

# Integral Employee Activation Index

Employee readiness to support organizational goals

## Employee Activation Index

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## About this Index

**2,011**  
participants

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**4** generations

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**17** mindsets

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**25** societal  
& political issues

Employee and internal communications played a vital role as organizations adapted at crisis-speed to new ways of working in 2020 and 2021. With many corporate employees working from home, the division between work and home life narrowed and blurred. Employees and employers found themselves demanding more of one another.

***Integral**, an employee activation agency, sought to understand the impact of societal issues and workplace experience on employee perceptions and behavior.*

Integral engaged The Harris Poll to conduct a survey of more than 2,000 employed individuals across the United States from June-July 2021. Participants shared their perceptions about their mindset, priorities, compensation, and their values against 25 societal and political topics and how well their organization was making a difference on those values.

# Key takeaways

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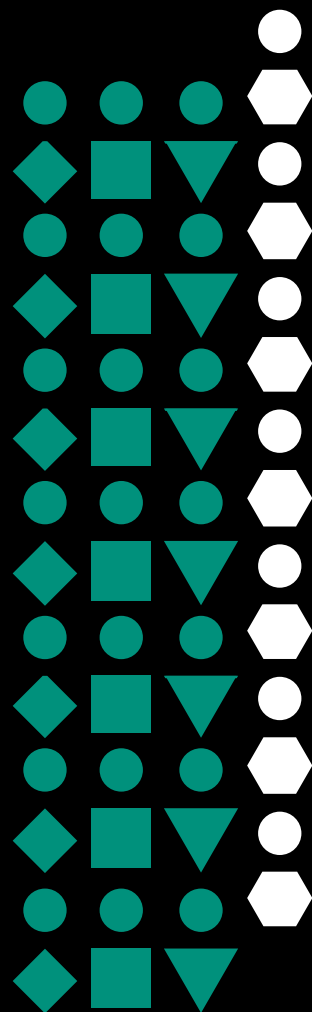
Employees gave their employers a performance review.

## Key takeaways

The Pandemic. The Great Resignation. Contentious societal and political issues. The challenges we face create unprecedented stress on individuals and families which can seep into the work environment.

- 1.** Employees with a clear sense of their organization's values are more likely to perceive the organization positively, and drive beneficial action on behalf of their employer.
- 2.** Employees are more likely to change jobs if they feel their organization performs poorly in areas that are important to them, like racial justice and equality.
- 3.** Employees who believe their organization reflects their values are more likely to have a positive daily mindset.
- 4.** Employees with children in the household face different issues and hold different social values than their peers without children at home.
- 5.** Organizations that explore and understand the specifics of involvement and interests across generations help all employees make their best contributions.
- 6.** Employees who feel their organization reflects their values are more likely to follow and interact with their organization and colleagues on social media and be online advocates.
- 7.** Taking a proactive approach to understanding employee sensitivities regarding social and political issues will help organizations build more inclusive cultures.
- 8.** Gender roles impact types of organizational involvement that employees are interested in.

01.



# When values align



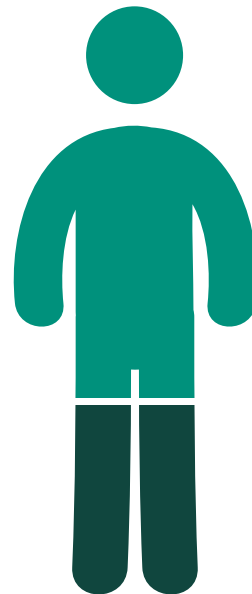
Senior leadership talks a lot about getting employees to live organizational values. Our study found a twist.

## 01. When values align

Employees with a clear sense of their organization's values are more likely to perceive the organization positively.

2020 and 2021 brought many types of crises to the workplace and organizational decisions. Employees' perceptions of an organization's alignment with their own personal values drives their actions on- and off-line. Organizational values guide employee behavior and interactions by clarifying central tenets of company culture. How these intersect plays a big part in navigating change.

### How employees feel their organization performs on their personal values



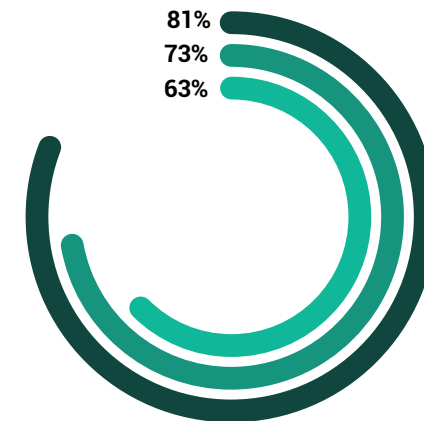
64%

Organization **does** reflect my values

36%

Organization **does not** reflect my values

### How employees experience their organization



- I believe I contribute to my organization's success
- My organization provides me with the tools and resources I need to do my job effectively
- My organization enables or encourages me to grow my career at the organization

## 01. When values align

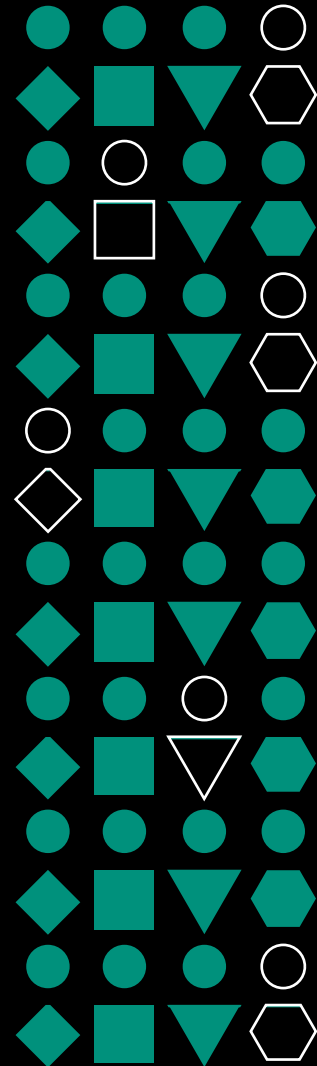
### Integral insight

**Employers need to act like Marketing departments: segmenting employees like customers and leveraging data analysis to drive decision-making.**

A deeper understanding of employees across a variety of factors (generation, gender, race/ethnicity) will help organizations gauge employee values and sentiment. Use this information to more accurately map business decisions and communications to drive employee actions, perceptions, and engagement.



