



Meaningful Work Tops the List of Workplace Drivers in America

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A new study of 1,000 people shows meaningful work factors to be among the strongest drivers of employee attitudes, behaviour and health. Yet, these are missing on most employee surveys. Meanwhile, job satisfaction and work ethic levels continue their 50-year slide.

The verdict is in. Meaningful work factors are among the strongest workplace drivers in America.

Similar to last year, I surveyed 1,000 people in 50 states using the Meaningful Work Inventory®, a comprehensive employee survey of the most critical workplace factors known to organizational science.

Thirty-seven work factors were linked to *overall job satisfaction, commitment, stay intentions, burnout, depression, anxiety, life satisfaction, life meaning, and physical and mental health.*

Following are eight of the **Top 10** strongest drivers of these outcomes:

- ◆ Having a positive impact on people and things through your work;
- ◆ Realizing your full potential, purpose and values through your work;
- ◆ Using all of your best skills and talents;
- ◆ Opportunities for growth & development;
- ◆ Feeling like you're accomplishing something worthwhile;
- ◆ A job that makes you feel effective at anything;
- ◆ Job tasks that are enjoyable, in and of themselves;
- ◆ Seeing your job as a significant source of life happiness.

Other meaningful work factors such as callings and corporate social responsibility were also highly-ranked. Unfortunately, these things are *missing on most employee surveys*. This is ironic, given what may be happening to work attitudes in North America. Several studies point to declining levels of job satisfaction and work ethic since the 1970's. *A new study confirms that they continue to slide.*

All of this suggests that meaningful work may be the employer competitive advantage of the future. Leading work pundits would agree...

Daniel Pink's bestseller, *Drive*, talks about our deep needs to "direct our own lives, learn and create new things, and do better by ourselves and our world". Malcolm Gladwell calls for more of these things in *Outliers*. Work gurus Dave Ulrich and Peter Warr have released their own treatises on meaningful work with *The Why of Work* and *The Joy of Work?: Jobs, Happiness, and You*.

The results of the study will be presented to the American Psychological Association later this year. Read more on this topic in my recent article, *10 Ways to Make Work More Meaningful*, at workforce.com, and also at the link below.

<http://www.paulfairlieconsulting.com/resources.html>

P.S. Pay and perks were ranked only 24th. and 25th. out of 37 drivers in the study.

References

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