

Wellbeing@Work

A National Report into the way UK Workers & Bosses Regard their Workplace

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Commissioned by Prowse & Company Limited
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1. Introduction

This report explores the concept of Wellbeing@Work, a term which encompasses concepts of psychological health, motivation and productivity.

A survey was used to explore the extent to which the eight variables described below affected both employees and employers in the UK.

The field work was carried out by DLC Research, an independent, market research consultancy, via random telephone calls to 800 adults (18 - 55+) half of whom were male and half female.

- Half (50%) of those surveyed were in the general workforce.
- A quarter (25%) were in middle management. About a third (29%) in this group were aged 55 or older.
- A further quarter (25%) were owners or directors of the company. Four out of ten (40%) in this group were aged 55 or over with less than one in ten (6%) being under 25.
- The distribution of workers, managers and owners (i.e. 50% - 25% - 25%) remained consistent across all five regions.

2. Variables Used in the Survey

Variable One: Surroundings.

This relates to how light, bright and cheerful those responding to the survey considered their own workplace to be. A significant body of research has shown that the physical conditions in which someone works has a significant effect on both their mental and physical wellbeing (cf. Balling, J. D. & F., J.H. 1982; Borysenko, M. & J. Borysenko. 1982; Burton, I. 1990; Cartwright, F. F. 1977; Cohen, S. & S., S 1978; Donnerstein, E., & Wilson, D.W. 1976; Fisher, J. D., Bell, P. A. & Baum, A. 1982)

Variable Two – Co-Workers

By this is meant a measure of how well, or poorly, everyone works together as a team, the extent to which they offer one another emotional and practical support. (cf. Willcox, D. 1994; Arnstein, S. 1969; Lewis, D. 2005).

Variable Three – Workload

While occasional bursts of frantic activity in which employees are obliged to work overtime typify many companies, when the pressure to perform is both high and unrelenting the detrimental effect on workplace wellbeing can be significant (Lewis, D. 2005).

Variable Four – Management Style

From an employee's viewpoint, working for someone skilled as a facilitator, who offers constructive criticism more often than destructive criticism while noticing and complimenting employees for their efforts greatly enhances wellbeing.

At the other extreme, a boss who tends to bully, only provide destructive comments and is generally viewed as moody, irritable and difficult to get along with, will quickly and severely undermine the wellbeing of his or her workers.

From the *employers* point-of-view a workforce which is flexible, motivated and self-starting significantly enhances his or her own wellbeing. By contrast, employers who struggle to complete orders and meet deadlines when the workforce is disruptive, poorly motivated and deliberately obstructive will face high levels of stress and reduced feelings of wellbeing. (Borysenko, M. & Borysenko, J. 1982; Lewis, D. 2005)

Variable Five – Deadlines

Research has shown that most people enjoy a workplace which is sufficiently busy to be stimulating and presents them with deadlines which while challenging, are also realistic and achievable. What causes wellbeing to plunge are workplaces where the targets simply cannot be met no matter how hard the workforce strives to do so. This quickly creates 'learned helplessness' in which workers – and frequently managers alike – rapidly become disillusioned and disinterested (Garber, 1980; Zimmerman, M. A. 1990; Abramson, L. Y., Seligman, M.E. P., & Teasdale, J.D. 1978; Alloy, L. B. 1982).

Variable Six – Recognition and Reward

This can range from a simple word of praise for a job well-done, or congratulations for an exceptional effort through to bonuses or tangible rewards when an individual or a team excels itself.

Such recognition, when regular, sincere and justified, can spell the difference between a workplace with a high level of Wellbeing and one where the workforce feels neglected and taken for granted. (Lewis, D. 2005; Alloy, L. B. 1982; Arnstein, S. 1969; LeDoux, J. E. 1986).

