

BEIS Management and Wellbeing Practices Survey 2018
Interviewer Instructions

Background

The Management and Wellbeing Practices Survey (MWPS) is being conducted on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. It is a survey of businesses in Great Britain that aims to collect information about flexible working practices and leave arrangements available to employees.

This work is, in many respects, a continuation of research carried out several years ago through the Workplace Employment Relations Survey (2011) and the Work-Life Balance Survey (2013). Policies around flexible working, in-work support for parents, and collective rights have changed substantially since these surveys were carried out. Hence BEIS have commissioned the MWPS to provide importance evidence on employer practices in these areas.

Sample

The sample for the survey is being drawn from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), the most comprehensive list of businesses in Great Britain.

The survey is workplace based (i.e. at site or location level rather than organisation or enterprises level). We need to speak to the person who is able to answer on behalf of the sampled workplace. For example if we have selected a Tesco store – then we are interested in practices at that specific site – **not the business as a whole**. On that basis you **CANNOT** take referrals to head office.

The sample doesn't contain telephone numbers initially – these have been found using a series of directory searches to ensure we have valid telephone numbers. But this does mean we expect a small percentage of cases to have incorrect numbers / numbers for other premises.

It is essential that we only interview people who are based at or able to answer questions in relation to the sampled premises.

Survey Details

There are essentially two stages to the survey itself:

1. **Screener** – It is unlikely that the person who answers the phone when you call will be the person that we want to speak to. Your initial task will be to find out who is the most senior person **AT THIS SITE** responsible for human resource issues such as recruitment, or general management issues.
2. **Interview** – Once you have established that you are speaking to the correct person, you can proceed with the interview.

Screener Section

The purpose of the screener is to ensure that we have contact details for the correct person within each business before proceeding with an interview. You should try to speak to the relevant person or obtain their contact details so that we can call back another time.

After the introduction, the first thing you will need to do is establish whether you have reached the sampled company:

‘Can I just check, is this [COMPANY NAME FROM SAMPLE]?’

Only if the answer is ‘Yes’ can you proceed. It may be that the company name in our sample isn’t quite right, but the person you speak to recognises it as the same company. For example, in our sample the company name may be listed as ‘Smith and Jones PLC’, but the correct company name is ‘Smith and Jones Inc.’. Provided you are confident that you’ve reached the correct company, it’s fine to go ahead.

The next question asks if the person you speak to initially is based at the sampled workplace:

‘And can I just check that I have reached you at [COMPANY ADDRESS FROM SAMPLE]?’

If the answer is ‘Yes’, you can proceed with the rest of the screener.

If the answer is ‘No’ you should code to one of the relevant options. These cover several different scenarios, and the outcome will differ depending on which scenario applies. The table below shows the list of options and the respective outcomes.

Code	Description	Outcome
No – corporate number / main switchboard / this is the head office	We have reached the correct company, but the person you are speaking to is not based at the sampled workplace.	Collect and record telephone number for the sampled premises
No longer at this address - moved	Respondent used to be based at the sampled address, but the workplace has moved to a new address.	Proceed with screener
Correct business but branch / location has completely closed.	Respondent tells you that the sampled workplace has closed down.	End interview

If you encounter any situations not mentioned, please let us know.

In some larger organisations, you may face resistance when you ask for contact details for the sampled workplace. The most common obstacles you are likely to encounter are as follows:

- * Some large organisations don't publish contact details for sites, so one has to go via head office gatekeepers, and they are often keen to protect the time of their local managers, and to want to answer the survey themselves.
- * Some will argue that there is no-one at the site who knows any of the detail that we want (e.g. numbers going on maternity leave) because those records are all held centrally or the processes are handled by an outsourced HR service.
- * Some will say that the interview needs to be split across different respondents in order to cover everything we want to know.

In these cases, please do your best to explain why we want to speak to someone at the sampled workplace. Someone at another site (e.g. a regional office, a head office or in a shared HR service centre) is likely to mix up the workplace with the broader organisation. In addition, a lot of the questions in the interview ask about specific practice at the workplace (i.e. what actually happens) as opposed to company policies more generally. This is information that respondents are unlikely to have unless they are based at the sampled workplace.

Number of employees

We are only interested in speaking to workplaces with 5 or more employees. This is because the questions we ask are unlikely to be relevant for the smallest companies.

