



CAFFE!NE®
STIMULATING BUSINESS

The Employee Pride Index 2025: What Drives Employee Pride?

#EmployeePrideIndex



FINANCIAL
TIMES | UK'S LEADING
MANAGEMENT
CONSULTANTS | Voted by
clients
and peers

www.thisiscaffeine.com

In association with

Savanta:



EMPLOYEE PRIDE INDEX

Now in its fourth year, The Caffeine Partnership's Employee Pride Index, in partnership with data and market research company Savanta, surveyed 1007 UK employees to understand expectations of what they want or need from work and what drives them to feel proud of where they work. In addition, each year we ask a topical question on a subject in the headlines, to get a steer on what employees *really* think about it.

The Index uncovers where employee pride comes from, the role of leadership in nurturing pride, and the truth behind employees' perception of company purpose and values. We believe understanding sources of pride is what enables businesses to design and deliver meaningful employee experiences.

Employee pride is a powerful proxy for advancing key business imperatives, including talent attraction, retention, engagement, productivity and ultimately, advocacy.

CAFFE!NE[®]
STIMULATING BUSINESS

What turns an employee into an advocate?

The Employee Pride Index was commissioned with one clear question in mind – what turns an employee into an advocate?

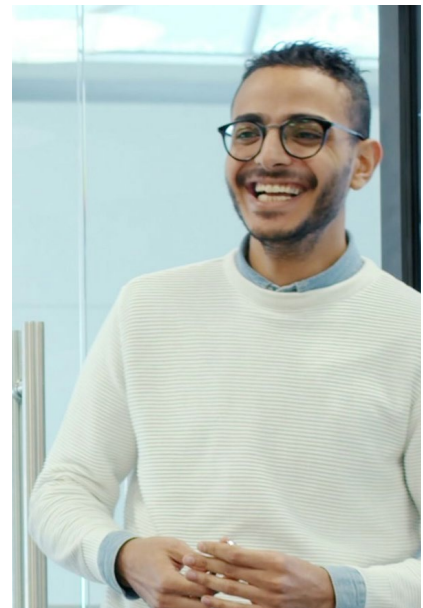
It makes sense that employees are more likely to become brand advocates when they enjoy a great employee experience, but what exactly do UK employees expect from that experience? And what can leaders of businesses do to ensure that their employees are proud to work there?

Once again, the results show that businesses with leaders who are committed to purpose and values, who deliver an outstanding customer experience, and an outstanding employee experience are the ones their employees recommend. Analysis reveals that the factors correlating most strongly with employee advocacy are all around an ethos of continuous improvement to the employee experience, factors such as *'my employer continually improves what it's like to work here'*, and *'my employer seeks to understand what matters most to me as an employee'*. Furthermore, pride is also driven by delivering value for customers, with *'my employer has a reputation for providing an outstanding customer experience'* one of the Top 5 statements correlating with employee advocacy. Straightforward as this sounds, the bad news is that while this may be common sense, it's not common practice.

There is improvement from last year's key finding that revealed only 30% of employees would recommend their employer, but this year's increase to 40% means that still almost two-thirds of employees surveyed would not recommend their employer as a good place to work and tells us that there are a lot of employees out there still working for businesses with leaders who are **not** committed to purpose and values and who **don't** deliver outstanding customer or employee experiences either.

The Employee Pride Index survey was commissioned by The Caffeine Partnership and carried out by independent research company Savanta.

Comprising a 10 minute survey, it was completed by a sample of 1007 UK employees, nationally representative of age, gender, region and company size.



“

“Though it's encouraging to see many of the scores improve this year, they're still nowhere where they need to be. That 60% of UK workers would not recommend their employers as a place to work is again a dismal finding. We know that productivity increases among people who take pride in their work and in the company they work for. More companies need to up their game in investing in what matters most to people if we want to tackle our chronic productivity problem.”

Andy Milligan, Co-founder,
The Caffeine Partnership



Why is this important?

Building an outstanding employee experience that makes people feel pride in their workplace is vital for your business strategy to succeed. You need to provide employees with experiences that empower and inspire them. Brand-led leadership and a strong employee experience drive the behaviour of your employees towards customers. This in turn drives customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, and ultimately, profitability and growth.

