

Brilliant

The Brilliant Employee Experience Model

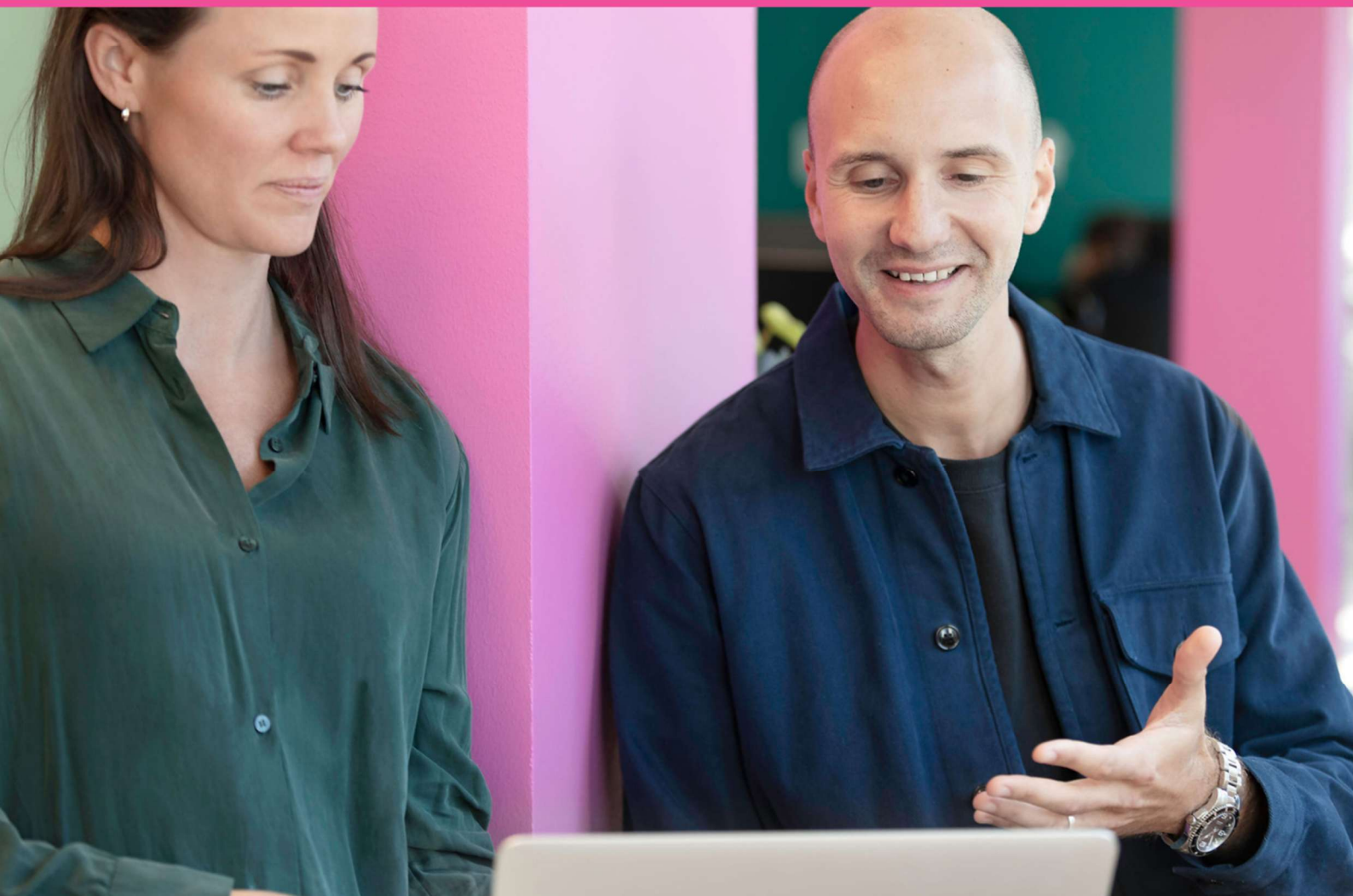


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Introduction

In recent years, the labour market has undergone significant changes. Rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning have transformed many jobs (World Economic Forum, 2025). In light of these developments, analytical and creative thinking have become increasingly essential skills for workers. Furthermore, sustainability has gained greater attention - not only in the context of climate change and the energy transition but also in fostering a sustainable work environment. This encompasses, among other aspects, a physically and psychologically safe workplace where all team members feel included and diverse perspectives are valued. It also involves hybrid work opportunities and other conditions that enable employees to balance their professional responsibilities with personal obligations and social activities. Additionally, it includes leadership support and personal development programs that help employees advance in their careers.

At the same time, customer expectations have risen. With access to vast amounts of information, customers can easily compare alternatives and increasingly demand a personalised approach that meets their specific needs. To remain competitive in this continuously evolving market, organisations must adapt to these shifts. Many successful organisations now prioritise employee well-being - not only to retain their most valuable asset, their people, but also because they recognise that engaged employees are both more productive and more effective in meeting customer needs, ultimately driving the organisation's overall success.

The Service Profit Chain

The *Service Profit Chain* is a model developed by Heskett et al. (1997, 2008) that explains how internal operations influence external performance and ultimately drive the achievement of organisational goals. It establishes connections between employee satisfaction and loyalty, customer loyalty, productivity, and overall effectiveness. The model is based on the following principles:

- Organisations seek to increase sales, profitability, and growth. The key to achieving this is customer loyalty, which in turn depends on customer satisfaction.
- Customer satisfaction and loyalty are strongly influenced by the quality of service they experience when interacting with the organisation.
- The value of the service and quality provided by the organisation is directly linked to its internal operations. Engaged and loyal employees enhance service value and quality. Additionally, lower absenteeism and reduced employee turnover contribute to increased productivity and improved service levels.