Variable Seven – Authority

By this is meant the extent to which individuals are able to exert control over their own patterns of work. The greater their authority and associated autonomy, the higher the levels of Wellbeing. Stress is most prevalent in workplaces where highly skilled, educated and talented workers are given little or no autonomy and whose views are disregarded or dismissed when they suggest changes which would improve productivity (Willcox, D. 1994; Zajonc, R. B. 1980; Zimmerman, M. A. & R., J. 1988; Lewis. D. 2005).

Variable Eight – Conflict Stress

This arises whenever someone is compelled, for whatever reason, to take an action which conflicts with their beliefs or basic value system. Depending on the extent to which this occurs the consequences can vary from mild discomfort to the kind of serious stress which causes sleepless nights and undermines self-confidence by creating self-loathing. (Burton, I. 1990, Cohen, S. & S., S. 1978).

3 Key Findings - Analysed by Region, Age & Sex.

3.1 Variable One – Surroundings *(This question was asked of all respondents).*

1. Which of the following best describes your workplace?

- (a) Little or no natural light, rather gloomy and depressing especially in winter.
- (b) Mixture of daylight and natural light, reasonably cheerful place to work. (c) Several windows, adequate daylight, views across an urban scene.
- (d) Large windows, daylight, cheery, bright with views which include urban green space, countryside and/or seascapes.

- Four out of ten (42%) described their surroundings as being reasonably cheerful places lit by a mixture of daylight and natural light.
- The East of England had the highest percentage (48%) of those describing their workplaces in this way compared with 46% in the Midlands and around 40% in the other three regions. (North 39%; SE 40%; SW 40%)
- A quarter (26%) were far more positive about their workplace, describing large windows letting in plenty of daylight making the premises seem bright and cheerful, while offering views over either urban green spaces, the countryside and/or seaside.
- Regionally, the South East of England had the highest proportion (30%) of workers describing their workplace in this way, followed by the North (28%); the South West 27%; the East of England (26%) and the Midlands (21%)
- One in five (21%) said their workplace had several windows providing adequate daylight but offering views across an entirely urban scene.
- Regionally the highest proportion of workers who described their workplace in this way came from the North (26%), followed by the Midlands (24%) with one in five (19%) from the South East, South West and East of England doing so.
- One in ten (10%) was negative about the surroundings in which they are obliged to spend their working life, describing it as offering little or no natural light which made the place gloomy and depressing, especially during the winter months.
- South West England had the smallest percentage of employees condemned to work in such surroundings (4%) compared to 11% in the South East; 9% in the Midlands; 8% in the East of England and 6% in the North.

3.2 Variable Two – Co-Workers (*This question was put to general workforce / middle management only*).

2. Which of the following best describes your fellow workers?

- (a) Highly motivated, friendly and supportive. Best bunch of people I have ever worked with.
- (b) Reasonable team spirit, some friendly and helpful, not a bad bunch.
- (c) Some highly competitive and only out for Number One.
- (d) Little or no team spirit, co-operation or mutual support. Highly competitive environment in which to work.

- Half (50%) described their fellow workers as 'highly motivated, friendly and supportive' and said that they were 'the best bunch of people I have ever worked with'.
- Younger employees and managers (18-24) were the *most* likely (57%) to describe their fellow workers in this way while those aged forty and older were *least* likely (46%) to do so.
- This opinion was also somewhat more likely to be expressed by female rather than male employees (53% vs. 47%).
- Regionally, six out of ten (60%) Northerners felt this way about their fellow workers followed by those in the South East (54%); the Midlands (50%); the South West (46%) and the East of England (41%).
- Four out of ten (42%) said they were 'not a bad bunch on the whole' with a 'reasonable team spirit and some friendly and helpful individuals.
- Just over half of workers in the East of England (52%) felt this way, followed by almost half (47%) in the South West and four out of ten in the Midlands (41%). In the North & South East, by contrast, the proportion declined to around a third (37% & 33% respectively).
- Less than one in twenty (4%) were less positive saying that many of their colleagues or subordinates were 'highly competitive' and poor team players who were 'only out for Number One'.
- South West England had the lowest proportion (2%) of employees and managers who regarded their fellow workers in this highly unflattering way followed by the Midlands (3%) while the North and South East had the highest (4%).
- A slightly smaller proportion (3%) said there was 'little or no team spirit, co-operation or mutual support' in their organisation and that the

atmosphere was characterised by a damagingly high level of distrust and rivalry.