02.



# Politics & the Great Resignation

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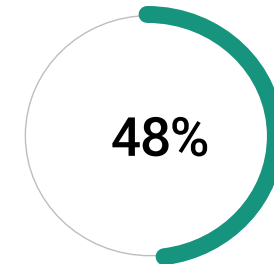
Understanding the landscape of employees' personal values will enable insightful decisions to build the very human act of connection, balance conflicting needs, and drive positive outcomes.

## 02. Politics and the Great Resignation

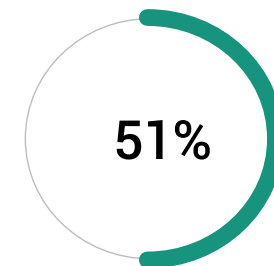
Employees in organizations that reflect their values are more comfortable sharing their political opinions, as well as more likely to feel that others should be able to share political views in the workplace.

There is a clear split on sharing political views in the workplace, with 48% feeling people should have the ability to share and 51% of people feeling comfortable in sharing.

Millennials feel most strongly about sharing their viewpoints, while Baby Boomers are less comfortable and not as adamant about sharing their opinions.



Feel people should have the ability to express their political views in the workplace



Feel comfortable sharing their own personal political views in their organization

## 02. Politics and the Great Resignation

An organization's performance on societal and political issues directly impacts an employees' likelihood to change jobs.

Nearly 75% of employees felt their organizations were responding "very well to somewhat well" on these issues. Most participants felt their employer has performed very well/somewhat well on their top five issues.

Those who feel their organization reflects their values are more likely to rank racial inequality, gender wage/leadership gap, and climate change as important—and to say their organization performs well on societal issues.

### Overall top 5 ranked issues\*

- 40%** Employees' good health and well-being
- 26%** Job creation
- 25%** Racial inequality/discrimination/hate crimes/prejudice/bias
- 24%** Data privacy
- 20%** Gender wage and leadership gap/gender equity (uplifting women into leadership roles)

\*Participants chose up to five issues from a [list of 25 societal and political issues](#) most important to them (see appendix). Issues ranged from employees' good health and well-being, universal access to healthcare, poverty and hunger to voting, veteran's issues, and first/second amendment rights. We also looked at responses to domestic violence, sexual harassment, and racial, gender, and income inequality.

## 02. Politics and the Great Resignation

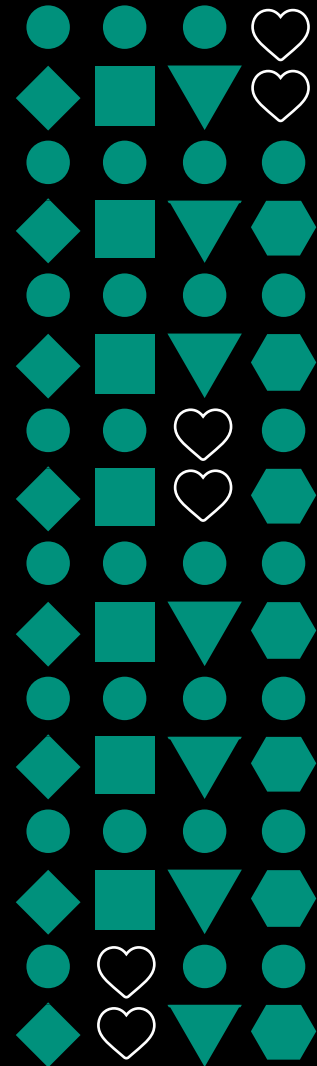
### Integral insight

**Employees care about the impact their organization makes on the values they hold most dear. Knowing how your organizational values do (or don't) align with employee personal values will help pinpoint gaps.**

Create programs, training, and targeted communications that address the gaps to reduce negative behaviors (such as not complying with safety protocols) and motivate positive behaviors (such as going the extra mile for a teammate).

Retaining employees during this period of “Great Resignation,” where employees are quitting at high rates, will keep organizational knowledge in-house, reduce expenses related to recruiting and on-boarding, and build a stronger culture.

03.



# Emotion drives behavior

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What are you driving? Employees are more likely to have positive associations with their organization when company values align with their own personal values.

### 03. Emotions drive behavior

Mindset strongly correlates with feelings. Feelings drive employee behavior.

Employees who believe their organization reflects their values are more likely to have a positive mindset about their job.

# 79%

say they are loyal

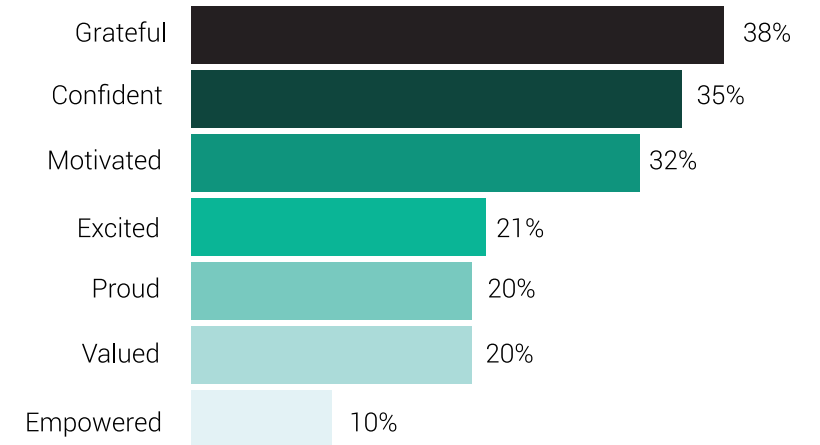
# 65%

would give their organization a favorable review online and indicate they feel appropriately compensated for their role

