



2025 Employee Perspectives

How Clubs Outperform Other Career Opportunities

Clubs offer a preferred working environment for employees. Leaders can use these insights to recruit, retain, and build a pipeline of talented people by focusing on the strengths of our industry.

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Key Insights

- Across 19 measured attributes, employees indicated that clubs provided better working conditions, with only compensation and promotion opportunities rated better in other workplaces.
- Between managers, supervisors, and hourly employees, hourly employees often rated their experience below those of managers and supervisors.
- Leaders and employees generally agree on what employees want. However, club leaders prioritize training, scheduling, and dedicated spaces significantly more than employees.

Recruiting and Retaining Talent

Attracting and retaining top talent is more critical than ever for club leaders¹, especially as competition for skilled employees intensifies in 2025. With other employers continually raising the bar on benefits and workplace culture, the true differentiator lies in understanding what genuinely drives employee satisfaction and loyalty. The Club Employees' Perspectives ("CEP") research goes beyond satisfaction, offering valuable insights into how clubs compare to other hospitality employers and identifying opportunities to enhance the employee experience.

¹ *Club Leaders' Perspectives: Finding Success and Facing Challenges 2024* (West Palm Beach, FL: GGA Partners), 2024.

The Club Employee Experience

As employers, private clubs have made significant changes to successfully attract and retain employees. Our ongoing Club Leaders' Perspectives research has tracked these changes over the past three years, and the CEP results show that clubs are finding success. Employees with experience outside of clubs were asked to select where various employment dynamics differed to understand how successful clubs have been. Each respondent was given three options: better in clubs, not better or worse, and better in other jobs.

Figure 1: Comparison of Workplace Conditions

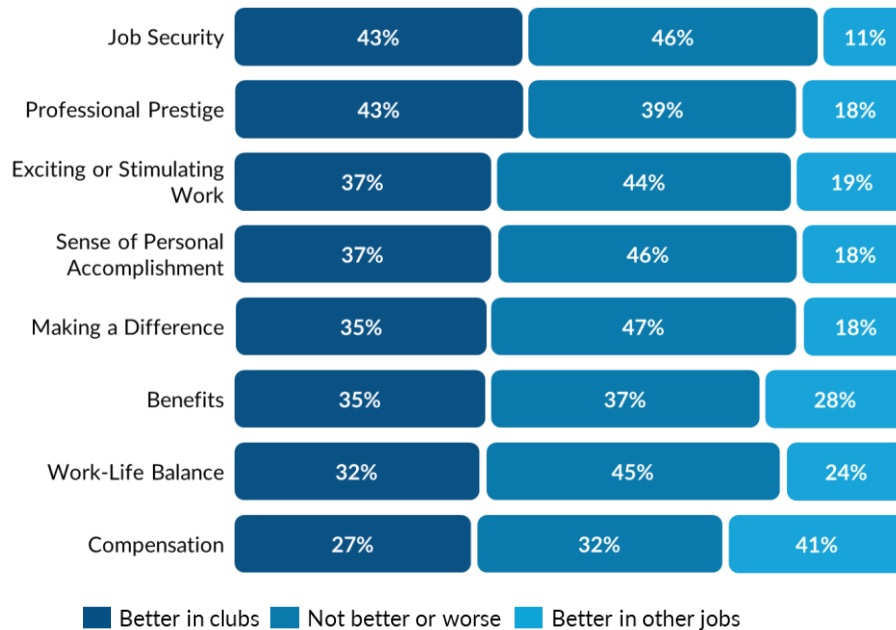


Workplace Conditions. In assessing the work environment, Figure 1 indicates that most clubs perform better in most areas. Employees rated the favorable working conditions (45% compared to 14%) and support from supervisors (43% compared to 16%) superior to other workplaces. These results indicate that leaders have cultivated an atmosphere where employees feel safe and supported, which can be acknowledged and used to attract potential new hires and retain existing employees. While no workplace condition dynamics were superior to clubs, most respondents noted that the remaining dynamics, such as manageable workloads (48%) and environmental safety (48%), were comparable across workplace settings.

Clubs are providing a preferred working environment, and these results can be leveraged to attract and retain employees.

