Canadian Employers Still Have Work to do When it Comes to Creating Psychologically Safe Workplaces - ADP Survey

Survey reveals most Canadians feel valued and comfortable at work, but underlying issues persist for some respondents[1]

TORONTO, April 28, 2022 /CNW/ - A new survey from ADP Canada, conducted with Maru Public Opinion, reveals most Canadian workers feel comfortable at their workplaces; however, Canadians who indicate they are Black, Indigenous Peoples or people of colour are more likely to report facing workplace challenges that may affect psychological safety – the belief you won't be punished or humiliated for speaking up, sharing ideas, asking questions, or making mistakes at work.

Most Canadians feel valued and comfortable at work

Canadian employers appear to be fostering psychologically safe workplaces, with close to nine-in-ten working Canadians indicating they are comfortable being themselves at work and eight-in-ten feeling they can bring concerns to their manager or senior leadership team.

In addition, most working Canadians say they feel valued at work, with 82 percent of respondents noting their unique skills and talents are used and appreciated at work.

More than a third of racialized and Indigenous workers report concerns around being undermined in the workplace

Despite feeling valued and comfortable at work, the data reveals racialized and Indigenous respondents are nearly twice as likely (36%) as white respondents (21%) to say they feel their colleagues may deliberately act in a way that undermines their efforts at work. This was particularly true for respondents in these groups who identified as men (40%).

A similar sentiment was uncovered when respondents were asked about making mistakes at work, with nearly half (49%) of racialized and Indigenous workers saying they agreed with the statement that making a mistake at work will be held against them. Respondents in these groups were also more likely (35%) to say it is difficult to ask colleagues or a direct manager for help.

Psychological safety is key to building strong connections and promoting authenticity at work

Although employers appear to support inclusive workplaces, more work is needed to ensure all employees feel seen, heard, and valued. It's important to recognize that microaggressions – subtle or unintentional acts of discrimination – can occur in the workplace and psychologically impact employees, often leading to feelings of not being connected.

Encouraging an environment that promotes open discussion and action around disadvantage, including microaggressions, and issues of inclusion can help employers create a workplace that promotes psychological safety, a sense of belonging and a culture of advocacy.

"We know strong connections are an indicator of inclusion – a recent ADRI study determined employees who feel strongly connected are 5x less likely to be experiencing discrimination at work," said Heather Haslam, Vice President of marketing at ADP. "It is crucial to acknowledge that psychological safety plays a role in building strong connections. Leaders are responsible for creating psychologically safe spaces that build strong connections, create more inclusive environments and better position opportunities to enhance employee engagement, collaboration, and creativity," concluded Haslam.

Survey methodology

These are some of the findings of a survey undertaken by Maru Public Opinion from March 8th to March 14th, 2022, of 1,002 randomly selected employed Canadian adults who are Maru Voice Canada online panelists. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size has an estimated margin of error (which measures sampling variability) of +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been weighted by education, age, gender, and region (and in Quebec, language) to match the population according to Census data which ensures the sample is representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals when compared to the data tables are due to rounding. The detailed tables can be found at Canadian Public Opinion Polls | Maru Group

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[1] *This survey polled employed Canadians, where respondents self-identified as Black, Indigenous Peoples or people of colour. The term "racialized" is preferred by human rights organizations and is used in recognition that race is a social construct.*

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