

Hong Kong
Indonesia
Malaysia
Philippines
Singapore
Thailand
Vietnam

Employee job happiness index 2017

Strategies to engage, motivate and
retain top talent

SEEK Asia signature market research series vol. 5

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About us

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Executive summary

A happier workforce in 2017

Employees in Indonesia (5.27) and Vietnam (5.19) are the happiest in the region and the only two countries posting scores above 5 (5="neutral", scoring 0="extremely unhappy" and 10="extremely happy"). Overall, the regional weighted average returned a higher score than the previous year, 4.77 compared to 4.64 in 2016. Outlook for the next 6 months for almost all the countries is not optimistic, except in the Philippines, where the index improves very slightly from 4.97 to 4.98.

Market intelligence garnered from this survey reveals some interesting insights about the aspirations and motivations of the different demographics interviewed. Gender and civil status of employees do not cause them to perceive happiness differently, however employees below 26 years are more concerned with their benefits and perks rather than opportunities for career growth.

Employees in medium to large companies (101->1000) rate company reputation more highly than having a flexible work schedule. People are willing to put in the hours for a stable job. Entry level employees and those with lower education levels are unhappiest with rewards.



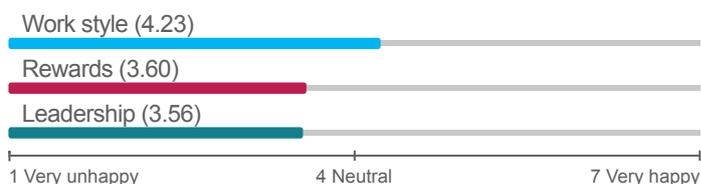
Weighted average Happiness Index rating from happiest to least happy rating (current), based on a 10-point scale, whereby 0 is extremely unhappy, 5 is neutral and 10 is extremely happy

What's driving or dampening happiness across the region?

	HK	ID	MY	PH	SG	TH	VN
Work style							
Good Colleagues	4.13	4.69	4.61	4.71	4.27	4.33	4.55
Company Reputation	4.17	4.42	4.25	4.64	4.23	4.54	4.64
Company Values	3.43	4.04	3.88	4.17	3.68	4.24	4.39
Job Security	3.98	4.02	3.96	4.14	3.82	4.11	4.27
Work Culture	3.38	4.22	3.86	4.09	3.51	3.70	4.08
Work Location	4.38	4.59	4.76	4.70	4.59	4.60	4.65
Work Schedule	3.99	4.34	4.13	4.56	4.11	4.12	4.35
Rewards							
Basic Salary	3.73	3.77	3.60	3.69	3.79	4.07	3.85
Benefits & Perks	3.66	3.59	3.59	3.72	3.74	3.88	4.04
Career Development	3.01	3.44	3.34	3.64	3.00	3.53	3.44
Training Opportunities	3.24	3.56	3.45	3.65	3.34	3.60	3.71
Leadership							
Immediate Superior	3.45	3.92	3.72	4.04	3.43	3.77	3.91
Leadership Team	2.89	3.59	3.25	3.66	3.07	3.47	3.62
Top 3		Bottom 3					

Happiness drivers scores are based on a 7 point Likert scale, whereby 1 is very unhappy, 4 is neutral and 7 is very happy

Happiest with work style



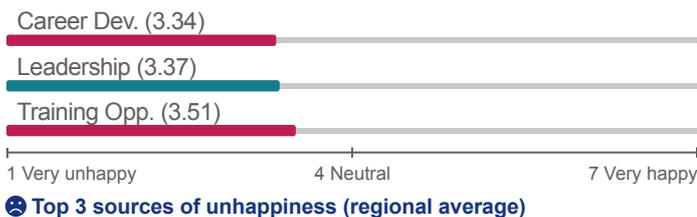
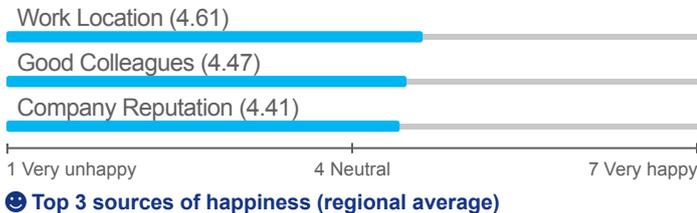
Happiness drivers by category

64   60 out of 100 (2016) out of 100 employees regionally are **neutral to happy**

