



**2008  
WORKPLACE  
SURVEY**

**UNITED STATES**





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Today, business success flows from intangible assets such as ideas, information, and expertise. Post-industrial metrics fall short of offering the insights that companies need to gain a competitive edge in a global business environment that values these kinds of assets.

Gensler's research establishes new measures of performance that make the difference in a knowledge economy: the power of people and place to drive profit.

As the leading design firm for business, Gensler has a unique perspective on the ways that people really work. Through projects with thousands of companies and our annual workplace surveys, we have seen firsthand the revolution of knowledge work, and how individuals and teams create organizational value and drive performance.

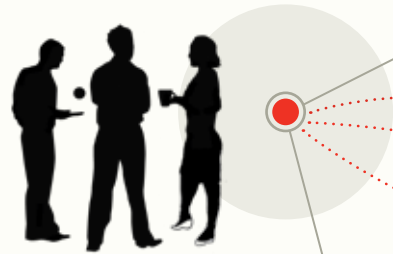
The 2008 Gensler Workplace Survey creates new insight about the day-to-day knowledge workplace activities that produce business success: four work modes—focus, collaborate, learn, and socialize—that allow the creative and innovative power of people to be fully realized. Gensler's Workplace Performance Index<sup>SM</sup> measurement and analysis tool for work environments correlates business success with the effective support of the four work modes in the workplace.

# KNOWLEDGE WORK EQUALS FOUR WORK MODES

WORK INTERACTIONS THAT CREATE COMMON BONDS AND VALUES, COLLECTIVE IDENTITY, COLLEGIALITY AND PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

TALKING, LAUGHING, NETWORKING, TRUST-BUILDING, RECOGNITION, CELEBRATING, INTERACTING, MENTORING, ENHANCING RELATIONSHIPS

Gensler research shows that people spend an average of 6% of their time in social activities.

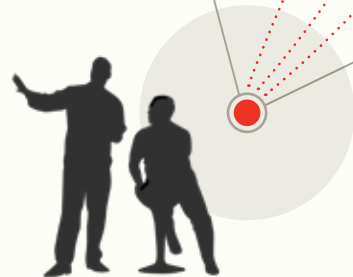


**SOCIALIZE**  
SOCIAL CAPITAL

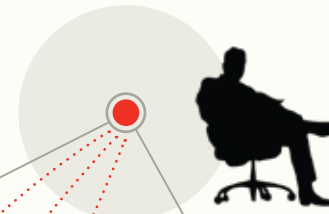
WORKING TO ACQUIRE NEW KNOWLEDGE OF A SUBJECT OR SKILL THROUGH EDUCATION OR EXPERIENCE

TRAINING, CONCEPT EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT, PROBLEM-SOLVING, MEMORIZING, DISCOVERY, TEACHING, REFLECTING, INTEGRATING AND APPLYING KNOWLEDGE

Gensler research shows that people spend an average of 6% of their time learning.



**LEARN**  
INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL



**FOCUS**  
PRODUCTIVE CAPITAL

WORK INVOLVING CONCENTRATION AND ATTENTION TO A PARTICULAR TASK OR PROJECT

THINKING, REFLECTING, ANALYZING, WRITING, PROBLEM-SOLVING, QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS, CREATING, IMAGINING, REVIEWING, ASSESSING

Gensler research shows that people spend on average 48% of their time in focus work.



**COLLABORATE**  
INNOVATIVE CAPITAL

WORKING WITH ANOTHER PERSON OR GROUP TO ACHIEVE A GOAL

SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION, DISCUSSING, LISTENING, CO-CREATING, SHOWING, BRAINSTORMING INTERACTIONS MAY BE FACE-TO-FACE, BY PHONE, VIDEO, OR THROUGH VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION

Gensler research shows that across all companies, people spend an average of 32% of their time collaborating.

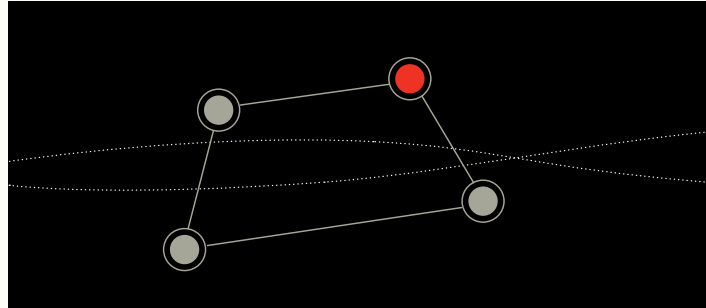
# KNOWLEDGE WORK EQUALS FOUR WORK MODES

“Knowledge worker,” a term popularized by management expert Peter Drucker, refers to an individual who develops and applies knowledge and information in the workplace. It is now estimated that knowledge workers outnumber all other workers in North America by at least four to one.

While industrial era companies were focused on task processes and tools to improve speed, efficiency, and productivity, knowledge economy companies realize competitive advantage through the creation of *ideas*. Knowledge work requires a high level of cognitive involvement as well as analytical and

judgment skills; process remains important but is far less structured. Knowledge work is also a composite of individual and collective modes. The overview of work modes below codifies these practices in the new science of work.

## FOCUS



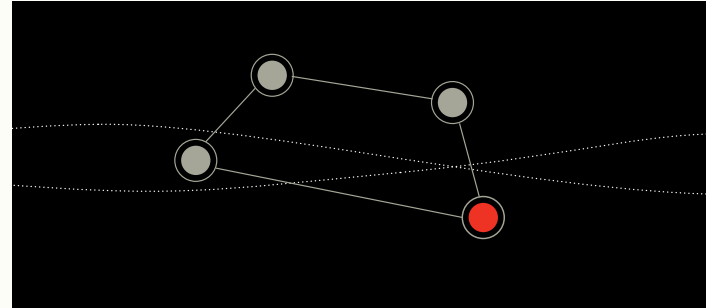
Research bears out the value that companies can realize by enabling their employees to focus better. Separate studies conducted at MIT and Harvard show that interruptions and distractions are among the biggest threats to worker concentration. Cognitive overload—the inability to concentrate due to excessive information—poses another barrier to productivity.<sup>1</sup>

People can make leaps in productive focus if they are granted distraction-free, protected time to get their individual work done. Yet while research shows increasing organizational support for the valuable interactive aspects of knowledge work, the support may have come at the expense of the individual aspect.<sup>2</sup>

These other work modes, as well as modern pressures on real estate costs, have diminished the quality of the focus mode. Collaboration and socializing have encroached on focus work by undermining the ability of the traditional site of focus work—the primary work space—to support concentrated individual activity due to distraction as colleagues gather to collaborate or socialize.

Open work environments help to foster interaction and also reduce real estate footprint, but can also result in the acoustical and visual distractions that hamper people’s ability to focus. This and other factors pose a dilemma for organizations looking to balance focus with other work modes.

## COLLABORATE



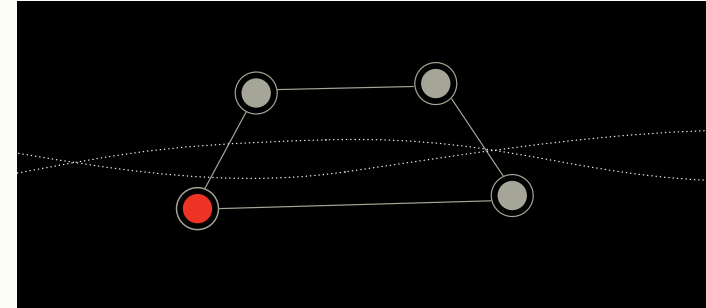
Innovation, speed and economic value in a knowledge economy are derived more and more from “collective intelligence”—the open sharing, connecting and building on ideas through a group process. Teams have the potential to offer greater breadth and creativity than any one individual can offer, resulting in innovative and comprehensive solutions and ideas.<sup>3</sup>

Teamwork exists in many different shapes and forms, and varies across important dimensions. Teams require the ability to interact with each other to achieve objectives through a shared understanding of resources, such as members’ knowledge, skills, and experiences, and explicit goals and objectives. Research shows that effective teamwork also involves interactions with tasks, tools, and machines.<sup>4</sup>

Knowledge creation is another important outcome of collaboration. Research at MIT found that people were five times more likely to turn to another individual for information than to search a non-human source such as a file or database, pointing to the value of interactive work as a business asset. It is estimated that over 70% of what people know about their jobs is gained through everyday interactions with their colleagues.<sup>5,6</sup>

Research has definitively linked environments characterized by visibility, openness, and greater worker mobility to effective collaboration. Proximity and visual contact help people interact frequently and build relationships that help them share information, think creatively, and reach more innovative solutions. This was echoed in Gensler’s 2006 workplace survey that correlated collaboration with innovation.<sup>7</sup>

## LEARN



Knowledge economy companies are increasingly aware that the success of their people is determined by not just what they know but how fast they can learn and share their learning. The American Society for Training and Development found that U.S. organizations spent \$109.25 billion annually on employee learning and development, with roughly 75% of that spent on internal learning programs. ASTD’s figures also show that the outsourcing of learning is on the decline, while investment in proprietary learning technologies is growing.<sup>8</sup>

Learning must be integrated into all aspects of a job because of the constant demands of change and the need for increasingly skilled workers, which traditional education cannot rapidly supply. In addition, companies want to avoid down-time while an employee trains. For all these reasons, there is tremendous pressure for workplaces to integrate learning with every aspect of daily activity.<sup>9</sup>

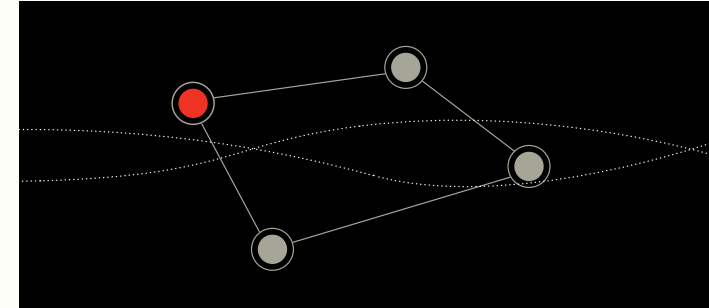
The design, development and facilitation of learning at work requires careful consideration of the context of learning as well as the learning styles of participants. Researchers have identified multiple ways adults learn.<sup>10</sup> Each learning style has different implications for when, how and where learning takes place, and suggests variations in the physical environments required to support them, challenging organizations to create not just discrete spaces where people learn, but entire workplaces that support varied employee needs.