This perspective reflects the key principles of the Service Profit Chain, first developed by professors from Harvard Business School. Their evidence-based finding is that a great employee experience leads to a great customer experience. You simply cannot have one without the other. But the foundation is the role of leaders and what they prioritise.

Having satisfied and engaged employees makes good commercial sense too. There are myriad statistics showing that organisations that invest in employee experience outperform peers with lower rates of staff turnover, higher revenue and as much as four times more profit.

The value of investing in your people's experience

Organisations that invest in employee experience outperform their peers with:



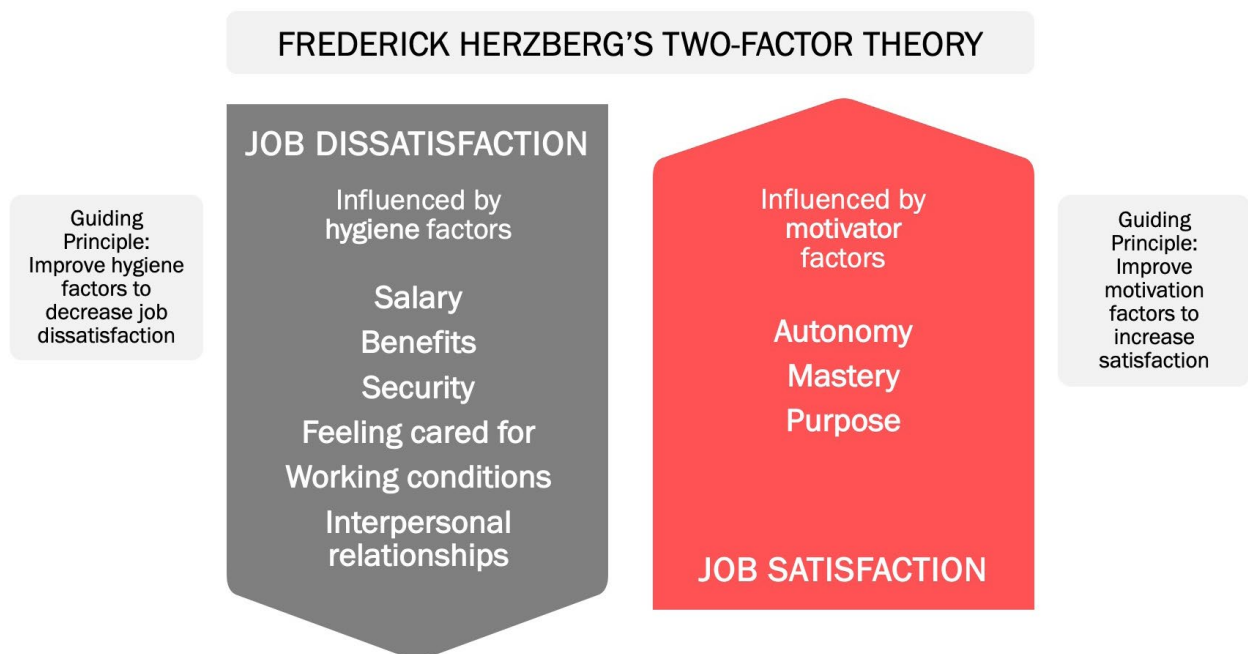
'The Three Employee Experience Environments', March 2023

©The Caffeine Partnership Private & Confidential

What drives employee engagement and satisfaction?

When considering the different factors influencing engagement, we reference the work of psychologist Frederick Herzberg. Herzberg identified that certain characteristics of a job are consistently related to job dissatisfaction, while different factors are associated with job satisfaction. Factors for dissatisfaction include salary and benefits, company policies, the relationship with supervisor and peers, work conditions and security, otherwise known as hygiene factors. On the other hand, the motivating factors for satisfaction include achievement, the work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth.

According to Herzberg, the factors leading to job satisfaction are “*separate and distinct from those that lead to job dissatisfaction*”. Therefore, if you set about eliminating dissatisfying job factors, you may create peace but not necessarily enhance performance. This placates your workforce instead of actually motivating them. When the hygiene factors have been adequately addressed, people will not be dissatisfied, nor will they be satisfied. If we want to motivate people, we have to focus on satisfaction factors such as achievement, recognition and responsibility. Or, to borrow from Daniel Pink, we have to give employees autonomy, mastery and purpose.