Once you have established that you are speaking to someone at the sampled workplace, you will ask:

‘Can you tell me approximately how many employees are on the payroll at this establishment? Are there at least 5 people on the payroll, or less than 5 people?’

Again, it’s very important that the answer relates to the **sampled workplace only**.

If there are fewer than 5 employees, the workplace will be screened out and you can end the call.

Identifying the correct respondent

The rest of the screener is focussed on identifying the correct respondent for the main interview – this is the most senior person **AT THIS SITE** responsible for human resource issues such as recruitment, or general management issues. If this is not the person you speak to initially, you should try to speak to the relevant person or obtain their contact details.

The respondent’s job title or role within the business will not always be the same. We expect it to differ depending on the size of the business:

- In **larger organisations** there may be a department or manager who is in charge of human resources issues. It will often be someone in this type of role who can take part.
- In **smaller organisations** this will probably be senior manager or the owner of the business.

The most important thing is that they should be able to answer questions about flexible working and leave arrangements for employees at the sampled workplace. Their specific job title will vary and isn’t in itself important and may well vary by industry sector as well as size.

Sending emails

There is an option available in the script to send the respondent an email outlining some basic information about the survey. **It is not essential that the respondent receives an email before taking part.** If they are happy to proceed with an interview without being sent an email, that’s fine. However, you must offer to send an email – this is entirely the respondent’s choice. If they do ask to be sent an email, you should ask whether they would still like to go ahead with the interview there and then. If not, you should arrange a time to call them back.

Main interview

Once you have identified the correct person to speak to, you should attempt to proceed with the main interview.

The questionnaire covers a range of issues around flexible working and leave arrangements, with each module asking about a different type of policy:

- Maternity and Paternity rights
- Shared Parental Leave
- Other parental leave
- Childcare and bereavement leave
- Flexible Working
- Collective Rights

The interview should last around 25 minutes on average. However, the questionnaire includes a fair amount of routing – the length of any given interview will depend on the types of leave arrangements offered by the workplace, and whether or not anyone has used those arrangements.

Accepting estimates

A lot of the questions ask the respondent to tell us how many employees, or what proportion of employees, have done particular things, e.g.:

‘At your workplace, approximately how many, or what percentage of employees are from a non-white ethnic group?’

‘In this workplace, how many employees have taken maternity leave in the past 2 years?’

‘In the past two years, how many men at this workplace have had time off as part of shared parental leave?’

While we obviously want the responses to be as accurate as possible, we accept that respondents will not necessarily have exact figures to hand during the interview. If they are not sure of the exact figure, you should encourage them to give their best estimate.

Dealing with respondent queries

The screener questionnaire includes a number of reassurances and explanations that you can use if respondents have questions. For reference, these are also shown below.

- **Why have I been selected?/ Where did you get my details?**

Your workplace was randomly selected from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), which is compiled by the ONS using Value Added Tax (VAT) and Pay As You Earn (PAYE) data from HMRC.

- **What is the survey about?**

The Department for Business would really like to know what employers think about the flexible working and management arrangements, and what you offer to your employees. Taking part and giving feedback will help them to develop policies in these areas in future.

- **Is the research confidential?**

All of the responses you provide will be confidential. The research findings will not identify you or your business and no personal or commercial information will be passed to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

- **Where can I get more information?**

If you would like any more information about the survey, please contact the researchers at Kantar on 0800 015 2479 or at mwpsurvey@kantarpublish.co.uk. You can also contact Helen Wrathall at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy at helen.wrathall@beis.gov.uk.

Key Definitions

Workplace:

For the purposes of this survey, a workplace is defined as “the activities of a single employer at a single set of premises”.

We are interested in the sampled workplace – for example, a particular Tesco store, not the organisation as a whole.

While this should generally be clear, some cases can be less straightforward. Two examples of cases that might occur are:

Example 1: a hospital site where there may be several different physical buildings located in close proximity where staff work across the sites – these would be considered as a single workplace.

Example 2: John Smith PLC operates from one floor of an office block, where various other companies are also based. The workplace here is just John Smith PLC.

Employee:

An employee is a person who works under a contract of employment in exchange for a wage or salary. The term excludes any freelance workers, agency and casual workers who do not have a contract of employment. Representatives, salesmen and similar employees who may work principally away from the workplace but nonetheless hold a contract of employment should be included if the selected workplace is the one to which they principally report.