.....  
STRUCTURED LEARNERS  
*Prefer teacher-directed, highly structured programs with explicit assignments that are assessed by the instructor; lectures and tutorials*

.....  
COLLABORATIVE LEARNERS  
*Discussion-oriented with a preference for group projects, collaborative assignments and social interaction; role playing*

.....  
INDEPENDENT LEARNERS  
*Prefer to influence the content and structure of individually-directed learning programs; distance learning, computer or web-based learning*

## SOCIALIZE



In today’s knowledge economy, the flow of information between and among people is at a premium. The sense of community developed through building a social collective creates the pathways of information sharing and establishes the common values, culture and mission of an organization.

A 2001 report on the changing nature of work by the National Research Council called attention to the importance of the relational and interactive aspects of work,<sup>11</sup> while researchers Cross and Prusak concluded that knowledge economy success will be increasingly social and relational, with work accomplished through informal networks more than organizational hierarchies.<sup>12</sup>

Social capital refers to the value of the connections among individuals in a social network and the norms of reciprocity and trust that arise from these groups. It contributes value by creating knowledge and new organizational resources that enhance the potential for individual and collaborative action.

Trust is an essential component of social capital. The greater the level of trust within a community, the greater the likelihood of cooperation. Similarly, mutually-held values and shared beliefs are fundamental to the process of collaborative action, and are closely tied to the flow of information in networks.<sup>13</sup> Social capital facilitates people’s ability to act on these beliefs and expectations.

Social networks help organizations to solve problems, learn, innovate, and adapt. They have been cited by researchers as an organizational advantage because of their capacity to produce new knowledge. Research has also shown that the differences between firms, including differences in performance, may stem from differences in their ability to create and effectively operate as a social collective. Firms that develop a robust social infrastructure are likely to be more successful.<sup>14</sup>

*Note: Research references begin on page 36.*

Gensler’s 2008 Workplace Survey shows that the physical work environment is an asset with a specific and quantifiable impact on business success. The results showed that top-performing companies—those with higher profits, better employee engagement and stronger market and brand position—have significantly higher-performing work environments than average companies.

**FINDING ONE:  
SUCCESS IN A KNOWLEDGE  
ECONOMY MEANS WORKING  
DIFFERENTLY.**

Through our projects with thousands of different companies, Gensler has established a key connecting point for all knowledge economy companies. Four work modes—focus, collaborate, learn and socialize—are the shared language of knowledge economy workplaces, and are central to our 2008 survey research.

We found that employees at top-performing companies not only spend more time collaborating and learning, they consider that time more critical to job success than do their peers at average companies, who remain focus work-centered.

**FINDING TWO:  
TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES  
DESIGN THEIR WORKPLACES TO  
SUPPORT ALL FOUR WORK MODES.**

Our findings clearly show that top-performing companies design more effective workplaces that allow people to spend higher-quality time in the work modes that matter most to their job success. We analyzed how effectively various work spaces support the work modes and found that there is a dramatic opportunity for companies to leverage workspace improvements that unleash the potential of their employees and their organization.

**FINDING THREE:  
EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE DESIGN  
DIRECTLY CORRELATES TO IMPROVED  
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE.**

Gensler’s 2008 Workplace Survey definitively connects profit and revenue growth, employee engagement and strong corporate brand to a well-designed workplace that supports the ways people really work in a knowledge economy. Using Gensler’s Workplace Performance Index<sup>SM</sup> measurement and analysis tool for work environments, our findings demonstrate that companies with the most effective workplaces are the most successful businesses.



**HOW WE DEFINE TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES**

To fully understand how the most successful companies work differently, we asked survey participants to rank their employers on a scale of one to seven (poor to excellent) for the following eight success factors which are universally accepted measures of corporate leadership from a financial, brand, and employer-of-choice standpoint:

- Leadership in their industry
- Financial strength
- Development and creation of quality products or services
- Innovation
- Promotion of work/life balance
- Superiority in management capabilities
- Ability to attract and retain talent
- Responsibility to the community and environment

Companies rated “excellent” in seven of the eight success factors are considered top-performing companies throughout this report; 17% of respondents fit this profile, evenly distributed across each industry we surveyed.

FINDING ONE

# SUCCESS IN A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY MEANS WORKING DIFFERENTLY.

Gensler's 2008 Workplace Survey asked participants two key questions to understand how the four work modes contribute to job performance in a knowledge economy workplace:

- Q: How critical is this work mode to your job role?
- Q: How much time do you spend in this work mode over the course of the average week?

Gensler's findings reveal a workplace that is filled with varied and dynamic interactions, and not just long hours of solitary work. We found that collaborating, learning, and socializing are as important to individual job performance as focus work and that people at top-performing companies spend their time in a very different mix of work modes than average companies do.

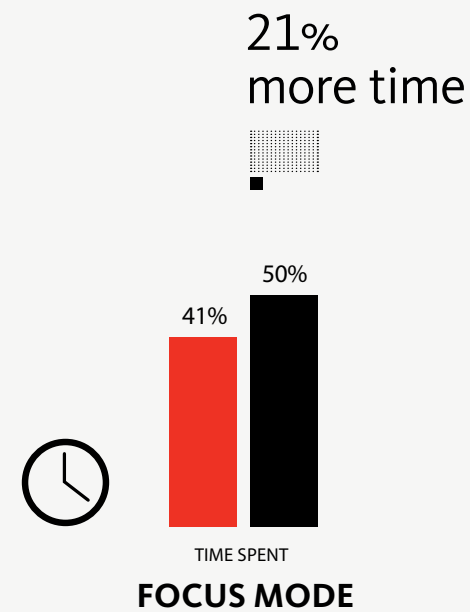




## AVERAGE COMPANIES ARE CENTERED ON FOCUS WORK

Average companies spend half of their work week in focus mode—21% more than top companies, even though on average they rank it less critical to their job performance. Average companies may recognize the disparity between what they are doing and what could create value—but they are not harnessing the performance potential of the work modes that distinguish market leaders.

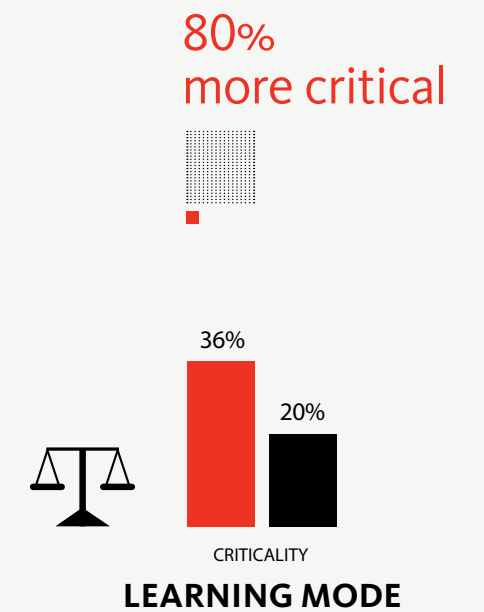
■ Top-performing Companies  
■ Average Companies



## LEARNING IS FAR MORE IMPORTANT TO TOP COMPANIES

Compared to average companies, top-performing companies consider learning 80% more critical to job success, and spend 40% more time in this work mode.

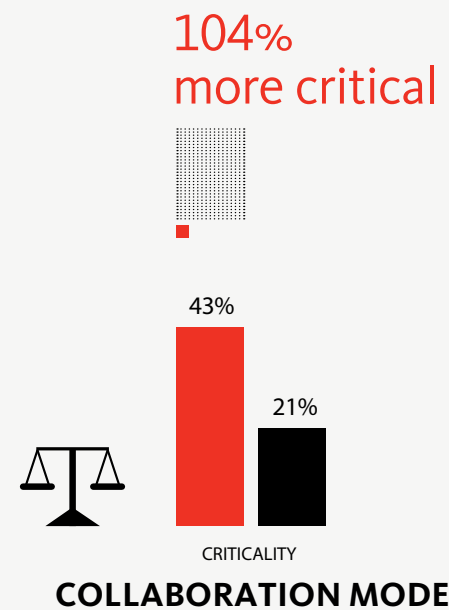
■ Top-performing Companies  
■ Average Companies



## TOP COMPANIES COLLABORATE MORE

Top-performing companies spend 23% more time collaborating than average companies and consider collaboration more than twice as critical to job success.

