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Under-Worked Employees Are Again The Least Happy; Balanced Workload is Best

PURCHASE, NY — If you want to keep your employees enthusiastic, make sure they don't have too little work.

For the second year in a row, employees who have too little work were less satisfied with their jobs than those with too much or just the right amount of work, according to the latest workload satisfaction survey by **Sirota Survey Intelligence**, specialists in attitude research. The findings are consistent with *The Enthusiastic Employee: How Companies Profit By Giving Workers What They Want* (Wharton School Publishing), recently published by the firm's authors.

According to the most recent Sirota survey of 203,000 employees:

- **The most satisfied employees of all are those with just the right amount of work.** They rated their overall satisfaction with their jobs at 68 on a 100-point scale. Last year, employees comprising a different survey sample rated having the right amount of work a 73 out of 100 points.
- **Once again, the least satisfied employees are those with “much too little” work.** They rated their job satisfaction at 37, compared to 32 in last year's survey.
- **Those who said they had too much work were again the second most-satisfied.** They rated their overall satisfaction with their jobs a 60 out of 100, compared with a rating of 57 in last year's survey.
- **Employees who said they had “much too much” work again were in the middle regarding job satisfaction** – a rating of 52, compared to a 42 in last year's survey.
- **The second-least satisfied employees are those with too little work** – they rated their overall job satisfaction at 43, compared to 49 in last year's survey.

<i>Amount of Work</i>	<i>Average Job Satisfaction (out of 100 points)</i>	
	2005 survey	2004 survey
About Right	68	73
Too Much Work	60	57
Much Too Much Work	52	42
Too Little Work	43	49
Much Too Little Work	37	32

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“The most recent survey results confirm one of the timeless truths about employee satisfaction. 95% of employees don’t want to just ‘get by’ in their jobs,” said **Jeffrey Saltzman, chief executive officer of Sirota Survey Intelligence**. “Most people come to work enthusiastic and want to make a real contribution. Those who feel they have too little to do – and possibly feeling not appreciated by their employers – have lower levels of overall satisfaction and a waning sense of enthusiasm.”

"Over-worked people in a sense are getting feedback from the organization that their contributions are important. Conversely, when people feel under-worked, they also tend to feel under-valued, and their job insecurity increases," Saltzman added.

“Although there is a cost to employers when their employees are over-worked, there may be an even bigger cost from being under-worked,” said Saltzman. “Companies need to consider employees’ expectations for having the proper amount of work in order to achieve the best productivity, morale, and employee retention.”

About Sirota Survey Intelligence

Founded in 1972, Sirota Survey Intelligence (www.sirota.com) specializes in attitude research. Headquartered in Purchase, NY, Sirota has conducted thousands of attitude surveys around the world that have helped organizations build strong, productive relationships with their employees, customers, communities, opinion leaders, investors, suppliers, and other publics. The major results of their surveys have recently been summarized in *The Enthusiastic Employee: How Companies Profit by Giving Workers What They Want* (Wharton School Publishing www.enthusiasticemployee.com). Last May, Sirota Survey Intelligence changed its name from Sirota Consulting.

Compiled since 1972 and continuously updated, Sirota’s multi-national, multi-industry database comprises data from millions of employees collected through the firm’s employee survey research (predominantly among the Fortune 500). It is possible that the results from the companies in Sirota’s database are more favorable than a national probability sample.