



About us

Institute of Internal Communication

The Institute of Internal Communication exists to help organisations and people succeed through promoting internal communication of the highest standards.

We've been driving standards for over 75 years, by developing and supporting internal communication professionals through our qualifications, training, awards, communities, and thought leadership.

We represent more than 2,800 members: communications professionals who shape and influence workplaces for the better.

They know people and business. They create conversations that help people at work feel informed, connected and purposeful, to drive organisational performance. They impact the working lives of millions.

Because how we communicate at work matters. #WeMatterAtWork

Ipsos Karian and Box

Ipsos Karian and Box is a team of over 130 employee experts at the heart of Ipsos's global network.

We've been trusted advisors to some of the biggest and best names for nearly 20 years, helping to create environments where people and businesses thrive by giving people a better voice at work.

With vast expertise in both internal communication and employee engagement, we support clients with our trusted advisory, cutting-edge insight and expert storytelling, to help them drive engagement and power performance.

Our team of consultants, data scientists and creatives shares a wealth of experience and offers end-to-end expertise. Each programme we co-create with our clients is as unique as the organisation and people within.

Together, we're driven by our belief that giving people a voice transforms organisational outcomes.

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Introduction

Since last year's IC Index, some things have remained unchanged.

The perennial questions around how we deliver messages to people are as present as ever. Are we sending too many emails? Is our intranet any good? Should we be using TikTok to share updates? What about employees who don't have work computers or phones? How do we tell them everything we need them to know?

All perfectly good questions. But are they the right ones? Because while some things are the same, many, many others have changed.

It's been a tumultuous time for global politics and economies with ripples that affect organisations everywhere, in every industry. Leaders have changed at organisations, and in governments. Jobs are changing. The conversation around AI has advanced. How we work is changing.

We wanted to understand how employees relate to their organisations, as we all try to maintain our footing on shifting sands. This year's IC Index delves deeper into the complexities of that relationship and how it informs the way we communicate.

Our analysis reveals that the very best internal communication experiences are when employees have a meaningful and direct connection with leaders. And, crucially, when leaders listen to, understand and care about employees – far beyond making sure they know what the organisation's strategy is (although that's important too).

Methods of communication will always be a part of the discussion, but it's clear that leaders need to offer the human touch: listen more, break down hierarchical barriers and have real conversations. And not just because it's a nice thing to do. There are tangible organisational outcomes – higher employee advocacy, engagement, retention.

The data shows there is still a long way to go, particularly in larger organisations, where building a sense of community and creating connection is naturally more challenging. This is where internal communicators can really make a difference. Coaching and supporting leaders. Challenging senior teams to be more open, to do more listening, to see employee perspectives on organisational change, to be more transparent in decision-making.

Welcome to your guide to keeping communication real in unreal times.

The IC Index findings show internal communicators where they need to focus to help organisations succeed over the next few years – building community, encouraging connection and equipping leaders to have meaningful conversations – while never forgetting that this is underpinned by clear, actionable messages, well told."

Dominic Walters

President, Institute of Internal Communication

Continuing to evolve our research together

We're now in our third year of working together on the IC Index, and we're keen to keep advancing our approach and exploring new areas, while still giving IC professionals insights that have practical applications.

We've continued to expand the research and this year surveyed almost 5,000 UK employees* to gather their views.

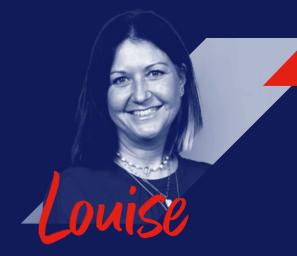
To help us explore the data and consider how to tackle the challenges posed, we spoke to IoIC Fellows for their perspectives. Thank you to all that took part in discussions and gave their voices to the report and our wider communication about this year's IC Index.

We've continued to explore areas such as artificial intelligence and employee activism, pushing the conversation to the next level from last year's report.

We're not seeing dramatic shifts in key measures, such as how employees rate their organisation's communication. And the results revealed no significant changes in channel preferences or appetites for more information on particular topics. However, the environment around us is constantly shifting.

The internal communicator's role has become more about creating genuine understanding between employees and their organisation, and vice versa. So, naturally, leaders hold the real key to the best internal communication, and our findings support that.

We hope this year's report helps you impress upon leaders the important part they play, and gives you the evidence to put real human connection at the heart of your internal communication strategies – in whatever ways make most sense for your organisation.



Louise BreedChief Executive, Ipsos
Karian and Box UK



Jennifer Sproul
Chief Executive, Institute
of Internal Communication

UK workers aged 18–64 between 21 March and 4 April 2025.

^{*} We conducted an online survey with a representative sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18–64 between 21 March and 4 April 2025.

IC Index 2025

Key insights



This year's report demonstrates how crucial it is for organisations not to remove the humanity from communication with employees. We know people want to connect with and understand their leaders and – importantly – they want leaders to understand them.

The following pages are packed with data and insights to inform your strategies and decision-making, but here are our top six takeaways that show how care, connection and listening are the key to great internal communication, and better organisational outcomes.



What the data says

0

Human connection is at the heart of the best communication experiences

- Employees who rate their organisation ten out of ten for communication not only hear regularly from leaders, but also feel leaders understand their challenges and are approachable and authentic.
- More personal activities by leaders such as listening sessions and interactions on social media – correlate with employees being more likely to feel their feedback is welcomed.

02

Leaders need to be more empathetic

- Only just over half of UK employees feel leaders understand the challenges they face. This drops to less than four in ten for employees who are not managers.
- Employees who say their CEO's or most senior leader's communication feels caring or empathetic have higher levels of trust in those leaders.



How organisations approach change makes a big difference

- Employees are less likely to say that communications about difficult changes that affect people are communicated with care when they work in larger organisations.
- Employees who do feel that this kind of change is communicated with care are more likely to feel valued and be advocates.

We conducted an online survey with a representative sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18–64 between 21 March and 4 April 2025. The percentages in the report have been rebased to exclude people who answered "I don't know", so the total number of respondents to each individual question is indicated on the chart (n=).

While the panel survey captured data on gender, ethnicity and other protected characteristics, we do not report on all of these due to low response numbers.

Throughout the report, we refer to the following groupings, defined as below:

- **Positive:** those who selected "Strongly agree" or "Agree"
- Neutral: those who selected "Neither agree nor disagree"
- **Negative:** those who selected "Disagree" or "Strongly disagree"

Feedback and action remains a challenge for many organisations

- While there has been a small uplift in employees feeling their organisation is good at showing how colleague feedback is used to help inform decisions and action, it is still an area for improvement.
- Employees who work for organisations that do 'close the loop'
 both welcoming feedback and showing how it is used have very high advocacy levels.



Clarity about AI use is key to employees feeling more comfortable with it

- Many employees are still worried about the impacts of generative artificial intelligence (gen AI) and are not comfortable with it being used to develop communications.
- When an organisation has been clear about their approach to using gen AI responsibly, employees are more likely to be comfortable with it being used.



Employees in smaller organisations are more positive overall

- Those working for organisations that have between 500 and 999 employees on average score more positively than larger organisations across a wide range of topics.
- They appear to be better at communicating change with care, welcoming and acting on feedback and providing clarity on how gen AI is used. Leader communications are also perceived more positively and they are felt to better understand employee challenges.

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The story in numbers

A 10/10 communications experience is rare



13%

of employees give their organisation top marks for how it communicates with them Only half feel leaders demonstrate key behaviour of empathy



51%

agree that leaders in their organisation understand the challenges employees face Highest clarity on strategy when it comes from the CEO



82%

say they have clarity
on the strategy when they
get their communication
on this topic from their CEO
or most senior leader

Care in change communication is critical



51^{pt}

uplift in employees feeling valued when they agree difficult changes affecting people (such as restructures or redundancies) are communicated with care

Managers may be overestimating their communication skills



94%

of senior leaders say they have the skills they need to effectively communicate with their team Many large organisations struggling to close the loop on feedback



43%

of employees who work for organisations with over 10,000 people say they are good at showing how feedback is used to inform decisions and actions Time to get clear on AI



41%

say their employer has clearly communicated how generative AI is used responsibly in their organisation Clarity on AI makes many employees more comfortable



70%

of employees who say their organisation has been clear about responsible AI use would be comfortable with it being used for communications

Mental health is top topic to take a stance on



54%

of employees who want their organisation to take a stance on something, select mental health as a priority Non-managers less likely to see work as an important part of their identity



38pt

difference between non-managers and senior leaders when it comes to feeling their job is an important part of their identity





What makes a 10/10 IC experience?

Overall, UK employees feel broadly the same about how well their organisation communicates compared to 2024.

A striking finding in last year's IC Index was the 39pt difference in engagement between good internal communication and excellent.

Engagement when internal communication is seen as excellent

73%

Engagement when internal communication is seen as good

39pt gap

34%

This year we wanted to go further and understand what makes the best internal communication experience. How can organisations move the dial over the next 12 months, so 2026 scores are higher?

With just 13%* of UK employees rating their organisation's internal communication as 10 out of 10, there's clearly a magic recipe that not many are currently following. And luckily, thanks to our research, it's not a secret.