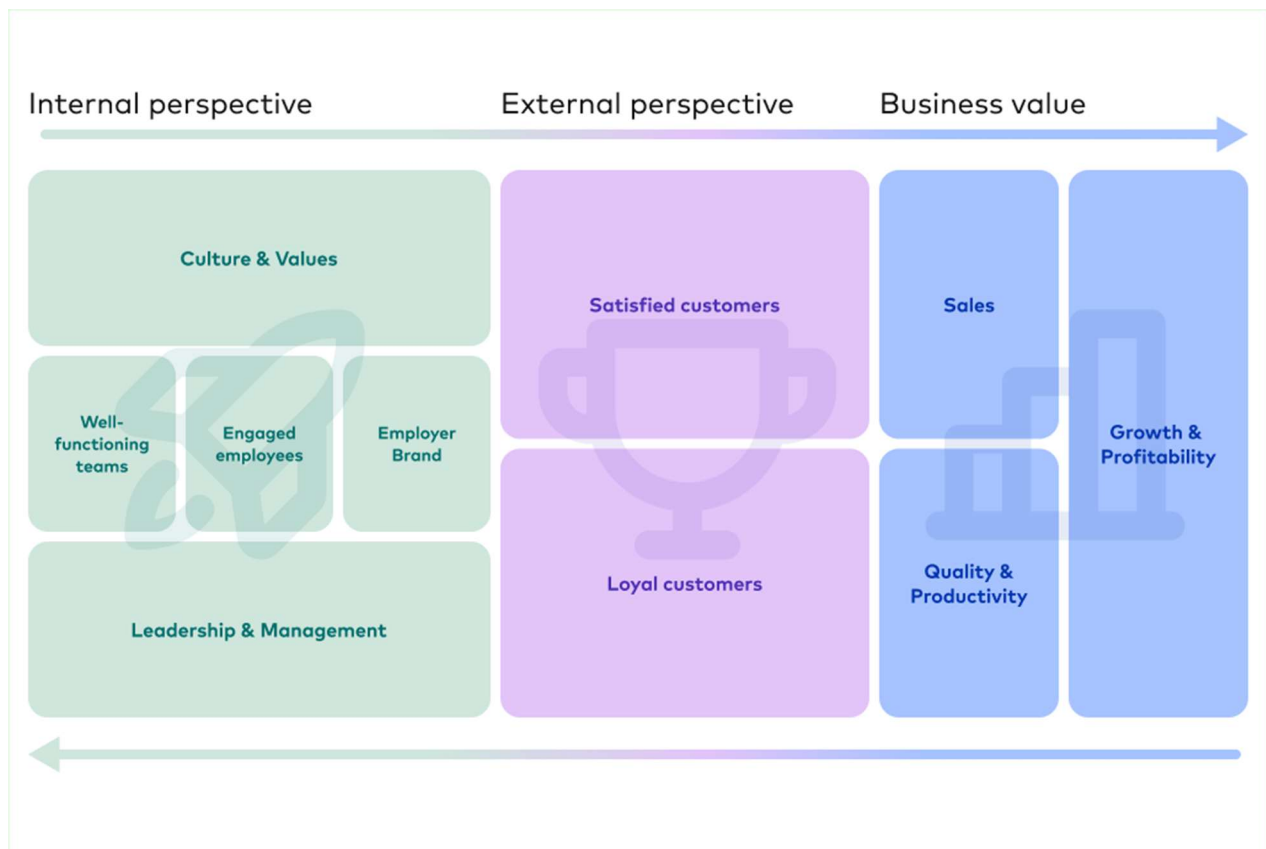


Figure 1: The Service Profit Chain

Many of the individual relationships within the Service Profit Chain have been extensively examined in academic research. For example, Salanova et al. (2005) demonstrate that work engagement influences both employee performance and customer loyalty. The argument is that when employees feel energetic, involved, and happy in their workplace (i.e. engaged), they develop positive perceptions of their work environment and the overall service climate. This, in turn, enhances both employee performance and customer loyalty. Subsequently, customer loyalty leads to repeat purchases, larger transaction volumes, and word-of-mouth recommendations, thereby strengthening the organisation's long-term profitability (Williams and Naumann, 2011). The Service Profit Chain has been empirically tested across various industry contexts (e.g. Yee et al., 2010, 2011; Son et al., 2021; Kazemi and Elfstrand Corlin, 2021), with all studies identifying significant relationships between the model's key components.

The employee perspective

The work environment is fundamental to fostering employee engagement. It all begins with a psychologically safe workplace, where employees are respected, feel free to express their opinions, and are not afraid of making mistakes, knowing that these will not be held against them. Such an environment encourages learning and continuous improvement. If these fundamental aspects of a healthy work environment are compromised, it becomes difficult—if not impossible—for employees to be fully engaged in their work. Effective leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring that these basic workplace conditions are met. A good leader provides guidance, inspires employees, and motivates them to perform at their best, ultimately contributing to the

organisation's success. In turn, this is likely to influence employee behaviour. When employees feel more motivated, energised, focused, and well-managed, they not only become more productive and efficient but also develop a stronger sense of loyalty towards the organisation. As a result, they are more likely to recommend the organisation as a great place to work and become true ambassadors for its values and mission.

These relations are visualised in the figure below, which is called the pyramid model.

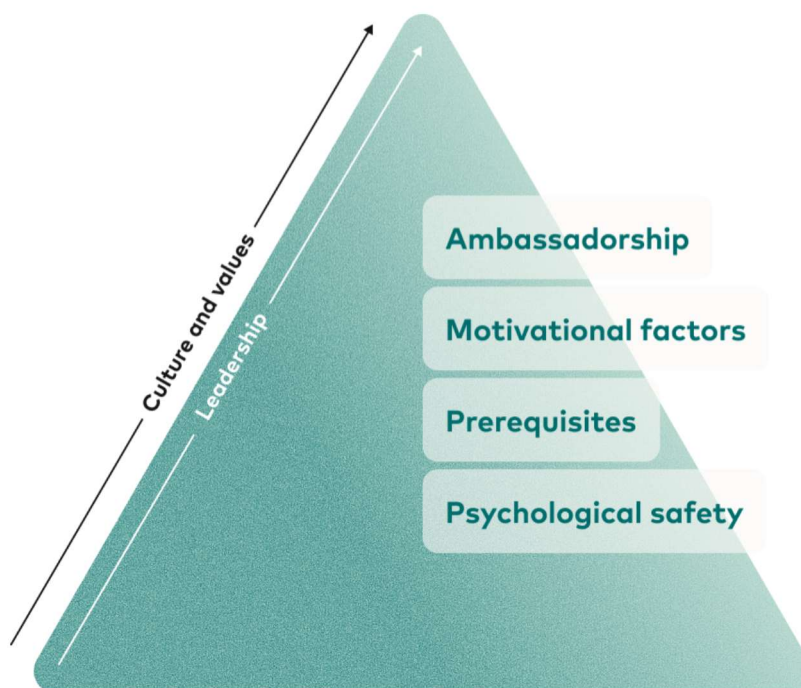


Figure 2: The pyramid model

But what happens if an organisation faces challenges related to psychological safety, the work environment, clarity, teamwork, motivation, or leadership? What role does the management team play, and how can meaningful change be achieved? Investigating an organisation's internal relationships is essential for initiating organisational change, as a clear understanding of current needs and requirements is crucial for driving meaningful and sustainable improvements. In the following sections, we will explore these key concepts in greater detail, elaborate on the theoretical foundation of our model, and discuss how Brilliant measures these constructs.

Note: We acknowledge that there are clear differences between private and public organisations, as private organisations are often strongly focused on profitability and return on investment, while public organisations prioritise serving the public interest, providing services, managing resources, and implementing policies that benefit the community. Nevertheless, we believe that all aspects of the work environment discussed shortly are relevant and applicable to both private and public organisations.

Engagement

The concept

Among researchers, the concept of engagement has been widely debated, yet no universally accepted definition has emerged (Bakker, 2022; Byrne, 2022; Bridger, 2018). Nevertheless, a frequently cited definition describes engagement as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli et al., 2002, 2013). Individuals who are engaged in their work exhibit high levels of energy, enthusiasm for their tasks, and deep immersion in their work activities.

There is a vast amount of evidence demonstrating that employees play a crucial role in driving performance, whether at an individual, team, business unit, or organisational level. Since engaged workers tend to be open to new experiences, research has shown that they generate more creative ideas and are more likely to innovate and demonstrate entrepreneurial behaviour (Gawke et al., 2017). Additionally, work engagement has significant implications for objective career success (Hakanen et al., 2021). At the team level, engaged employees are more likely to support their colleagues, fostering a positive dynamic, as teamwork engagement has been found to be positively correlated with team performance (Costa et al., 2015; Tims et al., 2013). Furthermore, high levels of employee engagement contribute to stronger financial performance at the organisational level (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009).

Engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption.

Some researchers have distinguished between emotional engagement and engagement that drives the organisation forward, also referred to as organisation-driven engagement (Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014) or affective commitment (Rhoades et al., 2001). The first considers engagement as an attitude (“it is great to do this work”), while the second is closely linked to a specific organisation (“it is great to work for this organisation”). Brilliant’s engagement index incorporates both emotional and organisation-driven engagement.

Brilliant’s engagement index consists of two components. The first is the energy dimension, which serves as a strong indicator of engagement. The second is the clarity dimension, which we consider a key determinant of engagement. Clarity encompasses both an understanding of organisational goals and a clear perception of more operational tasks. The rationale for including the clarity dimension is that high energy levels alone do not necessarily enhance organisational performance—without clear direction, high energy can lead to employees losing focus on their operational tasks. It is crucial to position energy levels in relation to employees’ understanding of their responsibilities, ensuring that their efforts are directed towards what truly matters. This alignment enables teams and organisations to achieve success.

There is substantial evidence that goal clarity has a positive impact on organisation-driven engagement (e.g. Callier, 2016; Chenevert et al., 2013; Manas et al., 2018). When employees lack a clear understanding of their objectives, they tend to invest less effort in their work, exhibit lower motivation, and limit their contributions to the minimum required by their contracts.

Measurement and presentation

Brilliant measures engagement through an engagement index, which includes both an energy dimension and a clarity dimension, as explained in the previous section.

Our energy dimension is based on a combination of “work engagement” and “organisation-driven engagement”. Work engagement measures employees’ level of engagement with their daily work, encompassing their emotional, cognitive, and physical involvement in tasks. It is driven by personal passion and motivation, focusing primarily on the individual employee’s relationship with their specific work and responsibilities. Organisation-driven engagement, on the other hand, reflects employees’ commitment to the organisation as a whole. It includes their sense of loyalty, belonging, and dedication to the organisation’s goals, values, and success. This form of engagement is shaped by organisational culture, leadership, recognition, rewards, and the alignment between employees’ values and those of the organisation.

One of our questions specifically addresses employees’ willingness to put in extra effort, a concept commonly referred to as discretionary effort or extra-role behaviour. This is a key element of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) (Sharafizad et al., 2020; Widarko and Anwarodin, 2022), which reflects employees’ voluntary efforts beyond their formal job requirements.

In the field of psychology, there is broad consensus of the notion that the engagement concept contains three different dimensions: emotional, behavioural and cognitive engagement (Shuck et al., 2017; May et al., 2004). Shaufeli (2013) shows how these dimensions relate to the key elements in the definition of engagement: vigour, dedication and absorption. If we compare our questions on energy with the questions that belong to these factors, we see that our construct is a mix of vigour and dedication.

Our clarity concept is related to two aspects of role clarity: goal clarity (the extent to which the outcome goals and objectives of the job are clearly stated and well defined) and process clarity (the extent to which the individual is certain about how to perform his or her job) (Sawyer, 1992). Our construct is based on these definitions, ensuring that both strategic direction and operational clarity are accounted for in our engagement measurement.

The Engagement index (4 questions)

Energy

1. Are you motivated in your work?
2. Are you willing to make extra effort when needed to contribute to the organisation's success?

Clarity

3. Do you know what you are expected to achieve in your daily work?
4. Is it clear to you how your team contributes to reach the organisation's overall goals?

Brilliant presents the relationship between energy and clarity with this engagement matrix:

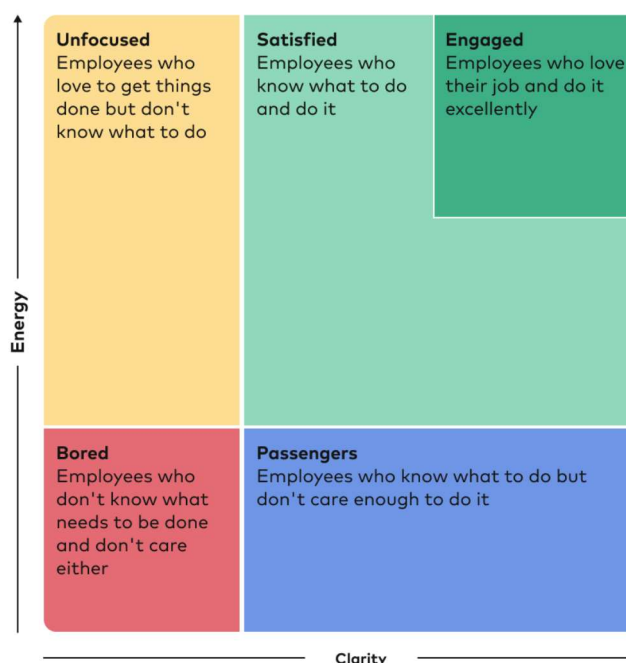


Figure 3: The engagement matrix

The two dimensions 'energy' and 'clarity' are provided on the axes. We distinguish several categories:

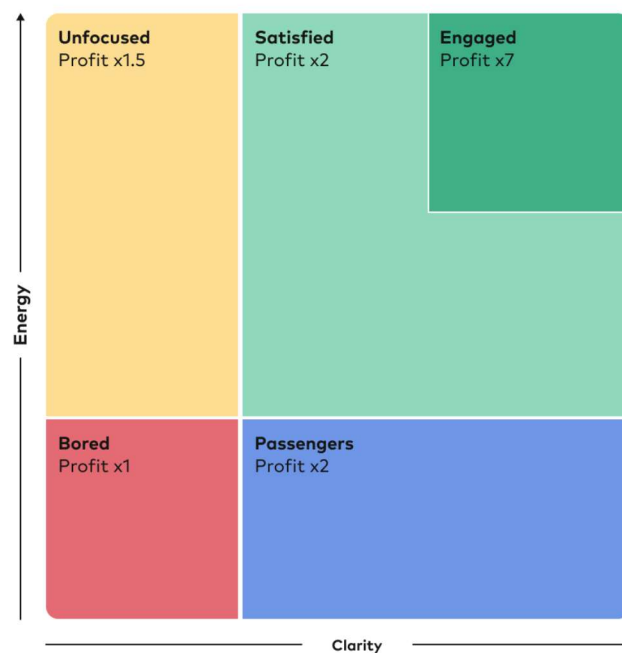
- Engaged employees: employees who love their job and do it extremely well
- Satisfied employees: employees who know what to do, and do it
- Unfocused employees: employees who love to do things, but do not know what to do
- Passengers employees: employees who know what to do, but do not care enough to do it
- Bored employees: employees who do not know what to do, and do not care either

Every unit, whether it is an organisation, a business unit, a team or an individual employee can be plotted in the figure.

Empirical evidence

We conducted a study where we related both energy and clarity to profitability, see the figure below. We observed that organisations where the averages on both dimensions for all employees were high (see the dark green area), the organisations showed the highest profitability. Organisations with mostly satisfied employees (see the light-green area) had lower profitability. Subsequently, organisations with mostly passengers (blue area) and unfocused (yellow area) employees showed even lower profitability rates.

This study shows how engagement is associated with the financial result of the organisation.



