

Report July 2006

Traidcraft Staff Survey

Prepared for
Traidcraft, Kingsway, Gateshead NE11 0NE

Contract No: 2656

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

FMR Research was commissioned to undertake a survey with Traidcraft staff in spring 2006. A staff survey has been conducted each year for a number of years internally but managers were keen to undertake an independent process. FMR has an understanding of Traidcraft, a complex mix of plc and charity within one organisation, having conducted a number of research projects for the company in the past five years or so, including UK and overseas supplier/producer stakeholder feedback to inform the social accounts. The company has also undertaken a number of employee surveys with different sizes of organisations in public, private and voluntary sectors.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the staff survey were:

- to gain feedback from staff on Traidcraft as an employer, identifying areas of strength and weakness, in order to further develop and improve the organisation; and
- to form an important element of the social accounting process.

This report first outlines the method followed before highlighting the key findings to emerge from the staff consultation process and making conclusions and recommendations.

2 Method

2.1 Introduction

The process was agreed with Traidcraft and Adrian Henriques, the social accounts auditor, at the end of April and survey issued to staff by Traidcraft in mid-May. The two different elements of primary research are discussed, followed by some comment on the analysis and reporting process.

2.2 Staff survey

It was agreed that a postal self-completion questionnaire was the most appropriate and cost effective way to obtain quantitative staff feedback. The questionnaire was developed in partnership with Traidcraft and Adrian, building on core questions asked in previous years to allow comparability of responses. This was augmented with additional questions and space for staff to make comments. It was important that the questionnaire was kept relatively short to encourage response and it was preceded by a letter from Paul Chandler, Traidcraft's Chief Executive. Paul signed each letter to help reinforce the importance of the survey.

The questionnaire is appended for information. It should be noted that this was printed on A3 paper and folded in half, to make it easy for staff to respond to questions 1 – 19 on the left hand side of the centre page then match up any relevant comments on the right hand side.

The survey was sent by Traidcraft (given Data Protection restrictions which apply to personal details) to each member of staff's home address, to allow them to complete the survey in private, as had been requested in previous years. Reply-paid envelopes were enclosed so all responses were posted directly to FMR. The survey was announced to staff at one of the regular Monday morning briefing sessions and they were encouraged to respond. An email reminder was also issued and this resulted in further responses.

By the middle of June, a total of 86 questionnaires were returned – a response rate of 54%. The breakdown of responses by department (as grouped on the questionnaire to retain anonymity as far as possible) and the total number of staff in each grouping is detailed in the table below. It should be noted that two members of staff did not indicate which department grouping they belonged to. The response rate was 50% in 2004/5 (68 responses).

Figure 1 Response rates by departmental grouping

| Department | Total staff | No of responses | Response rate |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| International Development Dept/Market Access Centre/Policy Unit (incl overseas) | 32 | 21 | 66% |
| Sales & Marketing (incl Admin Team) | 34 | 19 | 56% |
| Operations Team | 71 | 25 | 35% |
| Finance/General Management/Human Resources/IT/Producer Support/Sourcing | 22 | 18 | 82% |
| Total | 159 | 86 (2 did not declare dept) | 54% |

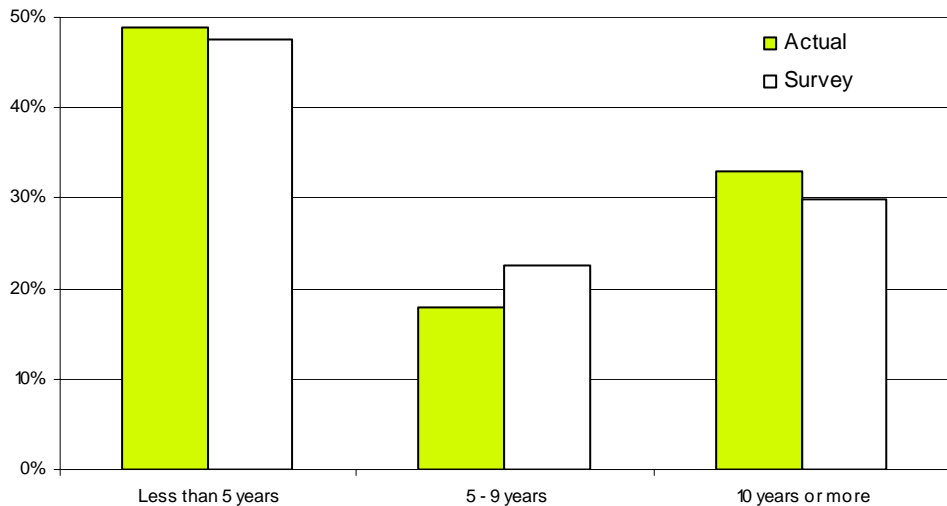
The lower response rate from the Operations Team is marked, at 35%, in comparison to the total response across the organisation of 54% and high of 82% of the Finance, etc., grouping. It is difficult to know exactly why this is the case as there are any number of potential reasons, e.g. staff are happy and do not feel the need to comment, staff feel disenfranchised and do not feel that it will make any difference to

them whether they complete the survey or not, they are suspicious of the motives behind the survey, or they just didn't get around to completing the survey and sending it back in. There may well be different reasons for different members of staff, and potential reasons were sought from the telephone interviews to try to understand this more clearly. Several interviewees considered this to be just one of those things which staff had not got around to but a few felt that this could be due to a lack of trust or clarity over the motives of the survey which may well have deterred completion amongst the Operations Team.

It is important, however, to take the variation in response rates into account when interpreting the findings.

Staff were also asked to state how long they had worked with Traidcraft: less than 5 years, 5 – 9 years or 10 years or more. The breakdown is noted in the table below, with actual length of employment for all staff in addition to the respondent profile. It should be noted when interpreting the data that almost half of respondents have been with Traidcraft for less than five years so they have a shorter period of time to comment upon, but this accurately reflects the recent growth of the organisation and is therefore representative of the wider staff base. Thirty percent of the staff who responded have been employees of Traidcraft for ten years or more.

Figure 2 How long have you been an employee of Traidcraft?



2.3 Depth telephone interviews

The questionnaire also explained that the next stage in the process was a small number of telephone interviews and asked staff members to elect to participate in this. The telephone interviews were designed to gain a deeper understanding of the issues raised in the survey and this worked well. A total of 15 interviews were conducted with staff across different departments of the organisation, with involvement from staff who had been with Traidcraft for different lengths of time.

The discussions were semi-structured, starting with some standard questions which were then augmented depending on the responses made by the employee to the survey and checking out other issues which were emerging from the research. The questionnaire had asked employees when they preferred to be interviewed and what number they preferred to be contacted on for interview to ensure that the discussion was private (most provided home numbers or mobile numbers so they could find a quiet corner at work if they did not have their own office) and employees were reassured that their comments would remain confidential, according to the Market Research Society Code of Conduct, and only reported in an anonymous manner. Given the small scale of the Traidcraft organisation yet diverse roles, we were

conscious that people could be identified from examples given during the course of the discussion and comments made. All interviews were conducted by FMR Director, Nikki Bell, who has worked on all FMR projects for Traidcraft and she asked interviewees to highlight if any particular comments/ways of saying things would identify them in order to ensure that more general comments were made to retain their anonymity. Discussions were not tape-recorded in order to further reassure staff members of confidentiality so notes were taken of each interview.

Approximately two-thirds of respondents indicated their willingness to be interviewed, which allowed a good cross-section of interviews to be conducted. A good split was achieved across the four departmental groups, including offices outwith Kingsway; with very different functions being represented and different levels within the Traidcraft hierarchy; with staff who had been with Traidcraft from just a few months to over ten years.

The topic guide was designed once over half of the questionnaires had been returned in order to respond to, clarify and explore the issues raised more fully with staff. As the discussions developed, so points raised by earlier participants were tested with later ones. All interviews were conducted in June 2006. It was quite challenging to find people at home given the hot weather and timing clash with the World Cup, in addition to difficulties in reaching overseas offices, but this was achieved to schedule.

2.4 Analysis and reporting

All quantitative responses were entered onto SPSS, the industry-standard data processing and statistical package upon receipt. Given the size of the sample and variation between the number and themes of open-ended responses made, it was appropriate to list and code some open-ended questions but not all. The telephone interviews were written up and emerging themes analysed.

This report outlines the key findings of both the quantitative and qualitative stages of the research, which have been reported in an integrated fashion given the role of the qualitative research to 'flesh out' the quantitative data gathered. This also aims to avoid any duplication or confusion.

We would usually include direct, but anonymous, quotes from the research to illustrate points made but have not done so in this instance given the potential for members of staff to be identified from the way they phrase things/language used and the degree of concern expressed by staff around confidentiality. Sentiments are therefore expressed within the body of the report.

3 Key findings

This section details the key findings of the consultation with Traidcraft staff, following the sequence of the questionnaire, supplemented by qualitative comment where appropriate.