It's notable how many of these ingredients relate directly to leaders.

None are about channels or organisational strategy. That's not to say those things aren't important – they're crucial foundations. But it seems to make it to the very top, to be 10 out of 10, it's more about human connection – making the effort to speak regularly, genuinely listening, showing empathy.

In other words, to be the best, you have to keep it real.



	Employees who rate IC at 10/10	Gap	Other employees
Feel that leaders understand the challenges employees face	93%	+48 ^{pts}	45%
Feel their organisation is good at showing how colleague feedback is used to help inform decisions and actions	93%	+46 ^{pts}	47%
Hear from their CEO/most senior leader at least every few weeks	72%	+29 ^{pts}	44%
Hear from their departmental/senior leader every few days	50%	+27 ^{pts}	22%
Receive communications about business priorities from their CEO/most senior leader	58 %	+27 ^{pts}	30%
Feel the volume of communication is just right	88%	+17 ^{pts}	71%

Describe communications from the CEO/most senior leader in the following ways:

Openly tells it as it is	45%	+20 ^{pts}	24%
Inspiring	30%	+20 ^{pts}	10%
Clear	40%	+15 ^{pts}	24%
Authentic	30%	+15 ^{pts}	16%
Approachable	33%	+14 ^{pts}	19%

Do leaders understand employees' challenges?



Just 51% of UK employees feel leaders in their organisation understand the challenges employees face, up slightly from last year (+2pts). Almost three in ten disagree and just over one in five respond neutrally.

Employees who work in smaller organisations of 500–999 people are the most positive – seven in ten say that leaders understand employee challenges. This drops to around half of employees (52%) in organisations of between 1,000 and 9,999 people.

Those who work in large organisations of 10,000 or more are the least positive, with only four in ten agreeing.

Managers are 25pts more likely than non-managers to feel leaders understand employee challenges. Within management roles scores vary by seniority: senior leaders are most positive (84%), followed by middle managers (62%) and first-line managers (57%).



Experiencing empathetic leadership – where employees feel leaders understand the challenges they face – is a key factor in the best internal communication experiences (p. 12–13) and an essential thing to get right.

Partly it's about confidence and trust. Leaders make decisions that impact people's working lives – for better or worse. If employees don't feel those leaders understand their challenges, how can they trust them to make the right decisions, or be confident in the outcomes?

There are numerous challenges to improving this understanding, not least of which is organisation size. Leaders can seem to be (or actually are) more removed from the day-to-day experiences of their employees in large organisations, and may also struggle to reach people or cut through the noise of the big machine.

This is where internal communicators can make a real difference, helping leaders connect in more personal ways (see p. 36–37). We can share their reflections from these activities across the organisation, showing employees that leaders do take time to listen and understand their issues.

There's also a question of perception. Around three in five managers believe that leaders in their organisation understand the challenges employees face; but a similar proportion of non-managers believe the opposite. There is clearly a disconnect – but on which side? Who needs to listen to whom, and could better leader communication help shift things?

Leaders must also respond well to employees' challenges. For example, do they listen and work with teams to solve any problems employee surveys highlight? Action is often louder than even the most well-crafted words and employees may only feel leaders understand their challenges if they show they're willing to address them.

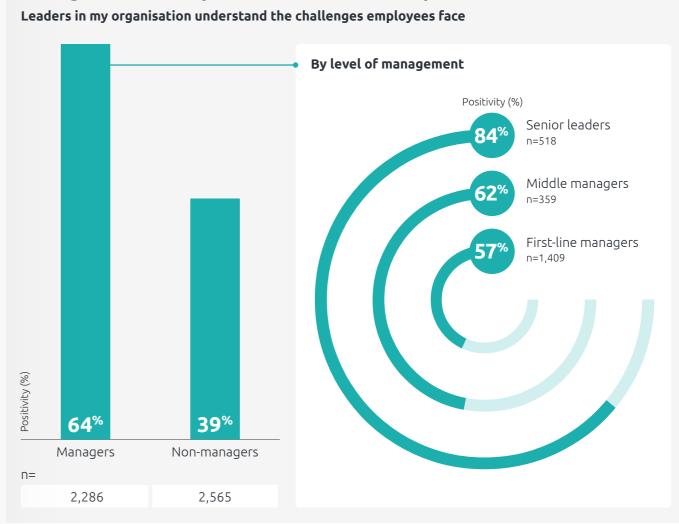
Leaders in smaller organisations are felt to better understand employee challenges

Leaders in my organisation understand the challenges employees face

n=4.851



Managers more likely to think leaders are empathetic



n=4.539

Changing times demand careful communication



What the data says

A little over half (56%) of employees feel that difficult changes affecting people (such as restructures or redundancies) are communicated with care in their organisation.

Organisation size is a factor. 71% of employees in smaller organisations (500–999 people) feel change is communicated with care, compared to 45% in larger organisations (of 10,000 or more employees).

Careful change communication affects how valued employees feel. 83% of those who feel difficult changes are communicated with care in their organisations feel valued, compared to 32% of those who don't.

There's a similar connection to advocacy. Employees who are positive about change being communicated with care are 47pts more likely to recommend their employer as a great place to work.



What we think

Change is a business process but also a human one. Getting it right demands paying attention to regulations, policies and laws on the business side, and questions, concerns, and emotions on the human side.

Internal communicators can help organisations communicate change with care by making sure it's a two-way process. Thoughtful messaging and logistics are essential, as is making sure people feel heard and included.

We're uniquely placed to help. We can shape change messages and anticipate people's questions and reactions – because we've read all the comments from the employee surveys, managed Q&A sessions, kept an eye on internal social media and have a network who will tell us what people really think and feel.

This isn't just the right thing to do, it's also about managing risk. When people feel left out or poorly informed, more questions and issues are likely to follow. When change is done well, we can see how it protects trust, and key organisational outcomes.



Fellows' point of view

Our Fellows emphasise how important it is for IC professionals to keep bringing the employee voice into the conversation. The colleagues and leaders driving the change may be laser-focused on the process and outcome, but we need to ensure the human aspect is constantly considered. This is even more important in the current context, when people may already feel unsettled by multiple global crises outside of work.

Understandably, the focus is often on the day the change is announced, but it's vital to also plan well beyond that. Particularly communication with the rest of the organisation. We tend to do a really good job of looking after the people impacted by change, but in my experience, the onlookers can actually react more strongly. Having a plan to guide everyone through the change is essential and can go a long way to protecting engagement and reputation."



Paul Diggins

Former head of IC at Santander and IoIC Board Member

Employees of smaller organisations more likely to say change is communicated with care

Difficult changes affecting people (such as restructures or redundancies) are communicated with care in my organisation

Kev: ■ Positive ■ Neutral ■ Negative



Employees are more likely to feel valued and recommend their employer if change is communicated with care

Key: • Positive perceptions of care in change communication* (n=2,529)

Not positive perceptions of care in change communication* (n=2,010)

Positivity (%)

I feel valued by my organisation



I would recommend my employer as a great place to work



*Full question: Difficult changes affecting people (such as restructures or redundancies) are communicated with care in my organisation.

IC Index 2025 IC Index 2025

What's your relationship status with your employer?

Our analysis shows that the level of connection that UK employees feel with their organisation and leaders falls into four main groups.

We've given these groups names that reflect their level of connection, shown the percentage of employees who fall into these 'types' and created an illustrative quote to bring their viewpoints to life. What can we learn from these groups about how we can boost their experience at work through communication?

When it comes to the leaders in my organisation, it's like they're on another planet. My manager is ok, but everyone above them... it's like they have no idea what we have to deal with. Not only do they give no clarity around where we're going as an organisation, they don't seem remotely interested in hearing my point of view. The only thing I can say is that my job is vaguely interesting. I doubt I'll be here for that long though."

Deeply disconnected

- Most likely to say they rarely hear from their CEO or senior leadership team.
- Nearly three times as likely as the average employee to describe their CEO's communication style as not communicating openly.
- 7 in 10 words chosen to describe their CEO's communications style are negative.
- Oldest average age, and is found equally in private and public sector organisations.
- Most likely to be in a role where they aren't frequently connected to a computer.



11 On the whole, I quite like work. My job mostly gives me the opportunity to do interesting and challenging work and most days I feel motivated to give it my best. But the biggest missing piece for me is our leaders... I just don't trust them! They don't seem to get what's happening on the ground, and the strategy they've outlined doesn't feel clear or like it's the right one. I hear from my CEO, but they just sound scripted."



- Most likely group to hear business updates from an internal communication channel.
- Less likely than those who are 'Ready to level up' or 'Happily here' to hear about business priorities from their senior leaders or CEO.
- Most likely to say they've completed an employee survey in the last 12 months.
- More likely to work in the public sector, and an organisation of over 10,000 people in a non-managerial role.
- More likely to work away from a computer, compared to other groups, except 'Deeply disconnected'.

Level of connection



II It's not all rosy at work, but I have to say the best thing about my work is the people. I can't say I am 100% bought into our organisation's strategy, but I do really trust the CEO and the leadership team. I trust them as much as I trust my manager! There are some areas for improvement though they could do more to demonstrate that they understand the challenges of the wider business and that they're listening to and acting on our feedback."



