

tyllr x The People Experience Hub

Management Survey

We spoke directly to managers about what they need most — from wellbeing and growth to everyday support. This report shares what they told us, and what organisations can do to better back their managers.



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Introduction

When we think of how managers are portrayed, many of the images are quite negative, aren't they? Unnecessary layers in a bureaucracy, not really contributing anything particularly useful; or the maligned middle, getting it in the neck from above and below.

Often characterised as 'not leaders'.

In our work on Employee Surveys we're often struck how positively people view their line manager; respectful, caring, and supportive; providing clarity and, often, a protective layer to their teams.

So, when tyllr suggested we surveyed managers themselves, I was curious to know how they think and feel about their work as managers, and what makes them tick.

And I'm equally fascinated by the results. I hope you are too, and that they will stimulate some useful dialogue that contributes to improving the experience of being a manager.



Rob Robson

Director of People
Science at The People
Experience Hub



Hasan Khair

CEO at tyllr

There's a lot of talk about the importance of managers.

Most leaders would agree they're critical to how organisations function. But when it comes to consistent, meaningful support, it's often sidelined or treated as an afterthought.

At tyllr, we see this gap every day. Managers are expected to lead teams, navigate complexity, and deliver results but often without the time, tools, or backing to do it well.

That's why we were delighted to partner with PxHub on this survey. We wanted to understand what it's actually like to be a manager - not just what they're doing, but how it feels, where the pressure sits, and what's missing around them.

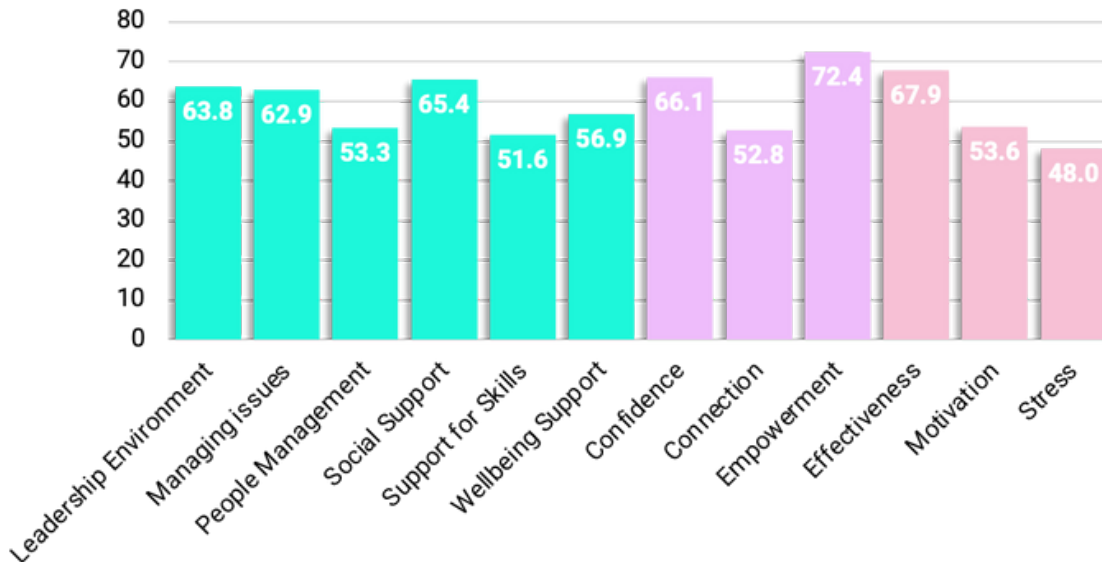
The results gave us real insight. Some of what we heard was encouraging, but it also surfaced clear signals that there's still much more to do.

This isn't about evaluating managers. It's about bringing their reality into sharper focus - so we can build stronger, more human systems around them.

We hope this report prompts reflection, and leads to more curiosity, braver decisions, and broader support for those leading the line.

Summary

107 Managers took part in the survey | Px Score (Average): 59.1%



Key areas of concern (score x influence on outcomes)

- Ability to manage workload
- Access to learning and resources to manage team's performance
- Well prepared to deal with emotional aspects of management
- Have tools I need to be an effective ally for my team

Most favourable responses

Question

Favourable

I would feel comfortable supporting a direct report experiencing bereavement	81.3%
I have control over how I manage my time at work	78.5%
I feel confident in my abilities as a manager	77.6%
I believe that I'm creating a team environment that helps people be at their best	74.8%
I am empowered to be my true self at work	72.9%

Question

Favourable

I have access to the learning and resources I need for the 'hard' side of management such as planning and budgeting	29.0%
I feel stressed or overwhelmed in my role as a manager	33.6%
I believe I have been given the tools in my managerial role to be a strong ally to the members of my team	35.5%
I feel able to switch off my responsibilities as a manager when I leave work	37.4%
I have access to the learning and resources I need to manage my team's performance effectively	39.3%

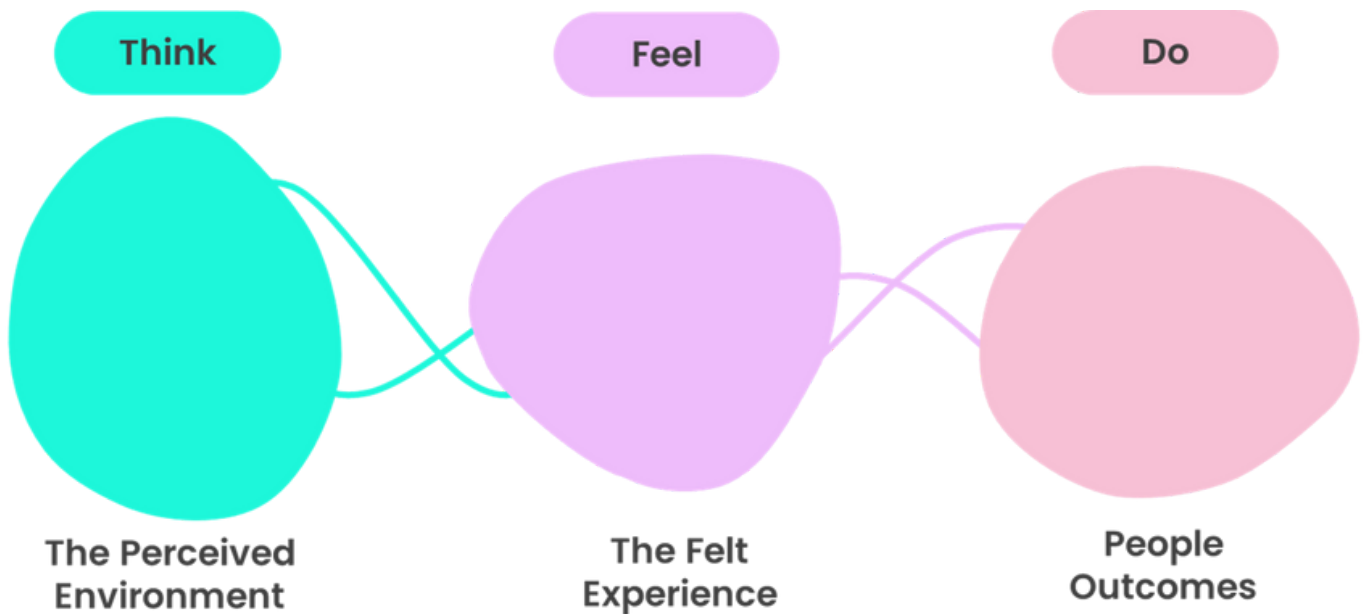
The Px3 model...