The Employee Pride Index methodology and key findings

To test our point of view and take the temperature of employees for the fourth consecutive year, we commissioned an independent survey of 1007 UK employees nationally representative of age, gender, broad sector and company size.

Fieldwork was carried out by our partners at Savanta using a 10-minute online survey with an overall objective of understanding what UK employees want or expect from work and what makes them proud to work where they do.

The leadership gap

As in previous years, the quality of leadership remains a problem for UK businesses. The survey asked respondents to place a series of factors on a scale of how important they were, and then how they felt their current employer performed against these factors. This year, the biggest gap between perceived importance and performance after competitive pay was *'the quality and effectiveness of the senior leadership within the business'*.

Further analysis shows what's driving this gap. Only 53% believe their employer's leaders focus on motivating people and making their company a great place to work and just 51% think their employer continually improves what it's like to work there. A little over half of UK employees felt their employer sought to understand what matters most to them personally, as an employee of the business. Though these scores have improved since last year (52% and 41% respectively), they still show that only just over half of employees think their leaders are focused on what matters most to them.

Employees also rank highly the opportunity to progress their career and get new responsibilities through their current organisation and that they're given the flexibility to do their job in a way that works for them.

But they also ranked highly *'The ability and encouragement to learn new things and learn new competencies'*. Sadly, only 55% felt their employers actually achieved that. Though that is up on last year, it is still a relatively low number.

The survey continues to show those leaders who are getting it right, and have employees score them highly on leadership quality, effectiveness, motivation and their efforts to make their company a great place to work, achieve higher rates of pride and advocacy.

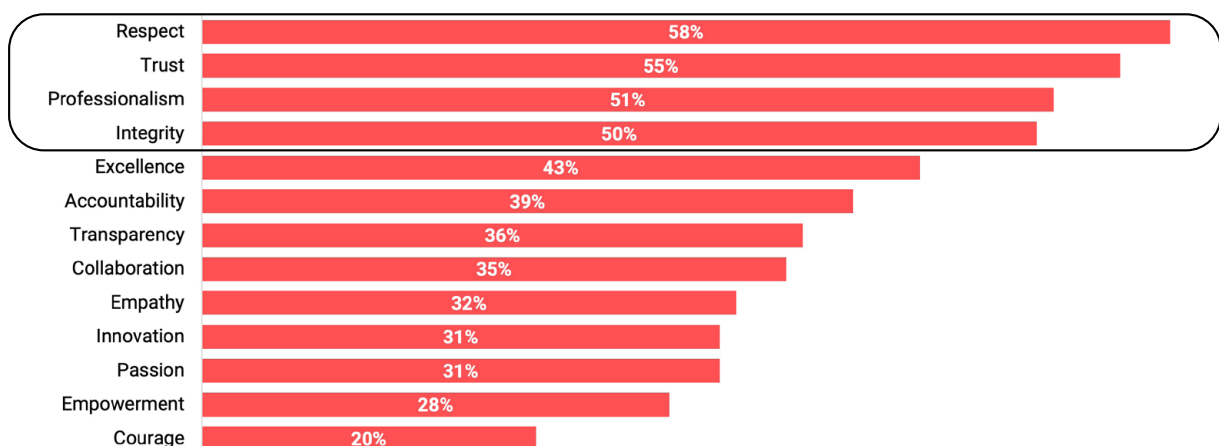
The purpose and values problem

Part of the leadership problem is a failure of purpose. A purpose is the guiding vision that reflects a company's values, goals, and mission. It plays the defining role in why a business exists beyond the goal of making a profit. Fulfilling the purpose is success, profits are a proof of that success. As a consultancy that helps organisations articulate their purpose, we are always curious to see how embedded purpose is across UK organisations and investigate how connected to the purpose employees feel they are.

Companies that make much of their 'purpose' – the guiding vision that reflects the organisation's values, goals and mission could feel encouraged that 92% of those employees who worked for a company with a purpose (that's 81% of UK employees), knew what that purpose was. However, words are not translated into action, with only 64% agreeing that their colleagues act in accordance with their organisation's purpose, and only 65% agreeing that their leaders do too. Although these figures are an improvement from last year (58% and 57% respectively) the gap between intent and action is still too wide.

