



The Business Benefits of Being a **Dream Company**



HORIZONS 
**Workforce
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Introduction

What's the key to attracting, engaging, and retaining great employees? The answer: it's not about the job. Research shows that for employers, there's considerably more strategic power in offering people a position in a Dream Company than there is in merely providing a dream job. Why? The *Horizons Workforce Consulting*[®] survey of 4,000 working adults found that providing people a job in a Dream Company — one with a culture that supports them as whole people as well as employees — stokes both employees' commitment to the job and their desire to stay with the company. As a result, Dream Companies enjoy the type of employee engagement, retention, and productivity that other employers can only dream about.

What Dream Companies Know

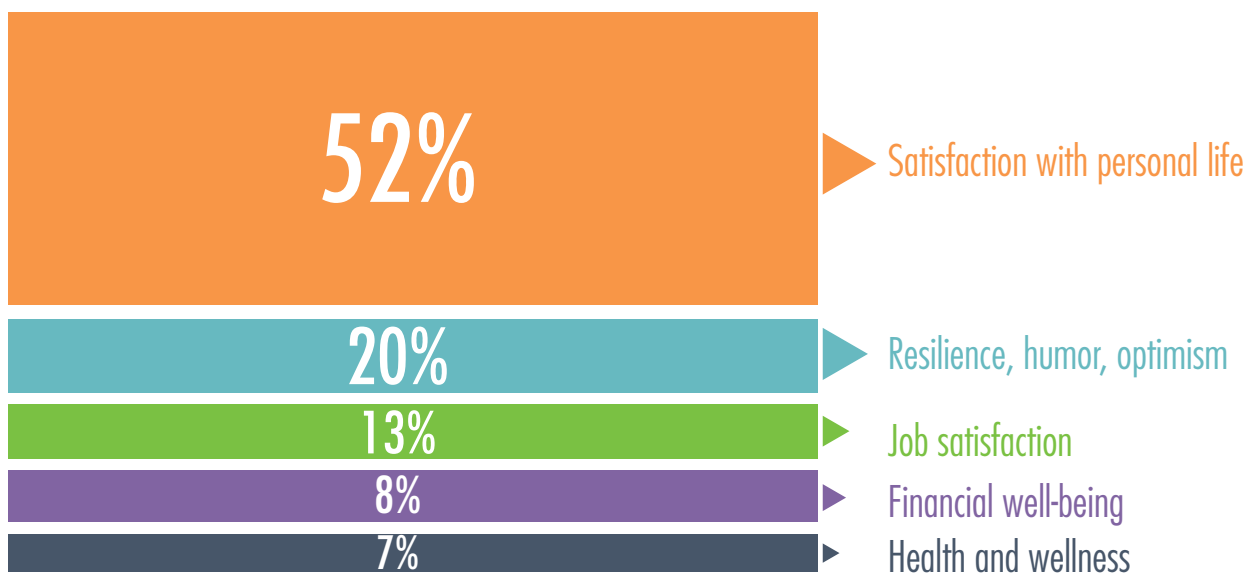


Dream Companies **offer people great places to work**. Through programs and policies, these organizations make definitive statements about **support for the workforce as people and not just employees**. Specifically, according to survey respondents, Dream Companies have cultures that support:

- Employee well-being
- Professional development
- Work/life balance
- Productive meetings
- Effective communication

These elements are important because previous studies by Horizons Workforce Consulting have shown that satisfaction with life outside of work is the main driver of well-being — the personal and professional grounding that makes people feel fully capable of putting in their best performances. The research also demonstrated that employees with high levels of well-being are better performers at work.

The Key Drivers of Well-Being



Source: Data from the 2012 Horizons Workforce Consulting Well-Being Study

Dream Companies therefore have embraced the fact that **support for personal priorities is in fact support for the organization**.



What Do Dream Companies Look Like?

Dream Companies have gone to great lengths to create positive cultures and very specific policies to support employees. These organizations all share key characteristics.

Dream Companies Offer More Benefits

Dream Companies **use supportive benefits to create conditions for success** in employees' personal and professional lives. Examples of benefits offered in Dream Companies include:



- Flexible work arrangements
- Child care
- Elder care
- Educational advising services
- Tuition reimbursement
- Wellness resources
- Fitness center
- 24-hour nurse line

Equally important, Dream Companies **convey both permission and encouragement to use these benefits**, with employees at these companies taking advantage of more non-core benefits than those not in Dream Companies.

