

Sona.

The top staff benefits that drive revenue

Top takeaways for multi-site leadership teams in Hospitality

30% of respondents plan to leave in the next 12 months, costing 1000+ employee organisations £1.6m on average.

Retaining them comes down to *HOW* leaders deliver self-service benefits and use forecasting to reconcile employee wellbeing with business growth demands.

This report aims to provide leaders in HR and Operational departments with three summarised challenges based on the findings of Sona's 2024 Workforce Happiness Index, and outline what an ROI-focused growth strategy that promotes employee wellbeing can look like.

"What stood out to me most was how often public praise and manager interactions were mentioned. These human touches are essential to a great employee experience and, therefore, to retention.

However, many respondents weren't able to self-service many basic operational activities, leaving managers busy with admin and little time to inspire and motivate.

Seeing how driven team members are when they're kept up-to-date with business metrics makes me confident there is a big opportunity in this data for leaders looking to boost productivity.

This report goes beyond simply showing that staff need more support and formulates a set of solutions that Hospitality operators can consider in order to empower every employee to perform their best.

Avoiding that £1.6m bill is certainly great motivation, but as we all know, happy employees are productive employees, and investing in their wellbeing is essential to growing long-term."



Karina Coen
VP of Productivity Solutions, Sona



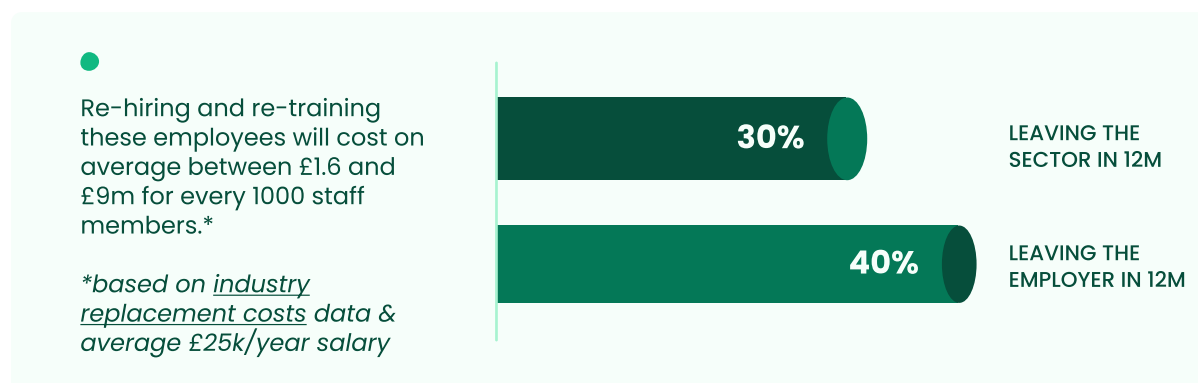
To learn more about how Sona's person-centred approach can help your Hospitality organisation's labour productivity and employee engagement, [click here](#).



*Based on Sona's 2024 Workforce Happiness Index - 890 BOH/FOH Hospitality workers interviewed May 2024
See last page for Methodology.*

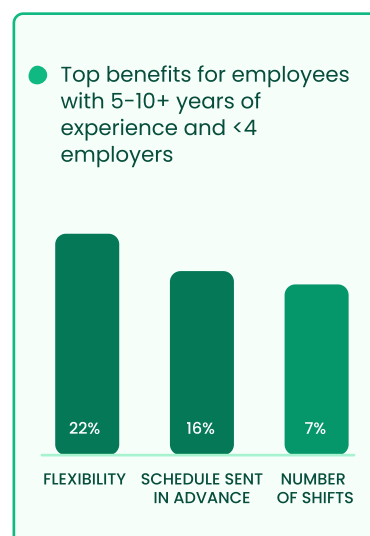
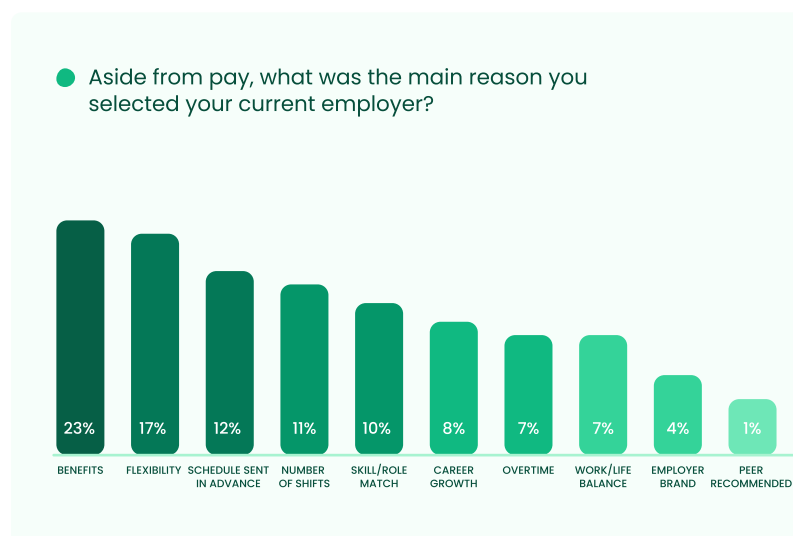
1. Tenured employees are more likely to stay if they are offered shift flexibility.

