Aviation Workplace Culture Report

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THE AVIATION COLLECTIVE

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Introduction

People are everything to a successful organization. Hiring the right people and facilitating their teamwork and accomplishments is the most gratifying.

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Aviation professionals love what they do but are held back by "less than ideal" work environments. This report gives you the data and insights needed to create an engaging workplace for yourself and your team.

To build this one-of-a-kind report, we conducted a comprehensive workplace culture survey with participation from more than 350 aviation professionals from every region of the world, with respondents split among women and men, managers and employees. The trends exposed in this report will help you make your company a place where people thrive.

The report is segmented into four areas: respect, resources, reasons, and realignment. At The Aviation Collective, we refer to these as the "Four Forces That Balance Workplace Culture" (an ode to the four forces of flight).

If you'd like to learn more about how to keep these four forces in balance beyond the data and insights provided in this report, visit theaviationcollective.com/fourforces to access our free training designed to help you eliminate workplace turbulence.

Before we dive into the analysis of the data, let's first take a look at our contributors to better understand their perspectives. Through the review of their responses, we've found trends amongst different segments and provided related takeaways when interacting with these groups of individuals.

OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS

01 / Role

In an effort to provide you with an accurate picture of workplace culture in aviation, we surveyed managers and employees alike, with questions phrased based on the respective role.

The participation was almost perfectly balanced with 51% of participants being employees and 49% being managers.

49% MANAGERS **51% EMPLOYEES**

02 / Location

This survey had participants from every region of the world: Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.

Note: Participation from Australian participants wasn't significant enough to warrant analysis, so you will not see insights specific to that region.

4% AFRICA
13% ASIA
1% SOUTH AMERICA
76% NORTH AMERICA
5% EUROPE
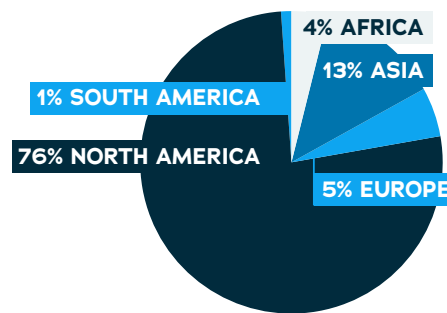
03 / Generation

This survey had participants that spanned five generations. These generations are defined as follows:
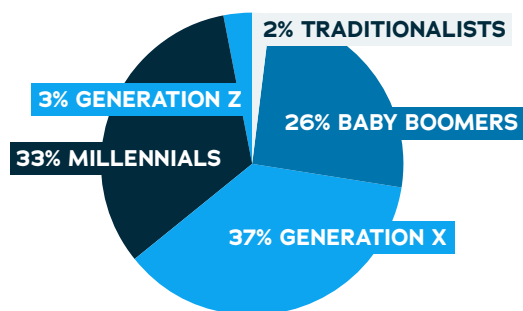
Traditionalists (Born 1945 and before)
Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964)
Generation X (Born 1965-1976)
Millennials (Born 1977-1995)
Generation Z (1996-2015)
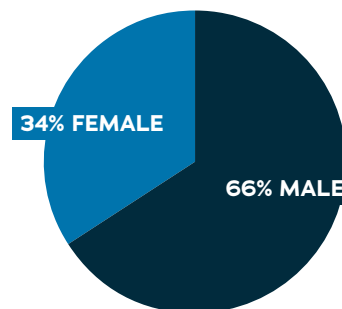
2% TRADITIONALISTS
3% GENERATION Z
26% BABY BOOMERS
33% MILLENNIALS
37% GENERATION X

04 / Gender

The survey had strong representation of men and women, more balanced than the industry.

34% FEMALE
66% MALE

Broad Insights

AREAS OF AGREEMENT

The four areas of workplace culture were addressed through a series of 18 questions. Of those topics, participants most strongly agreed with the following statements:

01

I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT MY WORK AND CLEAR ABOUT ITS PURPOSE.

02

I (OR MY DIRECT REPORTS) HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF VALUE TO THE COMPANY.

03

I (OR MY DIRECT REPORTS) HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF RESPONSIBILITIES.

This data affirms the opening statement that aviation professionals love what they do. Additionally, when it comes down to it, there is not only a passion for the work but a recognition of value and responsibilities, workplace culture aside.

Broad Insights

AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT

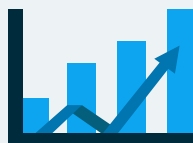On the other hand, participants most strongly disagreed with the following:

01

THERE IS ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

02

I (OR MY DIRECT REPORTS) AM PAID ABOVE INDUSTRY NORMS.

03

I (OR MY DIRECT REPORTS) HAVE A CLEAR PATH FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT.

