



# European HR Best Practice Report 2011 - Full Report

## A CRF Institute Benchmark Study on Top Employers in Europe



INSPIRE TO STAND OUT



# Raport Instytutu CRF: Europejscy Top Employers 2011 – Najlepsze praktyki HR

Szanowni Państwo,

Przedstawiam całość raportu poświęconego najlepszym praktykom HR stosowanym przez europejskich Top Employers 2011, łącznie 444 organizacje z dziewięciu krajów Europy. Poniższy raport uwzględni dane dotyczące wszystkich Top Employers 2011 i ukazują podobieństwa oraz różnice w polityce personalnej w Europie. Zawarliśmy w nim również porównanie tegorocznych i ubiegłorocznych wyników. Poniżej znajdują Państwo krótkie podsumowanie raportu.

## *Wzrost liczby kobiet na stanowiskach kierowniczych*

Z raportu wynika, że w 2011 roku procent kobiet zatrudnionych na stanowiskach kierowniczych wzrósł z 19,6% do 21,4%. Istnieje wyraźny związek pomiędzy ilością zatrudnionych kobiet a pozycją różnorodności na liście priorytetów strategicznych. Polscy i brytyjscy Top Employers przywiązują największą wagę do różnorodności, a jednocześnie mogą pochwalić się najwyższym aktualnym i planowanym odsetkiem kobiet na stanowiskach menedżerskich.

## *Top Employers odpowiedzialni społecznie*

90% europejskich Top Employers deklaruje, że społeczna odpowiedzialność biznesu (CSR) znajduje się wysoko na liście celów strategicznych, a zdecydowana większość tej grupy zatrudnia pracowników odpowiedzialnych za CSR. Europejscy Top Employers najchętniej podejmują działania mające na celu poprawę ekologiczności wewnętrznych działań firmy (65%) oraz jej produktów lub usług (62%). 65% wyróżnionych firm bierze udział w programach ochrony środowiska i wspiera finansowo różne inicjatywy.

## *Angażowanie pracowników priorytetem Top Employers*

Tegoroczne badanie pokazuje, że 80% firm wyznaczyło osobny budżet na działania związane z poprawą zaangażowania. Raport wskazuje, że firmy, które przywiązują dużą wagę do angażowania pracowników, kładą nacisk na komunikowanie wyników oraz monitorują i oceniają skuteczność planów poprawy.

## *Potrzeba komunikacji*

Ze względu na duże różnice między kosztami życia w poszczególnych krajach i zróżnicowane świadczenia dodatkowe. trudno jest

porównywać rzeczywisty poziom wynagrodzenia w Europie. Mimo to jedno pozostaje bez zmian: należy jasno komunikować politykę organizacji dotyczącą wynagrodzeń.

## *Planowanie sukcesji*

Badanie pokazuje związek między planowaniem sukcesji a istnieniem w organizacji zdefiniowanej ścieżki kariery. Polska i Hiszpania są krajami, w których najczęściej obsadza się stanowiska dzięki sukcesji wewnętrznej. W pierwszej trójce najczęściej stosowanych działań znalazły się: szkolenia, przygotowujące pracowników do objęcia wyższego stanowiska (94% Top Employers), regularny przegląd stanowisk wyższego szczebla oraz stworzenie oficjalnego planu sukcesji.

## *HR –priorytetem i priorytety HR-u*

Według raportu aż 74% szefów działów HR podlega w swoich organizacjach bezpośrednio CEO. Oznacza to w praktyce wpływ na strategiczne decyzje firmy. W pierwszej trójce priorytetów, jakie stawiają sobie dyrektorzy HR europejskich Top Employers, znalazły się: zarządzanie talentami, szkolenia i rozwój pracowników oraz budowanie zaangażowania pracowników. Wśród najmniej docenianych wyzwań znalazło się zastępowanie kadr odchodzących na emeryturę (jedna z ostatnich pozycji na liście).

## *Top Employers planują z wyprzedzeniem zatrudnienie i rozwój pracowników*

Praktyki Top Employers w Europie wskazują jednoznacznie na potrzebę tworzenia trzyletnich planów EVP, jeśli firma zatrudnia i planuje zatrudniać profesjonalistów. Takie plany są konieczne, aby utrzymać obecny personel oraz przyciągnąć nowe talenty. Niedobór profesjonalistów na rynku jest szczególnie dotkliwy w Holandii, Belgii i Szwajcarii.

**Zapraszam do lektury całego raportu oraz zachęcam do zapoznania się ze szczegółami badania Top Employers Polska 2012.**

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For the third consecutive year, the CRF Institute presents its research report on Top Employers in Europe. This report gives insight in the best practices, differences and similarities in HR policy across Europe. It also compares the results with last year's outcomes.

## THE RESEARCH INSIGHTS IN THIS REPORT

The insights in this report derives from the CRF Institute's annual Top Employers projects (including Top Arbeitgeber Deutschland and Schweiz and Top Employeurs France). It is based on a benchmark of the annual Top Employer research conducted by the CRF Institute in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom and Poland.

In the research, all critical areas of the HR Management of the participating organisations are assessed. Key drivers, practices and policies for criteria such as Pay & Benefits, Training & Development, Career Opportunities, Working Conditions and Company Culture are reviewed thoroughly. The purpose of the Top Employers' research is to identify which organisations excel in terms of offering HR policies and practices that drive human capital attraction, staff retention and employee engagement.

Only organisations that meet top standards in HR, and thus have Best Practice HR policies and practices, receive a Top Employers certification. In total 444 Top Employers in these 9 countries successfully completed the research. The data of those certified organisations are included in this HR Best Practices Report.

## 2011 COMPARED TO 2010

In the report, a comparison is made between 2010 and 2011 data. '2011' refers to the Top Employers that received their certification in early 2011. The '2010 results' are based on the data derived from the Top Employers that were certified in 2010.

## HOW TO READ THE REPORT

The report is divided into chapters, each corresponding to a topic in HR. Each page (covering elements such as the position of HR, well being policies & absenteeism, etc.) comes with a summary of research outcomes on this topic on the left hand side. The figures will give you insight into the year-on-year comparison and local outcomes in each of the researched countries. Finally, the key findings and the Top Employers Best Practice, conclude just what exactly we can learn from the HR policies and practices of the top performing employers.