Competing to attract and retain the best talent in Hospitality can often come down to offering stand-out benefits. As salary rates are, to an extent, reliant on external forces that operators aren't always in control of, this survey chose to exclude pay from the benefits conversation.



Attractive benefits (defined as health insurance, mental health help, discounts, and parental leave) were the top reason for joining, but **shift flexibility importance increased with tenure**.

Almost half of respondents with 5-10+ years of experience and fewer than four employers chose their current company thanks to shift-related benefits. **Making it easy for these experienced employees to see their schedule, pick overtime, and feel in control can be a productivity boost.**



"I'm not sure what more I could ask for as flexibility of work times is sorted and that's the main thing I find important. "*

**Aside from pay, what more could your employer do to show appreciation for great performance?*

2. Managers can drive retention if they prioritise leadership over admin.

Organisations who are succeeding at retaining their employees for the next 12 months have built a strong culture based on collecting feedback, regular team meetings and activities, and strong leadership values.

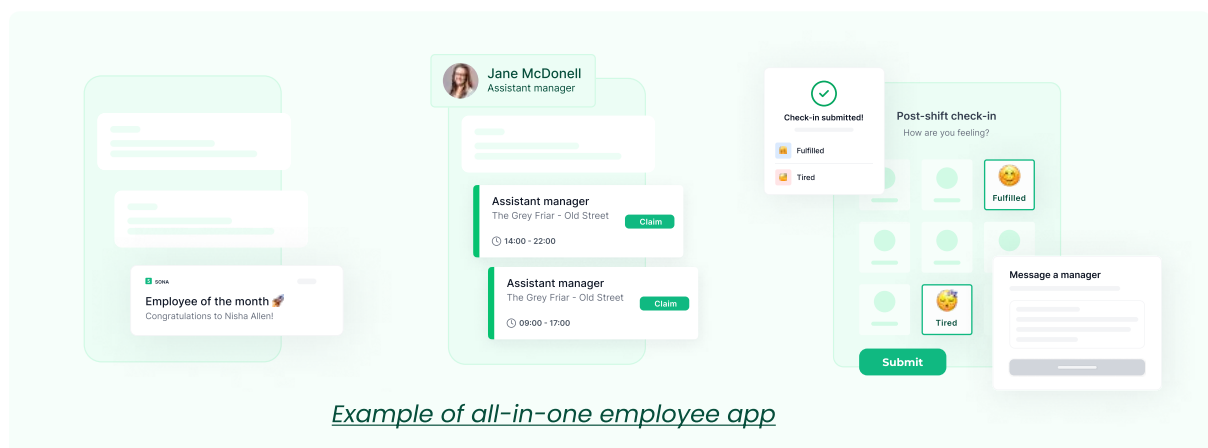
● How does your current employer promote positive company culture?



Selection of respondents who plan to stay with their current employer for 12+ months.

An open-ended question on how respondents *wished* their employer showed appreciation, aside from pay, brought nuance to the importance of:

- personal words of affirmation from managers
- implementing feedback
- public acknowledgement (via “Employee of the month” type announcements)



“Always checks to know how I’m doing, my health, family and makes working really enjoyable because he [team lead] seeks my opinions and acts on them.”

“We have noticed that they have not done the usual ‘host of the month’ in a while which a lot of us have commented on.”

3. Three leadership challenges

- Challenge 1** Offering appreciation-related benefits comes with the trial that they often occur on an ad-hoc basis. Without an organisational process in place to standardise it (e.g. by notifying managers), these benefits are left to the discretion of each team leader. This can lead to wellbeing discrepancies between teams.
- Challenge 2** When employees perceive a positive relationship with their line manager, this helps to protect them against burnout, but concurrently managers have limited time resources themselves to inspire and motivate, as they also shoulder the responsibility of organisational processes.
- Challenge 3** Fundamentally, organisations need to reconcile the needs employees cite above with business productivity. Predicting customer demand is essential in order to give staff an accurate expectation of what is feasible.

