Quarterly survey report
Summer 2009

Employee outlook
Job seeking in a recession

This employee outlook has been written by Claire McCartney and
Ben Willmott at the CIPD

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Summary of key findings

Job satisfaction

Like last quarter, UK employees' satisfaction scores remain high. The overall net satisfaction score is +48 (compared with +46 last quarter and +26 in 2006).

Comparisons across sectors shows that employees working within the charity/voluntary sector are most satisfied (+60), while those working in the private (+46) and public (+45) sectors are fairly equally satisfied.

Job satisfaction across most of the elements surveyed has shown a slight increase since last quarter and, as reported last quarter, a substantial increase since 2006.

Highest satisfaction scores

Employees are most satisfied with their relations with fellow workers (+72), their freedom over their working method (+55) and their hours of work (+51).

Lowest satisfaction scores

UK employees are least satisfied with their chances of promotion (-6), the way change within the organisation is managed (-1) and leadership by top management (2), although scores relating to these have increased since Spring 2009.

Like last quarter, employees are generally positive in their attitudes towards their immediate line managers. Employees are most likely to feel that their managers always/usually treat them fairly (70%). On the other hand, employees are most likely to say their manager rarely/never coaches them on the job (44%).

Employee attitudes towards senior management

Overall, respondents are less positive in their attitudes towards their senior managers. Respondents are most likely to agree that their senior leaders have a clear vision for their organisation (42%) and treat employees with respect (42%). Respondents are most likely to disagree that senior managers in their organisations consult employees about important decisions (46%) and that they trust senior managers (33%). These figures show a very slight improvement on last quarter.

Trust in senior leadership

There is widespread agreement that senior managers need to restore or improve trust felt towards them by employees. Only 19% of respondents say that their senior managers do not need to improve trust.

Top of the list of ways of improving trust is frequent and honest communications about what is happening within the organisation (53%). Respondents would also like to see more meaningful consultation (35%) and giving employees greater voice (30%).

Communication

Fewer than half of respondents (49%) state that they feel either fully informed or fairly well informed about what is happening in their organisation.

The need for open and transparent communication is recognised but a significant proportion of respondents state that they do not believe everything they hear from senior managers in the organisation: 24% state that they can believe about half the information they receive about the organisation from their managers; a further 12% can seldom believe it.

Pressure at work

The survey shows an increase in the proportion of employees that feel under excessive pressure at work, either every day or once or twice a week, to 41% from 38% in the previous quarter.

Public sector employees (46%) more commonly report feeling under excessive pressure than their private sector counterparts (40%).

However, workers in the construction industry report the highest levels of pressure across all industry sectors, with 46% saying they feel under excessive pressure either every day or once or twice a week.

Work–life balance and flexible working

Compared with last quarter's *Employee Outlook* survey, the proportion of employees agreeing that they achieve the right balance between their work and home life has increased to 61% from 56%.

In all, 23% disagree that they achieve the right work–life balance compared with 23% for the previous quarter. Women more commonly agree (65%) that they achieve the right work–life balance than men (57%).

Just over a third of employees (36%) agree that their organisation provides support to help them manage their work–life balance, with a similar proportion (37%) agreeing that their manager provides support to help them manage their work–life balance

Employers' response to the recession

Employers are increasingly adopting a range of measures to cope with the economic challenges they face. The proportion of employees reporting their organisation has been affected by the recession has increased to 79% from 75% for the previous quarter.

Compared with the last *Employee Outlook* survey report, there has been an increase in the proportion of employees reporting that their organisation has: made redundancies; frozen recruitment; cut back on training; cut back on hours worked; and reduced employee benefits.

Private sector employees are most likely to report that their employer has responded to the recession through a range of responses including recruitment freezes, job cuts, reductions in working hours, as well as pay freezes and cuts.

However, public sector employees are more likely to say their employer is planning to make redundancies or has cut back on training.

Impact of the recession on individuals

In all 34% of employees agree they are concerned about being made redundant, with 33% disagreeing (net agree score +1). Half of employees say they are worried about the future compared with 20% disagreeing (net agree score +30).

The area of career development and progression appears to have been hit particularly hard by the recession, with just 24% of employees agreeing they are learning new skills in their organisation as a result of the recession compared with 45% disagreeing (net agree score –21). Only 7% of respondents agree there are more opportunities to progress, in contrast to 58% disagreeing (net agree score –51), while 13% agree they are confident of finding work elsewhere with 58% disagreeing (net agree score –45).

The impact of redundancies on 'survivors'

Seven out of ten employees whose organisations have made redundancies report that the job cuts have damaged morale, with 20% saying that the job losses have made no impact on morale and 2% seeing an increase in morale.

A quarter of respondents (27%) agree they are less motivated in their jobs as a result of losing colleagues through redundancies, compared with 43% disagreeing (net agree score –16).

Just over a fifth of employees (22%) agree that they feel the redundancies were not handled well and they are looking to change employer as soon as the jobs market improves, with 42% disagreeing (net agree score –20).

In all, 43% of employees agree that they felt a great sense of shock and loss but realise the redundancies were necessary for the organisation to survive, in contrast to 26% disagreeing (net agree score +17). There is a considerable split between public and private sector employee attitudes on this question, with 46% of private sector respondents agreeing compared with just 23% of those in the public sector.

More than half (51%) of employees feel under increased pressure to perform and prove their worth following redundancies, with only 20% disagreeing (net agree score +31).

Job security in the recession

There appears to have been a slight increase in confidence among employees over their job security. In all, 17% of employees believe it is likely or very likely they could lose their job as a result of the economic downturn, down from 18% for the previous *Employee Outlook* survey report.

The majority of employees are more optimistic, with 54% believing it unlikely or very unlikely that they will be made redundant as a result of the recession, compared with 52% for the previous quarter.

As in the last quarter's survey, private sector employees are most worried over their job security, with 19% thinking it likely or very likely they could lose their job as a result of the economic climate, compared with just 11% of both public and non-profit sector employees.

Job-seeking in the recession

While job security fears may have eased slightly, the proportion of employees thinking it will be difficult or very difficult to find a new job if they are made redundant has climbed to 64%, compared with 61% for the previous quarter.

Like last quarter, the majority of UK employees (75%) plan to remain with their current employer for the foreseeable future. However, when respondents are asked if ideally they would like to change jobs within the next year, 34% said yes (37% last quarter).

Of those who will be looking for a job in a different sector from their current job, the most popular sectors appear to be the public and voluntary, with 28% looking for work in other community, social and personal services activities, 20% wanting to move into education and 17% looking for health and social work.

Just over half (52%) will be looking for the same sort of work, but interestingly a sizable quarter (25%) will be looking for different work, with a further 23% who again have not made up their minds about this. With a view to changing jobs, 17% are up-skilling, 11% are retraining and 10% are gaining volunteering experience.

Reasons for wanting to change jobs

The top three reasons why UK employees would ideally like to change their job is to increase job satisfaction (57%), to do a different type of work (43%) and for better pay and benefits (39%). For those in the banking and finance sector who would ideally like to change their job, 67% gave 'to increase job satisfaction' as the main reason.

Reasons for staying

For those that are not wanting to change their job in the next year, the top main reason given for staying is because they have job satisfaction (32%). This is particularly the case in the voluntary sector, where 45% of respondents gave this answer.

Job search methods

The most popular method for looking for a job is through local newspaper advertisements (42%), followed by the use of recruitment agencies (35%). Interestingly, recommendations from friends are high on the list (28%), showing the power of employee advocacy.

Skills/attributes of potential applicants

We also asked respondents which skills/attributes potential applicants most need to demonstrate in the current economic environment. Respondents pointed to fitting in with the culture and values of the organisation (47%) and having transferable/flexible skills (47%).

