



# “Going Green” Positively Impacts Employee Engagement and Opinions of Senior Managers

Research conducted by the Kenexa® Research Institute (KRI) evaluated workers’ opinions of their organizations with regard to “green” initiatives. The latest research suggests that an organization’s business choices that support the environment such as recycling, energy conservation and vendor selection have a significant influence on employees’ engagement levels and views of senior management. The report is based on the analysis of data drawn from a representative sample of workers surveyed through WorkTrends™, KRI’s 2008 annual survey of worker opinions.

“Worldwide, more and more organizations are ‘going green’ and are integrating this dedication into their strategic corporate initiatives,” said Anne Herman, Ph.D., research consultant, Kenexa Research Institute. “Those organizations committed to the environment demonstrate this by routinely recycling, conserving energy and working with vendors who share similar values. This sets them apart from their competition by creating a positive employment brand, and establishes an emotional tie between the employee and organization.”

The results from the latest cross-culture study indicate that among the 13 countries surveyed, more than half (54%) of workers state their favorability with their organization’s participation in “green” initiatives. Workers in India (63%) are the most favorable, while workers in Japan (40%) and Russia (42%) are the least favorable.

Across all countries surveyed, the research indicates that working for an organization where employees positively view “green” efforts has a significant, favorable impact on how they rate their

pride in the organization, overall satisfaction and willingness to recommend it as a place to work. Furthermore, employees with favorable opinions of their organizations’ “green” activities are more likely to state an intention to stay, relative to those who have unfavorable opinions.

Employees who have favorable views of their company’s “green” activities also have more favorable opinions of their management. They are much more likely to feel that senior managers have the ability to deal with company challenges, demonstrate that employees are important to the success of the company, and provide employees with a clear picture of the company’s direction. In addition, these employees are also more likely to believe that senior management supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct, and is more trustworthy.

When asked why they joined their organization, employees reported that one of the reasons they joined was because of the organization’s reputation. Those who were favorable toward their organization’s green initiatives were more likely to indicate that their company’s reputation had improved in the past year compared to those employees who were unfavorable toward their company’s green practices.

“Today’s employees are considering the reputation of an organization in their decision to join, and the positive influence of a company’s green policy relates to a more favorable reputation. Earth Day serves as a reminder that organizations that participate in ‘green’ initiatives are not only positive global environmental citizens, they increase their competitive advantage when hiring and retaining employees,” said Herman.

## Database Overview

The Kenexa WorkTrends database is a comprehensive normative database of employee survey results with comparisons on topics including leadership, employee engagement and customer orientation from workers in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, The Netherlands, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

## Study Details

The WorkTrends survey question was designed specifically to evaluate how workers view their organizations with regard to green operating initiatives. The question asked was: “My organization makes business choices that support the environment, such as recycling, energy conservation, and vendor selection.”

Opinion items were rated using a 5-point Likert-like scale. The percent favorable is the percentage of people who chose either of the two most positive answers (typically “strongly agree” or “agree”).

## Survey Results

The results from the latest cross-culture study indicate that among the 13 countries surveyed, more than half (54%) of workers state their favorability with their organization’s participation in “green” initiatives. Workers in India are the most favorable while workers in Japan and Russia are the least favorable.

Using a sample of 1,000 workers from each country surveyed, KRI classified respondents into two categories; those who felt their organization participated in green activities and those who do not.

### Employee Satisfaction with Organization’s Green Efforts

Country	Favorable	Unfavorable
Australia	62	38
Brazil	55	45
Canada	61	39
China	57	44
Germany	54	46
India	63	38
Italy	46	54
Japan	40	60
Mexico	61	39
The Netherlands	47	53
Russia	42	58
United Kingdom	55	45
United States	59	41
<b>Average</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>43</b>

*Note: Values represent percent favorable*

Those with a rating corresponding to at least the “agree” mark on the green item were categorized as working for a green company. By this criterion, approximately 54% of all surveyed workers currently rate their organization favorably in terms of participating in green initiatives.