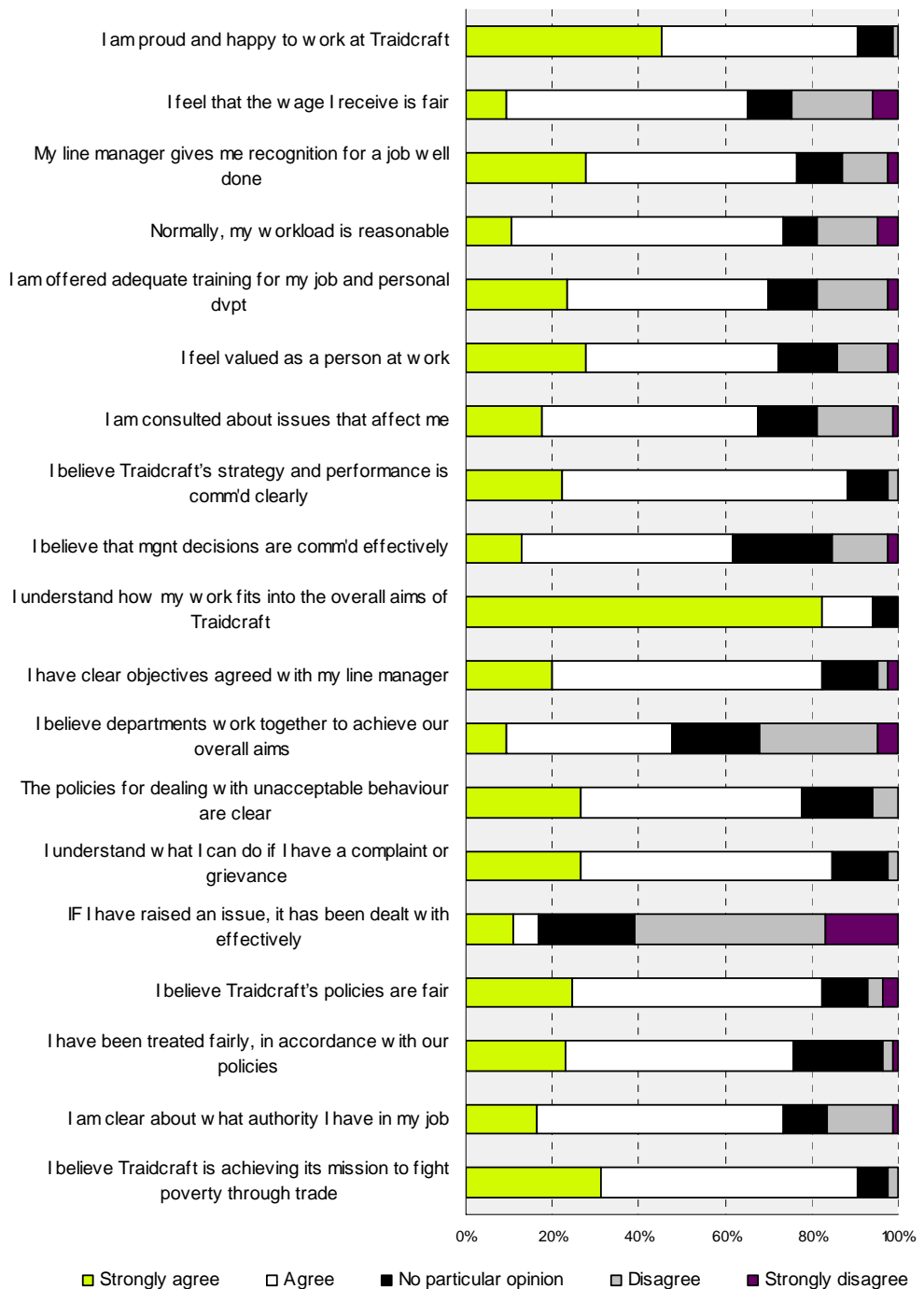
Where numbers do not sum to 100%, this is due to rounding. The total number of respondents was 86, but please note that the base for each question varies as some respondents did not answer every question.

3.1 Overview of agreement/disagreement with statements

3.1.1 2006 responses to statements

The survey first asked staff members to state whether they agreed or disagreed with nineteen different statements about different aspects of working at Traidcraft, on a five point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. An overview of agreement /disagreement to these statements is shown in the figure overleaf. All but two of the statements had a majority of staff who responded to the survey in agreement.

Figure 3 Overview of responses to each statement



These statements will be considered individually in section 3.2 but looking at the positive responses first of all in overview, at least three-quarters of staff strongly agree or agree to the following statements:

- I understand how my work fits into the overall aims of Traidcraft (98%);
- I am proud and happy to work at Traidcraft (90%);
- I believe Traidcraft is achieving its mission to fight poverty through trade (90%);
- I believe Traidcraft's strategy and performance is communicated clearly (88%);

-
- I understand what I can do if I have a complaint or grievance (85%);
 - I have clear objectives agreed with my line manager (82%);
 - I believe Traidcraft's policies are fair (82%);
 - The policies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at work are clear (78%);
 - My line manager gives me recognition for a job well done (77%); and
 - I have been treated fairly, in accordance with our policies (76%).

The balance of responses is more strongly on the 'agree' element of the positive side of the scale, with 'strongly agree' responses representing under 30% of responses to most statements. Exceptions to this were:

- I am proud and happy to work at Traidcraft (45%);
- I understand how my work fits into the overall aims of Traidcraft (33%); and
- I believe Traidcraft is achieving its mission to fight poverty through trade (31%).

It is, of course, extremely important to look closely at the negative ratings given and the following represent areas which require to be considered, as the strongly disagree and agree ratings were given by at least 15% of staff:

- If I have raised an issue, it has been dealt with effectively (61%, this was of 18 respondents who answered this question)
- I believe departments work together to achieve our overall aims (32%);
- I feel that the wage I receive is fair (25%);
- Normally, my workload is reasonable (19%);
- I am offered adequate training for my job and personal development (18%);
- I am consulted about issues that affect me (18%);
- I am clear about what authority I have in my job (15%); and
- I believe that management decisions are communicated effectively (15%).

3.1.2 Trends over time

It is useful to compare results to previous years where there is comparable data (some statements have only been tested in the last year or two) and this comparison is illustrated in the figure below for year 2002/03 through to the current 2005/06 survey (source for previous data: Traidcraft Social Accounts 2004/05). Previous data available shows that numbers 1 to 5 were allocated to each point on the scale from strongly disagree through to strongly agree. Our preference is usually to use a -2 to 2 scale to reflect a neutral midpoint of 0, but we have used 1 to 5 to facilitate comparison.

The results are fairly consistent with the general trend on the positive rather than negative side. Particular improvement is evident in Traidcraft's strategy and performance being perceived to be communicated clearly, staff feeling valued as a person at work, staff feeling consulted about issues which affect them, management decisions being communicated effectively, clear objectives set with line managers and improvement in training (although there was a slight dip since last year the trend is upwards). The most concerning negative trend is that of people who have raised issues feeling that they have been dealt with effectively as this dropped by 0.5 to have a negative rather than neutral average score in 05/06.

Figure 4 Overview of mean scores to each statement by year

| | 05/06 | 04/05 | 03/04 | 02/03 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| I am proud and happy to work at Traidcraft | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 4.2 |
| I feel that the wage I receive is fair | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.3 |
| My line manager gives me recognition for a job well done | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Normally, my workload is reasonable | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| I am offered adequate training for my job and personal development | 3.7 | 3.8 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| I feel valued as a person at work | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 3.3 |
| I am consulted about issues that affect me | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.2 |
| I believe Traidcraft's strategy and performance is communicated clearly | 4.1 | 3.9 | 3.6 | n/a |
| I believe that management decisions are communicated effectively | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.1 | 3.3 |
| I understand how my work fits into the overall aims of Traidcraft | 4.3 | 4.2 | n/a | n/a |
| I have clear objectives agreed with my line manager | 4.0 | 3.8 | n/a | n/a |
| I believe departments work together to achieve our overall aims | 3.2 | 3.1 | n/a | n/a |
| The policies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at work are clear | 4.0 | 4.1 | n/a | n/a |
| I understand what I can do if I have a complaint or grievance | 4.1 | 4.1 | n/a | n/a |
| IF I have raised an issue, it has been dealt with effectively | 2.5 | 3.0 | n/a | n/a |
| I believe Traidcraft's policies are fair | 4.0 | 4.0 | n/a | n/a |
| I have been treated fairly, in accordance with our policies | 3.9 | 3.9 | n/a | n/a |
| I am clear about what authority I have in my job – I know what decisions I can make on my own and when I must consult a manager | 3.7 | 3.8 | 3.5 | n/a |
| I believe Traidcraft is achieving its mission to fight poverty through trade | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.1 |

When the proportion of strongly agree and agree responses for the 2005/06 survey are compared to the survey of 2004/05, fourteen of the nineteen statements have had an increase in the number of positive agreement responses and five have decreased. Variance between the two years is generally less than 10% but the exception to this rule is whether people feel their issue has been dealt with effectively if they have raised it. Less than 17% agreed it was dealt with effectively this year in comparison to 42% last year (the caveat on this is that the numbers are small as only a proportion of respondents have raised issues).