There can be uncertainty over whether a person is an employee or not. If the employer has a duty to provide work, controls when and how it is done, supplies the tools or other equipment needed to do it and pays tax and national insurance contributions on the worker's behalf, then it is likely that the worker is an employee. If, on the other hand, the worker can decide whether or not to accept work and how to carry it out, makes his or her own arrangements for holidays or sickness absences, pays his or her own tax and national insurance contributions and is free to do the same type of work for more than one employer at the same time, this points towards the person being self-employed.

Other key terms:

Part-time working hours: A part-time worker is defined as someone who works less than 30 hours per week.

Temporary or fixed-term contract: An employment contract for a short duration that may or may not be for a fixed term. Such workers may be used to cover seasonal or cyclical demand or to meet increased demand that is not expected to be permanent.

Temporary agency staff: Staff that are hired on a temporary basis through an employment agency. They are not directly employed by the workplace at which they work, but by the employment agency itself. The workplace pays the agency a fee for their services, out of which the agency pays the employee their wages. Temporary agency staff will therefore not have a contract of employment with the workplace, nor appear on its payroll.

Zero hours contracts: An employment contract under which the employer does not guarantee to provide the employee with work. The employee has no fixed hours, but instead there is a requirement that the employee will work hours as set by the employer and the employee can be called into work for as few or as many hours as the employer requires. These hours may alter from day to day, or week to week.

Annualised hours: This is where the number of hours staff have to work is calculated over a full year rather than a week or month. This form of employment enables the number of hours worked by the employee in a defined period (day, week, month, quarter) to be varied, subject to an agreed maximum number of standard working hours for the year.

Compressed hours: Where an employee works full-time hours over fewer days in their working week. For example, working a 40 hour week over four days, or working a nine-day fortnight. This is not the same as shift-working.

Flexi-time: The employee chooses when to start and end work (within agreed limits) but works certain 'core hours', e.g. 10am to 4pm every day

Job sharing: This is where someone shares a full-time job with another employee

Shared parental leave: Where an employee and their partner can share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay between them if they are having a baby or adopting a child.

Parental leave: This is where parents can take extra unpaid time off work, beyond annual leave, to spend more time with their child, for example, to settle children into new childcare arrangements, or to take children to medical appointments or to look at new schools.

Consultation: Where management obtain the views of employees, often through their representatives before coming to a decision. This is contrasted with negotiation, which has the added dimension of the decision being arrived at via a process of mutual concessions, bargaining and / or agreements between the parties.

Negotiation: Management and employee representatives enter into negotiations with the aim of arriving at a decision through a process of mutual concessions, bargaining and / or agreements. See also *Consultation*.

Recognised union: Where a number of employees have joined a trade union, a request for recognition may be made to the employer. Recognition normally confers upon the union the right to negotiate (or bargain) pay and conditions on behalf of its members. Negotiation normally takes place under a set of rules, jointly agreed by employers and the unions, which are set out in a collective bargaining agreement

Collective bargaining: The process of negotiation between unions / staff associations and employers in respect of the terms and conditions of employment and the rights and responsibilities of employees. The process necessarily contains elements of negotiation as distinct from consultation.

Collective dispute procedures: Method used to resolve disputes where a group of employees are involved. Organisations may have one or several different procedures covering topics such as pay and conditions, health and safety, and redundancies. The procedures will often include a provision for the dispute to be referred to an outside body or person in the event of the failure to reach an agreement at the workplace.

Disciplinary procedure: A procedure that is intended to govern the steps that should be taken when an employee is to be disciplined. The procedure may also indicate the types of misconduct that can be expected to lead to particular disciplinary sanctions.

Individual grievance procedures: A procedure that outlines the methods to be used to resolve employees' individual grievances. Typical grievances might include dissatisfaction with treatment by a colleague or manager, over pay, or working conditions. Issues will be systematically processed through different stages and levels. For example, the procedure might require the issue to be dealt with, in the first instance, by an employee's immediate supervisor or line manager. If no agreement were reached it may be that the individual concerned will be asked to put their grievance in writing, or meet with a more senior representative of the organisation. The procedure may include reference to mediation.