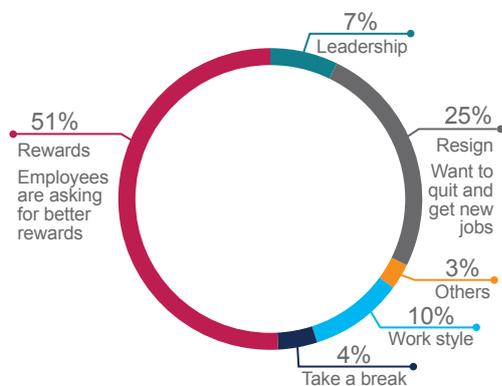
New global employment trends point to people working more than one job to support their families.

(Source: World Economic Forum - Employment trends 2016)

What drives happiness is similar throughout the region



The things that will make employees happier in their jobs



Regional happiness motivators by category

Work style

- Working hours
- Working location
- Working with a new team

Rewards

- Change of job function/ responsibilities
- Get a promotion
- Get recognised
- Training
- Salary increase

Leadership

- Get a new boss
- Improve relationship with boss

More money, benefits and new jobs rank as top motivators for job happiness

The rewards category leads, the same as for last year. An increase of salary is what 29% of employees are looking for, compared to 25% who wanted a salary raise in 2016. Getting a promotion, and being recognized are also desired.

Quitting their jobs also features strongly by one in four employees in their search for greater job happiness. This trend has been strongly indicated in Thailand.

Top tips for hirers



REPUTATION Consistently build up the company reputation by having fair and transparent policies. Satisfied employees will say good things about their company and perpetuate the good reputation.



Equip your leaders to manage effectively. Training programmes and skills upgrading are essential to engage and retain employees.



Be invested in their career. Develop career goals together within the organisation in order for employees to want to strive harder for a mutually beneficial outcome.



Respectful treatment of employees at all levels help to build employee confidence and promote a reciprocal relationship.



Employers need to be more flexible to accommodate the changing nature of workstyles whereby employees may be working multiple jobs to supplement their primary income

Fairness and transparency are fundamental yet powerful concepts that can make a lasting impression on employees and employers bringing about a positive outcome for the company. *(Source: SHRM 2017 Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement)*

Hong Kong

Hong Kongers rank the second lowest in the regional Happiness Index and their outlook over the next six months is even gloomier. The unhappiest employees are from manufacturing, the garment industry, education and retail. The industries that are the happiest are banking, construction, government and, oil & gas.

Ranks 6th on the Regional Happiness Index

	2016	vs	2017
Happiness index	4.56	↓	4.45
6 months' outlook	4.25	↓	4.18
Number of happy employees	57%	↑	58%

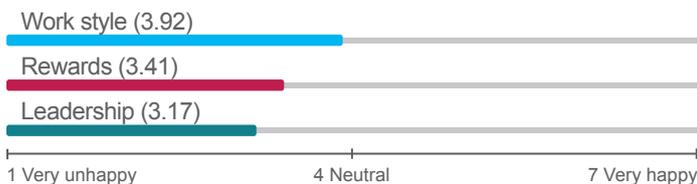
2016 versus 2017 comparison of happiness quotient

Happiest are those not yet jaded by the system

	Happiest	Unhappiest
Age	Below 21 years old	36-45 years old
Education	Vocation / Technical Diploma	High school graduate
Level	Entry / Fresh Graduate	Manager

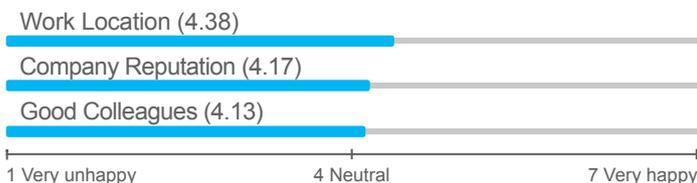
Selected demographic information by country