Some differences between the data from each year can be attributed to a change in composition of the Top Employers group. However, most changes are in fact changes that are visible also in like-for-like comparisons where only bi-annual participants are included in the comparison. Where relevant an additional explanation is given.

## ABOUT THE CRF INSTITUTE

The last page of this report tells you more about the CRF Institute and its projects.



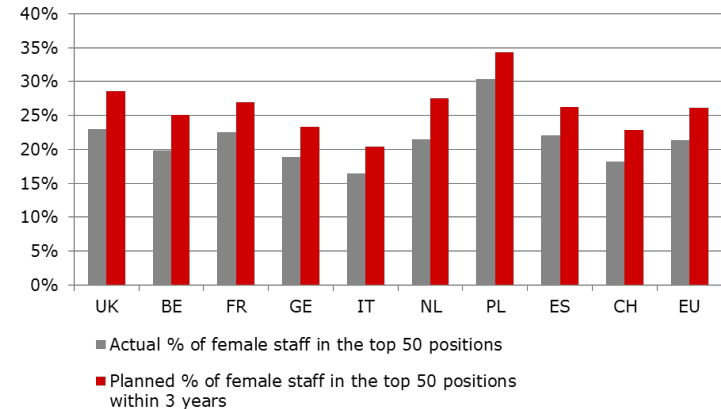
## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- 71% of European Top Employers indicates that diversity is a key strategic priority for their organisation. Diversity is measured in the Top Employers research as the strategic objective to include people of diverse culture, gender, ethnicity, ability and religion in the workforce. For 64% of the Top Employers obtaining a diverse workforce was a strategic priority in 2010 (52% in 2009).
- So diversity seems to be growing in importance across Europe. However when the same group is asked to group their key HR priorities, diversity turns out to be #13 on the list of priorities.
- Diversity has greater importance for Top Employers in the UK and in Poland. These employers can also boast the highest actual and planned percentage of female managers in the top of their organisation.
- On average 38% of the workforce of Top Employers in Europe are women, which is a slight decrease versus 2010. In the surveyed Top Employers 21,4% of the top management is filled by women, which shows an increase versus last year (19,6% in 2010).
- Aspects of diversity that are covered in the diversity amongst European Top Employers are gender (applied by 63% of the researched organisations), physical disability (38%), ethnic and/or racial background (23%), age (52%), religion (9%), and sexual orientation (6%).

**Graph 1. Top five HR priorities for organisations, European average**



**Graph 2. Actual and planned percentage of female managers in top 50 positions**



## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- Employers that have diversity as a high priority more than average have people in the organisation that have diversity as their core responsibility.
- Employers that have diversity as a high priority are more ambitious in their goals for the percentage of women in senior management
- Employers that have diversity as a high priority more than average employ diversity initiatives

## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- If you want your organisation to be truly more diverse, it is not enough to state diversity as a strategic priority. It moreover involves setting clear goals, assigning responsibilities and employ a variety of measured diversity initiatives. Only if you practice what you preach, diversity rises to the top of the actual agenda



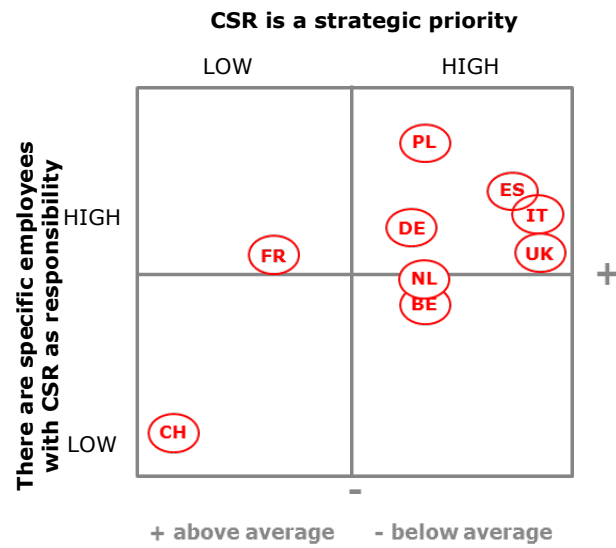
**Graph 3. Most applied CSR initiatives, European average**

**SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

- A large number of employers around Europe indicate that CSR is a strategic priority for their organisation. 88% of the Top Employers indicate that this is the case (equal to 2010). 89% of these organisation have staff that are specifically responsible for CSR (91% in 2010).
- Both CSR initiatives that have an effect on the own **organisation** and business as well as CSR programs directed at the 'outside world' are applied by these employers.
- With the exception of many Swiss and French Top Employers CSR is proving to be high on the list of strategic imperatives for Top Employers around Europe. And this is not only lip service, as most of the organisation also have people in their organisation that have CSR as a specific responsibility. So CSR is both advocated as well as applied across Europe.

MOST APPLIED CSR INITIATIVES	
Increase sustainability of internal operations	65%
Increase sustainability of products and/or services	62%
Grant special leave for participation in CSR activities	29%
Environmental protection programmes and initiatives	65%
Active participation in charity events	60%
Financial support and/or sponsorship for various programmes	65%
Provide services free/or at low cost to disadvantaged people / groups / organisations	32%
Provide resources and assistance to raise money for charities	37%

**Graph 4. CSR strategy vs. CSR as specific employee responsibility**



**TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS**

- Employers that have CSR as a high priority more than average have people in the organisation that have CSR as their core responsibility.
- Employers that have diversity as a high priority generally encourage their employees to be part of and / or initiate CSR activities
- Employers that have CSR as a high priority more than average employ CSR initiatives

**TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE**

- To make CSR a real priority, you need to make specific staff responsible for developing a CSR vision, rolling it out and continuously measure the success. Moreover employees must be encouraged to participate. Only then a real socially responsible organisation can be built and sustained.



# Staff turnover

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

• At a national level, the staff turnover rates are fairly stable. With the exception of Poland and – to a lesser extent – Spain and Italy, the turnover rates have remained at similar levels from 2007-2009. The effect of the global economic crisis that was particularly apparent in the second half of this period are less apparent.