BRILLIANT STUDY

Profitability in engaged teams is significantly higher than in the other engagement categories.

Profitability is measured as EBITA % (Earnings before interest, taxes and amortisation, divided by total revenue).

The study is based on data from 220 teams.

Figure 4: The effect of engagement in teams on profitability

Psychological safety

The concept

Psychological safety in the workplace is a fundamental element for fostering an environment where employees feel valued, respected, and engaged. It refers to the shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking, allowing members to express their thoughts, ask questions, seek help, and admit mistakes without fear of embarrassment or retribution (Gallo, 2023). Team members feel safe to be vulnerable in front of one another. This concept is pivotal for enhancing team efficiency, creating a better work environment, and boosting employee engagement.

Psychological safety is defined as the belief that the work environment is safe for interpersonal risk-taking. The concept refers to the experience of feeling able to speak up with relevant ideas, questions, or concerns. Psychological safety is present when colleagues trust and respect one another and feel able - even obligated - to be candid (Edmondson, 1999, 2018).

Psychological safety is defined as the belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking. The concept refers to the experience of feeling able to speak up with relevant ideas, questions or concerns.

There is extensive evidence that psychological safety is a key determinant of successful teams (e.g. Newman et al., 2017). Furthermore, in teams where members experience a high level of psychological safety, learning is significantly higher than in teams with much lower psychological safety (Edmondson, 2023).

Measurement

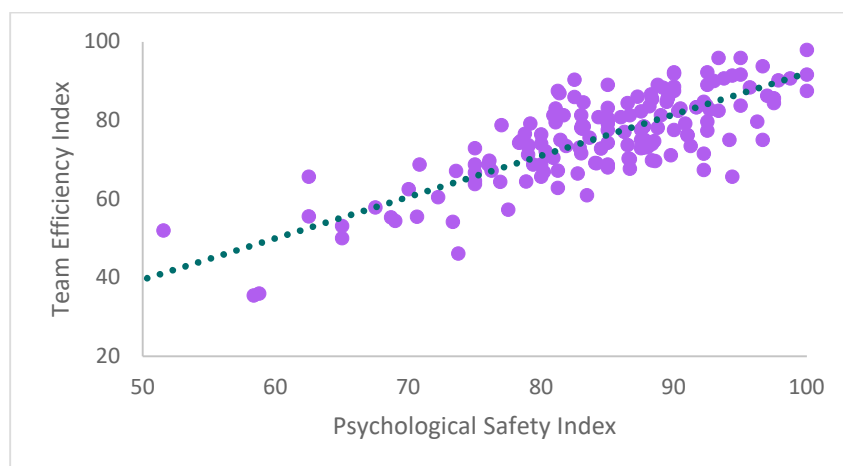
The measurement scale for psychological safety is adapted from Edmondson (1999), which contains several subdomains: asking for help, inclusion and diversity, risk attitude and failures, and an open conversation. We measure psychological safety with the following questions:

The Psychological safety index (5 questions)

1. Do you feel that you can be yourself at work?
2. Do you feel respected by your colleagues?
3. Are you able to freely express your opinions in your team?
4. Do you feel comfortable sharing mistakes in your team?
5. Do you feel that you are part of the team you work in?

Empirical evidence

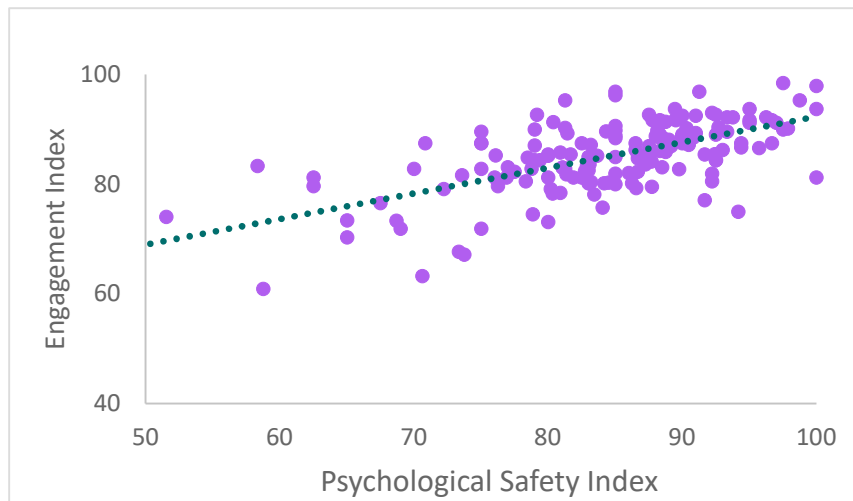
Studies at Brilliant show that psychological safety is an important foundation for successful teamwork. When employees feel able to be themselves, are treated with respect and feel included, better conditions are created for open and constructive collaboration. They are able to express their views, raise different perspectives and talk about mistakes without fear of negative consequences. Psychological safety therefore increases people's willingness to give and receive feedback in order to develop both individual and team knowledge and skills. We also see a positive relationship between psychological safety and engagement. In other words, a safe and supportive working environment contributes to higher motivation and creates better conditions for both development and performance.



BRILLIANT STUDY

The analysis is based on a case study in the public sector, comprising nearly 1,600 responses from 160 teams.

The correlation between psychological safety and team effectiveness is 0.80. The



Team efficiency

The concept

Effective teamwork is one of the key elements of high-performing organisations. Well-functioning teams can lead to enhanced creativity, team learning, quality, and productivity, all of which may ultimately result in greater economic gains (Akgün et al., 2014; Barczak et al., 2010; Gonzalez-Roma and Hernandez, 2014). However, several conditions must be met for teams to truly be effective.

Team efficiency refers to the achievement of common goals or objectives through the coordination of team members' work activities (Irving and Longbotham, 2007). Researchers have encountered challenges in defining the boundaries of the concept of team effectiveness. Two types of models have been identified. The first model relies solely on objective performance and/or productivity figures to measure team effectiveness. The second model is multidimensional and acknowledges that team effectiveness depends on a variety of factors beyond productivity and performance (Delgado Pina et al., 2008). Brilliant adopts the second model, as it allows for targeted work with specific elements to enhance team effectiveness.

Measurement

In research on team effectiveness, usually three dimensions are being recognized (Cohen and Bailey, 1997; Roberson and Colquitt, 2005):

- performance effectiveness assessed in terms of quantity and quality of outputs
- member attitudes
- behavioural outcomes

First, performance outputs refer to specific objective figures related to performance. Second, member attitudes encompass several components, including satisfaction with the team, trust, attachment, and cohesion. Third, behavioural outcomes include cooperation and helping, conflict management, task strategies, and other observable interpersonal behaviours.

Brilliant measures the prerequisites for team efficiency using the following questions:

The Team Efficiency index (4 questions)

1. Do you cooperate well in your team?
2. Does work allocation work well in your team?
3. Is work well planned in your team?
4. Are you good at giving each other feedback in your team?

Empirical evidence

The notion that effective teams are associated with higher performance can be confirmed with data from Brilliant's database. A case study carried out by Brilliant shows that the profitability in highly effective teams (marked as dark green) is 13 percentage points higher than poorly effective teams.

