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Ethics at Work
2015 Survey of Employees
Britain

By Daniel Johnson
Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees - Britain


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First published November 2015
by the Institute of Business Ethics
24 Greencoat Place
London SW1P 1BE

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## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBE Foreword</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Reviewer’s Comment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Findings from Britain</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the survey</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The questionnaire</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The analysis</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1 Attitudes to Ethics at Work</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee attitudes to travel expenses</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee attitudes to ethics in the workplace</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes of managers to ‘petty fiddling’</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2 Experience of Ethics at Work</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty in the workplace</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of misconduct</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking up</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure to compromise organisational standards</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3 Supporting Ethics at Work</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics programmes</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of incentives to encourage ethical</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behaviour in the workplace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators of an ethical culture</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and Conclusion</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Survey Questionnaire</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Methodology and Respondent Profile</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related IBE Publications</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Author
Daniel Johnson is the Research Hub Manager at the Institute of Business Ethics. He researches and writes on a number of business ethics topics for the IBE, manages its programme of public and corporate surveys and engages in training and public speaking to raise awareness of the subject. He holds a Master’s Degree in Corporate Social Responsibility from the ICCSR at Nottingham University.

Acknowledgements
The IBE would like to thank the following companies for their generous financial support of this survey.

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Many people and organisations have made this survey report possible. In addition to the financial support provided by the companies listed above, we are grateful to Ipsos MORI for their help and support in producing the report. The author is thankful for the input of all at the IBE, especially Joanna Hicks who edited the text and oversaw production, and to Neil Pafford who designed and laid out the final report. Rev. Dr. Simon Robinson also provided an insightful review of an earlier version of the text.
IBE Foreword

The IBE first surveyed the British public in work about their attitudes to ethics in their workplace in 2005. It is exciting to be publishing the findings from our fourth British Ethics at Work survey ten years later.

Employees are the barometer by which the temperature of ethical business can be measured. Employees approach to ethics – what they are willing or not willing to do – and their perception of how they feel supported to do the right thing is crucial to understanding what makes an ethical business culture.

As the British survey results show, there are some positives to reflect on, but as ever there is room for improvement. Corporate scandals continue to hit the headlines, illustrating that companies need to strive harder to embed their values so that they become a part of the company culture.

I am very grateful to Daniel Johnson, the IBE’s Research Hub Manager, for his authorship of this and the other six reports in the 2015 IBE Ethics at Work Survey series.

Finally, this series of survey reports would not have been possible without the financial support of a group of the IBE’s subscribers and I thank them all for their contributions: Barclays, Centrica, Lloyds Banking Group; Aviva, HSBC, L’Oréal, Orange, RBS, Total; and Airbus.

As with all IBE publications we look forward to receiving your feedback and insight on these survey findings. We would encourage you to use the data provided to benchmark the views of your own employees with regard to levels of awareness of misconduct, willingness to raise concerns and perceptions of ethical culture.

Philippa Foster Back CBE
Director
Institute of Business Ethics
National Reviewer’s Comment

The Institute of Business Ethics (IBE) now has ten years of data derived from its tri-annual Ethics at Work surveys. This data can be used to track changes in employees’ views of what they feel about the way business in their organisation is being conducted. Because the sample was selected to represent British employees, some overall conclusions about business ethics in Britain can be deduced.

One useful outcome of undertaking the survey is that it enables the IBE to focus its programme of events, publications and advice in a relevant way – that is, to focus on those matters which cause some concern and also to emphasise the positive things that British employees are seeing about corporate ethics in their day-to-day work.

An example of the concerns expressed through this survey would be that one in five of all British employees say they are aware of misconduct at their place of work. Indeed, a growing number (now eight out of ten), say their organisation provides a confidential means for their staff to raise their concerns. Yet 61% of those who did raise their concerns say they were dissatisfied with what happened after they had done so (it was 30% in 2012). This helps to explain why a significant proportion of employees say that they do not think anything will be done by management if they decide to raise an issue. This needs addressing.

An example of a positive trend revealed in the survey, is that British organisation’s business ethics programmes generally are having a beneficial effect on employee attitudes. This is demonstrated in this year’s survey by the apparent lower levels of awareness of misconduct amongst employees in organisations which provide all the elements of an ethics programme.

We at the IBE hear regular comments about the difficulties being experienced by ethics practitioners in making their ethics awareness and training programmes effective among middle managers. One piece of evidence from this survey indicates just how serious this problem is and highlights the need to find ways to overcome it. The evidence is this: in the section on management behaviour as an indicator of an ethical culture, it is reported that over a third of British employees say that their line manager ‘rewards employees who get good results, even if they use practices that are ethically questionable’ (Figure 17). Another third of employees say they are unsure what their manager does in this regard!

The overriding ethical concern among employees in this survey who were aware of misconduct is the treatment of their fellow employees – unfair or inappropriate treatment, bullying and harassment were cited by just under half of the respondents.

On the other hand, perhaps the most encouraging finding is shown in Figure 14. All four indicators of British employee awareness of their corporate ethics programme have risen significantly over the last ten years. For example, in 2005, 65% of respondents said that they were aware of the existence of a written standard (code of ethics) in their organisation. In 2015, this proportion has risen to 86%. While having a code of ethics is a necessary element of any ethics programme, it is not sufficient in itself to influence behaviour. So the acceleration of the awareness of available ethics training from 50% in 2005 to 78% in 2015 is heartening for those of us who consider good corporate ethical behaviour to be an essential element in sustainable capitalism.

Simon Webley
Research Director
Institute of Business Ethics
Key Findings from Britain

The data from the 2015 IBE Ethics at Work Survey in Britain indicates that employee experience of business ethics in the workplace has remained relatively consistent in the last 3 years. However, over the course of this survey since 2005 employee attitudes have seen much fluctuation, while employer support for ethics at work has grown positively.

**Employees believe honesty is practised frequently**
81% of British employees believe that honesty is practised always or frequently in their organisation.

**81%**

**A consistent fifth have been aware of misconduct**
20% said that they were aware of misconduct in 2015 (2012 also 20%)

**20%**

**Pressure to compromise ethical standards remains low**
Only 8% of British employees said that they had felt pressured to compromise their organisation’s ethical standards.

