



Recruiting
for the Plastics Industry

2024 Employee Satisfaction Survey

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Contents

Introduction	A-3
Key Take-Aways	A-4
Employee Satisfaction	A-5
Likelihood of a Job Change / Influencers	A-15
Average Bonus / Commission / Incentive by Year	A-20
Respondent Profile 2024	A-21

Introduction

MBS Recruiters used SurveyMonkey to conduct an online survey of plastics professionals in February and March 2024.

The 466 plastics professionals who responded fully were included in the sample set and evaluation. All information provided was self-reported by respondents.

MBS examined the trends for job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, likelihood of seeking a new job, top drivers for a job change, and average bonus levels over time.

Data summary was performed by Brand Beacon Consulting of TN with data analysis and reporting by MBS Recruiters.

All references to statistical significance in the report are at the 95% confidence level, which indicates how certain we can be of the results.

Key Take-Aways

Over the past eight years, employee satisfaction ratings have skewed toward the positive end of the scale, with 70 to 80% of respondents being very or somewhat satisfied in their current role. In 2024, about two-thirds of employees (68%) report they are very or somewhat satisfied, with only five percent reporting they are very dissatisfied. The percentage rating their satisfaction at the neutral midpoint has increased by 9% since 2022, generally shifting from satisfied categories.

Regarding job satisfaction by gender, males are 12% higher in the very satisfied category, while women are 12% higher in the neutral category.

Factors contributing most to job satisfaction are a positive work environment and competitive compensation, followed by company culture, flexibility, job stability, work-from-home capability, benefits, growth opportunities, and regular raises. Males are somewhat more likely than females to report compensation and stability as important factors. Females are more likely to report flexibility, the ability to work from home and commute as important factors.

The factors contributing most to job dissatisfaction are a toxic work environment, a lack of growth opportunities, feeling overworked, and not receiving raises.

2024 results suggest that 50% of respondents are **not likely** to seek a new job this year, while 9% are actively seeking one, 5% are definitely planning to seek one, and 36% are somewhat likely to seek one in the coming year. The ratings suggest a rebound from 2023 when 62% of respondents were likely to seek a new job.

Consistent with previous years, salary, benefits, and a positive work environment rank highest in what people would look for from a new employer.

Performance-based compensation leveled off in 2023 and decreased by 29% in the 2024 survey. It should be noted that most respondents to this survey are in sales and management roles.

Employee Satisfaction

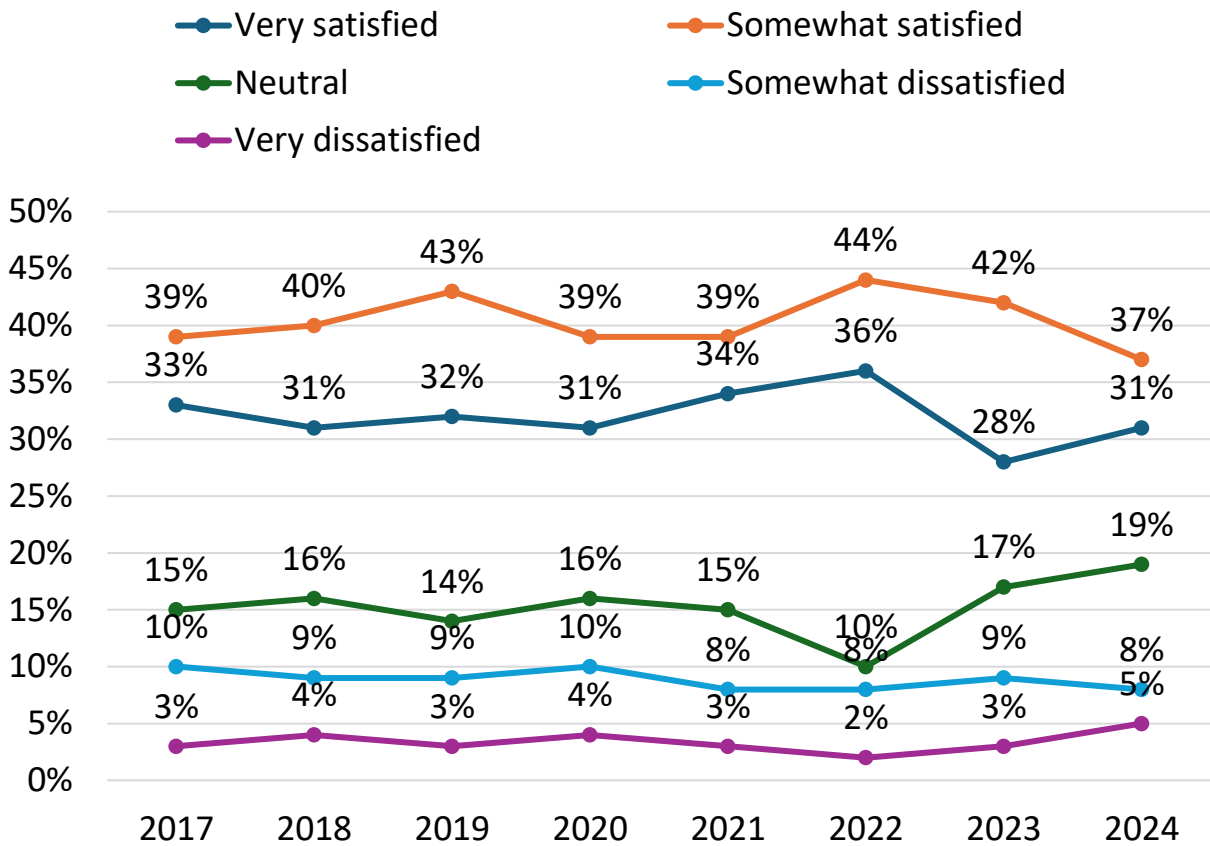
This section examines employee satisfaction trends for the total sample and summarizes 2024 employee satisfaction ratings of current positions by gender, age, company tenure, managers, and region.

This section also analyzes factors contributing to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

The results are depicted in the following graphs.