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction has increased slightly from last quarter, with 65% of employees expressing themselves satisfied compared with 17% disagreeing. Employees working within the charity/voluntary sector are most satisfied with little difference in job satisfaction levels between the public and private sectors.

Job satisfaction

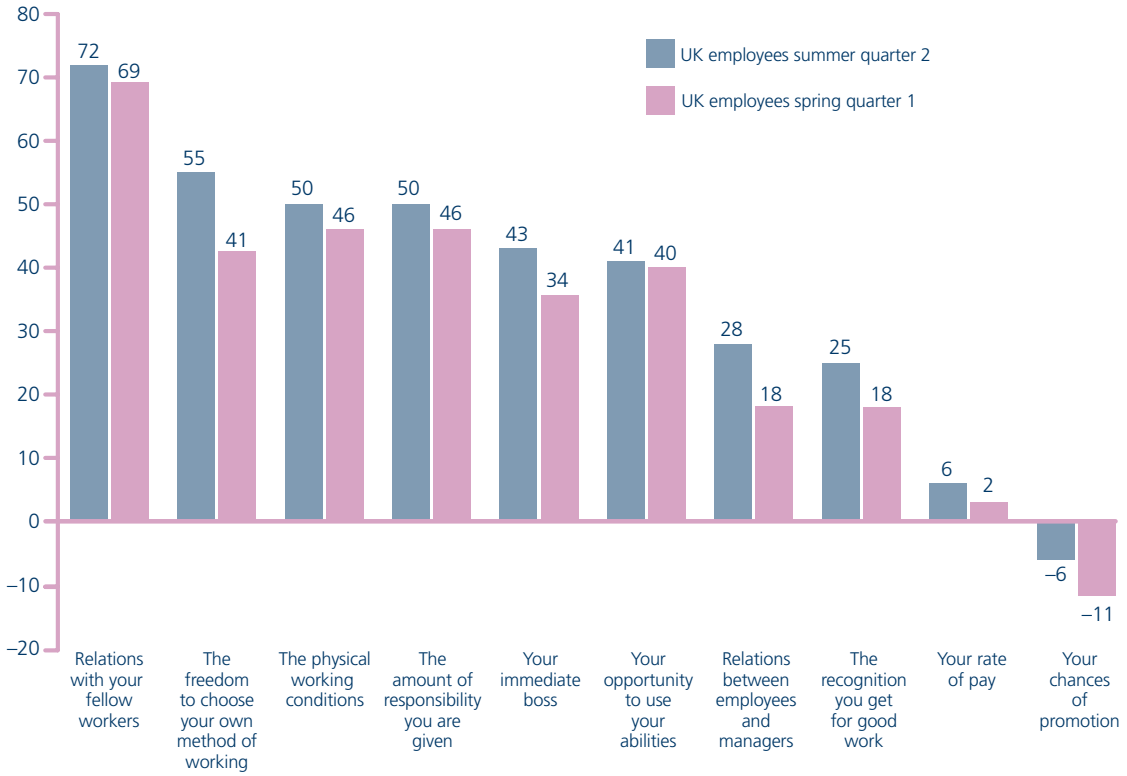
UK employees' satisfaction scores have edged slightly higher to +48 compared with +46 last quarter and +26 in 2006. Male (+48) and female (+49) satisfaction scores are more balanced this quarter (compared with +41 and +51 respectively last quarter).

Like the last quarter, sole traders (+72) are most satisfied with their current job but those working within large organisations are least satisfied with their jobs (+39). Job satisfaction has changed most for employees working within medium businesses, with their net satisfaction score increasing from +40 last quarter to +50 this quarter.

Comparisons across sectors shows that employees working within the charity/voluntary sector are most satisfied (+60), while those working in the private (+46) and public (+45) sectors are fairly equally satisfied. Interestingly, while the net satisfaction rates for the private and public sector are exactly the same as last quarter, net satisfaction in the charity/voluntary sector has increased by 7%.

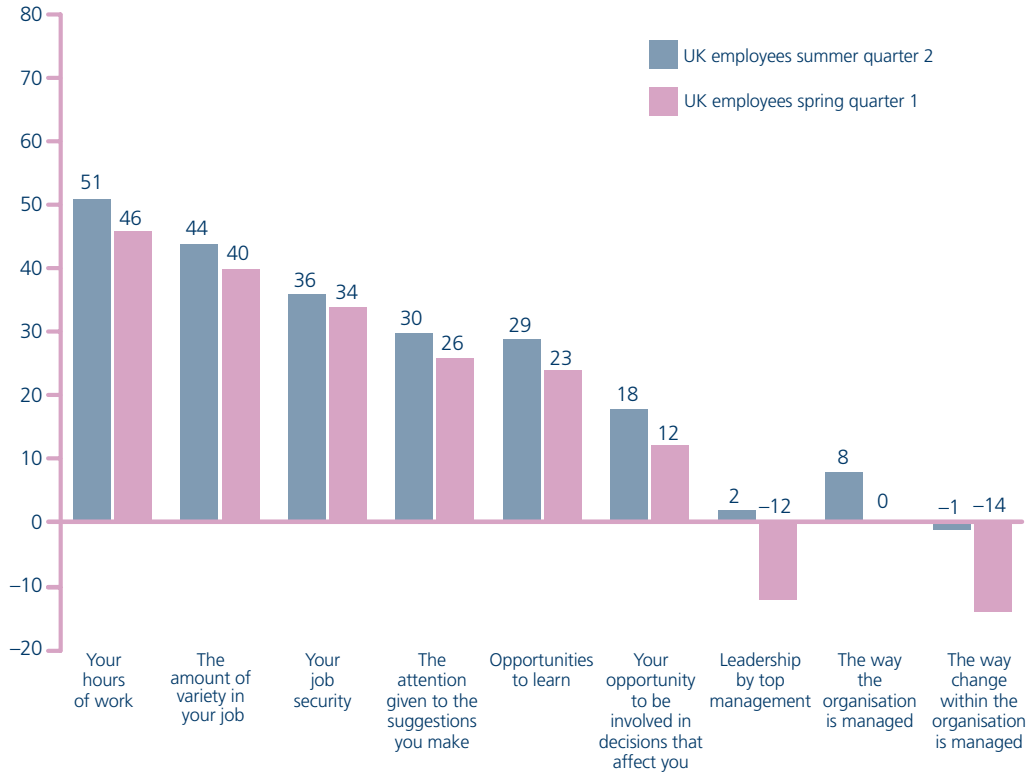
As shown in Figures 1 and 2, job satisfaction across all of the elements surveyed has shown a slight increase since last quarter and, as reported last quarter, a substantial increase since 2006.

Figure 1: How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your work?



Base: 3,337: The net satisfaction score is generated by subtracting the percentage of respondents that report they are satisfied from those saying they are dissatsified.

Figure 2: How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your work?



Base: All employees: 3,337

Highest satisfaction scores

Employees are most satisfied with their relations with fellow workers (+72), their freedom over their working method (+55) and their hours of work (+51).

While satisfaction among public sector employees has increased from +74 to +79, private sector employees seem less satisfied with the relations they have with their co-workers from the first quarter (+77 down to +70).

Satisfaction with freedom of choosing your own method of working has increased by 14 points from last quarter. Scores for the public sector remain the same but satisfaction among private sector employees has increased slightly from +55 to +58.

Public sector employees remain far more satisfied with their working hours than private sector employees, with a 7-point difference (+55 compared with +48).

Satisfaction with recognition for good work has increased by 7 points – this, however, seems to have taken place in the private sector, with scores increasing from +21 to +24, rather than in the public sector, where scores have remained the same.

