



2021

GIVE YOUR WORKPLACE A CHECKUP SURVEY REPORT



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Give Your Workplace A Checkup Survey Results 2021

INTRODUCTION

USOLMT conducted a small survey called “Give Your Workplace a Checkup” from January – August 2021. The survey was taken by 40 employees across the United States. While this is only a small snapshot of what is happening in the massage workplace in 2021, we still feel it is important to report the findings and for massage business owners to consider the results. The survey was anonymous. We asked various questions about the massage workplace. This report highlights our key findings.

SUMMARY

We see a lot of complaints on social media from employees and former employees in the massage field about their jobs or previous positions that seem to have pushed them into opening their own independent practices. We know that most employees in the massage field view their part-time or full-time massage jobs as stepping stones to move into private practice. This has not changed with the Covid-19 pandemic, which has only served to move massage therapists into private practice faster.

CONFLICT AT WORK

We asked participants to grade their workplace from Hostile to Excellent. What we found was that 56.41% of employees rated their workplaces good and excellent, while 43.59% rated their workplaces either fair or hostile. Just under half of all massage employees engaged in this survey have experienced conflict at work. Massage workplaces are notorious for toxic company culture. It can happen in the nicest of locations and cause the best employees to pack it up and head out for private practice where they can work alone, without the stresses of a team or management to answer to.

Hostile answers, meaning everyone is out for themselves, there is a lot of conflict, it is stressful to be at work, and someone is always in trouble came out to 15.38%. Fair, meaning there is some conflict at work, but it gets resolved and decisions are fair came to 28.21%, Good, meaning everyone does their job and goes home and that conflict is rare came to 20.51%, and Excellent, meaning everyone is engaged and has fun at work, it is lively and feels good to be there came to 35.9%.

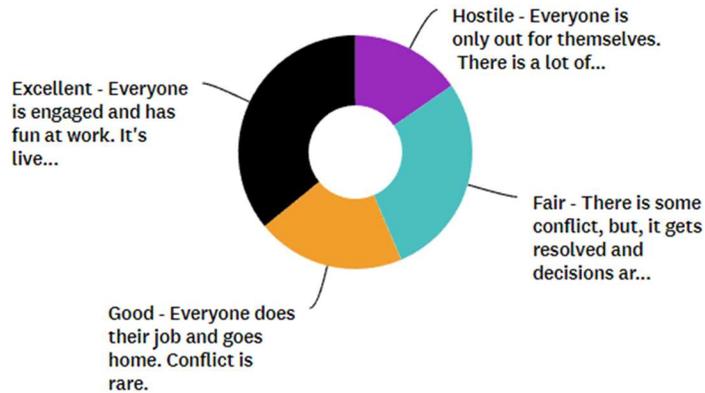


43.59%
FAIR OR HOSTILE
EXPERIENCING CONFLICT AT
WORK

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Would you consider your workplace

Answered: 39 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Hostile - Everyone is only out for themselves. There is a lot of conflict. It's stressful to be there. Someone is always in trouble.	15.38% 6
Fair - There is some conflict, but, it gets resolved and decisions are fair.	28.21% 11
Good - Everyone does their job and goes home. Conflict is rare.	20.51% 8
Excellent - Everyone is engaged and has fun at work. It's lively and it feels good to be there.	35.90% 14
TOTAL	39

While 56.41% of workplaces scoring good or excellent represent most survey results, we can't help but be concerned about the **43.59%** of workplaces scoring low with employees experiencing conflict at work, and the **15.38%** of those employees working in a hostile, stressful environment.

We must consider *why* a massage therapist would choose to work in such an environment, how long they are willing to stay in a hostile working environment, and what the effect of such environments is on their work with clients, their mental health, and overall well-being.



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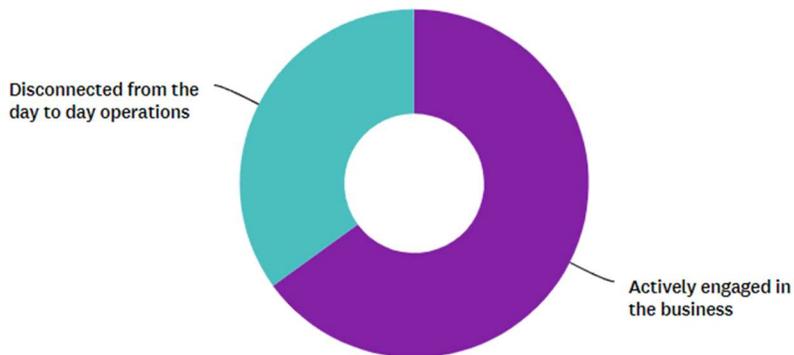
DISENGAGED BUSINESS OWNERS

While we believe that it is the dream of many business owners to eventually disengage from their businesses as much as possible by hiring great staff that can effectively manage the daily operations of their business, freeing themselves to engage more actively in their lifestyle rather than work, we recognize the impact that disengagement with poor management can have on a business.