Ready to level up

- Twice as likely as those who are 'Seeking more' to provide feedback via Q&A with leaders.
- More likely to be a manager and work in a smaller organisation, compared to other groups, except those who are 'Happily here'.
- Most likely to say their CEO's communication style is down to earth.
- Over a quarter rely on word of mouth to learn about company updates.
- Lower overall motivation than those who are 'Seeking more.'



If I put a lot of faith in the senior leaders of my organisation, and I feel it's paying off. They keep me up to date on the decisions they make about our strategy and where we're heading – and I think they're making the right calls. I'm feeling really motivated to play my part too. Most importantly though, I feel like the business cares about what we as employees think. And not only is my feedback welcomed, but my organisation is really good at showing how they're using our ideas."



Happily here

 Most likely to rate internal communication in their organisation 10/10.

- Just under half of this group hear from their CEO or most senior leader at least weekly.
- Most likely to describe their CEO's communication style as 'openly tells it as it is' and 'clear'; least likely to say their CEO sounds scripted.
- Most likely to say senior leaders in their organisations do site visits to speak to employees or one-to-one sessions.
- Has the youngest average age, and more likely to work in a small private sector organisation.

Level of connection





The right tone can inspire trust



What the data says

63% of employees chose positive words to describe how their CEO/most senior leader's communication style feels to them, while 34% selected negative ones. It's worth noting that 7% of responses were 'I have not seen or heard enough from my organisation's CEO or most senior leader to be able to comment.'

Some of the words selected link strongly with levels of trust in CEOs or most senior leaders. Trust levels are highest when the tone of communications is inspiring (93%) and authentic (90%), and lowest when the tone is arrogant (15%) or unapproachable (19%).

Again, responses from employees who work in smaller organisations are more positive than those who work in larger organisations, with a 20pt difference between the smallest and largest.



What we think

Our research shows that an authentic, empathetic communication style goes hand in hand with trust, and that while some leaders are getting this right, there's still work for organisations to do. To truly support leaders in their communication, we need to not only develop strategies and messaging, but also coach them as communicators.

We can help them understand and develop their personal style, and we can support them with channels that work to their strengths. As there's not always a perfect match between topic, channel and leader, we may also need to give some difficult feedback and think creatively to find a solution.

The good news is that people don't want slick communicators, they want real ones. Working with organisations, we've found that even a leader who isn't a natural orator can still connect well with employees and inspire trust if they are themselves, are approachable and are seen to care.



Fellows' point of view

Many of our Fellows have helped leaders to dial up the 'realness' in their communication. A range of approaches have had an impact: sharing more about their personal lives, leaning into their professional interests to bring out their enthusiasm, being more open about the day-to-day reality of the job or even getting employees to interview them.

We've made a real effort to encourage leaders to be more human in their communication. Making their language more chatty, their stories more personal, their tone more conversational. This has had a big impact on how employees perceive them, including in business-focused communications. In large organisations, leaders can seem distant, but this approach can really close the gap. It won't come easily for everyone, but if you can build trusting and authentic relationships with your leaders, you'll be in a great position to help them develop and share their stories in an engaging and compelling way."



Joe Salmon
Iron Mountain

Just over six in ten words* chosen to describe CEOs' communication are positive How does your CEO's or most senior leader's communication style feel to you? (Select up to three) n=4,818







* 20 words were available to choose from, along with "None of these" (selected by <1%) and "I have not seen or heard enough from my organisation's CEO or most senior leader to be able to comment" (selected by 3%).

More positive perceptions of CEO/most senior leader tone in smaller organisations



Which words link with highest or lowest levels of trust in the CEO/most senior leader?

Five tone words with correlation to highest levels of trust in the CEO/most senior leader

Propor	tion selected	I trust my organisation's CEO/most senior leader – Positivity (%)
13%	Inspiring	93%
18%	Authentic	90%
6%	Caring	87%
21%	Approachable	86%
4%	Empathetic	84%

	Five tone words with correlation to lowest levels of trust in the CEO/most senior leader					
Propor	tion selected	I trust my organisation's CEO/most senior leader – Positivity (%)				
4%	Arrogant	15%				
5%	Unapproachable	19%				
6%	Boring	20%				
6%	Doesn't communicate openly	20%				
4%	Indifferent	22%				

Clarity on the strategy is higher when the CEO shares it



Employees' clarity on and belief in their organisation's strategy is relatively stable, with a 2pt movement in both since last year's report. Just over one in ten employees respond negatively to this question, but more respond neutrally.

Similar proportions of employees most commonly receive strategy communications from their senior leadership team (36%), direct manager (35%), or CEO / most senior leader (34%). Just under three in ten get their updates on business priorities from internal communication channels.

7% of employees are relying on their colleagues and the rumour mill for information and 4% say they don't receive any communication on this topic.

The more senior the source, the more clear employees are about the strategy. 82% of those who say they tend to receive updates directly from the CEO or most senior leader feel that their employer has been clear on the strategy and business priorities.

Receiving communications from senior leadership teams and departmental leaders also correlate with high levels of clarity, at 75% and 73% respectively. Internal communication channels and direct managers also score above average.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the smaller percentage of employees who rely on the rumour mill or their peers report lower than average clarity.



The message in the data is clear: people need to hear about your organisation's strategy, priorities and direction from your CEO or most senior leader.

Employees need to know the person at the top has a plan and hearing it directly from them gives them the clarity they need. The rest of the team at the top can also be of benefit, showing there is a united view and support for the plans across all areas.

There will always be a place for strategic information in internal communication channels, but it should be in a supporting role – adding detail, serving as a reminder, being a point of reference, providing updates. Strategy communications need to have a face in order to feel real and clear, so internal communicators should centre them on leaders, working closely with them to hit the right tone (see p. 22–23) and messaging.

Don't discount managers, though – as we saw in last year's IC Index, employees' understanding of their personal contribution has a big impact on whether they believe in the strategy. Managers should talk to employees about their part in the plan – but explaining what that plan is should be a job for the person leading the organisation.

Less than six in ten employees say they believe their organisation's strategy is the right one for success

Key: ■ Positive ■ Neutral ■ Negative n=4,939

My employer has been clear on the organisation's strategy and business priorities (for example, the long-term plans and operational goals)

67% ©2^{pts} ⊕10^{pts} vs. 2024 vs. 2023 21% 21%

I believe our organisation's strategy is the right one for success

My organisation's senior

My organisation's CEO/

Other (please specify)

most senior leader

leadership team

58[%] ⊕2^{pts} ⊝5^{pts} 29[%] 13[%]

Employees who hear about business priorities from their CEO most likely to say they are clear on strategy

Who do you most commonly receive communications about your employer's business priorities from (including organisation's strategy, plans, changes, etc.)?

Proportion (%)

36%

34%

Clarity on strategy and priorities* – Positivity (%)

75%

82%

55%

n=4,939

My direct manager 68%

My departmental leader/
senior manager

73%

Internal communication channels (e.g. intranet, video, emails, etc.)

29%

From the rumour mill/ colleagues chatting 7%

I don't receive any communications about my employer's business priorities

4%

<1%

* Full question My employee has been closed the especiation's strategy and bygings especiation

* **Full question:** My employer has been clear on the organisation's strategy and business priorities (for example, the long-term plans and operational goals)

Managers and employees have similar IC priorities, with one key difference



We asked managers what they see as their most important responsibilities in relation to communication with their teams. The most commonly selected response was 'setting clear objectives', chosen by 42% of managers.

Just under one in three selected 'listening to my team's views', while three in ten said 'making the organisation's strategy easy to understand' was a top responsibility. 'Managing my team's tasks and workload' and 'giving my team feedback on performance' were next, at 27% and 24% respectively.

When we asked employees about the things they most value in a manager when it comes to internal communication, four themes were closely aligned with managers' views. The key difference was that employees selected 'acting on feedback from employees' (23%) in place of 'making the organisation's strategy easy to understand.'

19% of employees selected 'making my organisation's strategy easy to understand', 11pts lower than the proportion of managers, while 15% of managers selected 'acting on feedback from my team,' 8pts lower than employees overall.



Although it's great to see broad alignment between managers and employees, the one difference in the top five highlights a common tension. Managers feel responsibility for explaining the big picture to employees, so they can respond to the organisation's needs; employees want their views to be heard and acted upon, so the organisation can respond to their needs.

Internal communicators, like managers, often sit in this space between organisation and employee, trying to build two-way communication and understanding. And as our analysis of what makes a ten-out-of-ten experience shows (see p. 12–13), this two-way connection is crucial to employees feeling that they are getting everything they need in terms of internal communication.

Manager responsibilities like listening to team's views, making the organisation's strategy easy to understand and acting on feedback from employees are all areas where IC professionals can provide crucial support. That could be through creating channels that provide them with information and guidance, tools and training that helps them get to grips with their communication responsibilities, or communities that allow them to share experiences and best practice with each other.