# 63%

are likely to remain with their employer over the next 6-12 months

### Positive daily mindset sentiment\*



\*Participants were asked for up to 3 characteristics to describe their job mindset

### 03. Emotions drive behavior

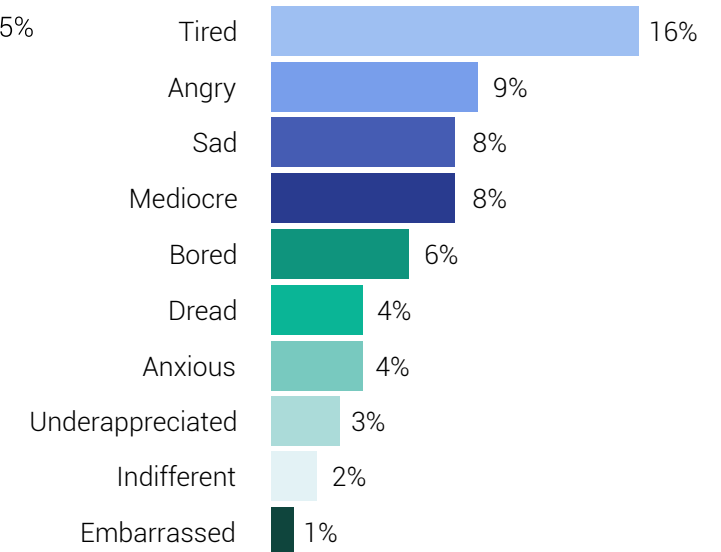
While most employees feel their colleagues would take positive actions on behalf of their organization, nearly one-fifth of employees believe their co-workers would take negative action.

Employees who don't believe their organization reflects their values are less likely to have a positive mindset about their job.

#### Potential for negative action against their employer



#### Negative daily mindset sentiments



\*Participants were asked for up to 3 characteristics to describe their job mindset

### 03. Emotions drive behavior

#### Integral insight

**Measuring employee values and sentiment will help organizations find ways to share and reinforce positive mindset and sentiment. A deeper look at employee perceptions and behaviors will help balance trust and risk.**

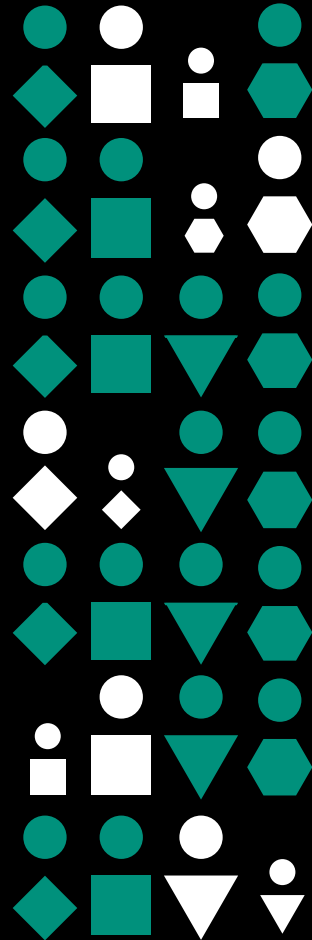
Understand the double-digit percent of employees likely to take negative action against your organization to establish warning signs and measures to prevent cyber-security risks, confidentiality disclosures, and disregard for safety protocols.

Create formal and informal roads to help employees share their positive energy and mindsets to communicate, influence, and reinforce aligned values.

Find compassionate ways to identify employees with negative mindsets and address the causes before their mindset turns into negative behaviors.



04.



# Take your kids to work year

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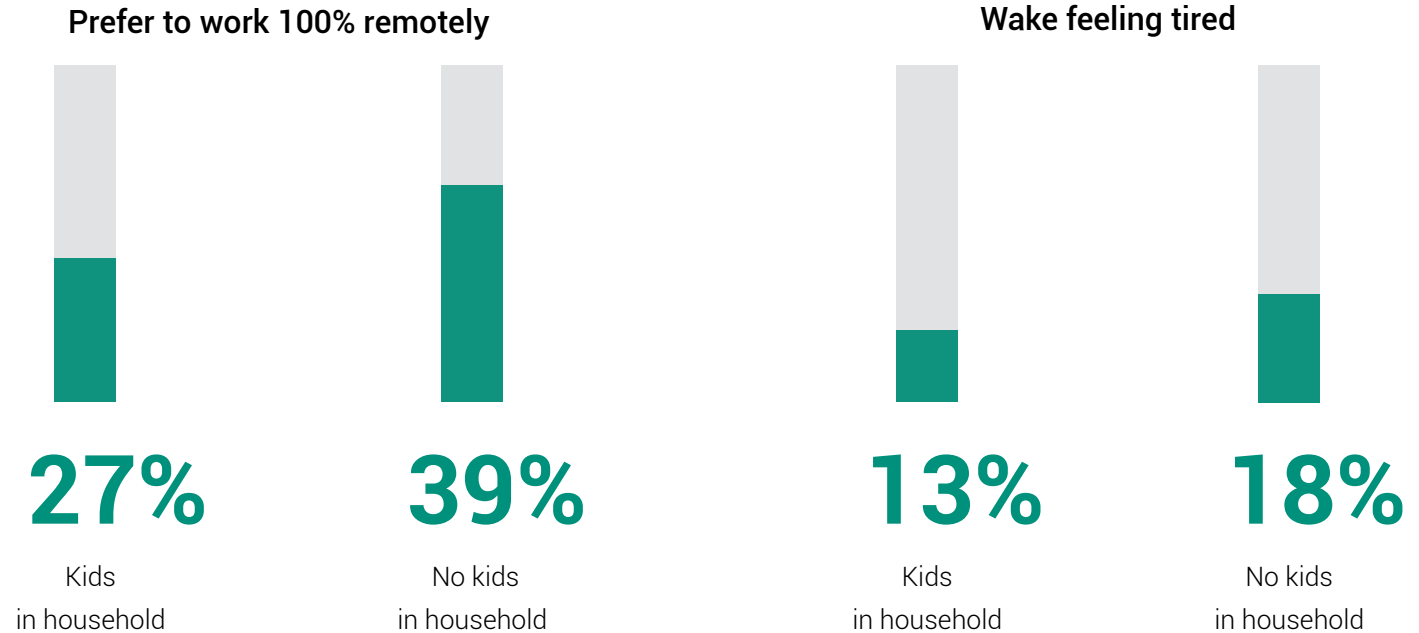
Employees with children in the household have different experiences, values, and perceptions than their peers without children in the household.