Participants were asked whether the business owner was actively engaged in the business or disconnected from day-to-day operations. Results show that while 65% of business owners were engaged in the day-to-day operations of their businesses, 35% were disconnected from the business, including their staff and employees. In these operations, staff relies on a good relationship with their manager.

Would you consider the owner of your workplace

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Actively engaged in the business	65.00%	26
Disconnected from the day to day operations	35.00%	14
TOTAL		40



35%
DISENGAGED
BUSINESS OWNERS

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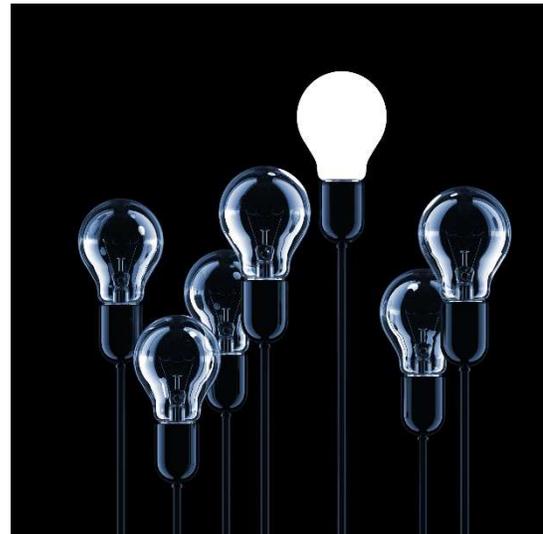
POOR MANAGEMENT

Survey respondents were asked to grade their manager on a scale from excellent to terrible.

They told us that 61.54 % of them believe that their manager needs improvement.

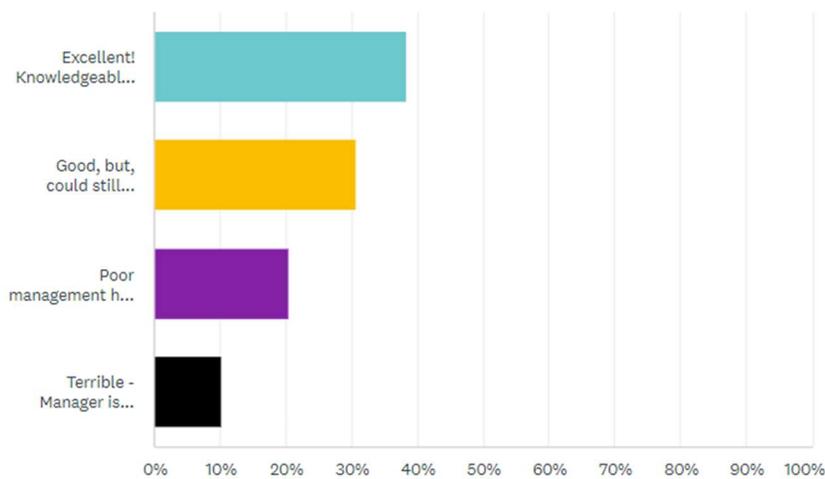
Of that total, 30.77% said that their manager had contributed to problems at work and worse.

Businesses left at the hands of poor management often see marked declines in employee performance and satisfaction.