The idea behind Px3 is to understand how to create an environment where people are motivated and healthy. These are “People Outcomes” that we want to see.

The survey asks questions about these, along with two other types of question.

The “Felt Experience” is about how we want managers to feel.

The “Perceived Environment” is everything that we can change about work to improve the experience, creating those great emotions and people outcomes.



WHAT IS PX3?



This is The People Experience Hubs flexible framework that enables us to better understand and predict people outcomes, such as employee engagement or wellbeing, Px3™ has three levels: Think, Feel & Do.

[Find out more about Px3 here](#)

The Px3 model

When we look at what's driving our outcomes ('Do') together, there are a number of higher and lower scoring questions.

Higher scoring questions act as 'resources' helping managers and lower scoring items (shaded) act as 'demands' that make it harder for them to be motivated, effective or less stressed.

Let's now examine each of our outcomes in turn.

1. If you want people to...

Do	Mean
Be an effective manager	66.8
Be motivated	47.7
Be less stressed	44.9

2. Help them to...

Feel	Mean
Can keep growing as a manager here	57.0
Less lonely at work	41.1
Confident in abilities as a manager	77.6
In control of time at work	78.5

3. And to...

Think	Mean
Workload is manageable	43.9
Access to learning & resources to manage team's performance	39.3
Safe to challenge someone more senior	55.1
Well prepared to deal with emotional side of management	43.0
Part of a supportive management team	61.7
Leadership cares about people	57.9
Have tools to be a strong ally to my team	35.5

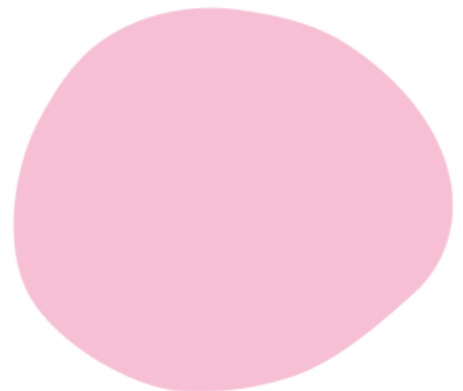
Figures shown are % favourable response, therefore a higher number is always positive, irrespective of how the question is worded



Do

Our Outcomes and their Drivers

Effectiveness, Motivation and Stress:
How do they score and what influences them?



Effectiveness

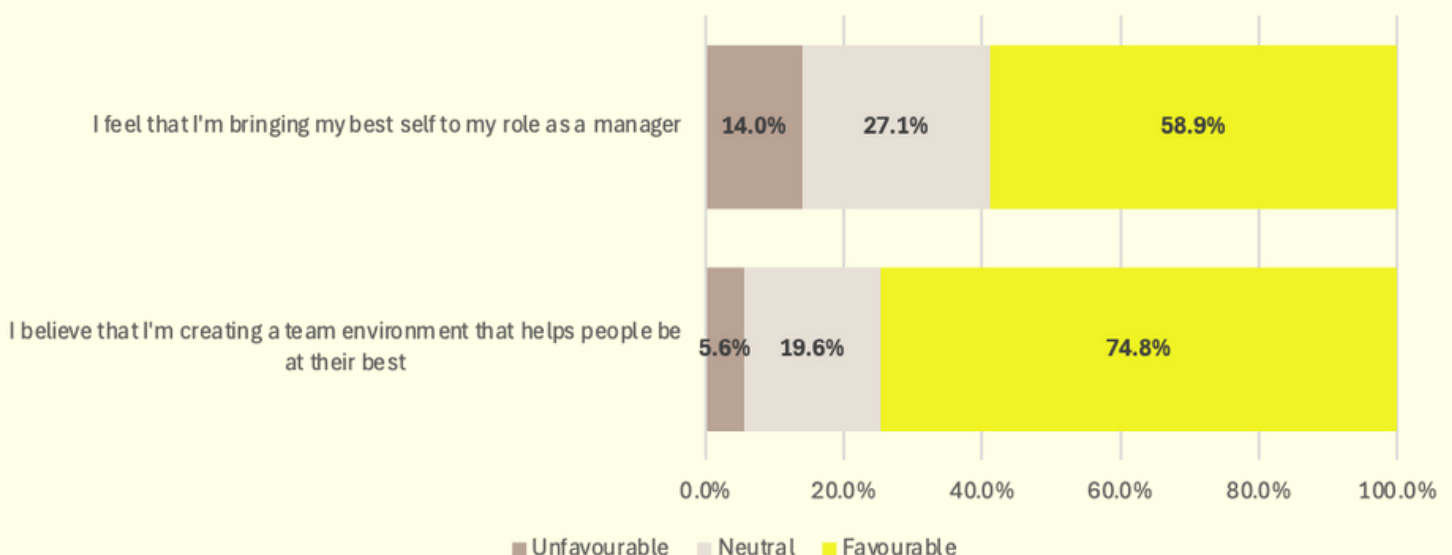
67.9



Managers feel effective - but not always at their best

Managers rate their own effectiveness relatively highly, with $\frac{3}{4}$ believing that they're creating a team environment that helps people to be at their best. While this may seem optimistic, our own cross-client data suggests that employees rate their managers just as positively.

Fewer (less than 3 in 5) however feel that they're frequently bringing their best self to their role as a manager – this seems to be most influenced by:



Effectiveness

It's no surprise to see that people are most likely feel effective when they also feel that they can grow, are confident and in control of their time.

However, the importance of workload and access to learning and resources for team management give a clear path to action.

It's also interesting to see that psychological safety has a role to play in feeling effective as a manager.

1. If you want people to...

Do

Mean
50.9

Be an effective manager

66.8

Which means...

Bringing my best self

58.9

Creating an enabling team environment

74.8

3. And to...

Think

Mean
48.9

Workload is manageable

43.9

Have access to learning & resources to manage team's performance

39.3

Safe to challenge someone more senior

55.1

2. Help them to...

Feel

Mean
61.6

Can keep growing as a manager here

57.0

Confident in abilities as a manager

77.6

In control of time at work

78.5

Want to learn more?