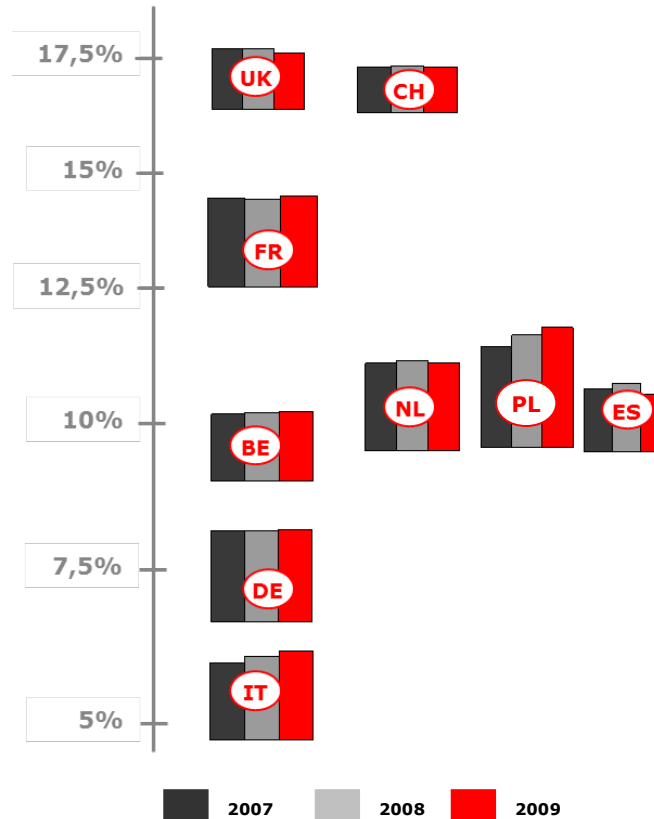
• Restructuring has increased turnover in many organisations, but this effect is offset by the fact that many employees were less inclined to change jobs in this unsecure period.

• The reasons for resignation have changed significantly in 2011. Reward was the 6<sup>th</sup> mentioned reason in 2009 and 2010, but has become much more significant in 2011.

• A new category that was introduced this year in the research was Employee recognition and this immediately took a spot in the 5 most important reasons to leave an organisation.

• Work-life balance has become more of a factor to take into account for staff retention. This was the #7 reason for resignation in 2010 and is now listed fourth.

**Graph 5. Staff turnover rates 2007-2009 per country (graph position based on 2009 rate)**



**Graph 6. Most mentioned reasons for resignation**

- TOP 5 KEY REASONS FOR RESIGNATION**
- #1 Career aspirations
  - #2 Reward, salary
  - #3 Location
  - #4 Work-life balance
  - #5 Employee recognition

## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- Those organisation that use disproportionally many employee feedback communication channels show a significantly lower staff turnover.
- Organisations with high staff turnover have higher shortages of professionals
- Organisations where working conditions are mentioned as a reason for resignation have a higher staff turnover than organisations where this reason is not mentioned
- In organisation where exit interviews are held by an HR manager turnover is significantly lower

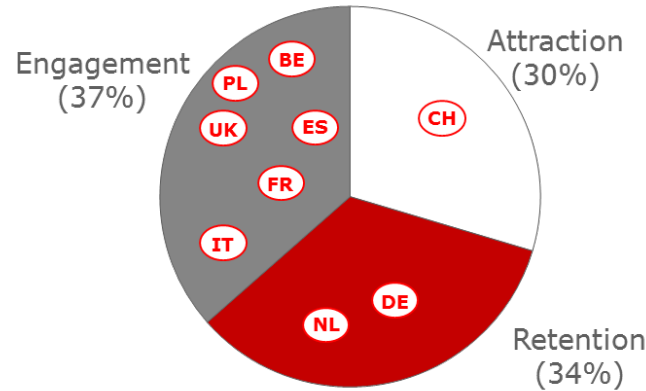
## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- To lower turnover rates one key solution is to improve communication channels, so feelings can be expressed in an early stage. Especially channels to give management feedback on their strategy and behavior prove to have a significant effect on staff turnover.
- This effect of communication holds equally true for exit interviews. The lessons learned from these exit interviews prove to have a beneficial effect on staff retention.



# Engagement

**Graph 7. Attraction, retention and engagement priorities across Europe. The position of the country indicates which priority is the most mentioned locally.**



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Over the past three years employee engagement has risen to the top of the HR agenda. This year it surpasses Retention and Attraction in relative importance for the European Top Employers as their key strategic focus.

- Only in Germany and the Netherlands – where retention is the no. 1 priority - and in Switzerland where the focus remains on attraction of new talent, is engagement not the no. 1 priority. In all other researched countries engagement tops the list.

- The focus on engagement is also translated into actions: 80% of the Top Employers have a specific budget for implementing engagement action plans and a high 73% of employers tie their managements' bonus to realisation of engagement action plans.

- Monitoring and evaluation of engagement plans is increasing, but in this area there is still room for further improvement.

**Graph 8. Application of engagement activities**

KEY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES ACROSS EUROPE	
Action plans for improvement are developed	73%
A specific budget is allocated for implementing the action plans	80%
The implementation of action plans is monitored	48%
Achieved results are linked to management's bonus	73%
The effectiveness of action plans is evaluated	32%

## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

• Those Top Employers that have engagement as a key priority more than average measure engagement and satisfaction, communicate results, allocate specific engagement budgets, monitor implementation plans, link management bonuses for achieved results, and evaluate the engagement action plans

## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

• To really make engagement a top priority, employers should communicate their choice to focus on employee engagement. Moreover they should action their objectives and measure engagement and satisfaction, communicate results, allocate specific engagement budgets, monitor implementation plans, link management bonuses for achieved results, and evaluate the engagement action plans

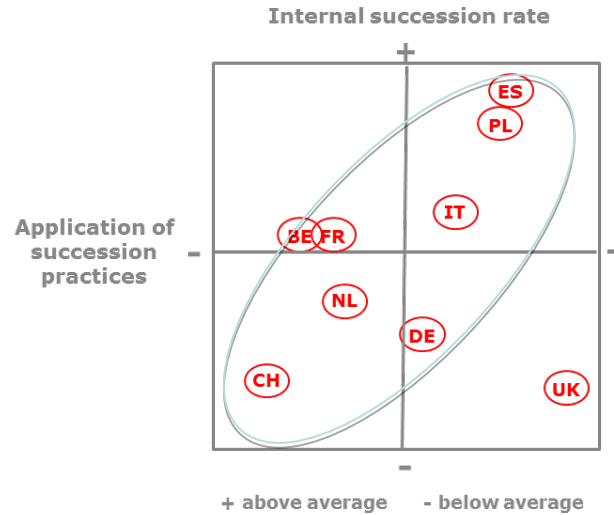


# Succession planning

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- The focus on succession planning varies to a strong degree within Europe. In Poland and Spain many succession practices are applied and with result: the internal succession rate is high compared to the rest of Europe.
- The UK is an outlier in this analysis: although relatively few succession planning strategies are applied, the internal succession rate is the highest amongst the European countries that were included in the research.
- Overall a relationship between the input of succession practices and the output of internal succession is however visible across Europe.
- The key succession practices that are applied are training, reviews of senior managers and description of a clear succession plan.