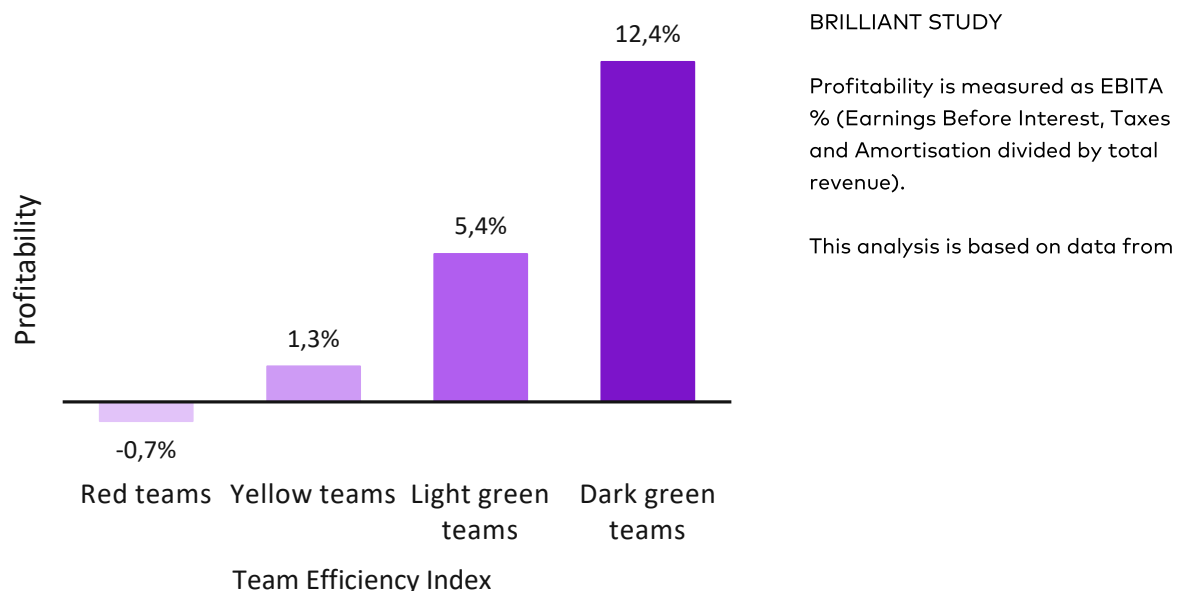


Figure 5: Team efficiency and profitability

As we showed, there is a clear relation between team effectiveness and performance, however, this relation does not stand alone in the complexity of the organisation. There are often other factors that further influence this relation. One of the most important factors is leadership. Several studies show how leadership affects the relation between team effectiveness and performance (Daspit et al., 2013; Hu and Liden, 2011; Wang et al., 2014). The influence of leadership is considered in the next paragraph.

Leadership

The concept

Good leadership is one of the most important factors for an organisation's success. Leadership plays a role not only at the executive level but also at lower levels, where managers are responsible

for larger or smaller areas of focus, whether it be a specific region, a product, a market, or a particular phase of the production process. A good leader is crucial in fostering engagement, successfully embedding a strong corporate culture, and ensuring that organisational members work towards common goals.

The broad concept of leadership has a long history, marked by evolving perspectives shaped by different cultures and eras, and it remains a topic of interest for many researchers and practitioners today. As a result, leadership can be defined in numerous ways. At Brilliant, we use a concise definition: we define leadership as a process of social influence that maximises the efforts of others towards the achievement of a goal (Kruse, 2013).

Leadership involves:

- establishing a clear vision,
- sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly,
- providing the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision,
- coordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders.

Brilliant's leadership model and metrics are based on two theoretical concepts: transactional and transformational leadership. Both leadership models have solid scientific support from both experimental and correlative studies and are used by both researchers and practitioners.

Leadership is defined as a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal.

With transactional leadership, the focus is on communicating clear expectations, setting clear goals, and providing feedback and praise. In this approach, reward and recognition are used as tools to achieve the desired performance, with rewards often being financial and recognition typically psychological (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1997). Transformational leadership, on the other hand, is a style of leadership that facilitates change in individuals and groups. This approach enhances followers' motivation, morale, and performance in several ways. It aligns followers' identities with the team's goals, involves leaders serving as inspiring role models, encourages followers to take greater responsibility for their work, and helps leaders to recognise and develop their followers' strengths and address their weaknesses. This type of leadership is centred on supporting followers' growth and continuous improvement (Bass, 1999; Bass and Avolio, 1993).

In a more concrete sense, transformational leadership is often captured in what is called the four I's:

- *Idealised influence*: the manager leads by setting a good example and builds respect and confidence amongst employees.
- *Inspirational motivation*: the manager motivates and inspires employees by setting challenging goals and conveying sense, confidence and team spirit.
- *Intellectual stimulation*: the manager stimulates creativity and innovation and motivates independent thought.
- *Individualised consideration*: the manager cares about employees' individual needs, listens to them and develops them.

The transactional and transformational leadership models are often presented as two separate approaches, but scientific research suggests that a combination of both produces the best outcomes (Bass et al., 2003). More specifically, the most effective leadership style depends on the situation (Breevaart et al., 2014). In contexts where employees are required to outperform

others, the transactional leadership style tends to be the most effective. In contrast, in situations that call for learning and development, it is more advantageous to adopt a transformational leadership style (Hamstra et al., 2014).

Measurement

Brilliant's Leadership Index measures how leadership is perceived by employees, helping to identify strengths and areas for development within an organisation's leadership. Brilliant's Leadership Index comprises the following questions:

The Leadership index (4 questions)

1. Does your manager lead your team well?
2. Is your manager clear about what is expected from you?
3. Do you get regular feedback from your manager?
4. Do you get support from your manager when you need it?

Leadership and engagement

There is substantial research demonstrating the influence of leadership on employee engagement. For example, Tims et al. (2011) show that transformational leadership has a positive impact on employee engagement, which is mediated by optimism. Specifically, transformational leadership increases optimism, which in turn positively affects engagement. Similarly, trust mediates the positive relationship between leadership and engagement (Hassan and Ahmed, 2011).

Empirical evidence

Brilliant's own studies show that employees who have a manager with strong leadership qualities are significantly more engaged than those who have a manager with weaker leadership qualities. Employees who are led by managers with strong leadership qualities are more motivated in their work, have clearer goals, and possess a better understanding of how to achieve them. They are also more loyal to their employer and more likely to act as both internal and external promoters of the organisation.

BRILLIANT STUDY

Based on about 600 managers and teams (over 5000 responses) in Brilliant's database

The quality of leadership is measured by the Leadership Index.