- The South West and North of England did equally well with only two in a hundred (2%) describing their colleagues in this negative manner.
- The highest proportion to do so came from the South East (4%) followed by the East and Midlands (3%).

3.2 Variable Two – Co-Workers *(This question was put to owners/directors only).*

2. Which of the following best describes your employees?

- (a) Highly motivated, friendly and supportive. Best bunch of people I have ever employed.
- (b) Reasonable team spirit, some friendly and helpful others less co-operative. (c) Many highly competitive and looking out only for Number One.
- (d) Little or no team spirit or co-operation or loyalty.

- Just over a half (54%) described their workers as 'highly motivated, friendly and supportive' saying they were the 'best bunch of people I have ever employed'.
- This was especially likely among owners and directors aged 55 and above (62%) and least likely among those aged between 25 and 34 (43%).
- It was also significantly more likely to be said by female than male owners and directors (61% vs. 48%).
- Regionally, owners and directors in South West England were most likely to describe their workforce in this way (57%) closely followed by those in the Midlands (56%) the South East (55%), East (54%) and North (52%).
- Around one in three (29%) described them as possessing 'reasonable team spirit' and said that while some were 'friendly and helpful' others proved much less co-operative.'
- Regionally, this response was most likely to come from owners and directors in the South West (38%) or North (38%), followed behind by those in the East of England (28%) and the Midlands (27%).
- Those from the South East were least likely (17%) to express such an opinion.
- Less than one in twenty (4%) complained that many of their employees were 'highly competitive' and 'only looking out for Number One.'

- Regionally, the highest proportion making such a claim came from the South East (33%) and the East of England (22%) and the Midlands (22%). The lowest proportion were found in the North and West of England (11%).
- A similar proportion (3%) admitted that their workforce showed 'little or no team spirit, co-operation or loyalty.'
- These negative comments were entirely made by male owners and managers.
- The South East and Midlands had the highest proportion (33%) of owners and directors making this claim.

3.3 Variable Three – Workload (*This question was put to both general workforce / middle management and owners/directors*).

3. Which of the following best describes your daily workload?

- (a) Constantly under pressure to achieve impossible targets.
- (b) Too little to keep me occupied, frequently bored.
- (c) Occasionally excessive but generally achievable within the time available.
- (d) High levels much of the time but achievable through good teamwork and organisation.
- (e) Heavy but enjoyable workload makes most days speed by.

- Four out of ten (41%) described their typical workload as 'occasionally excessive but generally achievable within the time available.'
- Such a view of the workload was *least* likely to be voiced (29%) by the under twenty-fives.
- Regionally, South West England had the highest proportion (22%) of workers making this claim, followed closely by those in the North and Midlands (21% each) then by the East of England (19%) and the South East (16%).
- Around a quarter (26%) claimed it was 'heavy but enjoyable' and ensured that most days 'sped by.'
- Workers in the South East (23%), East (21%) and South West (20%) were most likely to describe their workload in this way, followed by those in the North (19%) and Midlands (17%).

- About one in five (18%) reported high levels of work much of the time but also said they managed thanks to effective teamwork and good organisation.
- The North of England had the highest proportions of workers (24%) reporting this level of workload followed by those in the South East (21%) with the remaining regions showing South West (19%); East (18%) and Midlands (19%).
- Just over one in ten (11%) complained of being under constant pressure to achieve impossible targets.
- Regionally, such an opinion was *least* likely to be held by employees in the South West of England and the North (16% each) and most likely to be given by those in the South East (24%), the East (22%) and the Midlands (22%).
- One in twenty (5%) said there was too little to keep them occupied with the result that they frequently felt bored.
- The lowest proportion voicing such a complaint came from the North and South West of England (10% & 16%) respectively; followed by the Midlands (20%) the East (26%) and the South East (28%).