The following sections consider each of these nineteen statements in turn in more detail and then the remainder of the questionnaire. In addition to asking staff whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement, staff were asked whether each issue had got better, worse or stayed the same in the last year. If things had got better or worse they were asked to comment on this. This was obviously optional so some staff who had indicated that things were better or worse did not make any supplementary comments and others who felt things were the same commented too. Each issue is therefore considered fully below in terms of agreement/disagreement, perceived change in the last year and additional comments made on the questionnaires and during the telephone interviews.

3.2 Analysis of responses to statements

Each of the statements are now considered in turn but there are a few general points which should be made first.

- Those who rated Traidcraft overall as an employer in the range 4 – 7 out of ten were generally less positive in their ratings of the individual statements tested, whilst those who rated Traidcraft overall in the range 8 – 10 were more likely to agree strongly and less likely to disagree.

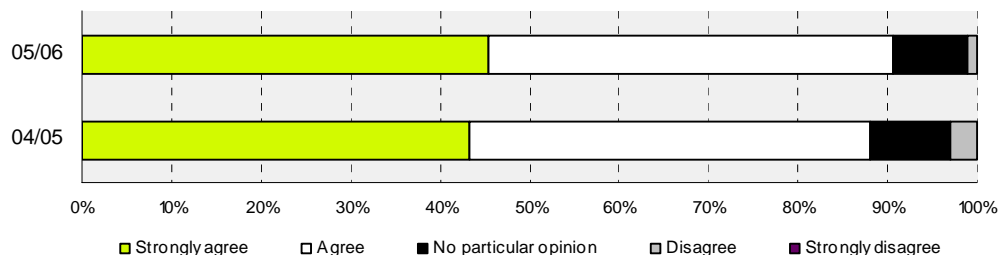
- Members of the Operations Team who responded to the survey were consistently more negative than respondents from other departments. It is hard to say whether they were more likely to respond to the survey because they had lower satisfaction levels or whether their views are representative of the wider Operations Team, however.
- It was noted from the telephone discussions that the midpoint on the scale of 'no particular opinion' was used in the literal sense, where for example staff had not looked at the HR policies and so felt unable to comment, but also where staff felt unable to agree that something was positive (as all the statements were positive) but similarly did not feel sufficiently negative about it to disagree. This is slightly different to having no particular opinion on an issue.
- There was a general pattern to the responses of those who gave a view as to whether something had become better, worse or stayed the same in the last year. Those who had strongly agreed, in particular, or agreed were more likely than the norm to state that things were better; the vast majority of those who gave the response of 'no particular opinion' usually stated that things were static; and those who gave disagree or strongly disagree ratings were more likely to state that things had become worse in the last year.
- For information, we have also provided last year's break-down of responses to illustrate changes in opinion which may not be as evident from the mean responses in the table above.

Rather than repeat these points for each of the nineteen statements, any variations from these general principles are reported.

3.2.1 I am happy and proud to work at Traidcraft

The first statement focused on whether staff felt happy and proud to work at Traidcraft and there was general agreement, with 90% (78 respondents) stating that they agreed or strongly agreed (split 50:50 between the two points on the scale). Only one member of staff disagreed and seven had no particular opinion. Staff in the IDD/MAC/PU grouping were particularly positive in their agreement with this statement and saw it having improved in the past year, as were those who had been employees for less than five years. Twenty-one percent of respondents stated that this had improved in the past year and only 6% noted deterioration.

Figure 5 I am happy and proud to work at Traidcraft

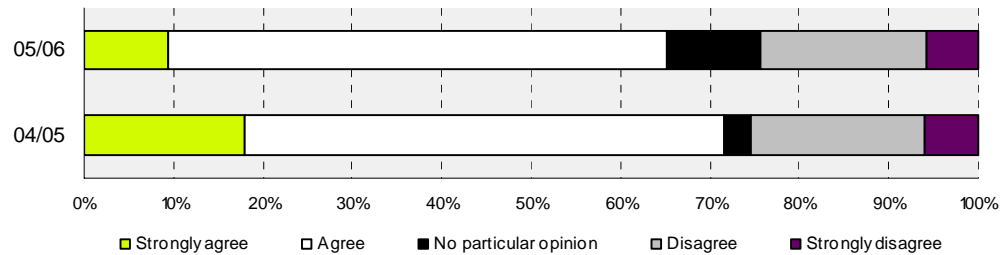


The increasing public awareness of Fair Trade and, alongside this, Traidcraft's raised profile as an organisation played a role in the overall positive trends noted. As newer members of staff have grown to understand the organisation, their views have improved but some of those who have been with Traidcraft for a longer period of time have become less happy with the way things are done within the organisation.

3.2.2 I feel that the wage I receive is fair

Whilst 65% (56 respondents) agreed that the wage they receive is fair, 25% (21 respondents) disagreed that this was the case. This was a particular issue for the Operations Team where two-fifths disagreed, although not exclusively. Pay was perceived to have improved for a quarter of staff but to have got worse in the past year for 19% of staff who gave a view this year. The level agreement dropped from 2004/05, as can be seen from the figure below.

Figure 6 I feel that the wage I receive is fair



There were a number of comments around this issue on the questionnaires and the interviews also discussed this issue in some detail as a result. It is clear that some roles have been regraded and staff have received pay rises accordingly, which is an improvement although not wholly addressing the issues for all. Whilst staff are generally proud and happy to work at Traidcraft, and wages/salaries are not necessarily the main driving factor, there was a view that the organisation should not go too far in taking advantage of the goodwill of staff, for example several members of staff have taken substantial pay cuts in order to work for Traidcraft. This cannot be relied upon and pay was perceived to be a deterrent to recruitment of suitably experienced or qualified staff, which impacts on what the organisation can achieve and the sustainability of this approach in the medium to long terms.

The benchmarking system was perceived negatively by a number of members of staff. Staff members felt that it was difficult to find a job which matches what many staff do, given the breadth and depth of activity undertaken by any one individual. Whilst benchmarking may focus on one element of a role, it was not seen to encompass the 'whole' nor reflect the increased level of responsibility that many staff bear given the full scope of their role. Several staff members were considered to perform specialist or technical roles and this was not always perceived to be recognised in terms of pay or in being valued by others. There was a perceived lack of clarity and suspected inconsistency with the way in which benchmarks are set as a result of this lack of clarity. There was some lack of understanding over how staff could progress beyond the median point on their salary scale.

Whilst some members of staff considered their pay to be fair in relation to others within the organisation, it was perceived to be low in comparison to other organisations. This was perceived to be at odds with the principle of paying producers a fair price for products, with particular impacts on those with children to support and mortgages to pay. There were a couple of comments querying the appropriateness of a bonus scheme.

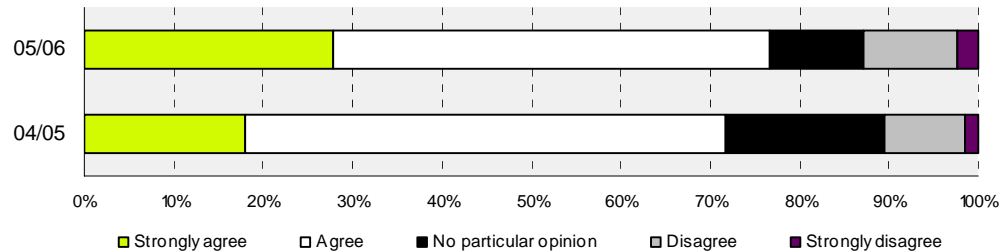
London weighting was not perceived to be applied sufficiently well.

3.2.3 My line manager gives me recognition for a job well done

There was a positive response with regard to recognition for a job well done (77%, 66 respondents). However, 12% of respondents (11 respondents) disagreed with this statement, with particularly negative responses from staff in IDD/MAC/PU and the Operations Team. Staff in Finance/GM/HR/IT/Producer Support/Sourcing were very

positive in contrast. Contrary to the general trend, those who rated Traidcraft overall as an employer in the 4 – 7 range were more likely than the norm to say that this had improved in the last year. The figure below shows improvement on 2004/5 results.

Figure 7 My line manager gives me recognition for a job well done

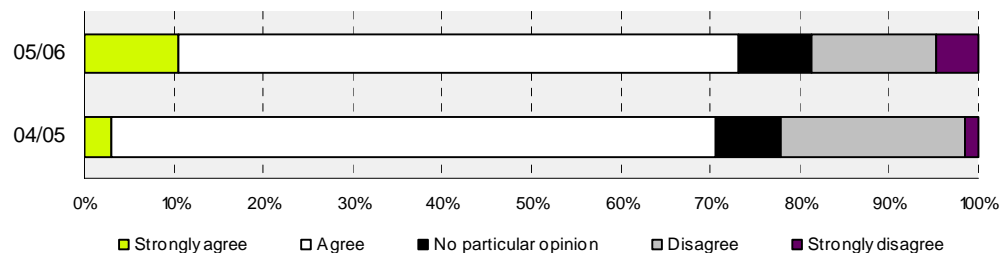


The figure above shows improvement in both the proportion of ‘strongly agree’ responses and total proportion of staff in agreement. Several comments made in the survey and interviews suggest that changes in line management have contributed to this. Where there are negative comments, it appears to be focused on a lack of line management’s understanding of the role performed by the member of staff (with impacts on valuing and rewarding it appropriately) and one person reported receiving less feedback than before. It was suggested that 360 degree feedback should be considered to ensure any issues are out in the open and addressed fully.