#### 04. Take your kids to work year

Employees with children in the household face different issues than their peers without children at home.

Those without children in the household could be early-in-career, those whose children are grown, or childless employees.

While we don't presume to know why participants with children in the household say they're excited to come to the workplace (*escape their children?!), 30% did—in contrast to 14% of employees without kids in the household.*



#### 04. Take your kids to work year

Employees with children in their household are significantly more likely to follow or interact with their organization across channels, not just social media channels.

Those with children at home are also more likely to advocate for a union, warn a candidate away or post a negative review online about their employer.

#### Likelihood of employee actions on behalf of or against their organization

	Kids	No Kids
Be involved in a mentoring program	71%	56%
Participate in corporate charitable/matching gift program	70%	46%
Volunteer with their organization/team	68%	49%
Buy company stock	51%	34%
Advocate for or join a union	44%	22%
Warn a candidate that organization is a bad place to work	33%	20%
Provide a negative review on job sites (such as Indeed.com, Glassdoor.com, or LinkedIn)	27%	15%

#### 04. Take your kids to work year

Employees with kids in the household put more importance on their organization taking action on societal and political issues.

Employees feel that it's important for their organization to take positive action\* on:

Kids in household	Issue	No kids in household
56%	Abortion	23%
76%	Climate change	44%
67%	Immigration to the US	36%
87%	Data privacy	65%
80%	LGBTQ rights	60%
62%	Income inequality	42%
65%	Second amendment rights	46%
58%	Domestic violence	41%
73%	First amendment rights	56%

\*Each participant defined "positive action" for themselves.

## 04. Take your kids to work year

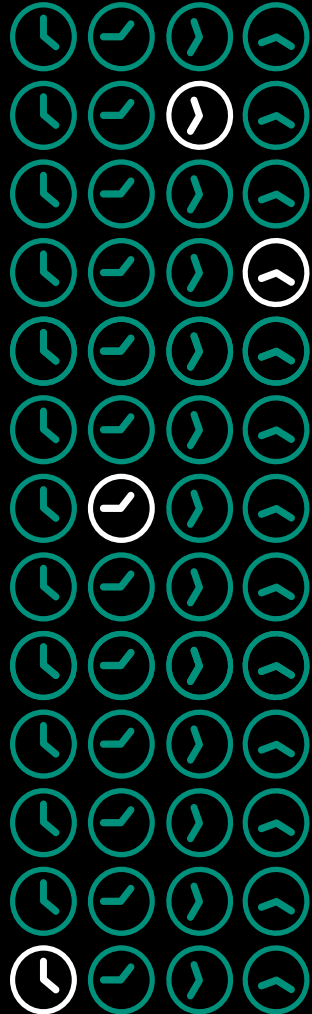
### Integral insight

**As work and home life boundaries blur, segmenting employee audiences by children/no children should enable organizations to further support employees.**

Rethink and target communications, programs, benefits, and policies so that all employees—regardless of parental status—have a broader capacity for getting their work done. Furthermore, organizations need to ensure that employees, regardless of children in the household, get the flexibility and advancement opportunities they need to be successful.

Some employees, based on industry, will always need to be on site, but you can customize experiences to drive activation and consistent support for all employees, regardless of title, position, location, or children in the household.

05.



# The Generation crash

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Taking a creative left-turn with employee communications can bridge generational divides and overcome stereotypes.


## 05. Generation crash

Map your employee experience to meet multi-generational needs and increase understanding between workforce generations.


Media and popular culture tend to emphasize generational differences and conflicts. The Index findings indicate nuanced areas organizations can use to strengthen employee involvement, reduce generational friction, and motivate employees to stay engaged across the four generations in the workforce.

Informed and engaged employees drive productivity and business growth regardless of the time they've spent in the workforce.

The earlier an employee is in their career, the more likely they are to indicate that their organization is supportive and collaborative. The longer career an employee has, the more results-oriented they believe their organization to be.