3.4 Variable Four – Management Style (*This question was put to general workforce/ middle management only*).

4. Which of the following best describes your immediate boss.

- (a) An excellent facilitator and organiser who lets me get on with what I do best.
- (b) Usually fair but occasionally makes unreasonable demands.
- (c) Unpredictable moods, tense working conditions.
- (d) Extremely demanding & critical, causes me great stress.

- Six out of ten (60%) employees described their boss as 'an excellent facilitator and organiser who lets me get on with what I do best'.
- This opinion was *most* likely to be expressed by workers aged 55 and over (67%) and least likely by those aged 45-54 (54%).
- They were also more likely to be women than men (64% vs. 57%).
- Regionally, the highest proportion of workers holding the boss in such regard were found in the South East (22%) although none of the other regions was far behind at around 20% each.

- Around a third (30%) described their boss as 'usually fair' but prone to make occasionally 'unreasonable demands.'
- Here, it was the 45-54 age group who were *most* likely (34%) to hold this view while the over 55's were *least* likely (25%) to do so.
- A quarter of workers in the North (25%) and around one in five of those from the Midlands, the East and the South West of England (21%) described their boss in this way. The lowest proportion (15%) are from the South East.
- Less than one in ten (7%) described their boss as having 'unpredictable moods' which led to 'tense working conditions.'
- The highest proportion of these moody bosses are from the South East (27%) and the lowest from the East of England (10%) with the other regions coming in at around one in five (18%).
- Only three in a hundred (3%) described their boss as 'extremely demanding & critical' and a cause of 'great stress'.
- The East of England and the Midlands were the regions with the highest proportion (50% & 19%) of employees who described their employer in this highly unflattering way.

3.4 Variable Four – Management Style Response of Workforce. (*This question was put to owners/ directors only*).

4. Which of the following best describes your management style?

- (a) Organise and facilitate while allowing people to work at their own pace.
- (b) Fair but firm, prepared to take tough decisions when needed.
- (c) Keep people alert by not being too predictable.
- (d) Demand a high performance from all - no patience with shirkers or idlers.

- Slightly more than four out of ten (44%) employers described their own management style as 'fair but firm' and said they were perfectly prepared to take tough decisions when required, even if this made them unpopular.
- These were most likely (47%) to be aged 55 or over and least likely to be aged under 35 (39%).
- They were also more likely to be women than men (48% vs. 39%).
- The South West had the highest proportion of bosses who use this management style (28%) followed at some distance by those from the

Midlands (21%), the South East (19%) the North (16%) and the East of England (15%).

- Around one in three (28%) claimed that their approach was to 'organise and facilitate' while allowing employees to 'work at their own pace'.
- Those aged between 45 and 54 were most likely (36%) to favour this approach.
- Regionally, this approach best characterised employers in the South West (26%); the South East and East of England (26%) and was least likely to be adopted by bosses in the North (13%).
- About one in ten (9%) reported keeping their staff constantly alert by 'not being too predictable.'
- These 'hard to handle' bosses were mainly from the North (30%) and South East (25%) and were least likely to be encountered in the South West, the Midlands or the East of England (15% in each case).
- The same proportion (9%) of bosses demanded a high performance from all their employees and admitted having 'no patience with shirkers or idlers'.
- This type of leadership is apparently more prevalent in the East of England (30%) and the Midlands (25%). In the South West however, there is only a one in twenty chance of working for such an employer.
- Regionally, this approach best characterised employers in the South West (26%); the South East and East of England (26%) and was least likely to be adopted by bosses in the North (13%)

3.5 Variable Five – Deadlines *(This question was put to general workforce / middle management only).*

5. Which of the following best describes your deadlines?

- (a) Relentless pressure leads to corner cutting & risk taking.
- (b) Tough but usually possible to achieve
- (c) Occasional deadlines interspersed with slower paced work enabling tasks to be paced.
- (d) Toughest deadlines usually easy to meet due to efficient planning and team-work.