More employees feel that attention is paid to the suggestions they make, with the net satisfaction score increasing from +26 to +30. Similarly, it seems senior management is making more of an effort to include employees in decisions that affect them.

Lowest satisfaction scores

UK employees are least satisfied with their chances of promotion (-6), the way change within the organisation is managed (-1) and leadership by top management (2), although scores relating to these have increased since Spring 2009.

For those working in both the public and private sector, satisfaction seems to have increased slightly with their immediate boss and relations between employees and managers within their organisations.

The management of change within organisations has seemed to improve since the last quarter.

Public sector employees are still dissatisfied with the way change is managed within their organisations, but the score has increased from –34 to –27.

Private sector employees are now satisfied with the way change is managed within their organisation (–9 compared with +3). This again will need to be monitored to identify whether or not it is a trend, but there seem to be signals that the recession has led to an improvement in the management of organisations.

Employee attitudes towards management

Employees are generally positive in their attitudes to their immediate manager, particularly in terms of being treated fairly and being supported if they have a problem. Line managers are not rated so highly for how they develop, coach or give feedback. However, only just over a third of employees say they trust senior management and just a quarter say they are consulted over important decisions by their organisation's leaders.

Employee attitudes towards line management
Like last quarter, employees are generally positive in their attitudes towards their immediate line managers.

Employees are most likely to feel that their managers always/usually treat them fairly (70%), are committed to their organisation (69%) and are supportive if they have a problem (65%). On the other hand, employees are most likely to say their manager rarely/never coaches them on the job (44%), discusses their training and development needs (35%) nor gives them feedback on their performance (26%); again, these figures are broadly the same as last quarter.

Table 1: To what extent does your immediate supervisor/manager or boss do each of the following? (%)

	Always	Usually
Consults me on matters of importance to me	53	54
Discusses my training and development needs with me	40	39
Recognises when I have done a good job	57	55
Makes me feel my work counts	53	54
Gives me feedback on how I am performing	46	46
Is open and honest	60	61
Is supportive if I have a problem	64	65
Keeps me in touch with what's going on	51	50
Makes clear what is expected of me	58	59
Listens if I have a suggestion to make	63	63
Treats me fairly	70	70
Is committed to my organisation	71	69
Makes sure I have the resources to do the job	54	54
Coaches me on the job	30	29

Base: 2,662

Employee perceptions of their senior manager

Overall, respondents are less positive in their attitudes towards their senior managers. Respondents are most likely to agree that their senior leaders have a clear vision for their organisation with 42% agreeing and 27% disagreeing (net agree score +15). They are also more likely to agree (42%) than disagree (29%) that their senior managers treat employees with respect (net agree score +13). However the reverse is true on the issue of trust with just 36% of employees agreeing that they trust their senior management and 33% disagreeing (net agree score +3). Respondents are even more negative in their views on the extent they feel they are consulted on important decisions, with only 26% agreeing that this happens compared with 46% disagreeing (net agree score –20).

These figures show a very slight improvement on last quarter. See Figure 3.

There has been a slight improvement in the net agreement score in relation to consultation with employees; however, the score is still negative. Small businesses seem to consult better (a net agreement score of +9) while medium (–30) and larger businesses (–37) score the worst.

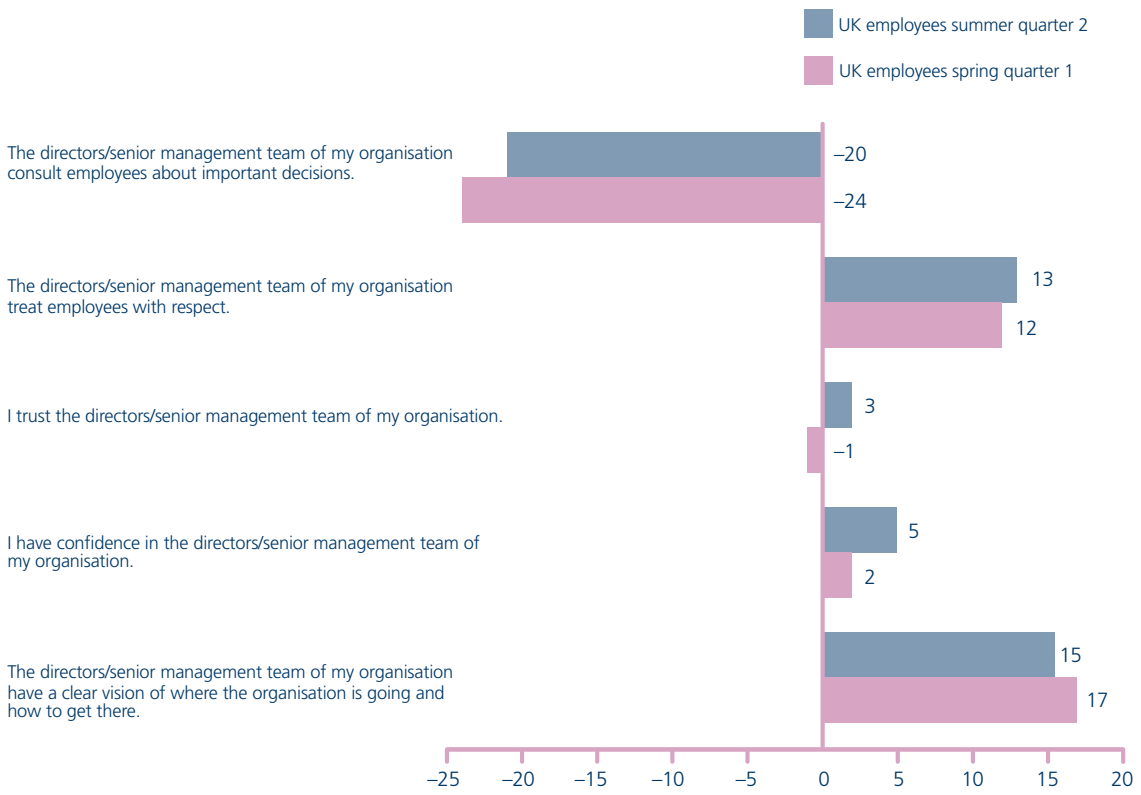
There have been slight improvements in the trust and confidence that employees have in their directors and senior management team. However, as was the case in the first quarter, the public sector is still the most distrusting of its senior managers with a net agreement score of –21.

The extent to which employees believe that they are treated with respect varies considerably by size of organisation. For micro businesses, the net agreement score is +52. For large businesses it is –4.

Rebuilding trust in senior leadership

There is widespread agreement that senior managers need to restore or improve trust felt towards them by employees. Only 19% of respondents say that their senior managers do not need to improve trust.

Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your directors/ senior managers?



Base: 2,960

Top of the list of ways of improving trust is frequent and honest communications about what is happening within the organisation, with 53% of respondents citing this as key. Respondents also believe that more meaningful consultation (35%) and giving employees greater voice (30%) would contribute to improved trust in senior management.

Almost a third (29%) of employees think trust in senior management would be improved if there were no rewards for failure among the senior leadership team, while 27% of respondents feel that trust in senior management would be helped if senior managers invested more trust in middle and junior managers. See Figure 4.