Dream Companies Respect Employees

Dream Companies **make a substantial effort to ensure time at work is meaningful for employees**. Elements such as transparent communication and an emphasis on effective meetings convey respect for employees' time. As a result, a higher percentage of employees in Dream Companies agree with the statements:

- Meetings here are productive
- Communication in my organization is effective
- My work is valued in my organization

Time and Work Are Valued

■ Not in a Dream Company ■ In a Dream Company



Dream Companies Have Supportive Managers

Dream Companies understand the substantial impact of direct supervisors on the employee experience. To that end, Dream Company managers clearly communicate and advance the supportive culture at every level of the organization. As a result, these managers earn high ratings from direct reports. More than **75% of Dream Company employees say their supervisors:**



- Make them feel comfortable bringing up personal or family issues
- Truly care about the effects of work demands on personal lives
- Recognize employee accomplishments
- Give fair appraisals of work
- Set an example of ethical behavior
- Stand behind employees when needed
- Create an atmosphere of trust

Dream Companies Invest in Career Development

Dream Companies recognize the value of learning and growth opportunities and offer employees numerous avenues to enhance skills.



- **75% of employees in Dream Companies** agree that their organization provides them with opportunities for learning and growth, **versus 32% of those not in Dream Companies**
- **Nearly half of employees** in Dream Companies say they're satisfied with training and professional development opportunities, compared with **29% of those not in Dream Companies**

Dream Companies Convey Trust

Dream Companies give employees a meaningful level of control over their work. As a result, **more than 80% of employees in Dream Companies report that they:**

- Feel free to do their jobs the best way they can be done
- Have the ability to provide input into matters that affect their work



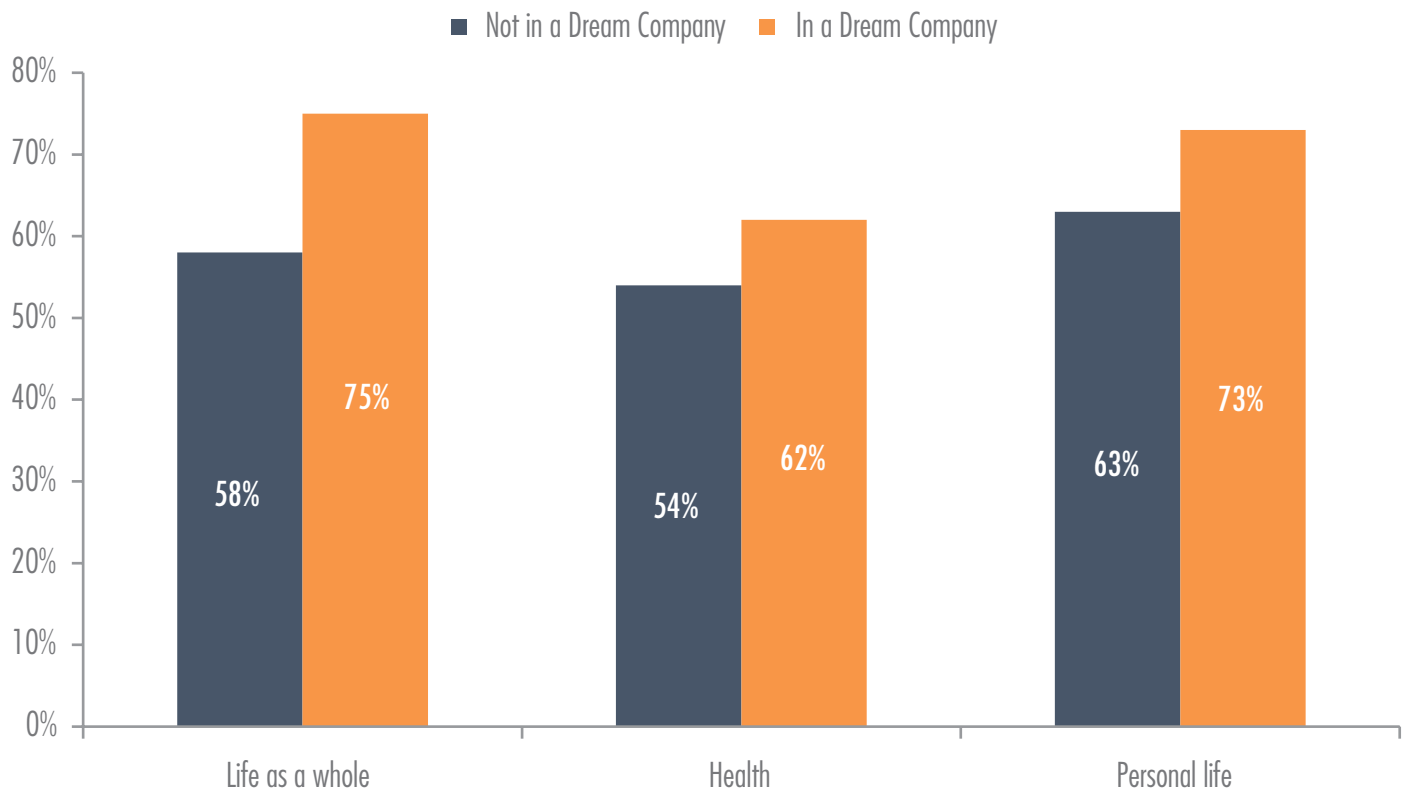
Dream Companies Support Life Outside of Work