The results revealed how generic company values have become across organisations. In our experience of working with clients from many different sectors, we had noticed the same values being used time after time. To test how prevalent this was, for the second year running, we provided a list of values and asked respondents to select any that their employer had as part of their stated values. The results speak for themselves – over half of all respondents worked for companies with either 'respect', 'trust', 'professionalism', or 'integrity' as one or more of the values.

Almost all companies have generic values



As with the purpose problem, again we identified a disconnect between what companies say, and what employees believe their leaders do. Only 60% of respondents who knew their company's values felt those values instilled a sense of pride and similarly, 58% felt the organisation's culture reflected the values. And the scores were similar when asked whether they believed their colleagues lived the values (56%) and the leaders of their organisation lived the values (58%).

The opportunity to differentiate

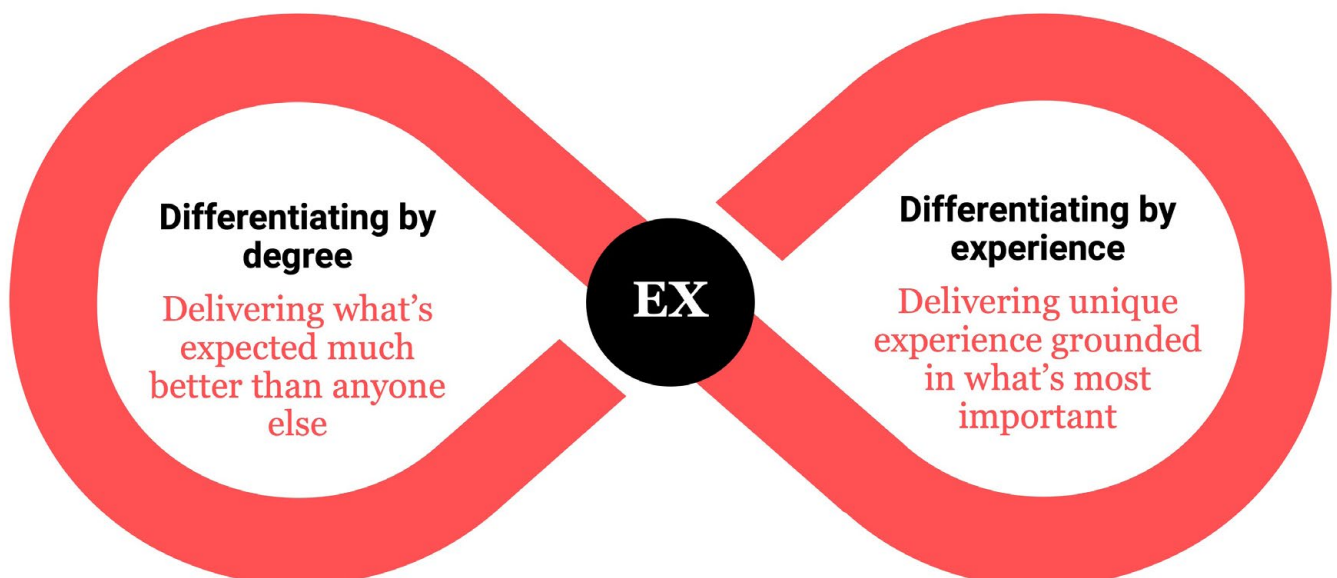
We believe focusing on your employee experience presents an opportunity to align the commitments you make as an employer with the values your people believe in. Once established, the two work to strengthen each other. The more you deliver on the promises you make to your people, the more they will champion the values and behaviours your organisation needs to succeed.

But as more organisations begin to communicate purpose and values and those values sound similar, their leaders need to be thinking about how to stay ahead in the employee experience space.

At those critical times when people are thinking about changing careers, their next move, whether they stay with an existing organisation or move to another, leaders must look for points of differentiation in the experience.

