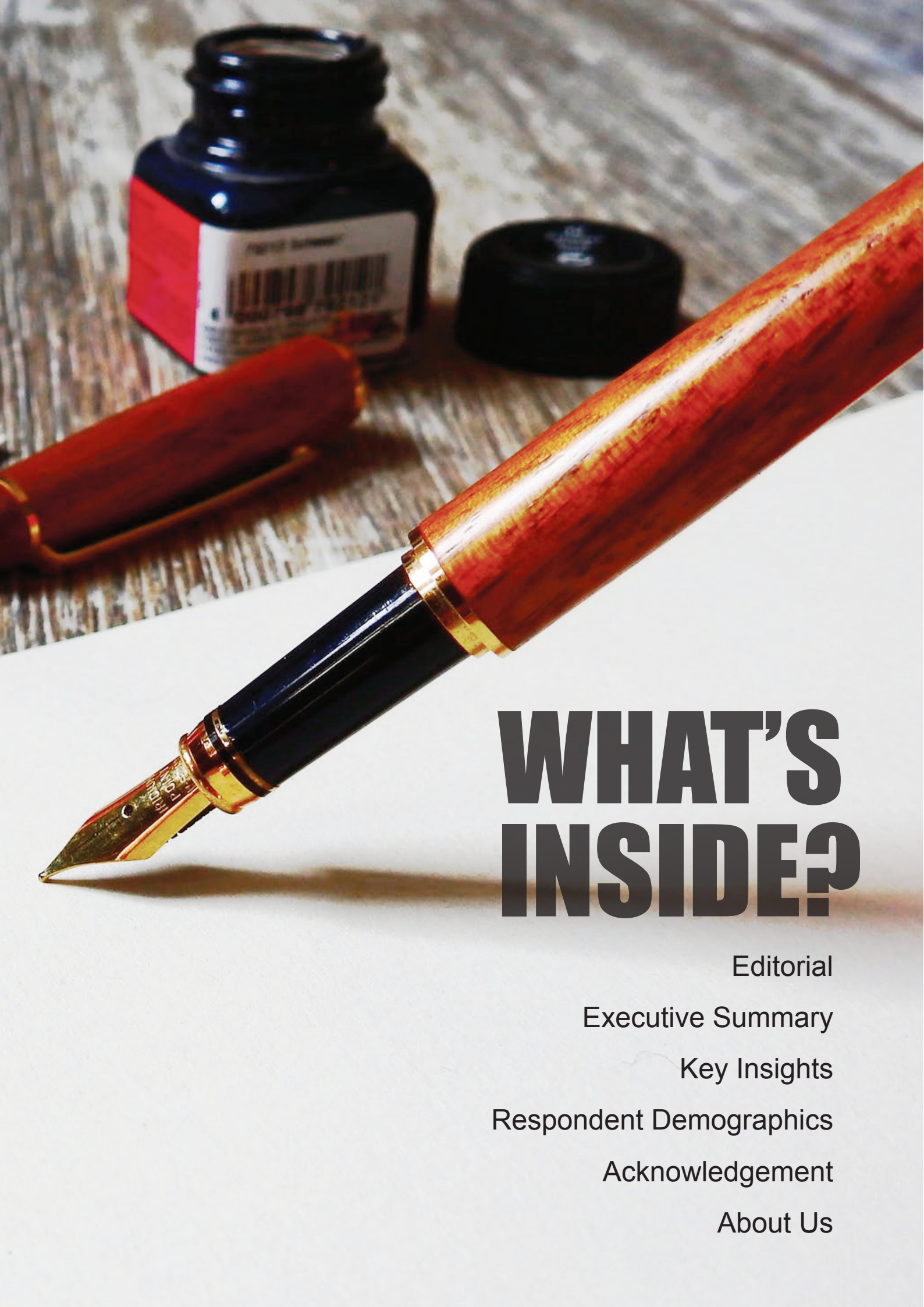


MINDFULNESS AT WORKPLACE

INDIA STUDY 2018



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Marut Bhardwaj
Convenor & Founder
Mindful Leadership India Conclave

We are living in a modern, digital, fast paced VUCA world. Research indicates that working professionals are distracted 47% of the total time that is spent at work. Further, we are under immense pressure to stay continuously connected through technology.