 **Generation Z**  
(1997-2012)

 **Millennials**  
(1981-1996)

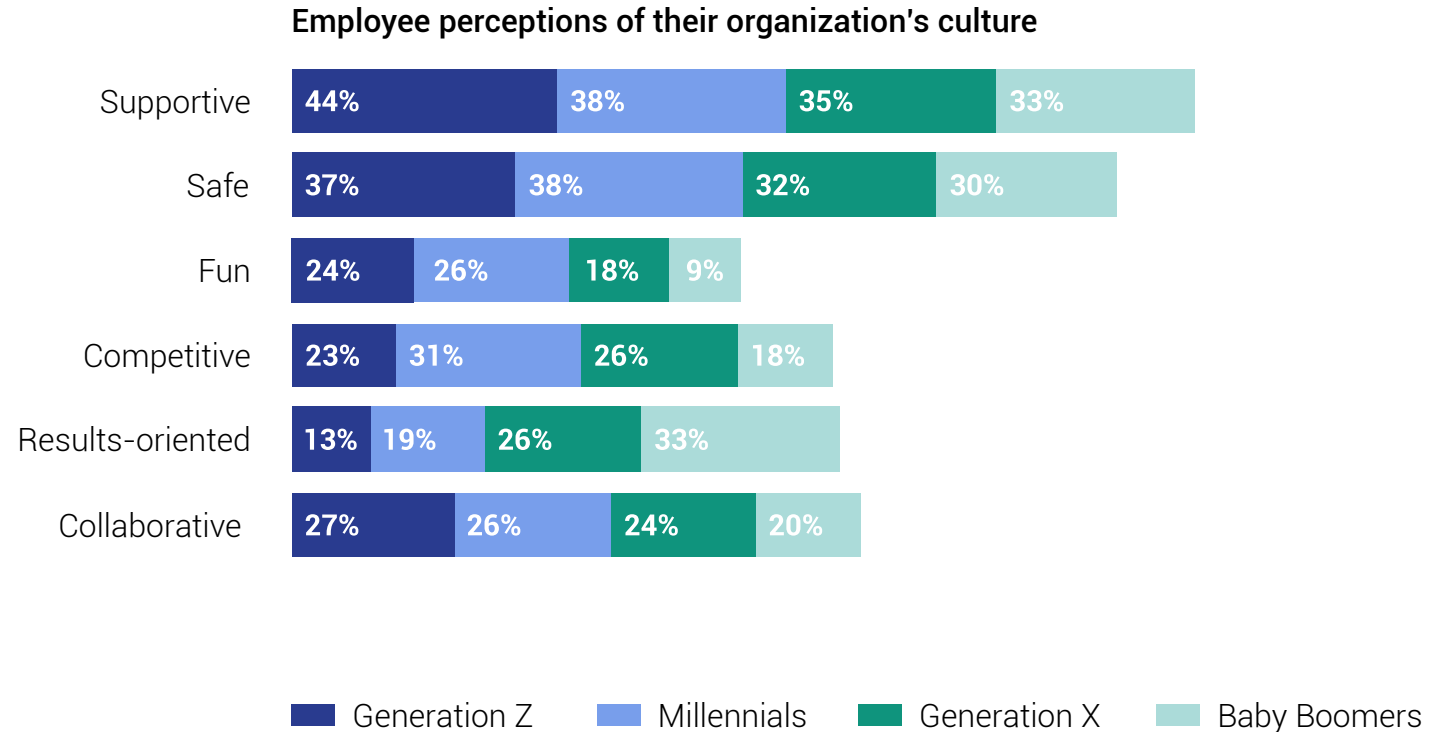
 **Generation X**  
(1965-1980)

 **Baby Boomers**  
(1946-1964)

## 05. Generation crash

Each generation experiences organizational culture attributes differently.

Younger generations indicated more enthusiasm for the organization's social gatherings. Yet, Gen Z is only 44% likely to volunteer with their organization or team compared to 61% Millennials, 58% Gen X, or 50% of Baby Boomers.





## 05. Generation crash

### Integral insight

#### **Turbocharge your ability to activate employees across all generations.**

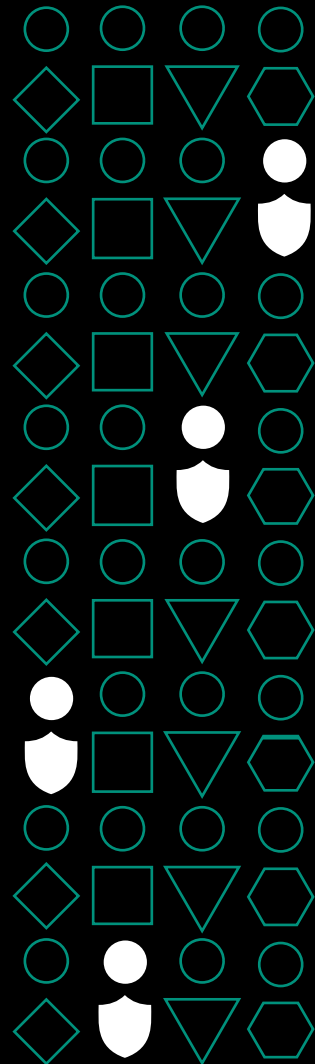
Personalize content like you would for your customers. Analyzing your employee population by generation leads to more effective communication differentiating messages, policy, and program offerings. The payoff? Employees across generations feel valued, appreciated, and successful.

Reinforcing organizational outcomes and tying them to personal and departmental goals underscores personal impact across generation-bound attitudes.

Messaging for policies and safety protocols can be tailored by generational tendency to improve compliance. Taking the time to listen and learn about the breadth of employee needs enables more nuanced and personalized reinforcement of positive actions as well as appropriate interventions for undesired behaviors. Use technologies and language that makes employees across the entire organization feel included and relevant.

Do not stereotype. Use caution when rolling out programs or communications initiatives tailored by generation.

06.



# Developing digital defenders

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Employees who feel their organization reflects their values are more likely to follow and interact with their organization and colleagues online.

