



# Bored Employees Are More Disgruntled Than Overworked Ones, Research Finds

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**PURCHASE, NY – January 30, 2008** – Businesses may realize far more negative consequences from bored employees than from those who report having “too much work,” according to research just completed by **Sirota Survey Intelligence**, specialists in attitude research.

Employees who are bored (reporting “too little work”) are often doing work for which they are ill-suited, or have jobs that are poorly designed. As a result, they have by far lower job satisfaction, sense of accomplishment, and pride in their employers compared to all other workers, according to the Sirota survey of over 1 million employees.

“Feeling overworked – a condition that could lead to job burnout – is far more prevalent than feeling bored – yet both have harmful effects on employees and their companies. Interestingly, being bored has far more serious consequences for an organization than being overworked,” said **Douglas Klein, president of Sirota Survey Intelligence** ([www.sirota.com](http://www.sirota.com)).

Employees’ perceptions of being overworked spike during their second through fifth years with an employer. 27% of employees with two to five years experience with an employer report being overworked. In general, more employees report feeling overworked (22%) than those who say they are bored (14%).

“Employees who complain about being overworked also feel they are not receiving adequate support from co-workers. In addition, they contend that the quality of their work suffers, they experience greater stress and tension, and feel they have sacrificed their personal lives for their jobs,” said Klein.

- **Adequate support from co-workers:** 59% of employees who have “about the right amount of work” feel they receive sufficient support from colleagues, compared to just 35% of those with “too much work”
- **Quality suffers:** 59% of employees who have “about the right amount of work” feel quality is unaffected by their workload,

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compared to just 25% of those with “too much work”

- **Job stress:** 32% of employees with “about the right amount of work” are favorable about their level of job stress and tension, compared with just 14% of those with “too much work”
- **Job pressures interfere with personal life:** 49% of employees with “about the right amount of work” are positive about their work-life balance, compared to just 28% of those with “too much work”

“Again, while overwork raises significant issues for employees and employers, the attitudes of bored employees pose even greater challenges. Bored employees are less satisfied with their jobs, finding them less challenging and poorer matches to suit their skills,” said Klein. “Bored employees are also less proud of their employers, less innovative, and feel less valued compared to all other workers.”

- **Job satisfaction:** 81% of employees with “about the right amount of work” are satisfied with their jobs, compared to just 50% of those with “too little work”
- **Find job challenging:** 71% of employees with “about the right amount of work” feel that their jobs are challenging, compared to just 22% of those with “too little work”
- **Good use of their skills and abilities:** 74% of workers with “about the right amount of work” feel their jobs make good use of their skills and abilities, compared to just 36% of those with “too little work”
- **Pride in their employers:** 76% of workers with “about the right amount of work” are proud of where they work, compared to just 51% of those with “too little work”
- **Feeling of personal accomplishment:** 73% of workers with “about the right amount of work” get a feeling of accomplishment from their jobs, compared to just 38% of those with “too little work”
- **Encouraged to be innovative:** 65% of workers with “about the right amount of work” feel they are encouraged to be innovative, compared to just 43% of those with “too little work”
- **Feel important to the company:** 61% of workers with “about the right amount of work” feel they are an important part of their companies, compared to just 34% of those with “too little work”

Note: Those reporting “too much” work are almost as favorable as those who report “about the right amount” on the above dimensions.

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"The complaints of both overworked and bored employees should be taken seriously," Klein cautioned. "Complaints about being overworked can be an indication of poor quality or work processes, and it can be difficult in certain circumstances to retain employees who feel they are overworked and out of balance with their work life. But bored employees have an even greater negative impact on an organization, lowering morale and productivity, and draining resources."

#### **About Sirota Survey Intelligence**

Founded in 1972, Sirota Survey Intelligence ([www.sirota.com](http://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, shareholders, suppliers, and other publics. The major results of their surveys have been summarized in ***The Enthusiastic Employee: How Companies Profit by Giving Workers What They Want*** (Wharton School Publishing [www.enthusiasticemployee.com](http://www.enthusiasticemployee.com)).

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.