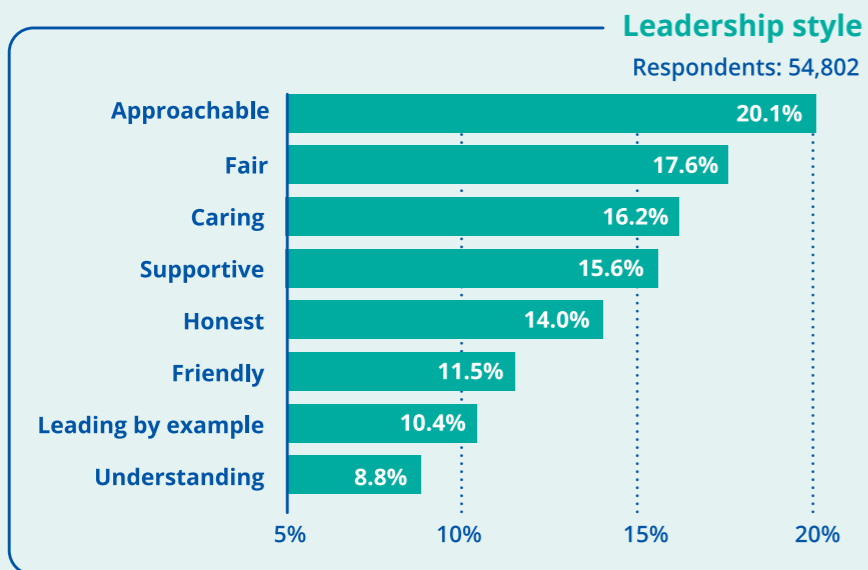


The Aged Care Census Database

Insight # 10: Leadership Styles & Priorities

Aged Care Workers describe the leadership style of their managers predominantly as approachable and fair...

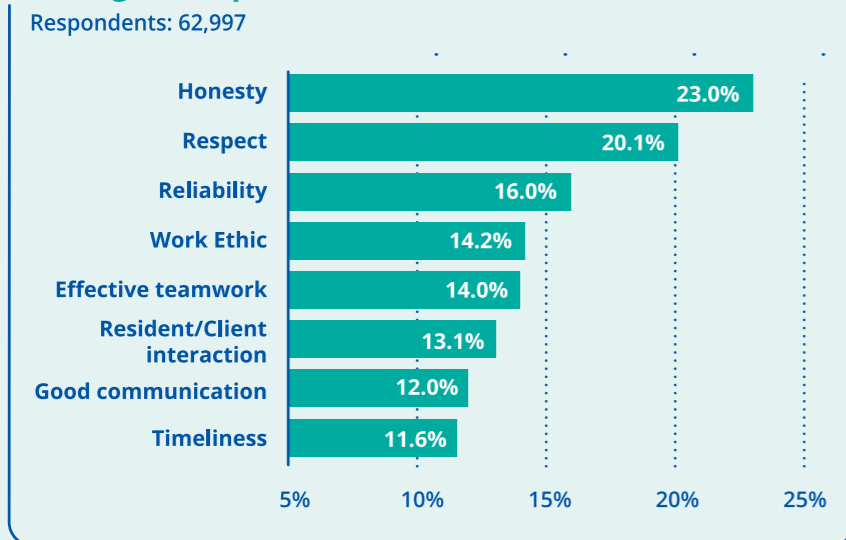


... Though full-time workers tend to see their managers through the lens of how supportive they are.

The top priorities that these managers are communicating to their staff (intentionally or not) revolves around honesty, respect, and reliability...

... though reliability does tend to be more emphasised with casual workers

Management priorities



NB: The importance of these priorities cannot be over-stated. They reflect the choices that managers are making as they balance organisational goals with the demands of getting the work done. The question is: "Are these the right choices for the sector as a whole?" For example, why isn't safety one of the top 5 priorities?

Analysis of the insight

The Aged Care Census Database (ACCD) data shows us that aged care workers believe that the top four (4) priorities of their managers are: honesty (23%), respect (20.1%), reliability (16%) and work ethic (14.2%).

Aged care workers also rank their managers' leadership style as predominantly approachable, fair, caring and supportive.

But only 10.4% of aged care worker think their managers 'lead by example'

To explore this further, the Aged Care Census Database (ACCD) examines safety as an issue. 89% of aged care workers feel comfortable raising safety issues with their manager. This fits with 'approachability' being a top aged care manager attribute. But when asked if workers feel comfortable raising safety issues with their organisation's executive this drops to an average of 73.3%. The biggest drop is seen in public aged care sector workers with 89.2% comfortable raising safety issues with their manager, reducing to only 67.3% comfortable raising safety issues with their executive.

So, what does this mean for aged care providers?

Aged Care managers appear to be good at cultivating productive working relationships with their workers. Their leadership styles show they are accessible, friendly and back-up their workers.

Managers are also communicating priorities to their staff. Whether this communication is deliberate – that is, the priorities communicated reflect the priorities of the organisation or whether it is inadvertent is unclear.

But regardless, communication and approachability are only part of a manager's capabilities.

What appears to be missing are the other key criteria of leadership capabilities, such as 'achieves results', 'exemplifies personal drive/integrity through action', 'focuses strategically' and 'manages change/risk'.

These last two points are particularly important.

As a provider offering consumer-centric care, you would expect to see your managers prioritising consumer interactions more highly than 13.1%.

Similarly, when providing quality care one of the number one conditions for the delivery of that care has to be a low-risk, safe environment. This requires managers to not just listen to worker safety concerns but address them - which the ACCD data shows us is not happening.