

Shared Services 2005 Workplace Survey

Methodology

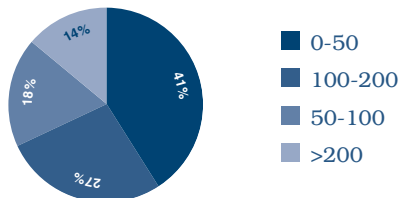
The survey was conducted online during February 2005 in collaboration with the Shared Services Network. It was responded to by the financial management from over 100 Shared Service Centres. The purpose of the survey is to highlight current employment trends within SSC's and act as a basis for discussion at the workshop facilitated by Robert Half International during the 5th Annual Shared Services Week.

Profile of the respondents

Current Position



Size of the SSC (Headcount)



Robert Half InternationalSM

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1. Evaluation/Retention

1.1. Does your company carry out employee performance appraisals?

Every 6 months: 46%
Every year: 46%
No: 8%

Almost half of the respondents only conduct appraisals on an annual basis

1.2. Primarily, which criteria do you take into account during the appraisal process?

1. Overall work performance
2. Achievement of specific results or objectives
3. Individual and team motivation

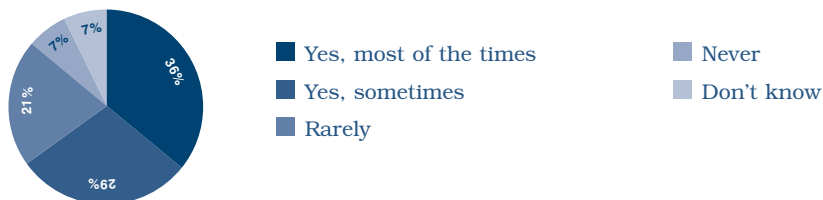
'Personal performance' and 'specific results' were the two top evaluation criteria

1.3. Other than base salary, what incentives do you offer to encourage staff retention?

1. Training
2. Career Development Programme
3. Financial (benefits/bonus)

Additional financial compensation was only listed as the third most popular staff retention tool

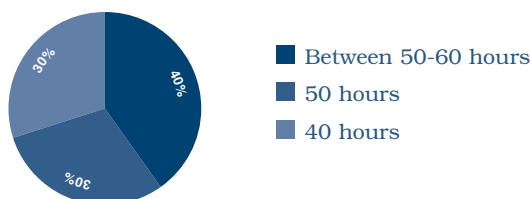
1.4. In your experience, when employees leave, do they join another SSC?



Almost two-thirds of the respondents envisage a long-term career in a Shared Services environment

2. Environment/Telecommuting

2.1. Average weekly working hours



More than two-thirds of the respondents work more than 50 hours per week

2.2. Which aspect of the job would you like to change?

1. Increasing workload
2. Job stress
3. Professional autonomy

Flexibility is named as one of the biggest advantages of working in a Shared Service Centre. Increasing workload was listed as the number one disadvantage to working in a SSC.

2.3. Other than English, which of the following languages do you believe are most in demand?

1. French
2. Spanish
3. German
4. Dutch

3. Highlights

- Workload is increasing every year
- "Cash is still king" for motivating and retaining Shared Service Staff
- Turnover in shared services is high, but experienced staff tend to stay within the shared service environment for a long period

4. Workshop Discussion Topics

1. Evaluation/Retention

- Is one appraisal per year enough? In addition to the formal appraisal processes, what kind of informal 'interim appraisals' are available?
- Are Shared Service Centres still too focused on short-term objectives? Is this reflected by poor training and/or career development programmes?
- In general are Shared Service Centre staff interested in staying for a long period of time in one specific company? On average, how long do people stay in one position?
- How does "Management by Objectives" play a role in motivating and compensating senior finance staff? How is "Management by Objectives" balanced with "Management by Example"?
- Would Shared Service Centre staff be interested in receiving more "soft incentives" (training, team building events, etc.) or is "cash still king"?
- Is staff turnover considered to be a negative or could controlled turnover be a strategic way to manage the business?
- How can smaller-scale Shared Service Centres compete for talent with the larger ones?

2.Environment/Telecommuting

- Is overtime a staffing issue?
- Is overtime remunerated separately or included in the current package?
- Are workload and stress considered to be tools of 'natural selection'?
- Are the 'soft skills' of communication, listening and problem solving more important than the 'hard skills' that are common across every SSC?
- Does the multicultural nature of a Shared Service Centre act as a driver or a barrier to its' success?
- Is diversity at lower levels reflected in the same way at management level?
- Are there specific processes (e.g. extra controls by a supervisor) in place to prevent misunderstandings and inaccurate communication? In this respect, does e-mail play a more important role in the communication process?
- Are there specific training programs in place to deal with some of the issues of a Shared Service Centre such as communication, multicultural management and language skills? If so, to what extent are they able to resolve some of the issues mentioned above?

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