Communications

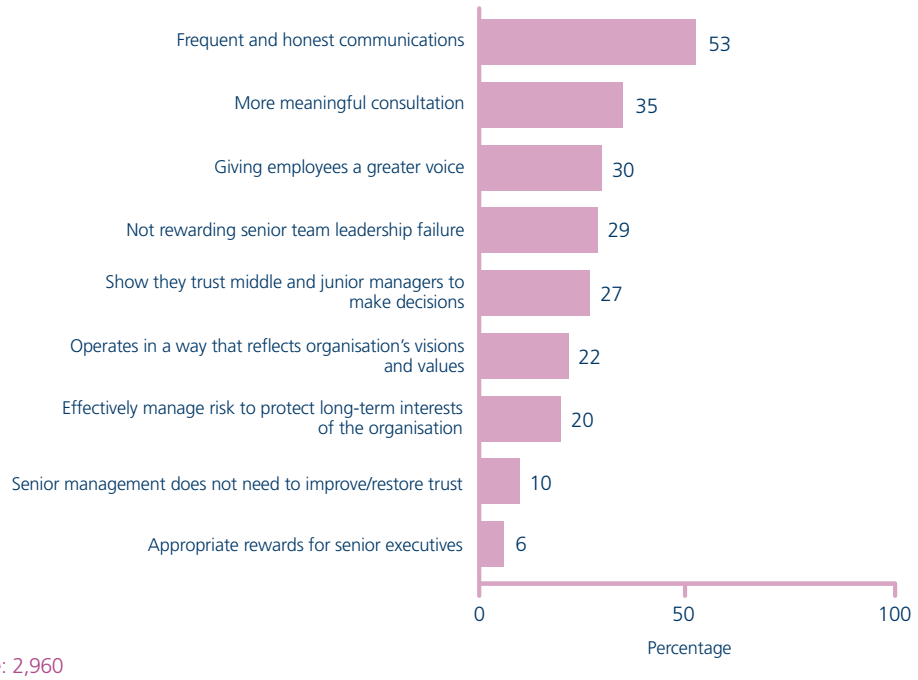
Fewer than half of respondents (49%) stated that they feel either fully informed or fairly well informed about what is happening in their organisation. There is little variation in this figure by size of organisation. However, there are variations by business sector: 54% in the health sector stated that they are fully or fairly well informed; for retail, the corresponding figure is 46%; for telecoms it is 45%.

When it comes to opportunities to feed views/issues upwards, UK employees have a net satisfaction score of +12 (+13 in quarter 1), indicating that, overall, they are satisfied with the opportunities available to them.

As was found in the first quarter, employees working in the private sector are slightly more satisfied with opportunities provided to them to feed views/issues upwards than employees working in the public sector (+15 compared with +5).

The need for open and transparent communication is recognised but a significant proportion of respondents state that they do not believe everything they hear from senior managers in the organisation: 24% state that they can believe about half the information they receive about the organisation from their managers; a further 12% can seldom believe it.

Figure 4: Which if any of the following would improve/restore trust in the directors/senior management team of your organisation?



Base: 2,960

Pressure, control and workload

There has been an increase in the proportion of employees that feel under excessive pressure at work, either every day or once or twice a week, to 41% from 38% in the previous quarter.

Pressure at work

The survey shows an increase in the proportion of employees that feel under excessive pressure at work, either every day or once or twice a week, to 41% from 38% in the previous quarter.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as the 'adverse reaction that people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed upon them'. Long-term exposure to stress is linked to a range of health problems, including anxiety and depression, as well as heart disease.

Men (43%) are more likely than women (39%) to feel under excessive pressure, which could be explained by the fact that full-time workers (46%) are subject to more pressure in their jobs, either every day or once or twice a week, than part-time workers (29%).

Public sector employees (46%) more commonly report feeling under excessive pressure than their private sector counterparts (40%).

However, workers in the construction industry report the highest levels of pressure across all industry sectors, with 46% saying they feel under excessive pressure either every day or once or twice a week.

Chief executives and managing directors report the highest levels of excessive pressure, followed by middle and line managers. See Table 2.

Table 2: Approximately how much of the time do you feel under excessive pressure in your job? (%)

	Average	Male	Female	Private	Public	Volun-tary	Chief execu-tive	Man-aging director	Line manager	Worker with no managerial responsibility
Every day	14	15	13	14	16	8	28	27	15	11
Once or twice a week	27	28	26	26	30	31	22	36	34	26
Once or twice a month	25	24	25	25	25	31	28	22	26	23
Less fre-quently than once a month	21	19	23	22	18	17	0	5	17	26
Never	13	14	13	13	11	13	21	10	7	14

Base: 3,337

Control at work

One of the mitigating factors for stress at work is the amount of control employees have over their jobs. In all, more than three-quarters of respondents say they have a great deal (30%) or a fair amount of control (47%) over the way they do their job. Men are marginally more likely than women to feel they have control at work.

Private sector employees are significantly more likely to report they have a great deal or a fair amount of control than their public sector counterparts; however, voluntary sector employees say they have the most amount of control over the way they do their job. See Table 3.

Workload

Just over a quarter (27%) of employees think that their individual workload is too much, with 61% believing their workload is about right and 10% saying it is too little. Non-profit sector workers are most likely to say their workload is too much (37%), followed by public sector employees (36%) and private sector employees (25%). Within these three main sectors, employees working in education (38%) and health and social care (33%) are most likely to report excessive workloads in their jobs, particularly compared with people working in agriculture (15%) and utilities (18%). People working in smaller organisations are less likely than those in large organisations to report excessive levels of workload. See Table 4.

A greater proportion of employees report the general level of workload facing their organisation is too much (32%) than those saying their individual workload is excessive. Public sector employees are most likely to say the general level of workload in their organisation is too much (50%) compared with non-profit employees (48%) and private sector employees (28%).

Table 3: How much control do you feel you have over the way you do your job? (%)

	Average	Private	Public	Voluntary
A great deal of control	30	33	15	22
A fair amount of control	47	46	52	63
Not much control	16	15	23	12
Just a little control	4	4	7	1
None at all	3	3	3	2

Base: 3,337

Table 4: Thinking about your role at work, is the workload…?

	Average	Private	Public	Voluntary	Sole trader	Micro business (2–9 people)	Small business (10–49 people)	Medium to large (50–249 people)	Large (250+ people)
Too little	10	11	6	7	24	11	7	7	8
About right	61	63	57	55	61	68	67	63	57
Too much	27	25	36	37	14	20	26	28	34
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1

Base: 3,337

Work–life balance and flexible working

The proportion of employees agreeing that they achieve the right balance between their work and home life has increased to 61% from 56%. Just over a fifth (21%) say the economic downturn has meant they are spending more time at home compared with 18% saying they are spending less time at home.

Compared with last quarter's *Employee Outlook* survey, the proportion of employees agreeing that they achieve the right balance between their work and home life has increased to 61% from 56%. In all, 23% disagree that they achieve the right work–life balance compared with 26% for the previous quarter. Women more commonly agree (65%) that they achieve the right work–life balance than men (57%). See Table 5.

Just over a third of employees (36%) agree that their organisation provides support to help them manage their work–life balance, with a similar proportion (37%) agreeing that their manager provides support to help them manage their work–life balance. See Table 6.

Employees working in the non-profit sector are most likely to agree their organisation and manager provide support to help them manage their work–life balance.

Table 5: The extent to which employees agree or disagree that they achieve the right balance between their home and work lives (%)

	Average	Men	Women	Private	Public	Voluntary
Strongly agree	16	15	17	16	14	19
Agree	45	42	48	44	48	44
Neither agree nor disagree	16	18	14	16	16	14
Disagree	18	19	16	18	17	19
Strongly disagree	5	6	4	5	5	4
Not sure	1	1	1	1	1	1

Base: 3,337

Table 6: The extent to which employees agree or disagree that their organisation/manager provides support to help them manage their work–life balance

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
My organisation provides work–life balance support						
Average	10	26	31	20	11	3
Private	10	25	31	20	12	3
Public	7	32	28	21	10	2
Non-profit	13	29	30	18	9	1
My manager provides work–life balance support						
Average	10	27	31	17	11	4
Private	10	25	32	17	12	4
Public	9	36	26	18	9	2
Non-profit	13	33	28	17	6	2

Base: 3,337

The survey suggests that the recession has on balance been contributing to an increase in the amount of time employees spend at home, which may be the result of falling demand for products and services. However, workforce cuts may mean staff in some organisations are having to work longer hours and spend less time at home.

