



Latest FranklinCovey Research Reports Major Gaps in U.S. Workers' Focus and Execution on Top Organizational Priorities

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SALT LAKE CITY, Mar 13, 2003 (BUSINESS WIRE) --

U.S. Workers Need to Work Effectively Together, Meet Often With Managers, and Overcome Barriers That Prevent Achievement of Key Goals

FranklinCovey (NYSE: FC), which has surveyed more than 2.5 million people over the last 14 years about productivity and effectiveness issues, today released the results of its latest assessment of 11,045 U.S. workers. The survey results confirm that most organizations suffer from major "execution gaps" which undermine the achievement of their highest priorities. These gaps include the following:

1. Workers don't know their organization's highest priorities. Only 44% of U.S. workers surveyed said they clearly understand their organization's most important goals. 2. Workers don't translate their organization's highest priorities into action. Only 19% of U.S. workers have clearly defined work goals, and only 9% believe that their work has a strong link to their organization's top priorities. 3. Workers don't embrace their organization's highest priorities. Only 19% feel a strong level of commitment to their organization's top priorities. 4. Workers don't stay on track with their organization's highest priorities. They report spending only 49% of their time on activities they believe are directly linked to their organization's key priorities. U.S. workers spend 32% of their time on other activities that demand their immediate attention, but have little relevance to their organization's most important goals. And 19% of their time is spent on petty politics and bureaucracy. Only 12% report their individual performance is reviewed monthly with their manager. 5. Workers don't collaborate well on their organization's highest priorities. Just 31% feel they can express themselves honestly and candidly at work and only 34% say they work together in a "win-win" atmosphere.

Overall, U.S. workers gave their organizations a score of 51 out of 100 for their collective lack of focus and execution on truly important goals.

"U.S. workers are basically giving their organizations a failing grade on focus and execution," said Bill Bennett, president of the FranklinCovey Organizational Solutions Business Unit. "There is a great opportunity for organizations to increase their productivity by closing the gap between their key objectives and daily execution."

FranklinCovey recently introduced its xQ(TM) (Execution Quotient) Survey -- a new assessment and management tool that measures, from an employee and workgroup perspective, how well organizational goals are understood and carried out. FranklinCovey commissioned Harris Interactive(R) to field the xQ Survey to poll 11,045 U.S. workers, representing executives, managers, and front-line workers across 11 major industries, including banking and finance, retail trade, healthcare, public administration and government, military, technology services, telecommunications, education, automotive, accommodation and food services, and communications.

The xQ Survey data indicates that the execution gaps result from a combination of factors, including a lack of focus on key goals and a surprising lack of mutual accountability and follow-through. For example, only 30% of workers plan with their workgroup how to support each other in agreed upon goals and tasks, and just 19% say their organization helps them meet its most important goals by removing barriers.

Only 28% of U.S. workers say they decide with their manager what they need to do to achieve important goals, and just 46% hold each other accountable for doing what they commit to do. The most significant barriers U.S. workers face in completing their most important work tasks are:

-- Bureaucratic processes -- (e.g., needless approvals, lack of access to key people, unnecessary time-consuming procedures, outdated rules, etc.) -- Surprise projects -- Lack of resources -- Micromanagement -- Unproductive meetings -- Broken systems -- Uncertainty about what to do

Today's tough, slow-growing economy is making U.S. workers busier than ever, as they try to do their own job, plus those of one or two gone-but-not-replaced colleagues. Trying to do more with less has resulted in a loss of focus, support and recognition. In fact, 43% of U.S. workers report.com/forbusiness/solutions or call 800/868-1776.

Additional Key Findings of the xQ Survey

Survey questions were presented to participants in a multiple response format.

Organizational Goals Lack Clarity -- 52% of U.S. workers say their organizations have decided what their most important goals are. -- 43% said their organization has clearly communicated its most important goals. -- 49% said they clearly understand what they are to do to help their organization achieve them. -- 40% report their organization's goals are emphasized on a regular basis. Lack of Commitment and Discipline to Key Goals -- 40% of employees feel their companies set goals that give measurable economic payback. -- 34% say their organization sets goals that will delight their customers if they achieve them. -- 35% feel their organization sets goals that are really achievable. -- 23% say their organization consistently achieves its most important goals. -- 13% say they are extremely satisfied with the results of their work at the end of most weeks. Poor Alignment of Key Goals -- 39% of U.S. workers feel their organization's mission is translated into a few clear goals that are most important to organizational success. -- 27% said their organization's most important goals are translated to the goals of their workgroup. -- 25% report their workgroup goals are translated into their individual work goals. -- 32% said their individual work goals are translated into daily tasks and/or performance standards. Fail to Plan, Plan to Fail -- 43% of U.S. workers feel their personal work goals are specific and clear. -- 40% say those goals are tied to specific measurable results. -- 37% report their work goals are tied to a deadline. -- 30% take time to plan their work schedule every day. Involve, Recognize, and Reward Employees