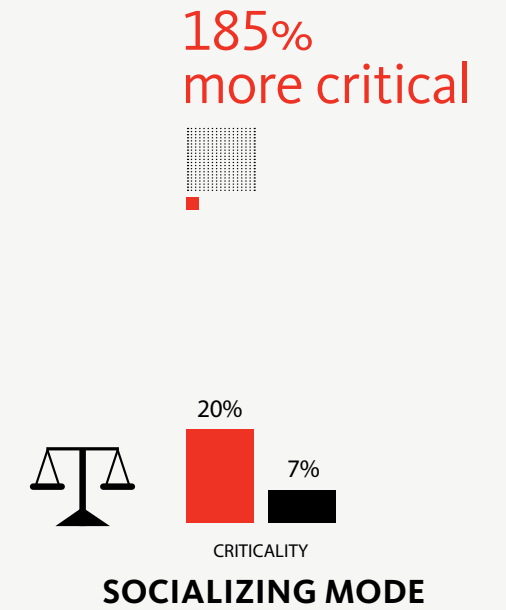
■ Top-performing Companies  
■ Average Companies



## TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES VALUE SOCIALIZING

Overtuning the notion that socializing is a time-waster rather than a business asset, top-performing companies socialize 16% more than average companies. Further, they consider it almost three times more critical than average companies, the largest gap among all of the work mode comparisons.

■ Top-performing Companies  
■ Average Companies



## IMPROVING WORK MODE PERFORMANCE

Respondents from all companies projected that better work spaces would yield significant improvement for their performance of each work mode: 28% improvement in focus, 27% in collaboration, 27% in learning, and 23% in socializing.

This establishes the equal importance of improving spaces for focus, collaboration, learning and socializing to improve employee job performance.

## SO?

These findings provide insight into the complex equation of what creates value in a knowledge economy: work can be improved through the right proportion of four work modes, and in top-performing companies, even greater economic value

is derived from collaboration, learning, and socializing. People believe that better design of their workplace would help them be more productive, whether the work involves focus, collaboration, learning or socializing.



# TOP-PERFORMING COMPANIES DESIGN THEIR WORKPLACES TO SUPPORT ALL FOUR MODES.

Understanding that workplace improvements can help people focus, collaborate, learn and socialize better, our survey questions delved deeper into how effectively today's workplaces support knowledge workers:

- Q: Where do you perform each work mode: primary work space, meeting areas, training areas, common/support areas?
- Q: How effective are those work spaces in supporting each mode?
- Q: What is the quality of the space attributes of your workplace such as light, air, layout, furniture and storage?

We found again that the knowledge economy's top-performing companies are very different, drawing a new picture of the way that work environments affect individual and organizational performance.



## THE FIRST STEP IS A GOOD WORKPLACE

Good places for work start with basic functionality and support of human needs. The quality of attributes such as light, air, furniture, and space layout contributes to a workplace that is sustainable, ergonomically sound, and flexible.

Top companies ranked the quality of their work spaces 13 points higher than average companies. 87% of top-performing company respondents had high marks for primary

workspaces versus 74% at average companies. Meeting areas were ranked 10 points higher by top companies, and training areas 9 points higher.

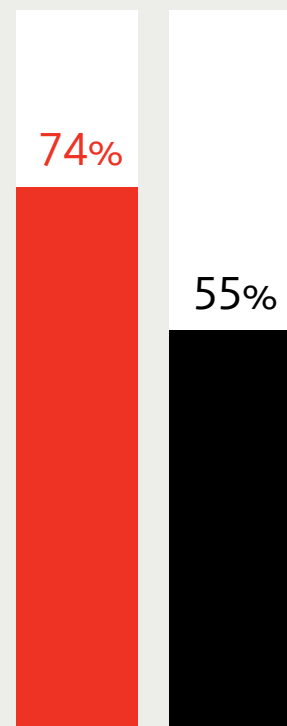
With this understanding of the basic quality of a workplace as a foundation, we can start to consider the pattern of activities taking place there—how a company is using their workplace for individual and group work modes.

## THE SECOND STEP IS AN EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE

Top-performing company work spaces are ranked effective by more people for supporting knowledge work. There is a 12-point gap in the focus mode, and more importantly, there is up to a 14-point gap in the collaborate, learn and socialize modes that are a hallmark of the different way top companies do business.

Higher workplace quality and effectiveness help people perform their jobs better. As we continued to explore these dynamics, we also found that they contribute significantly to the intangible assets that matter so much in a knowledge economy.

### OVERALL QUALITY OF WORK SPACE ATTRIBUTES



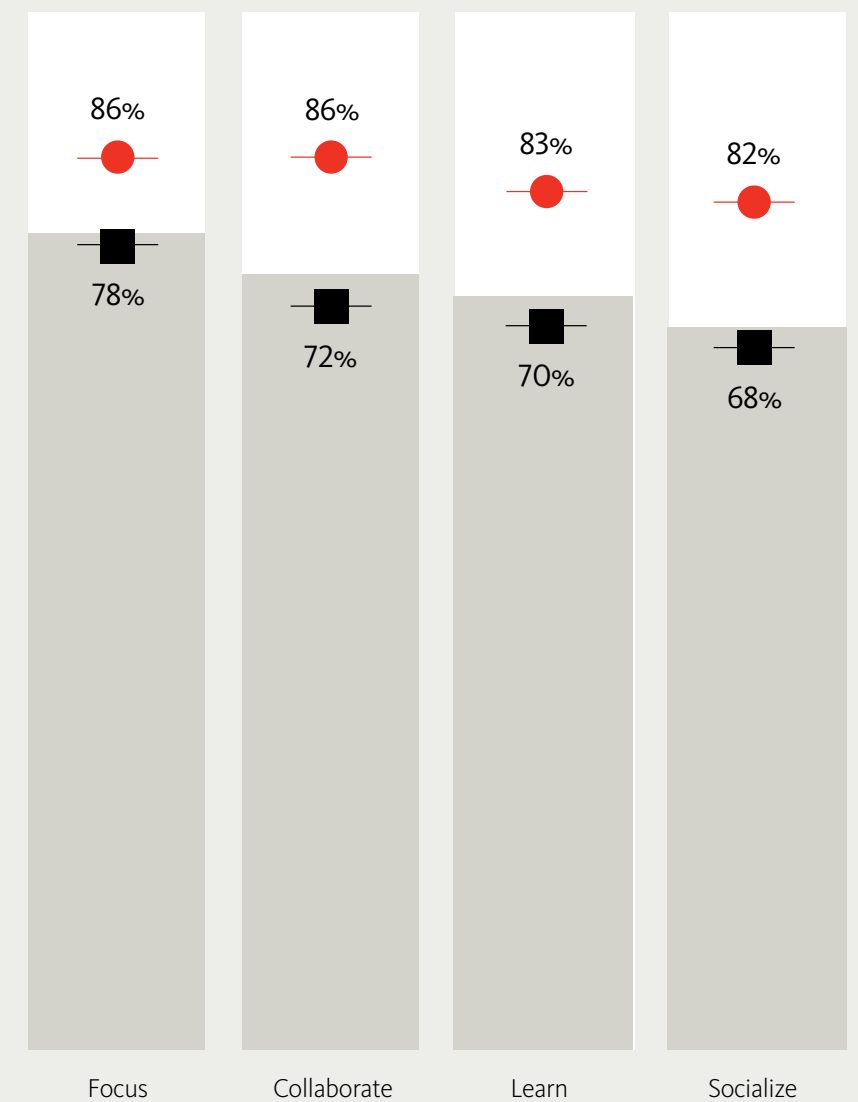
● Top-performing Companies  
■ Average Companies



Survey respondents rated the quality of space attributes such as layout, air quality, furniture comfort, storage, and privacy/access to create a composite rating for each type of work space.

### WORKPLACE EFFECTIVENESS FOR WORK MODES

● Top-performing Companies  
■ Average Companies  
■ All Companies

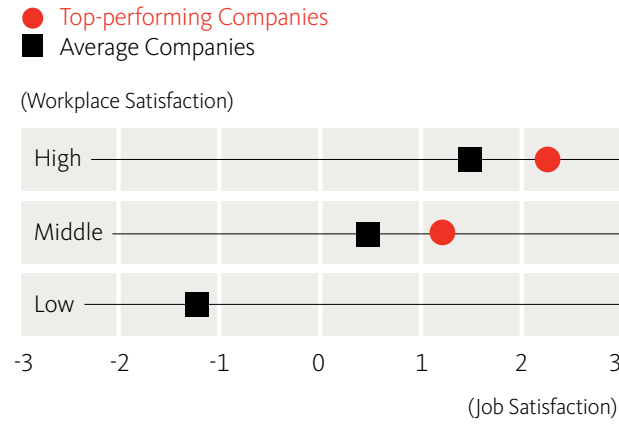


## EFFECTIVE WORKPLACES HELP DRIVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

We evaluated several metrics of employee engagement to better understand how effective support for people's daily work modes translates to organizational performance.

At top companies, 82% of employees are satisfied or highly satisfied with their workplaces; more than half of that group is highly satisfied. Just 43% of average companies can say the same, with a 21-point drop-off between highly satisfied and satisfied employees.