Dissatisfied with opportunities for growth within the company

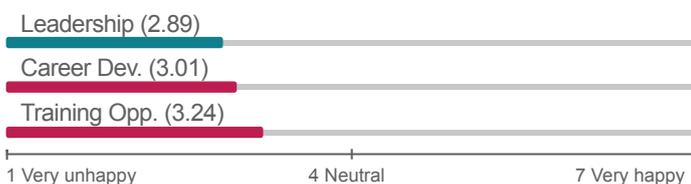


Hong Kong happiness drivers by category

Leadership is a major concern



Top 3 sources of happiness

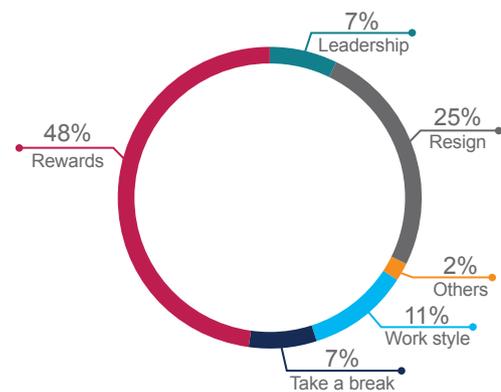


Top 3 sources of unhappiness

1 in 4 people want to move on to better jobs



Top 3 motivators for increased job happiness



Hong Kong happiness motivators by category

Key take away for hirers

- Bridge the leadership gap by equipping all managers with people skills and leadership training
- Adopt more transparent management systems to have employee buy-in



Indonesia

Indonesians are the happiest in this survey, however their six months' outlook is slightly muted. The unhappiest employees are generally from the younger less experienced workers, and represented by the IT- Hardware and general trading and media industries. The industries that are the happiest are government and, oil & gas.

Happiest country in the region

	2016	vs	2017
Happiness index	5.16	↑	5.27
6 months' outlook	5.58	↓	5.05
Number of happy employees	71%	↔	71%

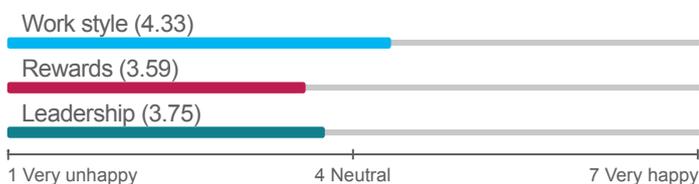
2016 versus 2017 comparison of happiness quotient

Highly educated senior employees are the happiest

	Happiest	Unhappiest
Age	Over 45 years old	31-35 years old
Education	Masters degree or higher	Vocation / Technical Diploma
Level	CEO / Owner / Pres.	Entry / Fresh Graduate

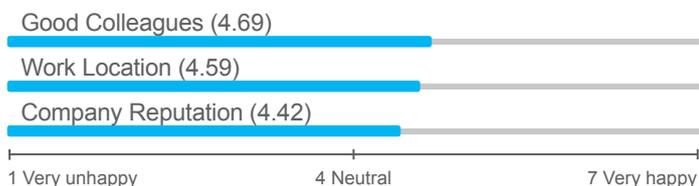
Selected demographic information by country

Good colleagues make working life great

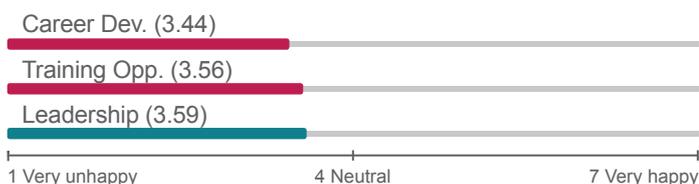


Indonesia happiness drivers by category

Dissatisfied with the lack of career development opportunities



Top 3 sources of happiness

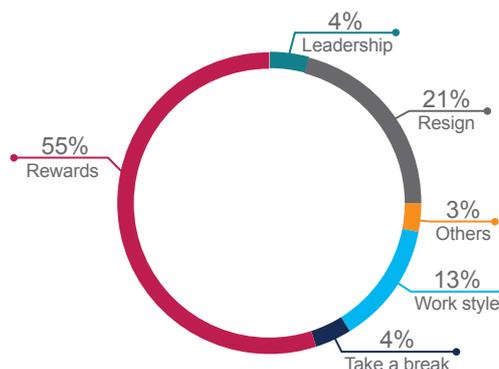


Top 3 sources of unhappiness

Salary increase is the leading desired intervention in Indonesia



Top 3 motivators for increased job happiness



Indonesia happiness motivators by category

Key take away for hirers

- Benchmark and implement attractive remuneration packages
- Design target based compensation for achievements



Malaysia

Malaysians rank 5th in this happiness survey, however we have seen an increase in happiness from the previous year. More than half the employees (58%) surveyed are neutral to happy. The happiest employees work with the government, food & beverage and medical industries and the unhappiest in the BPO, garment and banking sectors.