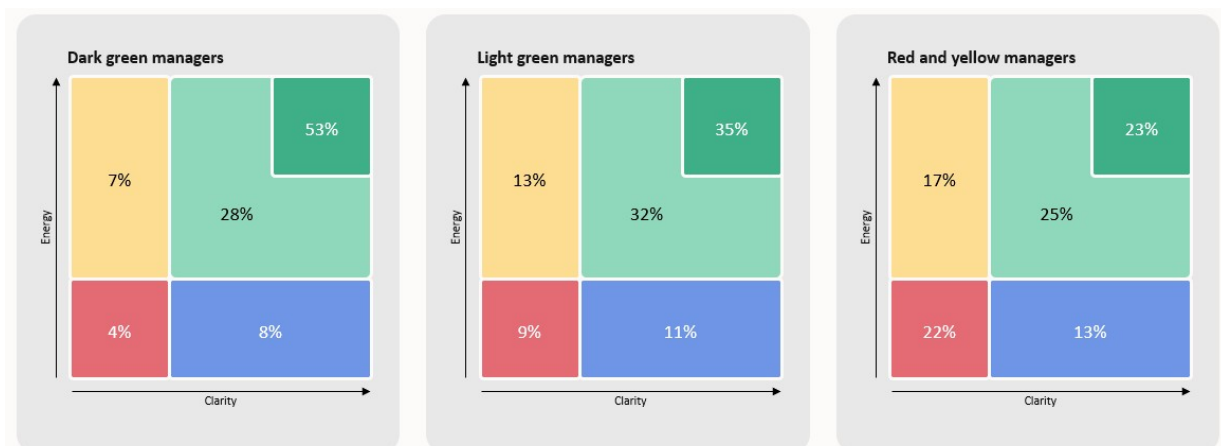
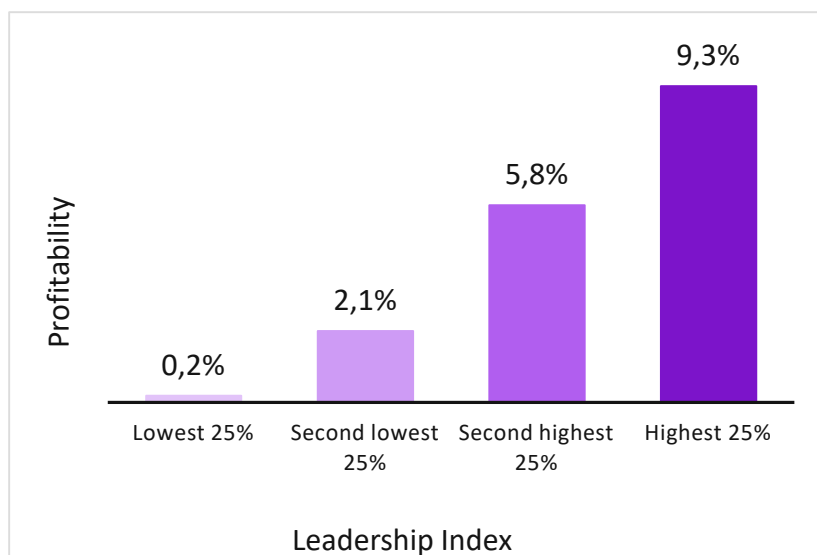


Figure 6: Leadership and Employee Engagement

Using the Brilliant database, we examined the relationship between leadership and profitability. Based on data from 87 companies across various industries, we found a clear positive effect, as illustrated in the figure below. Organisations with strong managers generate significantly higher profits, whereas organisations with weaker managers generate considerably less.



BRILLIANT STUDY

This analysis is based on data from 87 companies.

Profitability is measured as EBITA %, earnings before interest, tax and amortisation, divided by total revenue.

Figure 7: Leadership and profitability

The organisational and social work environment

The concept

The Swedish Work Environment Authority (Arbetsmiljöverket) is responsible for ensuring that work environments across Sweden are safe, healthy, and well-functioning. The authority creates and enforces regulations related to health and safety in the workplace. These regulations apply to all employers in Sweden, and it is the employer who holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring that they are followed. All individuals with an employment relationship are covered by these regulations: permanent employees, part-time employees, project employees, agency workers, temporary staff, hourly employees, trainees, and apprentices. Regardless of the tasks they perform or the duration of their employment, they are included within the scope of these regulations.

The regulation on the organisational and social work environment covers the following areas:

- Knowledge requirements for managers
- Requirements for goals for the organisational and social work environment
- Workload
- Working hours
- Victimisation

The Swedish Work Environment Authority's regulations describe *what* is regulated. *How* to comply is handled by the provisions on the Systematic Work Environment Management (Systematiskt Arbetsmiljöarbete, SAM).

The central activities within the Systematic Work Environment Management are:

- examination of the organisation
- assessment of the risks highlighted during the examination
- actions to reduce risks
- Verification that the measures have contributed to a better working environment.
-

Measurement

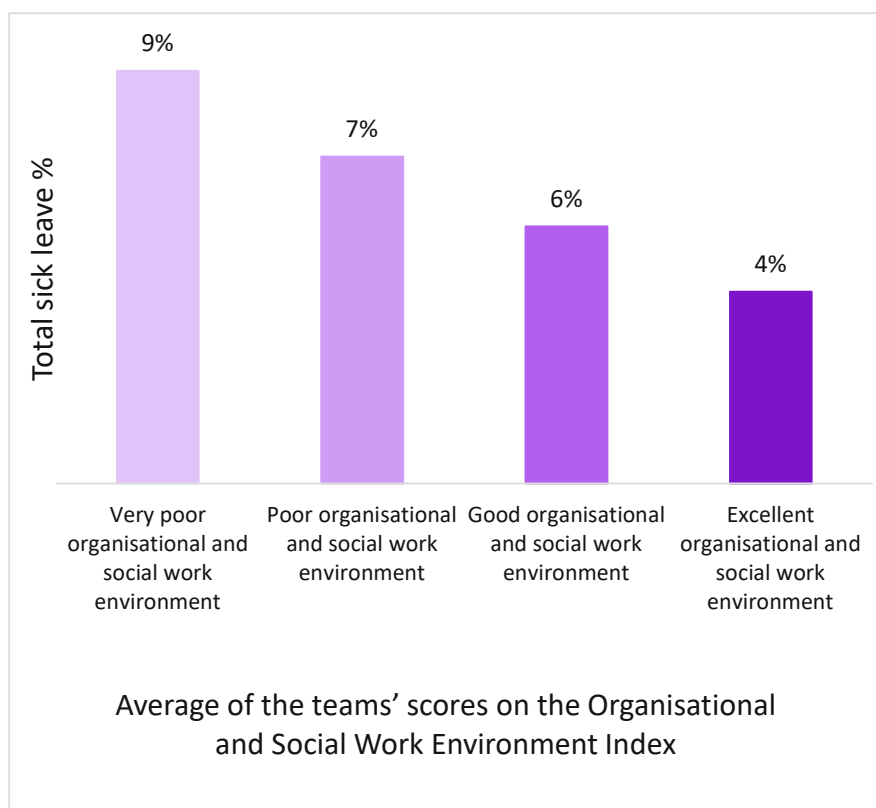
Brilliant's employee surveys help employers explore the less visible aspects of the organisational and social work environment. By conducting a survey, employers can receive important signals about the work environment that may have been overlooked during a physical safety inspection or in conversations with a manager. The questions included in the index for the organisational and social work environment are:

The Organisational and Social Work Environment Index (6 questions)

1. Do you generally have an acceptable stress level in your work?
2. Do you have enough recovery time between working days?
3. Do you receive support when you have a heavy workload?
4. Do you have the prerequisites you need to do a good job?
5. Can you influence your work situation?
6. Do you feel that all employees have the same opportunities and duties regardless of gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation, or age?