### Job Satisfaction (-3 to +3 scale)

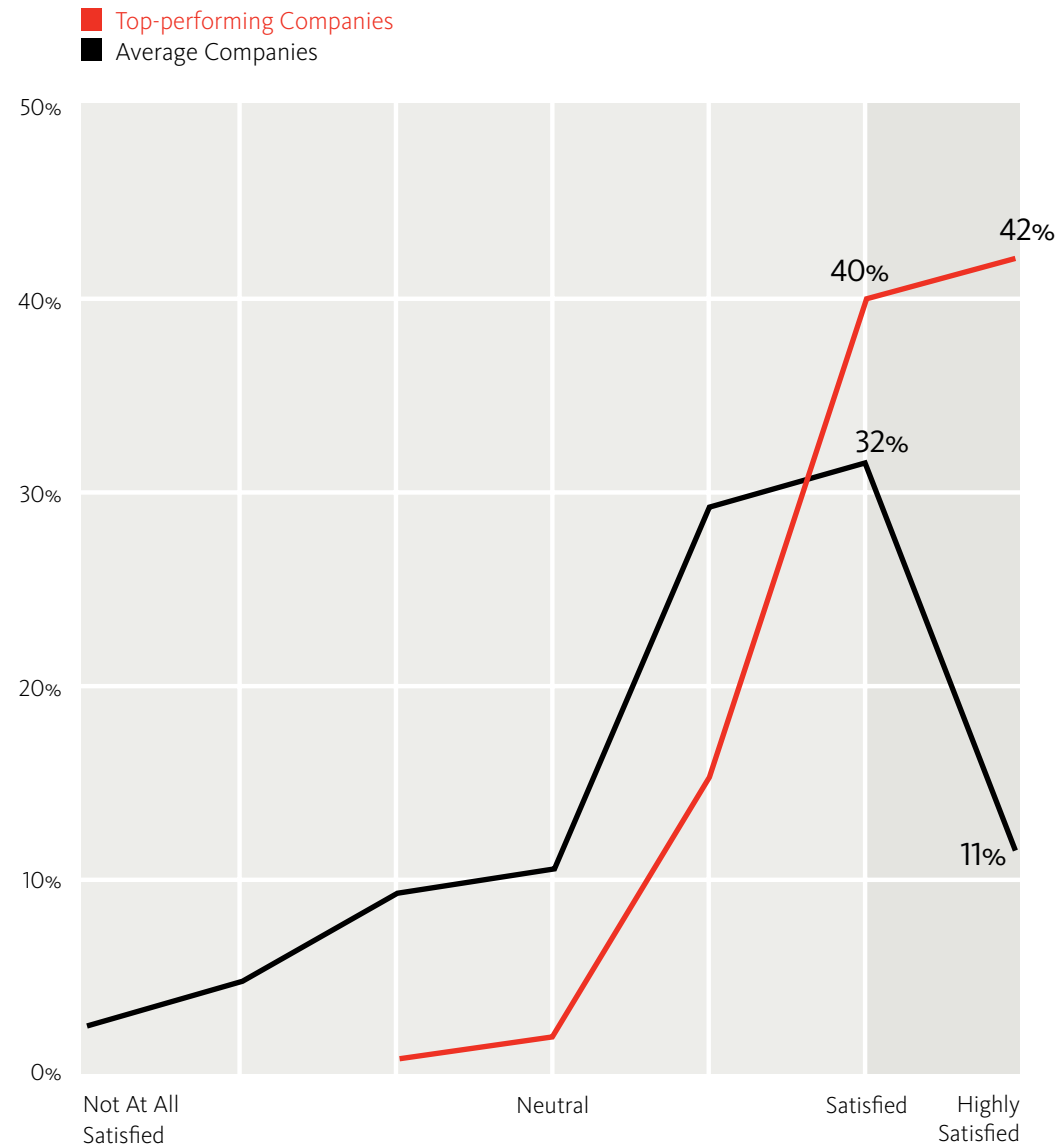


## TOP-PERFORMING COMPANY EMPLOYEES ARE UNIFORMLY SATISFIED

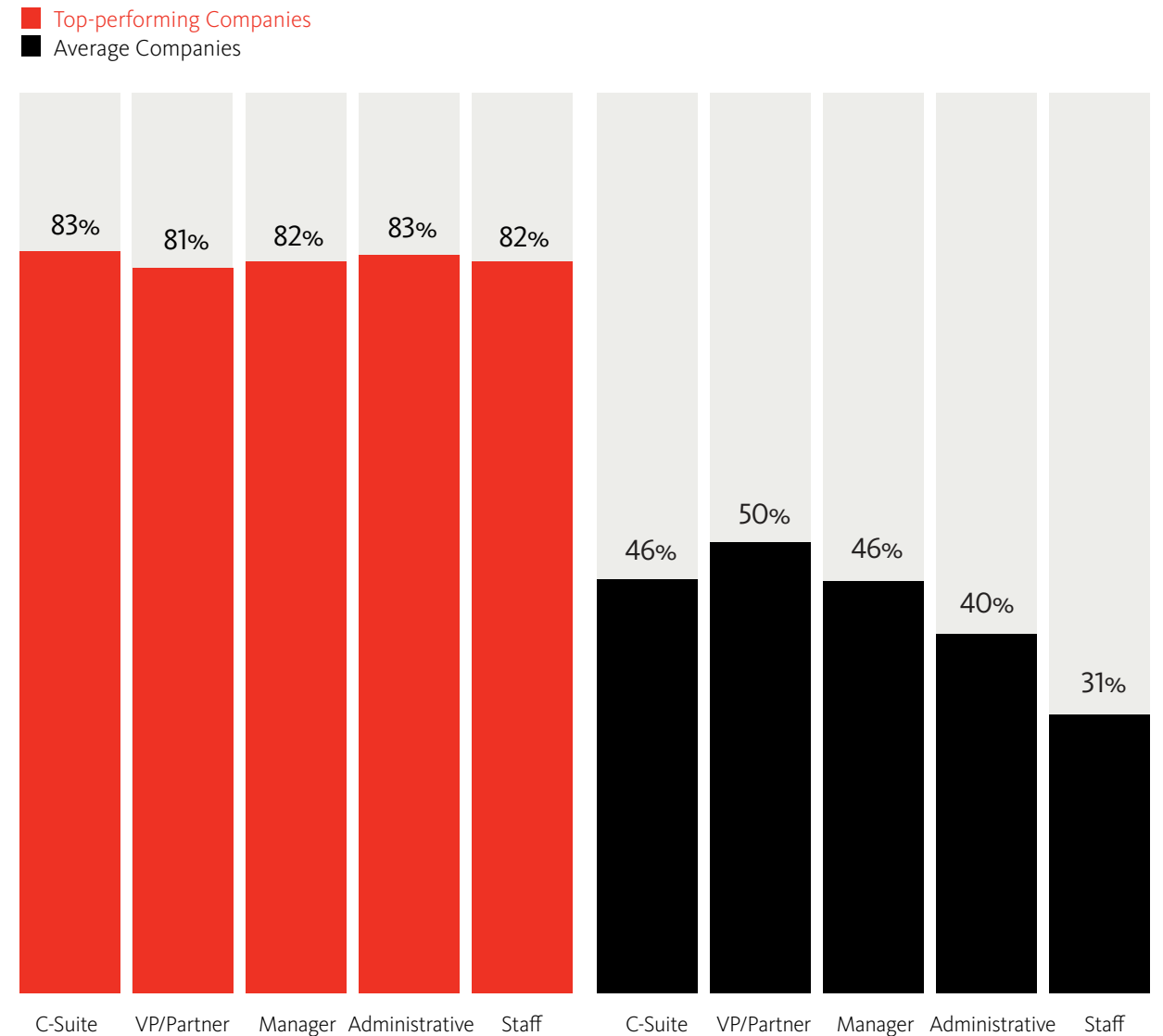
In addition to the job satisfaction measures shown at left, comparing workplace satisfaction results by staff levels underscores another tremendous difference for top companies: uniformly high scores from the CEO to the staff level. At an average company, a 15-point gap stands between the CEO level and general staff.

These numbers are noteworthy in light of the importance of trust, shared values and a sense of community in the workplace, as we noted in the earlier overview of work modes. The fall-off at average companies is the kind of gap that may be a symptom of workforce disengagement that is creating lower performance, explored in the next section of this report.

### WORKPLACE SATISFACTION



### VERY SATISFIED/SATISFIED WITH WORKPLACE





Measuring workplace effectiveness is valuable; understanding exactly what drives effectiveness up or down allows companies to fix problems and magnify strengths to design a workplace that is effective for knowledge economy work modes.

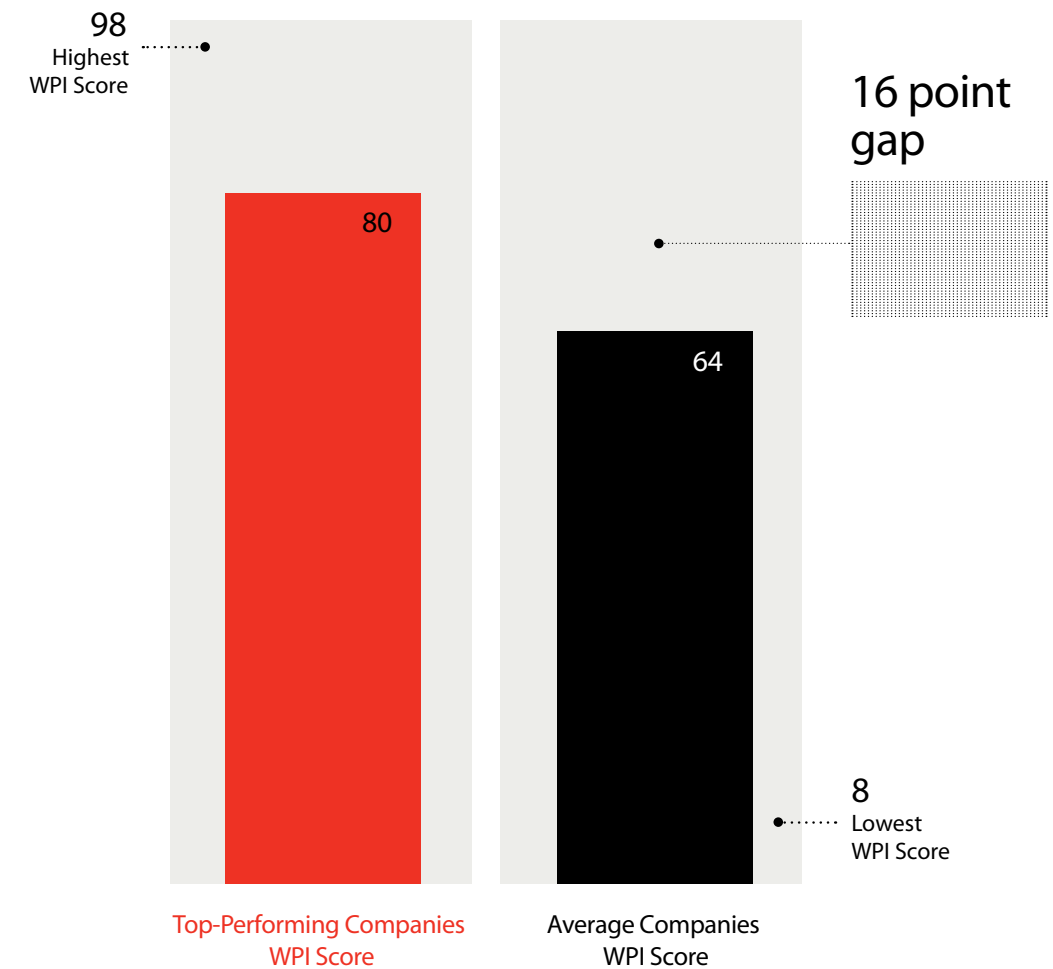
Gensler's Workplace Performance Index<sup>SM</sup> (WPI) measurement and analysis tool for work environments helps clients understand specifically what comprises space effectiveness so that design solutions can be highly targeted. The WPI is a web-enabled pre- and post-occupancy evaluation tool that creates an index based on work mode criticality, work space effectiveness for work modes, and time spent, as well as the quality of individual attributes of each type of work space. The 2008 Workplace Survey responses are now part of Gensler's global database that provides clients with comparative information for benchmarking purposes.