Those with an average rating corresponding to “neither agree nor disagree” or lower (i.e., disagree and strongly disagree) were categorized as working for a non-green company. By this criterion, approximately 43% of all surveyed workers currently rate their organization unfavorably in terms of participating in green initiatives.

The differences between these two groups on other important measures such as engagement, retention and views of senior management were then calculated.

## Employee Engagement

The WorkTrends survey questions were designed to evaluate employee engagement. The questions asked were:

- I rarely think about looking for a new job with another company.
- I would gladly refer a good friend or family member to my company for employment.
- Overall, I am extremely satisfied with my company as a place to work.
- I am proud to tell people I work for my company.

Employee engagement is calculated by averaging the percentage of favorable responses across these four items. This results in a single score that reflects the overall employee engagement for workers in each country studied.

Country	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Australia	77	23
Brazil	73	27
Canada	76	24
China	74	26
Germany	70	30
India	76	24
Italy	65	35
Japan	63	37
Mexico	77	23
The Netherlands	60	40
Russia	57	43
United Kingdom	73	27
United States	71	29

*Note: Values represent percent favorable*

### Views of Senior Management

Australia	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	81	19
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	81	19
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	80	20
Has ability to deal with company challenges	80	20
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	75	25

Note: Values represent percent favorable

China	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	71	29
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	71	29
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	74	26
Has ability to deal with company challenges	73	27
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	74	26

Note: Values represent percent favorable

Brazil	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	75	25
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	77	23
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	78	22
Has ability to deal with company challenges	73	27
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	74	26

Note: Values represent percent favorable

Germany	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	70	30
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	69	31
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	69	31
Has ability to deal with company challenges	70	30
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	70	30

Note: Values represent percent favorable

Canada	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	75	25
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	77	23
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	78	22
Has ability to deal with company challenges	73	27
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	74	26

Note: Values represent percent favorable

India	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	77	23
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	77	23
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	76	24
Has ability to deal with company challenges	75	25
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	76	24

Note: Values represent percent favorable

Italy	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	65	35
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	66	34
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	68	32
Has ability to deal with company challenges	64	36
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	64	36

Note: Values represent percent favorable

The Netherlands	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	63	37
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	62	38
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	62	39
Has ability to deal with company challenges	59	41
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	61	39

Note: Values represent percent favorable

Japan	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	65	35
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	59	41
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	56	44
Has ability to deal with company challenges	65	36
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	60	40

Note: Values represent percent favorable

Russia	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	55	45
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	58	42
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	63	38
Has ability to deal with company challenges	54	47
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	54	46

Note: Values represent percent favorable

Mexico	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	75	25
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	79	21
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	77	23
Has ability to deal with company challenges	75	25
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	77	23

Note: Values represent percent favorable

United Kingdom	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	73	27
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	71	29
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	72	28
Has ability to deal with company challenges	74	27
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	69	31

Note: Values represent percent favorable

United States	Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
Trustworthy	75	25
Provide employees with a clear picture of the company's direction	76	24
Demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company	74	26
Has ability to deal with company challenges	74	26
Supports and practices high standards of ethical conduct	71	29

### Reputation

For all countries surveyed, those who were favorable toward their organization's green initiatives were more likely to indicate that their company's reputation had improved in the past year compared to those employees who were unfavorable toward their company's green practices.

Green Organization	Non-Green Organization
79	68

### About Kenexa

Kenexa provides business solutions for human resources. We help global organizations multiply business success by identifying the best individuals for every job and fostering optimal work environments for every organization. For more than 20 years, Kenexa has studied human behavior and team dynamics in the workplace, and has developed the software solutions, business processes and expert consulting that help organizations impact positive business outcomes through HR. Kenexa is the only company that offers a comprehensive suite of unified products and services that support the entire employee lifecycle from pre-hire to exit.

### Media Contact

Jennifer Meyer, Kenexa  
 1.800.391.9557  
[jennifer.meyer@kenexa.com](mailto:jennifer.meyer@kenexa.com)