Empirical evidence

Using data from the Brilliant database, we investigated the relationship between the organisational and social work environment and sick leave. The hypothesis is that when employees feel less comfortable in the workplace, they are more likely to be absent. This relationship was confirmed, as shown in the figure. As the organisational and social work environment improves, sick leave decreases.



BRILLIANT STUDY

This analysis is based on data from one organisation with 141 teams.

Total sick leave (%) is measured as the share of all types of sick leave (short, average and long) divided by the total amount of working hours.

Figure 8: Sick leave and the organisational and social work environment

Management

The concept

The role of top management in organisations is always complex. Members of the management team face various, and often conflicting, pressures from investors, customers, employees, and society. It is often challenging to meet the needs of both internal and external stakeholders. Top management must balance long-term and short-term planning, choose between launching radical new products or making incremental improvements to existing ones, and stay alert to new business opportunities in the market. At the same time, there is an internal perspective, which involves making the most of available resources such as facilities, brands, knowledge, capital, and, most importantly, people. Trust in management is a crucial factor in employees' willingness to give their best for the organisation. When employees' implicit and explicit expectations are met, they are more engaged and more likely to perform at a high level (Agarwal, 2014).

However, it is not only trust in management that increases employee engagement and effectiveness. Trust is built through communication, and it is the tone set at the top that can strengthen trust in management. Good leadership at the executive level influences leadership at lower hierarchical levels and, in turn, overall organisational effectiveness. This is explained by the "trickle-down effect" (Zhang et al., 2022; Ruiz et al., 2011; Zenger and Folkman, 2016), where positive or negative behaviours at the top of the organisation shape behaviours further down in the hierarchy. Similarly, engagement at the management level fosters engagement at lower levels, helping to build an organisational culture rooted in engagement (Matsuo, 2024).

Measurement

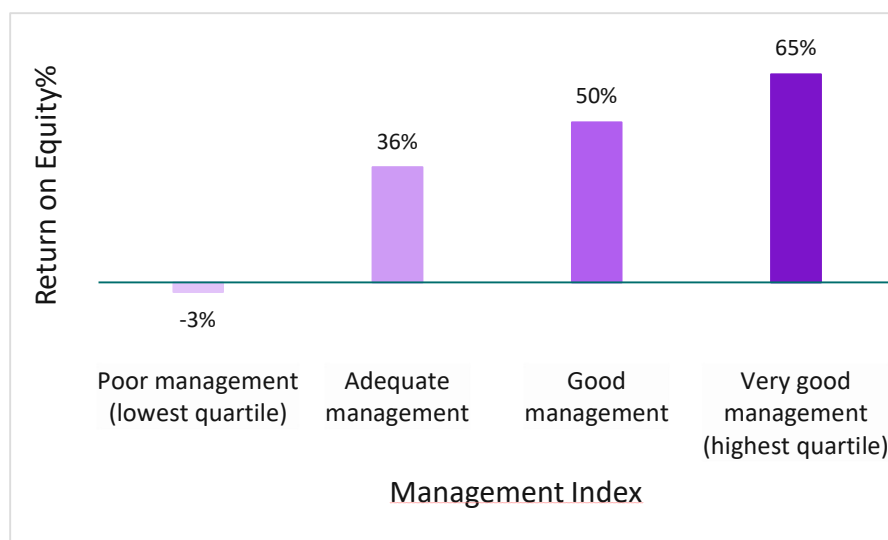
Brilliant's management index incorporates both the internal and external perspectives. Particular emphasis is placed on communication, which is regarded as a key factor in an organisation's success. Employees who feel that management communicates effectively and keeps them informed about relevant matters tend to have greater trust in management and believe that the organisation is better managed, compared to employees who do not perceive communication in their organisation as effective.

The management index (4 questions):

1. Do you think the organisation's management team leads the organisation well?
2. Is the organisation's management team good at communicating internally?
3. Do you feel that the management team convey a clear picture of the organisation's future direction?
4. Do you think the organisation is developing to meet the changes in the world?

Empirical evidence

With data from our own database, we investigated the effect of the management index on profitability. The analysis shows that management teams that are evaluated well by the employees, show higher profitability.



BRILLIANT STUDY

Organisations with management teams that are evaluated well by the employees are more profitable. Profitability is measured as Return on Equity %. The study is based on data from 87 organisations.

Figure 9: Management and return on equity

As mentioned in the theoretical section, leadership at the management level influences leadership at the next hierarchical level. Organisations with strong leadership at the management level often exhibit strong leadership at lower levels as well. This is known as the trickle-down effect: good leadership cascades throughout the organisation. This relationship is illustrated in the following figure.

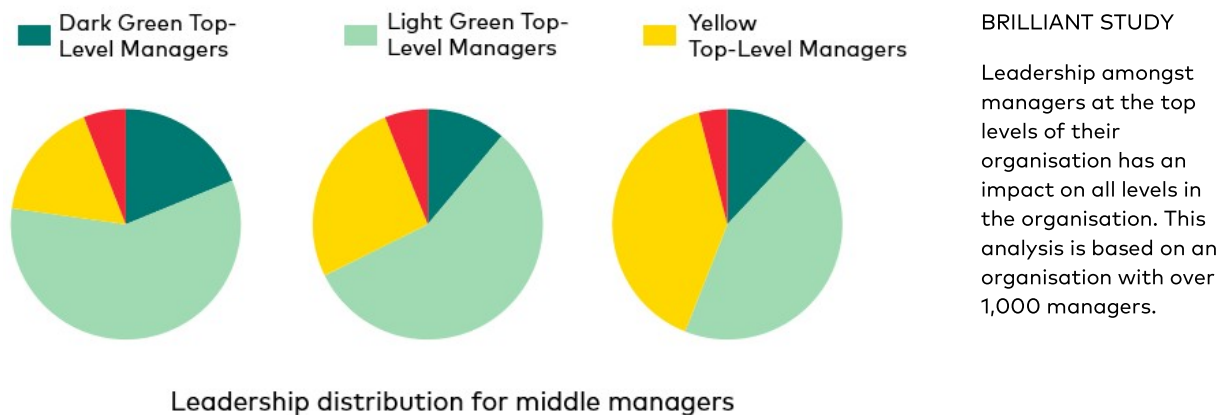


Figure 10: the trickle-down effect: good leadership spreads throughout the organisation

Employer brand (eNPS)

The concept

As employees have become an increasingly important asset to organisations, it has become essential for organisations to attract and retain the best talent. Employer branding is one way to achieve this and can be described as enhancing an employer's reputation as a desirable place to work, along with its employee value proposition. The purpose of employer branding can be both externally focused (attracting new employees) and internally focused (retaining existing employees). External employer branding can be instrumental, involving factors such as compensation, benefits, location, or working hours, or symbolic, relating to the organisational prestige that potential employees may associate with working for the organisation. Internal employer branding focuses on fostering perceptions of organisational identity and culture, which can lead to employee brand loyalty and, ultimately, higher employee productivity (Backhaus, 2016; Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004).

Measurement

One way of measuring Employer Brand is the Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS), which measures the organisation's employment attractiveness overall. The Net Promoter Score (NPS) was originally developed by Fred Reichheld of Bain & Company to measure customer loyalty (Reichheld, 2003; Reichheld & Markey, 2011). Since 2006, Brilliant has used this measurement in employee surveys to measure employer brand.