3.2.4 Normally, my workload is reasonable

Nearly three-quarters of respondents to the survey agreed that their workload was normally reasonable (73%, 63 respondents). However, a core of 19% (16 respondents) disagreed with this and workload was a particular issue for several of the telephone interviewees. Whilst 16% felt their workload had improved in the past year, although some of those interviewed felt this was partly due to staff not doing things that they would have liked to, and 21% considered their workload to have got heavier in the last year. The positive responses have increased since the question was asked last year.

Figure 8 Normally, my workload is reasonable



Peaks and troughs of workload and generally excessive workload appear to be a particular issue for some personnel in both Sales & Marketing and IDD/MAC/PU and the inflexibility of flexi-time to accommodate this was a particular bug-bear for staff in this situation. The flexi-time system does not currently allow more than 12 hours per day to be logged, despite HR circulating paperwork for staff to sign away their rights to be work no more than 48 hours under the EU Working Time Directive. The message from HR therefore appears to be that people should work longer hours but shouldn’t expect to be remunerated for it. Some staff have worked substantially more than 12 hours per day both in the UK and overseas (when there is sometimes nothing to do in the evening other than work!). Whilst staff are very committed and many would not object to losing a bit of time, there are limits to this and concerns about this apparent support for working long hours without time in lieu. There is also a limit to the number of days which can be carried forward to the next flexitime period but a substantial

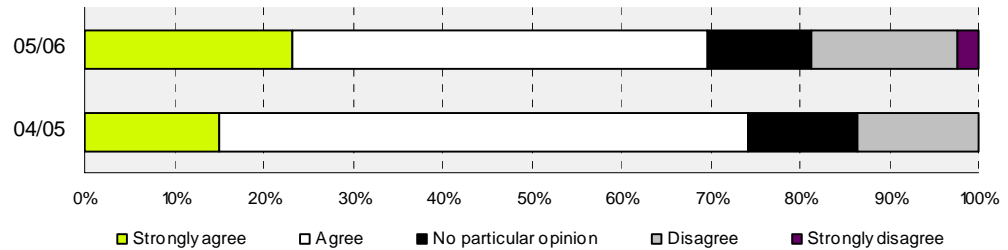
amount of time is often lost during the 'peaks', as it cannot be taken during a quieter period. It is also perceived to be restrictive for part-time workers given the need for an unpaid break to be taken over 6 hours, which makes it difficult for part-time staff to respond to work demands on any one day without having to commit unpaid time to be at work.

Comments and discussions reveal that the increase in activity levels within the organisation has resulted in some roles coming under increasing pressure even though the total workforce has increased. The process by which staff are recruited, which was intimated to require Board approval rather than managers taking the decision, does not help to address workload pressures quickly. The lack of clear career paths/progression within the organisation, given the degree of specialisation evident in particular, was perceived to be a barrier to managers when delegating tasks and also when staff take holidays/are absent, as no one provides/can provide cover for their role. It was suggested that, if resources are restricted to current staffing levels, then perhaps some hard decisions need to be taken in terms of focusing activities more clearly, in order to do a smaller number of things better rather than spreading resources too thinly.

3.2.5 I am offered adequate training for my job and personal development

Seventy percent of respondents agreed that they received adequate training for their job and personal development but 18% (16 respondents) disagreed with this. There was particular disagreement from respondents in the Operations Team and those who had been employees for ten years or more. This was perceived to have improved in the past year by 25% of respondents who gave a view, but to have deteriorated by 13%. The overall proportion of positive responses is slightly lower than that recorded in 2004/5.

Figure 9 I am offered adequate training for my job and personal development



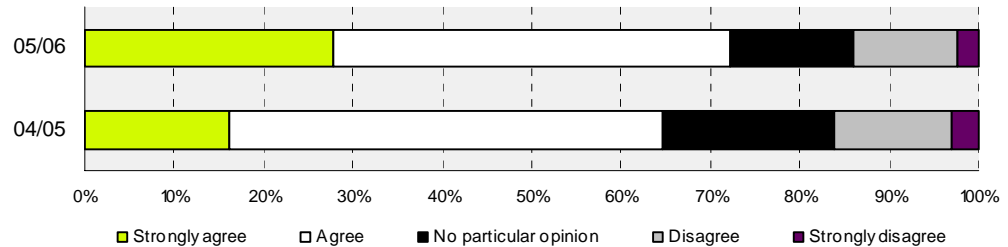
Training was generally seen to be available to staff and PPDR was praised, but there were a number of negative comments around this area. Workload was raised again with regard to training, as several members of staff stated that they have been offered training but find it very difficult to find the time to take it up. A similar comment was made with regard to keeping up to date with keeping up to date with information relevant to the job or emails about HR policies, etc.

Training was not always perceived to be particularly relevant or helpful to people when doing their job and attendance at some sessions was compulsory, which was perceived to be inappropriate in some instances, e.g. where people had already received training or had qualifications in the subject; or where local or external training could be accessed as an alternative to that provided by HR in Gateshead. HR were not perceived to appreciate the very diverse roles and skills base within the organisation, which may require to be addressed in a different manner to the 'one size fits all' approach which is currently perceived to be the case.

3.2.6 I feel valued as a person at work

The majority of respondents (72%, 60 respondents) agreed that they feel valued as a person at work but 18% (16 respondents) did not. This was perceived to have improved in the past year by 23%, stayed the same by 64% and deteriorated by 14%. Reported agreement levels since 2004/5 have improved.

Figure 10 I feel valued as a person at work



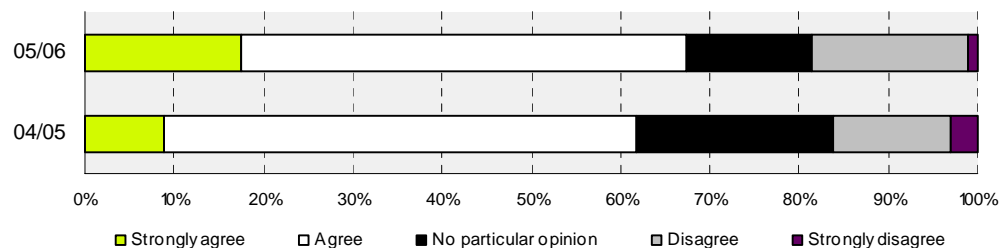
Several members of staff commented that their line manager had changed or the team they worked in was good and they felt more valued as a result, showing positive improvement. Increased pay and the introduction of flexitime were also cited as reasons for feeling more valued at work. However, others felt that they were being watched very closely with regard to working hours because of flexitime, so this did not make them feel valued.

A small number of employees reported a lack of understanding or appreciation of their/others' roles and contributions, either at line management or senior management levels, which resulted in them not feeling valued.

3.2.7 I am consulted about issues that affect me

Two-thirds of respondents agreed that they are consulted about issues that affect them (67%, 58 respondents). Eighteen percent of respondents disagreed with this statement (16 respondents). This was perceived to have remained constant for 72% of respondents, improved for 9% and deteriorated for 18%. Absolute agreement levels have improved on last year's results, however.

Figure 11 I am consulted about issues that affect me



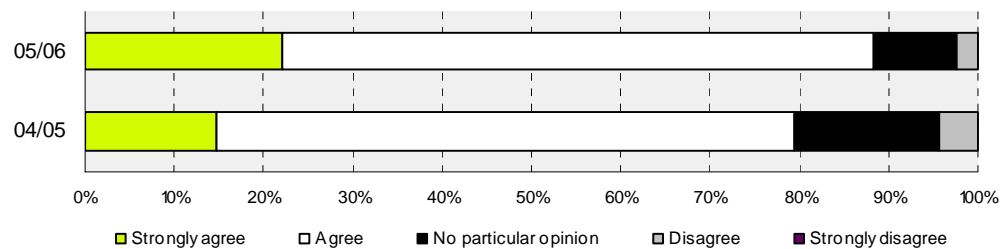
Not many members of staff commented on the questionnaire about this issue but it was raised in the depth interviews. Whilst the above presents generally a positive picture, there was some feedback that staff have been informed after decisions have been made, even where those decisions affect them substantively, rather than consulted beforehand which has presented problems and frustrations for them. On a related point, communication between departments was considered to be an area for improvement as the impact of decisions in one area of the organisation can have significant impacts on other teams. It was noted that a cross-departmental communications group has been established to help to address this. Staff were keen that more people were involved in decision-making and thinking through the consequences of different courses of action, rather than decisions made in isolation.

It is understood that some decisions may have to be made without consultation and in this instance it is important that the reasons for this, and for the decision itself, are communicated.

3.2.8 I believe Traidcraft's strategy and performance is communicated clearly

The majority of staff (88%, 76 respondents) agreed that Traidcraft's strategy and performance is communicated clearly, with only 2% disagreeing. The organisation has just launched its new five year strategy so this should be fresh in employees' minds and 30% of respondents considered this to have improved in the last year, with none thinking it was worse. This is supported by the comparative response from 2004/5.