**Top tips for
running effective
team meetings**

[Read the blog here](#)

Motivation

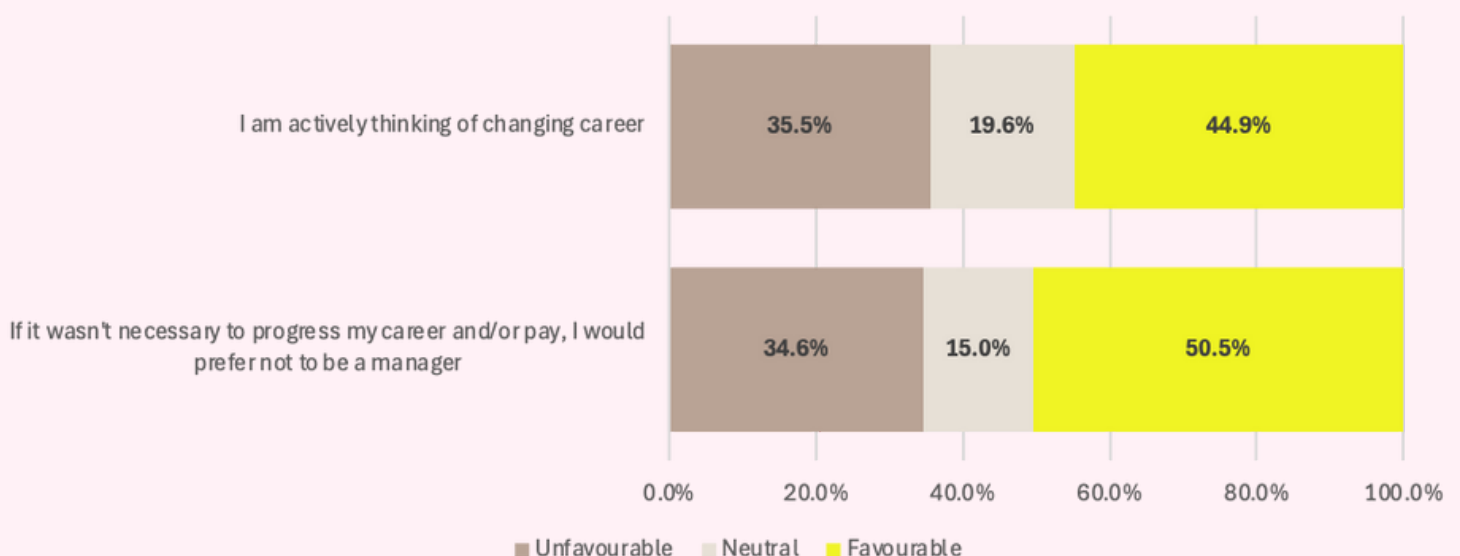
53.6

Managing for the money - not the motivation



Over a third of managers would prefer not to be a manager, but see it as necessary for pay and progression (and 15% more and not sure).

This suggests that around a half are not intrinsically motivated by the role, and it is therefore not surprising to see that similar numbers are actively thinking of changing career.



Motivation

Motivation, in comparison is driven by feelings of confidence (in abilities and ability to keep growing) and being connected (lower loneliness).

Loneliness is a particular issue, being one of the lower scoring questions in the survey.

Key environmental (think) items include workload, and access to learning and resources to manage team's performance (which are low scoring) and being part of a supporting management team, in an environment where leadership cares about its people.

1. If you want people to...

Do

Mean
50.9

Be motivated

47.7

Which means...

Want to be a manager
(not tied to pay/progression)