Comparing manager and employee views on what the most important manager responsibilities are perceived to be What do you see as your **most** Which if any of these do you Top 5 important responsibilities as a most value in a manager manager when it comes to internal mentions when it comes to internal communications?* - Proportion (%) communications?* - Proportion (%) n=4.772 **37**% 42% Setting clear objectives 32% **32**% Listening to my team's views Making the Actina on organisation's feedback from 23% strategy easy employees to understand Managing my team's 27% **22**% tasks and workload Giving my team feedback 24% 22% on performance

Most managers say they're getting it right. Is our work complete?



Nine out of ten managers say they have the skills they need to effectively communicate with their team. 8% are neutral (neither agree nor disagree) and only 2% disagree.

Eight out of ten say they feel equipped to lead a conversation with their team on what's happening across the business. A similar proportion say they have the time they need to effectively communicate with their team. Just over one in ten answer these questions neutrally and a similar proportion disagree.

77% of managers agree that their employer provides them with the information they need to effectively communicate with those in their team. 14% neither agree nor disagree, and just under one in ten say they do not get the information they need.

Positivity broadly aligns with seniority. Senior leaders score above 90% across all metrics, with middle managers slightly less positive but still scoring highly (76% and above).

First-line managers are the least positive, although the majority still agree to each question. Just over seven in ten first-line managers agree that their employer provides them with the information they need to communicate effectively (71%, the lowest score across all four questions).



Internal communicators might be forgiven for looking at this data and feeling the job to support managers is almost complete.

With scores this high, we can't help but wonder – do managers (particularly senior leaders) overestimate their own skills? Do they underestimate both the breadth of the task and the time they should be dedicating to communication?

We reported in last year's IC Index that communication is a driver for trust. High levels of trust in direct managers (76%, see p. 58) suggest that when it comes to communication with their immediate teams, managers are getting it right a lot of the time. But maybe not as consistently as they think.

Meanwhile, senior leaders seem to feel they have everything they need to communicate effectively. Confidence is good, but as lower proportions of employees believe that communication is open and honest, that their organisation welcomes feedback and/or shows how that feedback is used (see p. 33), there's a significant gap in perception and reality.

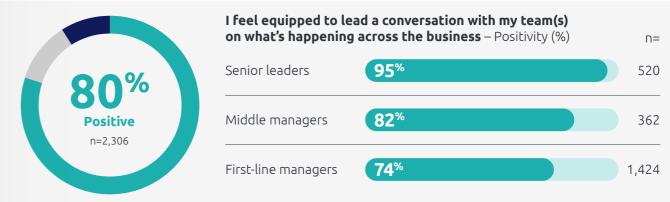
Maybe some leaders aren't aware that not all employees feel they are being open with them, and perhaps see communication primarily as a one-way street where they impart information to employees? If leaders don't receive feedback, how can they know when communication doesn't hit the mark?

As IC professionals, we need to provide managers with the information to support their communication, and also ensure they understand all their responsibilities and what makes for excellent communication. It may be more complex than they are currently perceiving, and they may need some candid feedback and clear guidance to help them deliver what employees need and want

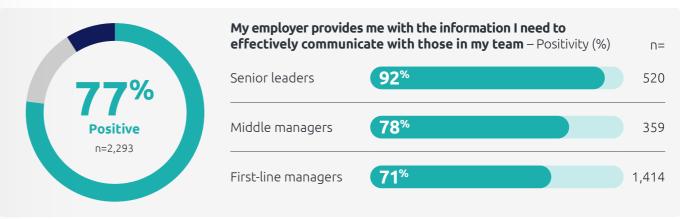
Understanding manager views on whether they have the skills, time and information needed to communicate













Do we show that we're listening?



Six in ten employees feel their organisation welcomes open and honest feedback on them as an employer. More than a fifth aren't sure, and just under that proportion actively disagree.

There's a similar trend for whether employees feel their organisation is good at showing how colleague feedback is used to help inform decisions and actions. A little over half of employees agree, but – perhaps worryingly – a quarter disagree.

Private sector employees respond more positively to these questions than those in the public sector. Two thirds of private sector employees feel their organisation welcomes feedback, compared to just over half who work in the public sector.

In private companies, 59% say their organisation is good at showing how feedback informs decisions and actions, this drops to 44% in the public sector.

Once again, employees who work in smaller organisations are more positive than those in larger ones. Around three quarters of employees in organisations of 500–999 employees agree that their organisation welcomes open and honest feedback, falling to just half of those in organisations of more than 10,000 employees.

Size is also a factor in taking action. 72% of those in smaller organisations say their employer is good at showing how feedback informs decisions and actions, compared to just 43% in the largest organisations.



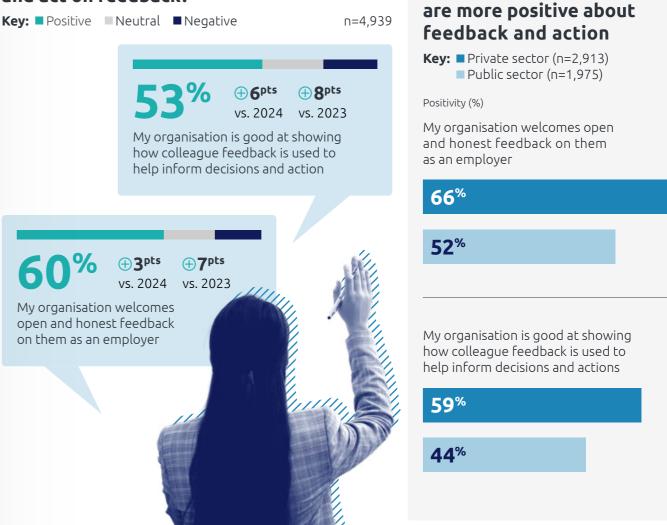
While there have been small positive shifts in the past two years, this is still an area for improvement.

All our insights point to employee perceptions of listening and action being fundamental to a great employee experience (see p. 12–13), and critical organisational outcomes (see p. 34–35). Internal communicators can use this data to make the case for increased listening, for sharing what happens with feedback – and for involving employees throughout the whole process.

In large and public sector organisations, there are clearly some extra challenges to overcome. Both kinds of organisation can be less agile, making positive change hard. For public sector organisations, tight budgets, limited resourcing and less autonomy in decision-making can also restrict the ability to act on employee feedback. But these needn't be insurmountable barriers. The answer must lie with local leadership and communication.

Leaders can be open and honest with employees about what is and isn't possible, can listen intently and welcome feedback, and work to maximise employee-informed change in their area. Internal communicators can offer vital support – p. 36–37 sets out the activities that can have the biggest impact on employees feeling their feedback is welcomed.

Do organisations welcome and act on feedback?



Private sector employees

Employees in smaller organisations are more likely to say feedback is welcomed and used to inform decisions

Key: • My organisation welcomes open and honest feedback on them as an employer • My organisation is good at showing how colleague feedback is used to help inform decisions and actions **76**% **72**% 50% **52**% 51% 43% 1,000-4,999 5,000-9,999 10,000 or more 500-999 Organisation size 1,059 1,089 971 1,820

Base: A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18–64 in the UK were surveyed between 21 March and 4 April 2025. Percentages have been rebased to exclude "I don't know" responses.

37

Are organisations listening and acting? And what happens if they're not?



There is a clear link between welcoming feedback and acting on it, and advocacy.

Just under half of organisations are 'closing the loop' – both welcoming employee feedback and showing how that feedback informs decisions and actions. Nine in ten employees working for these organisations would recommend them as a great place to work.

13% of employees say their organisation welcomes feedback but isn't good at showing how that feedback is used – 'All talk and no action'. Advocacy drops to 63% for this group, just 1pt above the average (see p. 58).

Just 5% of employees feel their organisation is good at showing how feedback is acted upon but doesn't welcome open and honest feedback. For these organisations with 'selective hearing,' 60% of employees would recommend their employer.

More than a third of employees say their organisation neither welcomes open and honest feedback nor shows how it informs decisions and actions – their organisation seems 'completely disinterested.' Less than a quarter of employees who feel this way would recommend their employer as a great place to work.



There is a clear business case for taking employee feedback seriously. If leaders want their organisation to be a 'better than average' place to work, or even a great one, they need to show they're open to both hearing and acting on feedback.

These are not 'nice-to-have' activities – they're essential to key organisational metrics such as advocacy. Plus, listening to employees' experiences offers leaders real insight into the things that affect their organisation's performance, processes, profitability – not just their people.

IC teams should build feedback opportunities into their channels and strategies wherever possible. ensuring that what employees share doesn't fall into a communication black hole.

Questions to ask might include:

- Are employers considering and responding to employees on internal social media?
- How does the organisation define and share actions in response to employee survey results?
- Do in-person or virtual sessions with leaders feature the opportunity for employees to ask questions or make suggestions?
- How is input from employee networks shared and responded to?