Would you consider your manager

Answered: 39 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent! Knowledgeable, Personable, and Professional.	38.46%	15
Good, but, could still improve.	30.77%	12
Poor management has contributed to problems at work.	20.51%	8
Terrible - Manager is incompetent, unreliable, and unprofessional.	10.26%	4
TOTAL		39

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LAISSEZ FAIRE LEADERSHIP

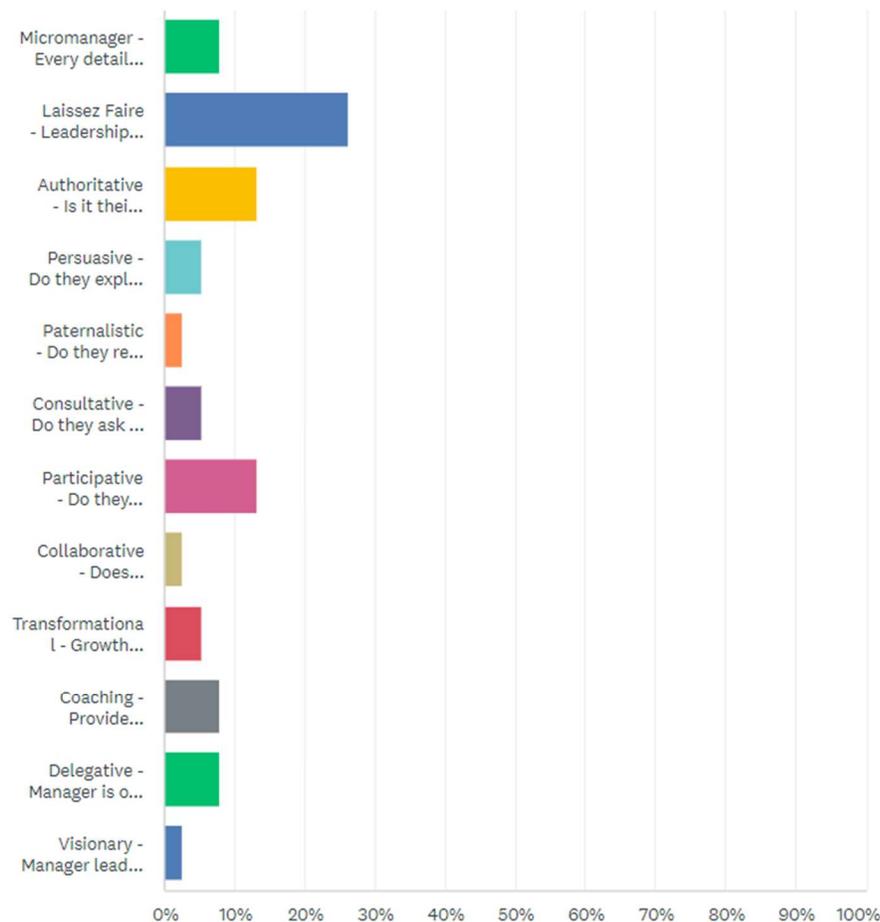
Laissez Faire is defined as a policy or attitude of letting things take their own course without interfering. In this leadership style, employees are given the freedom and trust to do their jobs with support and resources from management.

The style is most appropriate when your team is composed of highly talented and experienced individuals who are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions while being offered solid support from management. When this happens, the team feels valued and stays longer in most cases.

When this leadership style fails, it places responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the employee for all shortcomings, lowers productivity, reduces accountability, and causes employees to feel they are not supported.

What is your manager's style?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 2



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LACK OF VISION AND COLLABORATION

The answers to the management style questions above were all over the map. What stood out most to us was that visionary and collaborative management styles are lacking in the massage workplace.

These styles are extremely important in a massage therapy environment. Visionary leadership can connect the team to the company's goals and vision while motivating them to carry it out for their own benefit and the benefit of the company, while Collaborative leadership leads to a feeling of involvement and participation in the direction of the company.



FRONT DESKS NEED IMPROVEMENT

The front desk team at any massage business is an integral part of the proper functioning of the business. They are responsible for booking providers, telephone sales and upgrades, making sure policies are adhered to and forms are filled out properly, the cleanliness of the location, retail sales (if applicable), membership sales, rebooking, collecting payment, greeting and exiting clients and more.

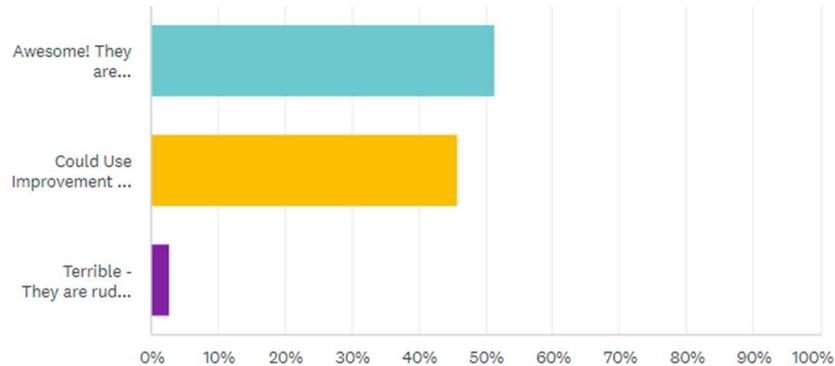
When the front desk functions properly and relationships are formed with providers without favoritism, the business is usually a well-functioning business.

