15Five Study Shows Employees Want Open Communication with Bosses - But Few Get It

New research shows vast majority of US employees prefer to join companies that value open communication over those that offer top perks. Study also shows boomer managers and millennial employees clash over communication styles at work.

San Francisco, CA (PRWEB) March 10, 2015 -- 15Five, provider of the leading web-based team feedback and alignment platform, today unveiled new data that points to pervasive communication challenges at the office. The vast majority of full-time employees want more honesty and transparency at work, but only 15% of are very satisfied with the quality of workplace communication.

Based on a survey of over 1,000 full-time employees across the US, 81% of employees would rather join a company that values “open communication” than one that offers great perks such as top health plans, free food, and gym memberships. Unfortunately, most employees don’t work in such companies.

-Only 15% of employees are “very satisfied” with the quality of communication within their companies.
-Only 15% of employees believe their managers “highly value” their feedback.
-58% of employees said managers value their feedback only moderately, slightly, or not at all.
-62% of employees share their professional goals with managers just a few times a year or less.

In particular, younger employees feel “unheard”. When asked why they don’t share feedback with bosses, 29% of millennials said managers are “too busy to listen”, while 28% said their managers “don’t ask us to share these things”. Meanwhile, 17% of millennials feel their “feedback isn’t taken seriously.”

What would improve communication at work? Technology could help. About 70% of employees said they’d be more likely to share information with managers if they could enter comments into a web-based feedback platform - with millennials most likely to use such platforms and boomers least likely. Some 60% of respondents said such a platform would make it easier to communicate with team members of a different generation.

Companies could also improve communication if they addressed generational differences. When asked if different generations have varying communication styles, 40% said boomers and Gen-Xers “tend to be more guarded and less open”, while 38% said millennials are “more honest but sometimes too brash/opinionated.” (Millennials themselves were even more likely to agree with that statement.)

Several older respondents said they find it difficult to communicate with younger colleagues who prefer email or text instead of talking face-to-face. Meanwhile, many millennials said the opposite; older bosses sometimes struggle to adapt to new communication technologies like text and chat, making it difficult to stay in touch.
Gen-Xers, on the other hand, expressed the most dissatisfaction with communication at work.

“Clearly, companies have a lot of work to do to foster open dialogue,” said David Hassell, CEO of 15Five. “If teams aren’t communicating with honesty, clarity, and respect, then their companies won’t thrive; finding ways to bridge generational divides, encourage honest feedback, and improve transparency will go a long way to boosting productivity, morale, and profits.”
About 15Five

15Five provides web-based communication software that elevates the performance of managers, employees, and entire organizations by initiating weekly conversations that quickly uncover achievements, challenges, and risks. 15Five is driven by the belief that the best companies inspire greatness in their people. Over 1,000 companies worldwide use 15Five to allow employees to self-reflect on successes and challenges, stay focused on key objectives, and get regular feedback from managers who support them in reaching their potential. Founded in 2011 by David Hassell, 15Five is based in San Francisco and is backed by leading investors including Matrix Partners and Point Nine Capital.
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