There is opportunity here for companies to change the standard of the aviation industry without significant cost by, at a minimum, providing a clear path for career advancement to their employees.

Companies can stand out by providing and encouraging participation in professional development opportunities, whether through a stipend or corporate engagement, and by paying employees above industry norms

Broad Insights
GAPS & OPPORTUNITIES

In comparing the submissions of managers and employees, there are three areas with a 20% or greater gap in response to the statement, with managers more strongly agreeing than employees.

01

MANAGERS SAW GROWTH POTENTIAL IN THEIR DIRECT REPORTS BUT EMPLOYEES REPORTED NOT BEING ABLE TO IDENTIFY THAT AS CLEARLY.

When it comes to growth potential, managers have an opportunity to lay out a clear advancement path which will in turn help the employees see their potential for growth at the company.

02

MANAGERS REPORTED MENTORING EMPLOYEES INFORMALLY OR FORMALLY BUT EMPLOYEES DIDN'T REPORT BEING MENTORED BY SOMEONE AT WORK OR IN THE INDUSTRY TO THE SAME DEGREE.

When it comes to mentorship, we anticipate employees not recognizing informal membership in the same way as managers. If a manager is engaging an employee in an informal membership, we recommend they develop a clear structure around the communication cadence and intentionality of development to ensure employees are recognizing the opportunity for development.

Broad Insights

GAPS & OPPORTUNITIES

In comparing the submissions of managers and employees, there are three areas with a 20% or greater gap in response to the statement, with managers more strongly agreeing than employees (continued).

03

MANAGERS SAY THEIR TEAM CARES ABOUT EACH OTHER AND IS INVESTED IN OTHER PEOPLE'S SUCCESS BUT EMPLOYEES REPORTED NOT AGREEING WITH THAT AS STRONGLY.

Being invested in success ties growth potential and mentorship together. By investing in employees' growth in these ways, managers have an opportunity to demonstrate their care of and investment in the success of their team. This is often a communication gap more than a real one.
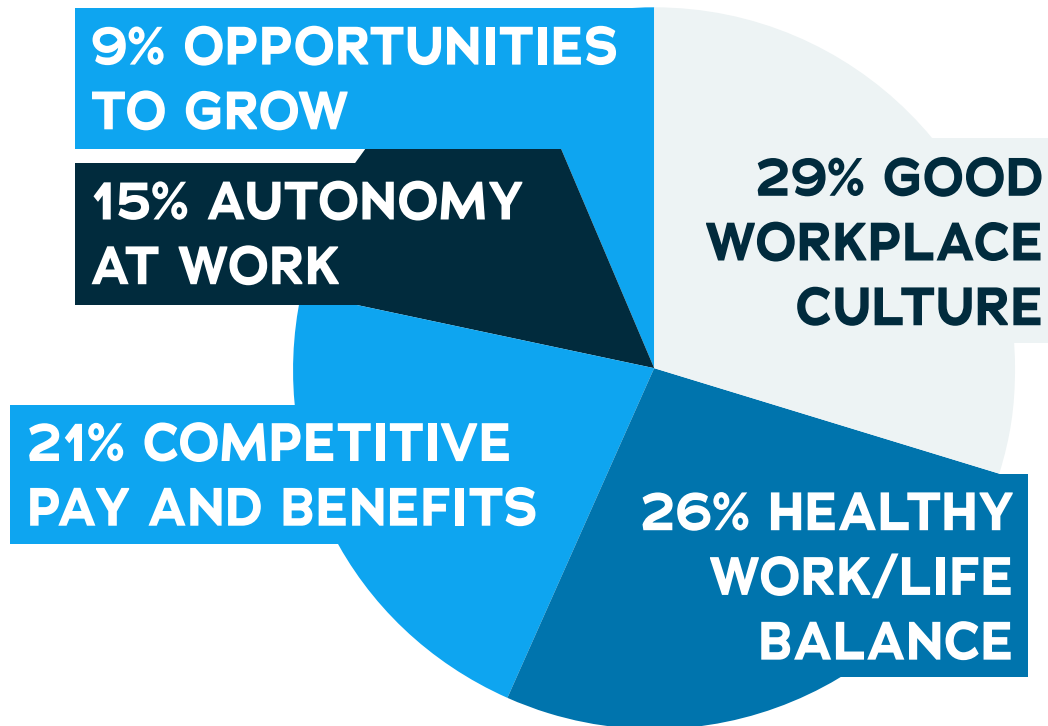
My experience has shown that being a compassionate leader can be the key to success, both for yourself and for your team. There is nothing more important than letting your team members know that you truly care about them being successful and achieving their goals.