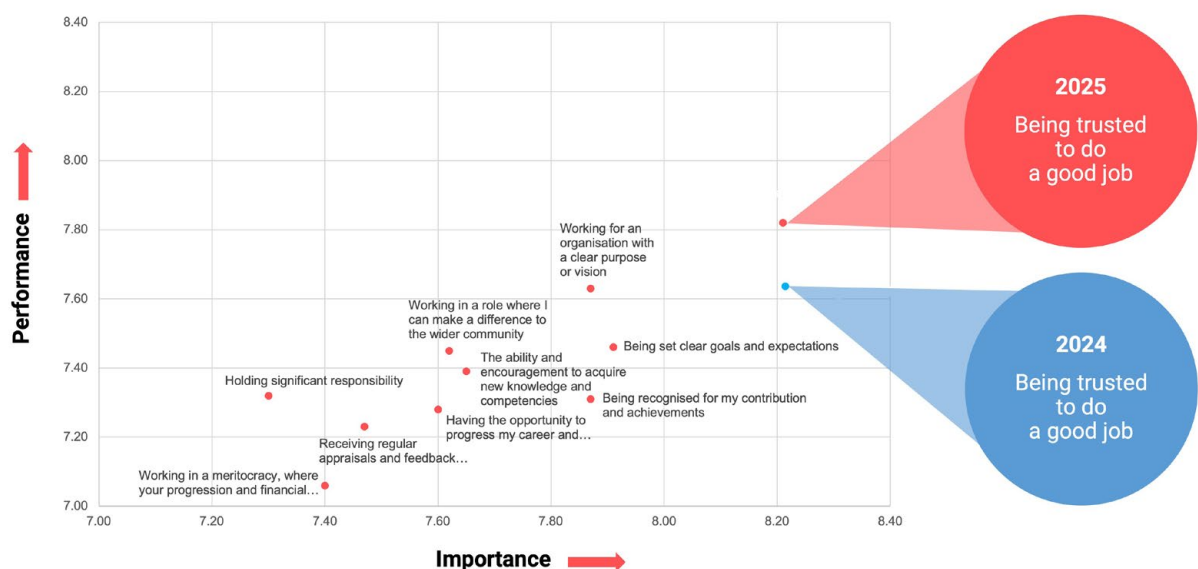
Two important opportunities exist. First, how can the organisation, differentiate the experience that they provide for their employees **by degree**. In other words, how to do the basics, what's expected by your employees, but do them much better than anybody else?

And second, there's an opportunity to think about how to differentiate from competitors by creating experiences that are **unique** to the brand. Experiences that really tie in with the purpose, the values, and are based around what's most important to employees..



Trust and respect continue to be important to employees

We may have highlighted how generic the company values of ‘trust’ and ‘respect’ are, but unsurprisingly, they are both important factors to employees, specifically the sense of autonomy and mastery people feel when they are ‘trusted to do a good job’. The Index found that this is the most important factor in driving people’s satisfaction with their job above competitive pay. Also ranked high in importance is *‘being recognised for my contribution and achievements’*, or in other words, being respected. This clearly goes beyond pay, which we know is important, and extends to a desire for regular appreciation from line managers to colleagues for work well done.



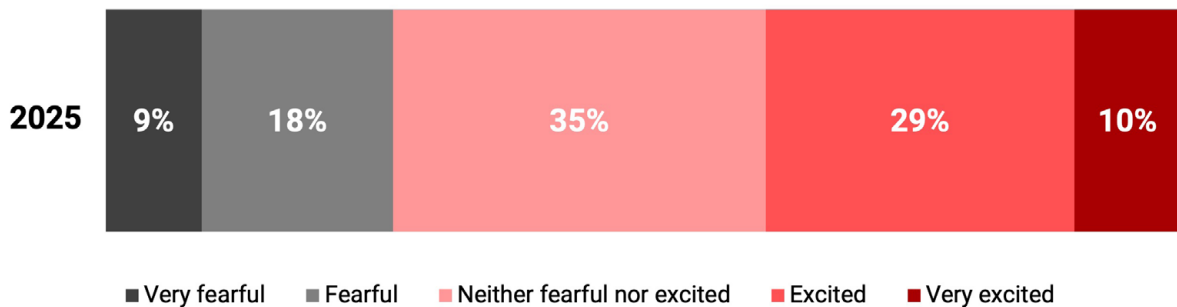
Looking closer at the factors of high importance to employees, we see other key drivers of autonomy, mastery and purpose, such as *‘having the opportunity to progress and acquire new responsibilities’*, alongside *‘the ability and encouragement to acquire new knowledge and competencies’*. Together, these put the onus on line managers to have clear development plans in place for everyone they are responsible for.

