

VIEW FROM THE TOP.

How CEOs are keyed in to workplace empathy.



Employees want to work for, and stay with, organizations that empathize with their needs—and so do CEOs.

Our 2020 State of Workplace Empathy Study measured how leaders feel about this important value, both for their organizations and for themselves.

[Here's what we learned about the CEO's perspective on empathy.](#)

As a group, CEOs believe it's important for organizations to demonstrate empathy.



93%
2017

95%
2018

97%
2019

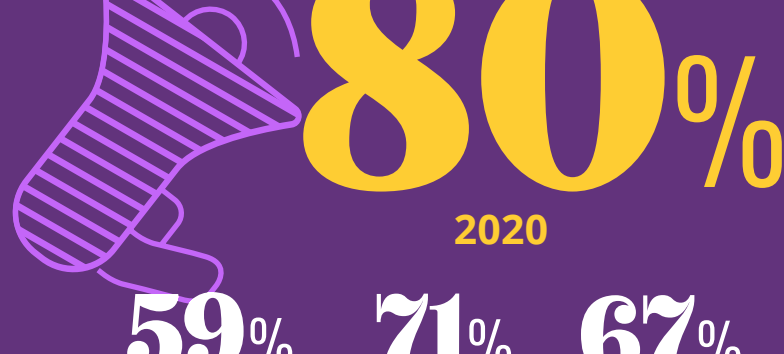
Compared to HR pros and employees, CEOs see the strongest link between empathy and the bottom line, and most believe it contributes to financial performance.



77%
HR Pros

72%
Employees

CEOs appear bullish about the possibility of change. A growing percentage believe empathy can be learned.



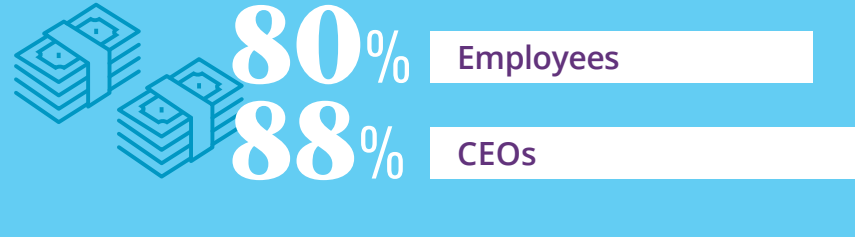
59%
2017

71%
2018

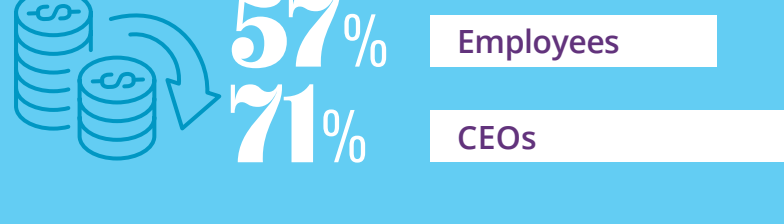
67%
2018

Compared to employees, CEOs are even more strongly motivated by empathy in their own careers.

I would switch employers for equal pay if they were more empathetic.



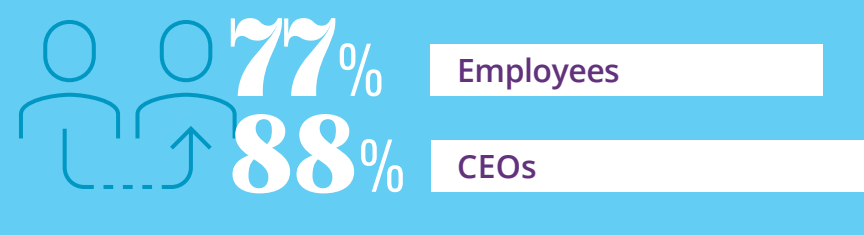
I'd be willing to take slightly less pay for an empathetic employer.



I would choose an organization with a strong culture of empathy even if it meant changing current job roles, industry or career path.



I would consider leaving my current organization if offered a similar job with a more empathetic organization.



At the same time, they still think their own organization—and leaders in general—are doing pretty well.



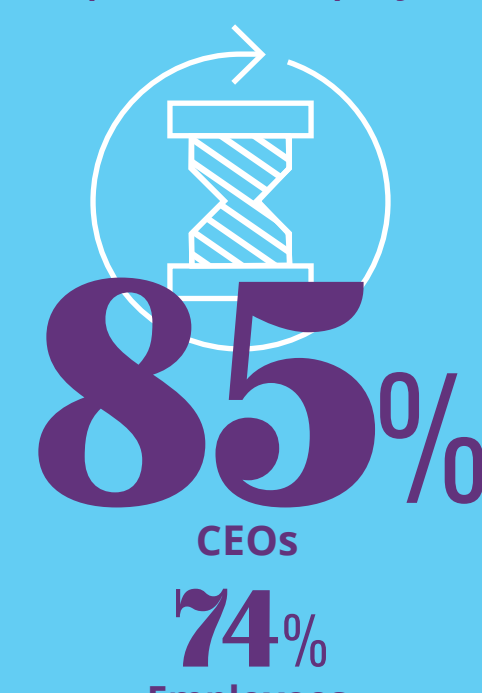
My organization demonstrates empathy:

83%

CEOs demonstrate empathy:

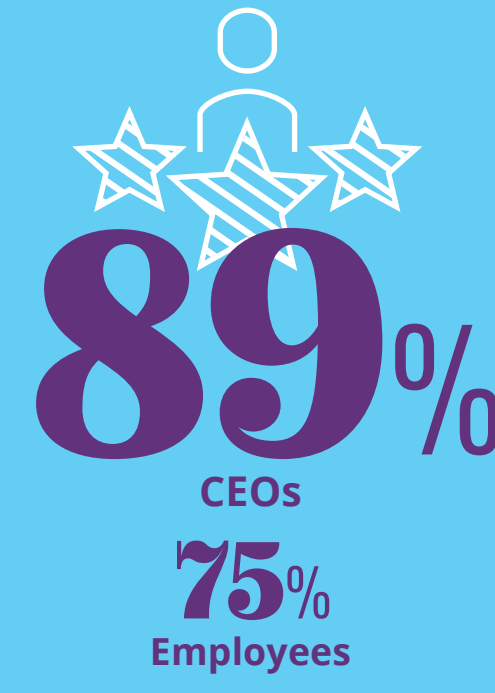
87%

I'd be willing to work longer hours for an empathetic employer.



74%
Employees

I would choose an organization with a strong culture of empathy over slightly higher salary.



75%
Employees

As an HR pro, what do these findings mean for you?

Empathy is probably already on the radar. In the past several years, CEOs like Microsoft's Satya Nadella have gone public with their views on the [importance of empathy as a source of innovation](#). Your CEO may be among those leaders beginning to embrace empathy. So, while it might not have been top-of-mind in the corner office before, chances are it is now.

The business case for empathy might not be that hard a sell. With CEOs increasingly recognizing the importance of empathy and its ability to be learned, suggestions that promote or improve empathy in your organization may be more welcome than ever.

Empathy is 360 degrees. Empathy doesn't only impact engagement and productivity for employees, it impacts everyone, at every level. Your focus on building a more empathetic environment just might help inoculate your organization against the inevitable change we always face.



How CEOs view empathy is also important to the organizations they lead.

Find more insights in our special report—[Workplace Empathy: What Leaders Don't Know Can Hurt Them](#).



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