

HR Engagement in 2024



Exploring employee engagement
in the HR profession



Research Report

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Introduction

HR Engagement in 2024

Welcome to HR Engagement in 2024

The Ten Space 'Big HR Engagement Survey' has now closed and the results are in!

Over the last few months, we've been gathering insight from hundreds of in-house HR professionals and we're going to give you a sneak-peak of our findings.

The purpose of the survey was to gauge the level of engagement within the HR profession and the industry as a whole.

We aimed to uncover the factors that drive HR professionals, understand the challenges they face and explore the opportunities that lie ahead.

How engaged are those who are often responsible for engaging others?

How we sliced and diced!

We asked a number of qualifying questions in the survey to get a feel for trends across the HR profession.

We asked

- the industry they are in
- the size of their organisation
- the type / level of role they were in
- how long they'd been in the profession
- if they had caring responsibilities or not

Throughout, we'll be sharing where there are interesting trends that have emerged throughout this report.



Victoria Bond
CEO & Founder, Ten Space



How **engaged** is the HR profession?



Is HR under-engaged?

We started with the key question...

We asked: On a scale of 0 to 10 How engaging do you find your current role?

Overall the average score for all respondents was **7.1 out of 10**.

We consider an "engaged" population to be anything over a score of 8. So this tells us that the HR profession is likely under-engaged in their roles currently.



Key insights:



Across industries, Arts, entertainment and recreation, and transport and logistics professionals gave the lowest scores to this question, indicating that those in these industries were least engaged in their roles.



The most engaged HR professionals were those working within professional services.



Those with under 100 employees in their organisation were more engaged than those with larger organisations.



Senior-level professionals were less engaged than others overall, with specialists in the profession (such as L&D), telling us they were most engaged in their roles.



There was a marked difference between the engagement of those who have caring responsibilities and those that don't. Those without caring responsibilities are more engaged than those with children or dependents to take care of outside of work.

How does HR's
engagement **compare**
to other departments?



HR vs Everyone else

How does HR's engagement compare to other departments?

We asked: How does your personal engagement compare with other functions in your organisation?



The majority of respondents, **44%**, told us that they felt they were as equally engaged as others in their business.

With HR professionals telling us that they aren't brimming with engagement, we could be seeing indications of a lack of engagement across the board, of which HR is just a part.

It was great to see that **32%** of HR professionals said that they were more engaged than others. This was especially the case in our Professional services, and Transport & Logistics answers, where over **50%** said that they felt more engaged than others in their organisation.

What did we learn?

There was a sense in the survey that engagement levels in HR may be industry-dependent. We know that challenges vary across industries and that no two organisations, or roles are the same. But there were some industries where HR professionals were more engaged in their roles compared to others, with those in professional services seemingly coming out on top in the engagement charts.



Engagement This Way

How has
engagement
changed recently?



A journey through time

How has engagement changed recently?

We asked: How has your level of engagement changed in the last 12 months to the current day?



The majority of respondents, **37%**, told us that they felt less engaged now than they did 12 months ago.

With only **28%** saying that their engagement had increased in the last 12 months.

The drop was particularly noticeable in our **manufacturing, construction** and **engineering** professionals, with **50%** of them saying their engagement had dropped in the last 12 months and charities and social enterprise where **71%** said their engagement had dropped.

Mid-level professionals and those in **specialist roles** were the most likely to say that their engagement had dropped in the last 12 months, of those we surveyed.

Over **37%** of in-house HR professionals
said their **engagement was lower**
than in the previous 12 months

The Big HR Engagement Survey | 2024



What factors are having
a **positive impact** on
engagement?

HR are motivated by their work

So what factors are having a positive impact on engagement?

We asked: What would you say has had the most positive impact on your engagement recently?

The majority of respondents told us that the thing that was bringing them the most engagement was **the type of work** that they do, followed by **their HR leader** and the **culture** of the organisation.

Career opportunities was the lowest scoring category here (we'll come back to this!).



There were some industry exceptions; **retail and hospitality** were most engaged by the recognition they received. For **charities and social enterprises**, it was all about the culture of the organisation.

What is negatively impacting HR engagement?



HR & their leaders

Of course we had to ask the opposite question!

We asked: What would you say has had the most negative impact on your engagement recently?



The most common response we got here was, the **leaders** in the organisation, with **27%** of HR professionals citing this as their top reason.

Those in **health, social care** and **education** definitely felt this, with almost **50%** saying that leaders were impacting on their engagement negatively.

This was different for the retail and hospitality industries, who said that their **benefits package** was impacting their engagement most negatively.

The **public sector** also gave us some alternative views, with the organisational culture and current career opportunities being the biggest negative impact on engagement.

Our mid-level professionals called out **current career opportunities** as their biggest negative impact. Those in specialist roles, called out the culture of the organisation most strongly.

Those with caring responsibilities appeared to be more negatively impacted by leaders in their organisations, with **33%** of professionals stating they were the biggest negative impact. Whereas those without caring responsibilities were more evenly split across the options we gave them, from leaders, the work that they do and the culture of the organisation.

What did we learn?

It is possible that here we're seeing differences in why HR professionals enter an industry and what they expect in return. Failure to get what they are expecting from the organisation could then be impacting on engagement.

Are you at risk of
losing your HR
talent?



What sectors are most at risk of losing talent?

Have you considered leaving your current organisation in the last 12 months?

Over **65%** of those we asked said that they had considered leaving in the last 12 months.

How did this stack up across industries?



Which are the industries most at risk of losing their HR talent?