Dream Companies have clearly communicated support — via policies, programs, and culture — for managing personal responsibilities. As a result, Dream Company employees have **life satisfaction rates that are substantially higher** than those not in Dream Companies.



High life satisfaction equates to enhanced well-being. Employees in Dream Companies indicate higher levels of satisfaction in key areas of life, as shown below.

Employees With High Satisfaction Levels*



*High satisfaction is defined as a rating of between 8-10 on a 10-point scale.



The Organizational Payoffs of Being a Dream Company

Data from the study shows that Dream Company characteristics lead to substantial organizational gains.

Dream Companies Are Synonymous With Engaged Employees

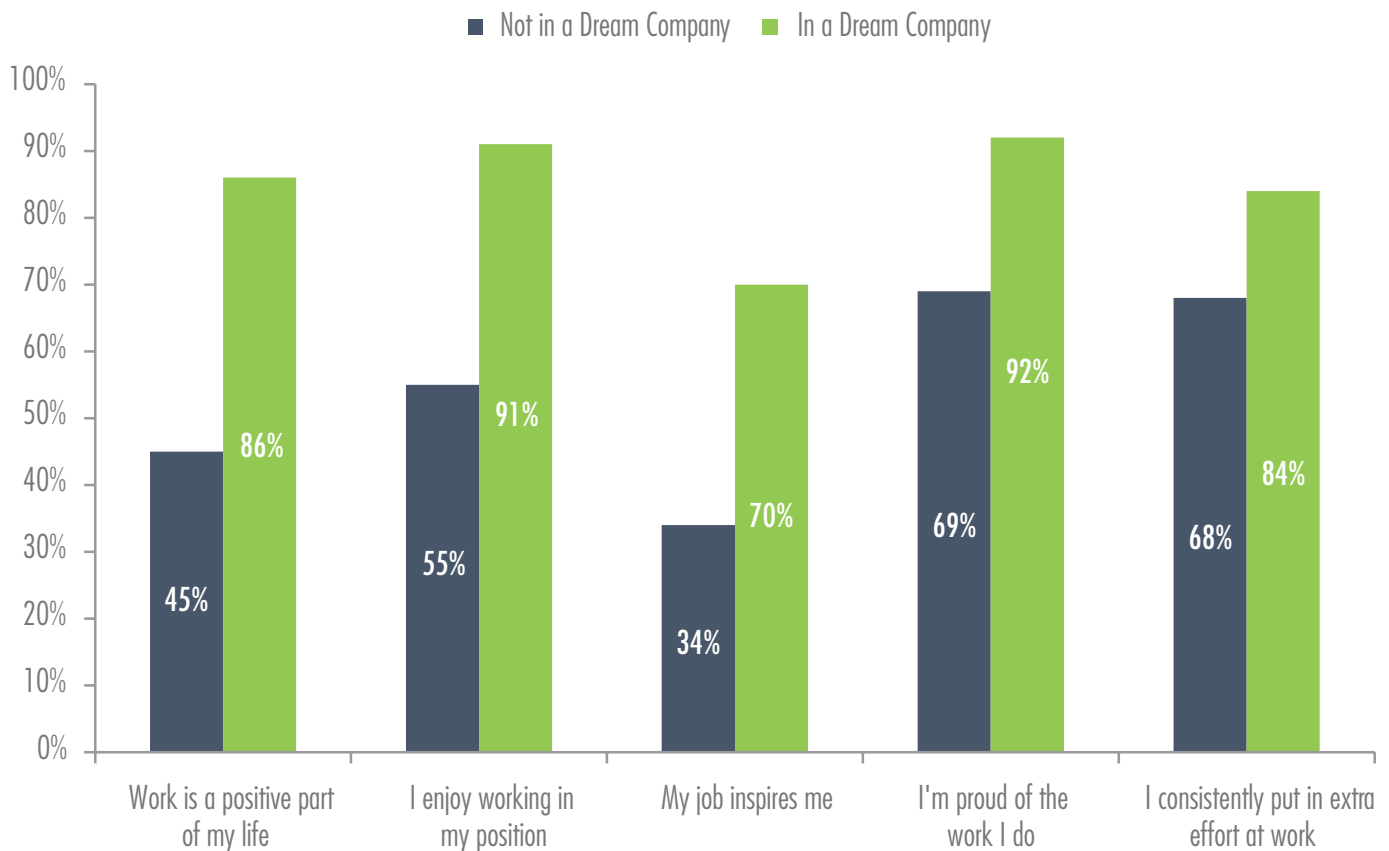


Job satisfaction strongly correlates with employee engagement, and **72% of employees in Dream Companies (versus only 28% of those not in Dream Companies)** report high levels of satisfaction with their jobs. Many employees in Dream Companies even indicate that work feels like play.

Additionally, Dream Company employees are much more likely than those not in Dream Companies to agree that:

- They are proud of the work they do