**Graph 9. Relative comparison between the application of succession practices and the internal succession rate**



**Graph 10. Application of engagement activities**

## KEY SUCCESSION PRACTICES

There is a defined Succession Plan	68%
Senior positions are reviewed periodically to identify successors	85%
Mentoring to prepare suitable employees	61%
Training to prepare suitable employees	94%
Job rotation to prepare suitable employees	61%
Managers need to bring on their own successor before they are promoted	24%

## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- **Organisations that apply succession practices more than average have higher internal succession rates. These companies also use job level career paths significantly more than those who do not on applying various succession practices.**
- **The internal succession rate is higher for those organisation that measure their succession efforts and results as an official KPI.**

## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

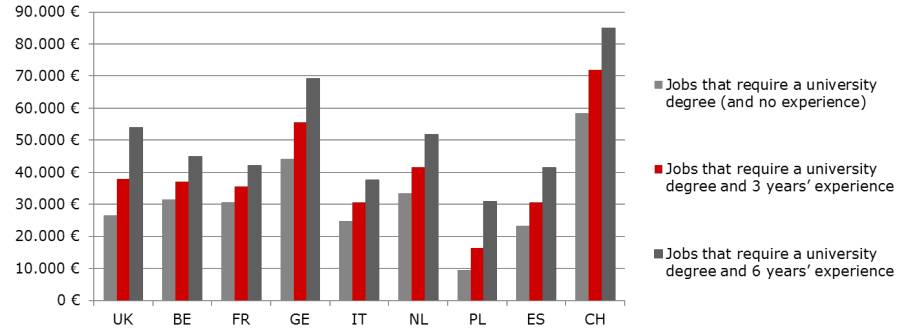
- **To raise the internal succession rate, employers should use a combination of the most applied succession practices (implement a succession plan, review senior positions periodically, training of suitable employees, etc.), define and communicate clear job level career paths and measure their efforts and results as an officially reported KPI.**





# Succession planning

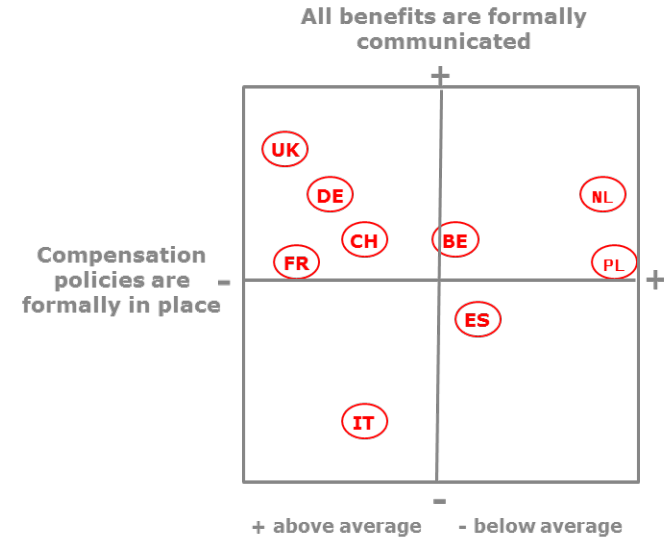
**Graph 11. Salary comparison across Europe, all converted in Euro (July 2011 exchange rates)**



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Comparing salaries from country to country is difficult these days with highly fluctuating exchange rates. This is further complicated by different tax systems, cost of living and secondary benefits policies. These numbers should therefore be used as illustration.
- Germany and Switzerland are at the top end of the remuneration scale, as they were in 2009 and 2010. The Mediterranean countries Italy and Spain are at the lower end, joined by Poland.
- Both Italy and Spain do not only have lower compensation packages than elsewhere in Europe, the policies are also less formalized.
- In communication of benefits there is still terrain to be won. Despite having formalized the compensation policies to a large degree, British and German Top Employers are not communicating these as much as they could.
- The Netherlands stands out on all levels: relatively high compensation, which is formalised and that is communicated well.

**Graph 12. Communication of compensation policies**



## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- The base salary increase (from 3 to 6 years of work experience) is higher for companies that apply a performance pay policy

## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- If you apply a performance pay policy, do not expect that this can be a complement for a low base salary. In fact, the base salary increase (from 3 to 6 years of work experience) is higher for companies that apply a performance pay policy



NOTE: the following pages have already been published in the first part of the European HR Best Practice Report 2011 (April 2011) .

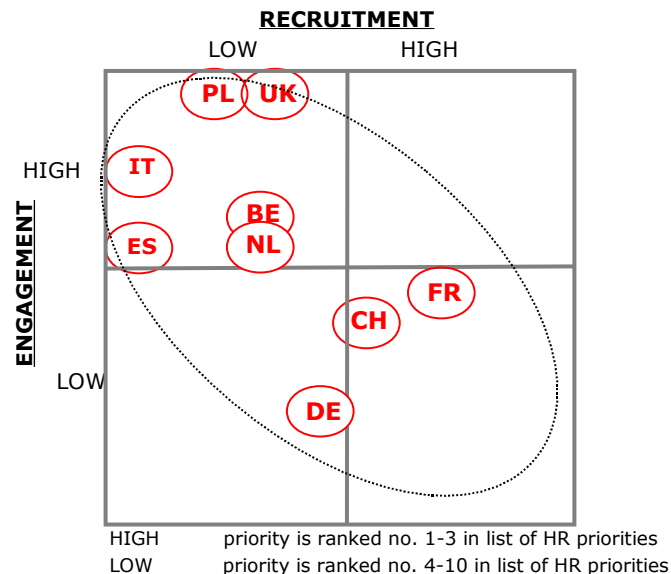
## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- While the top five HR priorities of European *Top Employers* in 2011 are the same (and are even ranked in the same order), as those in 2010, there are changes in the relative distance between the priorities. For instance, talent management became more important compared to learning & development while employee engagement rose in importance.
- Employee engagement is now a top five priority for eight of the nine countries researched (see Figure 2, right).
- Unsurprisingly, the higher a country's engagement score, the lower the priority it places on recruitment (also see Figure 2). It is in countries where slower-than-expected economic recovery has been visible (UK, Poland, Italy & Spain), that the focus is primarily on engagement. In countries that have experienced more sustained economic recovery, attention once more shifts back to attracting and recruiting staff.
- The next 5-10 years will be characterised by the retirement of the first wave of 'Baby Boomer' employees (those born between 1946-64). But, despite the impending pressure this demographic change will place on businesses, dealing with an ageing workforce is amongst the lowest in the list of priorities in all countries in Europe.