Just over a fifth (21%) say the economic downturn has meant they are spending more time at home compared with 18% saying they are spending less time at home. Private sector employees more commonly than those in the public or non-profit sectors report they are either spending more time at home (22%) or less time at home (19%) as a result of the recession. See Table 7.

Table 7: The proportion of employees spending more or less time at home as a result of the recession (%)

	Average	Private	Public	Non-profit
I am spending more time at home	21	22	18	15
I am spending less time at home	18	19	17	13
The current economic situation has not affected the amount of time I spend at home	59	58	62	70
Don't know	2	1	3	2

Base: 2,672

Impact of the recession on employees and employers

The proportion of employees reporting their organisation has been affected by the recession has increased to 79% from 75% for the previous quarter. The proportion of employees saying their organisation has made redundancies has increased to 27% compared with 22% for the previous quarter. However, there has been a slight fall in the proportion of respondents saying their employer is planning redundancies to 14% from 16%.

From the employee perspective, the recession shows no signs of easing, with employers increasingly adopting a range of measures to cope with the economic challenges they face. The proportion of employees reporting their organisation has been affected by the recession has increased to 79% from 75% for the previous quarter. Compared with the last Employee Outlook survey report, there has been an increase in the proportion of employees reporting that their organisation has: made redundancies; frozen recruitment; cut back on training; cut back on hours worked; and reduced employee benefits.

The proportion of employees saying their organisation has made redundancies has increased to 27% compared with 22% for the previous quarter. However, there has been a slight fall in the proportion of respondents saying their employer is planning redundancies to 14% from 16%.

Almost three in ten employees (29%) say their organisation has frozen recruitment, up from 25% in the last survey report. Just over a quarter (26%) of respondents report that their employer has frozen pay, an increase from 18% from the previous quarter, while the proportion of employees saying their organisation has cut back on hours worked has also increased to 18% from 16%. A fifth of employees (20%) say training has been reduced by their employers compared with 17% in the last quarter. See Table 8.

In addition, 14% of respondents say their employer has reduced employee benefits, 7% of employees say their employer has cut pay and 5% of employees say their organisation has reduced the amount contributed to employee pensions.

Just under half of respondents (45%) have identified an increase in stress at work as a result of the recession, with 16% reporting an increase in conflict at work and an increase in people taking time off sick. In all, 11% of employees say there has been an increase in bullying by line managers. These scores are almost unchanged compared with the previous survey.

Table 8: Measures taken by employers in response to the recession (%)

It has made redundancies	
All employees	27
Private sector	32
Public sector	16
It is planning to make redundancies	
All employees	14
Private sector	13
Public sector	20
It has cut back on training	
All employees	20
Private sector	20
Public sector	25
It has cut back on the number of hours that people work	
All employees	18
Private sector	22
Public sector	10
It has increased the number of hours that people work	
All employees	6
Private sector	7
Public sector	4
It has frozen pay	
All employees	26
Private sector	32
Public sector	12
It has cut pay	
All employees	7
Private sector	8
Public sector	2
It has frozen recruitment	
All employees	29
Private sector	31
Public sector	27
It has reduced the amount contributed to employee pensions	
All employees	5
Private sector	6
Public sector	2

Table 8: Measures taken by employers in response to the recession (%) (continued)

It has reduced employee benefits/perks	
All employees	14
Private sector	16
Public sector	6
It has been affected in some other way	
All employees	23
Private sector	21
Public sector	25
It has not been affected by the downturn	
All employees	21
Private sector	20
Public sector	19
Don't know	
All employees	8
Private sector	6
Public sector	15

Base: 3,337

Public sector employees (22%) are more likely to have noticed an increase in people taking time off sick, with private sector respondents more likely to say there has been an increase in stress and conflict between colleagues.

Employees in the voluntary sector are least likely to have noticed any of the factors happening.
See Table 9.

Table 9: As a result of the economic downturn, have you noticed any of the following? (%)

	Spring 09	Summer 09
An increase in conflict at work between colleagues	15	16
An increase in bullying by managers	11	11
An increase in stress	46	45
An increase in people taking time off sick	16	16
None of these	47	48
Base: All whose organisation has been affected by the economic downturn	2,363	2,650

Support introduced by organisations to help employees cope with the downturn

Despite the impact of the recession on employment and the workplace, only a fifth (20%) of employees say their organisation has introduced any additional support to help them cope. The most common response has been the introduction of health and well-being programmes, with 8% of employees reporting their employer has introduced this type of support. In all, 7% of employees say their employer has introduced an employee assistance helpline, while 6% report that their organisation has provided access to financial advice and a similar proportion have introduced face-to-face counselling services. Just 4% of respondents have provided access to advice on job search or introduced stress management training.

Impact of the recession on individuals

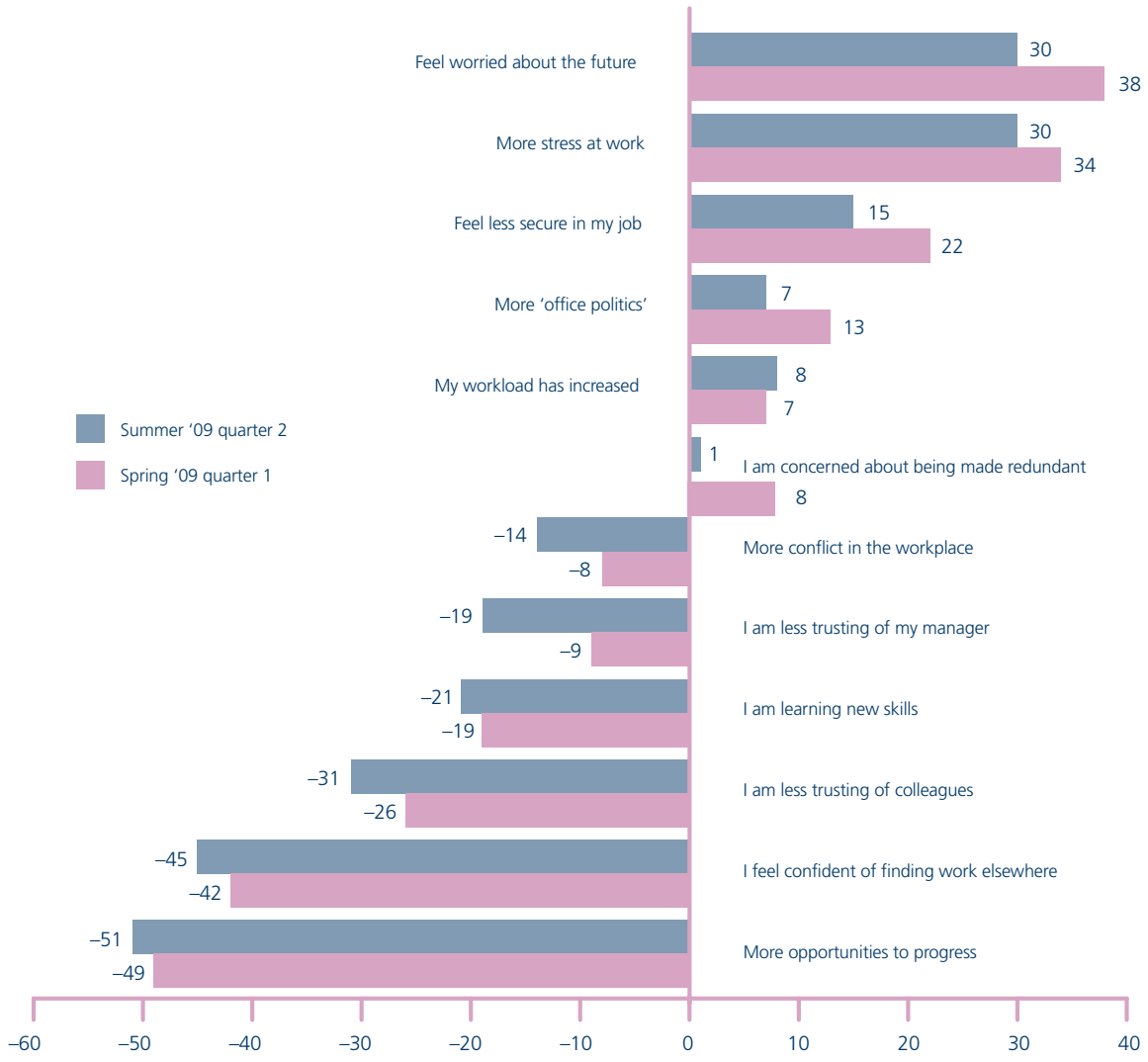
There are mixed messages concerning the anxiety that employees feel about the future. On the one hand, more people are concerned about being made redundant compared with the previous quarter's survey, but on the other fewer people feel worried about the future and feel less secure in their job. In all 34% of employees agree they are concerned about being made redundant, with 33% disagreeing (net agree score +1). Half of employees say they are worried about the future compared with 20% disagreeing (net agree score +30).