Figure 12 I believe Traidcraft's strategy and performance is communicated clearly



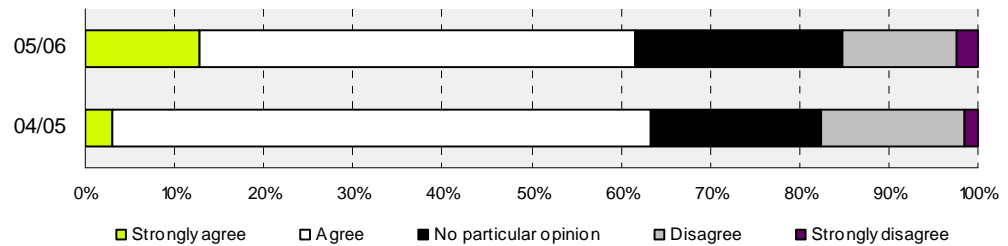
The new strategy was generally considered to have been clearly consulted on and communicated recently but some members of staff were keen to highlight that performance of different parts of the organisation is not measured, reflected upon sufficiently or communicated as well as it might be.

A distinct strategy for Traidcraft Exchange was also suggested, reinforcing other points made with regard to the need for greater cohesion, leadership, vision and performance. The three front-line departments in TX (IDD/MAC/PU) are not seen to work effectively together, with unclear lines of authority or responsibility for decisions. It was queried whether one person can realistically lead both the plc and TX given the sometimes conflicting nature of the organisations and perception that TX can feel a bit like the 'poor relations' in comparison to the larger plc activity base.

3.2.9 I believe that management decisions are communicated effectively

There were lower levels of agreement with the statement around effective communications of management decisions (62%, 53 respondents), with 15% (13 respondents) disagreeing. There were significantly higher levels of disagreement amongst the Sales & Marketing and Operations Teams than any other work area. Only 8% considered this to have deteriorated and 16% that it had improved in the past year but 77% felt it had remained the same. Operations staff were more likely to consider it to have improved in the past year. Whilst a greater proportion of staff strongly agreed with this statement in comparison to last year's results, the overall agreement level dropped slightly. There was an increase in the midpoint response, however, as disagreement levels also dropped.

Figure 13 I believe that management decisions are communicated effectively

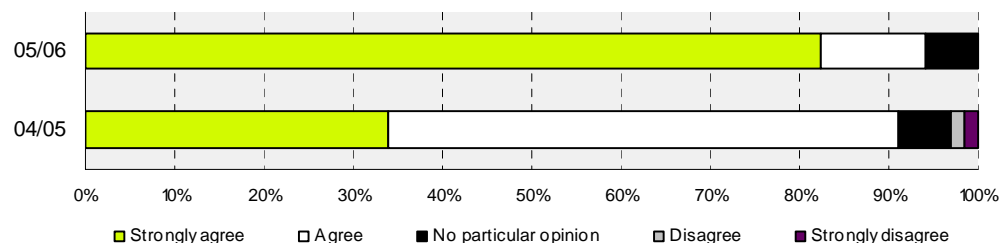


The quarterly briefings were appreciated as a good source of information about what is happening in the organisation, augmented by the Monday briefings. Communications generally were considered to have improved, but there was still seen to be room for improvement in this regard. Communications were not considered to be consistent within different departments and it was suggested that some senior managers and the Board could improve the way in which they relate to and communicate with staff.

3.2.10 I understand how my work fits into the overall aims of Traidcraft

Nearly all staff (98%, 84 respondents) stated that they understand how their work fits into the overall aims of Traidcraft and none disagreed. Staff in IDD/MAC/PU were more emphatic in their agreement than other areas of the organisation, whilst Operations staff were more likely to opt for the agree response than strongly agree. However, Operations staff were also more likely to state that this had improved in the last year, which is encouraging. Overall, 22% considered this to have improved in the last year and none felt it had deteriorated. As can be seen from the figure below, the proportion of strongly agree responses has more than doubled since last year's survey, illustrating a substantive improvement in understanding.

Figure 14 I understand how my work fits into the overall aims of Traidcraft

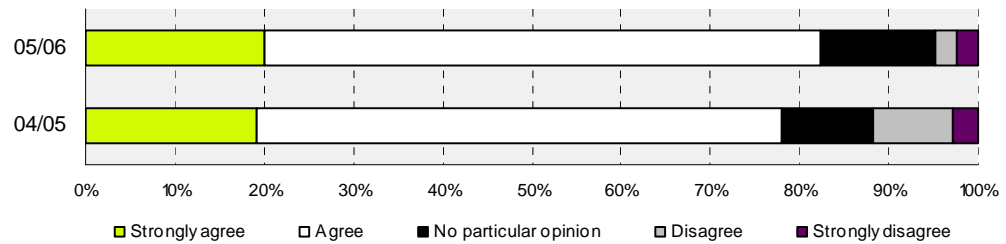


Comments made suggest that improvements in line management has made a difference, in addition to team members gaining more experience and understanding of their own role and the wider role of the organisation. One negative comment was made around senior management not understanding how the individual's role fits, echoing points made earlier.

3.2.11 I have clear objectives agreed with my line manager

The majority (82%, 70 respondents) stated that they have agreed clear objectives with their line manager but 13% (11 respondents) stated that they had no particular opinion on this point and 4% (4 respondents) disagreed. The majority of these were in the Sales & Marketing team. The trend is more positive on this, with 24% perceiving this to have improved in the past year and just 6% rating it as worse, although the improvement in comparison to last year's survey was less marked.

Figure 15 I have clear objectives agreed with my line manager

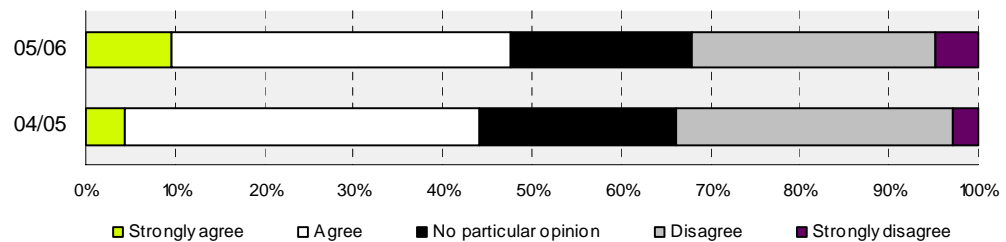


Again, improvements in line management were seen to have helped clarity on objectives, as had PPDR, although the issue of management not understanding the individual's role and therefore being unable to set objectives was also restated. The need for more frequent/detailed reviews was identified by a few members of staff. Even if objectives are clear, the point was made that forward planning is required to achieve these, with regard to workload and approaches to be used.

3.2.12 I believe departments work together to achieve our overall aims

This statement was one of only two to have less than 50% of staff in agreement (48%, 40 respondents). Thirty-two percent actively disagreed with the statement, even amongst those who rated the organisation highly in other regards, and this emerged strongly from comments and further discussions with staff. This was perceived to have improved in the past year by 16% of respondents but deteriorated by 21%. Comparison with last year's survey shows a positive trend.

Figure 16 I believe departments work together to achieve our overall aims



Several members of staff cited greater co-ordination and communications across departments but there was still perceived to be plenty of room for improvement on this issue, both within and between departments. Where communications are good, this was often perceived to be down to the individuals involved rather than there being appropriate structures or support systems in place to facilitate communications and joint working. The negative ratings were also perceived to be due to a lack of understanding or awareness of what other individuals do, so those who perhaps should be consulted or involved in something are not and some duplication of effort can occur. It was suggested that job roles could be clearer, with greater clarity on responsibilities to avoid duplication or something not being addressed at all.

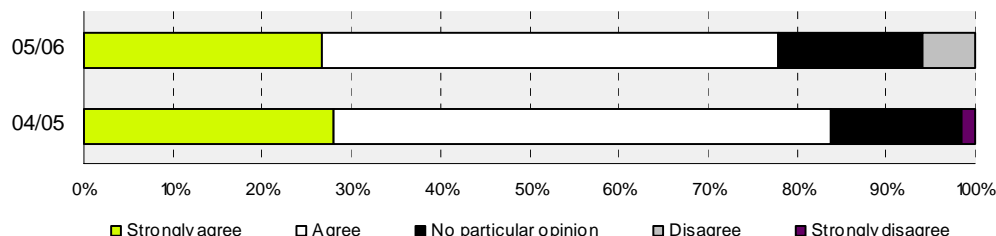
The cohesion within TX in particular was raised as staff in London, Gateshead and overseas offices were not perceived to be working as well together as they should be, linked again to the suggestions around a need for a distinct strategy for TX, with clear responsibilities for different parts of the team and how these fit together effectively. Communications between the plc and TX were also seen to be necessary to improve.

3.2.13 The policies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at work are clear

Over three-quarters (78%, 67 respondents) of respondents stated that policies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at work were clear and just 6% (5 respondents)

disagreed with this. This was perceived to have improved by 21% of those who offered an opinion on progress in the last year and only 2% felt this was worse. Perceived improvement was particularly notable with Operations staff. Comparison with last year's survey results are less positive than perceptions, however.