**Graph 13. Top five HR priorities for organisations, European average**

HR PRIORITIES 2011 (similar to 2010)
1. Talent management
2. Learning & development
3. Employee engagement
4. Leadership development
5. Recruitment and staffing

**Graph 14. Relative importance of engagement and recruitment priorities**



## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- **Top Employers** that want to grow staff numbers, put much more focus on retaining and recruiting staff. These growing organisations also apply significantly less emphasis on organisational change.
- **Top Employers** that have above-average focus on recruitment and diversity use research to study the impact of their employer brand on talent attraction and retention.
- **Top employers** that give above-average priority to talent management use research to study the visibility of their employer brand as well as to study the impact on talent attraction.

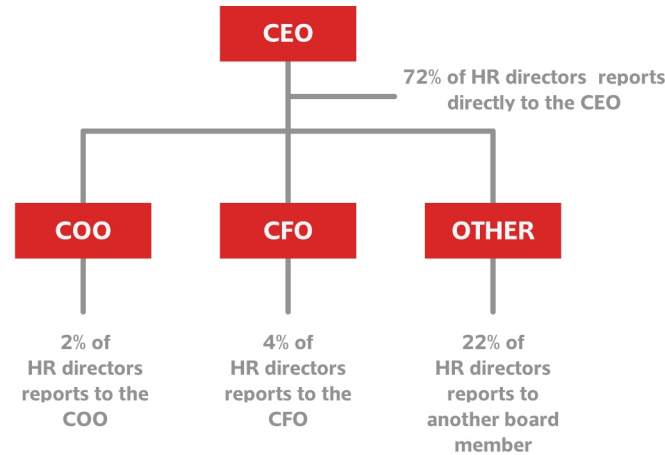
## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- If your mid-term goal (1-to-3 years) is to increase staff numbers, start now by focussing on the retention of current staff and on how you attract new talent.
- To truly measure the impact of the employer brand, go beyond measuring brand recognition and relative appeal on the external labour market (the most commonly-used ways of measuring). Instead, also measure the impact the employer brand has on talent attraction and retention.



# Position of HR

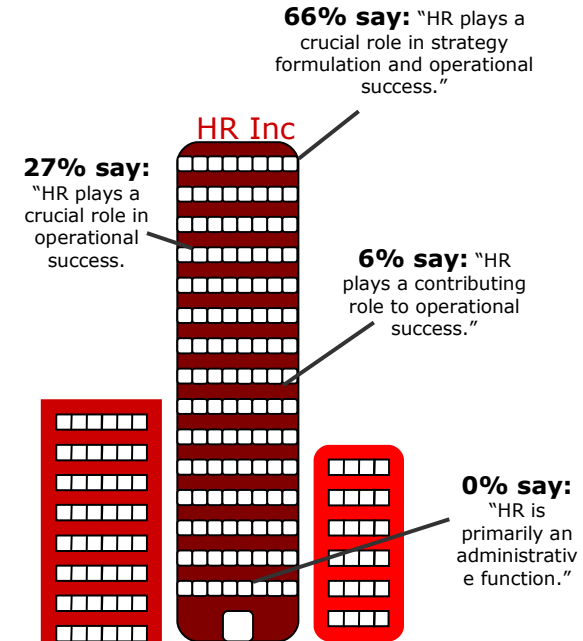
**Graph 15. Reporting lines for HR directors (European average)**



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- A growing number of HR leaders in *Top Employer* organisations now report directly to the CEO. In 2010, 65% of the HR leaders reported to their CEO; in 2011 74% report to the CEO.
- Fewer *Top Employer* organisations say HR plays a 'crucial role in strategy formation and operational success'. In 2010 three-quarters of *Top Employers* agreed this; in 2011 this had fallen to 66%. Countries where HR has the highest perceived influence are the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Spain. Notably lower influence is measured in Germany and Switzerland, where 50% of HR departments claim HR plays a crucial role in strategy formation and operational success. In these countries the contribution is perceived to be more operational than elsewhere in Europe.
- Despite the reduction in perceived influence, HR claims top spot in terms of its contribution to the annual report: 65% of *Top Employers* devote at least two pages of it to describing their HR strategy and organisational development. In Spain and Italy this is most common: 88% of *Top Employer* organisations publish this HR information in their annual reports.

**Graph 16. Role of HR within the organisation (European average)**



## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- HR directors that are members of the highest management team describe the role of their department as more crucial in strategy formulation and operation.
- HR directors that report directly to the CEO describe the role of their department as more crucial in strategy formulation and operation.

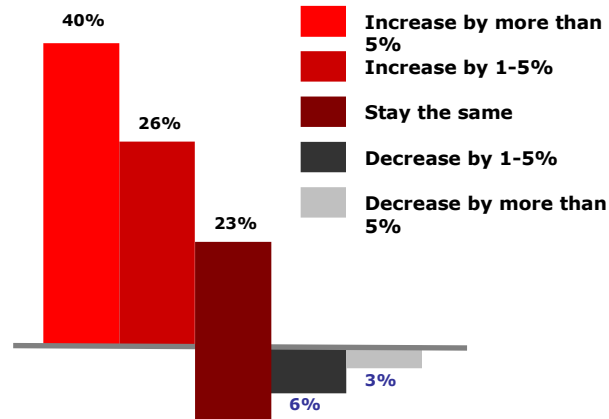
## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- To accelerate the impact and influence of the HR department, HR directors must be part of the highest management team and must report to the CEO directly. Only then will the influence of the HR function be fully visible and able to be developed.