**8%**

**Satisfaction with the outcome of speaking up has plummeted**
Only 39% said they were satisfied with the outcome of raising their concerns in 2015. In 2012, 70% were satisfied.

**39%**

**Around half of employees continue to speak up**
55% of British employees continue to raise their concerns of misconduct (but 45% did not)

**55%**

**Formal ethics programmes are more prominent**
All four elements of a formal ethics programme are more prominent in 2015 than they have been in the past.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Code of Ethics</th>
<th>Speak Up Line</th>
<th>Advice Line</th>
<th>Ethics Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change since 2005</td>
<td>+21%</td>
<td>+32%</td>
<td>+26%</td>
<td>+28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

What are British employees’ attitudes to the way business is done in their place of work? Do they feel able to speak up when they have witnessed misconduct? Are formal ethics programmes effective in embedding ethical values into organisational culture and behaviour? Have perceptions changed over time?

The Institute of Business Ethics (IBE) has asked such questions of the British workforce on a regular basis since 2005. We have, therefore, been able to observe the shifting trends in employee opinion towards business ethics in the workplace. Although over this time support for ethics at work has followed a predominantly positive trend, employee attitudes to, and experience of, ethics in the workplace has seen greater variation.

In 2012, the scope of the survey was increased to include four additional major European markets – France, Spain, Italy and Germany, and in 2015 we extended this work further by increasing the number of questions asked in these continental European markets to continue the harmonisation with the understanding of employee views in Britain.

This report presents the findings of the fourth IBE survey of employee views of ethics at work in Britain. Data is presented throughout to give a snapshot of the business ethics landscape in Britain in 2015. Where appropriate, we also comment on trends. Comparisons are not made with the continental European data as the research methodology and respondent profile differed for these surveys.

The results from the British, French, German, Italian and Spanish national surveys and the comparative Continental Europe findings are published in separate reports, and the overall survey conclusions are presented in a seventh report Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees – Main Findings and Themes.

All the survey reports are available free to download from the IBE website.

Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees – Main Findings and Themes »
Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees – Britain »
Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees – Germany »
Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees – France »
Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees – Italy »
Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees – Spain »
Ethics at Work: 2015 Survey of Employees – Continental Europe »

The 2005, 2008 and 2012 Employee Views of Ethics at Work: British Survey reports are each available, free to download, from the IBE website.

Employee Views of Ethics at Work: 2012 Continental Europe Survey, available, free to download, from the IBE website.

The data for the four continental European countries was collected online by ComRes. The data for the British report was collected face-to-face by Ipsos MORI. For a comparison of the research methodologies and respondent profiles, see the Main Findings and Themes report.
Purpose of the survey

The aims of this survey were as follows:

• to **develop** an understanding of British employees’ attitudes to, and perceptions of, ethics in the workplace in 2015
• to **identify** trends and developments by, where possible, making comparisons with the data from previous editions of the IBE British Ethics at Work Survey dating back to 2005
• to **explore** if and how an ethical culture and the existence of formal ethics programmes influence standards of ethical behaviour in the workplace
• to **assess** whether managers’ attitudes to ethics are significantly different to those they manage
• to **enquire** if and how employees feel supported in maintaining ethical standards at work.

The questionnaire

The interview questionnaire (a copy of which can be found in Appendix 1) consisted of a total 16 questions, although not all questions were answered by all respondents. Eligibility for certain questions was dependent on responses to previous questions.

The following areas were explored:

• employees’ and managers’ attitudes to certain ethical practices in the workplace
• employee perceptions of ethical behaviour in their organisation
• formal support offered by employers to encourage ethical behaviour in the workplace.

A note on the research methodology and respondent profile can be found in Appendix 2.

The analysis

This report details the findings of the responses from the nationally representative sample of 674 British workers surveyed by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the IBE in March 2015. The analysis is presented in three chapters:

Chapter 1 looks briefly at the attitudes to ethics at work of British employees and managers

Chapter 2 presents a more detailed view of their experiences of ethics at work

Chapter 3 reviews how organisations support ethics at work, and assesses the impact of these various support mechanisms on employee attitudes and experiences.

Four different sub-groups of the employee population were also considered to see if there were any differences in their experience of ethics in the workplace. These were: **gender** (male/female), **age** (younger employees: aged 16-34 / mid-career employees: aged 35-54 / older employees: aged 55+), **sector** (public/voluntary / private), and **seniority** (manager/non-manager).

Where percentages do not sum exactly to 100% this could be due to a number of reasons, including rounding, participants being able to select more than one response to the question, or additional options, such as ‘don’t know’ or ‘other’, not shown.

The survey findings give organisations valuable insights and guidance on how to create and sustain a culture of integrity. Individual organisations can use the data provided to benchmark their culture and performance against the findings presented here.
Attitudes to Ethics at Work

It is widely accepted that ethics begins where the law ends. Consequently, ethical decisions commonly inhabit what are referred to as ‘grey areas’, where the correct course of action invariably is not a simple black/white decision. Differences in opinion, upbringing and experience (to name but a few) mean that individuals have different definitions of what may be considered acceptable. Attitudes to ethics in the workplace also vary between cultures, ages and over time.

Following an ‘ice-breaker’ question, this first chapter outlines the attitudes of British employees towards a number of common workplace practices, designed to act as a barometer of the ethical sensitivity of employees in Britain. It also asks an additional question of managers in British organisations as to their attitudes towards ‘petty fiddling’.

Employee attitudes to travel expenses

As in previous years, the ‘ice-breaker’ question related to an ethical dilemma involving claiming travel expenses (Q1). This question was used to test respondent’s sensitivity to ethical issues.

**Figure 1  Attitudes towards claiming expenses (2005-2015 comparison)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>A. Taken the blank receipt, claiming £7.50</th>
<th>B. Accepted the receipt for £6</th>
<th>C. Taken public transport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q1** Jim takes a taxi to a business meeting. At the end of the cab journey – which costs £6 including tip – the cab driver offers Jim a receipt for £6 or a blank receipt. Jim accepts the blank receipt, fills it in for £7.50 and claims it on expenses. Which of the following reflects your view of Jim’s conduct?