50.5

Not actively thinking of
changing career

44.9

2. Help them to...

Feel

Mean
61.6

Can keep growing as a
manager here

57.0

Less lonely at work

41.1

Confident in abilities as a
manager

77.6

3. And to...

Think

Mean
48.9

Workload is manageable

43.9

Have access to learning &
resources to manage
team's performance

39.3

Part of a supportive
management team

55.1

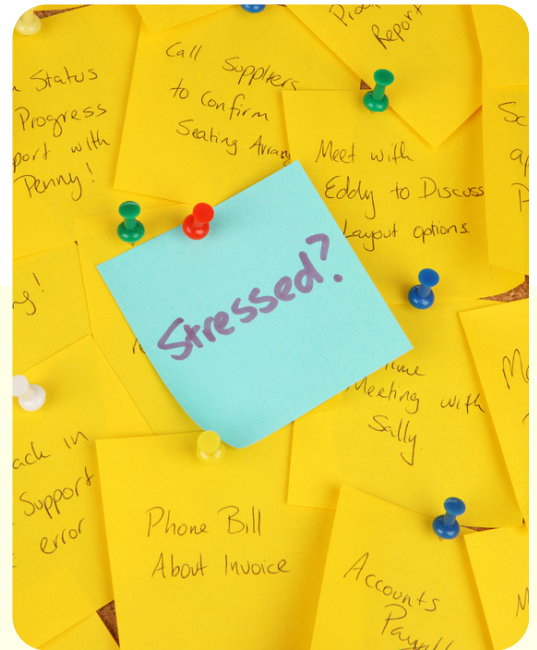
Leadership cares about
people

57.9

Stress

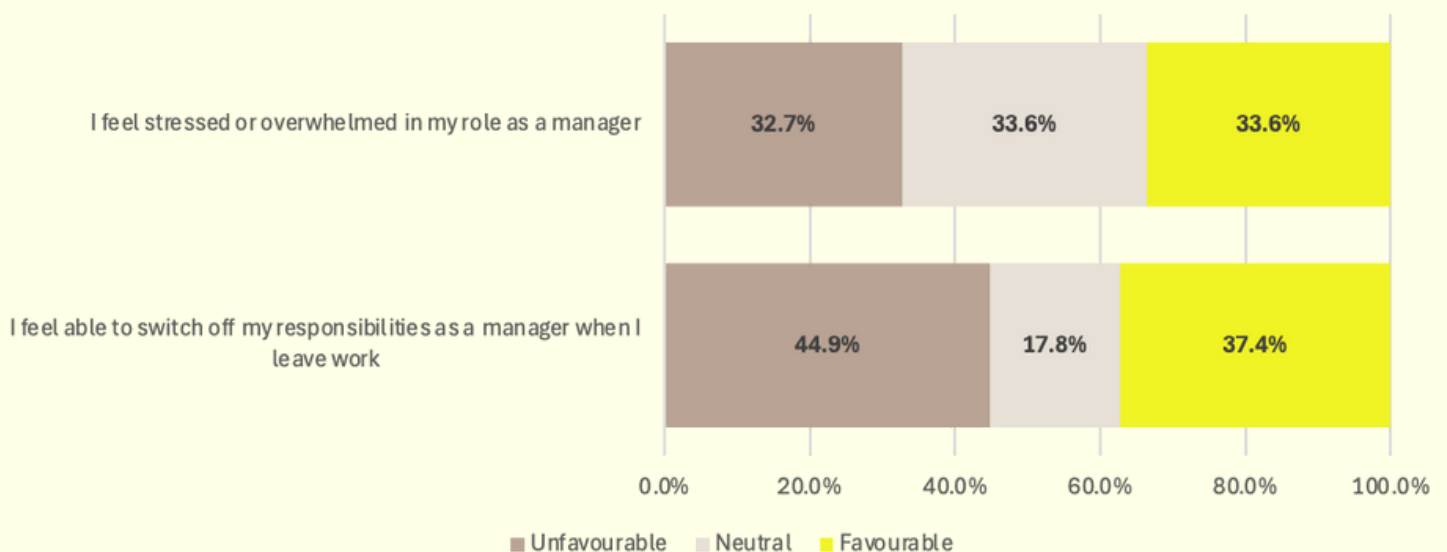
48.0

Stress is the standout concern



Stress is a concern among managers that participated in our survey, and is our lowest scoring theme.

Only 1 in 3 would consider themselves to be infrequently stressed or overwhelmed, while marginally more are frequently stressed and 45% feel unable to switch off from their responsibilities when they leave work.



Stress

Stress is moderated by feelings of growth, loneliness (a problem shared) and being in control of one's time.

Key environmental questions are around workload, being well prepared to deal with the emotional side of management, feeling safe to challenge someone more senior and having the tools to be a strong ally.

You can see, therefore, that while load is important, so too are the interpersonal aspects of being a manager, including feeling equipped to support one's own team.

1. If you want people to...

Do

Mean
50.9

Be less stressed

44.9

Which means...

Able to switch off when I leave work

37.4

Feel stressed or overwhelmed in my role

56.2

2. Help them to...

Feel

Mean
61.6

Can keep growing as a manager here

57.0

Less lonely at work

41.1

In control of time at work

78.5

3. And to...

Think

Mean
48.9

Workload is manageable

43.9

Well prepared to deal with emotional side of management

43.0

Safe to challenge someone more senior

55.1

Have tools to be a strong ally to my team

35.5

Learn to regulate your body and mind in a stressful situation by concentrating on the breath.

Breathwork for stress

[Find out more here](#)



The Felt Experience

Exploring how managers feel in their roles: Confidence, Connection and Empowerment.

Feel



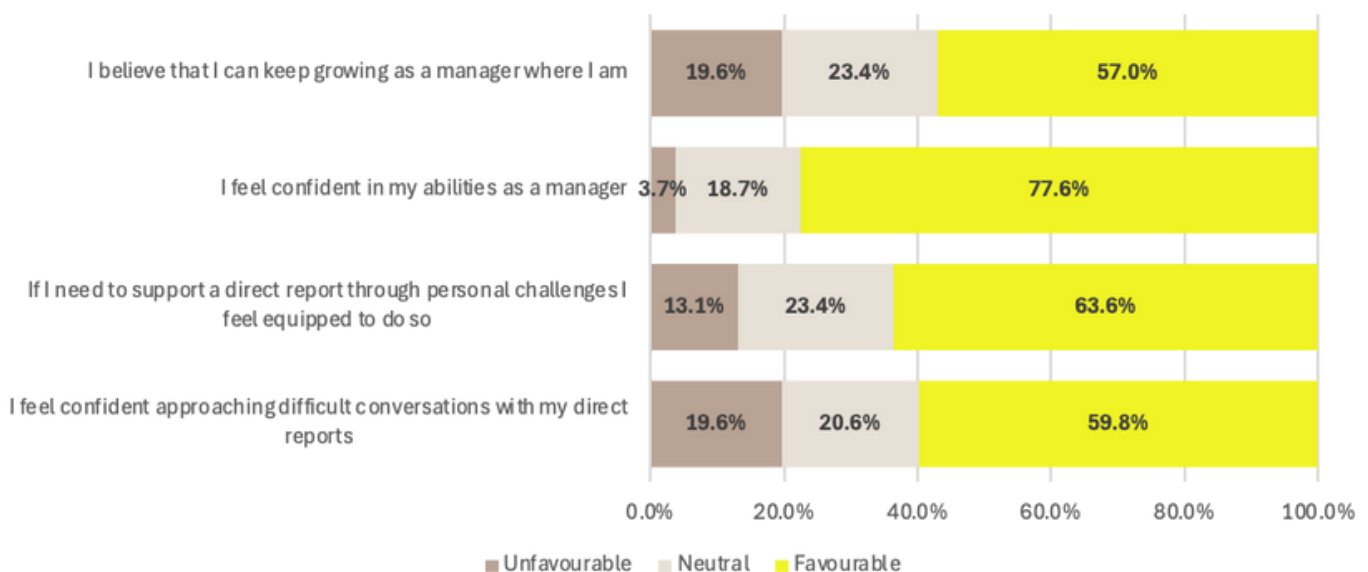
Confidence

66.1

Managers express strong confidence in their general abilities as a manager (77% favourable). However, when asked about more specific aspects of the role, they were less bullish. Around 3/5 feel confident approaching difficult conversations or equipped to support a direct report through personal challenges.

Slightly fewer believe that they can keep growing as a manager in their current role where they are (57%) and nearly one in five do not believe that they can.

Confidence and motivation are heavily linked in the psychological literature, and here we see the impact of believing that one can grow (here) as a manager or not on thoughts of changing career.



	Actively thinking of career change	Not actively thinking of career change
Believe I can grow here as a manager	66.70%	9.50%
Don't believe I can grow here	23.00%	62.30%