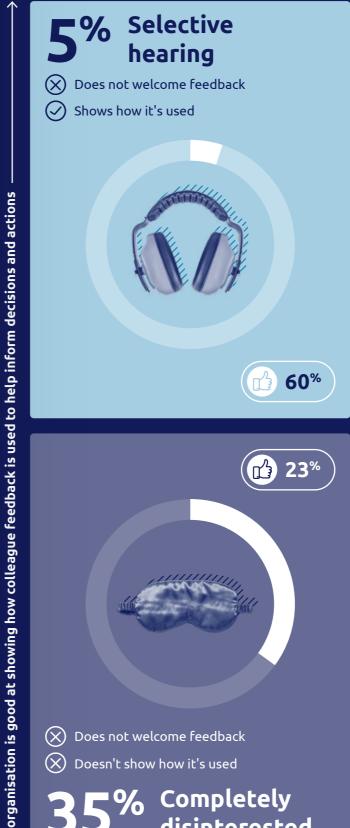
These are not areas for internal communicators alone. but we can push for more listening and transparency and ask the difficult questions, before employees do.

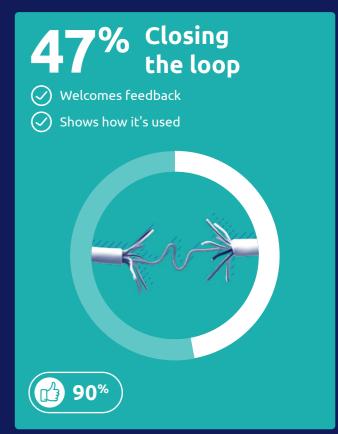
See the 2023 IC Index for a view on which organisational feedback methods are most effective,* and p. 36–37 of this report for ways that leaders should be listening.

Highest advocacy levels among employees who say their employer is both open to feedback and demonstrates action against it

Key: [3] I would recommend my employer as a great place to work

n=4.939







Percentages have been rebased to exclude "I don't know" responses.



My organisation welcomes open and honest feedback on them as an employer

Base: A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18-64 in the UK were surveyed between 21 March and 4 April 2025.

When leaders listen directly, advocacy improves



What the data says

The most common way leaders seek to understand employee views is large online Q&A events – 37% of employees say leaders do this. A quarter of employees say leaders walk the floor and a fifth say they conduct large in-person Q&A events.

Small or one-to-one listening sessions are slightly less common, with just under a fifth of employees selecting these options.

17% of employees say leaders take part in discussions on internal social media, and 8% are aware of reverse mentoring programmes.

Smaller but still notable proportions say they don't know how leaders seek to understand employee views (13%) and that leaders do not seek to understand them (6%).

Modes of listening have an impact. Reverse mentoring, internal social media, and listening sessions link with higher advocacy and perceptions of feedback being welcomed.



What we think

When it comes to two-way communication activities for leaders, bigger isn't always better. While large online or in-person events are great for leadership visibility and sharing updates, they're less suitable for encouraging open discussion. The impact of smaller interactions can be amplified, however, through these wider channels.

As for the optimum number of listening activities, variety plays a key part. Our analysis showed that employees are far more positive about their workplace when leaders take part in at least three different activities. 83% of employees who selected three options would recommend their employer, 21pts above the average.

With smaller increases in advocacy above this figure, we'd suggest three is the magic number for return on investment of leaders' time and communicators' effort.

GG

Fellows' point of view

Fellows echo our findings in their observations of the impact of leaders taking part in smaller and more personal communication activities. Leaders being skilled in active listening, and being open to feedback and self-reflection are considered essential. Fellows have also observed the positive impact of leaders sharing their learnings from these interactions more widely, for example through a blog or internal social media.

We find that smaller interactions work really well. Our CEO runs drop-in sessions and encourages direct feedback through his weekly email, then shares what's happened with those inputs. Internal social media is also great for employee listening. Leaders comment on employees' posts and join in the discussion in a really natural way. It wouldn't work for everyone as it has to feel authentic – it very much depends on leaders' personal styles."



Clare Bowers
Zoological Society of London

Large online Q&A events most common way to listen, but other methods can have more impact

In which of these ways if any do senior leaders in your organisation seek to understand employees' views? (Select all that apply)

n=4,939

Key: ● I would recommend my employer as a great place to work – Positivity (%)

My organisation welcomes open and honest feedback on them as an employer – Positivity (%)

	Proportion (%)		
Large online Q&A events	37%	70%	70%
Site visits to speak informally with employees/walking the floor	25 %	79%	79%
Large in-person Q&A events	20%	79%	78%
In-person listening sessions with small groups (fewer than 20 employees)	19%	84%	81%
One-to-one sessions with employees	19%	83%	83%
Online listening sessions with small groups (fewer than 20 employees)	18%	83%	81%
Through discussions on internal social media	17%	84%	85%
I don't know how senior leaders in my organisation seek to understand employees' views	13%	37%	33%
Reverse mentoring programmes	8%	84%	82%
Senior leaders do not seek to understand employees' views	6%	19%	10%
None of these	8%	35%	31%

Base: A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18–64 in the UK were surveyed between 21 March and 4 April 2025. Percentages have been rebased to exclude "I don't know" responses.

36



IC Index 2025 IC Index 2025

25–34-year-olds most likely see work as an important part of their identity



Just under two thirds (64%) of UK employees agree that their job is an important part of their identity. Just under a fifth (18%) disagree.

There is an interesting pattern by age, with employees becoming more positive as they move from the 18–24-year-old bracket into the 25–34-year-old bracket. The trend then reverses, with employees over 35 becoming less and less likely to feel their job defines them as they age.

Managers are significantly more likely to see their job as a part of their identity, with 77% of them agreeing, compared to 53% of non-managers. Seniority seems to dovetail with identity: 71% of first line managers connect their job to their identity, rising to 80% of middle managers and 91% of senior leaders.



Much of the data in this report demonstrates the importance of understanding the employee perspective. The connection people feel to their jobs is an important part of the picture – arguably one of the most important.

This is useful insight for our communication strategies, indicating the extent to which employees might be willing to engage with communication, and what topics they could be most interested in. It can help us advise and influence leaders who might sometimes over-estimate employees' desire to engage in activities that focus on the organisation more than the employee.

This data shows that those on the frontline/in less senior roles, or who are new to the world of work, or perhaps looking towards the time when they will retire from it, feel less connected to their jobs. People are understandably focused on different things based on their stage in life and the nature of their role.

For example, those who are new to work may be more interested in learning and development opportunities, and those heading towards retirement will perhaps be less interested in the organisation's five-year strategy.

None of this erases the fact that an organisation can have a positive impact on how connected their employees feel to their workplace. Employees can be happy, engaged, advocates, even if they don't see their job as a fundamental part of their identity - but they need to feel cared for and listened to (see p. 16–17 and p. 34–35).

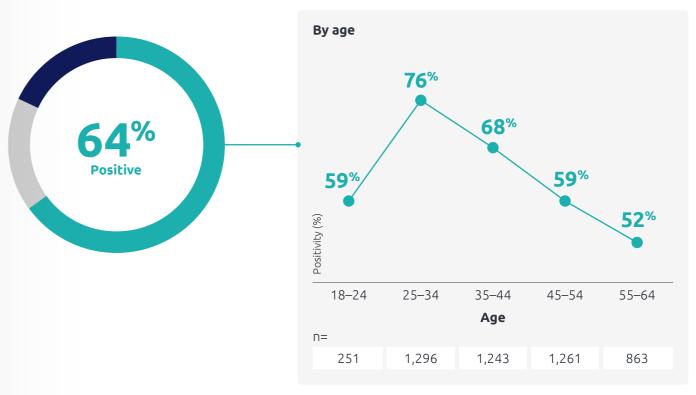
25-34-year-olds most feel that their job is an important part of their identity

My job is an important part of my identity

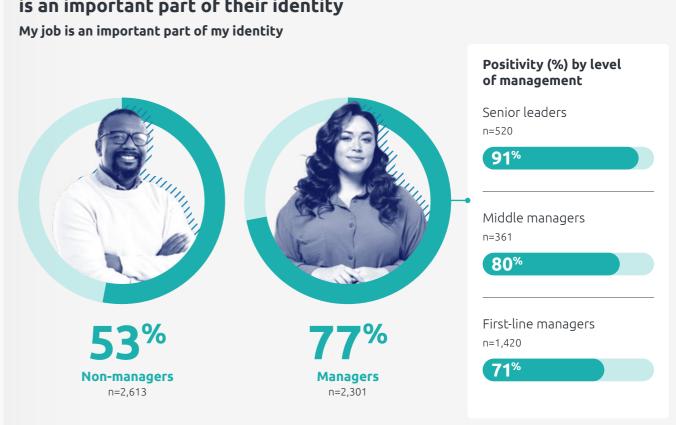


n=4,914

41



Managers are more likely to feel that work is an important part of their identity



Base: A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18-64 in the UK were surveyed between 21 March and 4 April 2025.

Percentages have been rebased to exclude "I don't know" responses.

Employees most want organisations to take a stance on mental health



What the data says

61% of UK employees want their employer to take a stance on the big issues in society, declining by 1pt since 2024 (see p. 58). This year, we asked employees who were positive or neutral to that question which issues they want their employer to take a stance on.

Mental health was the most selected, with 54% saying they would like their employer to take a stance on this. Workers' rights was the next most popular, with just under 50%. Four in ten chose climate change, and 38% gender equality. A third selected poverty and social inequality and smaller proportions chose other issues.