Which of these activities do you still have to do in person/via phone/email/messaging app?

- IN PERSON/VIA PHONE/EMAIL/MESSAGING APP
- DEDICATED EMPLOYEE APP

Pick up overtime easily, via a "marketplace" format.

- 37%
- 63%



Request holiday.

- 38%
- 62%



See my payslip.

- 33%
- 67%



With the three challenges outlined above, it is important to observe that **more than a third of respondents aren't able to self-service basic admin operations without contacting their manager**. Picking up overtime easily is a particular opportunity, as it can help increase productivity and reduce the need to recruit additional staff.

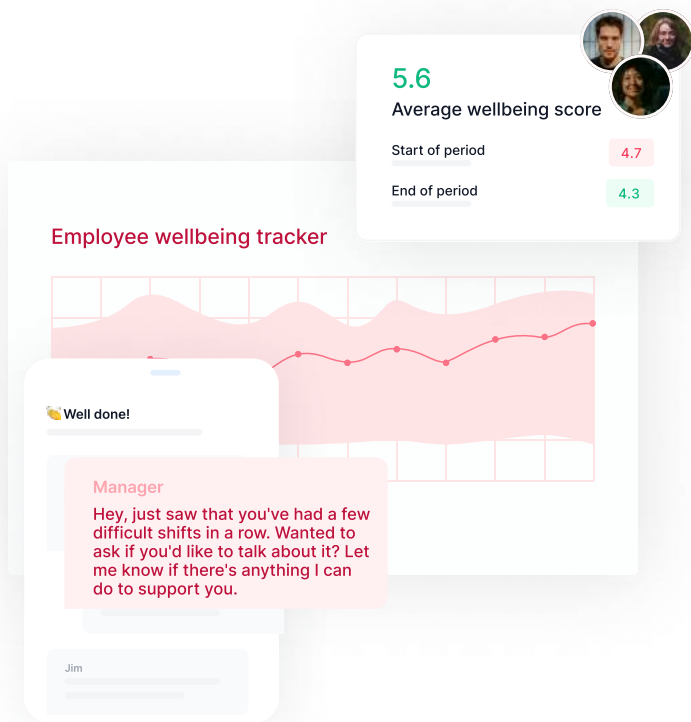
Overall, building a positive culture that drives retention and contributes to the end-customer experience takes time and focus. Technology cannot replace those human touchpoints, but it can make self-service possible and support managers to focus on regular interactions with staff.

"[Managers] Keeping employees informed about company goals, performance metrics, and how their contributions impact the organisation can foster a sense of purpose and pride in their work."

[Learn more about Sona's end-to-end employee app here.](#)



4. Leadership takeaway: Forecasts that drive both retention and productivity



● Organisations can support managers to prioritise a retention-driving leadership style via:

- tech that carries the admin load
- an employee engagement platform

● Without a wellbeing tracker, leadership is prevented from being proactive. Anticipating churn underpins the ability to correctly staff each location when complemented by demand forecasts.

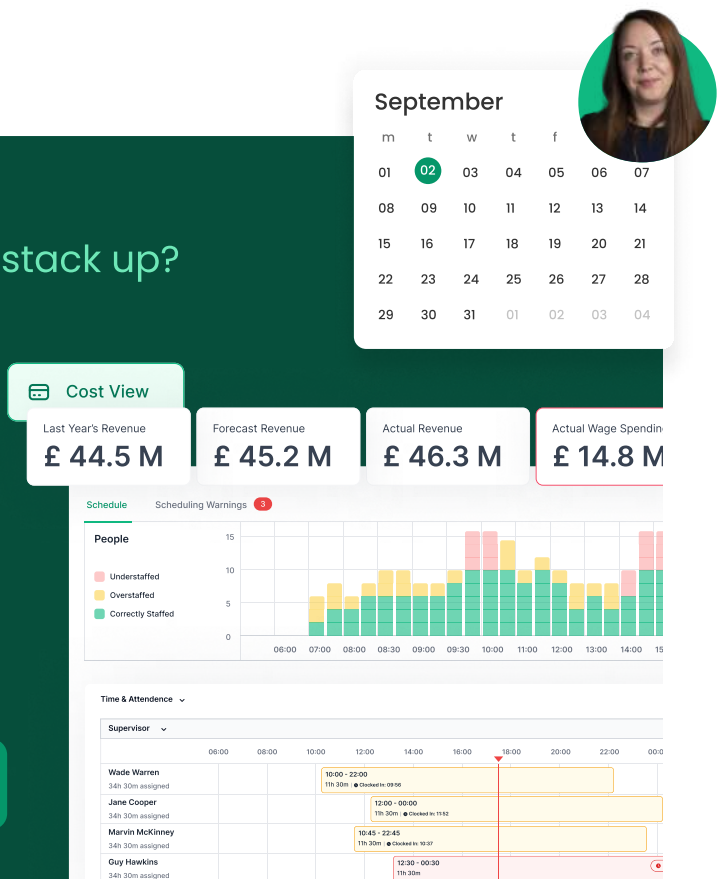
● The final piece of the puzzle is a truly intelligent next-generation solution. This delivers demand forecasts with maximum accuracy that leaders can trust when building long-term growth strategies.