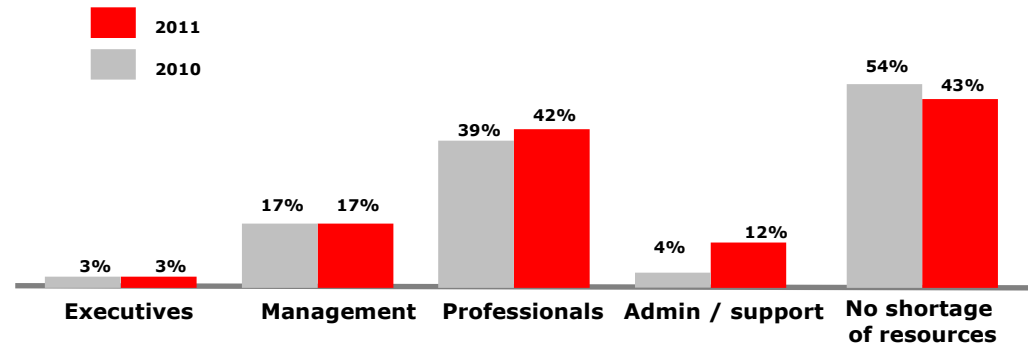


# Resource planning

**Graph 17. Expected change in number of employees (next 3 years) – 2011 European average**



**Graph 18. Expected shortages of adequate resources per job level (European average 2010-2011)**



## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Employers have greater confidence about the economic recovery: In 2010 only 51% of European *Top Employers* expected their organisation to grow. By 2011 this rose to 66%. Greater numbers (40%) of *Top Employers* expect their organisation to grow by 5% or more during the next three years.
- Differences in the expected growth of staff numbers reflect the broader picture in local economies: in the United Kingdom, Germany and Switzerland more than 75% of *Top Employers* expect moderate-to-strong staff growth levels. Italy and Spain – which are both plagued by record unemployment – show the most modest growth expectations. Only half of *Top Employers* there expect growth.
- There is a slight, but notable increase in the proportion of *Top Employers* that expect a shortage of staff in the most sought after employee group of professionals. In addition, less organisations (43% in 2011 compared to 54% in 2010), expect no staff shortages at all. The Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland report the tightest market for professionals: three quarters of *Top Employers* there indicate they expect a shortage of professionals.

## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- Companies experiencing employee shortages put more emphasis on attraction as an HR priority.
- Companies that do not experience employee shortages attach a higher priority to engagement in their HR policies.
- Companies with a three-year *Employee Value Proposition* have fewer shortages for professionals.

## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- To avoid employee shortages in the immediate short-term, employers should do all of the following: create formal statements about the organisational offering to staff; Identify and segment specific employee groups according to their needs/desires and organisational offerings; measure the fit between employee needs/desires and organisational offerings; and most importantly: develop a three-year strategic outlook on future employee needs/desires and organisational offerings. All of these strongly correlate to fewer employee shortages.



# Secondary benefits

### Graph 19. Most applied secondary benefits Top three per country\*

#### SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Overall, European *Top Employers* offer outstanding secondary benefits to their employees. In 2011 the level of benefits offered has further increased compared to 2010.
- The most popular benefits offered include, medical aid schemes (including healthcare), sabbaticals and car/travel allowances (see box, right).
- Compared to 2010 some benefit provision has been reduced. In 2010 78% of *Top Employers* offering study leave to all or some of their staff; in 2011 it went down to 71%. Those offering crèche/childcare facilities has fallen from 35% to 31%.
- The most generous *Top Employers* offering secondary benefits to all employees are found in the Netherlands and Spain.
- Poland and Switzerland have lower levels of benefits offered, but in the case of Switzerland, this is offset by businesses having considerably higher primary benefits (including offering bonuses and profit sharing).



\* Most applied measured by benefits that are available to all employees

- Most applied secondary benefits across Europe – available for all employees:**
1. Medical aid scheme
  2. Sabbatical
  3. Meal allowance
  4. Study leave
  5. Car/travel allowance

- Least applied secondary benefits across Europe – available for all employees:**
12. Entertainment allowance
  13. Home services at work
  14. Home internet connection
  15. Religious and/or spiritual facilities
  16. Company car

#### TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- In companies that give their employees the possibility to choose between a range of benefits (via a *cafeteria model*), a higher number of employees are entitled to study leave and study support, home internet connection, sabbatical leave, and to religious facilities.
- Companies that offer the *cafeteria model* are more likely to have KPIs in place on employee well-being and on employee competency levels.

#### TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- If you want to offer a competitive suite of secondary benefits, allow employees to choose them themselves. This allows staff to mix and match benefits according to their individual needs. It also allows employers to offer the maximum number of benefits without having to offer everything to everyone (with the associated costs of doing this).
- If you offer employees the opportunity to choose their benefits personally, measure your employees' well-being at least annually.



# Flexible working arrangements **Graph 20. Most applied flexible working conditions Top three per country\***

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- The majority of European *Top Employers* enable part-time work and/or flexi-time for their staff.
- Telecommuting and sabbaticals are the top two growing flexible working benefits: Telecommuting was offered by 68% of *Top Employers* 2010, and is now offered by 74%. The rise in offering sabbaticals is even greater: it is up 54% in 2009 to 82% in 2011.
- Telecommuting is the least consistent flexible working offering across Europe. In Italy 66% of *Top Employers* offer it to their staff, but in the UK it is offered by 96% of *Top Employers*, while in the Netherland this figure reaches 98%.
- Sabbaticals are most universally offered in France, Poland and the Netherlands, where 95%+ of *Top Employers* offer it. In Spain however, just 53% of *Top Employers* there offer some form of career break,



\* Most applied measured by arrangements that are available formally and informally

Most applied** flexible working conditions – applied formally and informally (across Europe)	
1. Part-time working	97%
2. Flexi-time working	92%
3. Telecommuting	83%
4. Sabbatical	82%
5. Time off in lieu	77%

Least applied** flexible working conditions – applied formally and informally (across Europe)	
10. Reduced overtime	41%
11. Reduction in company travel	41%
12. Term-time working	30%

\*\* Percentage of European Top Employers that applies this arrangement formally or informally

**TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS**

- The availability of 'work from home' facilities shows a positive relation with employers that offer compressed working hours, flexitime working, job sharing, part-time work, sabbatical, self-rostering, term-time working, telecommuting, reduction company travel, and special leave.

**TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE**

- Work from home must be offered as part of a full, and flexible working solution. It does not stand on its own.

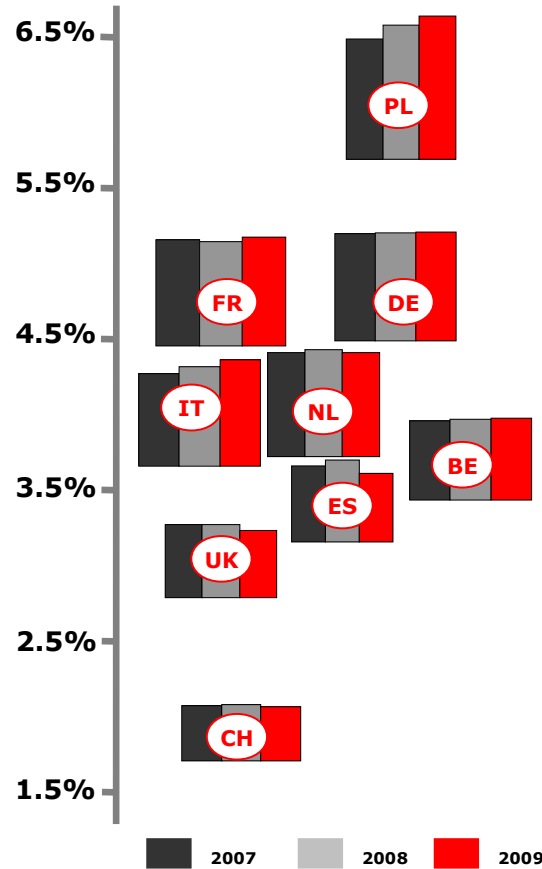


# Wellbeing policies & absenteeism

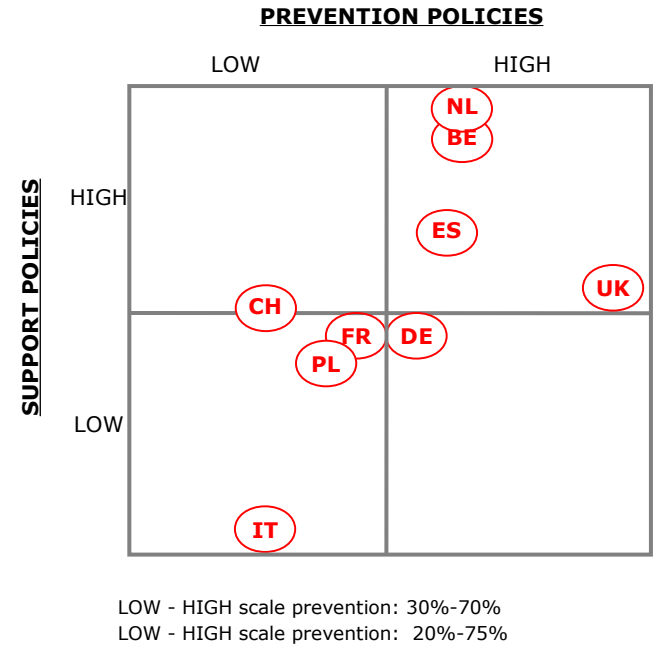
**Graph 21. Absenteeism rates 2007-2009 per country (graph position based on 2009 rate)**

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- At a national level, absenteeism rates are influenced by cultural and legal conditions. (Straight comparisons must therefore be seen in this light).
- Prevention and support policies are more comparable across Europe. Prevention policies include: stress management, time management and ergonomic support. Support policies include: burn-out recovery programmes and in-house doctors/nurses.
- *Top Employers* in the UK, the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain excel in offering both prevention and support policies to support the wellbeing of their staff. Apart from Belgium the trend for absenteeism rates in these countries is downward.
- *Top Employers* France, Italy and Poland provide fewer prevention and support policies. As such, they show an upward trend in their absenteeism rates.
- Providing prevention and support policies positively reduces absenteeism.



**Graph 22. Relative application of well being policies focused on prevention and support**



## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- *Top Employers* that have access to an in-house doctor as part of a formal support policy have significantly lower absenteeism rates than those who do not.
- *Top Employers* with employee wellbeing programs also measure and report these policies in specific wellbeing KPIs.

## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- Provide support and prevention policies to generate a positive effect on the wellbeing of your employees. This can also help lower absenteeism rates.
- Employing an in-house doctor will bring about a significant reduction in absenteeism. Organisations striving for lower absenteeism rates should consider this.