This makes it very challenging to stay present and focused. In order to handle distractions and enhance focus, the practice of mindfulness is gaining significance in corporate corridors.

Mindfulness is an integrative mind-body training that is considered to help professionals to change the way they think and feel, especially about stressful experiences at the workplace.

While the concept gains interest, it is important to take up an unbiased scientific investigation and deliberation into the practice of mindfulness.

Through the annual Mindful Leadership India Conclave and Mindfulness at Work India Study 2018, it's our endeavor to bring industry and professionals together to help come out with insights as well as questions around the concept, relevance and practical utility of Mindfulness in Workspace.



Sapan Shrimal
Managing Partner
Strat-Board Services

Mindfulness has come a long way from being considered a spiritual practice to a scientifically established tool towards organisational success and individual well-being.

Significant amount of research, coupled with early adoption by some of the most progressive business organisations, has helped Mindfulness to gain significant credibility.

However, Mindfulness is yet to travel a long journey before it can become an integral part of management practice and culture.

While there is significant awareness at the concept level, the objective clarity about practice and measurable outcomes yet remains confined to a minor community of experts and researchers.

There is an imminent need to bring forth this subject at the mainstream business and HR deliberations – not only to spread awareness, but to critically debate its seemingly abstract and unclear aspects.

Besides presenting the first set of opinions from Indian industry, we hope that this study opens up avenues for further dialogues to strengthen a dispassionate understanding of Mindfulness, with an intent to create success and well-being at all levels.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTEXT & OBJECTIVE

During the last few years, mindfulness has generated a lot of interest as well debate on its relevance for the workplace. While numerous studies have been carried out internationally, it is important to get factual insights in the Indian context as well.

This study brings together the perspectives and experiences of organisations in India and of their leaders, with respect to the adoption, relevance and challenges around mindfulness at workplace.

With this study, we hope to trigger further dialogues on the topic, enabling greater clarity on specific aspects and attaining higher objectivity in understanding the concept, relevance and implementation of mindfulness at work, resulting into greater success and well-being at individual and organisational level.

Key Findings

Mindfulness at Workplace – India Study 2018 brings forth some interesting and compelling insights for the industry, to reflect and deliberate upon its culture and people strategies with respect to mindfulness. Below are some of the key aspects:

- Corporates in India have expressed an **unequivocal confidence in the value of mindfulness** towards accelerating organisational objectives. This is significant in view of the fact that mindfulness is a recent concept as a corporate and business tool (as compared to other management practices and tools).

Though certain level of skepticism does exist, it paves way for further experimentation and research into the subject.

- Strong belief in the utility of mindfulness **does not necessarily translate into its adoption**. Despite awareness and conviction about Mindfulness, only a small percentage of corporates have actively adopted and implemented it. The fact that Mindfulness does not appear to be in the scheme of things for 43% corporates signify that Mindfulness is still largely considered as a 'good-to-do' initiative, rather than an organisational and business need.

- Industry has **high and wide ranging expectations** from Mindfulness, most significant being productivity enhancement – closely followed by cultural impact and emotional intelligence.

Though at individual level, well-being is considered to be the primary goal of Mindfulness, at organisational level, it does not find similar prominence. This reflects a bit different picture, compared with the world wide concern around stress at workplace and employee well-being.

- Efficacy of Mindfulness will be largely **tested against collaboration and engagement results**, followed by business outcomes. This means that Mindfulness industry must establish clear measures of success on these aspects – which might be a bit challenging, considering the subjective nature of these outcomes.

It also reflects that industry, at this point, does not intend to measure Mindfulness on longer and deeper impact factors, e.g. attrition.