- They consistently put in extra effort at work
- Work is a positive part of their life
- They enjoy working in their position
- Their job inspires them

By Multiple Measures, Employees Are Highly Engaged





The Edge in Maintaining Hard-to-Fill Jobs

IT professionals, customer service employees, finance, sales, and marketing — these are all valuable professionals. They're also constantly at risk of being poached. Such employees have in-depth company expertise, and skills that are highly mobile. They can also be very expensive to replace. For these people, *where* they work is the defining factor. By focusing on company over job, Dream Companies are in the best position to keep them.

Dream Companies Experience Reduced Turnover

Dream Companies win the war on talent — particularly when it comes to hard-to-fill positions.

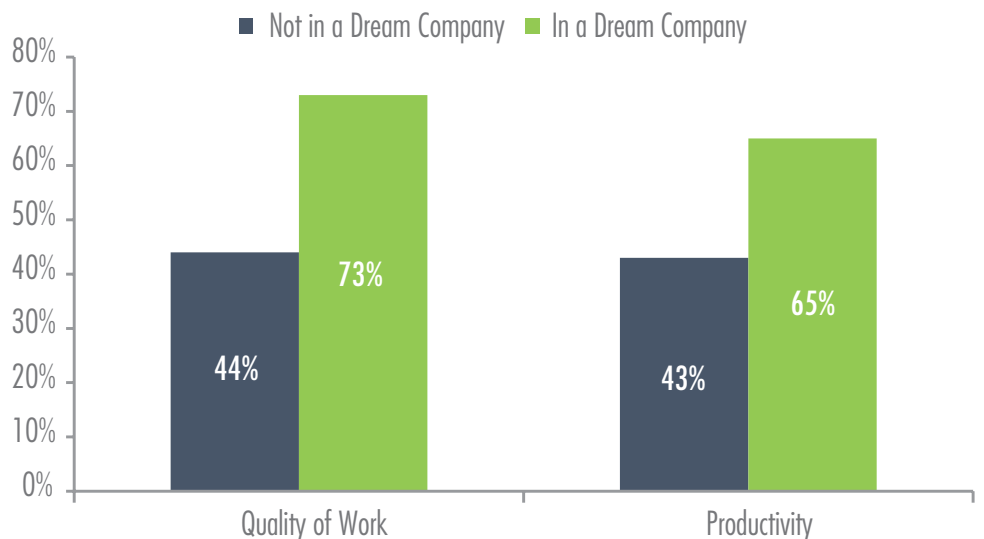
- **52% of employees not working in Dream Companies** said they had considered looking for a new job in the previous month, **versus just 13% of those in Dream Companies**
- **74% of employees in Dream Companies see a future at the company**, saying they feel confident that they will be able to achieve their long-term career goals there, **versus 29% of those not in Dream Companies**