Jill Meyers
Senior Manager
National Radio Astronomy Observatory

Employee Priorities

9% OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW

15% AUTONOMY AT WORK

29% GOOD WORKPLACE CULTURE

21% COMPETITIVE PAY AND BENEFITS

26% HEALTHY WORK/LIFE BALANCE

When asked about priorities in a work environment, the most important was good workplace culture, followed by healthy work/life balance, competitive pay and benefits, autonomy at work, and opportunities to grow.

There were some segments that had another priority:

- **Traditionalists**, who preferred autonomy at work and a healthy work/life balance
- **Africans**, who preferred a healthy work/life balance
- **Asians**, who preferred autonomy at work
- **South Americans**, who preferred opportunities to grow

Segmented Insights
GEOGRAPHICAL

The four areas of workplace culture were addressed through a series of 18 questions. Of those topics, participants most strongly agreed with the statements denoted by a (+) and most strongly disagreed with the statements denoted by a (-). Their priority in a workplace is denoted by (*).

Africans

+ Having a diverse leadership team
- Receiving competitive benefits
* Healthy work/life balance

Asians

+ Having a diverse leadership team
- Being paid above industry norms
* Autonomy at work

Europeans

+ Being passionate about their work
- Receiving competitive benefits
* Good workplace culture

North Americans

+ Being passionate about their work
- Having a clear advancement path
* Good workplace culture

South Americans

+ Having clearly defined values
- Receiving competitive benefits
* Opportunities to grow

Segmented Insights

GENDER-RELATED

The four areas of workplace culture were addressed through a series of 18 questions. Of those topics, participants most strongly agreed with the statements denoted by a (+) and most strongly disagreed with the statements denoted by a (-). Their priority in a workplace is denoted by (*).

Men

+ Being passionate about their work
- Having a clear advancement path
* Good workplace culture

Women

+ Being passionate about their work
- Having a clear advancement path
* Good workplace culture

Segmented Insights

GENERATIONAL

The four areas of workplace culture were addressed through a series of 18 questions. Of those topics, participants most strongly agreed with the statements denoted by a (+) and most strongly disagreed with the statements denoted by a (-). Their priority in a workplace is denoted by (*).
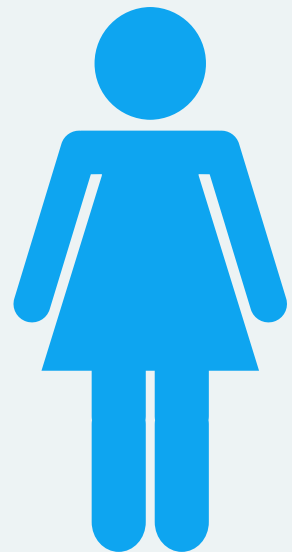
Traditionalists

+ Are passionate about their work
- Believe poor performance is addressed at work
* Autonomy at work

Baby Boomers

+ Are passionate about their work
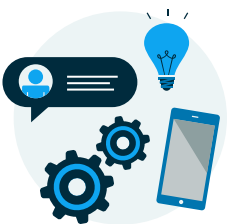- Engage as a mentor or mentee
* Opportunities to grow

Generation X'ers

+ Are passionate about their work
- Have a clear advancement path
* Good workplace culture

Millennials

+ Are passionate about their work
- Are paid above industry norms
* Good workplace culture

Generation Z'ers

+ Have a clear understanding of their value
- Receive competitive benefits
* Good workplace culture

INSIGHTS: RESPECT

Respect is defined as due regard for the feelings, wishes, rights or traditions of others. That may mean co-workers, leaders, customers. Respect also extends to the policies or processes at a company.

Six of the 18 questions asked in our workplace culture survey addressed respect. The most notable insights are as follows:

36.4% of employees strongly agree that the company where they work has clearly defined values.

South American participants unanimously strongly agreed to this point, rating it 5/5. There was a 50% gap between European employees and managers.

42.6% of employees strongly agree they are comfortable sharing feedback with their supervisor.

Africans, Europeans, and Traditionalists showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers felt they received more feedback than employees felt they were empowered to give.

26.2% of employees strongly agree their leadership team actively seeks input and is open to new ideas.

Europeans, Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X'ers showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers felt leadership was more receptive to feedback than employees felt.

22.1% of employees strongly agree they have a clear path for advancement at their current job.

Europeans showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers believed they expressed a clear career path, but employees did not express the same clarity.

22.6% of employees strongly agree there is growth potential with their current employer.

Every segment with the exception of Traditionalists showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers agreed aware of employee growth potential, but the employees did not.

30.3% of employees strongly agree their pay is based on a fixed set of criteria, not past pay history.

Europeans and Traditionalists showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; some employees felt their compensation reflected past pay history.