The area of career development appears to have been hit particularly hard by the recession, with just 24% of employees agreeing they are learning new skills as a result of the recession compared with 45% disagreeing (net agree score –21). Only 7% of respondents agree there are more opportunities to progress, in contrast to 58% disagreeing (net agree score –51), while 13% agree they are confident of finding work elsewhere with 58% disagreeing (net agree score –45).

Private sector employees are the most likely to be concerned about being made redundant. However, the net agree score has decreased from +18 in the last quarter to +9 in this quarter. This suggests that while concern over redundancy remains high, it has eased slightly during the last three months.

In the public sector, the net agreement score over concern about redundancy has fallen to –17 from –24 from the previous quarter. This could be an indication that public sector employees expect to be hit harder by redundancies in the future than they have in the past. See Figure 5.

Figure 5: Ways in which individuals are affected by the current economic situation.



Base: 2,672

The impact of redundancies on 'survivors'

Seven out of ten employees whose organisations have made redundancies report that the job cuts have damaged morale, with 20% saying that the job losses have made no impact on morale and 2% seeing an increase.

A quarter of respondents (27%) agree they are less motivated in their jobs as a result of losing colleagues through redundancies, compared with 43% disagreeing (net agree score –16).

Just over a fifth of employees (22%) agree that they feel the redundancies were not handled well and they are looking to change employer as soon as the jobs market improves, with 42% disagreeing (net agree score –20).

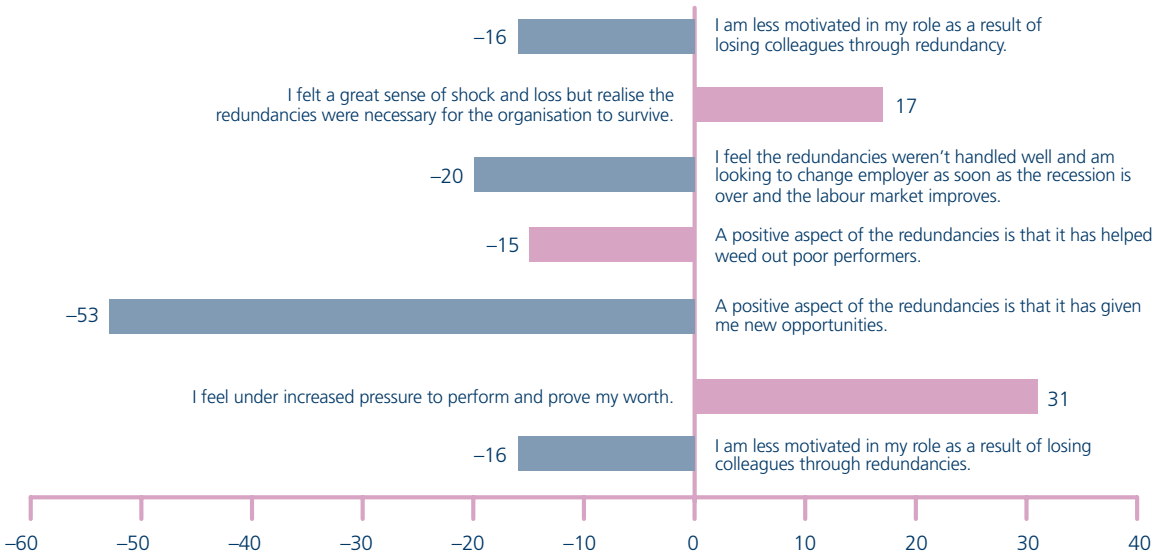
In all, 43% of employees agree that they felt a great sense of shock and loss but realise the redundancies were necessary for the organisation to survive, in contrast to 26% disagreeing (net agree score +17). There is a considerable split between public and private sector employee attitudes on this question, with 46% of private sector respondents agreeing compared with just 23% of those in the public sector.

More than half (51%) of employees feel under increased pressure to perform and prove their worth following redundancies, with only 20% disagreeing (net agree score +31).

However, redundancies have not created new opportunities for surviving employees, with just 10% agreeing that this is the case compared with 63% disagreeing (net agree score of –53).

Almost a third (30%) of respondents agree that a positive aspect of redundancies has been to weed out poor performers, but 45% disagree (net agree score –15). Private sector employees are more than twice as likely to agree on this question (32%) as their public sector counterparts (16%). See Figure 6.

Figure 6: The impact of redundancies on survivors



Base: 954

* The net agreement score is calculated by subtracting the % of respondents who agree with the statement from the % who disagree.

Job security and job-seeking in the recession

Job security fears have eased slightly, but the proportion of employees thinking it will be difficult or very difficult to find a new job if they are made redundant has climbed. Like last quarter, the majority of UK employees (75%) plan to remain with their current employer for the foreseeable future, however, 34% of employees say ideally they would like to change jobs within the next year.

Job security and job-seeking

There appears to have been a slight increase in confidence among employees over their job security. In all, 17% of employees believe it is likely or very likely they could lose their job as a result of the economic downturn, down from 18% for the previous *Employee Outlook* survey report.

The majority of employees are more optimistic, with 54% believing it unlikely or very unlikely that they will be made redundant as a result of the recession, compared with 52% for the previous quarter.

As in the last quarter's survey, private sector employees are most worried over their job security, with 19% thinking it likely or very likely they could lose their job as a result of the economic climate, compared with just 11% of both public and non-profit sector employees. See Table 10.

Table 10: How likely employees think it is that they could lose their job as a result of the recession (%)

	All employees	Private sector	Public sector	Charity/voluntary sector
Very likely	4	4	3	2
Likely	13	15	8	9
Neither likely nor unlikely	24	25	19	22
Unlikely	32	31	35	45
Very unlikely	22	20	30	17
Don't know	5	5	5	5

Base: 3,337

Table 11: The proportion of employees thinking it will be easy or difficult to find a new job (%)

	All employees	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55+
Very easy	2	0	1	1	2	3
Easy	7	9	10	9	6	3
Neither easy nor difficult	22	19	24	29	20	14
Difficult	37	40	43	37	39	29
Very difficult	27	25	16	18	29	44
Don't know	5	6	5	5	4	6

Base: 3,337

While job security fears may have eased slightly, the proportion of employees thinking it will be difficult or very difficult to find a new job if they are made redundant has climbed to 64%, compared with 61% for the previous quarter.