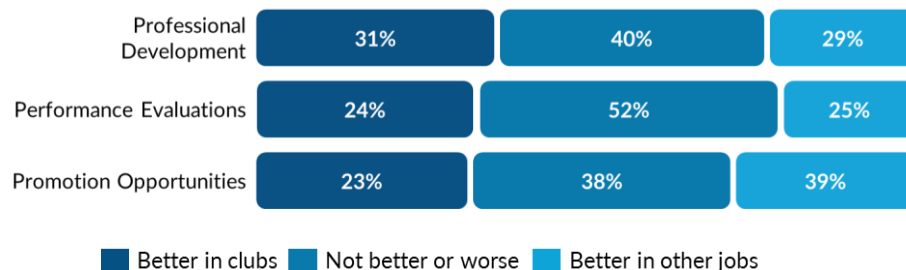
Personal Fulfillment. Club employees indicated that the aspects of personal fulfillment in clubs are generally better than in other jobs (Figure 2). Job security (43% compared to 11%) and professional prestige (43% compared to 18%) are substantially better in clubs than in other hospitality occupations. The most notable difference is the compensation rating compared to different jobs, where a difference of -14 % indicates employees see stronger pay opportunities outside of clubs. Like workplace conditions, the remaining dynamics were comparable across various employment settings.

Figure 2: Comparison of Personal Fulfillment



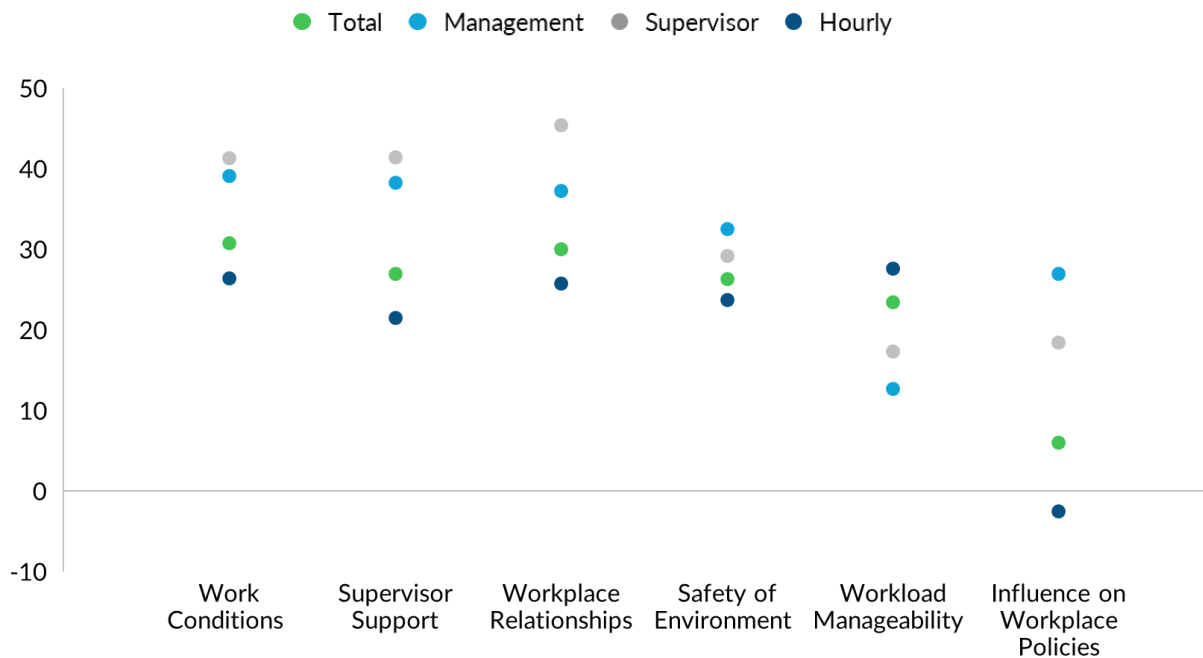
Performance Opportunities. Of the three areas assessed, this represents the most significant opportunity for improvement. Results in Figure 3 show that while professional development is better in other jobs, performance evaluations and promotion opportunities were rated below other jobs. Promotion opportunities (-16%) were similar to compensation in that this is one area where employees see better opportunities outside of clubs.

Figure 3: Employee Performance Recognition



Employee Differences. While clubs are experiencing success, especially for managers, differences persist across employee classifications. This is especially true for hourly employees, who indicated a lower level of preference for clubs over other hospitality careers. Across work environment (7 out of 8), personal fulfillment (7 out of 8 dimensions), and performance opportunities (3 out of 3), hourly employees showed the lowest levels of preference for clubs. Figure 4 visualizes a sample of these differences, with values calculated by subtracting the % of those who said outside of clubs is better from those who indicated clubs are better. Any value above '0' is positive for clubs, where negative values indicate opportunities for improvement.

Figure 4: Employee Group Differences



Results reveal a range of disparities among management, supervisors, and hourly employees. Managers rated work-life balance and workload manageability the lowest among all employee groups. Supervisors had varied assessments, with job security, work conditions, supervisor support, and workplace relationships receiving the highest ratings among employee groups. Only compensation and promotion opportunities were deemed lower in clubs by all employees, representing the greatest potential for improvement.