Where did our survey respondents land on the WPI scale, in which 100 is a perfect score? The WPI score for all survey respondents was 67. Separating top-ranked companies from average showed a 16-point gap in WPI score, with top companies at 80.

Earlier, survey respondents identified significant improvement in every work mode given better work spaces. In both top-performing and average companies, respondents indicated that improvements in elements such as light and air quality, furniture comfort, layout functionality, visual access and acoustic qualities would increase the effectiveness of their workplaces.

! These findings are based on a survey designed by Gensler in collaboration with an independent research firm. The survey was conducted with a random sample of 900 full-time, in-office workers. Respondents covered all staff levels, with equal distribution across the continental U.S. and from varied industries including banking and finance, technology, consumer products, legal, accounting, consulting, energy, media, entertainment, and not-for-profit organizations.



**SO ?**

The effectiveness of spaces where work happens makes a difference in successful employee performance and employee satisfaction in knowledge economy workplaces. Top-performing companies are designing more effective workplaces than

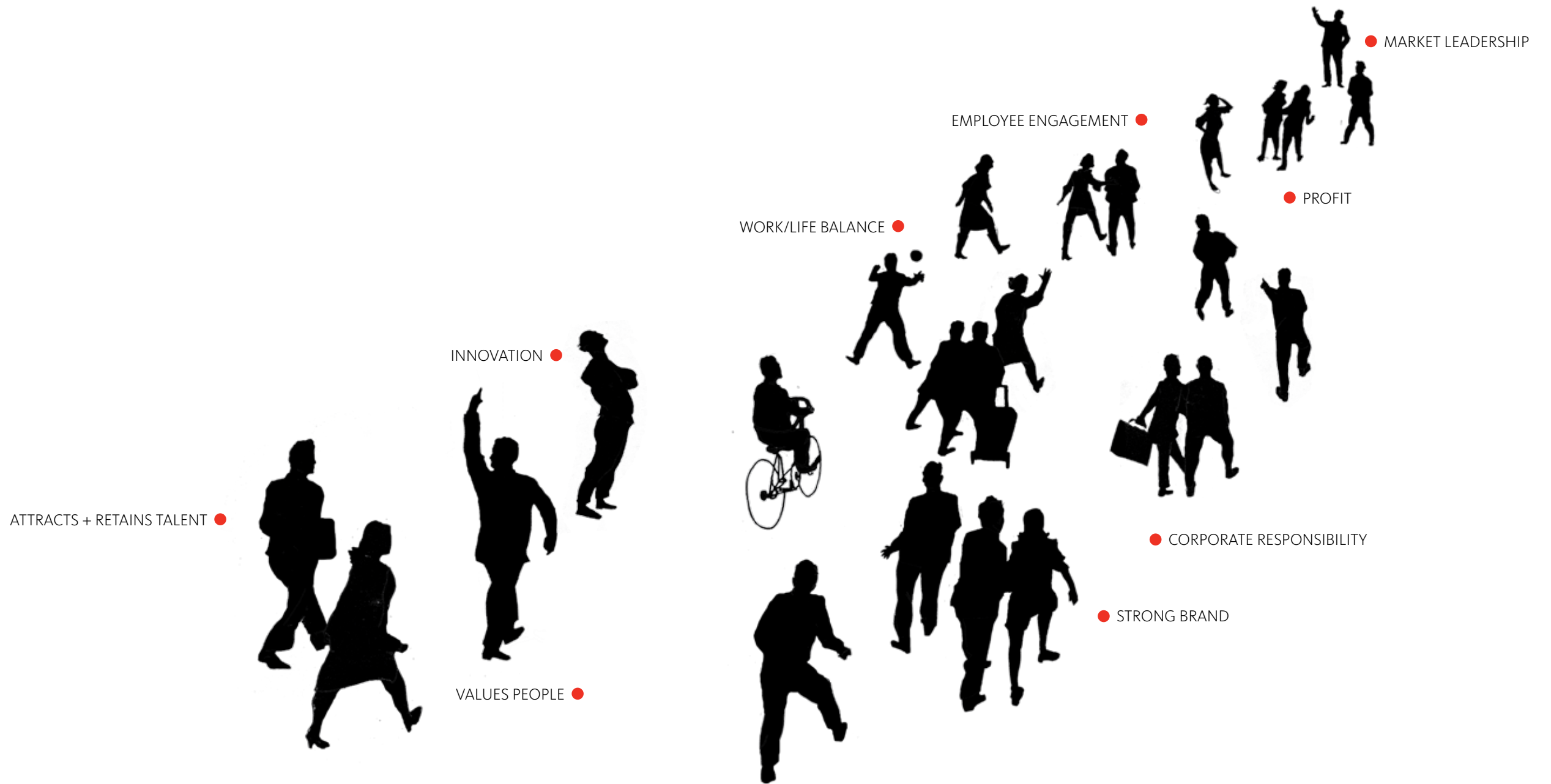
most, but all companies can do more to make their work environments better support focusing, collaborating, learning and socializing to improve organizational performance.

# EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE DESIGN DIRECTLY CORRELATES TO BETTER BUSINESS PERFORMANCE.

Using Gensler's Workplace Performance Index<sup>SM</sup> (WPI) measurement and analysis tool for work environments, we assessed the relationships between work modes, workplace effectiveness and key business performance metrics. Our evaluation asked these questions:

- Q: Top-performing companies work differently and have more effective workplaces—are they also the most financially successful? How well do they perform on other business metrics?**
- Q: Do even average companies with higher workplace effectiveness ratings perform better?**

The results show that as a company's WPI rises, their scores on multiple business metrics also rise, including profit, market position, innovation capabilities, employee engagement and brand. For profit alone, the higher WPI scores of top-performing companies translated to 7 to 14-point higher profits across all industries.



# HIGHER WPI SCORE



# BETTER FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

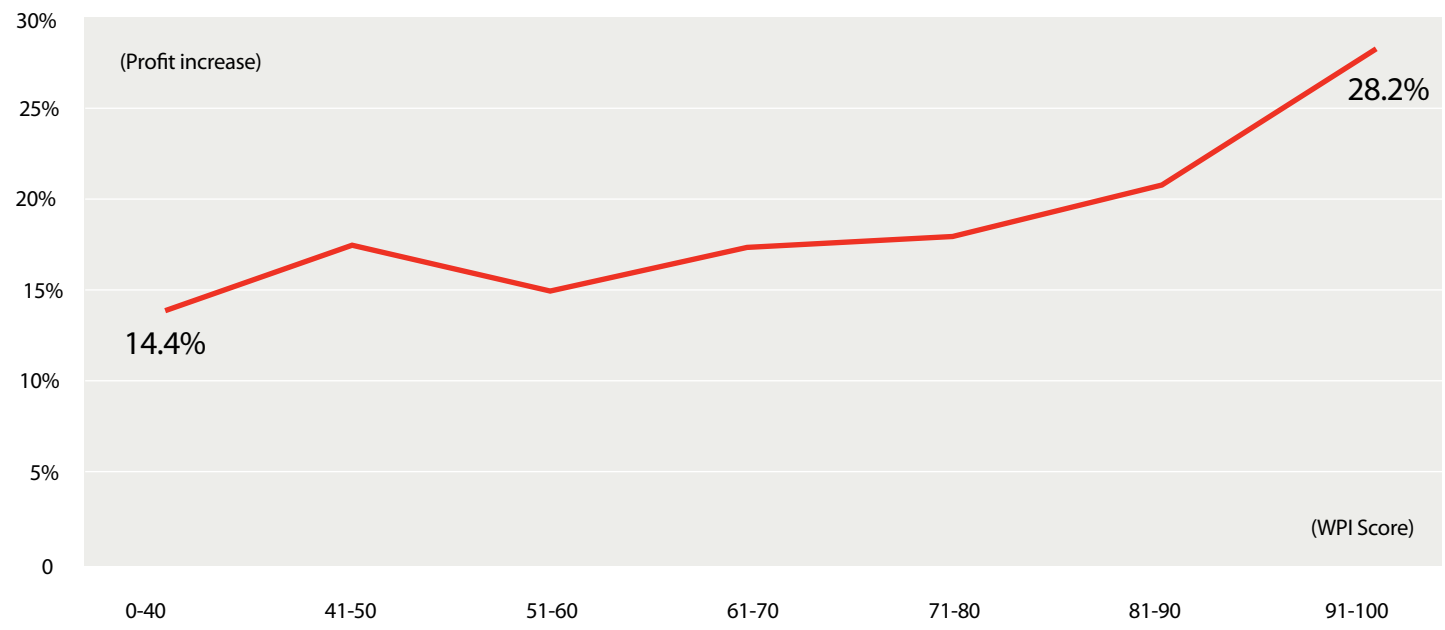
As WPI scores rise, the three-year average profit growth of companies increases, hitting 28.2% at the highest levels, almost twice as high as the lowest WPI scores and one-third higher than the next-best set of WPI scores.