Ranks 5th in the region with increased numbers of happy people

	2016	vs	2017
Happiness index	4.22	↑	4.65
6 months' outlook	4.33	↑	4.53
Number of happy employees	47%	↑	58%

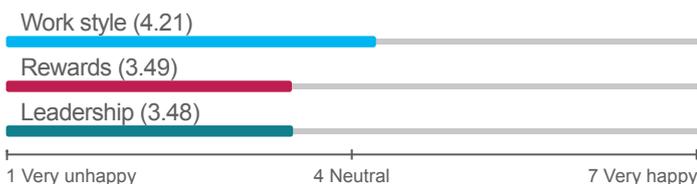
2016 versus 2017 comparison of happiness quotient

Unhappiest are the Gen X-ers unable break through the glass ceiling despite their higher degrees

	Happiest	Unhappiest
Age	Below 21 years old	36-45 years old
Education	Vocation / Technical Diploma	Masters degree or higher
Level	CEO / Owner / Pres.	Entry / Fresh Graduate

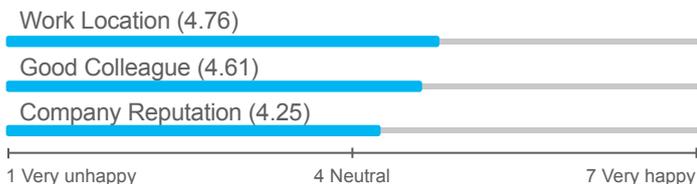
Selected demographic information by country

Leadership and rewards can tip the balance

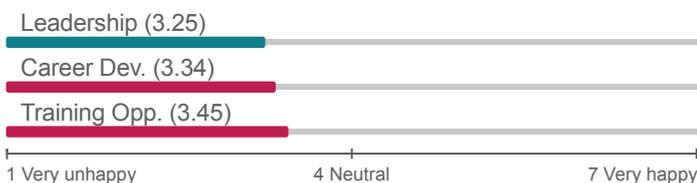


Malaysia happiness drivers by category

Working for a reputable company accounts for happiness



Top 3 sources of happiness

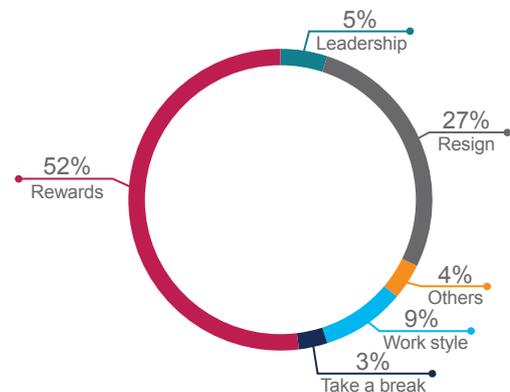


Top 3 sources of unhappiness

1 in 3 employees want a pay rise



Top 3 motivators for increased job happiness



Malaysia happiness motivators by category

Key take away for hirers

- Provide attractive rewards packages that take into consideration work-life balance
- Have regular skills upgrading programmes to motivate and keep employees current



Philippines

Filipinos rank 3rd in this happiness survey, and have posted lower happiness points from the previous year. The number of happy employees has slightly decreased from last year. The happiest employees work with in the hospitality, government and food & beverage industries and the unhappiest in the BPO, garment and general trading.

Dropped from 1st to 3rd rank since last year

	2016	vs	2017
Happiness index	5.25	↓	4.98
6 months' outlook	5.18	↓	4.97
Number of happy employees	73%	↓	67%

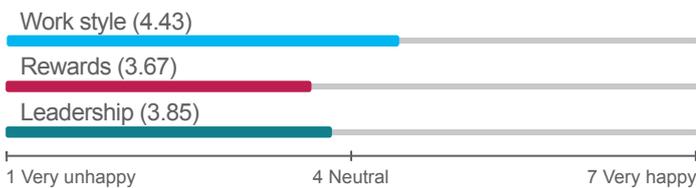
2016 versus 2017 comparison of happiness quotient

Unhappiest are the educated Gen X-ers that are still striving to fulfill their dreams

	Happiest	Unhappiest
Age	Over 45 years old	36-45 years old
Education	High school graduate	College degree
Level	CEO / Owner / Pres.	Junior / 1-4 years exp.