The career development focus of Dream Companies adds yet another boost, with more than half of Millennials telling a recent **Bright Horizons®** study that they value such growth more than pay raises, and that they'd stick with employers that offer increased opportunities on the job.

Dream Company Employees Are Better Producers

In addition to enhancing job satisfaction, **supportive policies minimize personal and professional obstacles to performance**. As a result, employees in Dream Companies report high levels of productivity and quality of work.

Employees Are Highly Productive



Dream Company Employees Are Less Likely to Burn Out

People working in Dream Companies are **mentally and physically better able to be productive**. In fact, according to the earlier study “Enhanced Employee Health, Well-Being and Engagement Through Dependent Care Supports” by Horizons Workforce Consulting, unsupported employees are substantially more likely to experience high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes than their supported counterparts.



- Employees in Dream Companies are less than half as likely as those not in Dream Companies to burn out
- Employees in Dream Companies give higher marks to satisfaction with personal health
- Top Dream Employees (see below) are **healthier than their counterparts**, with nearly 90% giving their health an 8-10 on a 10-point scale

Dream Companies Attract Dream Employees

The Horizons Workforce Consulting study discovered that within the workforce, there are Dream Employees; these are the rarified stars who drive their organization’s success. Most of these people — 96% — gravitate to and work at Dream Companies.

A Dream Employee:

- Rates job satisfaction 8 or higher (on a 10-point scale)
- Rates their quality of work and productivity over the previous two weeks an 8, 9, or 10
- Is strongly inspired by work
- Enjoys work so much, it often feels like play
- Attributes a great deal of personal meaning to both their work and their organization
- Is excited by opportunities to take on new tasks or challenges
- Regularly seeks out new tools and resources to improve work performance
- Has great relationships with colleagues





Opportunities for Employers

Results of the Dream Company study show great opportunity for employers. Work in the modern era is constantly bumping up against personal lives, leading employees to look for, gravitate to, and stay with organizations that provide help to make everything fit. That means supportive cultures are not just beneficial to employees, but to employers as well.

Becoming a Dream Company

Data from the Dream Company study clearly demonstrates a competitive advantage, **drawing a direct line between a positive “Dream” culture and top employee performances.** Becoming a Dream Company — and realizing those benefits — will require first looking inward and committing to action. For employers, key steps in this process include:



- Exploring the unique makeup of the workforce
- Assessing both the positive and challenging qualities of the organizational culture
- Understanding the specific obstacles to people’s success
- Addressing challenges directly, with responsive programs
- Communicating that the implementation of the new programs is a direct result of employee input

For some companies, these steps may require substantial change. However, the act of collecting data alone can be useful. Evidence shows an organization’s demonstrated interest in understanding employees’ life challenges can itself positively impact employee engagement.

Dream Companies demonstrate that **support for the employee as a whole person is support for the organization’s success.** The bottom line: an employer that truly cares about its employees and authentically exhibits that care will reap the rewards of living the dream.

About Horizons Workforce Consulting

With global capabilities and services ranging from work/life needs assessments to customized response strategies, Horizons Workforce Consulting, a division of Bright Horizons, assists clients in identifying and addressing the work, life, and dependent-care obstacles their employees face. The industry experts at Horizons Workforce Consulting help create workplace environments that allow employees to reach peak performance and productivity while enabling employers to achieve organizational success.



Horizons Workforce Consulting regularly publishes reports on the business outcomes associated with employer investments in the workforce. These briefs contribute to the thought leadership of today’s talent management practices.

Visit brighthorizons.com/solutionsatwork
or email clientservices@brighthorizons.com
to learn more about becoming a Dream Company.



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