

Firms 'struggle to motivate staff'

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COMPANIES are failing to achieve plans for change because disillusioned employees are not fully involved or committed, according to survey results. The report, published by management consultant Corven, suggests companies are struggling to motivate employees. Just 36pc of the 50 FTSE and public sector senior executives canvassed felt that employees cared whether the business was successful or not. Only a quarter believed that staff thought their ideas were valued.

The findings also showed that companies limited the number of employees involved in large-scale change projects. One said: "If we involve too many other people things will be delayed and the outcome uncertain." Another executive said: "We couldn't possibly share sensitive information with everyone." Dean Salter, head of communications and engagement, refining and marketing at BP, added: "Employee engagement during change can generate solutions that are often overlooked by those further up the organisational ladder." The Corven survey came ahead of the EU information directive which came into force yesterday. The directive makes provision for increasing the level of consultation with employees in companies with more than 150 employees on a variety of business issues. It gives employees the right to access price-sensitive information and companies will face fines of up to pounds 75,000 if they fail to "inform and consult". Some company directors fear it will increase the chance that information may be leaked. However, Nicholas Coyle, senior consultant at Corven, said: "Communication will always be important for change to be well received." Laurence Collins, director of human resources consultancy Ceridian Centrefile, said: "It is about having adult conversations to make your working environment more productive." The CBI is relaxed about the directive and its implications. Sir Digby Jones, director general, said: "These rules will be irrelevant to most companies because they already have systems that employees are happy with for discussing developments with them." He has some reservations, however. Sir Digby added: "I sincerely hope that unions don't think they can play the old game of using well intentioned legislation to grab more power, to the detriment of efficient businesses."