Even average companies make better profits when their workplace scores go up. Average companies with a WPI of 72 show profit growth of 18% versus 16% at companies with a 12-point lower WPI.

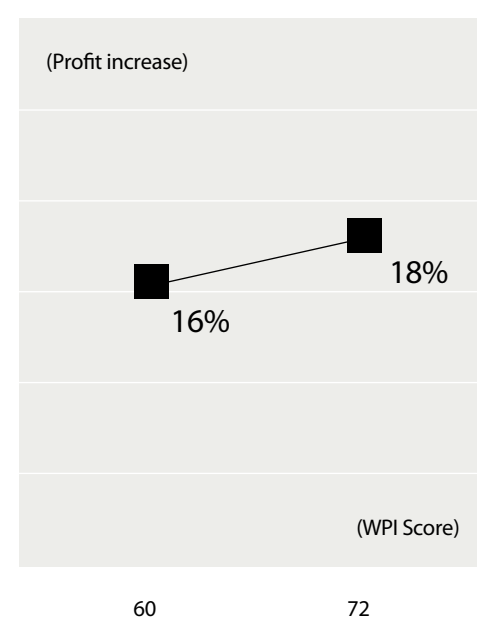
Financial performance is the cornerstone of measuring business success. In the knowledge economy, corporate profitability and growth are driven more by organizational capabilities than by control over physical assets. This is reflected in IBM's 2008 global CEO study in which market

factors and people factors were rated equally as the top drivers affecting businesses. Additional factors including market leadership, innovation, brand, and employee engagement create a multi-dimensional bottom line that drives profit and revenue strength.

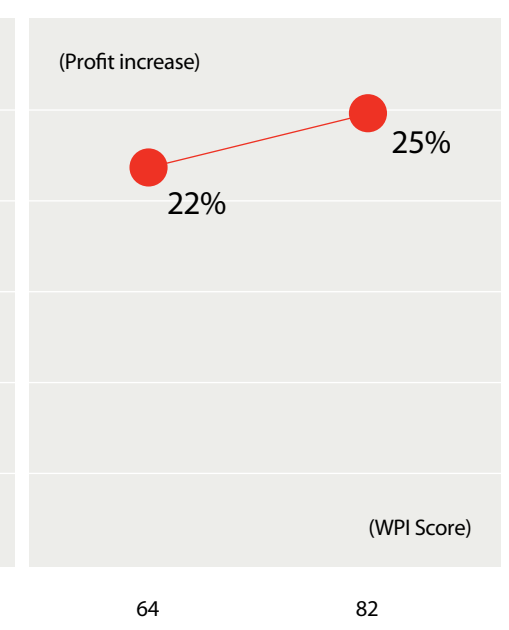
**Three-Year Annual Average Profit Growth vs. WPI Score**



**Average Companies**

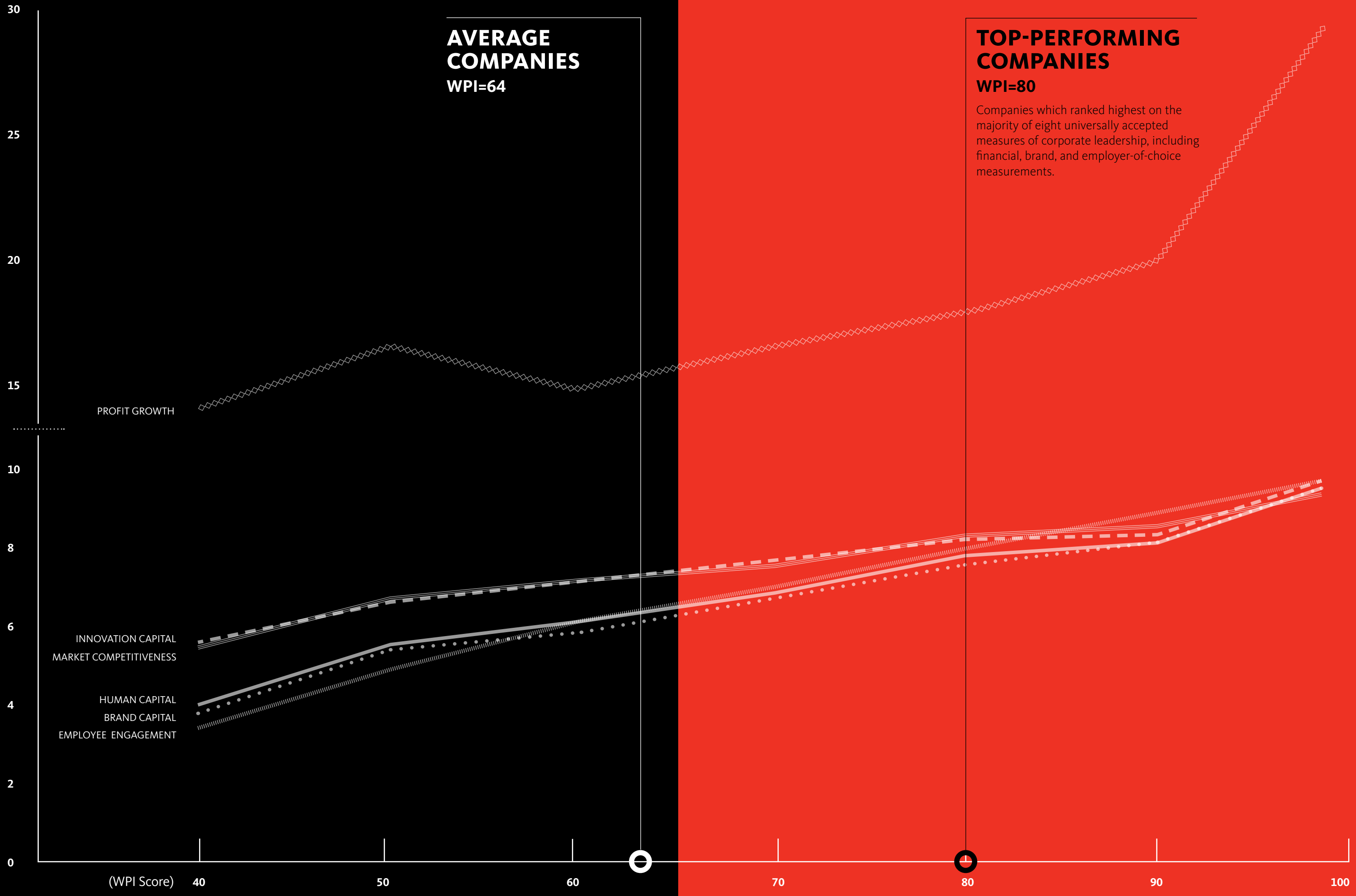


**Top-Performing Companies**



**!** Respondents at the manager level and above were asked to report profit and revenue growth. Research indicates a high level of confidence in the accuracy of management responses to questions about the financial performance of their company.





# THE VALUE OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

The Conference Board defines employee engagement as “a heightened emotional connection employees feel for the company that influences the expenditure of discretionary effort.”<sup>16</sup>

Employee engagement has become increasingly important to business success in the knowledge economy; connecting people to an organization’s values and brand creates a sense of meaning and value that complements cash and benefits compensation. Research by The Gallup Organization points to higher performance, profitability and tenure from more

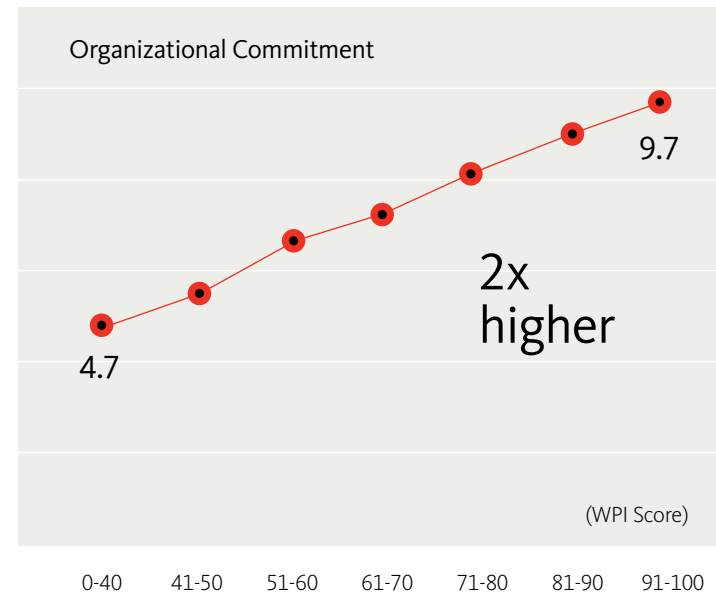
engaged employees, and several factors in Gallup’s Q-12 system, a research-based diagnostic for employee engagement, relate to workplace resources, company brand, and support of work modes.<sup>17</sup>

Gensler studied factors associated with employee engagement and human capital to understand the impact that effective workplaces could have on this aspect of organizational capability, including recruiting and retention, hiring top talent, work-life balance, and valuing people.