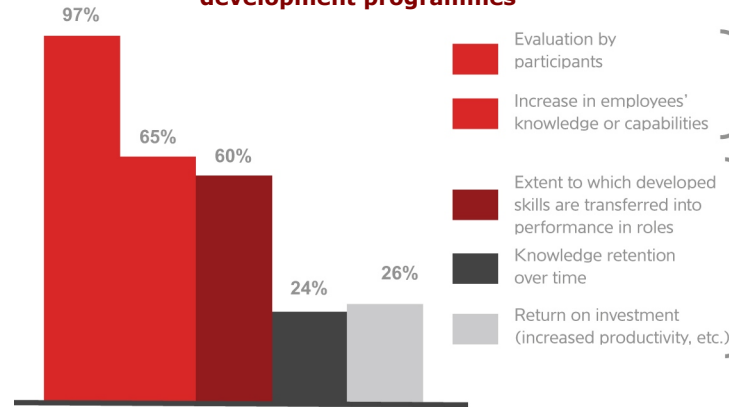


# Training & development

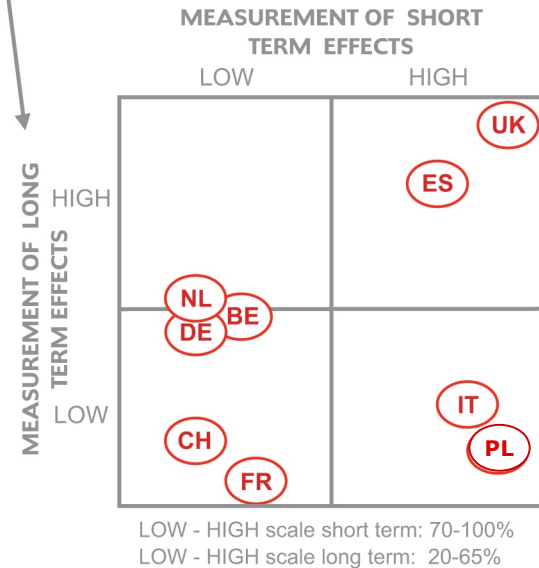
## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Nearly all *Top Employers* apply – either formally defined or informally applied – the following development programmes: Leadership development, individually-selected training, General training, industry job-related training, coaching/mentoring and talent management/high performer programmes.
- The majority of European *Top Employers* measure the participants' evaluation of training and development programmes. Two-thirds of employers also measure the actual increase in capabilities or knowledge gained by their staff from training.
- Long-term impacts of training programmes (including the extent to which developed skills are transferred into performance in roles; if knowledge is retained over time; and whether training provides some form of return on investment), are less commonly measured. In the United Kingdom and Spain equal focus is put on measuring both the short-term effects as well as the long-term effects of training. Italy and Poland focus mostly on the short-term, while in the rest of Europe short-term effects as well as long term effects tend to be measured most.

### Graph 23. Measurement of the effectiveness of development programmes



### Graph 24 Relative measurement of the effectiveness of development programmes



### Graph 25. Most applied development programmes



## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- Organisations that apply above-average development programmes also measure employee insights (via employee satisfaction research) at an above-average level.
- The availability of development programmes often goes hand in hand with measuring the effectiveness of these programmes.

## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- To create the optimal mix of development programmes, employee insights should be measured on a regular basis. This increases the 'fit' between the needs of staff and what is offered.
- Top Employers* focus on measuring the effectiveness of their development programmes. So: offer programs in line with the competency needs of staff, optimise participation rates and measure the effectiveness of programmes.



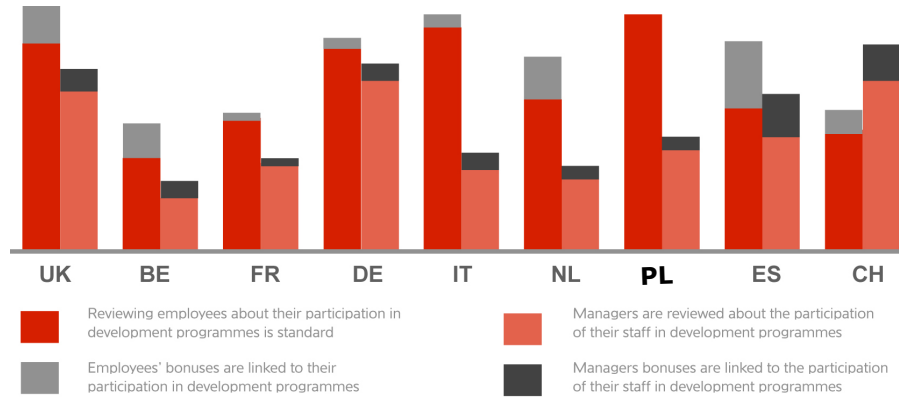


# Participation in development programmes

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- 62% of *Top Employers* review their employees on their participation in development programmes. This is most common in the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany and Poland.
- Among 42% of *Top Employers*, the manager is also reviewed on the participation of their staff in development programmes.
- Linking bonuses of staff or managers to training participation is far less common: Just 10% of *Top Employers* in Europe apply this evaluation method for employees, with this being 9% for managers. Spain however is the clear leader in matching bonuses to training: 25% of organisations there make part of bonuses dependent on participation in development programmes.
- Executives at most *Top Employers* play a crucial role in the development of their staff. They are most commonly involved in performance appraisals, recruitment and introduction, promotion decisions and are also often in mentorship roles.
- In the United Kingdom, Belgium, France and the Netherlands, the involvement of executives in these role is most apparent.

Graph 26. Use of reviews and bonuses to encourage employee participation in development programmes



Graph 27. Executives' role in talent development

Most frequent roles of senior executives in the development of staff	
Active involvement in performance appraisals	94%
Active involvement in recruitment and introduction	91%
Active involvement in all promotion decisions	91%
Mentorship roles	81%
Active involvement in performance moderating processes	68%
Delivery of training modules	60%
Holding open hours or allocated slots for discussion	53%

## TOP EMPLOYERS KEY FINDINGS

- Organisations that employ continuous learning activities and have executives that have an 'open door' policy for discussing staff development have a significantly higher percentage of employees participating in mentor and training programs.
- Organisations that use active encouragement (linking managers' bonuses to development participation and who review employees on their training participation), have a significantly higher percentage of employees participating in mentor and training programmes.

## TOP EMPLOYERS BEST PRACTICE

- To increase participation rates in training and development programmes four best practices can be learnt from *Top Employers*:
  1. Make the managers' bonus dependent on the training participation of their staff.
  2. Review employees on their training participation.
  3. Develop continuous learning activities, rather than stand alone programmes.
  4. Ensure executives are available to discuss the development of staff during special open hours.



## ABOUT THE CRF INSTITUTE

The CRF Institute is the independent organisation behind the Top Employers projects. CRF identifies top performers in the areas of HR, leadership and strategy. Since 1991 the CRF Institute has developed its proprietary methodology, research and deliverables. It has grown into an international organisation with operations in thirteen countries on three continents. Since then, more than 2,500 leading organisations around the world have participated in the international Top Employers projects.

### HR POLICY BASED RESEARCH

In the Top Employers projects, the CRF Institute identifies and certifies, by international standards, the frontrunners in excellent HR management. The unique Top Employers approach is characterised by HR policy based research, objectivity and an independent and selective assessment. Key to the project is that all participants must exceed the objective rating standards in the research.

### THIRTEEN COUNTRIES, FOUR CONTINENTS

The CRF Institute has operations in Belgium, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and United Kingdom. Its headquarters are based in the Netherlands.

### EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

The CRF Institute believes that finding and binding talent determines whether business goals are reached. The internal and external employer brand therefore becomes vitally important to effectively attract, retain and engage top talent. Top Employers provides its participants with the insight, recognition and visibility to enable them to stand out as an employer of choice and to celebrate this accomplishment.

For more information on the CRF Institute and the Top Employers projects, visit [www.crfinstitute.com](http://www.crfinstitute.com).