Figure 17 The policies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at work are clear

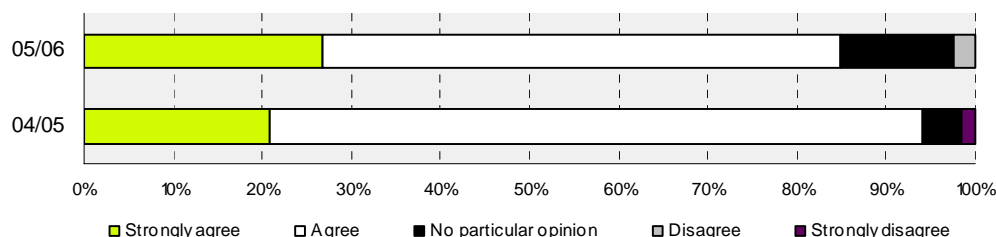


Whilst the policies were considered to be clear, and training has been provided, some comment was made about the way in which they have been operationalised, as some members of staff were perceived to have been treated harshly whilst others to have got away with poor behaviour repeatedly. Several members of staff were uncomfortable with the focus on poor behaviour and would like to see appreciation of good behaviour. A couple of people were also uncomfortable with the fact that difficult behaviour had not been addressed head on but a role had been made redundant.

3.2.14 I understand what I can do if I have a complaint or grievance

Similarly, there was a high level of agreement around understanding the process if staff have a complaint or grievance (85%, 73 respondents) and only 2% of staff disagreed with this statement. Comments and discussion would suggest that where staff selected the midpoint on the scale, they have not had cause to find out what the process is and not prioritised this information. No member of staff perceived this to have got worse in the past year, whilst 15% rated it as better. A greater proportion of staff strongly agreed to this statement this year but overall agreement dropped from 2004/5.

Figure 18 I understand what I can do if I have a complaint or grievance

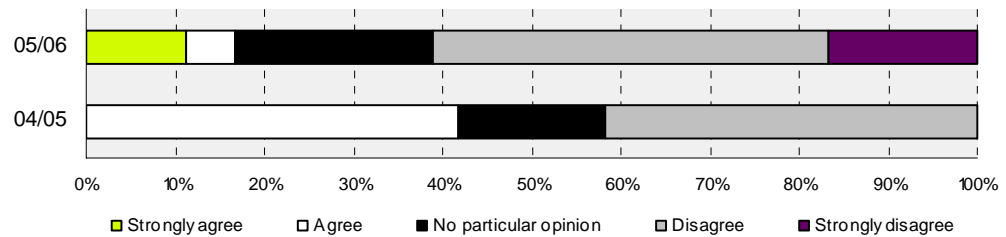


Little comment was made in the interviews around this issue, other than for a few members of staff to state that they had not had cause to look at the policies on this but were unsure if they would pursue things with HR in the first instance given negative perceptions about the way in which the HR department might respond. Colleagues, managers or the Staff Association were cited as the first point of contact instead.

3.2.15 If I have raised an issue, it has been dealt with effectively

Only a small number of employees (18 respondents) commented on this statement as it was only relevant to those who had raised issues. However, the response was very negative, with 61% (11 respondents) disagreeing and 38% considering it to have deteriorated in the last year. This perception was borne out by last year's response, when over 40% agreed that the issue had been dealt with effectively. Twelve members of staff responded to this question last year so there is a caveat over the small numbers giving views on this issue.

Figure 19 If I have raised an issue, it has been dealt with effectively

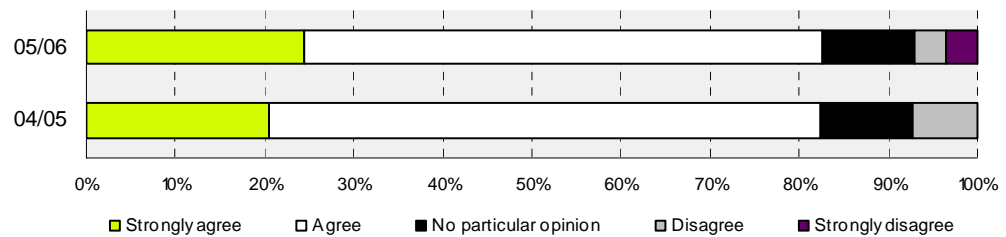


Whilst the number of members of staff commenting on this issue was low, issues were seen to take a long time to be resolved, with little communication or support during that time, and they were often not fully resolved which increased dissatisfaction. The manner in which issues were received was perceived negatively.

3.2.16 I believe Traidcraft’s policies are fair

The high levels of agreement to the statement about Traidcraft’s policies being fair (82%, 71 respondents) and the following one about personal experience of their application belie the very negative views expressed about the way in which they have been introduced and applied to others which are outlined in more detail below. A quarter of staff who expressed an opinion considered them to have improved in the past year and only 8% to have got worse, with Operations staff noting particular improvement. The overall agreement/disagreement scores vary little from the 2004/5 survey but there are increases in both the proportion of responses at each extreme of the scale.

Figure 20 I believe Traidcraft’s policies are fair

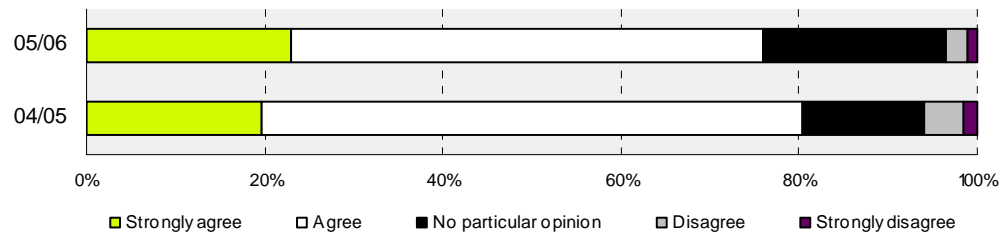


Whilst there was a little complaint about there being too many policies, having policies was perceived to be a good thing and the written policies were seen to be fair. However, there were a number of comments about the way in which HR ‘police’ the policies in a rigid and inflexible manner without taking into account common sense or people’s specific circumstances. Examples give focused on absence, flexitime and training in particular. On the flip side, a few respondents did not like the fact that some managers did operate with some degree of flexibility. HR were perceived to be very distant, with a ‘them and us’ attitude which seeks to apply rules rigidly rather than being there to support managers or staff.

3.2.17 I have been treated fairly, in accordance with our policies

Three-quarters of staff (76%, 63 respondents) agreed that they had been treated fairly, according to policy and only 3% disagreed but a higher proportion (20%, 17 respondents) stated that they had no particular opinion, perhaps suggesting that they did not feel they had required to be ‘treated’. Four out of five staff who offered an opinion felt this had remained constant in the last year, whilst 12% noted an improvement and 8% a deterioration. The proportion of staff agreeing overall dropped slightly from the 2004/5 survey.

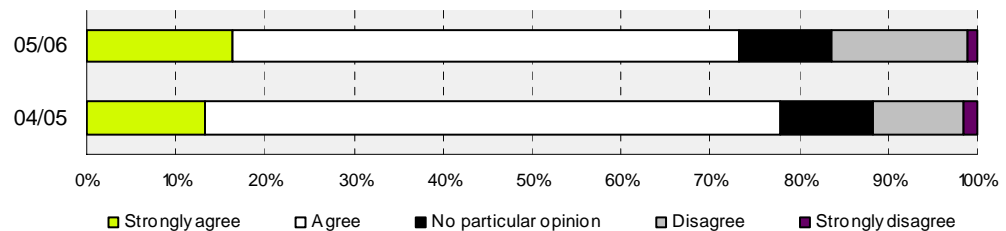
Figure 21 I have been treated fairly, in accordance with our policies



3.2.18 I am clear about what authority I have in my job

Whilst almost three-quarters of staff (73%, 63 respondents) were clear on the authority they have in their job, 16% (14 respondents) did not. This was a particular issue in the Sales & Marketing team. Sixteen percent had noted an improvement in the last year and 10% some deterioration. Again, overall agreement dropped slightly from 2004/5.

Figure 22 I am clear about what authority I have in my job - I know what decisions I can make on my own and when I must consult a manager

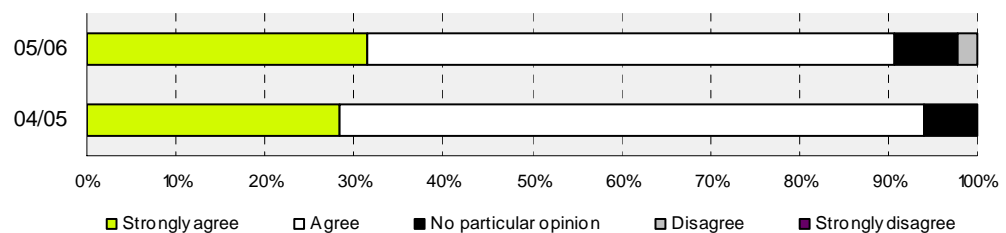


There were few comments specifically around this. The feeling gained from discussions was that there is a lack of clarity or momentum around decision-making processes generally, with some members of staff feeling that some decisions can only be made by the Board which delays actions unnecessarily. Some confusion over who does/is responsible for what also comes into play here which means that individuals often take their own view on things, which can sometimes be at odds with managers and so have to be changed later.