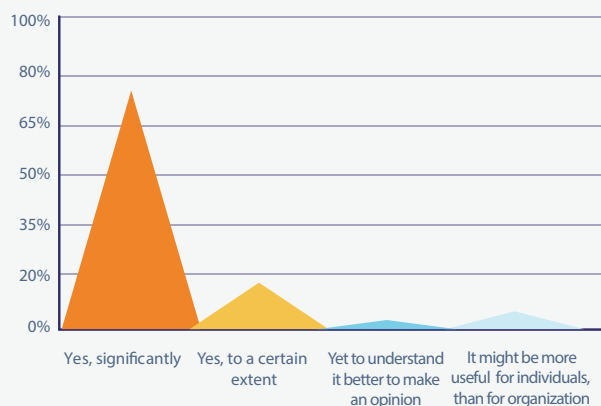
- **Acceptability from employees** is going to be a significant determinant of pace and level at which Mindfulness is adopted in the business organisations. While employees are largely expected to be interested in Mindfulness, their sustained involvement may be a challenge.

- **Notions and mindset** about Mindfulness, coupled with low awareness about research around it, could pose a challenge in getting buy-in from business. Leadership support (or lack of it) is expected to be the most significant factor in the adoption of mindfulness.



SHG'S KEY

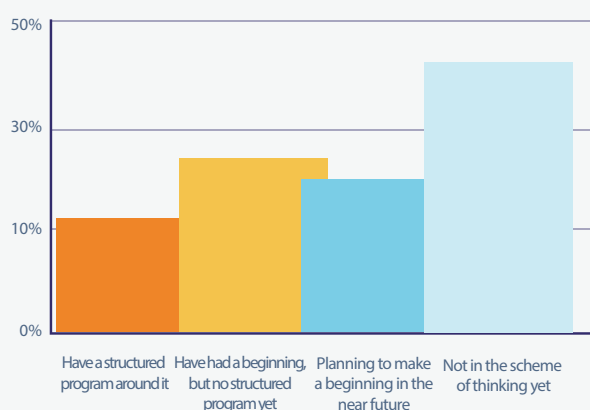
A) In your view, can mindfulness contribute to the organizational success?



One of the most fundamental questions on Mindfulness at work has been answered. A resounding 78% respondents believe that Mindfulness can significantly contribute to organisational success. An additional 17% are also believers and think that Mindfulness can make an impact upto a certain extent. It's only a minor 2% who are to yet understand about it further. This implies a strong awareness as well as conviction among Indian corporates about Mindfulness.

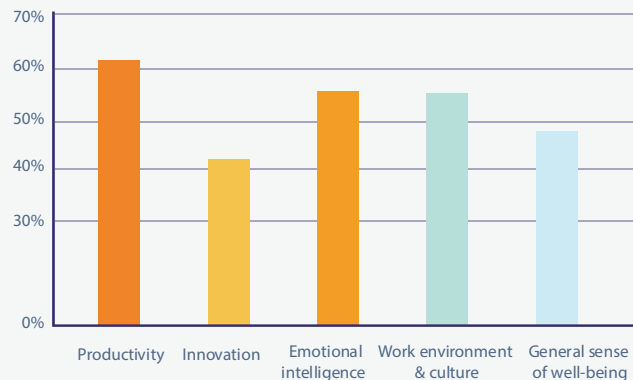
What's even more encouraging is that the same sentiment is being expressed across industries and from organisations of all sizes. Notably, all respondents from multi-national organisations clearly reflect a belief in the value of Mindfulness for organisations, as opposed to a general perception of it being a more individual centric practice.

B) Where does your organization stand with respect to adoption of mindfulness?



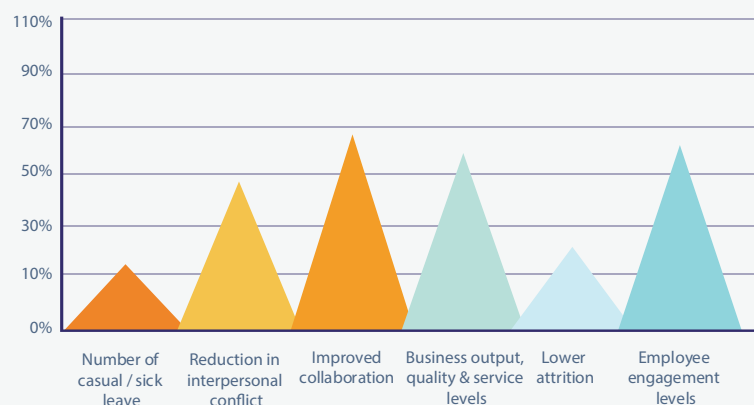
Compared with the overwhelming awareness and belief in the potential impact of Mindfulness, Only 11% corporates have a structured program around it (though it is pertinent to note that it is not limited to only large organisations). A large 43% still do not have it their current scheme of thinking, while there are a significant number of corporates (46%) who have made a beginning somewhere and are even experimenting with some ad hoc programs. This signifies that while corporates believe in the value of mindfulness, there still exist enough apprehensions and uncertainties about the practical realities. It seems that a more objective and quantifiable understanding and conviction is yet to emerge among Indian corporates.

C) In what ways, according to you, can mindfulness contribute towards organizational effectiveness?



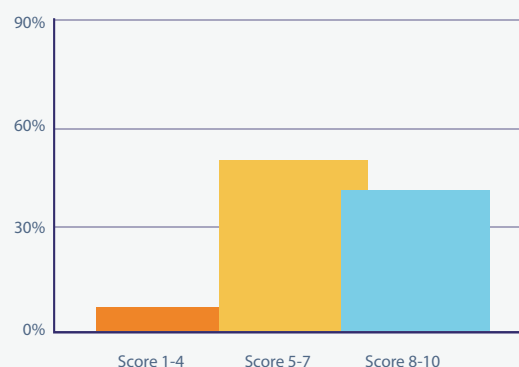
The industry perception about the specific outcomes of Mindfulness seems to be in line with the research studies on the subject – signifying wide ranging benefits, from organisational productivity to individual well-being. While a little larger number of respondents (63%) believe productivity is the biggest benefit, all the areas have received largely similar importance. Notably, medium to large organisations mostly chose productivity, followed by emotional intelligence. SMEs have given almost equal importance to all the benefits presented. It may also imply that Mindfulness can contribute differently for each organisation and that largely depends on the current state and priorities of the organisation.

D) What indicators would you like to measure, to calculate the ROI of mindfulness interventions?



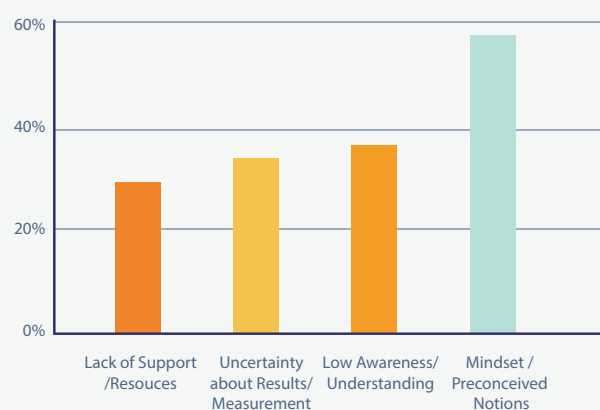
Every organisational intervention needs to clear the acid test of ROI. A significant number of respondents would attribute Mindfulness as a successful tool, if it can show clear outcomes on interpersonal and engagement aspects. It is interesting to note that more specifically quantifiable factors (attrition and leaves) have not been given higher priority by the respondents. It could be due to the belief that the benefit may not go so deep, as to arrest the attrition levels or to directly impact the physical health. As expected, the industry seems to be fairly divided on this matter and seems that the ROI factors are decided on organisation specific needs and a single ROI factor is still far in the journey. Respondents did not suggest any additional factors (despite being given the option), implying that industry is also exploring different options, with no clear answers.

E) On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are the employees to welcome mindfulness in the organization?