How does your tech strategy stack up?

When intelligent AI-driven forecasting technology is embedded into an end-to-end WFM solution, it can help leaders truly reconcile employee wellbeing needs with business productivity demands.

Interested in seeing how your tech strategy compares to that of other Hospitality leaders?

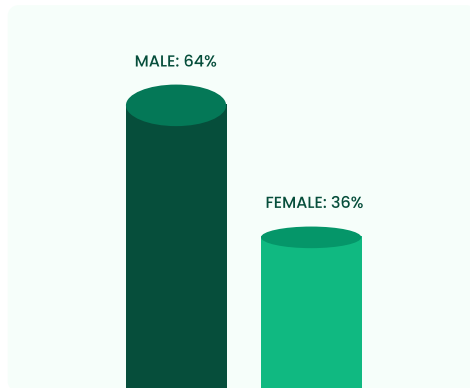
[Book a 15-minute consultant call](#)



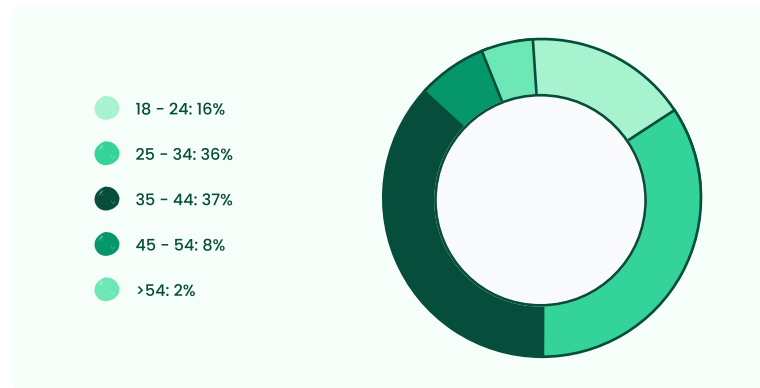
Methodology

We surveyed 890 people currently working in Hospitality in the UK over the course of May, 2024.

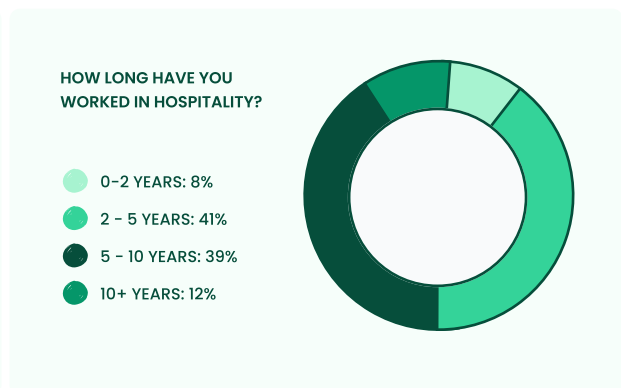
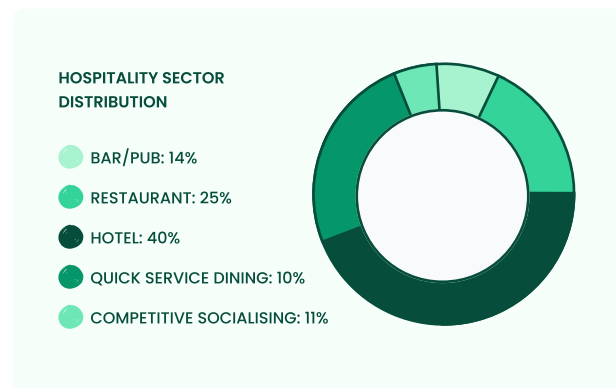
The polling audience was 64% male and 36% female.



The age ranges were as follows:



We interviewed mostly large Hospitality organisations (68% had over 500 employees and 25% had over 1000) and focused on long tenured employees – almost all the respondents had more than 2 years of experience and over half had over 5+ years. **70% were Front of House, 28% Back of House, and 2% worked both.**



The number of employers respondents had over the length of their Hospitality career:

