

IDG Network: [Login](#) [Register](#)**Make your Web site safe for business.****COMPUTERWORLD**
An IDG companyQuickLink 

Search Computerworld

[Home](#)[News](#)[Topics](#)[Print Edition](#)[Services](#)[Subscribe](#)[Events](#)[Research](#)[XML Feeds](#)

You may retrieve this story by entering QuickLink# 51882

[> Return to story](#)

Employees can benefit from outsourcing, poll says

The process can help workers advance careers and hone skills

News Story by Scarlet Pruitt

JANUARY 12, 2005

(IDG NEWS SERVICE) - Although a company's move to outsourcing can sometimes strike fear in employees who see their jobs as endangered, if done right workers may find that the process provides them with an opportunity to advance their careers and hone their skills, according to the findings of a poll out this week.

The poll, conducted in Europe and commissioned by IT services company LogicaCMG PLC, examined the opinions of 200 employees in large organizations before, during and after their positions were outsourced. While a majority of those surveyed, 84%, felt apprehensive at the prospect of having their positions outsourced, about 70% said they were more satisfied with the new roles they were given after the transition.

"There is a lot of confusion surrounding outsourcing, when in fact people often improve their positions and get to work for a specialist operation," said LogicaCMG management consultant Paul Dunn.

Outsourcing is often confused with offshoring, Dunn said, which involves moving jobs to lower-cost markets such as India, while outsourcing involves a company's decision to move a particular operation or function out-of-house. When companies outsource, European regulations stipulate that affected employees retain the same conditions they had in their previous positions.

While remuneration packages, benefits and retraining are important in helping employees through the transition, early and open communication from employers about the decision is the crucial factor in easing employee fears, Dunn said. "A lot of the transition is about perception, and to do the process right, communication is key."

New on-demand webcast

Ensure 100% security policy enforcement
on **EVERY PC** that accesses your network.

[Go to webcast](#)

Dunn suggested telling employees as much as possible about the process, how it will affect them and how their roles will change as soon as the decision is made.

Another important factor is inclusion and making sure that companies offer workers a chance to voice opinions and concerns, Dunn said. Participation by work councils and representative bodies can be particularly helpful in moving employees through the transition and giving them a channel for their feedback, the research found. In fact, 82% of those surveyed said that representative bodies played a crucial role.

If companies fail to communicate outsourcing changes, they risk losing employees, the poll found, with 29% of those surveyed saying they would seriously consider changing jobs if the process wasn't managed effectively.

But if done right, the research indicated that outsourcing isn't as threatening as it may sound. Some 91% of those polled said that their initial fears were at least in part unfounded, while 49% said that they saw outsourcing as an opportunity to improve their skills.

Outsourcing isn't always viewed as a threat, however, since different countries have varying views on the practice. The U.S. seems to have the most open and commercial view toward outsourcing, while traditionally protectionist countries like China view it with much more trepidation, Dunn said. In Europe, where the poll was conducted, the perception appears to be in between, with the U.K. leaning toward the U.S. view.

Still, no matter where employees are located, it appears from the poll that outsourcing can be a positive experience for workers if there is clear communication about the change. "Uncertainty needs to be eliminated as soon as possible," Dunn said.

The LogicaCMG poll was conducted across a range of sectors and employee positions in the U.K., the Netherlands, France and Germany by marketing research company Coleman Parkes.

Reprinted with permission from



For more news from IDG visit IDG.net

Story copyright 2005 International Data Group. All rights reserved.

The advertisement features a photograph of a woman and a man in business attire looking at a laptop. To the right of the photo is a blue banner with the text "New on-demand webcast". Below this is the main headline: "Ensure 100% security policy enforcement on EVERY PC that accesses your network." To the right of the headline is an orange button with the text "Go to webcast" and a mouse cursor icon pointing at it.

Copyright © 2005 Computerworld Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part in any form or medium without express [written permission](#) of Computerworld Inc. is prohibited. Computerworld and Computerworld.com and the respective logos are trademarks of International Data Group Inc.