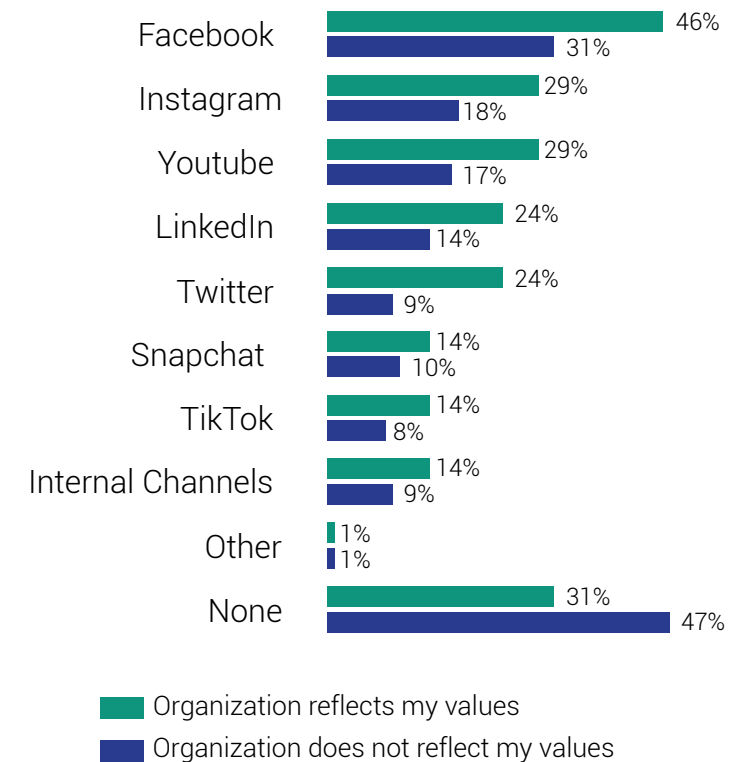
## 06. Developing digital defenders

Over two-thirds of participants are likely to give their organization a positive review online. Baby Boomers are the least likely to do so, while Gen X are the most likely.

Clear differences in social media engagement and online advocacy by generation. Baby Boomers are least likely to engage with colleagues and their organization on social media. While Gen Z are most likely to engage on Instagram; Millennials and Gen X on Facebook.

Overall, employees who feel their organization reflects their values are most likely to follow and/or interact with their organization and colleagues through Facebook.

### Channels used to interact with Organization

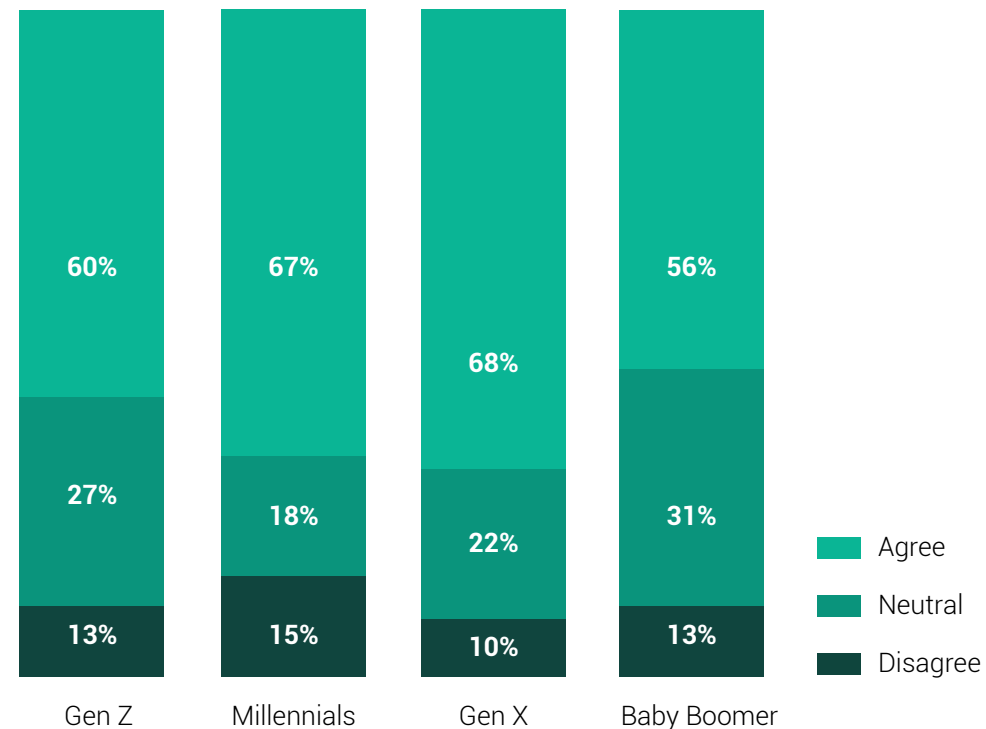


## 06. Developing digital defenders

Over two-thirds of participants were likely to give their organization a positive review on sites such as LinkedIn, Indeed, and Glassdoor.

Employees who feel their company reflects their values were also more likely to write a positive review.

Likelihood to give a positive review online



## 06. Developing digital defenders

### Integral insight

**The convergence of employees' personal and professional lives online presents organizations with the opportunity to activate the ultimate brand advocates and ambassadors.**

Organizations will need to provide training and policies to address the overlap of the personal and professional in the digital space. Make clear who is permitted to speak on behalf of the company, and what the non-negotiables are (posting about clients, vendors, proprietary information,

confidential internal initiatives). To take advantage of employee loyalty, you may wish to invite employees to post on key channels using specific hashtags to bolster and amplify your organization's social media presence.

To drive employee actions on behalf of the organization, invite or encourage employees who have been recognized with a promotion, raise, or significant anniversary to post an online review.

07.



# Inviting identities in

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When societal issues of identity find their way into the workplace, organizations must proactively meet employee needs by listening and addressing concerns with action.