There are some differences by age, most notably that 25–34-year-olds are 7–8pts more likely to want their employer to take a stance on gender equality and financial/political corruption.



What we think

There is no shortage of issues in the world for people to care about. The data shows that when it comes to their employer, people feel most strongly about them taking a stance on the issues that could be considered to most immediately affect employees.

Internal communicators need to work closely with corporate responsibility and external communication colleagues to ensure alignment on any issues the organisation might take a stance on. This is an area that can change rapidly based on world events, as we have seen in recent years.

It's vital that any stance aligns with the organisation's values, reflects the lived experience of employees and has relevance to that organisation. Inauthentic, performative displays will not land well.



Fellows' point of view

Fellows emphasise the importance of working with employee groups to ensure their lived experiences are at the heart of an organisation's approach. It's also vital to consider whether an organisation has a relevant reason to be speaking on an issue, particularly externally. This will vary wildly depending on factors such as culture, sector and ownership model. Alignment with external communications colleagues is non-negotiable.

We work closely with employee groups to understand and support them, and to establish what needs to be communicated more widely. It's important to us that we let them take the lead and we're not making decisions that we have no right to make. We have a real focus right now on mental health, so it's interesting to see that come out strongly. On these topics we must walk the talk, any gap between what you say and what you do erodes trust very quickly."



Kate Jones - Mental health, workers' rights and climate change top the list of issues* Which if any issues would you like to see your employer n=3.877take a stance on? (Select all that apply)** Highest in, by age Proportion (%) Mental health **58**% 45-54 **55**% 35-44 Workers' rights **52**% 25-34 49% Climate change 25-34 35-44 Gender equality 25-34 45% 18-24 Poverty and social inequality **37**% 25-34 Racial equality 25-34 **35**% 18-24 Financial/political corruption 25-34 35-44 LGBTQ+ rights **25**% 18-24 21% 45-54 Misinformation 18% 55-64 Military conflict between nations 12% 18-24 25-34 * Responses only from those who responded Responses by age 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the question 'I want my employer to take a clear stance 213 25-34 1,111 on the big issues in society (for example climate change, conflicts, inequality).' 35-44 997 952 **9% selected I do not think 15-54 my employer should take a stance 604 on any of these issues.

Base: A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18–64 in the UK were surveyed between 21 March and 4 April 2025. Percentages have been rebased to exclude "I don't know" responses.

/ 42

Alignment on values has the same impact on intent to stay as satisfaction with pay



More than six out of ten UK employees say their organisation's values are aligned with their own. At 63%, this percentage hasn't changed since the 2023 IC Index (see p. 58). A quarter are neutral and just over one in ten disagree.

There is a link between alignment of values and attrition. Those who feel that their organisation's values are aligned with their own are more likely to intend to stay with their employer for three or more years – 82% agree, compared to 62% of those who don't share the same values as their employer.

This difference is similar to the pattern seen in relation to whether an employee says they are satisfied with their job's pay and benefits.



What we think

With one in four employees uncertain as to whether their employer's values align with their own, there is clearly more to be done. If employees don't know what their employer stands for, how engaged can they really be?

Internal communicators have a key role to play in making it clear what the organisational values are, as well as sharing stories (through channels and leaders) that demonstrate what the values mean in practice.

More than just words on the wall, values should outline how an organisation treats its employees and how it expects employees to treat each other, as well as being the basis for the wider employee experience and environment. They should be woven into every touchpoint in the employee lifecycle: recruitment, performance management, reward and recognition, change and even leaving processes.

So perhaps it isn't surprising to see this close alignment between the importance of values and the importance of pay and benefits – they are two sides of the same coin, both integral to 'how it feels to work here'.

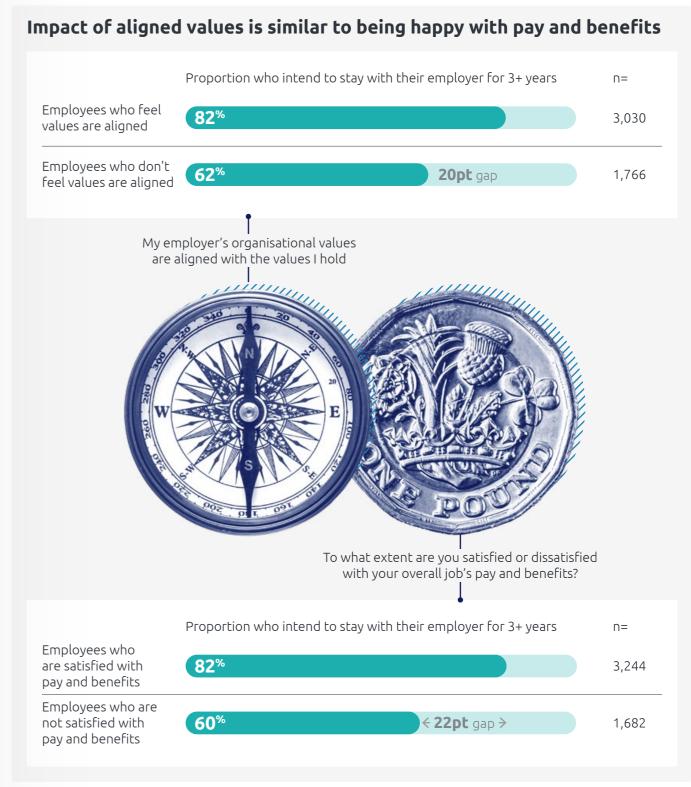
As with many topics covered in this report, internal communicators are well-placed to advise leaders on the reality for employees – in this case, any perceived disconnects between values and the lived employee experience. These gaps can have a severe impact on engagement and we are often first to hear the rumblings through our channels and networks.

More than six in ten employees say their organisation's values align with their own

My employer's organisational values are aligned with the values I hold

n=4,796





Machine learning

The case for clear Al communication



What are employees' hopes and fears around AI?



We asked UK employees what they worry about when it comes to the use of generative artificial intelligence (gen AI) in their organisation.

Loss of human jobs is the most common worry and is on the minds of 48% of employees. Data privacy and security follow, for 36% of people. Around a third are concerned about a lack of transparency and the spread of misinformation.

Three in ten worry about unethical use and over a quarter have concerns about poor quality of work. Just under a quarter are worried about copyright or plagiarism, and 17% about the amplification of existing bias and discrimination.

When it comes to excitement about gen AI, the top three positives are automation of day-to-day tasks, increased productivity and saving time.

Just under one in four feel it could improve creativity and the same proportion feel positively about improvements to processes and the customer experience. 22% feel that gen AI could lead to reduced human error and one in five feel it could help with rewriting / finessing.

Employees who work in smaller organisations are more likely to feel there are positives to using gen AI. They are particularly more likely to say it could improve creativity, with 41% of employees from organisations of 500–999 employees seeing it as a potential positive, compared to just 15% in the largest organisations.



Gen AI is clearly here to stay, but many organisations and individuals are still playing catch-up when it comes to exploring the potentials and the pitfalls of this new technology.

As noted in the IoIC's own Charter for the ethical adoption of AI,* we should be looking to 'harness the full power and potential of AI at work while mitigating the potential for misuse.'

With almost half of employees saying they fear gen AI could mean the loss of human jobs, and a third being worried about a lack of transparency, it's vital that organisations provide clarity to their people. The following pages will further prove the importance of clear communication in allaying these fears.

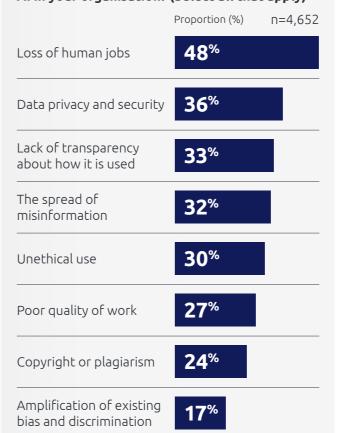
When it comes to the positives, many employees are clearly open to gen AI helping them with their jobs, so they can focus on the real value they can add. But if left to their own devices, without proper parameters and guidance around the use of AI, employees could open their organisations up to risk.

Internal communicators should be pushing organisations to have the difficult conversations around when and how gen AI can be used by employees. Silence on this topic could cause significant issues, including reputational and financial damage.

Well-defined principles for the use of AI, practical training, appropriate tools to use – these are all topics that need clear, consistent communication across the organisation. Internal communicators are of course not responsible for AI, but we should be influencing stakeholders to be proactive in setting out their approach to it, so we can develop a comprehensive strategy that maximises the benefits and minimises the risks.

Almost half worried about job losses

Top eight: What, if anything, do you worry about when it comes to the use of Generative AI in your organisation? (Select all that apply)

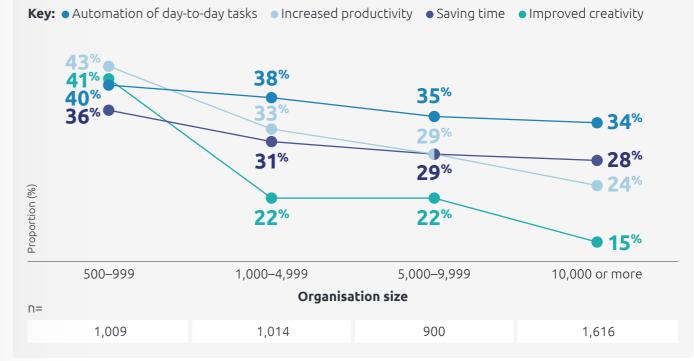


More than a third positive about automation of tasks

Top eight: What, if anything, do you feel positive about when it comes to the use of Generative AI in your organisation? (Select all that apply)



Higher proportion of employees of smaller organisations feel positively



* 'Sustaining Trust in the Future of Internal Communication: Introducing the AI Ethics Charter,'
The Institute of Internal Communication, February 2025

More clarity on AI needed



Just over four in ten UK employees agree their employer has clearly communicated how gen AI is used responsibly in their organisation. More than a quarter said their employer hadn't. 17% neither agreed nor disagreed and 15% said gen AI isn't used in their organisation.

When it comes to whether organisations have been clear with employees about how they are expected to use gen AI as a part of their jobs, we see a similar pattern. 36% say their employer has been clear on this and 25% say they haven't. Just under a quarter say gen AI is not expected to be part of their job, and 15% are neutral.

Employees who work in smaller organisations are far more likely to say their employer has been clear about the use of gen AI – both at an organisational and individual role level.

In organisations of 500–999 people, more than six in ten employees agree their employer has been clear on this topic in both respects.

In organisations of 1,000–4,999 or 5,000–9,999 employees, only four in ten employees say responsible organisational use of AI has been clearly communicated, and just over a third say role-related expectations are clear.

In the largest organisations just 29% say their employer has been clear on responsible use at an organisational level. And only 23% say their organisation has been clear about how they are expected to use gen AI as a part of their jobs.



As we've seen on p. 48–49, there's still considerable fear from employees around the use of gen AI. With only 41% of employees saying their organisation has been clear on its responsible use, the need for clarity is even more urgent.

Organisations that aren't proactive in their approach and communication are open to risk, as well as missed opportunities. Even in organisations where gen Al won't be used, clarity on this position – and why it's the right one for the organisation – is needed.

As always, managers will have a big part to play in creating that clarity. Internal communicators can advise on the organisational level approach and support with guidance for managers in leading conversations. Many managers may have little-to-no knowledge on this topic, so making this support clear and simple will be even more critical than usual.

The differences between smaller and larger organisations are stark. The higher levels of communication (and excitement, see p. 48–49) about AI in smaller organisations may be a reflection of their agility in exploring new technologies – and perhaps a higher likelihood of having a challenger mindset or willingness and ability to disrupt.

IC professionals in large organisations may need to wade through more red tape and resistance to get the clarity needed to communicate effectively on this ever-evolving topic, but tackling that challenge head-on should certainly be near the top of their to-do list.

Four in ten say their employer has been clear on Gen AI use

My employer has clearly communicated how Generative AI is used responsibly in my organisation

n=4.527







Generative AI is not used in my organisation

to be part of my job

51

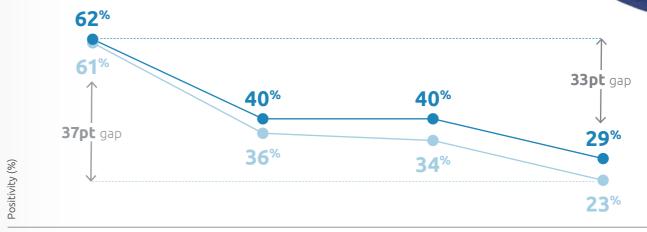
My employer has clearly communicated how I am expected to use Generative AI as a part of my job n=4,737



Employees of larger organisations less likely to say use of AI has been clearly communicated

Key: • My employer has clearly communicated how Generative AI is used responsibly in my organisation

• My employer has clearly communicated how I am expected to use Generative AI as a part of my job



	500–999	1,000–4,999	1,000–4,999 5,000–9,999	
		Organisa	ation size	
• n=				
	1,018	1,014	895	1,600
• n=				
	1,033	1,053	941	1,710

Base: A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18–64 in the UK were surveyed between 21 March and 4 April 2025.

Percentages have been rebased to exclude "I don't know" responses.

IC Index 2025 IC Index 2025

Talking honestly about AI helps people feel more comfortable



We asked UK employees whether they would feel comfortable if gen AI had been used to develop communications from their employer – either a written message, or an image or video.

We see very similar responses for both types of communication. The proportion of employees who would be comfortable is 36–37%, compared to 41-43% who would not feel comfortable.

Employees who responded positively to the question 'My employer has clearly communicated how gen AI is used responsibly in my organisation' are almost twice as likely to feel comfortable with AI being used for communication from their employer – seven in ten agree.



What we think

If the data already shared in this report hasn't made it clear why organisations must communicate their approach to artificial intelligence, then this should seal the deal.

It's not exactly surprising that providing clarity increases people's comfort – that is at the heart of why our profession exists. However, when considered in the context of the fears people have about the technology, and the potential issues that could arise from employees using AI without the necessary guidance and safeguards – this is a bit of a special case.

Communicators should not wait for their technology teams or other stakeholders to approach them to discuss AI communication. IC teams should be banging down the door to start the conversation.

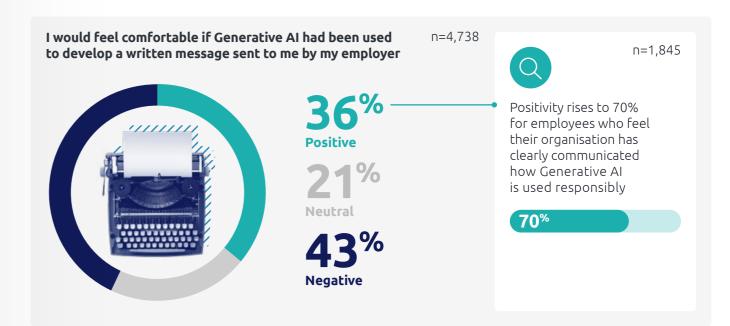
The importance of a balanced and informed view about AI comes through strongly in our conversations with Fellows. Encouraging exploration, but within set parameters, with clear purpose and a healthy dose of caution all emerged as important. Organisations are all at different stages of their relationship with AI, but whatever stage that is, clearly communicating expectations to employees is critical to avoid potential issues and concerns.

We're working to demystify AI for our employees. One key area we are exploring is how it can help with the processes that are pain points for people. We're gathering case studies to share, so we can make AI real and relatable and show how it connects into the things employees would like improved."



Heather Armond Allianz Commercial

Majority are not comfortable with gen AI being used for written or visual communications



Ask me anything...



53

I would feel comfortable if Generative AI had been used to develop an image or video sent to me by my employer



Positive

Negative

n=4.726

n=1,844

Positivity rises to 70% for employees who feel their organisation has clearly communicated how Generative Al is used responsibly

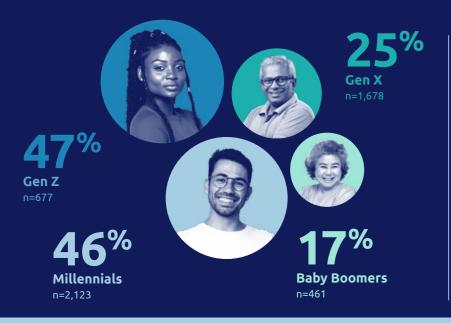
Base: A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18-64 in the UK were surveyed between 21 March and 4 April 2025.

Percentages have been rebased to exclude "I don't know" responses.



IC Index 2025 IC Index 2025

Would feel comfortable if generative AI had been used to develop a written message from their employer



employees n=2.540

Selects 'Being supportive when something impacts me personally' in the top three things they value in a manager

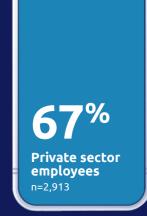


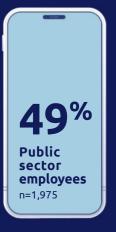


Male employees n=2,388

Female employees n=2,540

Has work-related apps on a personal device





Spot the difference

Demographic pull-outs

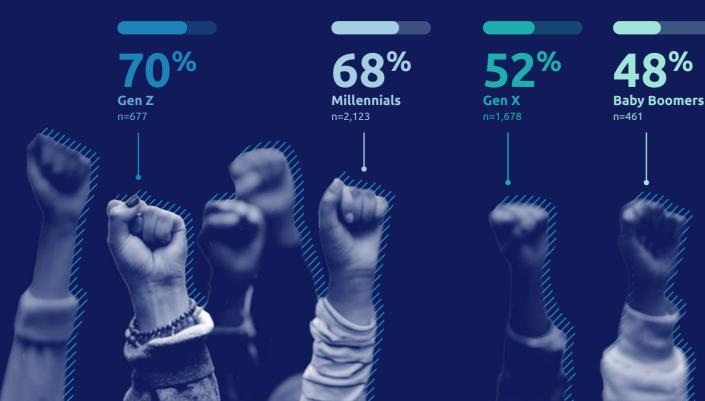
When exploring this year's data, we found some interesting patterns by different demographics or organisations. As a little extra data snack to help inform IC strategies, here are a few of the key differences that emerged.