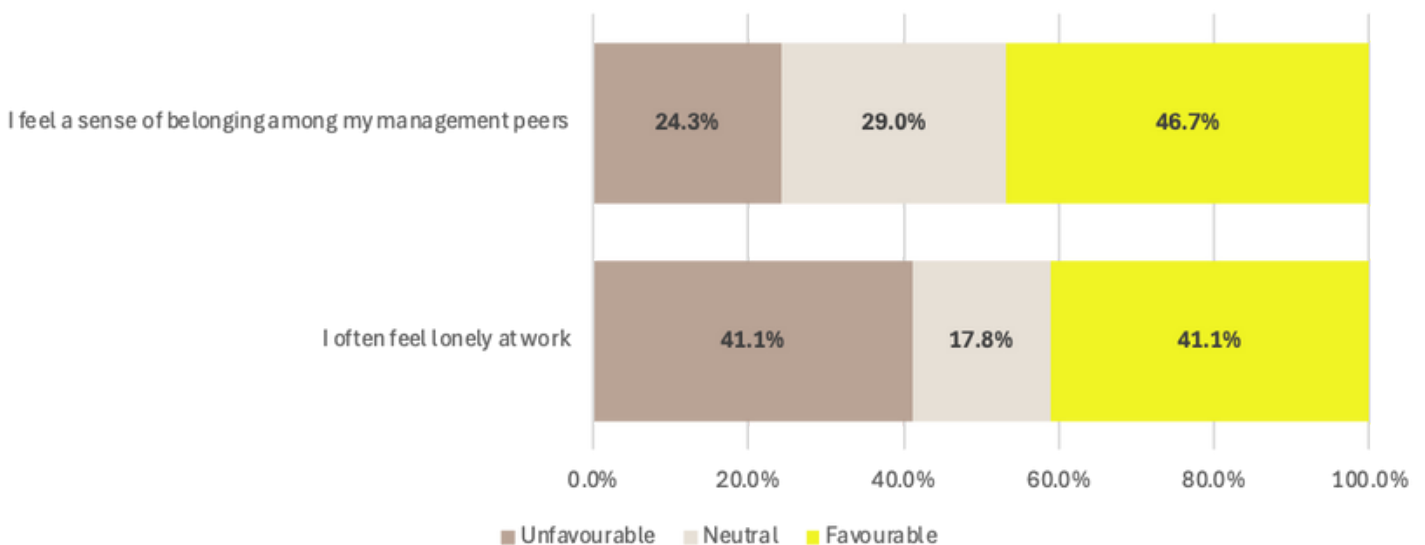
Connection

52.8

Connection is key to happiness, wellbeing and motivation. It's therefore a concern that fewer than half of participants could positively say that they feel a sense of belonging among their management peers, and more than 2/5 say that they often feel lonely at work.

There is a clear correlation between loneliness and stress. Nearly half of all managers who said they often feel lonely also said that they frequently feel stressed, while only a quarter of those that said they rarely felt lonely were frequently stressed.

This highlights the importance of cultivating relationships, and it seems that while managers are expected to maintain some distance from their reports, some are struggling to feel part of their management peer group.



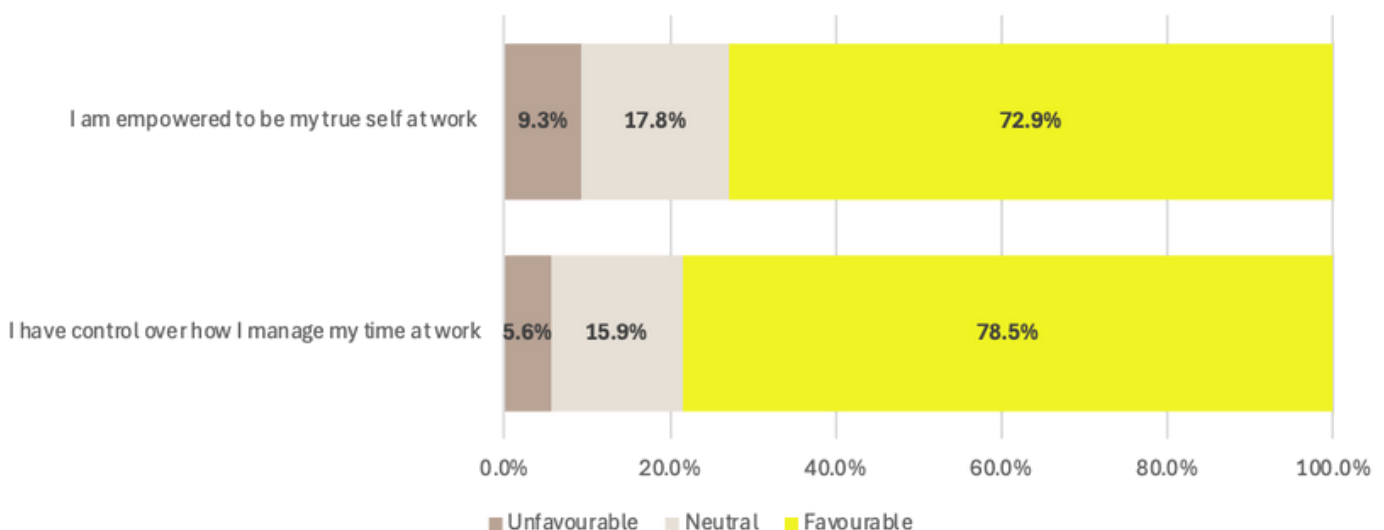
	Frequently feel stressed	Infrequently feel stressed
Rarely feel lonely	25.50%	43.20%
Often feel lonely	45.50%	29.50%

Empowerment

52.8

Managers report relatively high levels of empowerment. Nearly 80% say they have control over how they manage their time at work, which is encouraging as, anecdotally, we do hear of managers who struggle with calendar congestion. Managers also, generally, feel that they are empowered to be their true self at work, but it may be more pertinent to focus on the 27% who weren't able to give a resounding "yes" on this.

While most do have control over their time, the impact of not having it on manager effectiveness is severe, especially on creating an enabling team environment. This highlights that for every manager that struggles to control their time, multiple employees are affected.



	Bringing my best self	Not bringing my best self
Have control over time	63.10%	10.70%
Don't have control over time	16.70%	66.70%

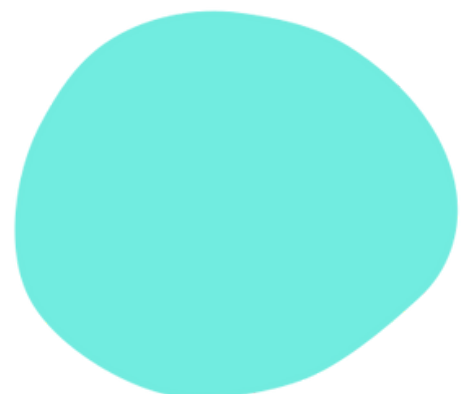
	Creating an enabling team environment	Not creating an enabling team environment
Have control over time	81.00%	3.60%
Don't have control over time	16.70%	16.70%



Perceived Environment

What do our managers think about their work and environment? Explore Leadership Environment, People Management, Social Support, Support for Skills and Wellbeing Support.