85%

Charity & social enterprise



83%

Manufacturing, construction & engineering



80%

Art, entertainment & recreation



78%

Retail



67%

Public sector



57%

Professional services



55%

Health, social care & education



50%

Transport & logistics

Specialists functions pose the most risk of leaving the organisations, with HR Directors and C Suite more likely to feel locked into their organisation.

Are HR professionals thinking of leaving HR for good?



HR is here to **stay**

Are HR professionals thinking of leaving HR for good?

We asked: Have you considered leaving HR / the profession in the last 12 months? Do you see HR / People being your long-term career path?



Thankfully not! **60%** of HR professionals said that they hadn't considered leaving the profession in the last 12 months.

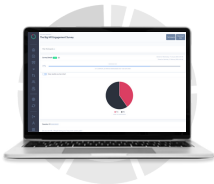
With **79%** of them telling us that they saw HR as their long term career path.



What did we learn?

We could be looking at a movement of talent around different organisations, as HR professionals seek to find a home that feels right for them.

The other alternative is that some are looking to stay in the profession, but go freelance. The UK has seen an increase in workers choosing to go freelance recently and it looks like HR are no exception.



The joy of HR

What do HR professionals like the most about working in HR?

We asked: What would you say is your biggest joy in your role currently?

Several respondents specifically called out enjoying the **culture** and **people** within their organisation. Other likes were flexibility, autonomy in their roles, small wins and progress, solving problems, and coaching and developing others.



Being able to take actions that have a positive action on individuals



The impact I have on the employees & leaders I engage with on a daily basis



Watching people develop & engage



Coaching, mentoring, development



The people I work with, such a variety of interesting individuals



The challenge of the work

What is your biggest joy in your role?

“

Focusing on my **true passion** and helping people and businesses.

”

“

Getting to help the team **develop** and building some positive relationships.

”

“

Achieving positive outcomes from tricky situations.

”

“

I currently enjoy the **respect** I receive in my role from our C-Suite. Additionally the work life balance and **flexibility** I have in where I work and how I work my contracted hours.

”

“

Specifically linked to my role I enjoy being able to **engage with staff** and find that feedback from staff that they feel **supported** by the HR department gives me greater joy.

”

“

Teaching the juniors in my team things about HR.

”

How **stable** is the HR
profession?



All about security

How stable is the profession?



We asked: How secure does your role in HR / People feel currently?

- Only 14% of those that we asked said they didn't feel secure and worried regularly about losing their job
- 50% said they occasionally worried about losing their job
- 36% said they rarely worried



The Health, Social care and Education sectors along with the public sector, seemed to offer the **greatest feeling of security** in all the sectors we explored.

We know that in general, **job security** is an important "hygiene" factor when it comes to building engagement in teams, so it's great to see that the HR profession isn't suffering in this area, as we have seen in the profession in the past.

This is one area we'd like to keep an eye on in future surveys, to see if this changes over time, with different economic factors, or whether HR as a profession is a stable career choice.

How is HR's wellbeing?



How are HR doing?

So what about wellbeing in the HR Profession? How are we doing?

We asked: How would you rate your current work/life balance?

77% of respondents rate their work-life balance as good or great.

With only a minority saying that their work-life balance was poor.



But there were some areas where the balance of work and life isn't so positive for our HR professionals. 60% of those in Arts, education and recreation said their work-life balance was poor, along with 40% of health, social work and education.

What about mental & physical wellbeing?

We asked: Have you experienced any mental health or physical health concerns as a result of your role in the last 12 months?



36% of those we asked said they'd had mental health concerns in the last 12 months.

With 20% saying they'd had mental and physical concerns in the same period.

But 41% said they hadn't had concerns about either.

The highest instances of mental health concerns were within the charity and social enterprise sector.

60% of our entry level respondents said they'd suffered from mental health concerns in the last 12 months.

There is a general downward trend, progressing up the ranks in HR, with more senior professionals reporting that they were less likely to have experienced mental health concerns in the last 12 months.

Would HR leaders
recommend **working**
in HR to others?



It's a **yes** from HR...

So after all that, would they recommend working in the HR Profession to others?

Overwhelmingly yes! **73%** said they'd recommend HR as a profession to others.



What advice would HR leaders give?

- “ **Know your worth.** Believe in the value you can bring to a business. You're not just an admin function – don't let them treat you as just that. ”
- “ **You won't fit in everywhere.** Don't be afraid to find a company that loves who you are. ”
- “ **Embrace and build strong analytical and commercial skills** | to be taken seriously by SLT. ”
- “ **Get the HR basics right** and then build strong business knowledge and become a true business partner by knowing how the company works and makes profit. Only then can you add real value to the People function. ”
- “ **Keep focused on the positive impacts** you make to people's lives even when times are difficult it's important to **recognise the impact you have made on others.** ”
- “ **If you aren't valued, leave** and go where you are valued. ”
- “ **Build your network.** There are some amazing support networks for HR who will have your back without agenda. ”
- “ **Keep in the strategic space** as much as you can to create results, demonstrate value and **reduce overwhelm and burnout!** ”
- “ **You are a business professional first** and a people specialist second. ”
- “ **Sometimes the only way to change, is to change – don't fight what you can't impact,** the business HAS to recognise the want and need to change, if they don't – you change. ”
- “ **Look after yourself** ”

We're here to support you

At Ten Space we work with our clients to amplify employee engagement, retention and performance.

We are here to enable you and your teams to deliver the future of your business.

If you've found our research report helpful and you want to know more, contact us on the details below

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enquiries@tenspace.co.uk

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