Believes their organisation's strategy is the right one for success

employees employees n=2,913

Private sector Public sector

Wants their employer to take a clear stance on the big issues in society



Would like their employer to take a stance on climate change



Employees of global organisations



Employees of international organisations



Employees of UK-only organisations

Feels their employer takes a clear stance on the big issues in society

Employees of global organisations

Employees of international

Employees of UK-only organisations

Tracking scores since 2023

	2025 score	2024 score	2023 score	vs. 2024	vs. 2023
	30016	Score	SCOLE		
Employees rating communication as 7–10 out of 10*	63 %	61%	61%	⊕2 ^{pts}	⊕2 ^{pts}
Employees rating communication as 4–6 out of 10*	25%	29%	31%	⊖4 ^{pts}	⊝6 ^{pts}
Employees rating communication as 0–3 out of 10*	12%	10%	8%	⊕2 ^{pts}	+ 4pts
I feel equipped to lead a conversation with my team(s) on what's happening across the business	80%	81%	71%	⊝1 ^{pt}	⊕9 ^{pts}
My job provides me with the opportunity to do challenging and interesting work	76 %	67%	61%	⊕9 ^{pts}	⊕15 ^{pts}
I trust my direct manager	76 %	75 %	65%	⊕ 1 ^{pt}	⊕11 ^{pts}
My employer has been clear on the organisation's strategy and business priorities (for example, the long-term plans and operational goals)	67%	69%	57 %	⊝2 ^{pts}	⊕10 ^{pts}
I feel proud to work for my organisation	67%	58 %	56%	⊕ 9 pts	⊕11 ^{pts}
My employer has been clear on how the organisation is performing against its strategy and business priorities	66%	65%	N/A	⊕ 1 ^{pt}	N/A
Right now, I feel motivated by my organisation to do the best job I can	65%	54 %	52 %	⊕11 ^{pts}	⊕13 ^{pts}
I believe communications from my employer is open and honest	64%	69%	54%	⊝ 5 ^{pts}	⊕10 ^{pts}
My employer's organisational values are aligned with the values I hold	63%	N/A	63%	N/A	⊜ O ^{pts}
I would recommend my employer as a great place to work	62 %	53 %	54%	⊕9 ^{pts}	⊕8 ^{pts}
I want my employer to take a clear stance on the big issues in society (for example climate change, conflicts, inequality)	61%	62%	N/A	⊝1 ^{pt}	N/A

^{*} **Full question:** How would you rate how your organisation communicates with you overall? (0 Very poor – 10 Excellent) **Base:** A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18–64 in the UK were surveyed between 21 March and 4 April 2025. Percentages have been rebased to exclude "I don't know" responses.



IC Index 2024 research: A representative quota sample of 4,000 UK workers aged 18–64 in the UK were surveyed online by Ipsos IIS team between 6–20 March 2024.

IC Index 2023 research: A representative quota sample of 3,000 UK workers aged 18–64 in the UK were surveyed online by Cint between 6–20 March 2023.

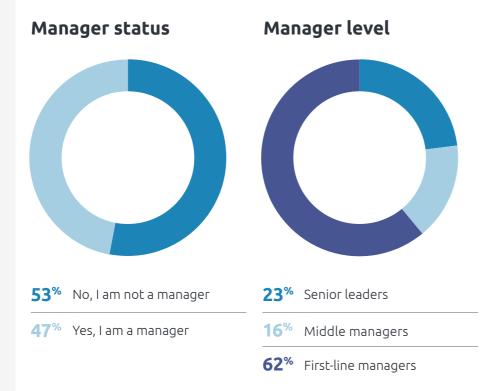
	2025 score	2024 score	2023 score	vs. 2024	vs. 2023
My organisation welcomes open and honest feedback on them as an employer	60%	57 %	53 %	⊕3 ^{pts}	⊕ 7 pts
I trust my organisation's leadership team	59 %	58 %	50%	⊕1 ^{pt}	⊕9 ^{pts}
I feel valued by my organisation	59 %	48%	49%	⊕11 ^{pts}	⊕10 ^{pts}
I trust my organisation's CEO/most senior leader	58%	55 %	54%	⊕3 ^{pts}	⊕4 pts
I believe our organisation's strategy is the right one for success	58%	56%	63%	⊕2 ^{pts}	⊝5 ^{pts}
My employer takes a clear stance on the big issues in society (for example climate change, conflicts, inequality)	54%	50%	N/A	⊕4 ^{pts}	N/A
My organisation is good at showing how colleague feedback is used to help inform decisions and actions	53%	47%	45%	⊕6 ^{pts}	⊕8 ^{pts}
Leaders in my organisation understand the challenges employees face	51 %	49%	N/A	+2 ^{pts}	N/A

Methodology

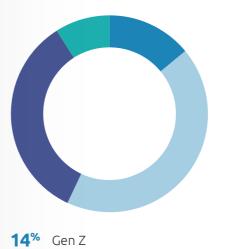
About the research

- The IC Index 2025 question set was developed by Ipsos Karian and Box in collaboration with the IoIC to help identify the key challenges and opportunities facing the IC profession.
- A representative quota sample of 4,939 UK workers aged 18–64 in the UK were surveyed online by Ipsos IIS team between 31 March and 4 April 2025.
- The sample obtained is representative of the population with quotas on sector, gender and age to ensure the ability to dive deeper into results and themes. The sample covered only employees working in large organisations employing over 500 employees to increase the likelihood of their organisation having a dedicated internal communication function in place.
- Throughout the report, where "employees" or "workers" are referred to, reported results are based only on those providing an affirmative answer to the question; results have been rebased to remove "I don't know" responses.

Gender Age 51% Woman 5% 18-24 48% Man 26% 25-34 <1% Non-binary</td> 25% 35-44 <1% My gender is not listed</td> 26% 45-54 <1% Prefer not to say</td> 18% 55-64



Generation



43% Millennial

34% Gen X

9% Baby Boomer

Management level

groups, these have been defined as below.

Throughout the report, where we have referred to the following

In response to: 'Which of these best describes your level of management?'

Senior leaders: selected 'I am a senior leader of my organisation'

Middle managers: selected
'I manage people who lead teams'

First-line managers: selected 'I manage a team or individual'

Generation

At time of survey, a respondent's age meant they were:

Gen Z: 18–28 years old

Millennials: 29–44 years old

Gen X: 45–58 years old

Baby Boomers: 59–65 years old

Scope of organisation's operations

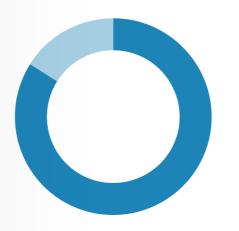
In response to 'Which of these best describes your organisation?'

Employees of global organisations: selected 'Global
– operating across continents
outside of Europe'.

Employees of international organisations: selected 'International – operating within Europe'.

Employees of UK-only organisations: selected 'Domestic
– operating within the UK'.

Employment status



84% Full-time employee

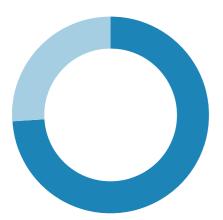
16% Part-time employee



60 61

Methodology (cont.)

Digital connection



I spend most of my work time in front of a computer

I work in a setting where
I am not connected to
a computer frequently
(for example in a store,
distribution or logistics role)

Organisation size





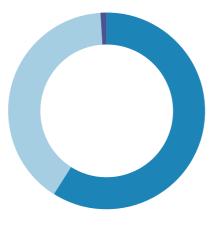
21% 500–999

22% 1,000–4,999

20% 5,000–9,999

37% 10,000 or more

Sector



59% Private sector

40% Public sector

1% Voluntary sector

Scope of organisation's operations



27% International organisations

21[%] Global organisations

52% UK-only organisations

Employee region		
Greater London	17%	
North West	12%	
South East	12%	
East of England	9%	
Yorkshire and The Humber	8%	
West Midlands	8%	
Scotland	8%	
East Midlands	8%	
South West	7 %	
Wales	5%	
North East	4%	
Northern Ireland	2%	

Industry

15 %	ІТ	2%	Non-profit	1%	Marketing/ Market Research/ Public Relations
13%	Healthcare/ Medical	2%	Utilities (Electric, Gas, Sanitary Services)	1%	Consulting
10%	Government/ Military	1%	Telecommunications	1%	Research/ Science
10%	Retail	1%	Aerospace/ Aviation/ Automotive	1%	Media/ Printing/ Publishing
7 %	Finance/Banking/Insurance	1%	Engineering/Architecture	<1%	Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing
6%	Education	1%	Accounting	<1%	Entertainment/ Recreation
5%	Manufacturing	1%	Food Service	<1%	Advertising
5%	Transportation/ Distribution	1%	Legal	<1%	Biotechnology
2%	Construction/ Home Improvement	1%	Pharmaceutical/ Chemical	<1%	Mining
2%	Hospitality	1%	Real Estate	7%	Other
2%	Business/ Professional Services	1%	Wholesales	_	

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The research behind this report was conducted by Ipsos Karian and Box on behalf of the IoIC.

For more information about the IC Index, reach out to

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