- One third (33%) of the workforce described their targets as 'tough but usually possible to achieve'.
- These workers were most likely (47%) to be aged between 25 and 34 and least likely (27%) to be under twenty-five.
- Regionally, the highest proportion in this group came from the Midlands (25%) followed by those in the South East (23%) and South West (19%), the North (18%) and the East of England (15%)
- A further third (33%) reported that the toughest of deadlines was usually easy to meet thanks to efficient planning and good teamwork.
- Those aged 18-24 were the most likely (42%) to make this statement while workers aged 55 and over were least likely (22%) to do so.
- Three out of ten (29%) said that because occasional deadlines were interspersed with a slower pace of work it enabled tasks to be paced.
- Workers in the South West and the East of England formed the highest proportion of this group (25% in each case) followed by those in the Midlands (20%), the South East (16%) and the North (14%).
- Just under one in twenty (4%) complained that relentless pressure led to 'corner cutting & risk taking'.
- This complaint was most likely to be made by workers aged between 35 and 44.
- They were most likely to be found in the South East (38%) the North (29%) of East of England (14%) and least likely to come from either the South West or Midlands (10% in each case).

3.5 Variable Five – Deadlines *(This question was put to owners/ directors only)*

5. Which of the following best describes the way you deal with deadlines?

- (a) Forced to cut the occasional corners to meet tight deadlines.
- (b) Keep up the pressure and help everyone focus on task at hand.
- (c) Try and pace employees by varying the pressure.
- (d) We all relish the challenge of tight deadlines.

- Three out of ten (31%) said they made sure to 'keep up the pressure' in order to help employees 'focus on the task at hand.'
- Those aged 35-44 were the most likely (38%) to adopt this approach while those aged 55 or over were least likely (27%) to do so.
- Regionally, this approach was most likely to be adopted by those in the South East (26%) and the South West (21%), followed closely by owner/directors in the Midlands (20%) and North (19%).
- A slightly smaller proportion (28%) insisted that they and all of the workforce 'relished the challenge of tight deadlines.'
- Those aged 25-34 were the most likely (36%) to make this claim while those aged 45-54 were least likely (25%) to do so.
- Owners and directors in either the East of England (29%) or Midlands (27%) were most likely to use this tactic, followed by those in the North (19%). The South East and South West England held the lowest proportion (13%) using this approach.
- Around one in five (22%) reported that their favoured approach was to 'try and pace employees by varying the pressure.' This technique was most used by owners and directors in the 35 to 44 age range (27%) and least adopted by 25 to 34 year olds (11%). It was also used by a higher proportion of female than male (26% vs. 19%) owners and directors.
- Employers in South West England were most likely (36%) to adopt this approach followed by owners and directors in the East of England (22%).
- One in ten (10%) admitted they were sometimes 'forced to cut the occasional corner to meet tight deadlines'. Such an admission was most likely to be made by owners and directors aged between 45 & 54 (13%) and least likely (5%) from those aged 35 to 44.
- The highest proportion confessing to this came from the South East (32%) and the North (27%). Least likely to take such measures were those from the South West (9%) with owners and directors from the East of England (18%) and Midlands (14%) in the middle of the range.

3.7 Variable Six - Recognition (*This question was put to general workforce/middle management only*)

6 Which of the following best describes the way an extra effort on your part is received?

- (a) Always recognised and rewarded, criticism usually constructive not destructive.
- (b) Not always recognised and rewarded. Occasional unfair and unreasonable criticism.
- (c) Far more blame than praise, hard work seldom recognised or rewarded.
- (d) Constantly found fault with, rarely praised for doing a good job.