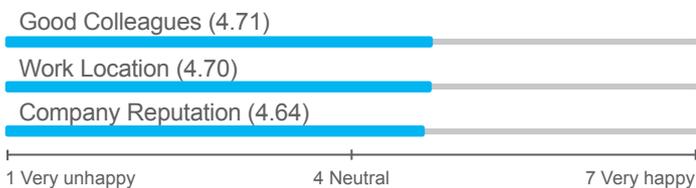
Selected demographic information by country

Need to address the rewards gap

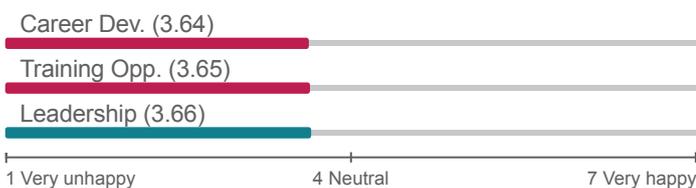


Philippines happiness drivers by category

Lack of career growth opportunities



☺ Top 3 sources of happiness

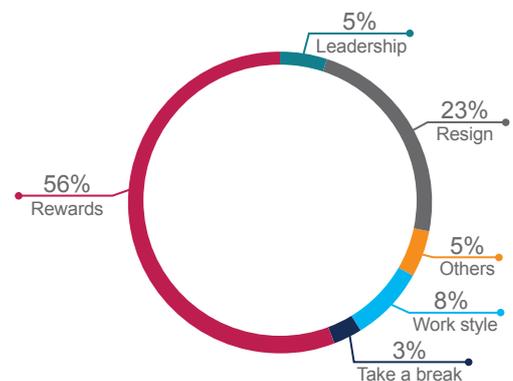


☹ Top 3 sources of unhappiness

More than a third of employees will be motivated by a pay rise



Top 3 motivators for increased job happiness



Philippines happiness motivators by category

Key take away for hirers

- Address the rewards gap with suitably tailored remuneration packages
- Provide scheduled training and skill upgrading programmes
- Consistent and transparent communication will give employees a greater sense of confidence in the leadership



Singapore

Singaporeans rank the lowest in this happiness survey, yet have increased their happiness level and numbers of happy employees from last year. The happiest employees work in the FMCG, accounting and telecoms industries and the unhappiest in media, general trading and retail.

Unhappiest in the region yet increased number of happy people since last year

	2016	vs	2017
Happiness index	4.09	↑	4.31
6 months' outlook	3.93	↑	4.21
Number of happy employees	48%	↑	55%

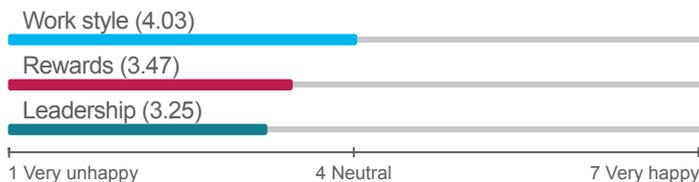
2016 versus 2017 comparison of happiness quotient

Happiest are the highly educated top management

	Happiest	Unhappiest
Age	26-30 years old	21-25 years old
Education	Masters degree or higher	High school graduate
Level	CEO / Owner / Pres.	Entry / Fresh Graduate

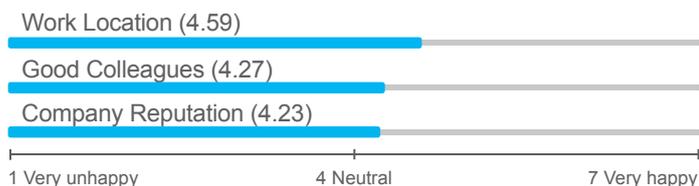
Selected demographic information by country