The importance of *‘being set clear goals and expectations’* reminds leaders to provide clarity on individual and team roles, responsibilities and expectations, alongside a cross-company understanding of common goals and cross-functional working to achieve them. We also see here that *‘working for an organisation with a clear purpose or vision’* is foundational to making a company a great place to work, not just a place to do work.

AI – more friend than foe

Although the risks of AI to employees (replacement and redundancy) is frequently in the news, the Index revealed overwhelmingly positive sentiment toward it. More employees (39%) are excited about the prospect of AI than are fearful about it (27%).

How do you feel about the rise in use of AI in the workplace?



Positive sentiment toward AI went even further when we asked those working for organisations currently using AI how it had impacted their jobs. Last year 39% reported their company had installed AI this year that has risen to 57%. Accordingly, the figure for those saying it had improved their job had risen from 70% to 78%. It seems clear that the more people become familiar with AI the more they see its benefits. We will explore how this response progresses in next year's Index and continue to consider how the use of AI at work can help or hinder employees' sense of autonomy, mastery and purpose.

How has the introduction of AI impacted your job?





Learnings and implications for leaders

To summarise the learnings from this year's Index, and therefore the implications for leaders, we draw these conclusions:

1. Understand what matters most to your people

Intentionally ask your people what matters most to them. *'My employer seeks to understand what matters to me as an employee'* is the number one statement that correlates to pride and advocacy. But only 52% of those that we surveyed felt that their current employer did that, so there's a gap.

Intentionally build autonomy, mastery, and purpose into the employee experience. A great salary and benefits will alleviate job dissatisfaction, but it won't drive satisfaction.

Proactively close the trust gap. Being trusted to do a great job ranks really highly in terms of importance, but only 66% of employees feel their current organisation provides that.

Don't overlook the importance of flexible working. It's here to stay and in terms of both importance and performance it increased among employees in 2026.

Encourage learning new skills and build a clear career path. It's really important, yet 40% of those we surveyed felt they didn't get that from their current employer.

Champion a purpose. Employees need to know what their personal contribution is, and need to feel recognised for their personal contribution. It's a basic need, yet only 55% of those surveyed said their current employer did this.

2. Address the Leadership Gap

Motivate people and making your organisation a great place to work. This really drives a high correlation to pride and advocacy, but currently, only just over half of those surveyed felt that their leaders in their organisation currently do this.

Do the right thing and communicate it. The quality and effectiveness of senior leaders is high in importance, but ranks in the bottom three in perceived performance among those that we surveyed.

Set clear goals, demonstrate trust, and recognise achievements. These three things drive job satisfaction scores which correlate highly with pride and advocacy.

Continually improve what it's like to work for the organisation. This really sort of drives pride and advocacy, but only, again, half of those surveyed feel that leaders in their current employer do this.

Champion delivering an exceptional customer experience. It really drives employee pride, but again, only 52% of those that we surveyed felt their current employer does this.

3. Stand up and stand out around purpose and values.

Ensure everyone in the organisation understands the company purpose and their role in delivering it. 64% of those surveyed don't think colleagues act in accordance with purpose right now, so there's clearly a gap between knowing what the purpose is and understanding what they as an individual need to do to contribute to delivering it.

Use purpose as a lens to make better decisions. This is very much aimed at leaders using that purpose as a lens, because only 65% of those that we surveyed felt that their leaders act on purpose right now.

Differentiate generic company values by fully operationalising them. Build a real culture to reflect them and live them.