- Half (50%) of those questioned said that a special effort on their part was always recognised and rewarded by their bosses and that when criticisms were made these were far more often constructive than destructive.
- Women are more likely than men (55% vs. 46%) to describe this outcome.
- Workers in the Midlands, North and East of England were most likely (21% in all three regions) to make this claim followed closely by those in the South East and South West (19% & 17%) respectively.
- Around four out of ten (39%), however, complained that their efforts were not always recognised or rewarded and that criticism was occasionally unfair and unreasonable.
- This complaint was most likely to be made by employees aged 18 to 24 (43%) and least likely (33%) to come from the 55 plus age group.
- Regionally, it was most likely to be made by workers in the North and South West (22%), followed by those in the South East (20%), the Midlands and the East of England (18% in both cases).
- About one in twenty (6%) complained that blame was far more common in their company than was praise and that hard work seldom went either recognised or rewarded.
- Such complaints were most likely to be found among workers in the South East (24%) and Midlands (21%) and least likely to come from those in the North (8%).
- Only one in fifty (2%), however, grumbled that the boss 'constantly found fault with their work' and that they were rarely praised for doing a good job.

- Bosses in the East of England (38%), the Midlands and South East (23% in each case) were most at fault here.

3.7 Variable Six – Recognition *(This question was put to owners/ directors only).*

6. How do you respond to extra effort on the part of staff?

- Always recognised and rewarded.
- Not always possible to recognise but strive to do so whenever I can.
- Criticism is more effective than praise for keeping people on their toes.
- See little point in rewarding people for doing their job.

- Around half (46%) the bosses questioned claimed they always recognised and rewarded their staff for extra effort or a job done especially well.
- Those aged 55 and over were the most likely (58%) to say they 'always did so' while those in the 35 to 44 age range were the least likely (41%) to make this assertion.
- Employees with a female boss were more likely to have a special effort or success on their part work recognised and rewarded than were those with a male employer (50% vs. 43%).
- Regionally, employers in the South West and East of England (27% & 19%) were most likely to recognise effort with those in the South East and Midlands (19% & 18%) being slightly less likely to do so. Least willing to recognise and reward effort were bosses in the North (14%).
- A third (36%) of bosses said that while it was not always possible for them to recognise and reward extra effort they tried hard to do so.
- Employers aged between 35 and 44 were most likely (45%) to adopt this approach while the under thirty-fives were the least likely (18%) to do so.
- The highest proportion of these bosses were found in the North of England (27%) followed by the South West (24%), the South East (20%), the Midlands (17%) and the East of England (12%).
- About one in twenty (6%) claimed they could see 'little point in rewarding people for doing their job. These bosses were most likely to be found in the Midlands (31%) the South East or East (23%) and least likely in the South West or North of England (15% & 8%)
- Only a tiny proportion (4%) took an even harder line by insisting that criticism proved 'far more effective than praise for keeping people on their toes'. These tough minded bosses were most likely to be encountered in

the Midlands or South East of England where around one in four (38%) of the employees expressing this extreme view were located.

- None of the employers in the South West of England agreed with such an extreme approach.

3.8 Variable Seven – Authority *(This question was put to general workforce / middle management only)*

7. How often do you find yourself without sufficient authority to meet the responsibilities placed on you?

- (a) All the time.
- (b) Fairly Frequently.
- (c) Occasionally.
- (d) Rarely or never