INSIGHTS: RESOURCES

Forward momentum doesn't occur without a careful combination of resources–and a spark to get it going.

Six of the 18 questions asked in our workplace culture survey addressed resources. The most notable insights are as follows:

36.9% of employees strongly agree their leadership team is diverse.

Europeans and Traditionalists showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers believed their leadership teams to be more diverse than did their employees.

22.1% of employees strongly agree they are mentored at work or in the industry.

Africans, Europeans, North Americans, Men, Baby Boomers, Generation X'ers, and Millennials showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers responded that they were engaging in mentorship but employees responded they were not.

23.6% of employees strongly agree they are encouraged to take professional development opportunities.

Europeans showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers agreed they offered and encouraged professional development opportunities but employees did not agree to the same level.

21.0% of employees strongly agree they are paid at or above industry norms.

Africans and Europeans showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers responded that they provided above industry norm compensation but employees did not respond in the same way.

25.1% of employees strongly agree their company offers competitive benefits.

Europeans and Traditionalists showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers responded they provided competitive benefits but employees did not respond in the same way.

55.9% of employees strongly agree they are passionate about their work and feel it has purpose.

This was consistently ranked highest across every segment. This is the one point where managers and employees had the greatest agreement on reality.

INSIGHTS: REASONS

Our organizations are unlikely to create a lasting impact without a mission that aligns customers, leaders and employees. Reasons help us land at our destination instead of being swept away by change.

Three of the 18 questions asked in our workplace culture survey addressed reasons. The most notable insights are as follows:

01

46.7% of employees strongly agree they have a clear understanding of their job's value to the company.

Europeans showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers recognized the value of their employees at a greater level than the employees.

02

43.1% of employees strongly agree they have a clear picture of what success looks like for their job.

Europeans and Generation X'ers showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers know the responsibilities of their employees more than the employees knew their responsibilities..

03

35.9% of employees strongly agree they have ownership or autonomy in their job.

There were not variations between managers and employees in any segment above 20%.

INSIGHTS: REALIGNMENT

Realignment in organizations looks like regular checkpoints, awareness, accountability and adjustments. With these in place, course corrections can help avoid disaster.

Three of the 18 questions asked in our workplace culture survey addressed realignment. The most notable insights are as follows:
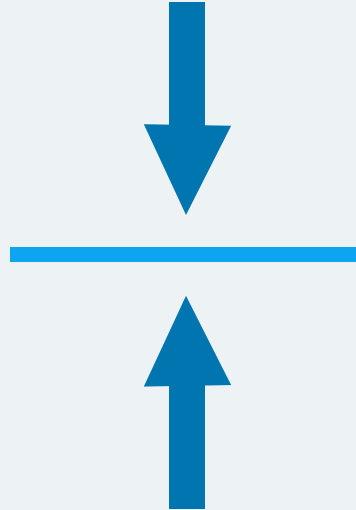
01

21.0% of employees strongly agree their company values are practiced by all.

Europeans and Traditionalists showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers believed values were practiced more than employees did.

02

15.9% of employees strongly agree that poor performance is addressed consistently and fairly in their company.

Africans, Women, Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X'ers and Millennials showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers felt poor performance was addressed more often than employees.

03

22.6% of employees strongly agree their leadership team cares about them personally and is invested in their success.

Europeans, North Americans, Women, Baby Boomers, Generation X'ers and Millennials showed a gap of ≥20% amongst employees and managers; managers responded that they were more invested in their employees success than the employees felt in return.

Concluding Thoughts

The longevity of aviation is at stake if we don't prioritize workplace culture. The people of aviation want to make a difference, and if we empower them to do so, they will thrive and so will our companies.

When you create a strong culture, you will experience minimal politics and confusion, low turnover rates, high engagement and productivity, and consistently good results. Who doesn't want that?

Go for the low hanging fruit based on the areas of this report that speak to your team. Additionally, if you'd like to learn more about how to keep the four forces of workplace culture in balance beyond the data and insights provided in this report, visit **theaviationcollective.com/fourforces** to access our free training designed to help you eliminate workplace turbulence.

GET BETTER COMPANY CULTURE

I've learned that the act of leadership often comes from those not officially "in charge" by having the courage to speak up. In the cockpit of an airplane, even though the captain is the pilot in command, it's vital that the first officer remembers that they are CO-pilots. It can be hard to speak up and question authority, but nothing is more important and professional than making sure there is a positive safety culture. Never question yourself about being a leader of your own safety and those around you, even though you're not the person in charge. You're never too low on the rungs of safety.

Erika Armstrong

Pilot / VP of Business Development
Advanced Aircrew Academy