Need to address the leadership gaps

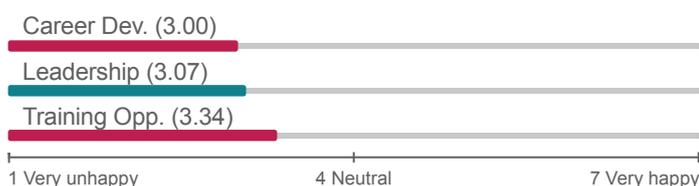


Singapore happiness drivers by category

Many Singaporeans feel stagnant in their jobs



☺ Top 3 sources of happiness



☹ Top 3 sources of unhappiness

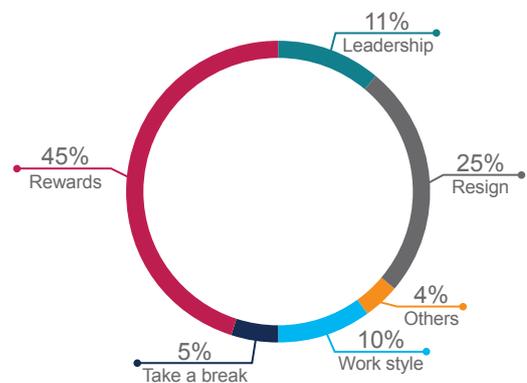
The greener pastures beckon

25% want to quit and get new jobs

20% are asking for salary increase

8% want to get a new boss

Top 3 motivators for increased job happiness



Singapore happiness motivators by category

Key take away for hirers

- Employers need to communicate a strong sense of leadership to get employee buy-in
- Adopting a people-focused work culture will increase employees' feeling of being valued and will encourage them to strive harder



Thailand

The Thais rank 4th in this happiness survey, have a lower happiness ratings and dimmer outlook from last year. The Thais have the largest percentage of employees in the region who would like to resign and get a new job as means to attain job happiness. The happiest employees work in the medical, construction and hospitality industries and the unhappiest are in food and beverage, government and telecoms.

Ranks 4th in the region slipping one spot from last year

	2016	vs	2017
Happiness index	4.74	↓	4.55
6 months' outlook	4.66	↓	4.51
Number of happy employees	61%	↓	60%

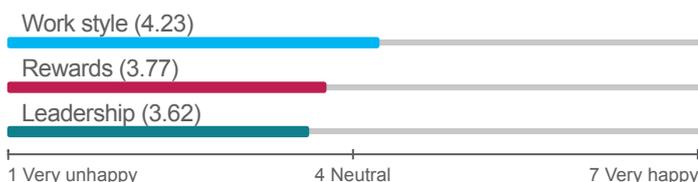
2016 versus 2017 comparison of happiness quotient

Unhappiest are those just starting their careers with lower level education

	Happiest	Unhappiest
Age	Below 21 years old	35-45 years old
Education	Vocation / Technical Diploma	High school graduate
Level	CEO / Owner / Pres.	Entry / Fresh Graduate

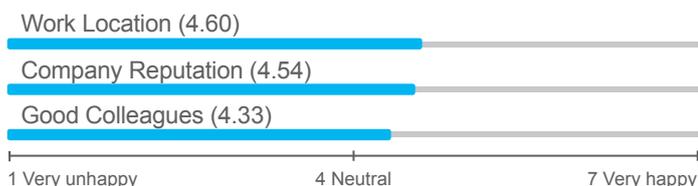
Selected demographic information by country

Thais are unhappy with the lack of career development

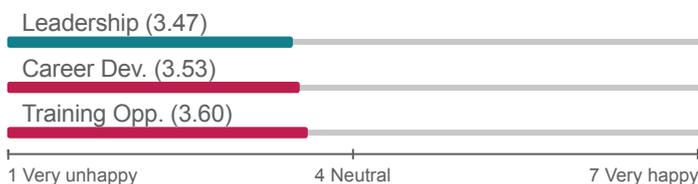


Thailand happiness drivers by category

A company with a good reputation and location counts



Top 3 sources of happiness

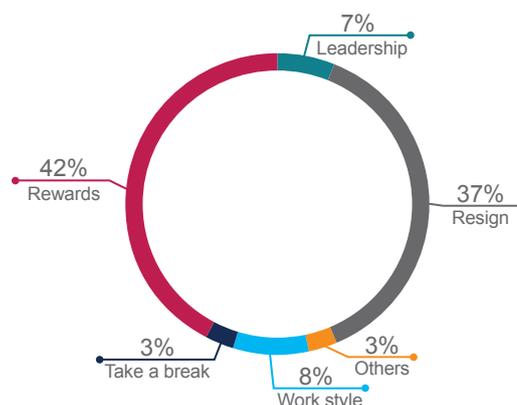


Top 3 sources of unhappiness

The Thais have recorded the highest indication of moving to a new job



Top 3 motivators for increased job happiness



Thailand happiness motivators by category

Key take away for hirers

- Employers need to communicate expectations clearly and match the right talents to the right jobs
- Career development planning is key to engage and retain high value talents



Vietnam

The Vietnamese rank number 2 in the region for the happiest employees and their satisfaction level has increased from the previous year. The number of happy employees has increased from 60% to 76%. The happiest work in the banking, call centre and medical fields and the unhappiest are in telecoms, oil & gas and food and beverage.