The NPS question reads: "How likely are you to recommend the organisation as an employer to a friend or acquaintance?" The question is answered on a scale from 0 (not at all likely) to 10 (extremely likely).

- *Promoters* (those who respond with 9 or 10) are considered loyal and enthusiastic employees who have a strong relationship with the organisation and actively recommend it as an employer.
- *Passives* (those who respond with 7 or 8) are considered satisfied but not particularly enthusiastic employees, who could be tempted to leave for another organisation.
- *Detractors* (those who respond with 0–6) are considered dissatisfied employees who do not have a strong relationship with the organisation and often make negative remarks about it.

This question is often followed by a free text question, where respondents can motivate their answer in further detail. The Net Promoter Score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters.

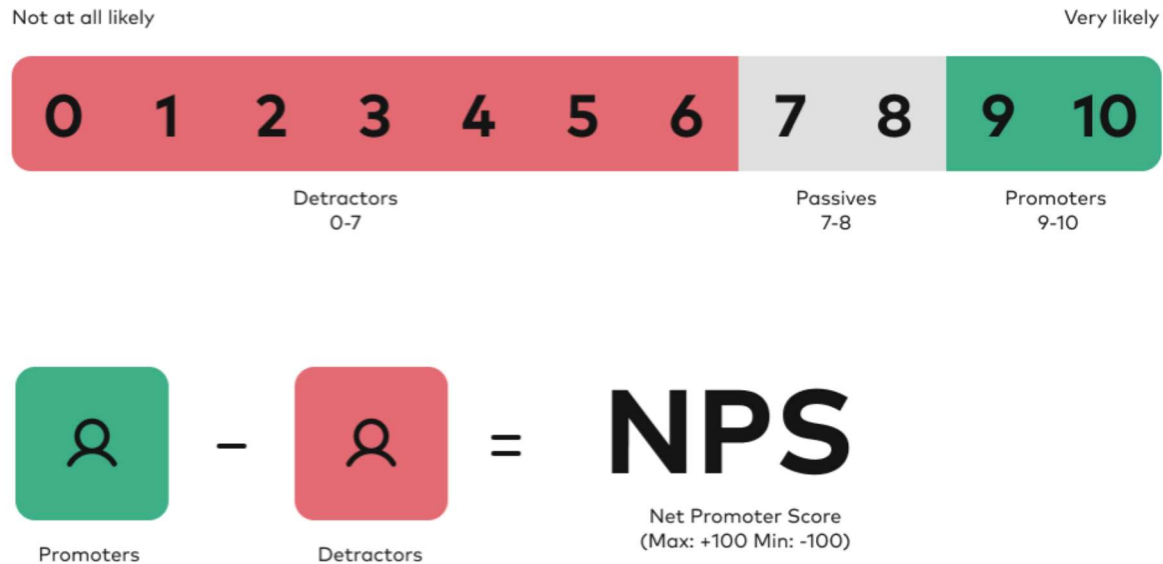


Figure 10: Explanation of the eNPS-score

Empirical evidence

In one of our studies at Brilliant, we examined the relationship between engagement levels and the Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS). See the figure below, which displays the eNPS for each area shown in the figure. The figure clearly illustrates that engaged employees (represented by the dark green area) are associated with a high eNPS. In the light green area, the eNPS is already considerably lower, and in the yellow, blue, and red areas, the eNPS is negative, indicating that there are more detractors than promoters.



Figure 11: Engagement and eNPS

A strong driver of eNPS is trust in management. Employees who believe that the management team leads the organisation well are often promoters of the organisation. The next figure illustrates this correlation, where the horizontal axis displays responses to the question on trust in management on a 1–5 response scale. This relationship between trust in management and eNPS is often strengthened by effective internal communication from the management team.

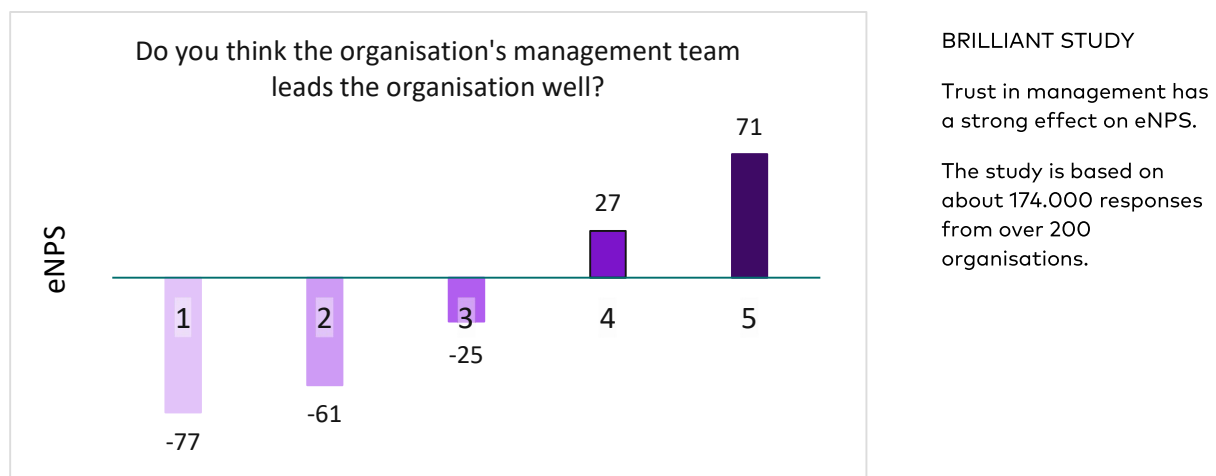


Figure 12: Trust in management and eNPS

Note: Although the Net Promoter Score metric is widely used globally, we acknowledge that it has also been subject to criticism (see Baehre et al. (2022) for an overview). eNPS may be seen as overly simplistic and lacking in specificity. Cultural differences in how respondents answer the NPS question have also been highlighted. Additionally, an excessive organisational focus on this single metric may encourage gamification behaviours. Nevertheless, research shows that the eNPS metric is a strong predictor of organisational success, as demonstrated by Reichheld (2003) among others. It also offers extensive opportunities for benchmarking, allowing for comparisons between organisations, industries, and countries. Benchmarking using eNPS has become particularly appealing due to the widespread adoption of the metric.

Brilliant survey method

Our measurement methods are firmly rooted in academic theory. In addition, the measures are regularly validated through statistical analysis, including factor analysis, regression analysis, and item response theory models. Brilliant's database contains more than 1 million records from employee surveys conducted across numerous organisations in various industries.

Our indexes demonstrate strong psychometric properties in terms of:

- *Reliability*
Cronbach's α typically ranges between 0.8 and 0.9 for our various indexes. This indicates that our measurement scales are accurate and display good internal consistency.
- *Validity*
Our measures exhibit strong content validity as well as construct validity (both convergent and divergent). This means that our measurement scales are accurate and assess what they are intended to measure. Furthermore, our results are generalisable, as they produce consistent outcomes across different organisations, reflecting good external validity.

Reliability and validity are also key considerations in the development of tailor-made instruments that we create for our clients.

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About Brilliant

Brilliant takes customer and employee relationships to the next level through automated recommendations and a holistic view of the situation.

We don't just measure employee engagement and customer experience – we drive real change and support organisations and leaders in becoming better.

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