A. It’s acceptable to take the blank receipt and fill it in for £7.50 – it’s only £1.50 and everyone does it

B. Jim should have accepted the receipt for £6 and claimed that amount

C. Jim should have taken public transport and saved his employer the money

The majority of British employees (84%) selected the ‘most ethical’ response, suggesting that Jim should have taken the receipt for the correct amount and only claimed for that amount. This is a significant increase over previous versions of the survey – 6% up on the 2012 survey.

Employee attitudes to ethics in the workplace

The second question asked respondents to pass judgement on whether or not they thought nine specific practices were acceptable (Q2). This question was designed to test further the ethical sensitivity of employees in Great Britain.

**Figure 2** Acceptability of common workplace practices (2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charging personal entertainment to expenses</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor fiddling of travel expenses</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using company petrol for personal mileage</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a ‘sicky’</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favouring family or friends when awarding contracts or recruiting</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posting personal mail from work (e.g. letters or parcels)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking pencils and pens from work</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the internet for personal use during work hours</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making personal phone calls from work</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, British employees have a negative opinion of each of the practices, with more than half saying that they disagreed with each of the statements. However, a significant proportion consider some actions, especially those relating to conducting personal activities during work hours, to be acceptable.

Abuse of expenses, in the form of claiming personal entertainment, minor fiddling of travel expenses and using company petrol for personal mileage, are found to be the most unacceptable practices.
The attitude of British employees to some of these practices has changed substantially over the history of this survey.

**Figure 3** Changing attitudes toward common workplace practices over time  (2008-2015 comparison: percentage saying acceptable)

Since 2008, using the internet for personal use, favouring family or friends and charging personal entertainment to expenses are all now more acceptable.

Since 2008, using the internet for personal use, favouring family or friends and charging personal entertainment to expenses have all increased in their level of acceptability amongst British employees. Whereas, making personal phone calls, taking pens and pencils, posting personal mail and using company petrol for personal mileage are now considered to be less acceptable.

When sub-groups of the employee population are considered, attitudes to most of these practices are relatively consistent. However, younger employees are more lenient in their attitude towards some of these practices (four of nine).
Attitudes of managers to ‘petty fiddling’

The role of managers at all levels is critical to the process of embedding ethics throughout any organisation. Line managers have an essential role in communicating ethics messages and acting as role models. Much is written about ‘tone from the top’, but the ‘tone in the middle’ is as important. This requires organisations to go beyond mere compliance with the requirements placed on them by legislation such as the UK Bribery Act, which appoints responsibility only with top management of the organisation as its legal representatives.

To help ensure that the organisation is living up to its values, some organisations explicitly place additional requirements on those in positions of management responsibility. This is most commonly seen in codes of ethics (or equivalent documents). For example, the expectations put on managers by BAE Systems are shown in Box 1.

**Box 1 Company commitment – BAE Systems**

“The Company commits that its leaders, managers and supervisors will:

- act with integrity, serving as role models for the high standards of conduct expected throughout the Company
- promote ethical conduct, both within the Company and in the markets in which we operate
- provide training and other resources so that employees are equipped to deal with ethical issues
- make sure this Code is provided to, explained to and understood by employees they manage and supervise
- foster an open work environment in which employees are encouraged to raise questions or concerns without fear of retaliation or retribution
- take action to address concerns of ethical misconduct.”

46% of the participants in this survey identified themselves as having day-to-day management responsibility. From responses to the previous question (Q2), managers are observed to have a slightly stricter attitude towards the workplace practices listed, with fewer managers finding a number of the statements (four of nine) to be acceptable than non-managers.

To gauge where British managers ‘draw the line’ when it comes to certain unethical practices in the workplace, this group of respondents were also asked an additional question where they were requested to say whether or not they agreed with six statements related to ‘petty fiddling’ (Q10).
More than half of all managers disagree with each of these statements, suggesting that managers generally agree that petty fiddling of any kind is unacceptable. There is, however, considerable variation in their attitudes towards these statements. Whilst the majority (84%) disagree that it is acceptable to artificially increase profits in the books as long as no money is stolen, only approximately half (52%) disagree that petty fiddling is inevitable.

Views on whether there is a ‘difference between fraud and a bit of expenses fiddling’ is the only issue for which attitudes have changed on this topic over the history of the survey. In 2015, British managers are more likely than in previous surveys to disagree with this statement.

There are no notable differences between sub-groups of the management population.
Experience of Ethics at Work

The previous section assessed employee and management attitudes to a variety of ethical issues. However, employee intentions are not always necessarily matched by their actions when it comes to dealing with ethical issues in the workplace.

This chapter reports on employee experiences of ethics at work, giving insights into employees’ actual behaviour, as opposed to intentions, when confronted with ethical issues in their day-to-day working lives.

Honesty in the workplace

The IBE defines business ethics as ‘the application of ethical values to business behaviour’. One such ethical value is honesty. Honesty is a trait which is valued by organisations, and is often a stated core value. In practice, it is also instantly recognisable. As such, it can be used as a proxy for business ethics or business integrity.

Respondents to the survey were asked for their perception of how frequently honesty is practised in their organisation’s daily operations (Q3).

Figure 5 Employee views of how frequently honesty is practised? (2015)

Consistent with the findings of previous surveys, around four-fifths of British employees (81%) think that honesty is practised always or frequently in their organisation.

The proportion who say that honesty is practised always or frequently in their organisation rises to a peak of 90% amongst employees in organisations with the ‘most supportive’ organisational cultures.

Women (87%) are more likely than men (78%) to say that honesty is practised always or frequently in their organisation’s daily operations.

Younger employees (aged 16-34) (16%) are more likely than mid-career employees (aged 35-54) (8%) to say that honesty is only practised occasionally.

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According to Forging Values, Integrity (ethics/honesty) is one of the 17 common shared values of Fortune 500 companies - http://forgingvalues.com/17-common-values/

In a 2012 ICAEW report – Real Integrity: practical solutions for organisations seeking to promote and encourage integrity, attempts to define business integrity were frequently grounded in the theme of honesty.

As defined in fn 18.

A response rate of 92% was recorded amongst employees in the third sector, but this was from only 10 respondents.
There are also a number of statistically significant differences in opinions between sub-groups of the employee population. Women are more likely to say that honesty is practised always/frequently than men, and younger employees are more likely to say that honesty is only practised occasionally than mid-career employees.

**Awareness of misconduct**

Respondents were asked about their awareness of actual misconduct (defined as behaviour by their employer or colleagues, which they thought violated either the law or the organisation’s ethical standards) over the previous year (Q4a).

**Figure 6 Employee awareness of misconduct (2015)**

A fifth of British employees said that they had been aware of misconduct during the past year. This level of awareness of misconduct has been consistent since this question was first asked in 2005. It is also relatively consistent amongst sub-groups of the employee population. However, more than half of employees in organisations with ‘unsupportive’ ethical cultures (57%) say that they have been aware of misconduct.

**Predominant types of misconduct**

Those British employees who said that they were aware of misconduct were also asked details about the types of misconduct of which they were aware (Q4b) 10. These respondents indicated that, on average, they were aware of approximately 2.5 types of misconduct each.

---

10 Participants were asked to select responses from a list of commonly observed types of misconduct. They were not limited in the number of options they could select, and an ‘other (please specify)’ option was also given.
The three most commonly reported types of misconduct were revealed to be: (1) people treated inappropriately, unethically or unfairly, (2) bullying/harassment, and (3) safety violations.

Older employees (aged 55+) and ‘senior managers’ (those with 11 or more direct reports) were the only exceptions to the observation that the unethical treatment of people was the most reported type of misconduct. For these two sub-groups, bullying/harassment was the type of misconduct of which they were most frequently aware.

**The impact of being aware of misconduct**

The responses of those who said that they had been aware of misconduct were compared with the overall responses. The findings reveal that British employees who have been aware of misconduct are:

- more likely to say that honesty is practised rarely in their organisation
- less likely to agree with each of the indicators of a positive ethical culture in question 6, suggesting they have a less favourable perception of the culture of their organisation
- more likely to have felt pressured to compromise their organisation’s ethical standards.
Speaking up

Most large global companies now provide mechanisms for their employees to raise, or speak up about, their concerns relating to misconduct in their workplace. According to separate IBE research conducted in 2013, having a speak up line (or whistleblowing line) is considered to be one of the main elements of a company ethics programme by more than four-fifths (86%) of FTSE350 respondent companies. Speak up lines are also considered to be an element of good governance, and can act as an early warning system for an organisation seeking to understand the issues which are being faced by its employees.

Respondents to this survey who said that they had been aware of misconduct were also asked whether they spoke up about their concerns (Q4c).

Figure 8  Employees raising concerns about misconduct (2015)

Similar to previous years, while around half of employees raised their concerns with management, another appropriate person, or through any other mechanism, just under half chose not to address the situation.

Reasons for not speaking up

Those respondents who said they had not raised their concerns about misconduct were asked an additional question to discover what they considered are the barriers to speaking up (Q4e).

The most prominent reasons given why British employees did not raise their concerns of misconduct in 2015 are: (1) feeling that it may jeopardise their job, (2) not believing that corrective action would be taken, and (3) thinking that they would be seen as a troublemaker by management. No respondents said that they did not know who to contact.

12 IBE Briefing (No 36) Speak Up. Available for free download from the IBE website.
13 Participants were asked to select responses from a list of commonly cited reasons for not raising concerns about misconduct. They were not limited in the number of options they could select, and an ‘other (please specify)’ and a ‘don’t know’ option were also given.
There were, however, substantial variations between sub-groups of employees, and not one sub-group reported the reasons they did not raise their concerns in the same order as the overall findings. Feeling that doing so might jeopardise their job was the most prominent issue for most sub-groups, with the exceptions of older employees and those working in the public sector. For each of these groups the belief that corrective action would not be taken was the most commonly reported reason for not raising their concerns.

There were notable differences in the top three reasons for not speaking up between employees in the private and public sectors (shown in Table 1).

**Table 1** Reasons why concerns were not raised: differences between public and private sector employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Private sector</th>
<th>Public sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt I might jeopardise my job</td>
<td>(29%)</td>
<td>I did not believe corrective action would be taken (51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt it was none of my business</td>
<td>(19%)</td>
<td>I felt I might jeopardise my job (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It had already been reported/dealt with</td>
<td>(16%)</td>
<td>I felt I would be seen as a troublemaker by management (30%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Satisfaction with the outcome of speaking up

Those respondents who said they did speak up were asked about their experience and whether they were satisfied with the outcome (Q4d).

**Figure 10** Employee satisfaction with the outcome of speaking up
(2012-2015 comparison)

In stark contrast to when this question was first asked in 2012, the majority of respondents are now not satisfied with the outcome when they raise their concerns of misconduct. This finding reinforces the prominence with which the belief that no corrective action would be taken is found to be a barrier to British employees raising their concerns of misconduct. This appears especially to be the case for women, younger employees, and employees in organisations with an unsupportive ethical culture where 71%, 79% and 97% respectively said that they were not satisfied with the outcome.

Conversely, nearly three-quarters of British employees in organisations with the most supportive ethical cultures (74%) said that they were satisfied with the outcome.

**Pressure to compromise organisational standards**

As in previous editions of the survey, all respondents were asked whether they had felt pressured to compromise their organisation’s standards of ethical conduct (Q7a).

As before, less than one in ten employees (8%) have felt pressured to compromise their organisation’s standards of ethical conduct in 2015. This does, however, rise to almost a third of employees in organisations with unsupportive ethical cultures (32%).

---

**Satisfaction with the outcome of raising a concern has declined by almost half**

**Figure 10** Employee satisfaction with the outcome of speaking up
(2012-2015 comparison)

**Were you satisfied with the outcome?**
base (2012, 2015) = 63, 73 All British full-time workers raising concerns of unethical conduct (caution small base size)
Figure 11  Proportion who have felt pressure to compromise ethical standards (2015)

Over the history of the survey there has also been a significant increase in the number of British employees who said they have not felt pressured to compromise their organisation’s standards of ethical conduct, rising from 85% in 2008 to 92% in 2015.  

This finding contrasts somewhat with similar research conducted by the Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA, 2015), which showed that, between 2012 and 2015, the proportion of professional management accountants in the UK who said that they had felt pressure from colleagues or managers to compromise their organisation’s standards of ethical business conduct rose from 18% to 30%. This suggests that pressure to compromise organisational standards can be more prominent in certain professions.

Predominant sources of pressure

The small proportion who said that they had felt pressure to compromise their organisation’s ethical standards were asked for the details of the types of pressures they had been aware of (Q7b).

The three predominant pressures faced by British employees in 2015 are:  (1) time pressures, (2=) following the boss’s orders, and being under-resourced.

---

14 In 2015 the question wording changed slightly from 2008 and 2012 when the question was: “Have you felt pressured to compromise your organisation’s standards of ethical conduct?” In 2008 there were 791 responses to this question.

15 A total of 2,498 responses were collected among CGMA designation holders and CIMA students working in business globally. Of these, 9% from based in the UK (223 responses), Managing Responsible Business 2015 Edition (CGMA, 2015).

16 Participants were asked to select a maximum of three responses from a list of common pressures to compromise organisational ethical standards. An ‘other (please specify)’ and a ‘don’t know’ option were also given.
Which, if any, of the following made you feel pressured?

- I felt time pressure
- I was following my boss’s orders
- We were under-resourced
- I had to meet unrealistic business objectives/deadlines
- I was being asked to take shortcuts
- There were financial/budgeting pressures at the company
- I felt peer pressure to be a team player
- I wanted to help the organisation perform better (e.g. against competitors or spending cutbacks)
- I was trying to save my job
- My organisation has an unethical culture

When the pressures are considered by sub-group, again, no sub-groups of employees reported the pressures in the same order as when considered overall. Notable differences are observed between men and women, youngest and mid-career employees, and those in the private and public sectors (as shown in Table 2).

Table 2 Sources of pressure: differences between employee sub-groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I felt time pressure (36%)</td>
<td>I was following my boss’s orders (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>We were under-resourced (30%)</td>
<td>There were financial/budgeting pressures at the company (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I had to meet unrealistic business objectives or deadlines (28%)</td>
<td>We were under-resourced (30%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>16-34</th>
<th>35-54</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I was following my boss’s orders (49%)</td>
<td>We were under-resourced (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I had to meet unrealistic business objectives or deadlines (48%)</td>
<td>There were financial/budgeting pressures at the company (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I felt time pressure (36%)</td>
<td>I felt time pressure (27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2  continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Private Sector</th>
<th>Public Sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I felt time pressure (33%)</td>
<td>I had to meet unrealistic business objectives or deadlines (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I was following my boss’s orders (32%)</td>
<td>We were under-resourced (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>We were under-resourced (27%) I was being asked to take shortcuts (27%)</td>
<td>I felt time pressure (29%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supporting Ethics at Work

This section of the report takes a look at how organisations support ethics at work. Participants were asked about whether their organisation offers support for employees on ethical matters, through four common elements of a formal ethics programme. They were also asked if their organisation provides incentives to encourage ethical behaviour in the workplace, and if so, which types of incentives were used.

Further testing was also done on a number of indicators of ethical culture.

Ethics programmes

British respondents were asked about whether their organisation offers support for employees on ethical matters, through any or all of four elements of a formal ethics programme – a code of ethics (A. written standards of ethical business conduct); a speak up line (B. a means of reporting misconduct confidentially); advice or information helpline (C.); and ethics training (D. training on standards of ethical conduct). Almost two thirds of respondents (64%) indicated that their organisation offers all four of these formal measures of support. Almost all (93%) said that their organisation offered at least one of these, and very few (7%) said that their organisation offered none.

The majority of British employees are aware that their organisations have each of the elements of a formal ethics programme in place, and written standards of ethical business conduct, such as a code of ethics or policy statement on ethics, are the most prevalent.

Figure 13  Employee awareness of elements of formal ethics programme (2015)
The next few questions relate to the level to which your organisation provides information and assistance with regard to acting ethically. Simply answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

A. My organisation has written standards of ethical business conduct that provide guidelines for my job (for example a code of ethics, a policy statement on ethics or guidance on proper business conduct)

B. My organisation provides employees with a means of reporting misconduct confidentially, without giving their name or other information that could easily identify them

C. My organisation offers advice or an information helpline where I can get advice about behaving ethically at work

D. My organisation provides training on standards of ethical conduct

When the sub-groups of the British employee population are considered, differences in levels of awareness are seen between those of different ages, and those in the public and private sectors. Employees in the public sector are more likely than employees in the private sector to say that their organisation offers each of these elements of a formal ethics programme.

Table 3 Public sector employees are more likely to say their organisation offers the elements of a formal ethics programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Public Sector</th>
<th>Private Sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written standards</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A means of reporting misconduct confidentially</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice or information helpline</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training on ethical standards</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conversely, older employees (55+) are less likely to say that their organisation offers written standards, a means of reporting misconduct confidentially or training on ethical standards than mid-career or younger employees.

Table 4  Older employees (aged 55+) are less likely to think their organisation offers elements of a formal ethics programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written standards</th>
<th>Older employees</th>
<th>78%</th>
<th>Mid-career employees</th>
<th>89%</th>
<th>Younger employees</th>
<th>84%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A means of reporting misconduct confidentially</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training on ethical standards</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not a statistically significant difference.

When looked at over the history of the survey, we see a consistent rise in the proportion of organisations that have each of these elements in place, with a significant increase reported for each of the statements between 2012 and 2015.

Figure 14  Changes in employee awareness of elements of a formal ethics programme (2005-2015 comparison)

In 2015, organisations are significantly more likely to provide each element of a formal ethics programme.
The impact of providing formal support for ethics in the workplace

Using the responses to question 5, we are able to assess the impact of providing formal support to employees. Responses to all questions were compared depending on whether respondents indicated that their organisation offered ‘all’, ‘any’ or ‘none’ of these options.

The findings show that, when compared to employees in organisations which offer none of the mechanisms of formal support, British employees who work in organisations which provide all elements of a formal ethics programme, are more likely to:

- say that honesty is practised always in their organisation
- have not been aware of misconduct over the past year
- agree with each of the positive indicators of ethical culture, suggesting they have a more favourable view of their organisation’s culture.

Use of incentives to encourage ethical behaviour in the workplace

Another formal element of support for ethics in the workplace is the provision of incentives. For the first time in 2015, all respondents to the British survey were also asked whether or not their organisation provided incentives to employees to encourage them to live up to the organisation’s ethical standards (Q8a).

Figure 15 Employee awareness of incentives to live up to ethical standards (2015)

![Chart showing employee awareness of incentives to live up to ethical standards]

Only a quarter of organisations (26%) offer incentives to employees to encourage them to live up to their organisation’s ethical standards.

Looking at the findings by sub-group reveals that incentives appear to be significantly more common amongst private sector employees than those in the public sector.

Only a quarter of British employees say their organisation offers incentives (30%) are more likely to say that their organisation offers incentives than those in the public sector (19%).

---

1. In 2012, only managers were asked to respond to this question.
Types of incentive used

Those British respondents who indicated that their organisation does offer incentives to encourage ethical behaviour were also asked for additional information regarding the types of incentives offered (Q8b).

**Figure 16 Prominence of types of incentives** (2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part of our annual appraisal/review</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing bonus payments</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public commendation</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary increases</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amongst British employees, the most commonly utilised incentive is including ethical considerations as part of the annual appraisal/review. The least common is salary increases. Public commendation is used by only a quarter of companies which do offer incentives.

The impact of using incentives to encourage ethical behaviour in the workplace

Using the responses to question 8a, we are able to assess the impact of incentivising ethical practices in the workplace. Responses to all questions were compared depending on whether respondents answered ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to this question.

The findings reveal that, in Britain, providing incentives to employees does not have much of an impact on their attitudes towards ethics at work. However, employees in organisations which provide incentives are more likely to agree with each of the indicators of ethical culture, suggesting that they have a more favourable opinion of the ethical culture of their organisation.

**Indicators of an ethical culture**

Respondents to the British survey were also asked about their opinion on a number of statements related to practices which can be considered as indicators of an ethical culture (Q6). The statements can be categorised into the four areas of:

- **management behaviour** (A. My manager sets a good example, C. My manager rewards good results even if they are achieved using practices that are ethically questionable, and D. My manager supports me in following my organisation's standards of ethical behaviour)
• communication of ethical standards (B. My manager explains the importance of honesty and ethics in the work we do, and H. Issues of right and wrong are discussed in staff meetings)

• responsible business conduct (F. My organisation acts responsibly in all its business dealings, and G. My organisation lives up to its stated policy of social responsibility), and

• enforcement of ethical standards (E. My organisation disciplines employees who violate its ethical standards).

Using respondent answers to each of these statements, we are able to identify whether respondents consider there to be either a supportive or unsupportive organisational culture in their place of work.

Of the 674 respondents, almost half (45%) work in organisations with the ‘most supportive’ ethical cultures, two-thirds (66%) work in organisations with ‘fairly supportive’ ethical cultures, and less than one in ten (9%) work in organisations with ‘unsupportive’ ethical cultures.

Management behaviour

**Figure 17 Perceptions of management behaviour** (2015)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

A. Overall, my line manager sets a good example of ethical business behaviour

C. My line manager rewards employees who get good results, even if they use practices that are ethically questionable

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18 Organisations with the ‘most supportive’ ethical cultures are defined as those in which respondents answered either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘tend to agree’ to each of these statements (excluding Statement C which is framed in the negative). Organisations with ‘fairly supportive’ ethical cultures are those in which respondents agreed with five or more statements (excluding Statement C). Organisations with ‘unsupportive’ ethical cultures are those in which respondents answered ‘tend to disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ to three or more statements (excluding Statement C).
Generally, British employees consider their line manager to be supportive of ethical behaviour, with approximately seven in ten agreeing that their manager sets a good example and supports them in following their organisation’s standards of ethical behaviour. However, in an apparent contradiction, more than a third (36%) also agree that their line manager rewards employees who get good results, even if they use practices that are ethically questionable.

This would seem to suggest that in the view of British employees there is a gap between what managers say and what they do. This is explored in more detail in the Main Findings and Themes report.

Communication of ethical standards

More than two-thirds of British employees say ethics is communicated well in their organisation.
Perceptions of responsible business conduct amongst British employees is high, with more than three-quarters agreeing that their organisation acts responsibly in all its business dealings and that it lives up to its stated policy of social responsibility.

**Enforcement of ethical standards**

Finally, almost three-quarters of British employees also agree their organisation acts on ethical lapses by disciplining employees who violate ethical standards.

Opinions on most of these indicators of ethical culture have generally remained consistent over the history of this survey. However, agreement with three of these statements has increased over time. These are: my line manager explains the importance of honesty and ethics in the work we do; my manager rewards employees who get good results, even if they use practices that are ethically questionable; and issues of right and wrong are discussed in staff meetings (see Figure 21).
Figure 21 Changes in perception of indicators of an ethical culture (2008-2015 comparison)

The rate of agreement that line managers explain the importance of honesty and ethics, and that they reward employees who get good results even if they use practices that are ethically questionable, both rose significantly between 2012 and 2015. For issues of right and wrong being discussed in team meetings, the significant increase was between the 2008 and 2012 versions of the survey, and the 2015 results are consistent with the 2012 ones.

The ten percentage point rise in the proportion of managers who apparently turn a blind eye to ethically questionable behaviour if it means good results are achieved, is somewhat inconsistent with the increased proportion who also say that their line manager explains the importance of honesty and ethics in the work they do.

The impact of working for an organisation with a supportive ethical culture

Using the responses to question 6, we are able to assess the impact of working for a supportive employer. Responses to all questions were compared depending on whether respondents indicated that their organisation was the ‘most supportive’, ‘fairly supportive’ or ‘unsupportive’.

The findings show that British employees who work in organisations with the most supportive ethical cultures are:

- more likely to say that honesty is practised always in their organisation
- less likely to have been aware of misconduct over the past year
- less likely to have felt pressured to compromise their organisation’s ethical standards.
Summary and Conclusion

This fourth IBE British Ethics at Work report has explored the attitudes and perceptions of British employees of ethical standards and behaviours in their workplace. The results in this report provide insight into the state of business ethics in British organisations in 2015. It has also shown how the view of British employees towards ethics in the workplace has shifted over time.

The findings show that between 2012 and 2015 there has not been a significant shift in the experiences of British employees of ethics at work:

- the practice of honesty is still considered to be prevalent with more than four-fifths of employees saying that honesty is practised always or frequently in their organisation
- a consistent fifth say that they had been aware of misconduct over the previous year
- only half of employees aware of misconduct continue to raise their concerns, and
- only 8% say that they had felt pressured to compromise their organisation’s ethical standards.

However, each of the elements of a formal ethics programme is now more prominent than three years ago:

- almost nine in ten say that their organisation has written standards of ethical business conduct, up from slightly less than three-quarters in 2012
- a similar proportion say their organisation offers a means of reporting misconduct confidentially, up from slightly more than two-thirds in 2012
- nearly three-quarters say their organisation has an advice or information helpline, up from approximately six in ten in 2012
- almost four-fifths say their organisation provides ethics training, up from less than two-thirds in 2012.

In 2015, ethics programmes now appear to be well established, and are becoming more embedded in organisations as their awareness amongst employees has increased substantially.

However, in a reversal of previous findings, fewer than two-fifths (39%) are now satisfied with the outcome when they raise their concerns of misconduct. In 2012, 70% were satisfied. This is consistent with the finding that not believing corrective action would be taken was the second most prominent barrier to employees raising concerns. The finding that almost three-quarters of employees in organisations with the most supportive ethical cultures said that they were satisfied with the outcome when they spoke up, does however suggest that individual organisations have a degree of control over this.

There is also evidence to suggest the benefits of formally supporting employees to do the right thing. Organisations which take ethics seriously by providing support to employees through formal ethics programmes and/or a supportive ethical culture experience:

- honesty more frequently in their day-to-day operations,
- misconduct less frequently, and
- less pressure on employees to compromise their standards of ethical conduct.
Appendix 1
Survey Questionnaire

Q1. Jim takes a taxi to a business meeting. At the end of the cab journey – which costs £6 including tip – the cab driver offers Jim a receipt for £6 or a blank receipt. Jim accepts the blank receipt, fills it in for £7.50 and claims it on expenses. Which of the following reflects your view of Jim’s conduct?

• It’s acceptable to take the blank receipt and fill it in for £7.50 – it’s only £1.50 and everyone does it
• Jim should have accepted the receipt for £6 and claimed that amount
• Jim should have taken public transport and saved his employer the money
• No opinion

Q2. I am going to read out some things which have happened in workplaces. In which category would you personally place each one?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Totally acceptable</th>
<th>Fairly acceptable</th>
<th>Not very acceptable</th>
<th>Totally unacceptable</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Taking pencils and pens from work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Posting personal mail from work (e.g. letters or parcels)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Making personal phone calls from work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Using the internet for personal use during work hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Using company petrol for personal mileage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Charging personal entertainment to expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Taking a ‘sicky’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Minor fiddling of travel expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Favouring family or friends when awarding contracts or recruiting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q3. In your organisation’s daily operations, would you say that honesty is practised...?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q4a. During the past year at work, have you been aware of any conduct by your employer or colleagues that you thought violated either the law or your organisation’s ethical standards?

Yes – go to Q4b  No – go to Q5  Don’t know – go to Q5

Q4b. [ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED ‘YES’ TO Q4a] Which, if any, of the following types of misconduct were you aware of? Tick all that apply.

READ OUT
A. Abusive behaviour
B. Misreporting hours worked
C. Safety violations
D. Discrimination (Please specify)
E. Stealing
F. Improper hiring practices (e.g. favouring family or friends)
G. Fraud
H. Bullying/harassment
I. People treated inappropriately/unethically/unfairly
J. Other (Please write in)
K. Prefer not to say

Q4c. [ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED ‘YES’ TO Q4a] Did you raise any of your concerns with management, another appropriate person, or through any other?

Yes – go to Q4d  No – ask Q4e  Don’t know – go to Q5

Q4d. [ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED ‘YES’ TO Q4c] Were you satisfied with the outcome?

Yes  No  Don’t know

Q4e. [ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED ‘NO’ TO Q4c] Which, if any, of the following influenced your decision not to raise your concerns? [Please select all that apply]

READ OUT
A. I felt it was none of my business
B. I felt I might jeopardise my job
C. I did not believe that corrective action would be taken
D. I felt I might alienate myself from colleagues
E. I felt I would be seen as a troublemaker by management
F. I did not know who to contact
G. I thought that it was common practice
H. I thought it would be raised by someone else
I. I thought that they already knew about it
J. I didn’t think it was a serious issue at the time
K. Other (Please specify)
L. Don’t know/prefer not to say
Q5. The next few questions relate to the level to which your organisation provides information and assistance with regard to acting ethically. Simply answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. My organisation has written standards of ethical business conduct that provide guidelines for my job (for example a code of ethics, a policy statement on ethics or guidance on proper business conduct)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. My organisation provides employees with a means of reporting misconduct confidentially, without giving their name or other information that could easily identify them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. My organisation offers advice or an information helpline where I can get advice about behaving ethically at work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. My organisation provides training on standards of ethical conduct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know/not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Overall, my line manager sets a good example of ethical business behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. My line manager explains the importance of honesty and ethics in the work we do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. My line manager rewards employees who get good results, even if they use practices that are ethically questionable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. My line manager supports me in following my organisation’s standards of ethical behaviour</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. My organisation disciplines employees who violate my organisation’s ethical standards</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. My organisation acts responsibly in all its business dealings (with customers, clients, suppliers, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. My organisation lives up to its stated policy of social responsibility</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Issues of right and wrong are discussed in staff meetings</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q7a. Have you felt pressured to compromise your current organisation’s standards of ethical conduct?

Yes – go to Q7b  
No – go to Q8  
Don’t know/prefer not to say – go to Q8

Q7b. [ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED ‘YES’ TO Q7a] Which, if any, of the following made you feel pressured? Maximum three responses.