While respondents believe that employees will welcome Mindfulness interventions, some level of skepticism does exist. A mere 6% respondents believe that employees will be disinterested, most of the respondents expect to receive a moderate to high acceptance and interest from employees. It is pertinent to note that employees' low acceptance is only expressed from SMEs. Responses represent a direct correlation between the size of organisation and belief of interest from employees – bigger the size, higher the belief. Though the belief is similar across industries, BFSI and education / research industries seem to be showing higher conviction.

F) Biggest challenges in adopting mindfulness at workplace



The mindset related aspects form the biggest challenge in the adoption of mindfulness at organisational level (including lack of openness and myths around the new concept) - with 59% respondents expressing their concerns around it. This is followed by low level of awareness about the concept, practice and practical utility of mindfulness, specially in the context of business and work (39% respondents). Surprisingly, comparatively lower number of respondents have expressed concern about results and ROI measurement (35%). Though, this may also imply that Mindfulness needs to first overcome the challenge of mindset and awareness, before being critically tested against ROI impact. Though lack of resources (including time and effective facilitators) and uncertainty over leadership support appear to be least concerning among the given factors, it continues to be a strong challenge (30%).

Major Challenges in adopting Mindfulness at Workplace

General Resistance from employees and stakeholders

Preconceived notions, existing culture & beliefs

Mindset

Myths and Stigma relating to mental wellness and spirituality

Difficult to accept for people that they are not mindful

Lack of clear understanding of concept and practice

Low awareness about specific benefits

Awareness

Varying interpretations

Lack of clarity on practical implementation

Perception of low relevance to organisation (compared with core business skills)

Perceived difficulty in achieving the claimed outcomes

Results

Low awareness about researched tools to measure impact and ROI at organisational level

Doubts about sustainability of practice and results

Low leadership support

May require high cost

Resources / Support

Uncertainty about quality of consultants / trainers

Lack of time at all levels

Notable Statements

"I have always used mindfulness for bringing together team at one level of thinking which results in achieving one goal in effective manner.."

- Nikhil Taneja, Group Head HR at S.Chand and Company Ltd.

"When being mindful, one is comfortable within, which reflects in his/her work, dealing with others and in turn in results."

- Bhavita Saxena, HR at Toll Group

"Mindfulness can bring in right understanding and reduce conflicts which can bring in clarity"

-Yogish, HR at NetScout

"Being mindful also boosts productivity where we can clearly prioritise without any internal or external conflict."

- Susmitha Nandipakain, HR Manager at Columbus Global Services India Pvt. Ltd.

As an executive at a major media company, I started my meetings with two minutes of guided mindfulness meditation. I found people to be more engaged and focused in the meetings."

- Tim Peek, Partner at The Conscious Leadership Group

"I attended few mindfulness sessions myself and feel it to be useful. The concept seems to have been well taken by employees at large."

-Head HR in Manufacturing Sector

Must practice Mindful listening to have moment to arrive, for better productivity.

-Sr. Officer in Bhutan Government

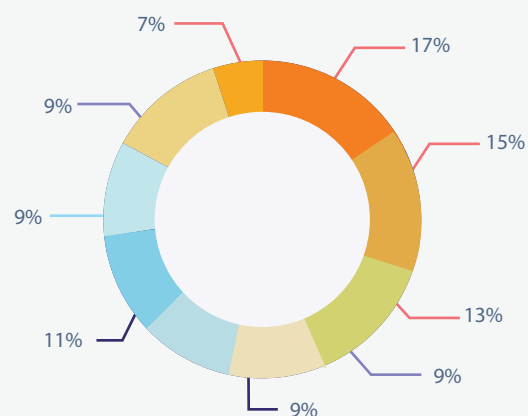
"Mindfulness has to be rolled out with a meticulous plan. otherwise it would be a failure. The top leaders in the organisation should start first before percolating it further down below."