3.2.19 I believe Traidcraft is achieving its mission to fight poverty through trade

There was substantial support in the belief that Traidcraft is achieving its mission to fight poverty through trade (90%, 78 respondents). This is not surprising, however, given that Traidcraft's very specific mission is the reason that many staff joined the organisation and why they rate it as highly as they do. This was perceived to have improved in the last year by 33% of those who gave a view, although overall agreement dropped slightly from last year's survey.

Figure 23 I believe Traidcraft is achieving its mission to fight poverty through trade

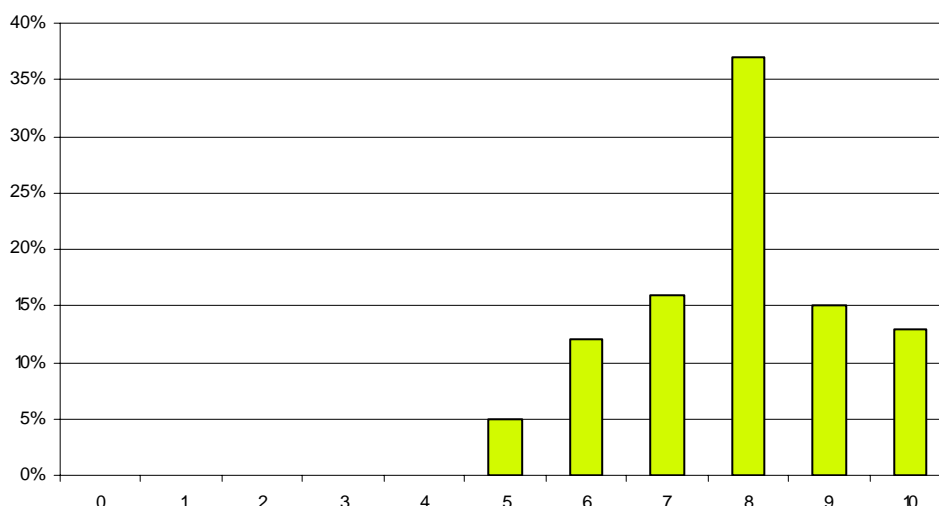


Some staff members cited greater public awareness of the issues and growth of the business as evidence that Traidcraft is achieving its mission, but others questioned how this could be reliably measured. There was some comment that progress towards the mission could be improved upon, for example, it was queried whether Traidcraft has really maximised the increased focus on Fair Trade in the UK in the last year or two and whether resources/activities were as effective as they might be, particularly with regard to international development. It was suggested that there were unlikely to be as many opportunities as there have been in the past five years so Traidcraft will need to be more proactive in what it does to grow further.

3.3 Overall rating of Traidcraft as an employer

The survey then asked each member of staff to rate Traidcraft overall as an employer, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 was low and 10 was high. Despite many of the negative scores to individual statements, the mean 'mark out of 10' was 7.9. The lowest score attributed was 5 out of 10 (4 respondents) and 11 respondents rated the organisation 10 out of 10. The most common response was 8 out of 10 (37%, 32 respondents), as can be seen in the figure below.

Figure 24 How would you rate Traidcraft as an employer?

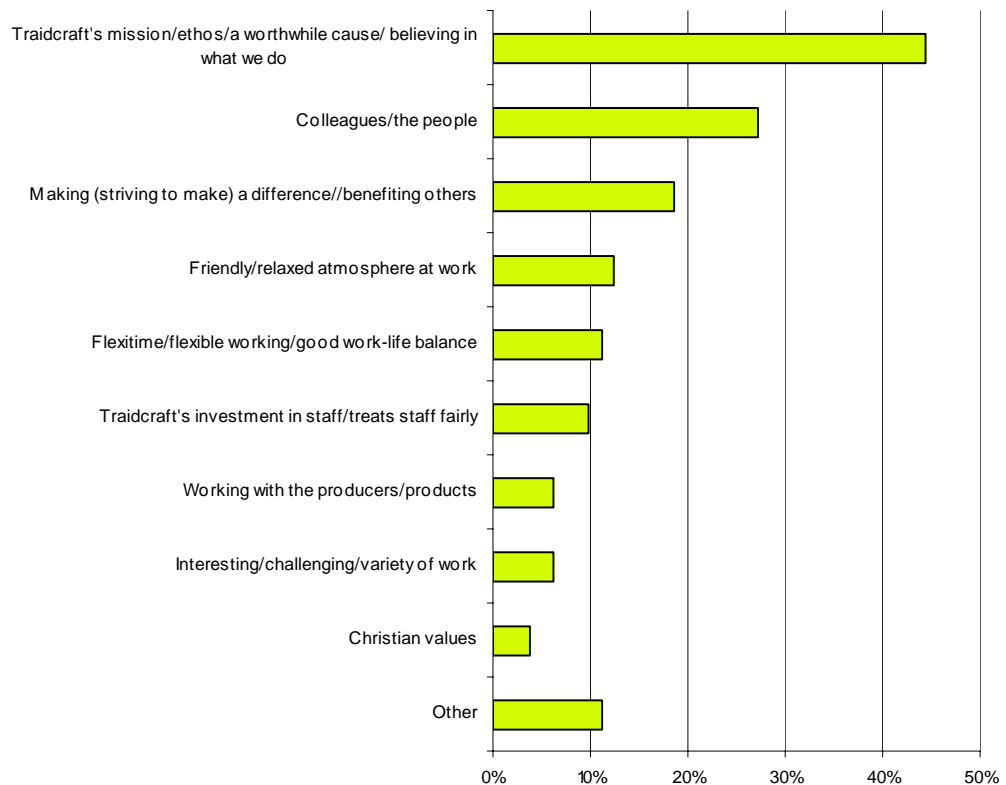


Those in the IDD/MAC/PU and Sales & Marketing Team (including Admin) were more positive in their ratings of Traidcraft as an employer than the norm, whilst the Operations Team and Finance/GM/HR/IT/Producer Support/Sourcing were less positive in comparison. Staff who had been employees of Traidcraft for less than five years were more positive, with 45% giving 9 and 10 scores, whilst those who had been employees for five years or more were much less likely to give the top two scores, preferring the 6, 7 or 8 ratings.

3.4 What staff like best about working for Traidcraft

Staff were asked an open-ended question about what they liked best about working for Traidcraft. The most commonly cited 'best' aspect was the organisation's mission or core business (44%, 36 respondents). Related to this was the fact that staff felt they were making a difference to others (19%, 15 respondents). The people who work at Traidcraft were also rated very highly (27%, 22 respondents) and this also came through in the telephone interviews as everyone was perceived to be very nice as individuals. The flexible working, resulting in good work/life balance, was also put forward and the fact that Traidcraft treats staff fairly. The figure below shows the main responses.

Figure 25 What do you like best about working for Traidcraft?



3.5 What staff like least about working for Traidcraft

When asked a similar open-ended question about what they liked least about working for Traidcraft, a much wider range of issues was raised, many of which were one-offs. However, the key areas of criticism cited earlier in the report were largely reiterated, as follows:

- low pay rates;
- heavy workloads;
- limited resources;
- the way some colleagues have been treated, particularly with regard to HR issues, by HR;
- 'office politics';
- poor inter-departmental communications and joint working;
- a lack of connection between the Board/Exec and staff;
- a disconnectedness, lack of cohesion, leadership and focus in TX;
- Gateshead/the A1 aren't particularly pleasant;
- the scope of individuals' roles not being understood and appreciated by management or reflected in remuneration;
- too many managers, not enough staff doing the work; and
- sometime lack of consultation about issues which affect staff.

3.6 Suggestions for improvement

The suggestions for improvement, which would result in Traidcraft being a better place to work, mainly focused around addressing the issues cited in 3.5 above. In addition, suggestions including improving the working environment by having more space, air conditioning, improving the ladies toilets downstairs at Kingsway, etc.

In addition, a number of staff were interested in having more social opportunities to get to know each other, gain more understanding of what others do/the challenges they face and to generally relax a little with colleagues. The Kingsway location makes this hard to do informally, so something needs to be organised specifically to address this. Given the perceived remoteness of some senior managers/the Board this was seen to be critical to be led from the top to give the organisation a sense of cohesion and for people to understand the stresses and strains others are under.

Individuals within the organisation were perceived positively but there was a perception expressed that the organisation is very hierarchical and there is something systemic which goes alongside people not having control of their own area of work/responsibilities. Individuals are 'nice' but the softer side within the organisation was perceived to have depleted/eroded with the introduction of business practices and the two were not considered to have to be mutually exclusive. It was acknowledged that it is difficult to strike an appropriate balance.

It was suggested that PPDR should drive training, not HR who have made some things compulsory for all, even if they are not required by an individual who already has these skills. Common sense was not seen to be applied by HR and this would be welcomed. Dealing with conflict training was also suggested to be helpful. There was a perception that training had perhaps missed out on some of the more basic elements staff need in order to do their job properly, which should be the first priority.