A. I had to meet unrealistic business objectives or deadlines  
B. I was following my boss’s orders  
C. I felt peer pressure to be a team player  
D. I wanted to help the organisation perform better (e.g. against competitors or spending cutbacks)  
E. I was trying to save my job  
F. My organisation has an unethical culture  
G. I was being asked to take shortcuts  
H. There were financial / budgeting pressures at the company  
I. We were under-resourced  
J. I felt time pressure  
K. Other (Please specify)  
L. Don’t know/prefer not to say

Q8a. [ASK ALL] Does your organisation provide incentives to employees to encourage them to live up to the organisation’s ethical standards?

Yes – go to Q8b  
No – go to Q9  
Don’t know – go to Q9

Q8b. [ONLY THOSE WHO ANSWERED ‘YES’ IN Q8a] Which, if any, of the following incentives does your organisation provide to encourage employees to live up to its ethical standards? Select all that apply.

A. It is part of our annual appraisal/review  
B. It is taken into account in assessing bonus payments  
C. Salary increases  
D. Public commendation (e.g. employee awards)  
E. Other (Please specify)  
F. Don’t know

Q9. For how many people do you have day-to-day management responsibility?  
This could be in terms of supervision, line management or personal management responsibilities

1-5 – go to Q10  
6-10 – go to Q10  
11-15 – go to Q10  
16-20 – go to Q10  
21+ – go to Q10  
None – end of questionnaire
Q10. [ONLY THOSE WHO INDICATED THEY WERE MANAGERS IN Q9] To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Petty fiddling is inevitable in a modern organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. If we cracked down on every little fiddle we would soon find we had no staff and probably no suppliers as well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. As long as I come in on time and within budget I am not going to worry about a bit of petty fiddling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. There is no real difference between fraud and a bit of expenses fiddling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. It is acceptable to artificially increase profits in the books as long as no money is stolen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

Methodology and Respondent Profile

This report presents the findings of Ipsos MORI’s public research on behalf of the Institute of Business Ethics.

674 face-to-face interviews were conducted with full-time workers in Great Britain as a part of the Ipsos MORI CAPIBUS survey, between 6-23 March 2015.

The results are weighted so as to be representative of the British working population aged 16+.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of British respondents</th>
<th>= 674 full-time workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENDER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Related IBE Publications

IBE publications provide thought leadership and practical guidance to those involved in developing and promoting business ethics, including senior business people and ethics and compliance practitioners.

Some recent publications related to this topic which you might be interested in include:

**Board Briefing: Checking Culture: a new role for internal audit**
**Peter Montagnon**
Can internal audit help a board understand how the company’s culture is embedded in a way that affects behaviour throughout the organisation? What needs to be done differently or better to help ensure that this is the case? This IBE Board Briefing looks at the role of internal audit in advising boards on whether a company is living up to its ethical values. It draws on the practical experience of those actually involved at senior level in six companies representing a wide range of sectors and sizes. In a series of interviews, Audit Committee chairs, heads of internal audit and heads of ethics and compliance talk directly about how they have approached the challenge of checking culture.

**Report: Setting the Tone: ethical business leadership**
**Philippa Foster Back CBE**
Leadership is essential to business ethics, as ethical qualities are essential to good leadership. This report demonstrates that business leaders should consider ethical competence as a core part of their business acumen and provides guidance to those wishing to build a culture of trust and accountability and strengthen the ethical aspirations of their organisation. It includes interviews with business leaders offering practical insights into ethical leadership issues.

**IBE Good Practice Guide: Surveying Staff on Ethical Matters**
**Katherine Bradshaw, Andrea Werner & Nicole Dando**
How can organisations use staff surveys to take their ethical temperature and assess the efficacy of their ethics programmes? This guide outlines the different methods for surveying staff on ethical matters and considers how to maximise the effectiveness of surveys. A list of questions that companies can use to ask their staff about ethical matters is provided, including the IBE’s 12 benchmark staff survey questions.
Other IBE Resources

Investing in Integrity Charter Mark

Is there a way to prove a company’s integrity? The IBE has developed a charter mark in association with Chartered Institute of Securities and Investment (CISI) to help businesses and organisations know if their ethics programme is embedded throughout their organisation.

The Investing in Integrity (IiI) charter mark gives an assurance of trustworthiness to clients, customers, investors and other stakeholders doing business with the organisation. The real strength of the IiI framework is that it tests an organisation’s ethical conduct against its statements of values to ensure those values are properly embedded. It can help them identify whether or not the company is truly living up to its values, from the boardroom to the shop floor.

The testing uses a self assessment management questionnaire and third party audit by IiI partner, GoodCorporation, whose methodology has been adapted for the IiI charter mark.

To find out more visit www.investinginintegrity.org.uk

Say No Toolkit

The IBE Say No Toolkit is a decision making tool to help organisations encourage employees to make the right decision in difficult situations. The Say No Toolkit delivers immediate guidance to employees on a wide range of common business issues, especially those that could lead to accusations of bribery.

Employees tap through a series of questions about the situation they face and the tool will provide the right decision to take: Say No, Say Yes or Ask. The answer also makes it clear why it is important to make that decision so your employees can have the confidence and the knowledge to respond correctly.

Organisations can use the both the IBE Say No Toolkit App and website for free. The App can be downloaded on to any smartphone/tablet.

You can start using it for free now. Simply go to www.saynotoolkit.net

The Say No Toolkit can be customised and branded to suit your organisations needs and detailed procedures. For more information email info@ibe.org.uk or call the IBE office on +44 20 7798 6040.

For details of all IBE publications and resources visit our website www.ibe.org.uk
Employee views are a key indicator of the ethical temperature in today’s organisations.

What do employees think about the ethical business practices of their employer? What do they consider ethical behaviour? And how much support do they get to ‘do the right thing’?

The Institute of Business Ethics has conducted a regular survey into employees’ views of ethics at work in Britain since 2005.

This report presents the data from the research which gives a snapshot of the business ethics landscape in Britain, from the perspective of employees, in 2015. It also comments on a number of changes which have occurred since the research was first conducted, back in 2005.

Individual organisations can use the data provided to benchmark the views of their own employees with regard to levels of awareness of misconduct, willingness to raise concerns and perceptions of ethical culture, and more.