When asked what actions organizations could take that would have the largest impact on increasing their employees' focus on the most important goals, U.S. workers responded with the following:

-- 40% say to involve employees in deciding what needs to be done. -- 39% say recognize and reward achievement of organizational goals. -- 33% want organizations to provide frequent feedback on how employees are doing in terms of meeting organizational goals. -- 31% say train employees on how to execute organizational goals. -- 29% want the alignment of systems and processes to support the goals of the organization. -- 29% say to hold people accountable. Poor Accountability, Few Clear Consequences -- 52% say they are held accountable for reaching their commitments on time. -- 36% say they are held accountable for staying on budget. -- 22% report clear consequences and/or rewards are applied to employees. More Talent, Little Support -- 46% report that they have more creativity, resourcefulness, intelligence, and talent than their job requires or allows. -- 35% say their organization is empowering them to meet its most important goals. -- 31% feel they are provided with sufficient direction and feedback to meet their organization's most important goals. Significant Distractions

The most significant distractions the average U.S. worker deals with that prevent them from completing their most important work tasks are:

-- Other people's urgencies and emergencies -- Interruptions -- Shifting priorities -- Workplace tensions -- political, social, or otherwise -- Trying to meet the conflicting expectations of influential people Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the United States between Sept. 26 and Oct. 17, 2002, among a nationwide cross section of 11,045 adults (18+), employed full time in 10 functional areas across 11 major industries. Figures for employment, industry, gender, education, income, race/ethnicity, and region were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. "Propensity score" weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

In theory, with a probability sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of +/-1 percentage point of what they would be if the entire adult population had been polled with complete accuracy. This online survey is not a probability sample.

The FranklinCovey Focus Solution

The FranklinCovey Focus Solution emphasizes both individual effectiveness and alignment of organizational goals throughout an organization.

Individual Effectiveness -- The effectiveness of individuals in achieving their highest priorities at work and in their personal lives is greatly enhanced by FranklinCovey's offerings, including:

FOCUS: Achieving Your Highest Priorities Workshop

The new, one-day Focus workshop teaches productivity skills integrated with a proven, powerful planning system. Participants discover how to apply a goal-setting process that gets results, stay focused every day with a reliable planning system, gain control of the competing demands on their time, and reduce stress by recognizing and eliminating low-priority activities and distractions.

FranklinCovey Planning System

The FranklinCovey Planning System is available for use on each of these powerful productivity tools -- paper-based Franklin Planner(TM), FranklinCovey PlanPlus(TM) for Microsoft(R) Outlook(R), FranklinCovey TabletPlanner(TM) for Tablet PC(R), FranklinCovey Planning Software, and Pocket PC(R) or Palm(TM) handheld organizers.

Organizational Alignment -- Effectively assessing how sharply employees focus and execute on their organization's key objectives, and then inspiring and engaging them to achieve those critical goals together, is vital to the success of every organization. These important business practices can be achieved through the following assessment and learning tools of the FranklinCovey Focus Solution:

xQ Survey and xQ Debrief

The xQ Survey helps leaders assess their organization's Execution Quotient by gathering employee and workgroup perspectives on how sharply they focus and execute on the organization's key objectives. The xQ Debrief shows executives, at any level in an organization, the areas of concern within particular divisions or departments. Leaders can see specific actions needed and the steps to improve focus and execution at any organizational level.

Aligning Goals for Results Work Sessions

These work sessions help managers lead and focus their teams on their organization's few dominant or most important goals by translating them into meaningful, measurable weekly and daily goals cascading from the top of an organization to each individual employee.

About FranklinCovey

FranklinCovey is a global leader in effectiveness training, productivity tools, and assessment services for organizations and individuals. FranklinCovey helps companies succeed by unleashing the power of their workforce to focus and execute on top business priorities. Clients include 90 percent of the Fortune 100, more than 75 percent of the Fortune 500, thousands of small- and mid-sized businesses, as well as numerous government entities and educational institutions. Organizations and individuals access FranklinCovey products and services through corporate training, licensed client facilitators, one-on-one coaching, public workshops, catalogs, over 180 retail stores, and www.franklincovey.com. More than 2,500 FranklinCovey associates provide professional services and products in 39 offices and in 95 countries.

To review the complete report of the FranklinCovey xQ Survey, visit www.franklincovey.com/about/press/2003/xq_report.pdf.

CONTACT: FranklinCovey, Salt Lake City
David Hill, 801/817-6441
david.hill@franklincovey.com
Debra Lund, 801/817-6440
debra.lund@franklincovey.com

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