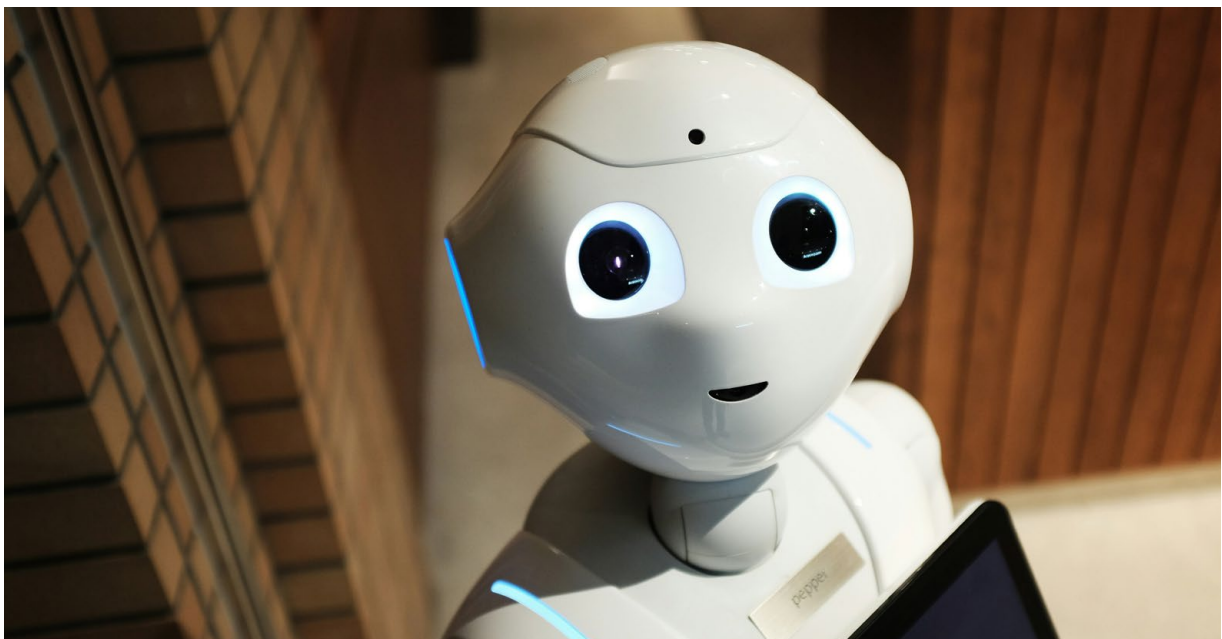
Ensure that the leaders champion those values. This drives a high correlation with pride, but there is still a gap, with only just over half of the leaders doing this.

4. Make AI your friend not foe

Lean into the benefits of AI. 78% of those we survey who are using it, commented on positive improvements to their work.

Don't wait for colleagues to 'catch up' intentionally promote how AI can 'free up' time to do more meaningful things. 61% of people we surveyed, either don't see the benefits or are fearful of AI.

Champion the 'human touch' that AI can't replace. As employees see the time saving benefits that AI brings, it's key that they see how this translates into tangible benefits and an improved culture.



And finally...

What we've seen overall from this year's results is that what turns an employee into an advocate is working in a business with leaders who are committed to purpose and values, and who deliver an outstanding customer and employee experience. These businesses are the ones their employees recommend and are proud to work for.

With a better understanding of what motivates employees and what drives employee pride, we are hopeful that next year, more than 40% of employees will recommend their employer as a good place to work. After all, when we spend an average of 84,365 hours in a lifetime at work, shouldn't our employee experience be a positive one?

About The Caffeine Partnership

The Caffeine Partnership is an award-winning strategic consultancy that stimulates business in three core areas: brand-led business strategy, customer experience and employee experience. For over 20 years Caffeine has helped leaders who have a vision they are impatient to achieve.

The Caffeine approach to creating a great employee experience involves deploying our proprietary Employee Pride survey to understand what aspects of the employee experience matter most and drive pride vs. how you currently perform against those expectations. Once this has been established, we then work with you to define the right employee value proposition and develop a consistent, differentiated, intentional and valuable employee experience.

More details on our approach can be found here: www.thisiscaffeine.com

If you'd like to know more about what matters most inside your organisation, please drop us a line: sophie.langham@thecaffeinepartnership.com

CAFFE!NE[®]
STIMULATING BUSINESS

About Savanta

Savanta is a data, market research and advisory company. We're here to help you make better decisions and accelerate your progress. Banishing the doubt, through the use of powerful data, high-impact consulting and empowering technology.

You can find out more here: www.savanta.com

Or contact: Oliver.Wright@Savanta.com

Savanta:



EMPLOYEE PRIDE INDEX

CAFFE!NE®
STIMULATING BUSINESS

In association with

Savanta 