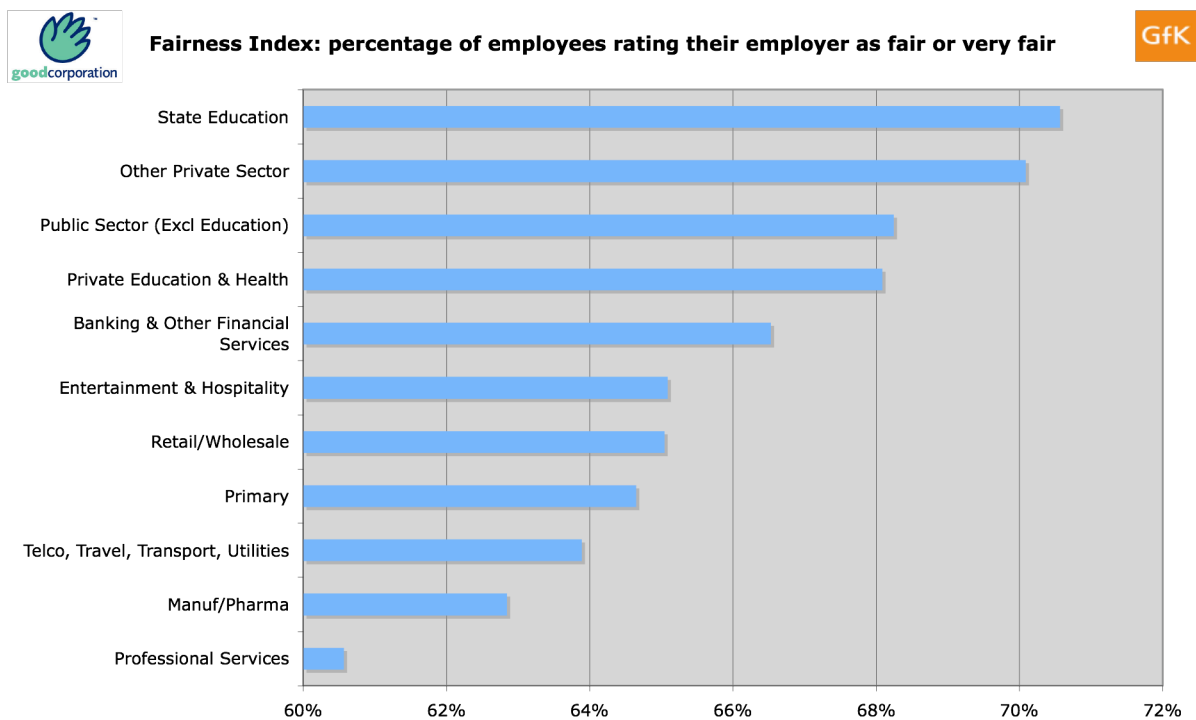


November 2007

MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL, WHICH IS THE FAIREST SECTOR OF THEM ALL?

One in three British workers do not consider their employers to be fair, revealed a recent GfK Fairness Index survey sponsored by GoodCorporation*. Employees from a representative cross section of British businesses were asked a series of questions about how their employers treated not just the people that work for them, but their customers, their suppliers and the community at large. Out of all the industries questioned, professional service firms came bottom in the Fairness Index with 39 per cent of employees remaining unconvinced that their employers were fair.





Britain's fairest sector, on the other hand, is its state schools and colleges, with over 70 per cent of employees scoring these organisations as fair in the Fairness Index.

Professional Service companies were considered below average in 21 of the 25 areas surveyed and were bottom of the table in 11 of the 25 questions making up the Fairness

Index. Their poorest performance in the area of employee relations was clarity and fairness about pay. Forty nine per cent of employees in this sector do not consider Professional Service companies to be clear and fair with regard to salaries. They were also considered to be lagging behind other industries in condemning bullying and harassment, considering the interests of disabled customers and in particular in their treatment of suppliers and the community at large, where they fell below average in all areas of the Index.



The GoodCorporation Mirror Mirror survey highlighted the key areas where British businesses can make major strides in improving responsible corporate behaviour.

Employees

More than 40% of UK employees would not describe their employer as fair in terms of:



- Internal communications
- Being clear about pay
- Training
- Work/life balance
- Appraisals

Suppliers

More than 30% of UK employees would not describe their employer as fair in terms of:



- Paying suppliers on time
- Selecting suppliers on a fair basis
- Ensuring that suppliers adopt responsible business practices

Community

More than 55% of employees would not describe their employer as fair in:

- Encouraging employees to help in the community
- Listening and dealing with any complaints from community groups
- Buying from local companies and using local employees

Customers

More than 20% of employees would not describe their employer as fair in terms of:

- Responding to customer complaints
- Advertising honestly
- Delivering what was promised
- Being fair to disabled customers

Commenting on the survey, Leo Martin, founding director of GoodCorporation said: “This is the first Fairness Index to assess what British employees think of the way their employers do business and it has been extremely revealing. How many board directors will be happy to learn that up to one third of their employees think that they are unfair or that over half do not think their employers treat the community fairly? From our assessment work we see a clear link between responsible business behaviour and profitability. It’s time British businesses woke up to this.”

Lord Sharman, chairman of Aviva and former global head of KPMG said: “I welcome the findings of GoodCorporation’s Mirror Mirror survey, but was disappointed to see Professional Services companies performing so badly. For an industry that spends much of its time advising others on how to run their businesses, this was a very poor performance indeed. While some of the larger professional service firms have made great strides in adopting good business practice, there is clearly a lot of work to do.”

ENDS

***Note to editors:** GoodCorporation is a privately owned certification business that assesses companies and organisations for best business practice. It was founded in 2000 by a [group of former partners and directors of KPMG Consulting](#) who wanted to create a clear and transparent system, which would enable companies to assess their business practices in a credible way. It is the only certification business to assess the ethical business practices of a company or organisation, providing an independent accreditation when the Standard has been achieved. It does not sell consultancy on the back of its audits.

Methodology: GfK conducted a representative survey of the UK working population. The sampling survey was controlled for geographic region, gender, age, working status and whether employed by public or business service sector. Over 1,000 respondents completed the 25 questions taken from the GoodCorporation Corporate Responsibility Standard. The Fairness Index is based on the average of these 25 questions.

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