Comparing Leaders and Employees

There are similarities and differences between the results of the CEP and what leaders believe is necessary to improve the employee experience². Except for performance-based bonuses, where employees selected this attribute at a higher level (46% to 41%), leaders indicated the importance of these attributes at a higher level and, in many instances, a significantly higher level.

Figure 5: Club Leader and Employee Differences

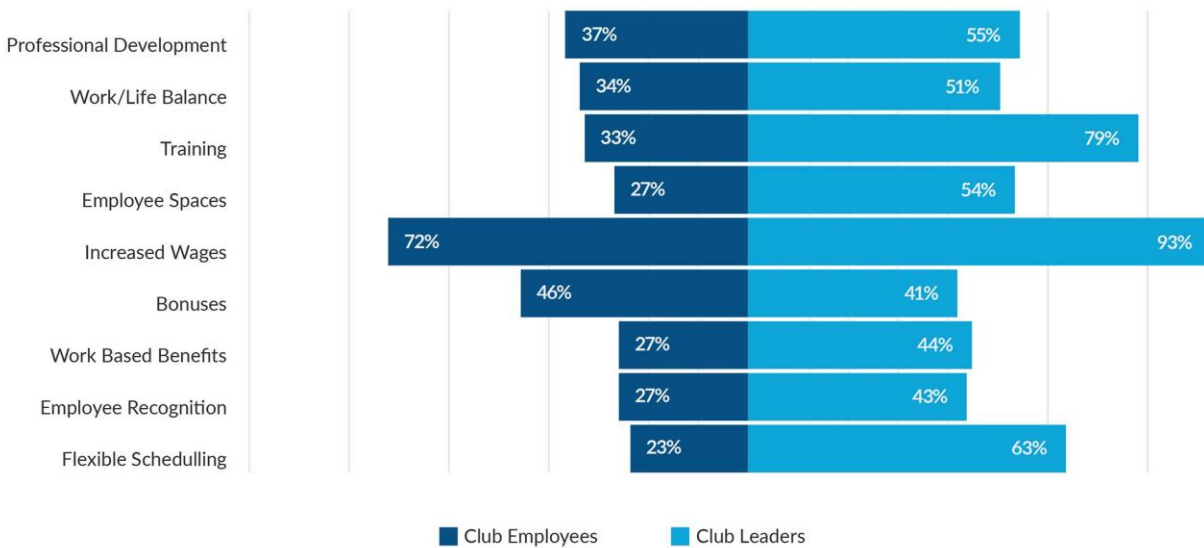


Figure 5 shows the greatest differences are found in the perceived desire for training (46%), flexible scheduling (40%), and the importance of employee spaces (27%). Even wages show a 19% difference between the percentages of employees and leaders who view this as necessary for improving the employee experience. When examining these results, it is important to note that these employee experience attributes are essential, as their removal could elicit adverse reactions. This is especially true for training, where employees place significantly less emphasis on enhancing the experience than leaders. These results indicate that current training can be improved or better aligned with employee needs.

To help understand the needs of your employees, leaders need to understand which efforts would be most successful for their individual club.

² Club Leaders' Perspectives: Finding Success and Facing Challenges 2024 (West Palm Beach, FL: GGA Partners), 2024.

The Club Leader's Opportunity

Concerns exist about clubs' ability to attract and retain staff, and the results of the CEP indicate that ongoing efforts to improve the employee experience are yielding positive outcomes. However, we expect that enhancing the employee experience will continue to be a priority for club leaders. To support these initiatives, leaders can focus on the following:

1. **Hourly Employee Emphasis.** For leaders, recognizing that hourly employees view clubs less favorably than management raises the question, "How can we improve the employee experience for this unique and important employee group?" A few avenues include providing a clear path to promotion, presenting opportunities for performance-based pay, and increasing compensation (where appropriate relative to the market).
2. **Gather Employee Insight.** Club leaders can leverage tailored resources and strategies informed by employee surveys to identify the unique needs of their employees across different departments and groups. Striking a balance between enhancing the employee experience and maximizing return on investment requires small yet impactful actions informed by employee preferences that can boost employee satisfaction and retention.
3. **Celebrate Successes.** Lean into CEP results that provide unbiased, quantifiable support that clubs are a great place to work when recruiting new employees. Emphasizing the benefits of clubs, such as job security, prestige, working conditions, and management support, helps create a compelling story to attract employees. While improvement opportunities will always exist, these results can be used in your current or next recruiting cycle.

Leaders who focus on understanding the specifics of what their employees want will be able to enhance the employee experience and improve recruitment and retention outcomes.

Visit www.ggapartners.com/perspectives to discover more about how effective strategy can help clubs be a preferred place to work, explore insights from the Club Employees' Perspectives research, and learn how GGA Partners can support your club's long-term success.