- Around half (52%) said they rarely or never found themselves in a position where they lacked sufficient authority to meet the responsibilities placed on them.
- The highest proportion in this category were employees from the North of England (22%) followed by those in the Midlands (21%) with the other regions coming in at about one in five (19%).
- A third (31%) admitted that this happened occasionally.
- The highest proportion in this category were, once again, found in the North of England (23%) followed by the East, South East and Midlands (22% & 19%) and the South West (17%).
- Approximately one in ten (11%) complained that lacking sufficient authority to meet their responsibilities was a 'fairly frequent' occurrence.
- 13% of employees aged between 25 and 34 and 7% of employees aged 45 or older felt this way.
- These were more likely to work in the South West (26%), the Midlands (23%) and the East and South East (21% each). They were least likely to come from the North of England (11%).
- One in twenty (5%) said it happened 'all the time'.
- These 'unfortunate' employees were mostly from the Midlands (36%) or South East (27%).

3.8 Variable Seven – Authority (*This question was put to owners / directors only*)

7. How often do you wake up in the night weighed down by the responsibilities of running a business?

- (a) Almost every night.
- (b) More often than I like.
- (c) Only at times of crisis.
- (d) Seldom or never

- About four out of ten (42%) bosses said they seldom or never woke up in the night worrying about the responsibilities of running a business.
- Younger employers (25-34) were the most likely (54%) to make this claim while those aged between 35 and 44 were least likely (38%) to do so.
- Significantly more male than female bosses (50% vs. 34%) took this view.
- Regionally, bosses in the Midlands (23%) and East of England (21%) were most likely to adopt this laid back attitude, followed by those in the South West, South East and North of England (19% in each case).
- Around a quarter (22%) said this only occurred during times of crisis.
- Those aged 55 and over were the group *most* likely (27%) to take this view while bosses aged between 25 and 34 were *least* likely (14%).
- Again, a significantly greater proportion of women than men (28% vs. 16%) had sleepless nights during a crisis.
- Bosses in the East of England and Midlands (26% & 24%) were most likely to lose sleep at a time of business crisis, followed by those in the South East (22%) and North (18%). Those in South West England (10%) were least likely to do so.
- For nearly one in five (18%) it happened 'more often than they liked'.
- This was a problem that affected a quarter (25%) of those aged between 35 and 44 but less than one in twenty (4%) of the 25 to 34 year olds.
- Women employers were, once again, more at risk than their male counterparts (24% vs. 12%).
- Bosses in the South West (32%) were most likely to come into this group, followed by those in the North (24%); the South East (20%); the East (15%) and the Midlands (10%).
- About one in ten (9%) admitted that worrying about their business kept them from sleeping properly 'almost every night'.

- The highest proportion of these sleepless bosses were to be found in the South East (30%) or South West (25%), the smallest percentage in this group was found in the North of England (10%). Other regions – Midlands (20%) and East (15%)

3.8 Variable Eight – Conflict Stress (*This question was put to both general workforce/ middle management and owners/directors*).

8] How often are you required to do things against your better judgement?

- (a) Very regularly.
- (b) Frequently.
- (c) Occasionally.
- (d) Seldom or never.

- Almost seven out of ten (69%) employees said they were seldom if ever required to do something against their better judgement.
- Those aged 35-44 were the most likely (73%) to make this claim while younger workers (18-24) were rather less likely to do so (66%).
- Approximately one in five (21%) said it happened occasionally.
- For just under one in twenty (4%) it was a frequent occurrence.
- Only two in a hundred (2%) said that such demands were made on a 'very regular' basis.
- Nearly half (48%) of all employers said they were seldom or never obliged to do things against their better judgement.
- However, around a third of those from the South East and the East of England (31% & 30%), over a quarter of those from the South West and Midlands (27% in each region) and one in five (20%) Northern employers admitted doing so from time to time.
- Those aged between 45 and 54 were most likely (39%) to make this admission while those aged 55 and older were the least likely to do so (29%).
- More female than male bosses (38% vs. 31%) admitted to doing things against their better judgement when under pressure.
- Less than one in ten (7%) rated this as something which happened frequently.
- 4% admitted it happened very regularly.
- These were more likely to be male than female (7% vs. 2%) bosses.

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