If training is meeting people's needs and up-skilling existing staff, staff would welcome seeing more promotion from within the organisation rather than losing colleagues who seek opportunities for promotion elsewhere.

It was suggested that the website needs to be more professional, with appropriate specialist support to maximise sales via this medium. The organisation was perceived to have been slow to pick up on this and this needs to be addressed. Generally, more email communications, with clear subject lines so people can judge how relevant/important information is, would also be welcomed.

It was suggested that consideration should be given to distinct leadership for both the plc and TX and a number of staff queried whether one person could lead both appropriately given the scale of activity and sometimes conflicting objectives. They need to work together but were considered to be distinct entities too. Clear leadership and strategies for both arms of the organisation were perceived to be critical in order for staff to understand and meet objectives set. Staff also felt that the Board should reflect expertise of both plc and social justice/NGO sectors in order for it to perform the visionary and monitoring roles it should, but it was not perceived to do this as well as it might at present. If it does, this needs to be demonstrated to staff. Decision-making processes also require to be clearer. Several staff perceived current structures to involve decision by committee, involving 'meetings about meetings', which was not considered to be helpful in getting things done and responsibility for tasks was not always clear which causes additional stress. Consultation prior to decision-making was seen to be vital, but that is different to decision-making by committee.

A few members of staff queried whether temporary staff were also invited to comment in the staff survey, as some have been with the organisation for months. Staff were keen that fair and equitable treatment extended to temporary staff.

4 Concluding comments

The survey gives Traidcraft some very positive feedback both in terms of how it is rated as an employer, with a mean score of 7.9 out of 10 given overall by those who responded to the survey, and in responses to specific statements tested. The statements tested with staff over the last few years show a steadily more positive trend overall. Fourteen of the nineteen statements (i.e. three-quarters) tested with staff had higher levels of agreement, with five decreasing from last year (although three of these were still higher than three years ago). There are several areas for improvement suggested by staff and these have been highlighted in the main body of the report. It must be remembered that nearly half of Traidcraft's employees did not give their views, however, and it is impossible to gauge what they may be.

It is clear that Traidcraft employees care deeply about the work they do to alleviate poverty in the developing world, but there are some strong feelings within the organisation about the way in which work is currently conducted, the structures and culture. Whilst the interviews were limited in number they did provide valuable insight into staff views. For example, some staff scored Traidcraft highly on the specific statements tested and overall but made further comments about issues they feel strongly about and which they would like to see addressed in order to make Traidcraft an even better place to work.

Traidcraft has grown substantially in recent years and has sought to become more structured and professional in the way it does business to help face its challenges. It is apparent that the organisation has attracted a very committed group of employees, to the extent that several professional staff have taken pay cuts to work in the organisation. There is clearly a lot of goodwill and enthusiasm and staff acknowledge that there will always be 'niggles', but there is concern amongst staff that there are some systemic issues which need to be addressed in order to meet their needs more fully, resulting in a happier workforce and a more efficient organisation in achieving its mission. These issues have been expressed very strongly indeed by some members of staff.

The key areas of concern expressed by staff, and highlighted in more detail in the Key Findings section, which it is recommended that the Board and Executive team give careful consideration to are as follows.

- Whilst staff recognise that it is beneficial to have HR policies, and Traidcraft's policies are considered to be fair by the majority of staff, the way in which they have been introduced and enforced by the HR team has been perceived very negatively. A 'one size fits all' approach is currently perceived to be pursued by the HR team but this is not considered to be appropriate by all staff. Some management discretion would be appreciated to take into account individual staff members' circumstances and the diverse range of roles and expertise within the organisation. Particular HR issues which were raised by staff were flexitime (hours per day limit, 'carry over' limit and requisite unpaid break), training and the management of attendance.
- Whilst benchmarking has been very positively received by many staff, others have expressed concerns that appropriate 'like for like' comparisons are not being used to reflect the full breadth and depth of some roles, with associated responsibility levels, particularly for those with technical or specialist elements to their roles. From comments made by staff, this clearly contributes to whether staff feel valued or not and may have an impact on the recruitment and retention of appropriately skilled and experienced staff.

-
- Organisational structures, leadership, decision-making pathways and inter/intra-departmental communications were all raised as key areas which staff felt could be improved upon.
 - Workload and resource allocation was a related issue which staff felt could be improved upon to increase job satisfaction and effectiveness. Some staff members were keen to see more opportunities to engender a greater sense of connectedness amongst staff, the Executive team and Board, for example by more social or lighter occasions and ways of working. It was suggested that there could be more of a fun or social element when staff currently get together, for example at Monday or quarterly briefings. This was perceived to be of benefit to staff members in terms of reducing stress, developing understanding of others' perspectives and building a more cohesive team.
 - The poorest ratings given to the statements tested with staff were around the issue of effectively dealing with issues raised by staff. The base was small but this may be worth looking at more closely to ensure the process and culture is in place to address this as well as possible.

Feedback to staff on the findings of the staff survey and any actions as a result of it is the next vital step in the process, following consideration of the findings by the Executive Team and Board.

Appendices

Appendix 1 The questionnaire

Dear Colleague

TRAI DCRAFT STAFF SURVEY

As usual at this time of year, it is time to seek the views of staff. However this year, we have asked an independent research consultancy, FMR Research, to work with us to ensure that anonymity of response is maintained and to encourage staff to raise any important issues. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it directly to FMR in the reply-paid envelope enclosed. FMR will then interview by telephone up to 15 members of staff who have given their permission to be contacted, drawing as representative a sample as possible from across the organisation. The interviews are designed to talk through issues raised in the staff survey more fully so FMR can gain a better understanding of how staff feel about working with Traidcraft.

All responses made to FMR will be treated as confidential and no-one at Traidcraft will know who said what, unless a member of staff asks FMR to report back a specific issue they wish management to act upon (and then only the information the staff member wishes to be reported back to management will be communicated by FMR). FMR will then analyse the responses made and report back on the findings of the survey. A summary of the report will be sent to you and you are very welcome to see the full report if you wish to do so.

I am very keen to hear what staff think of working with Traidcraft. If we are doing some things well, let us know so that we can continue to do them. If we are doing things badly, it is even more important to let us have constructive suggestions of what we can do to improve them. We can't promise to do everything you suggest, but we will consider very carefully what FMR reports back. Where we can make changes, we will do so and if we cannot act upon some of the feedback given, we will tell you why this is the case and if there are other things we can do to take forward the spirit of staff comments. We can only change things if we know people would like them to change, however, so I would appreciate you taking a few minutes to complete the survey.

If you have any questions or comments on the survey, please do not hesitate to contact me or Nikki Bell at FMR directly. Her contact details are: 0141 332 2647 or nikki@researching.co.uk.

Many thanks for your assistance and I look forward to hearing your feedback.

Best regards

Paul Chandler
Chief Executive

TRAIDCRAFT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE – APRIL 2006

| | |
|-----|--|
| | <p>If you think any aspect has got better or worse in the last year please tell us more about why you think this.</p> |
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TRAIDCRAFT STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE – APRIL 2006

20. How would you rate Traidcraft as an employer on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is low and 10 is high?
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
21. What do you like **best** about working for Traidcraft?
- _____
22. What do you like **least** about working for Traidcraft?
- _____
23. What would make Traidcraft a better place to work?
- _____
24. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?
- _____

Your response to this questionnaire is confidential and will not be disclosed to Traidcraft in any way that the company can tell how you have responded as an individual. In order for the information to be as useful as possible it is however important that some indication of where you work in the organisation and how long you have been with Traidcraft is given.

25. In which department of Traidcraft do you work?
- IDD/MAC/PU Sales & Marketing Team (inc Admin Team) Operations Team
Finance/Gen Management/HR/IT/Producer Support/Sourcing
26. How long have you been an employee of Traidcraft?
- Less than 5 years 5 – 9 years 10 years or more

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey.

Next steps

We (FMR Research) would like to contact up to 15 members of staff to talk through some of the issues raised by the survey in more detail. We are keen to speak to people from different parts of the organisation so would appreciate you giving your permission for us to contact you. The more staff members who give their details, the more representative the selection of staff members can be. Traidcraft cannot give us your contact details directly because of Data Protection legislation, which is why they sent out this questionnaire, and we are asking you for your contact details now.

We realise that it would be difficult for you to have a telephone discussion at work as we know a lot of staff work in an area where they are overheard by colleagues and participants must be anonymous, so we would like to speak to you at home or on a mobile (if you prefer to talk in working hours). Please complete your name, the telephone number at which you would prefer to receive a call, the best time of day/day of week to speak to you if you are happy to be contacted to talk in more detail about these issues, and then sign the declaration below.

Name _____

Telephone number _____

Best day of week Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday
Saturday Sunday Any day

Best time of day 9 – 12 12 – 2 2 – 6 after 6pm Other _____

I am happy to be contacted by FMR Research and to take part in a telephone interview (expected length 15-30 minutes). I understand that the interview will ask questions about what it is like to be an employee of Traidcraft, exploring any issues raised by the staff survey and that my responses will be confidential and only reported in an anonymous way, unless I ask FMR to report any issues which I wish to be addressed directly to Traidcraft management.

Signed: _____ Date: _____