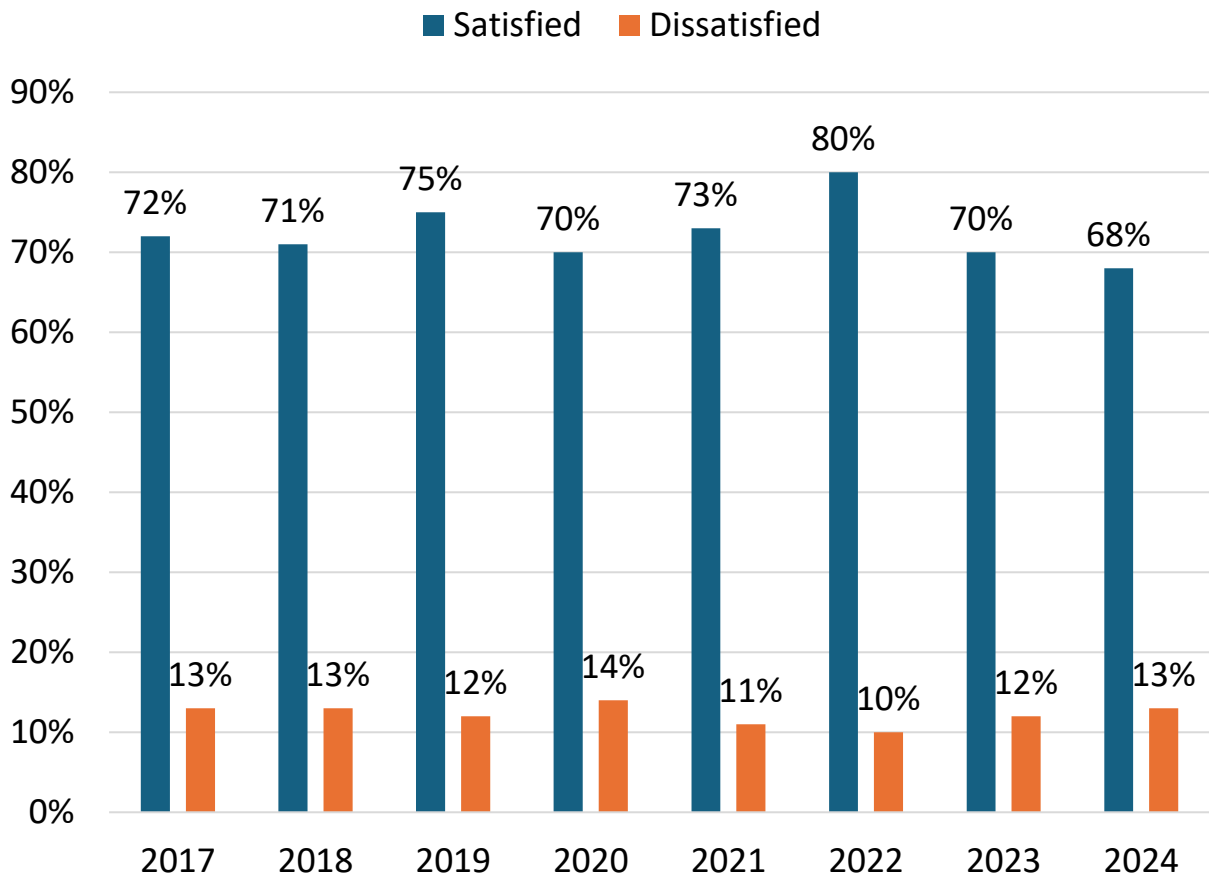
Satisfaction with Current Position – Annual Trends	A-6
Satisfaction with Current Position – Gender	A-7
Satisfaction with Current Position – Age	A-8
Satisfaction with Current Position – Tenure	A-9
Satisfaction with Current Position – Managers / Non-Managers	A-10
Satisfaction with Current Position – Region	A-11
Factors that Contribute Most to Job Satisfaction	A-12
Factors that Contribute Most to Job Satisfaction – Gender	A-13
Factors that Contribute Most to Job Dissatisfaction	A-14

Satisfaction with Current Position Annual Trends (2017-2024)



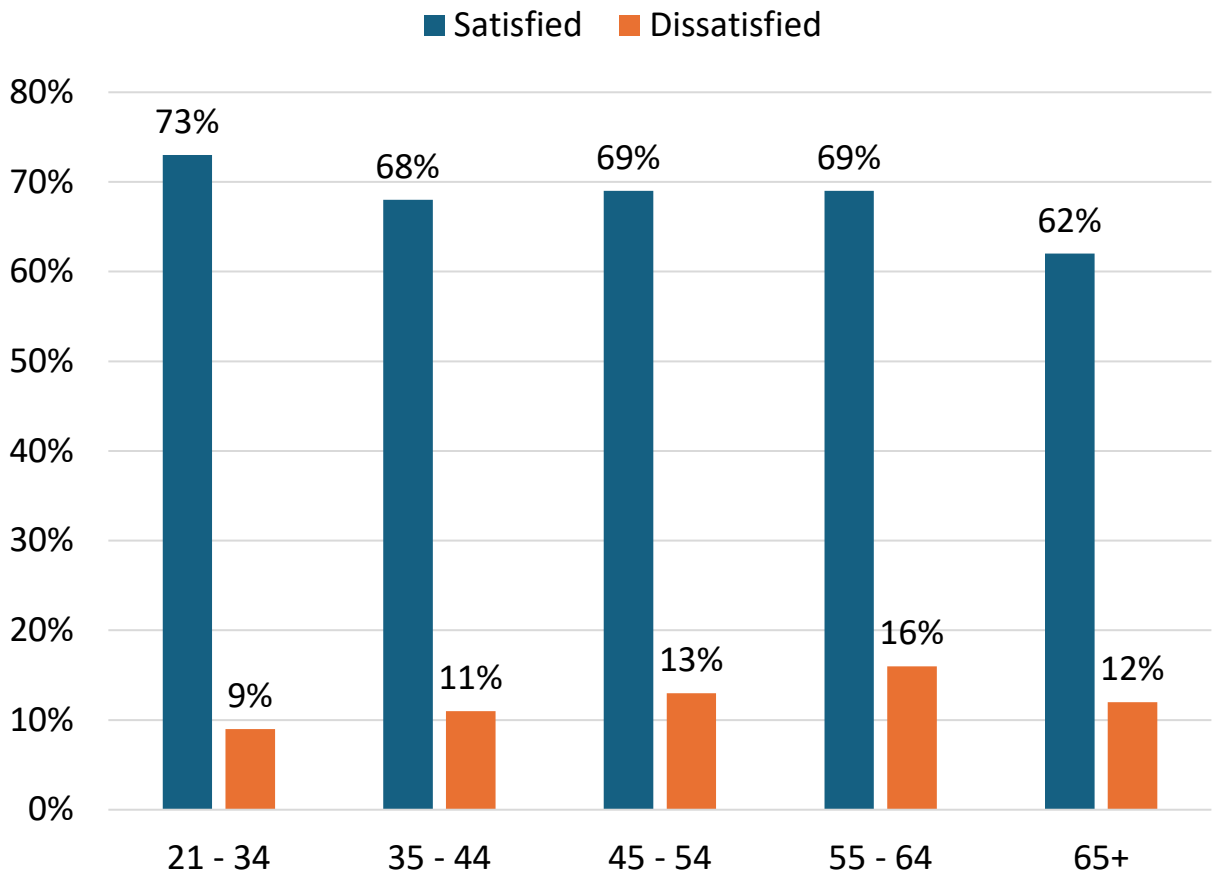
Satisfaction ratings continue to skew toward the positive end of the scale. About two-thirds of employees (68%) report they are very or somewhat satisfied, with only five percent reporting they are very dissatisfied. The percentage rating their satisfaction at the neutral midpoint has increased by 9% since 2022, generally shifting from satisfied categories.

Satisfaction with Current Position by Gender



The above graph depicts 2024 job satisfaction ratings by gender. Males report being 12% higher than females in the Very Satisfied category. Females are significantly more likely to be middle of the road (Neutral) on current job satisfaction.

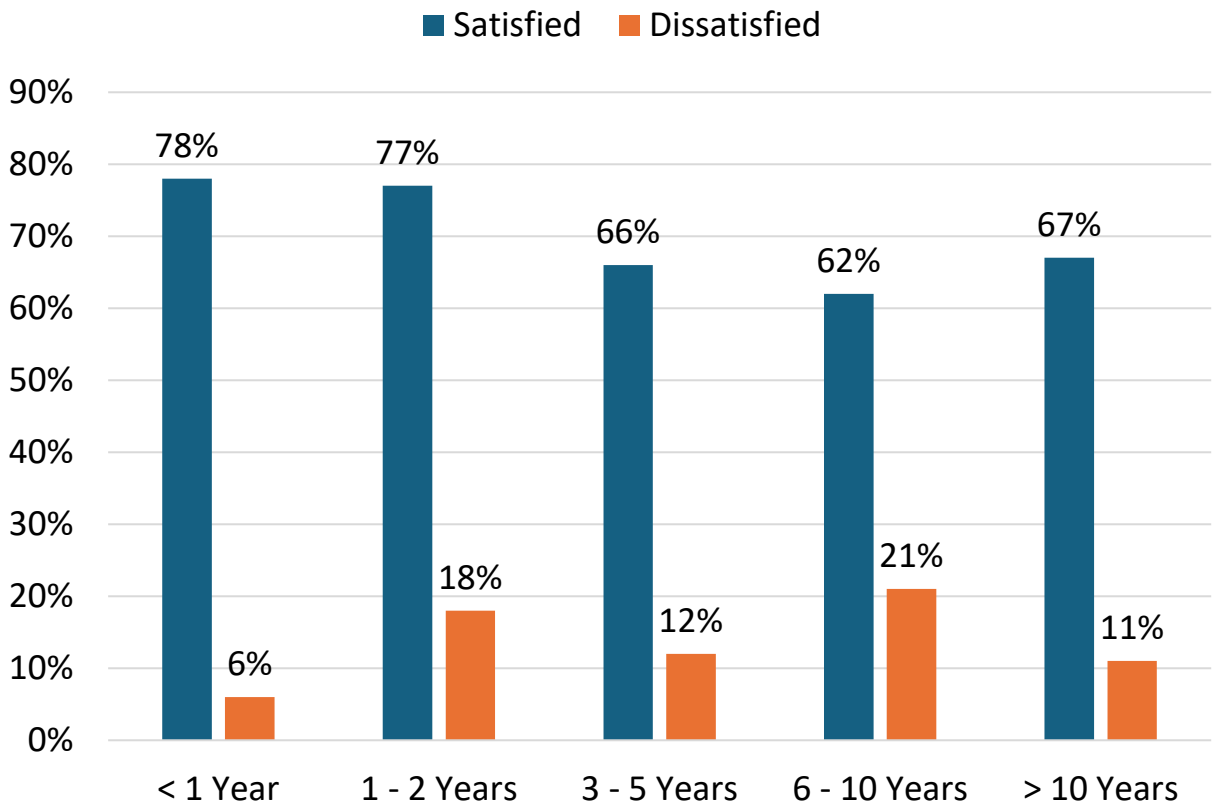
Satisfaction with Current Position by Age



The above graph depicts 2024 job satisfaction by age and shows a relatively consistent trend across age groups, with 62% to 73% of respondents being very or somewhat satisfied.

Note: Satisfied values include both somewhat and very satisfied responses. Dissatisfied values include both somewhat and very dissatisfied responses.

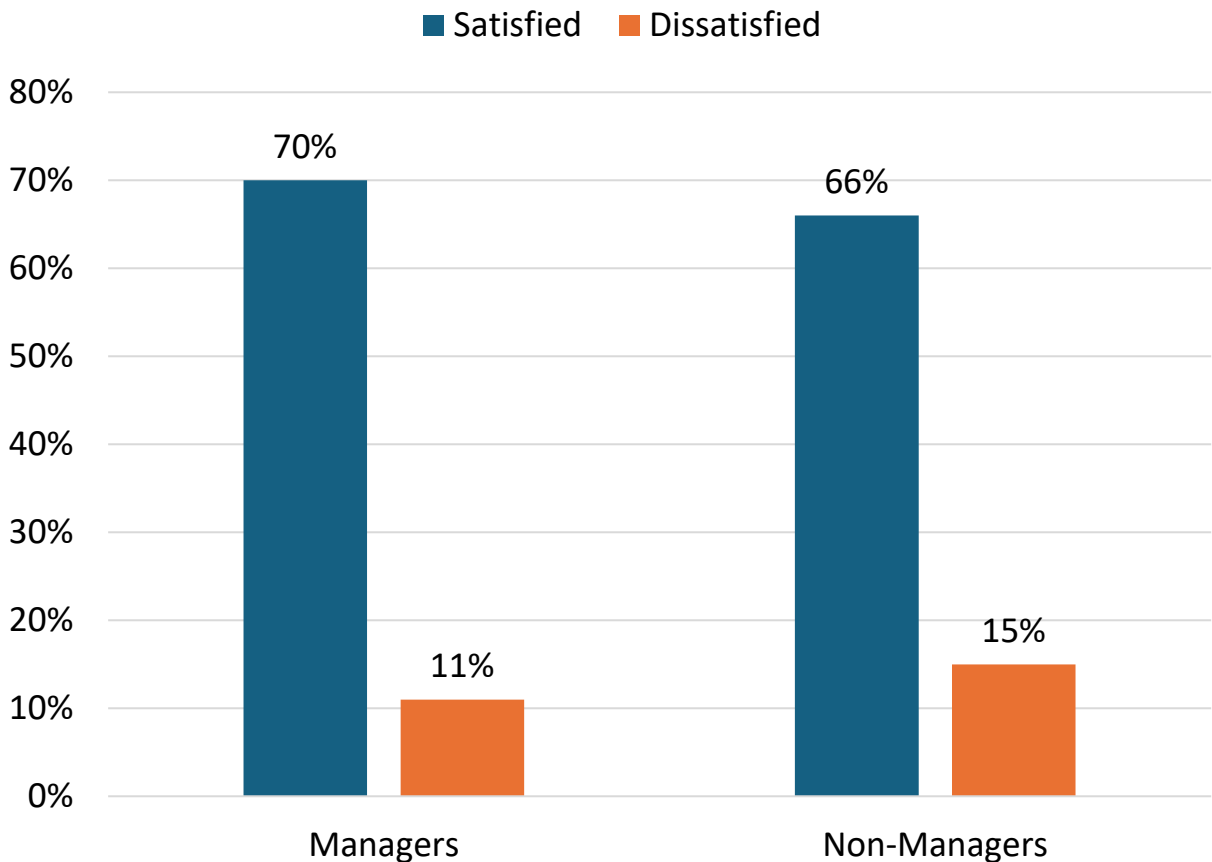
Satisfaction with Current Position by Tenure



The above graph depicts 2024 job satisfaction by company tenure and shows job satisfaction is slightly higher for employees with two years or less. There is a relatively consistent trend across the remaining age groups, with 62% to 67% of respondents being very or somewhat satisfied. Employees with 6-10 years report having the highest dissatisfaction ratings, with 21% either somewhat or very dissatisfied.

Note: Satisfied values include both somewhat and very satisfied responses. Dissatisfied values include both somewhat and very dissatisfied responses.

Satisfaction with Current Position Managers / Non-Managers

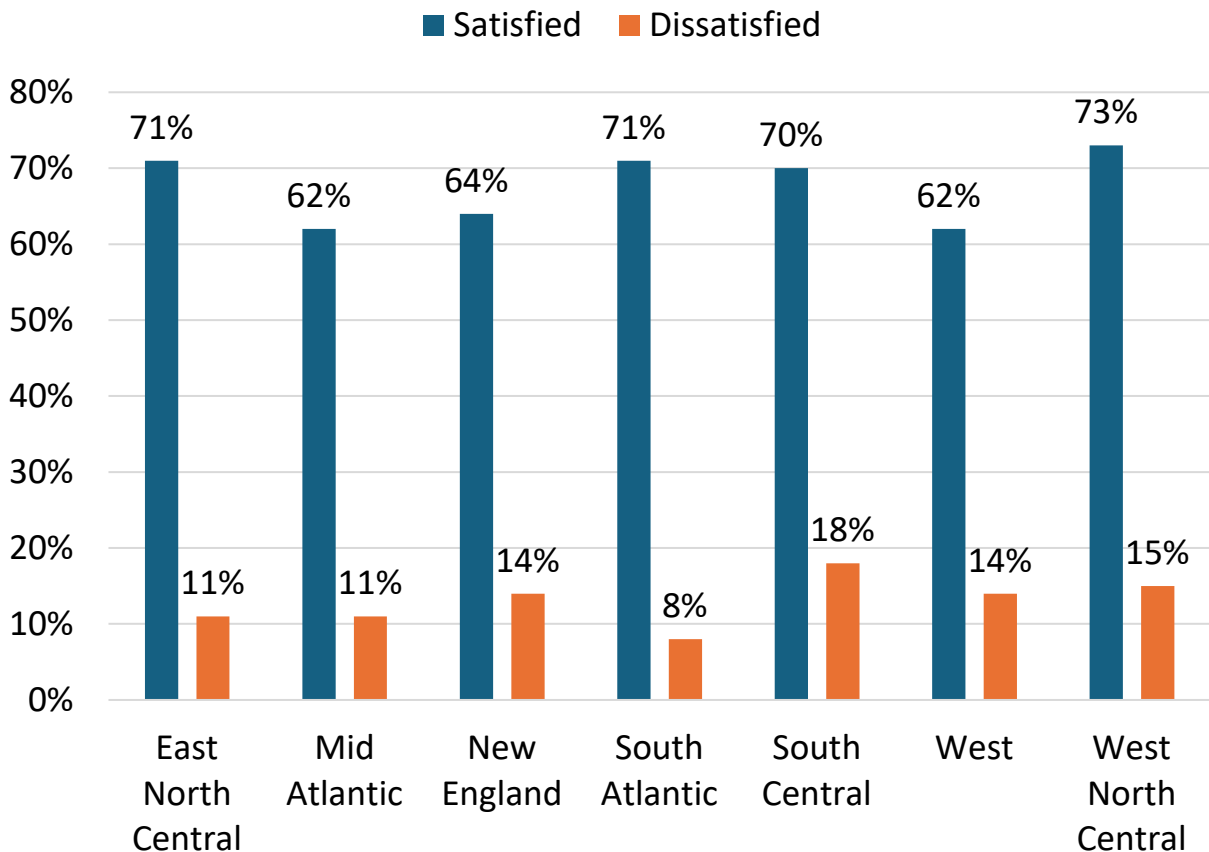


The above graph depicts 2024 job satisfaction for managers of employees versus non-managers and shows no notable differences for those with direct reports.

Note: Satisfied values include both somewhat and very satisfied responses. Dissatisfied values include both somewhat and very dissatisfied responses.

Satisfaction with Current Position

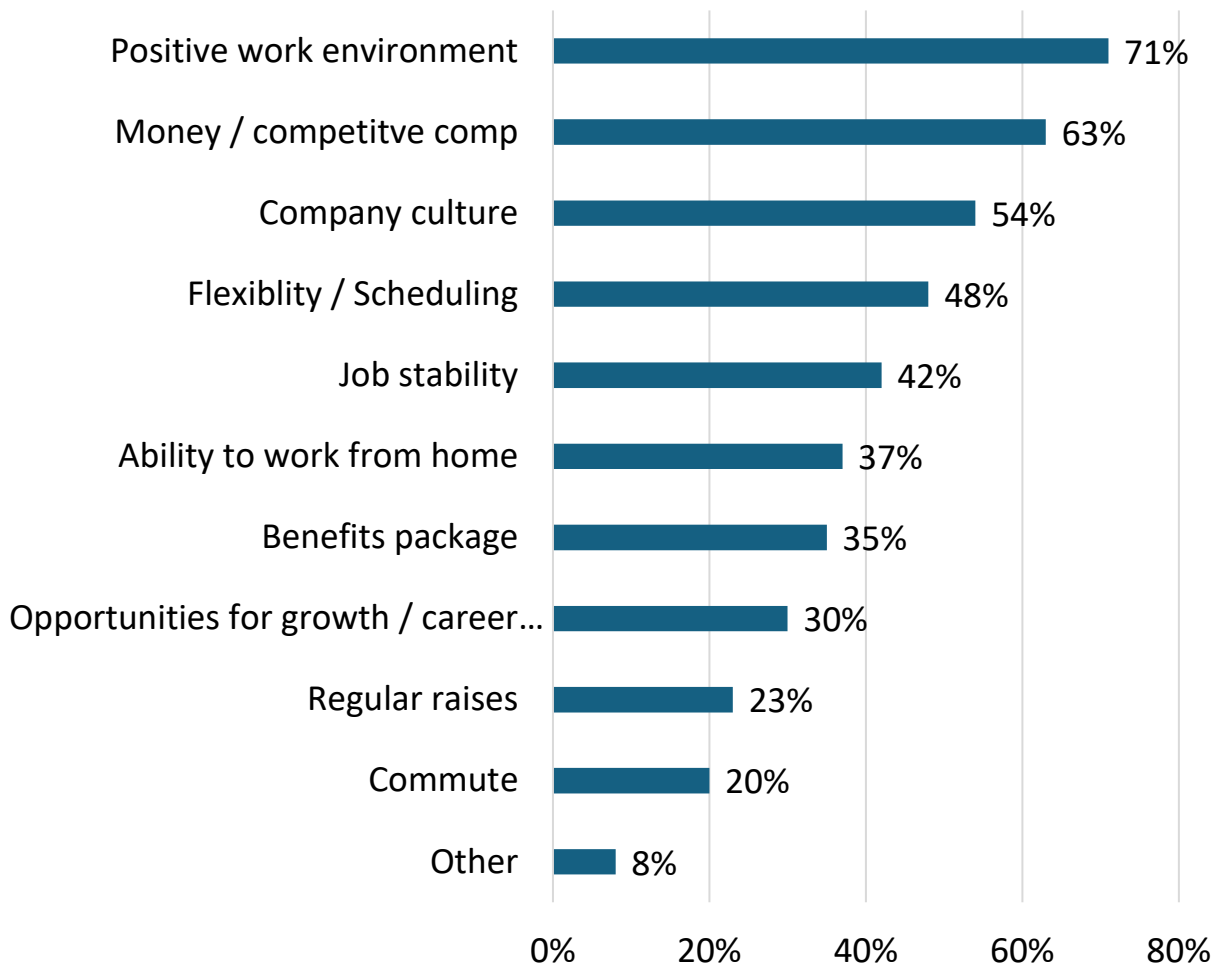
Region



The above graph depicts 2024 job satisfaction scores by US region. Sample sizes vary, but satisfaction generally runs highest in the West North Central region (IA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD) and lowest in the Mid Atlantic and West regions. Regions are further defined on page A-21.

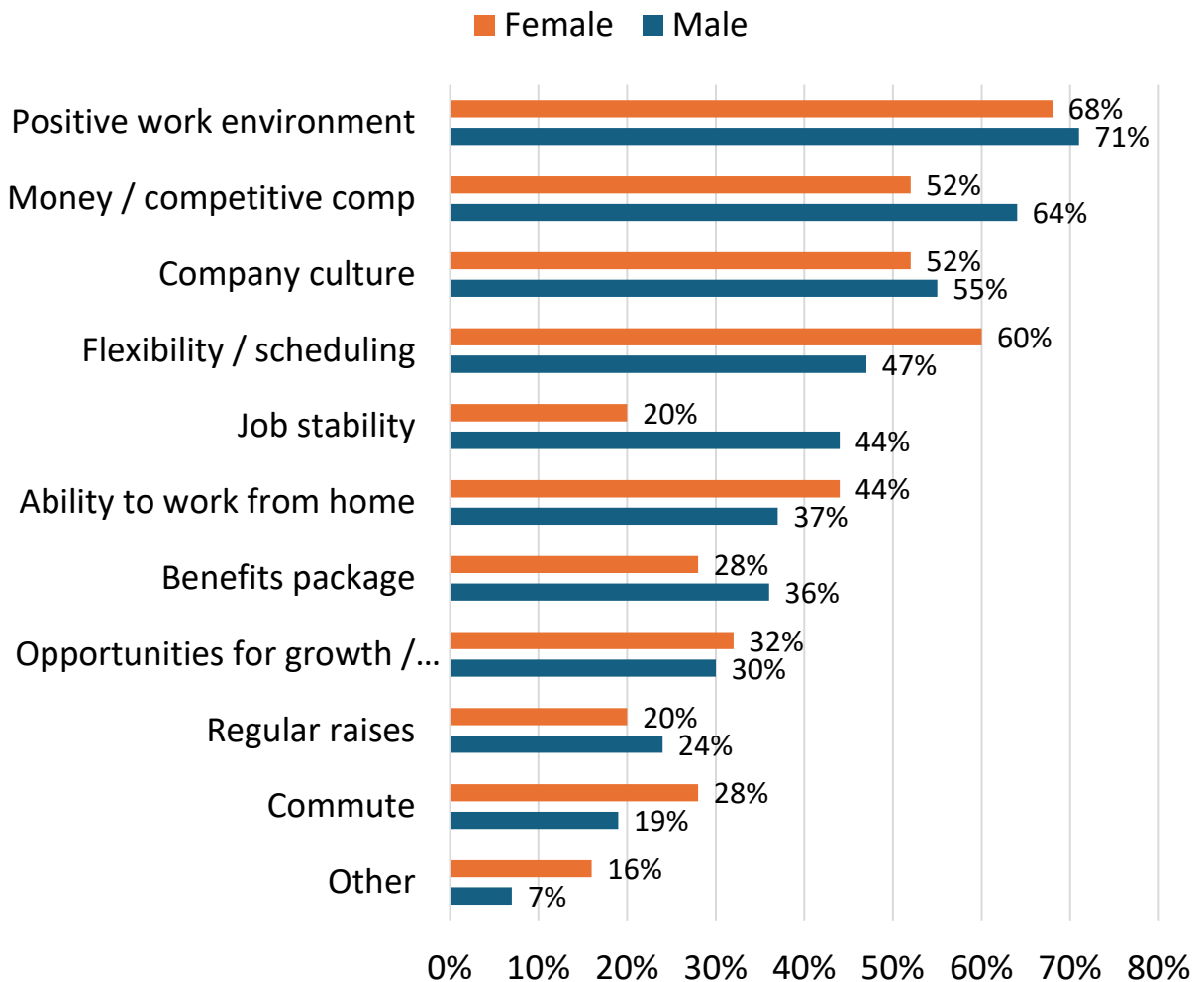
Note: Satisfied values include both somewhat and very satisfied responses. Dissatisfied values include both somewhat and very dissatisfied responses.

Factors that Contribute Most to Job Satisfaction



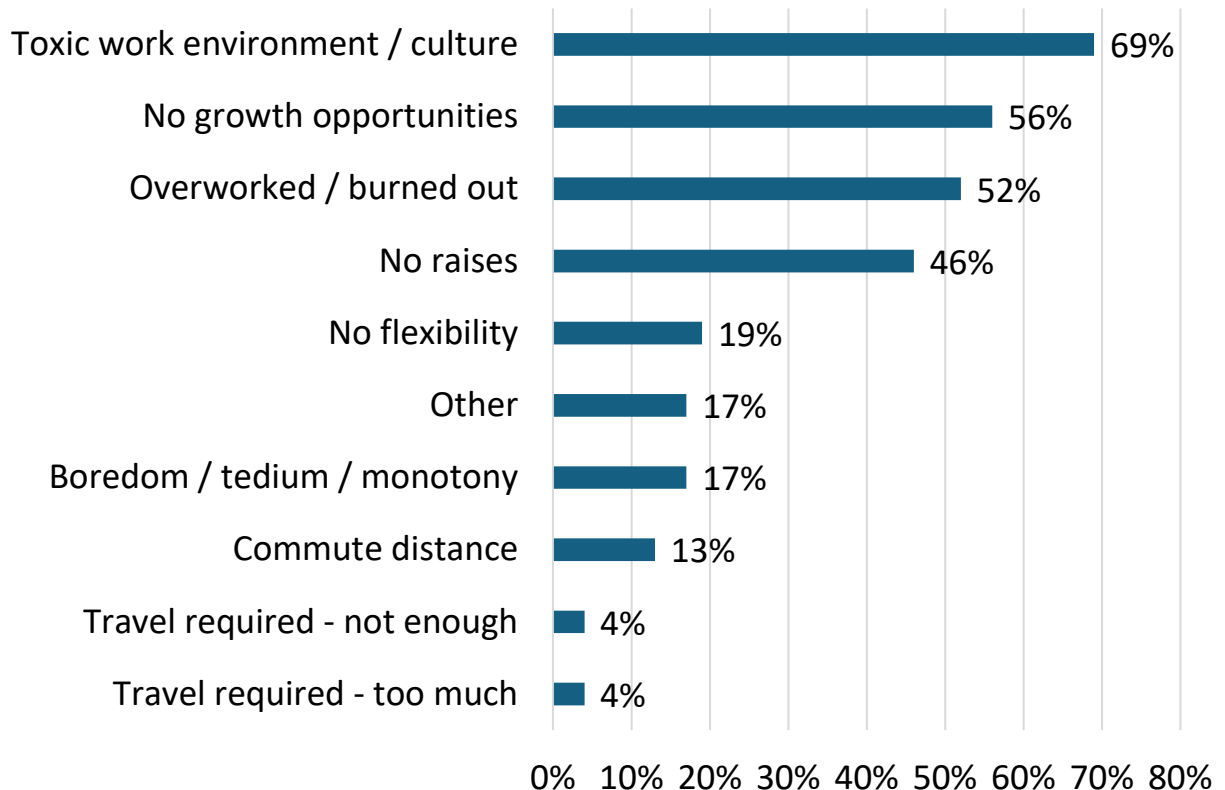
Satisfied employees selected factors that contribute most to their job satisfaction. Consistent with last year, positive work environment and competitive compensation rank first. Company culture and flexibility rank in the second tier. Several factors comprise the third tier - work from home capability, benefits, job stability, regular raises, and growth opportunities.

Factors that Contribute Most to Job Satisfaction - Gender



Satisfied employees selected those factors that contribute most to their job satisfaction. The above graph depicts the ratings by gender. Males are more likely than females to report compensation and stability as important factors. Females are more likely to report flexibility, the ability to work from home, and commuting as important factors.

Factors that Contribute Most to Job Dissatisfaction



Dissatisfied employees selected those factors that contribute most to their job dissatisfaction. The hierarchy from high to low is largely the same as last year. Toxic work environment/culture ranks first followed by lack of growth opportunities, overworked, and no raises. Travel-related factors were seldom reported as contributing to dissatisfaction. “Other” includes unrealistic expectations, management, immature coworkers, feeling unappreciated, lack of recognition, no work-from-home option, no benefits, and relocation of roles outside the U.S.

Likelihood of a Job Change / Influencers

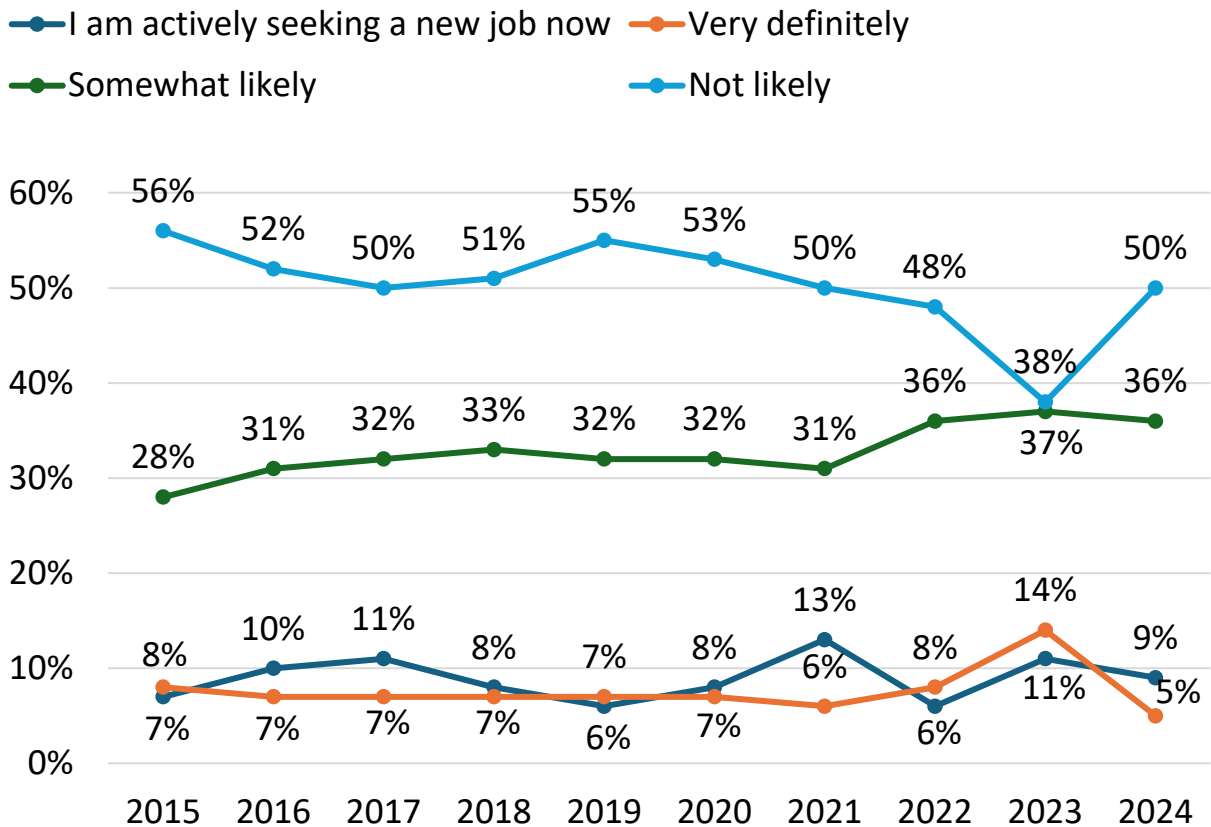
This section examines the trend for the likelihood that employees would seek a job change in the next 12 months.

This section also includes an analysis of the influential factors that could impact the desire to work for another company - what people would be looking for.

The results are depicted in the following graphs.

Likelihood of Seeking a New Job in the Next 12 Months Annual Trends	A-16
Likelihood of Seeking a New Job in the Next 12 Month Age	A-17
What People Would Look for in Another Company	A-18
What People Would Look for in Another Company - Gender	A-19

Likelihood of Seeking a New Job in the Next 12 Months – Annual Trends

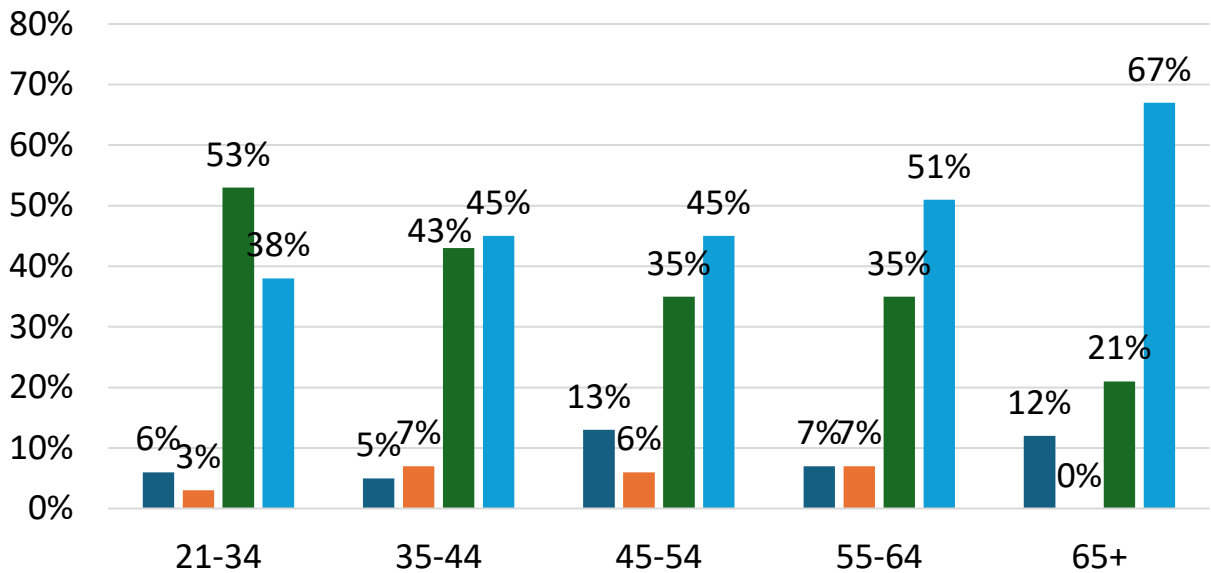


The percentage of employees **not likely to seek a new job** rebounded this year - a significant increase. Half the respondents will not likely seek a new job in the next 12 months. In keeping with this, the percentage who are very definitely going to look for a new job in the next 12 months decreased significantly - returning to its historical range.

Only 9% of respondents are actively seeking a new job right now, a slight increase from last year.

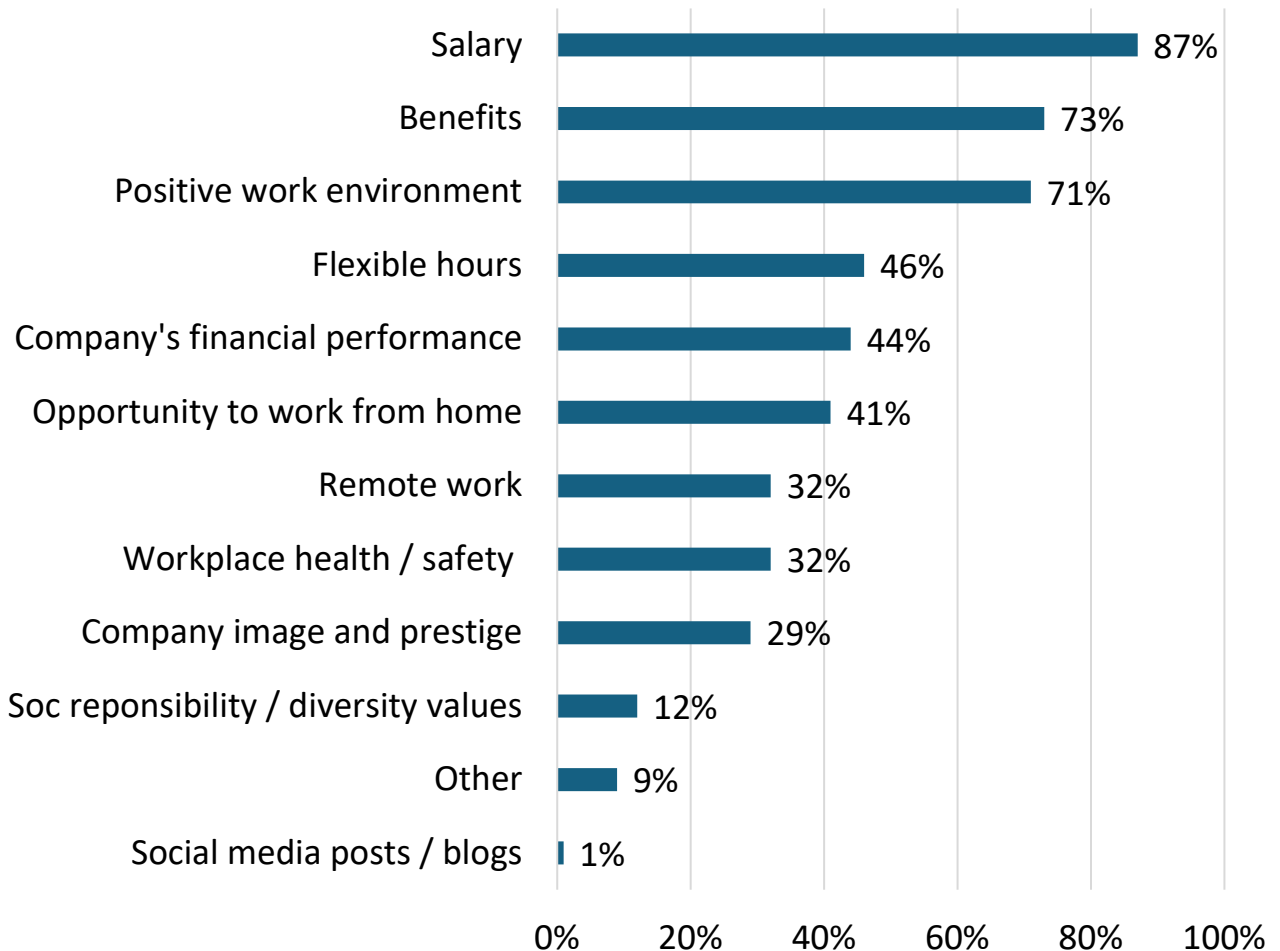
Likelihood of Seeking a New Job in the Next 12 Months - Age

■ I am actively seeking a new job now ■ Very definitely
■ Somewhat likely ■ Not likely



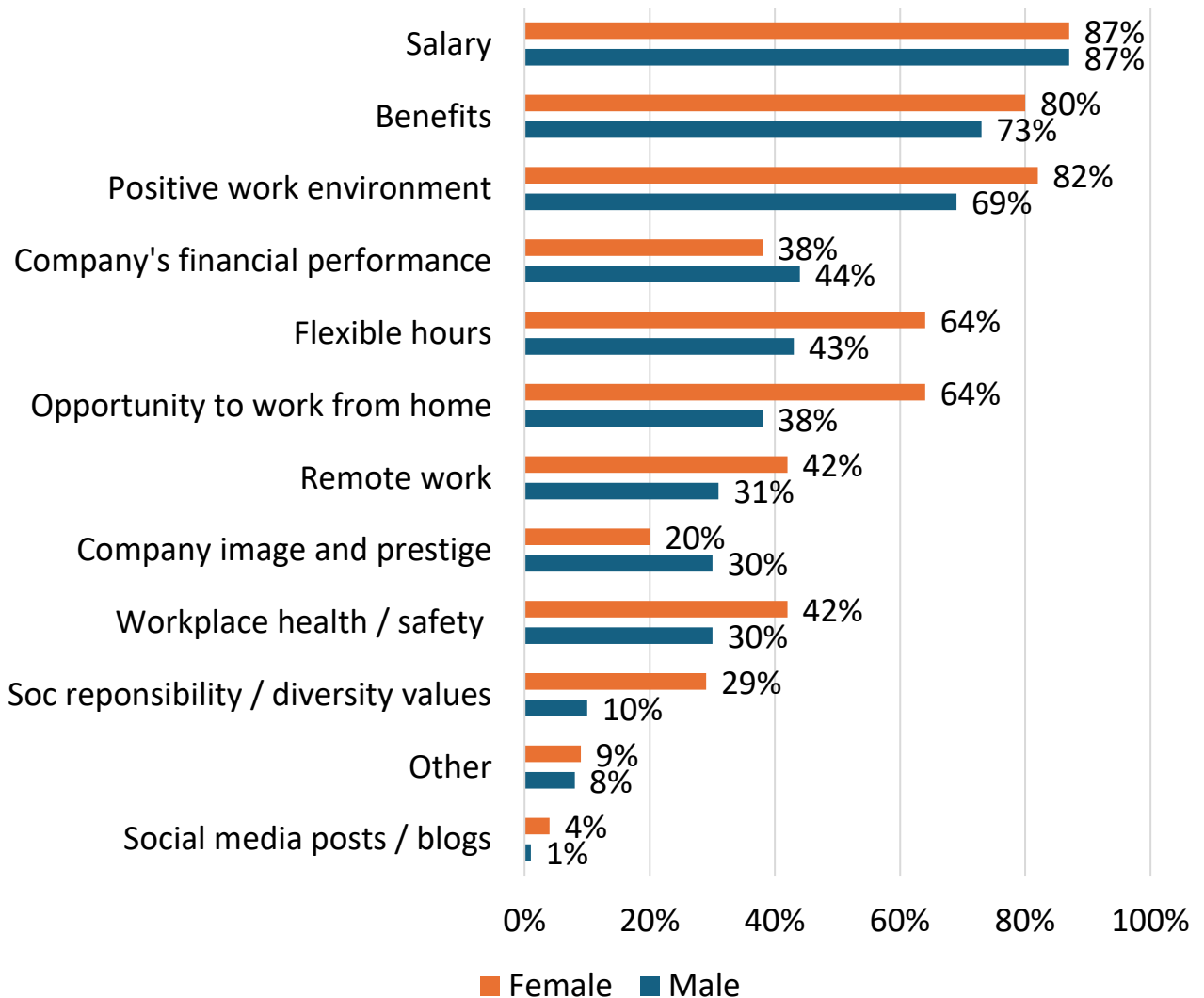
Above are the 2024 expectations for seeking a new job by age group. In keeping with previous survey periods, the percentage reporting they are somewhat likely to seek a new job decreases with increasing age, while 67% of respondents above 65 are not likely to seek a new job.

What People Would Look for in Another Company



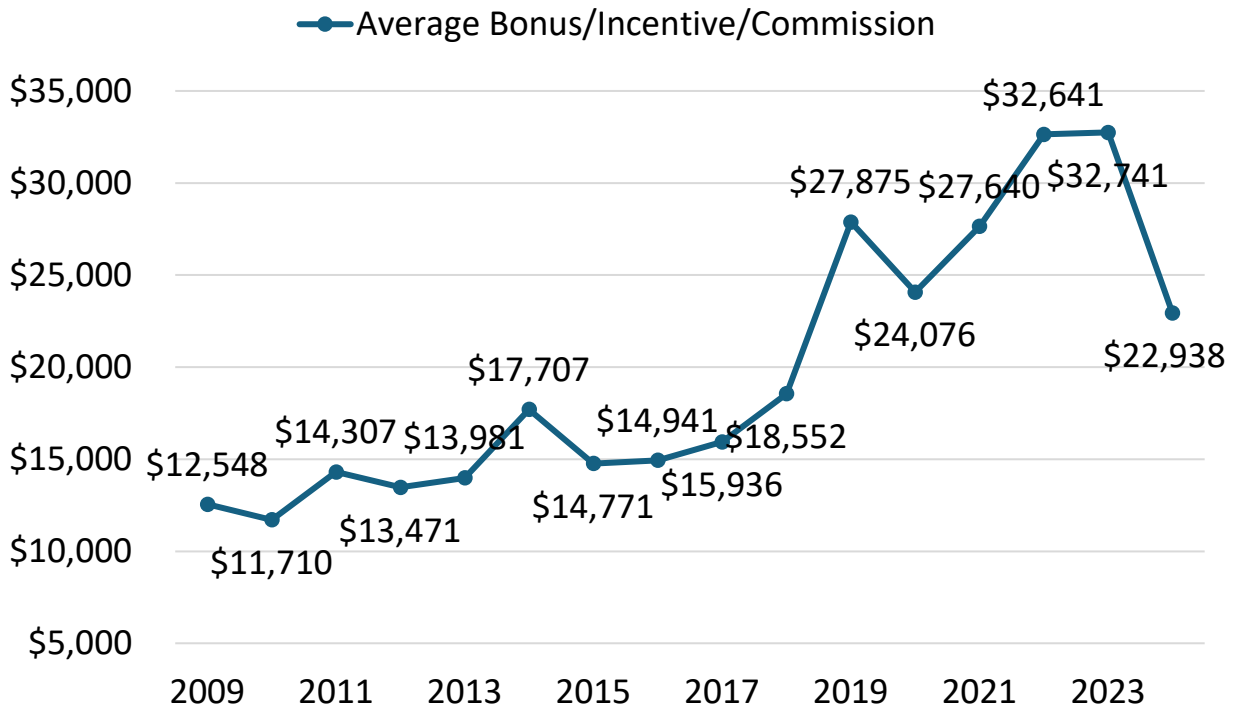
We asked respondents what factors they look for in another company. As in previous years, salary continues to rank first, with benefits and a positive work environment ranking second. Flexible hours, financial performance, and work-from-home opportunities rank third. Social media/blog posts anchor the low end of the ratings—cited significantly less often than all other factors people might consider.

What People Would Look for in Another Company - Gender



Factors are listed in descending order for the total sample. Flexible hours, opportunities to work from home, and social responsibility/diversity values are notably more prominent for females.

Average Bonus / Commission / Incentive by Year (2009-2024)



The graph above depicts the average bonus / incentive / commission by year from 2009 to 2024. Performance-based compensation leveled off last year and decreased in the 2024 survey. The average additional compensation for 2024 was \$22,939 – a decrease of 29% from 2023. It should be noted that the majority of respondents to this survey are in sales and management roles (see Current Professional Role page A-23).

Respondent Profile 2024

Primary Manufacturing Process	
Injection Molding	40.9%
Resin - Compounding - Additives	17.5%
Other	10.0%
Pipe - Profile Extrusion	4.1%
Distributor - Mfg. Rep	3.6%
Other Services	3.3%
Converting - Film	2.6%
Sheet Extrusion	2.6%
Auxiliary Machinery	2.1%
Tooling - Molds	1.8%
Blow Molding - Packaging	1.5%
Blown or Cast Film	1.5%
Thermoform Packaging	1.5%
Thermoform Heavy	1.3%
Recycling	1.0%
Rotomolding	1.0%
Automation	0.8%
Blow Molding - Industrial	0.8%
Compression Molding	0.8%
Contract Packaging	0.3%
Folding Cartons	0.3%
Form - Fill - Seal	0.3%
Labels	0.3%
Paper	0.3%

Region	
East North Central - IL, IN, MI, OH, WI	31%
West North Central - IA , KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD	7%
Mid Atlantic - NJ, NY, PA	9%
South Atlantic - DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV	13%
South Central - AL, AR, KY, LA, MS, OK, TN, TX	15%
New England - CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT	7%
West - AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY	8%
Outside the United States	9%

Respondent Profile 2024

Age	
21 - 34	9%
35 - 44	14%
45 - 54	25%
55 - 64	38%
65 +	13%

Gender	
Male	88%
Female	12%

Tenure with Company	
< 1 Year	9%
1 - 2 Years	11%
3 - 5 Years	15%
6 - 10 Years	16%
> 10 Years	49%

Country	
United States	91%
Other	9%

Direct Manager of Employees	
Yes	51%
No	49%

Tenure in the Plastics Industry	
< 1 Year	1%
1 - 5 Years	4%
6 - 10 Years	10%
11 - 15 Years	10%
16 - 20 Years	11%
> 20 Years	63%

Education	
High School	10%
Professional Certificate	7%
Associates Degree	8%
Bachelor's Degree	45%
Master's Degree	22%
Doctoral Degree	7%
Other	1%

Number of Employees	
< 10	3%
10 – 25	5%
26 – 99	19%
100 – 249	21%
250 – 499	11%
500 – 999	8%
1,000 - 2,499	9%
2,500 - 4,999	6%
5,000+	17%

Respondent Profile 2024

Current Professional Role	%
Salesperson or Account Manager	10.0%
Sales Manager	6.1%
Engineering Manager	5.9%
Chief Executive Officer	4.4%
R&D Engineer, chemicals, resins, additives	4.1%
Process Engineer	3.6%
Human Resources Manager	3.1%
President	3.1%
Sales and Marketing Director	3.1%
Tooling Engineer	3.1%
General Manager	2.3%
Materials Engineer	2.1%
Plant Manager	2.1%
Product Designer or Engineer	2.1%
Product Manager or Product Specialist	2.1%
R&D Engineer, other	2.1%
Marketing Manager	1.8%
Purchasing Director or Manager	1.8%
Maintenance Manager, process machinery	1.5%
R&D Engineer, mechanical	1.5%
Sales and Marketing VP	1.5%

Current Professional Role (cont.)	%
Consultant	1.3%
Engineering Director or VP	1.3%
Product Development VP or Manager	1.3%
Project Engineer	1.3%
Quality Manager	1.3%
Chief Operating Officer	1.0%
Manufacturing Engineer	1.0%
Manufacturing Engineering Manager	1.0%
Production Manager	1.0%
Program or Project Manager	1.0%
Quality Director	1.0%
R&D or Laboratory Manager	1.0%
Technical Support, in the field	1.0%
Tooling Manager	1.0%
Applications Engineer, in the field	0.8%
Applications Engineer, in the office	0.8%
Chief Financial Officer	0.8%
Human Resources	0.8%
Owner	0.8%
Process Technician	0.8%
Technical Support Manager	0.8%

Respondent Profile 2024

Current Professional Role (cont.)	%
Consultant	1.3%
Engineering Director or VP	1.3%
Product Development VP or Manager	1.3%
Project Engineer	1.3%
Quality Manager	1.3%
Chief Operating Officer	1.0%
Manufacturing Engineer	1.0%
Manufacturing Engineering Manager	1.0%
Production Manager	1.0%
Program or Project Manager	1.0%
Quality Director	1.0%
R&D or Laboratory Manager	1.0%
Technical Support, in the field	1.0%
Tooling Manager	1.0%
Applications Engineer, in the field	0.8%
Applications Engineer, in the office	0.8%
Chief Financial Officer	0.8%
Human Resources	0.8%
Owner	0.8%
Process Technician	0.8%
Technical Support Manager	0.8%
Controller	0.5%
Facility or Building Manager	0.5%
Manufacturing Manager	0.5%

Current Professional Role (cont.)	%
Manufacturing VP or Director	0.5%
Mold Designer	0.5%
Operations Director or Manager	0.5%
Purchasing Agent	0.5%
Quality Engineer	0.5%
Technical Support, in office	0.5%
Technology Manager	0.5%
Accounts Payable/Receivable	0.3%
Chief Information Officer	0.3%
Color Specialist	0.3%
Cost Analyst	0.3%
Industrial Engineer	0.3%
Lab Technician	0.3%
Machine Designer	0.3%
Machine Operator	0.3%
Maintenance Specialist, process machinery	0.3%
Manufacturing Director	0.3%
Moldmaker	0.3%
Packaging Engineer	0.3%
Planner or Scheduler	0.3%
Plant Layout Engineer	0.3%
Plant or Building Engineer	0.3%
Safety Engineer	0.3%
Shift Manager or Supervisor	0.3%
Simulation Design Engineer	0.3%
Technical support inside sales	0.3%
Other	2.1%

Perspective

- Year over year, about 70-80% of respondents in the plastics industry report they are satisfied in their current role, with about 50% of respondents not likely to seek a new job.
- In contrast, Monster's [2024 Work Watch](#) report suggest that 95% of workers are looking for or plan to look for a new job in 2024.



Plastics professionals report the most important factors to job satisfaction are:

- a positive work environment
- competitive compensation
- company culture
- flexibility

Successful companies need great people. Great people are hard to find.
MBS Recruiters can help.

MBS Recruiters work exclusively in the plastics and manufacturing industry. We identify top talent and guide our corporate clients through the hiring process. MBS successfully recruits management and executive-level professionals in sales, operations, engineering, HR, supply chain, financial, and executive management positions throughout North America.