Think



Leadership Environment

63.8

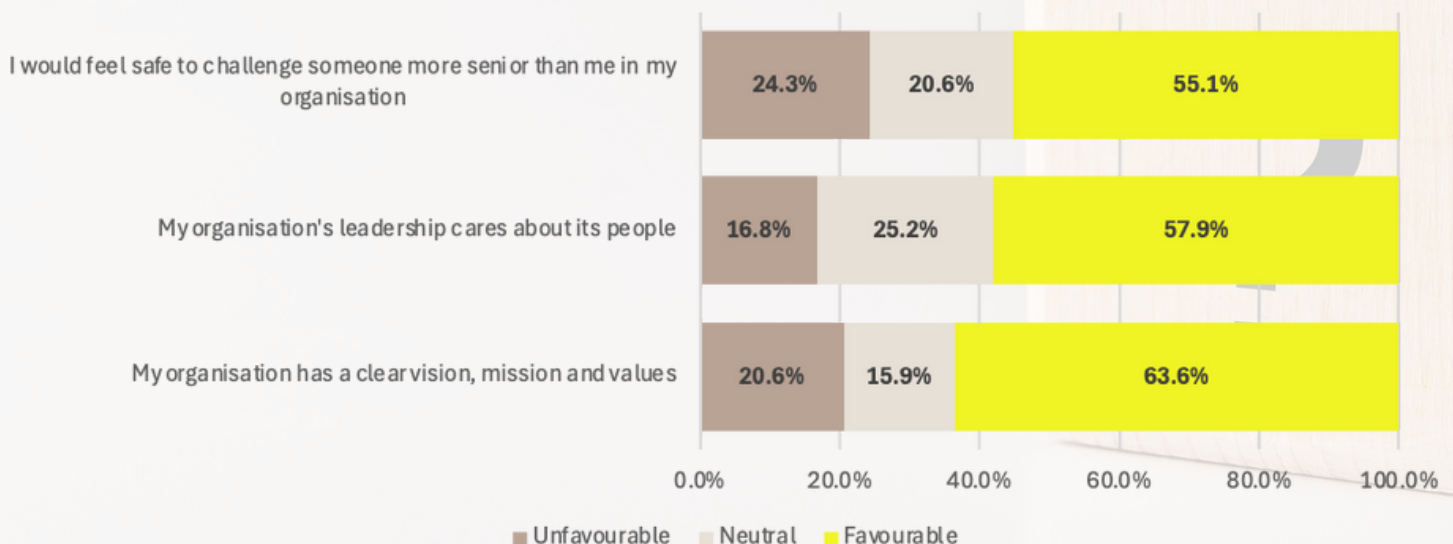
Leadership culture leaves room for doubt

Managers are operating in a reasonably, but not entirely, positive leadership environment.

While each of the questions was answered favourably by more than half of participants, it is also worth noting that almost a quarter would not feel safe challenging someone more senior than them in their organisation. Interestingly our manager population is no more positive on this than the average employee across our client base.

Only 55% of managers were able to say that their organisation's leadership cares about their people. This is only marginally better than the average employee.

It's also a slight concern that more than 1/3 of managers were not able to say that their organisation has a clear vision, mission and values. How, then, do managers ensure that their team's activities and goals align?



People Management

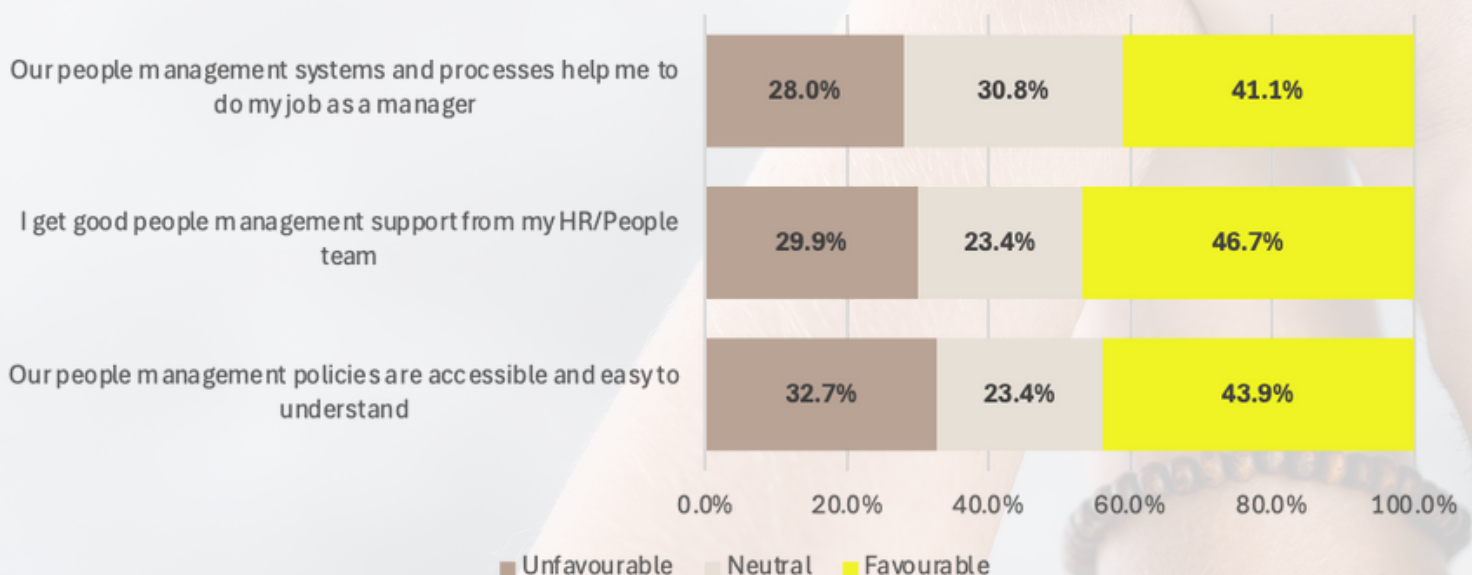
53.3

People management support falls short

Managers rate their people management systems and support relatively poorly.

For each of our questions fewer than half responded favourably, with only 2/5 saying that people management systems and processes help them to do their job as a manager.

Slightly more rate people management policies as accessible and easy to understand, and more still rate support from HR well, but these numbers suggest that the support needed to do the nuts and bolts of people management is available often enough.