Ranked 2nd in the region with more than 3 out of 4 people being happy

	2016	vs	2017
Happiness index	4.48	↑	5.19
6 months' outlook	5.30	↓	4.99
Number of happy employees	60%	↑	76%

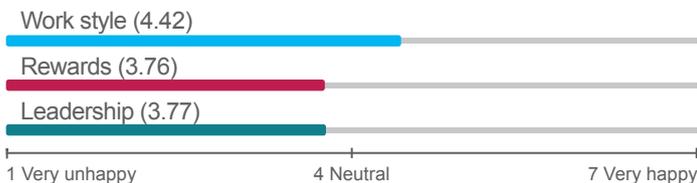
2016 versus 2017 comparison of happiness quotient

Unhappiest are the entry level employees without tertiary education

	Happiest	Unhappiest
Age	Less than 21 years old	21-25 years old
Education	Masters degree or higher	High school graduate
Level	CEO / Owner / Pres.	Entry / Fresh Graduate

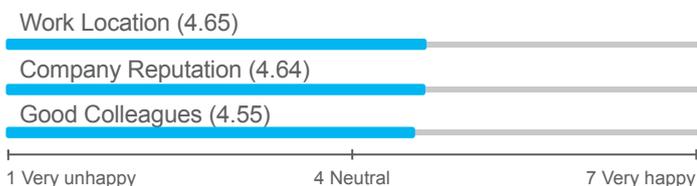
Selected demographic information by country

Better rewards and strong leadership is desired

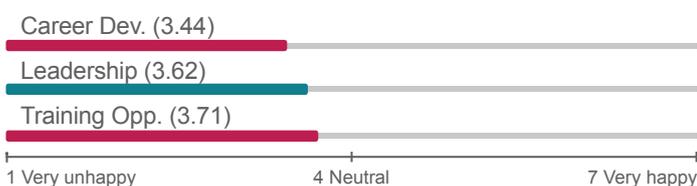


Vietnam happiness drivers by category

A reputable company with good values is key



☺ Top 3 sources of happiness

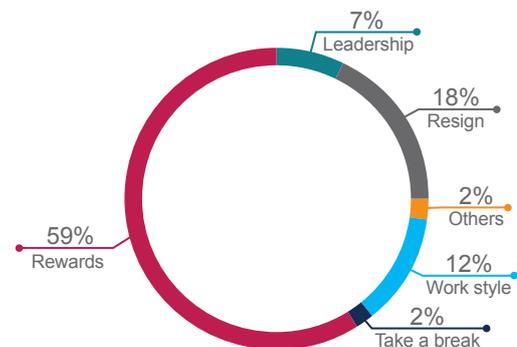


☹ Top 3 sources of unhappiness

More than 1 in 4 employees want a pay rise



Top 3 motivators for increased job happiness



Vietnam happiness motivators by category

Key take away for hirers

- Address the rewards gap by configuring remuneration packages with attractive benefits
- Impartiality and respect are key values to engage employees
- Have more frequent employee review sessions to be able to reward achievements in a timely manner



Methodology

Methods and sampling

The following report is based on a survey of employee happiness across seven countries, namely Hong Kong, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The purpose of this report is to gain detailed insight into the factors motivating employees in these countries in the pursuit of job happiness. This information will provide useful key insights to employers to help them develop and enhance initiatives to attract, engage and retain talent they need.

The questionnaire was developed with a HR academic research expert. A standardised format was used for regional deployment with localised language utilised as needed per country. A 10-point scale was used for the Job Happiness Index, where 5 was considered neutral, and a 7-point Likert scale was used to measure satisfaction with the various job qualities. Respondents were also asked how they would rate their job satisfaction in six months.

More than 35,000 respondents answered the survey, with candidates from a wide range of industries, including fresh graduates and those in top management positions. The questions in the survey were standardised, but translated with descriptions for each market, allowing the survey to be understood in a local context. Surveys were conducted via online survey forms.

Hong Kong
Indonesia
Malaysia
Philippines

Singapore
Thailand
Vietnam

35,513
respondents

Fresh grads
Juniors
Supervisors
Managers
Top management

20
industries

- Top 3 happiness drivers
- Top 3 source of unhappiness
- Top 3 motivators for increased job happiness

Strategies to
engage,
motivate
and retain

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