Private sector employees are more likely to be pessimistic over their chances of finding a new job compared with those working in the public and non-profit sectors.

Older workers are also gloomier over their job-seeking prospects than younger workers, with those aged 45 or above thinking it will be hardest to find new work. See Table 11.

Regionally, people in the north-east of England, West Midlands and Wales more commonly think that finding a new job will be difficult.

Like last quarter, the majority of UK employees (75%) plan to remain with their current employer for the foreseeable future. This is unsurprising given the current economic climate and the instability in the labour market.

Just over a third would ideally like to change jobs

However, when respondents are asked if ideally they would like to change jobs within the next year, 34% say yes (37% last quarter) and a further 12% are uncertain or undecided. This compares with nearly half of employees who said they were looking for a new job in our 2006 employee attitudes survey, *Working Life: Employee attitudes and engagement 2006* at a time when the labour market was much more buoyant.

Respondents in banking and finance (41%) and construction (40%) are the most likely to want to change their jobs in the next year. Of those who would ideally like another job, about a quarter (24%) would prefer to leave the sector they currently work in. For those in banking and finance the figure is 34%.

Of those employees who would ideally like to change jobs within the next year, 40% are very or fairly optimistic (39% last quarter), but 52% are fairly or very unoptimistic, of being able to change jobs (this has risen from 39% last quarter).

Of those who would like to change their job in the next year, 35% will be looking for a job in the same sector as their current job, 24% will be looking in a different sector and 30% will be looking in both their own and a different sector; a further 11% are unsure at this stage.

Private sector employees are most likely to be looking to change sectors, particularly those working in banking and finance, wholesale and retail and construction – all sectors which have been hit hard by redundancies.

People working in wholesale and retail (33%), telecommunications and postal services (31%) and education (28%) are most likely to be looking to change their line of work.

Most popular sectors

Of those who will be looking for a job in a different sector from their current job, the most popular sectors appear to be the public and not-for-profit sectors, with 28% looking for work in other community, social and personal services activities, 20% wanting to move into

Table 12: Which if any of the following sectors will you be looking for a job in? (%)

Agriculture, hunting, forestry, fishing	8
Mining and quarrying; electricity, gas and water supply	7
Manufacturing	12
Construction	8
Wholesale and retail trade; repairs	16
Hotels and restaurants	11
Transport, storage and communication	16
Financial intermediation	9
Real estate, renting and business activities	8
Education	20
Health and social work	17
Other community social and personal service activities	28
Don't know	30

Base: 1,164

education and 17% looking for health and social work. Most popular in the private sector are wholesale and retail trade and transport, as well as storage and communication, with 16% of respondents planning to move into these areas. See Table 12.

Reasons for wanting to change jobs

The top three reasons why UK employees would ideally like to change their job is to increase job satisfaction (57%), to do a different type of work (43%) and for better pay and benefits (39%).

Other popular reasons for wanting to change jobs are to learn new things (37%), to reduce stress (28%), opportunities for promotion and upward promotion (26%) and because they are unhappy with the leadership of their senior management (22%). See Table 13. Employees working in the banking and finance sector are most likely to cite job satisfaction as the main reason for changing job, they are also most likely to see learning new things as a reason for moving jobs. Respondents working in professional services and telecommunications and postal services are more likely to cite better pay and benefits elsewhere.

With a view to changing jobs, 17% of employees are up-skilling, 11% are retraining and 10% are gaining volunteering experience. A smaller proportion (9%) are currently holding more than one job. Just over three-quarters (61%), however, are not doing anything actively to prepare themselves to move jobs.

Reasons for not wanting to change jobs

For those that are not wanting to change their job in the next year, the top reason given for staying is because they have job satisfaction (32%). This is particularly the case in the voluntary sector, where 45% of respondents give this answer. Next most popular is because they perceive their job to be secure (13%). Public sector employees are more likely to cite job security as a reason for staying (18%) than those in the private (13%) or non-profit (10%) sectors.

Eleven per cent of respondents suggest that a reason for staying in their current role is because they would find it difficult to get another job at the moment. This figure is consistent across the different sectors. See Table 14.

Table 13: For what reasons would you like to change your job? (%)

For promotion within your organisation	28
To move to another role of a similar level within your organisation	12
To gain upward promotion to a higher level within a different organisation	26
To move to a position of similar responsibility within a different organisation	19
To do a different type of work	43
To be self-employed	9
To retire	5
To return to (full-time) study	3
To care for your children	3
To start your own business	11
To get better training and development	21
To care for other dependants	1
Because I dislike my immediate manager	11
Reduce stress	28
To get a better pension	10
To learn new things	37
Increase job satisfaction	57
Unhappy with leadership of senior management	22
Better pay/benefits elsewhere	39
Opportunities for promotion	26
I want to work for a more ethical/greener employer	5
Easier/shorter journey to work	16
More flexible working hours	20
Increased job security in another organisation	18
Other reason	6
Don't know	1

Base: 1,164

Job search methods

The most popular method for looking for a job is through local newspaper advertisements (42%), followed by the use of recruitment agencies (35%). Interestingly, recommendations from friends are high on the list (28%), showing the power of employee advocacy. Corporate websites are also used by 27% of respondents. Despite the hype surrounding Web 2.0 and social networking, only 6% of respondents use social networking sites (such as LinkedIn) when searching for jobs. See Table 15.

Skills/attributes of potential applicants

We also asked respondents which skills/attributes potential applicants most need to demonstrate in the current economic environment. Respondents pointed to fitting with the culture and values of the organisation (47%) and having transferable/flexible skills (47%). Respondents employed in the voluntary sector and in education and health are more likely to give this answer.

Just over a third (35%) feel that employers would be looking for good interpersonal skills. Public and voluntary sector employees are more likely to identify this attribute than their private sector counterparts.

Table 14: You said you would not like to change your job in the next year..

What is the MAIN reason for staying in your current role? (%)	
I trust the senior management team	0
I would find it difficult to find another job at the moment	11
I enjoy working with my colleagues	8
I have a good line manager	2
I receive good pay and benefits	9
I have a good pension	3
I receive a good bonus	0
I have job satisfaction	32
I have good career development opportunities	2
I have good training and development opportunities	1
I like my customers/clients	5
My job is secure	13
I would receive a decent redundancy payment if I were made redundant	1
Other	13
Don't know	1

Base: 1,781

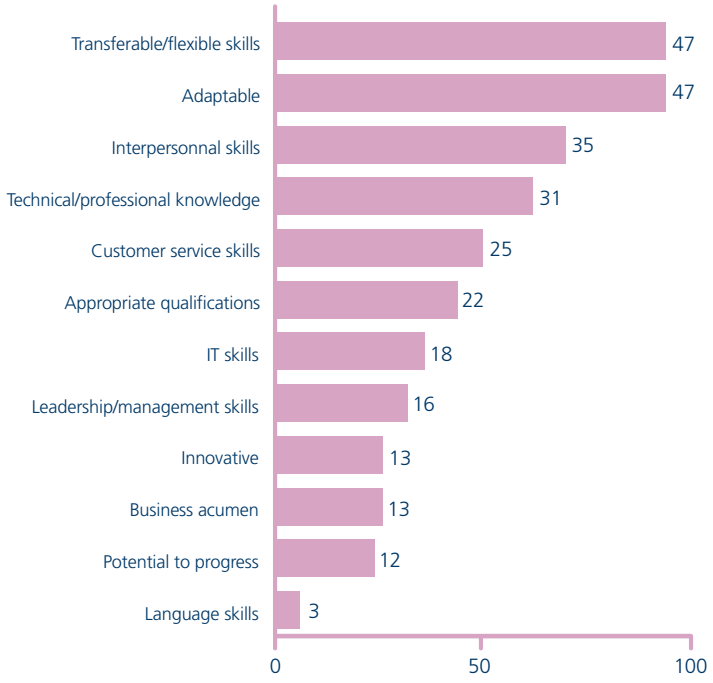
Skills such as business acumen and innovation are seen as less important than having the appropriate technical/professional knowledge, qualifications for the job and good customer service skills. See Figure 7.