Social Support 65.4

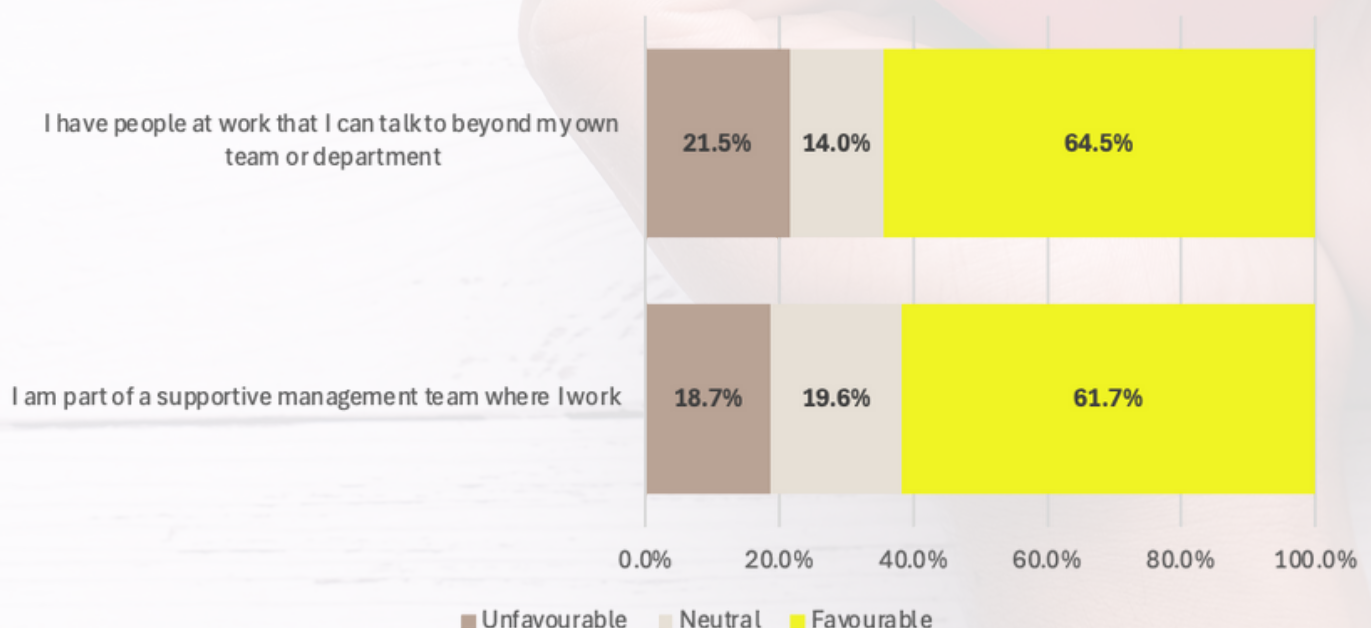
Support for some, silence for others

On the whole, managers report having fairly good social support in place.

However, one in 5 managers is saying that they do not have a support network at work.

People report being part of a supporting management team when they feel safe to challenge people more senior than them ($r=.56$), and when they believe that leaders care about their people ($r=.55$).

It is also not surprising that when people say they are part of a supportive management team they also report a sense of belonging among their peers ($r=.59$).



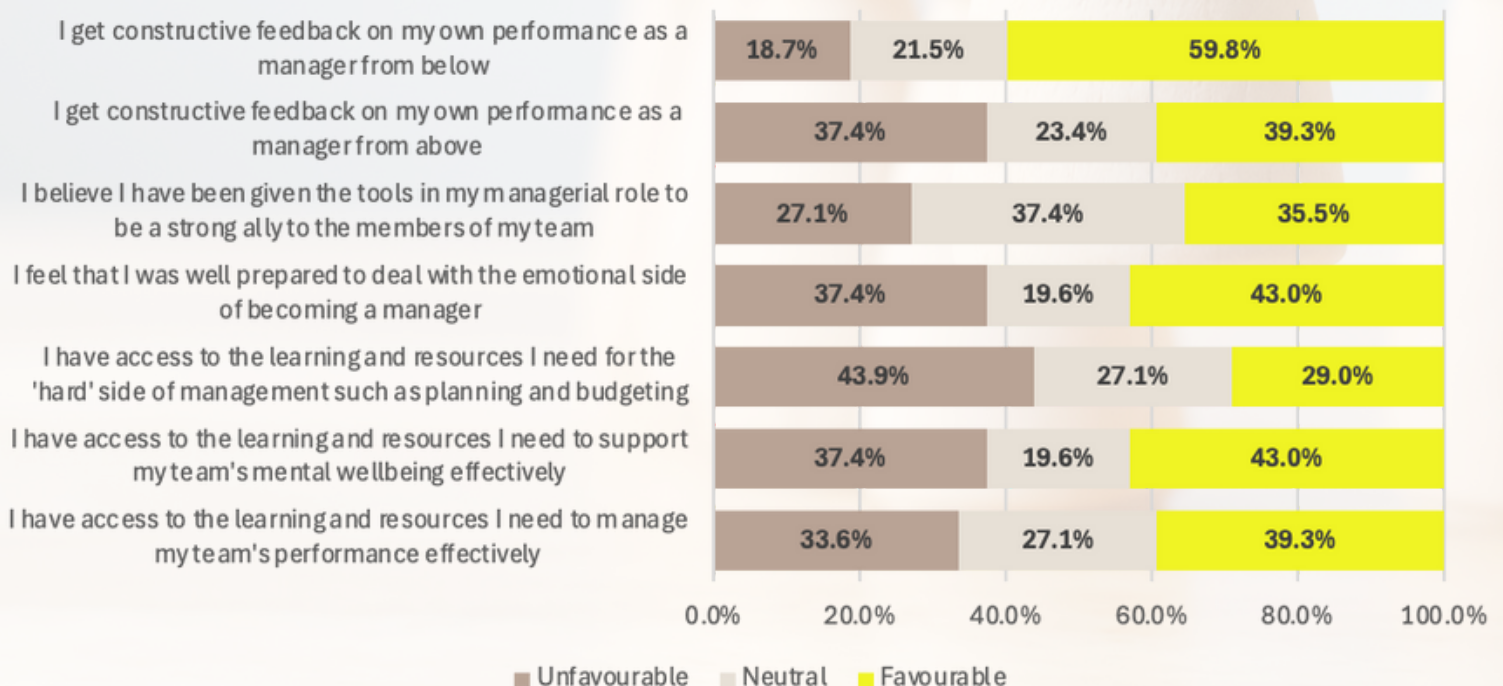
Support for Skills 65.4

Are we expecting too much from managers?

It seems that the most common source of support for skills that managers are getting is from their own teams (3/5 participants receive constructive feedback). In contrast, fewer than 2/5 get constructive feedback from above.

On the whole, these results paint a picture of managers who are poorly prepared for and lack the learning resources and tools to be effective managers, whether that's being a source of support or managing performance.

It's interesting that less than 30% have access to the learning and resources needed for the 'hard' side of management, with these skills perhaps being taken for granted in many organisations.