- GM HR in Financial Services

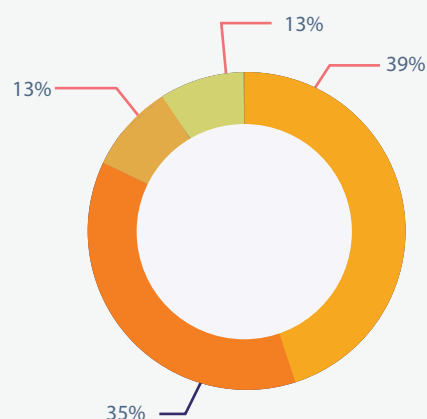


RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

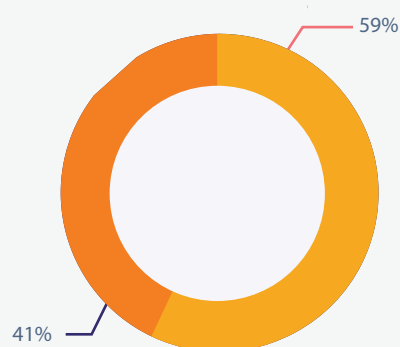
Industry	%
Business Services	17%
IT / ITES & Telecom	15%
Manufacturing & Infrastructure	13%
Healthcare / Pharma	9%
Banking / Financial Services	9%
Consumer Goods / Durables	11%
Oil & Energy	9%
Education / Research	9%
Other	7%



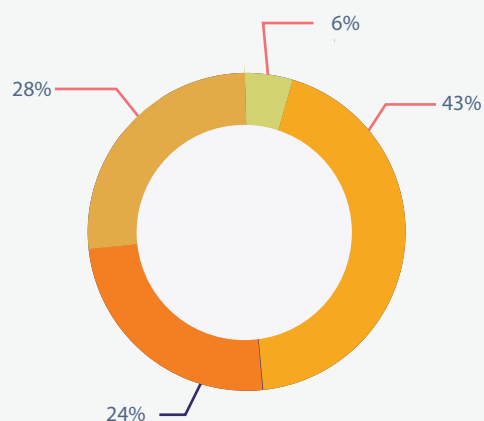
Workforce Size	%
Upto 500	39%
501 to 2,500	35%
2,501 to 10,000	13%
More than 10,000	13%



Indian/ MNC	%
Indian	59%
MNC	41%



Seniority Profile	%
Junior	6%
Mid-level	43%
Senior-level	24%
CXOs	28%



Acknowledgement & Core Team

Study authors and curators would like to thank the community for participating in this survey and sharing their perspectives, to help enrich the overall understanding at industry level.

Core Team

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ABOITUS



About Us

Mindful Leadership India Conclave

Mindful Leadership India is a facilitating platform for the visionaries, authors, research scientists and practitioners to come together and propel the Mindful Leadership Movement in India. Towards this mission, a passionate team puts together an annual event 'Mindful Leadership India Conclave. With more than 500 people having attended over the past 2 years, we have now launched this 3rd edition, with two days of learning, wisdom and sharing.

Strat-Board

Strat-Board is the new-age HR Marketplace, enabling discovery and selection of Right Service Partners in 75+ HR service categories. The Platform specialize in Niche, Innovative and High-Stake HR Projects.

Strat-Board is transforming the way, HR Services are explored, selected and availed, in a fast growing and highly fragmented HR market. With over 2,000 Providers enlisted, Strat-Board is trusted by a large cross section of corporates, cutting across locations & industry verticals.

Strat-Board's online platform, coupled with a personalized, consultative framework has earned wide appreciation from the industry leaders.

Further, Strat-Board works closely with the industry associations in spreading the best HR practices. Strat-Board has partnered with associations like FICCI Quality Forum, SHRM India and Mindful Leadership India - undertaking various events and activities together.

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Note:

This study has been carried out by Mindful Leadership India Conclave, in collaboration with Strat-Board Services, by conducting an opinion survey structured for the purpose. The Report is based on responses received from the CHROs, HR leaders, CXOs and well-being practitioners and may reflect a combination of practices in their respective organizations as well as their personal views. The objective is to look at a larger inference from the overall responses and not to study / represent thoughts of any particular respondent / organization. The explanation provided in the report are given based on the responses and should not be construed as advice or endorsement of any kind from Mindful Leadership India Conclave or Strat-Board Services. This survey, results and the report are proprietary property of Mindful Leadership India Conclave and Strat-Board Services.