Table 15: Which if any of the following methods do you use when searching for a job? (%)

Local newspaper advertisements	42
National newspaper advertisements	24
Specialist journals/trade press	22
Radio or TV advertisements	4
Physical posters/billboards/vehicles	3
Corporate websites	27
Recommendations from friends	28
Speculative applications/word of mouth	21
Recruitment agencies	35
Commercial job boards	14
Social networking sites (such as LinkedIn)	6
Jobcentre Plus	23
Schools/colleges/universities careers services	4
Other	4

Base: 3,337

Figure 7: Which skills and attributes do potential applicants most need to demonstrate in the current economic climate? (%)



Base: 3,336

Conclusions

The survey indicates that although employee job satisfaction scores are holding up well, the recession continues to deepen with employers increasingly adopting a range of measures to cope with the economic challenges they face. The proportion of employees saying their organisation has been affected by the recession has risen since the last quarter and there has also been an increase in the proportion of employees reporting that their organisation has made redundancies, frozen recruitment, cut pay, reduced training and cut back on benefits. The one positive finding is that the proportion of employees saying their organisation is planning redundancies has fallen slightly.

Private sector respondents are most likely to report that their organisation has been affected by the recession. However, since the last quarter's survey, the proportion of public sector respondents saying their organisation is planning redundancies has jumped from 14% to 20% and has overtaken the private sector figure, which has fallen to 13% from 17%. This suggests that the public sector, which has in comparison with the private sector been relatively sheltered from the recession, is starting to feel under increasing pressure to cut costs.

The fall in the number of organisations planning redundancies could explain a slight increase in confidence among employees over their job security. In all, 17% of employees believe it is likely or very likely they could lose their job as a result of the economic downturn, down from 18% for the previous *Employee Outlook* survey report. Although private sector employees are most worried over their job security, with 19% thinking it likely or very likely they could lose their job as a result of the economic climate, this is down from 23%. In contrast, the proportion of public sector employees similarly concerned over their job security has increased to 11% from 7%.

While job security fears may have eased slightly, the proportion of employees thinking it will be difficult or very difficult to find a new job if they are made redundant has climbed to 64%, compared with 61% for the previous quarter.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, three-quarters of employees plan to remain with their employer for the foreseeable future. However, over a third would ideally like to change jobs within the next year. This compares to nearly half of employees who said they were looking for a new job in our 2006 employee attitudes survey, *Working Life: Employee attitudes and engagement 2006,* at a time when the labour market was much more buoyant.

The survey shows that many people seeking a new job are looking for quite a fundamental career change, with about a quarter looking for work in a different sector and a similar proportion looking to change their line of work altogether. The top three reasons why UK employees would ideally like to change their job is to increase job satisfaction (57%), to do a different type of work (43%) and for better pay and benefits (39%). However, the reasons employees cite for staying in their current job are slightly different. Although job satisfaction is the top reason for staying, the next two most commonly cited reasons by employees are job security and because they would find it difficult to find another job at the moment. This suggests that employers could risk losing dissatisfied staff once the labour market picks up and job opportunities improve.

Worryingly for employers, the survey suggests that many employees have been left unhappy with management as a result of job losses. Seven out of ten employees whose organisations have made redundancies report that the job cuts have damaged morale. A quarter of respondents agree they are less motivated in their jobs as a result of losing colleagues

through redundancies and just over a fifth of employees (22%) agree that they feel the redundancies were not handled well and they are looking to change employer as soon as the jobs market improves. More than half of employees feel under increased pressure to perform and prove their worth following redundancies. The proportion of employees saying they are under excessive pressure has increased compared to last quarter's survey and nearly half of respondents report an increase in work related stress. In addition, redundancies have not created new opportunities for surviving employees, with just 10% agreeing that this is the case compared with 63% disagreeing.

Just under half of respondents (45%) have identified an increase in stress at work as a result of the recession with 16% reporting an increase in conflict at work and increase in people taking time off sick.

However levels of job satisfaction continue to hold up well, albeit against a background where people are likely to be happy just to have a job, with 65% satisfied and just 17% dissatisfied (net satisfaction score +48 compared to +46% for the last quarter).

Against this background it is concerning that employees' views of their senior management team remain negative. Only just over a third of employees agree that they trust their senior managers and just a quarter think they are consulted by senior management over important decisions.

The survey provides some pointers to how senior management teams can rebuild trust in their leadership, with more than half of employees calling for more frequent and honest communication about what is happening in the organisation and over a third seeing more meaningful consultation as key to improving trust. Three in ten respondents highlight the need to improve opportunities for employee voice through the introduction of staff councils/forums and a similar proportion believe that ensuring that senior managers are not rewarded for failure would contribute to improved levels of trust.

Recommendations for employers

Employers should be concerned about rebuilding employee morale and trust in senior leadership if they are not to haemorrhage talent when the economy and the labour market improve.

With more than a third of employees saying that ideally they would like to move jobs in the next year and job security and lack of available jobs cited by employees as two of the main reasons for staying with their current employer, it is clear that the current labour market conditions are acting as a dam holding back the normal flow of talent. Employers should be focusing on their talent management strategies to ensure they keep their top performers and key personnel once the recovery finally starts to emerge.

Employers should consider the following:

- Make honest and frequent communications about the realities of their business performance and how individual contributions can make a difference.
- Rather than reducing development activity, organisations should think of ways of doing more for less – perhaps by taking some development in-house and involving senior managers in the assessment and development of high-performers.
- Focus on the engagement and retention of current employees – make sure that they can see a future with the business and have clarity around career paths and work that is meaningful to them.
- Support managers to engage, develop and retain employees, particularly in uncertain times, through leadership development, coaching and mentoring and practical guidance from HR.
- Review the cost-effectiveness and impact of their talent management activities – this is something that organisations should be doing continually anyway, but is often the bit that gets missed out or that organisations find most difficult.

For more on talent management, download the CIPD's 2009 survey report *War on Talent? Talent management under threat in uncertain times*
www.cipd.co.uk/surveys

Fighting back through talent innovation is available to download at **www.cipd.co.uk/guides**

Background to the survey

The CIPD commissioned a survey among UK employees and sole traders to identify their opinions of and attitudes towards working life today, particularly during these difficult economic times.

YouGov conducted for the CIPD an online survey of 3,487 UK employees at the end of June 2009. This survey was administered to members of the YouGov Plc GB panel of 185,000+ individuals who have agreed to take part in surveys. The sample was selected to be representative of the Great Britain workforce in relation to sector (private, public, voluntary), industry type and full-time/part-time working by gender. The responding sample is weighted to the profile of the sample definition to provide a representative reporting sample. The profile is normally derived from census data or, if not available from the census, from industry accepted data.

An email was sent to panelists selected at random from the base sample according to the sample definition, inviting them to take part in the survey and providing a link to the survey.

Respondents were drawn from a mixture of public (19%), private (70%) and not-for-profit organisations (6%). The remaining classified their organisations as 'other'.

Size of organisation was classified in the following way: sole trader (one-person business), micro business (2–9), small businesses (10–49), medium (50–249), and large (more than 250).

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Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
151 The Broadway London SW19 1JQ
Tel: 020 8612 6200 Fax: 020 8612 6201
Email: cipd@cipd.co.uk Website: www.cipd.co.uk

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