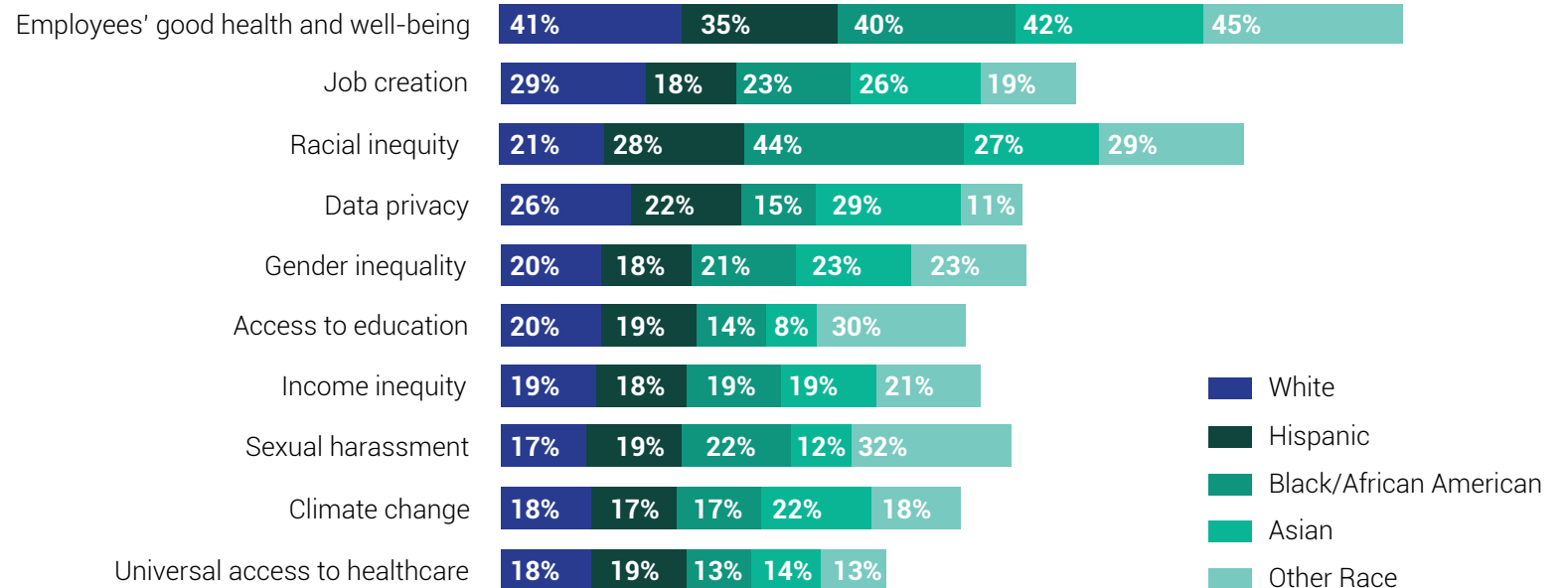
## 07. Inviting identities in

Employees are more likely to change jobs if they feel their organization performs poorly in areas that are important to them.

Black/African Americans are twice as likely to select racial inequality as a concern than people with any other racial background.

Employees who feel their organization reflects their values and addresses their societal concerns are more likely to take positive actions on behalf of their organization—such as posting a positive employer review online or going the extra mile for a colleague or client.

### Societal Issues that matter to employees



## 07. Inviting identities in

### Integral insight

**Organizational leaders can't control what happens in the world. They can set, motivate, and reinforce an equitable experience for their employees.**

Take a proactive approach to fostering inclusivity in the workplace to help retain and engage employees. Understanding the diverse experiences of employees from different racial and ethnic backgrounds is the first step to create psychological safety. And the first step to prevent your organization from being cheated of valuable potential high-performers and innovative perspectives. There will likely be cultural

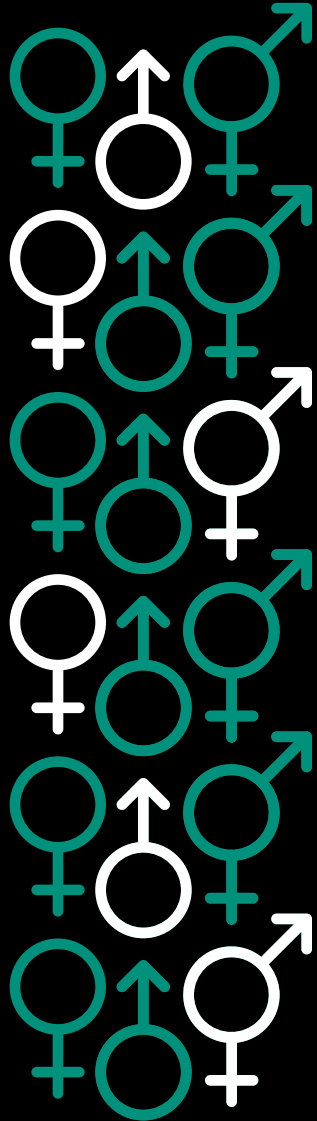
adjustments your company will need to learn more about and address.

An organization's stance on social justice issues has repercussions for its Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) strategies. Partner with expert advisors to deploy assessments, training and tools to unearth and interrupt unconscious bias, and develop awareness to avoid being blindsided by it.

Regularly consult Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to gain insights and input on company policies and initiatives. Examine policies across all employee audience segments.



08.



# The gender games

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Within corporations, female and male employees shared many similar viewpoints and perceptions. The differences impact types of engagement.

## 08. The gender games

Most often, male and female participants\* had different attitudes and approaches to employer engagement though both resulted in similar outcomes.

Male and female participants who believe their companies must prioritize the issue of gender pay parity are equally motivated to stay in their job, which may counter the perception that gender pay parity is solely a “women’s issue.”

Both were willing to engage with their organization or colleagues on social media. There were minor differences in social media preference. Male participants were slightly more inclined to follow their organization and colleagues on YouTube and Twitter; Female participants slightly more likely to follow colleagues on Facebook.

### ♀ Female participants are:

- Somewhat less likely to buy organization stock
- More likely to select Gender Wage and Leadership gap/Gender equality and “Sexual Harassment” as top concerns
- More often selected “grateful” as their daily mindset
- More likely to select “Tired,” “Anxious,” and “Unappreciated” than their male counterparts

### ♂ Male participants are:

- More likely to buy organization stock
- More likely to select Job Creation, and Climate Change as top concerns
- Nearly twice as likely to select First Amendment Rights as a top concern
- More often selected “Confident,” “Proud,” and “Valued” than their female counterparts

\*Integral’s survey included non-binary gender options. No participants identified using those options.