Wellbeing Support

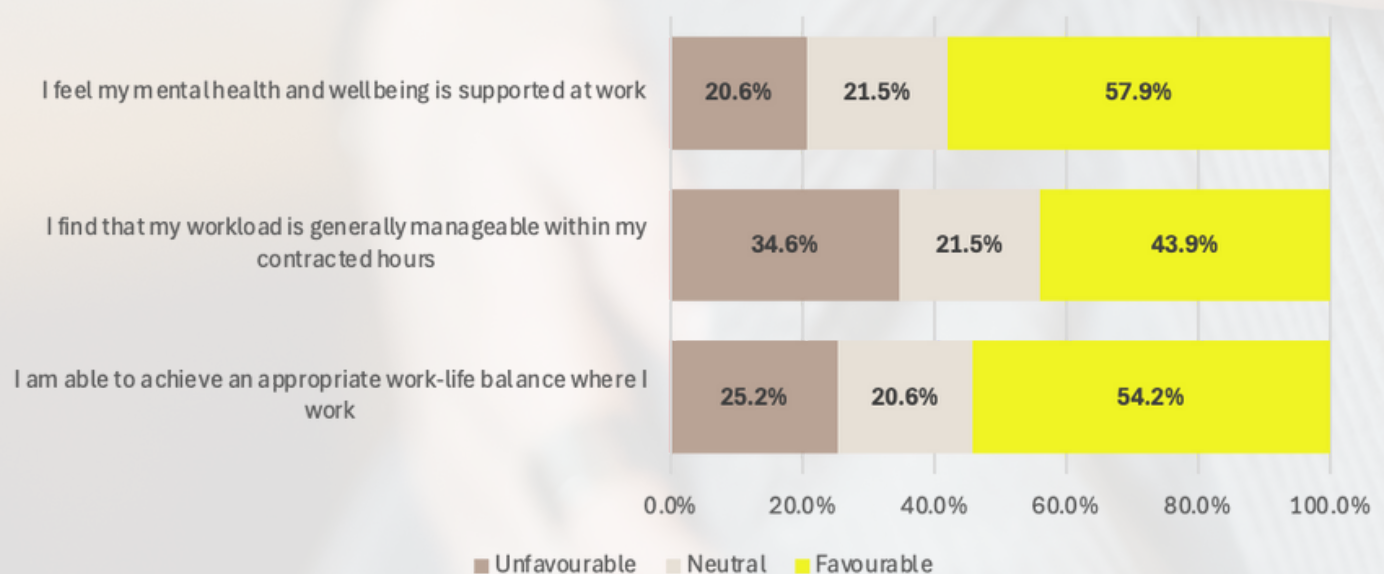
56.9

Most managers struggle with workload

Managers perceptions of wellbeing support could be better.

While more than half of participants say that their health and wellbeing is supported at work, and they are able to achieve an appropriate work-life balance, only 44% find their workload manageable.

Clearly, this means that 56% are not able to say that they do find their workload manageable. Similarly, nearly a half of managers provide a clear, positive view of support for mental health or work-life balance, so there is much work to do.





Managing Specific Issues

Sitting outside of the Px3 framework, we also investigated how managers feel about a range of specific hot topics related to people management and EDI.

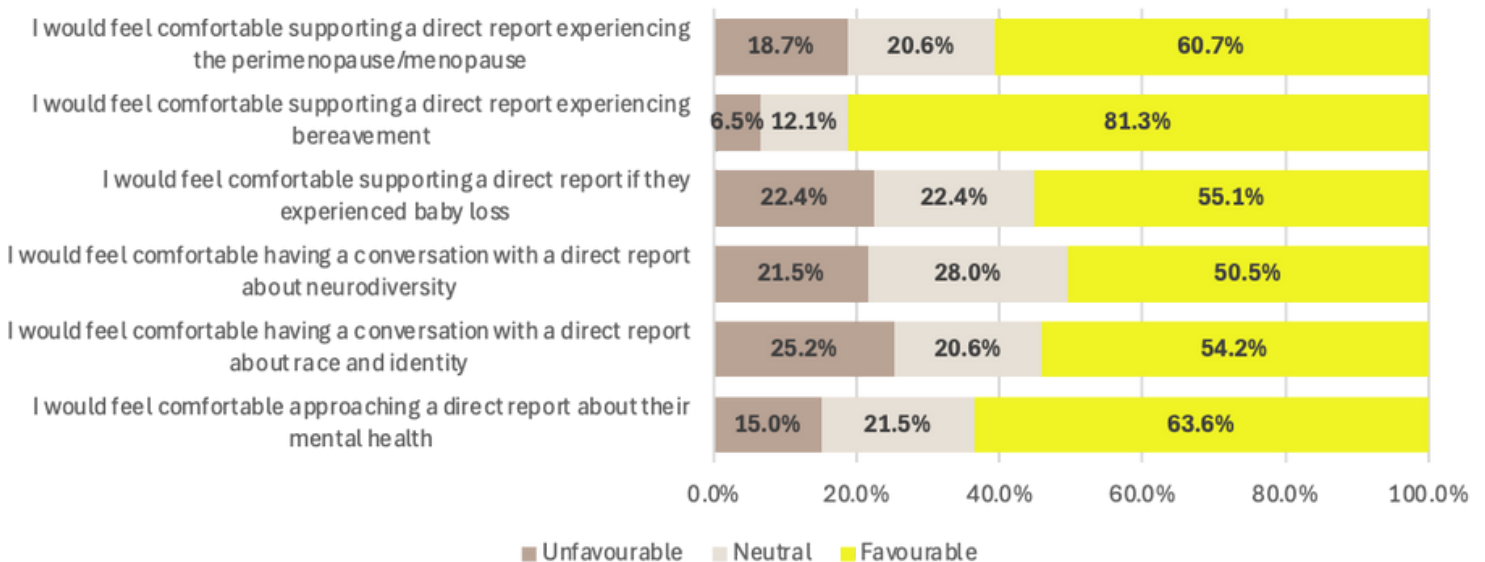
Managing Issues

62.9

When asked about a range of specific issues that they might encounter, managers reported feeling fairly comfortable about them on the whole.

They were most comfortable about supporting bereavement (81% favourable), and least comfortable about neurodiversity (50%), race and identity (54%), and baby loss (55%). These are relatively emotive topics and it seems that support is needed to help managers to deal with them effectively.

Perhaps the figures for supporting bereavement offers a clue: We would anticipate that most organisations have a clear policy on bereavement, including bereavement leave. This clarity is unlikely to be around baby loss, for example, while neurodiversity, race and identity are subjects that attract conflicting and controversial points of view.



Humans at Work Series

tyllrs Humans at Work series spotlights important life changes and struggles employees face in their personal lives, with the aim to give insight to how managers can sensitively approach in conversation and support. The video accounts are all anecdotal and subjective to the people interviewed.

[Watch it here](#)

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Email Tash: tash@tyllr.com



Find out more about The People Experience Hub

We're on a mission to help businesses give employees a voice, and to build healthier, higher performing cultures.

This video explains how we do that through our technology, our people, and our framework (Px3™)

[Watch it Here](#)



or

Email: hello@pxhub.io