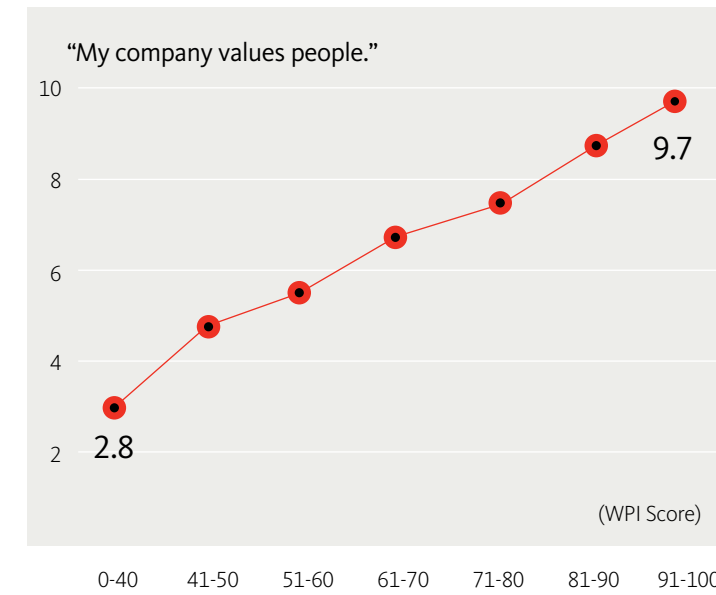
Additional human capital measures show the same alignment; companies with the highest WPI scores have close to perfect scores on valuing people, attracting/retaining talent and work/life balance. Scores for valuing people are two to three times higher when WPI scores are 80 or more versus the 0-40 group.

As organizations compete, increased levels of engagement are critical for realizing innovation, speed to market, and better-leveraged intellectual capital. The financial implications of this emotional commitment are clear through our research findings and others; a landmark UK study shows that increasing job satisfaction and organizational commitment accounts for 10% greater profitability and 23% greater productivity.<sup>18</sup>

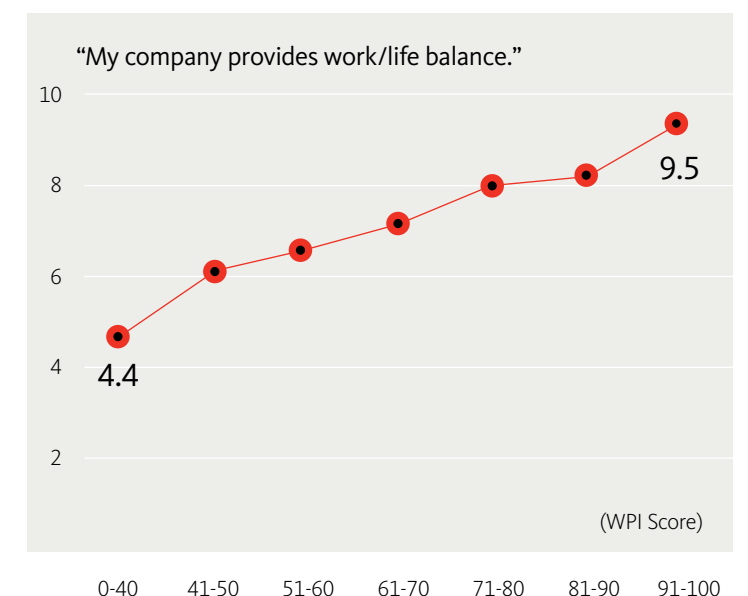
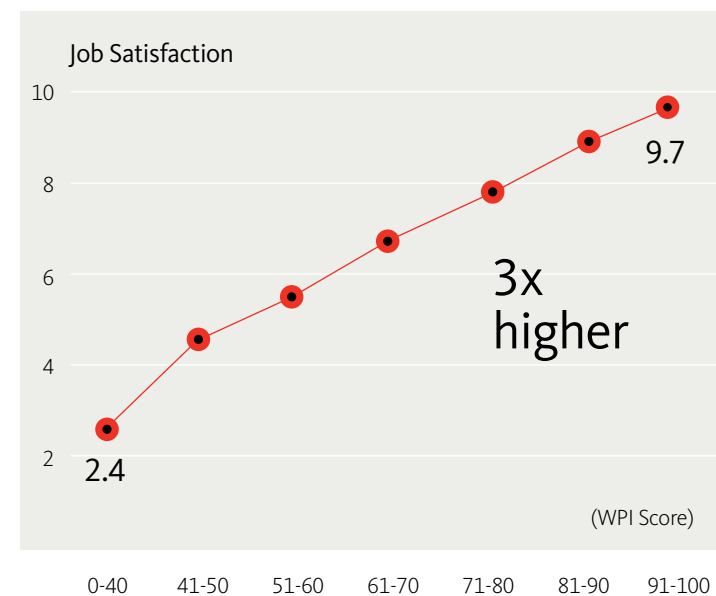
## Employee Engagement Indicators



## Human Capital Indicators



*Higher workplace scores directly aligned with higher scores on indicators of employee engagement. In high-WPI companies, job satisfaction rankings are three times higher and organizational commitment is twice as high.*



## BUILDING BRAND AND MARKET COMPETITIVENESS

In its 2007 annual survey of global brands, Interbrand asserts that “brands are value generators for business,” backed up by their research indicating that on average, brands account for more than one-third of shareholder value, with prominent global brands deriving up to 70% of their value from brand equity alone.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to supporting the work that people do, a workplace speaks volumes about a company, giving employees and visitors a visual point of reference that reflects the company’s

mission, values, and brand. Strong assessments of brand factors such as creativity, collaboration, and corporate responsibility are associated with higher WPI scores and vice versa.