## 08. The gender games

### Integral insight

**Organizations can gain a strategic advantage by recognizing and addressing the way gender roles and the intersectionality of gender impact work-life balance.**

Continued focus to prevent and address sexual harassment in the workplace will keep you out of court—and out of the court of public opinion. More importantly, a safe, respectful work culture ensures peak employee performance from all genders.

To encourage more women to invest in company stock, companies might consider

providing financial training and incentives to induce women to invest in company stock, noting gender pay differences impact ability to invest—particularly for early-in-career individuals.

As organizations work to close the gender wage/leadership gap, mentoring programs and training will elevate women's visibility and abilities. A positive work environment where all employees are valued, rewarded, and treated fairly results in increased productivity and loyalty.

09.

# Moving forward

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As the tumult of 2020 and 2021 fades into the distance, the lessons we've learned will guide new approaches to employee activation. Take a cue from your marketing departments.

## 09. Moving forward

Your multi-generational workforce is a complex set of publics.

They are not a monolithic, homogeneous “internal only” group. In a world where Customer Experience (CX) and User Experience (UX) rule, employees expect organizations to provide a personalized, data-driven experience. What’s more, feeling that their organization makes a positive difference regarding their most cherished values connects and engages employees.

Each employee is guided by their personal values and motivations. Feeling that their organization makes a positive difference on their top values will help activate employees to support business goals and outcomes.

### **How will you redefine the work environment?**

Learn what motivates employees to act and engage productively on behalf of the organization. Look

closely into how generational, gender, racial/ethnic identity, and personal values align/don’t align to the organization’s professed values.

A personalized, data-driven experience will drive perceptions, actions, and engagement. By deeply understanding your employees—their wishes and aspirations—you can foster a culture of dignity, respect, connection, and well-being.

A sophisticated approach to employee segmentation will give you insight into the high-level demographic information (location, role, generation, organizational tenure). Psychographic information, sentiment, and individual abilities will help you create personalized, targeted, and relevant content. When individuals have more clarity and feel understood, it drives activation that delivers on business outcomes.

## 09. Moving forward

### Integral can help

Integral puts clients' needs first to ensure we provide dependable, compassionate, and informed strategic support—whether digitally or in-person, or as an integrated approach. We help our clients activate their most important public: Employees.

Daily, organizational life brings opportunities to:

- strategically improve employee communication
- thoughtfully guide employees through change
- nurture a positive culture where employees flourish
- improve the employee digital experience

Get in touch

[hello@teamintegral.com](mailto:hello@teamintegral.com)

**Let's change the future of work, for good.**

# Appendix:

- Societal & political issues
- Participant demographics

## Appendix

### Societal & political issues

The survey included these 25 issues for participants to select from.

Participants could select up to five issues that they felt were important for their organization to make a positive difference on.

Percentages shown in the table reflect overall participant totals.

#### Societal & political issues

Employees' good health and well-being	40%	Small Business Growth	16%
Job creation	26%	Voting Rights	15%
Racial inequality/discrimination/hate crimes/prejudice/bias	25%	Gun Violence	14%
Data privacy	24%	Drug Addiction	13%
Gender Wage and Leadership Gap (uplifting women into leadership roles)	20%	LGBTQ Rights	13%
Access to Education	19%	Veterans Issues	13%
Income inequality (CEO/Worker pay gap)	18%	Hunger	13%
Sexual Harassment	18%	Domestic Violence	12%
Climate Change/Environmental Responsibility/Environmental Efforts	18%	First Amendment Rights	12%
Universal Access to Healthcare	17%	Immigration to the U.S.A.	12%
Poverty	16%	Second Amendment Rights	8%
Housing/Homelessness	16%	Abortion	6%
		Israel/Palestine Issues	4%



## Appendix

### Participant demographics

Integral partnered with The Harris Poll to gain insights into current employee perceptions and activation related to organizational culture, values, mindset, priorities, advocacy, and more.

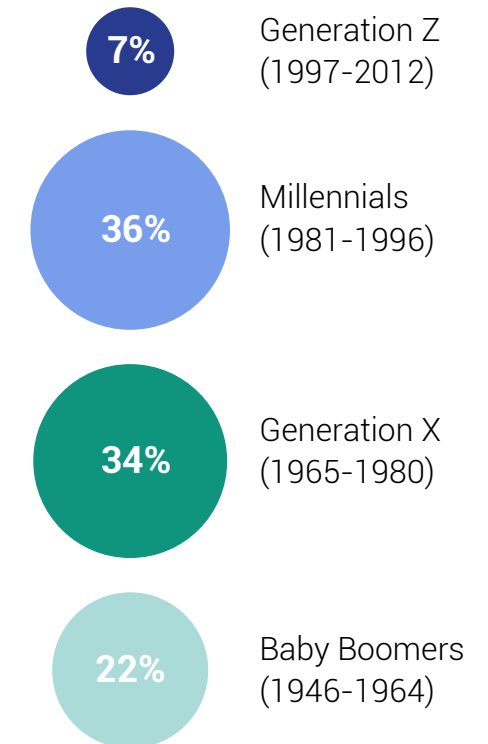
In mid-summer 2021, The Harris Poll invited 2,011 self-selected, employed participants ages 18 and older to complete the 8-minute online survey. Participant demographics are reflective of broader United States demographics.

Individuals from across generations and identities, with a mean age of 43.2

### Racial background

White	62%
Black or African American	11%
Hispanic	18%
Native American or Alaskan Native	1%
South Asian	1%
Chinese	1%
Korean	1%
Japanese	1%
Filipino	1%
Arab/West Asian	0%
Pacific Islander	0%
Other Asian	1%
Mixed Race	1%
Some other race	1%

### Generational spread



### Appendix

Participant demographics distribution by state

Total: 2,011