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When the front desk is not functioning properly and experiencing high turnover, problems ensue. **48.65%** of our survey respondents said that their front desk needs improvement.

Would you consider your front desk staff

Answered: 37 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Awesome! They are professional, close sales, get memberships, and clients are happy!	51.35% 19
▼ Could Use Improvement - The miss sales, don't sell products, forget to rebook, and don't ask for upgrades.	45.95% 17
▼ Terrible - They are rude to customers, don't deal with problems effectively, don't understand how to diffuse situations and cause drama.	2.70% 1
TOTAL	37

DISCOURAGEMENT AT WORK

When asked if employees felt empowered at work, our results show that 37.5% of employees felt discouraged rather than empowered. This leads employees to feel disposable and not valued.

It can also lead to distrust in managers, supervisors, business administrators such as the front desk staff and the business owner. A lack of trust in the massage workplace is a recipe for disaster.

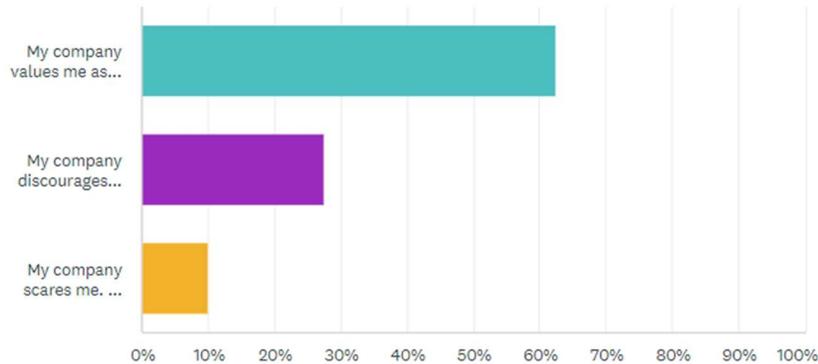
We found that while 62.5% of the employees surveyed do feel valued and empowered at work by their employers, we are concerned about the 27.5% who said that their employer discourages questions and input from their teams.

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We are most concerned about the ten percent of employees who said their company scares them, feeling that they will suffer negative consequences if they try to challenge their boss or change things in the workplace.

Do you feel empowered at work?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ My company values me as an employee and invests in my career growth. They provide a clear path for me to expand my skills, knowledge, and offer paths to promotions.	62.50% 25
▼ My company discourages questions, doesn't want to change things, and basically wants us to shut up and do our jobs without providing any input. I feel used.	27.50% 11
▼ My company scares me. I think I will get in trouble at work and suffer negative consequences if I try to initiate any change at work or a challenge against the boss.	10.00% 4
TOTAL	40

ANTI-LIVING WAGES

Asked about pay, these employees answered that **57.5%** of them were not paid living wages, meaning that either they are **a)** living in poverty, not being paid enough to live on, constantly having to choose which bills to pay and are struggling or **b)** their bills are covered but they do not have savings and can't buy anything new.

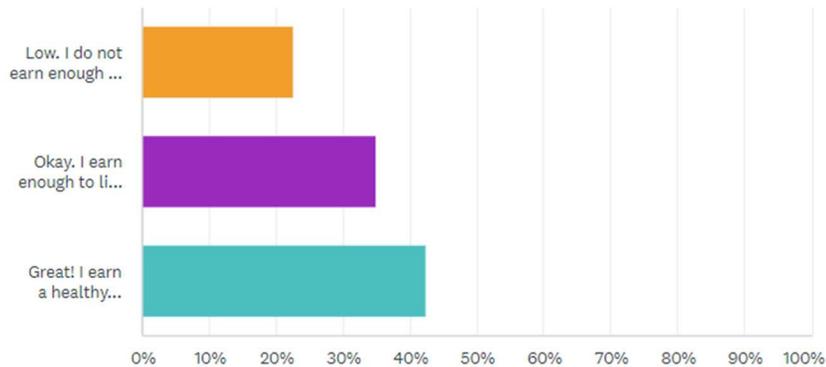
When an employee cannot save for emergencies, buy anything new, and is only making enough money to cover bills, this is not considered a living wage.

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Living wages cover bills and other necessary expenses, allow for a savings cushion, and give employees some freedom and flexibility to afford the lifestyle they choose.

Would you consider your pay

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Low. I do not earn enough to live on. I constantly have to choose which bills to pay. I am struggling.	22.50% 9
▼ Okay. I earn enough to live on, but, I am still not paid well enough to do my job. I don't have savings and can't buy anything new, but, my bills are covered.	35.00% 14
▼ Great! I earn a healthy living, I can rely consistently on my income, and I have savings.	42.50% 17
TOTAL	40

WAGE THEFT

Wage theft is defined as the practice by an employer of not paying the proper wages due to a worker or workers, especially through paying inordinately low salaries or failing to abide by employment law and regulations.

Wage theft can also occur in tipped workplaces where tips make up a large portion of employee pay, which are subject to deductions or cash tips are stolen by other staff members or management directly.

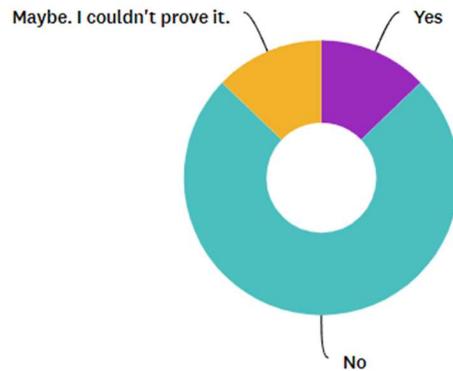
**Withholding pay
is not an
acceptable form of
reprimand.**

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Our respondents said that **25.64%** of them have or may have been subject to wage theft at work.

Have you ever experienced tip or wage theft at work?

Answered: 39 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	12.82% (5)
No	74.36% (29)
Maybe. I couldn't prove it.	12.82% (5)
TOTAL	39

NO BENEFITS



The massage workplaces where our survey respondents spend their time do not offer

them any benefits in

47.5%

of cases.

Massage therapists are subject to a range of health and safety dangers from communicable disease, bloodborne pathogens, product allergens, repetitive motion injuries, muscle strain, long periods of standing which could result in hip, foot and leg pain, varicose veins, and more.

Our survey respondents answered that

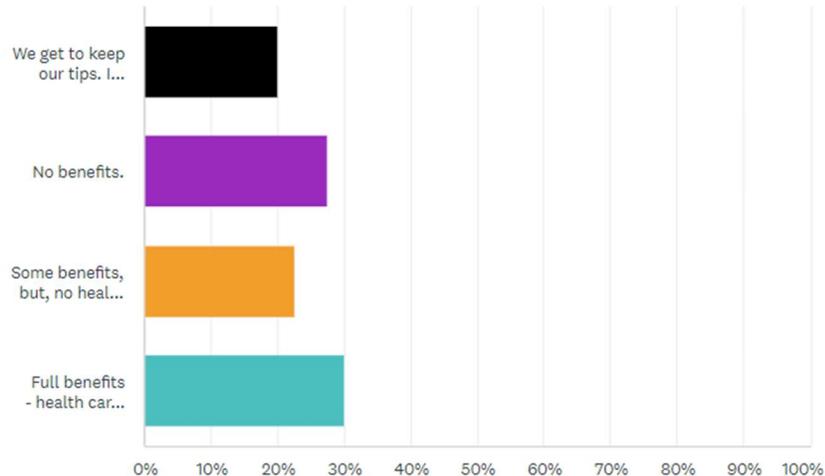
70%

of them had no healthcare benefits available to them from their employers.

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Do you have benefits?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ We get to keep our tips. Is that a benefit?	20.00% 8
▼ No benefits.	27.50% 11
▼ Some benefits, but, no health care.	22.50% 9
▼ Full benefits - health care, dental, vision, PTO, Vacation time, etc.	30.00% 12
TOTAL	40

CONCLUSION

While we are experiencing an unprecedented “labor shortage” and “the great resignation” in 2021, as reported by many news outlets, Business Insider recently reported they expected that businesses would allow for more flexibility in the hiring process, staff having more input on the job, and better working conditions, but said the overall outlook has not changed much.

We believe that all massage business owners must take notice, understand why the massage therapist labor shortage has occurred and take steps to manage the next phase of rehiring and rebuilding their businesses for success in 2022.