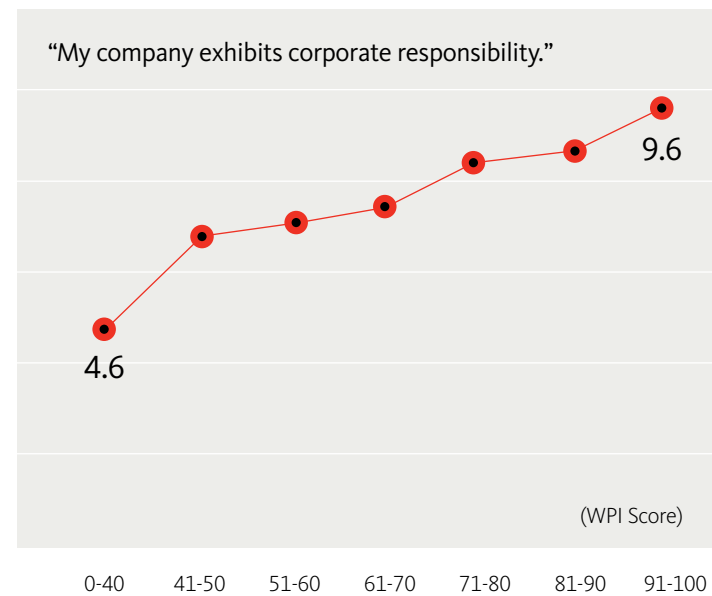
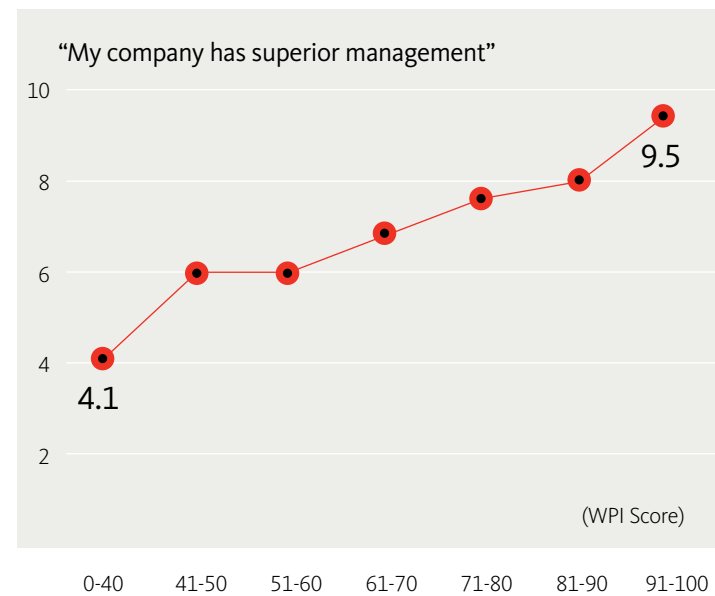
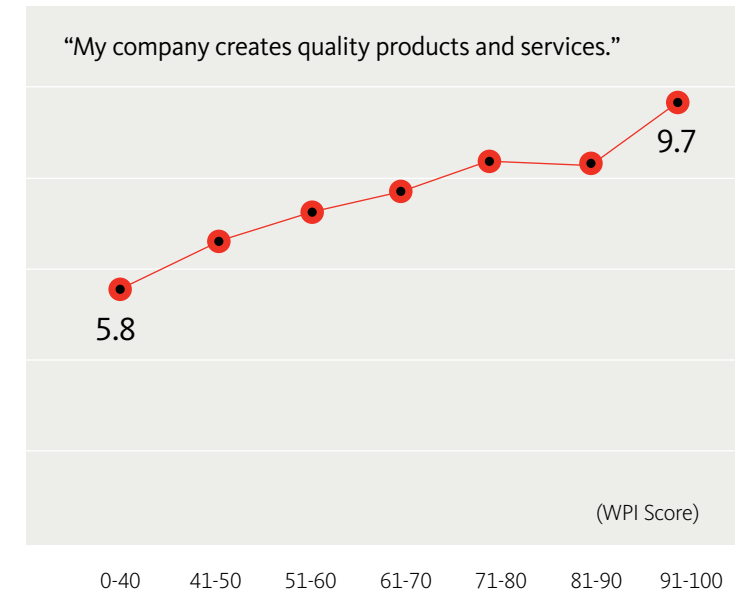
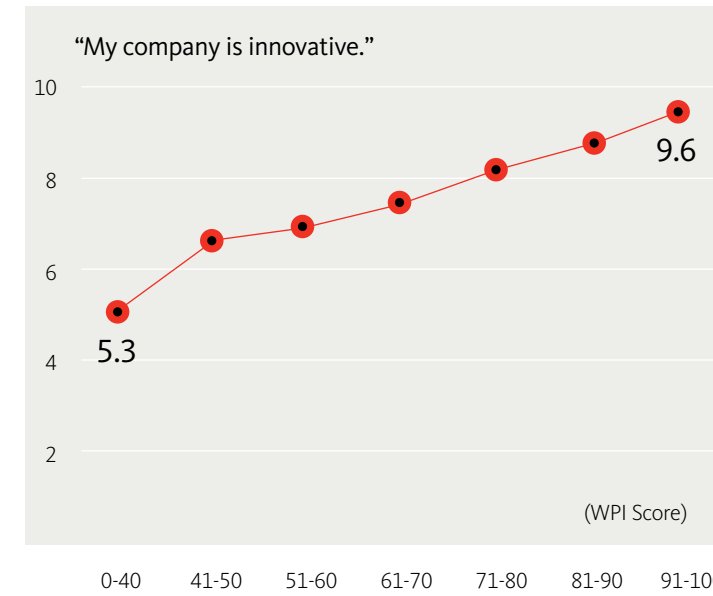
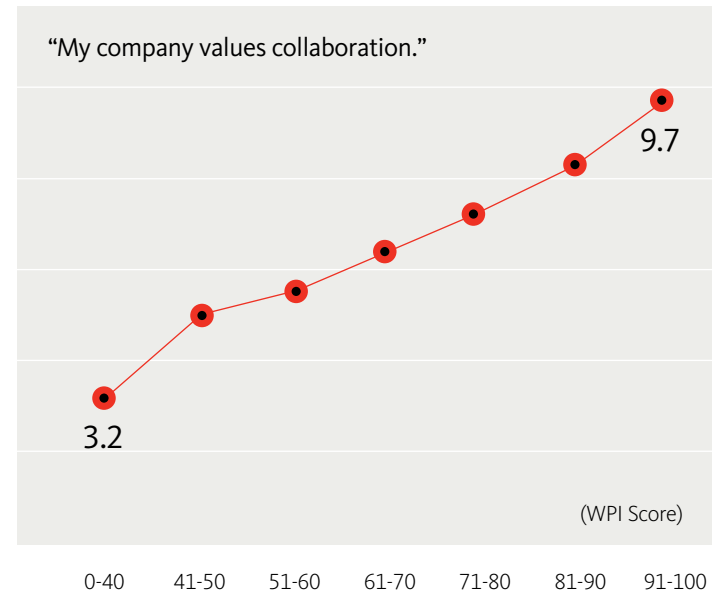
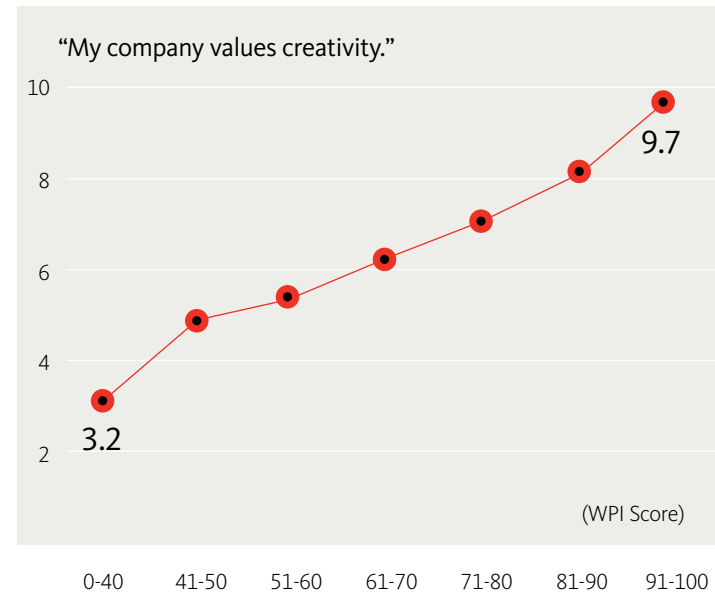
Bridging brand, employee engagement and financial performance, market capital illustrates perceptions of a company’s financial strength, market leadership and management quality.

## WHAT EVERY COMPANY WANTS: INNOVATION

Knowledge economy organizations seek innovation as a source of competitive advantage. Business Week magazine’s annual “Most Innovative Companies” list, compiled with the Boston Consulting Group, celebrates companies for valuing creative people, establishing creative cultures, diversifying their “idea portfolio” and seeking innovation whether economic times are good or bad.<sup>20</sup>

Our research found that innovation capital measures are higher at companies with stronger WPI scores; environments that better support the collaboration, learning and socializing work modes do a better job allowing the seeds of innovation to be nurtured and grow.

### Selected Brand, Market and Innovation Capital Indicators



### SO?

The workplace is an asset that organizations can use to make transformational improvements to their organizational capabilities and drive stronger financial performance.

Higher WPI scores translate to improvement of key metrics that matter in the knowledge economy: talent attraction and retention, brand strength, market leadership, creativity, innovation, profits and revenue.



# CONTINUED EXPLORATION

Gensler undertook a two-part initiative to understand how the 2008 Workplace Survey findings resonated with our client partners and within our own design teams.

## CLIENT ROUNDTABLES

Gensler conducted a series of roundtable discussions with our clients and staff where we presented survey findings and engaged in conversations about key ideas. Overwhelmingly, our clients acknowledged that knowledge economy work practices have changed but that many organizations have not recognized the full potential in these changes—essentially, they are prolonging workplace practices that conflict with new realities.

There was virtually universal agreement that collaboration is the paramount discipline to master in knowledge work, and that creating effective collaboration work spaces is equally as difficult. High amounts of collaboration are happening in primary work areas that were created for focus mode, disrupting the effectiveness of those spaces.

Roundtable participants agreed that learning at work has to move from an isolated, abstract activity to an inherent part of everyday work life, and that design plays a key role in enabling this improvement. Perhaps the strongest client response was around the increasing importance of socializing in the workplace. Clients cited staff retention, communication and innovation as critical outcomes of this work mode.

## DESIGN CHARRETTES

Gensler is conducting an ongoing series of design charrettes in the U.S. and U.K. in response to our survey findings. We asked more than 300 designers across the firm to create the different kind of workplace implied by our survey findings. Ideas have been both pragmatic and highly inventive, providing many new concepts that we can use to inform real-life client situations. Future papers and online features will explore these ideas in greater depth.

## RESEARCH AT GENSLER

Gensler's Workplace Survey series represents a continuum of efforts where each report builds on the research and findings of previous surveys. To this point, surveys have focused on the U.S. and U.K.; future initiatives will cover Asia and other markets. Survey methodologies are aligned for comparative analysis purposes.

### 2005

Findings from Gensler's 2005 U.K. Workplace Survey showed that workplace design is a significant factor to workers, and revealed that nearly 60% of the U.K. workers surveyed felt that their spaces did not reflect or support their job function or creativity. In addition, the survey discovered the potential for a 19% increase in productivity through higher-performance spaces. This percentage increase translated into roughly £137 billion pounds—about \$277 billion in U.S. dollars—in overall lost profit each year.

### 2006

The 2006 U.S. Workplace survey revealed that the workplace is a significant factor to U.S. workers, with 9 in 10 reporting that workplace affects their productivity. Respondents reported a 21% potential increase in productivity if spaces were better designed, translating into \$377 billion in lost opportunity each year. The 2006 U.S. survey findings were combined with focus group-based perspectives of more than 100 real estate and facilities decision-makers, leading to the identification of four primary workplace drivers: diversity, distance, corporate responsibility and work modes.

## METHODOLOGY

This report's findings are based on an original survey designed by Gensler in collaboration with independent research firm Added Value, a subsidiary of WPP.

### Survey Sample

The 2008 Workplace Survey was conducted with a national, random sample of 900 full-time, in-office workers—defined as workers who spend most of their time working at a primary, assigned location. Respondents covered all staff levels with equal distribution across the continental United States. The study included respondents from specific industries including: banking, finance, insurance, technology, internet, telecom, consumer products, retail, legal, accounting, consulting, energy, media, creative, entertainment, and not-for-profit associations.

### Survey Questions

We developed questions to place data about the physical work environment in a larger business and workplace context, looking for:

- Evaluation of company business success based on eight established indicators: leadership in their industry; financial strength; creation of quality products or services; innovation; promotion of work/life balance; superior management capabilities; ability to attract and retain talent; responsibility to community and environment<sup>21</sup>
- The company's profit and revenue growth
- Perceptions of the workplace in relation to company values, brand and performance
- Evaluation of physical workplace factors



In addition to the findings from our 2008 study, this Design+Performance Report draws on prior Gensler research, secondary research, and our ongoing client experience.

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Gensler is the world's leading design firm for business. We offer our client partners well-informed, compelling, and innovative design ideas that help them adapt to competitive changes and perform at their best.

Our Design+Performance programs enhance the practical application of design to our clients' business objectives through original research, benchmarking, best practices and project-based expertise.

This Design+Performance Report features our 2008 Workplace Survey, a quantitative assessment of the role that workplace design plays in business and individual performance.

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