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## Survey: Economic downturn leads to decline in employee commitment

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With the economic downturn have come cost-cutting actions that have done more than just cut expenses. According to an annual survey from global consulting firm **Watson Wyatt Worldwide Inc.** (NYSE: WW), cost cuts have contributed to a sharp decline in the morale and commitment of their workers, especially top performers.

Arlington, Va.-based Watson Wyatt's Worldatwork 2009/2010 U.S. Strategic Rewards Survey found that employee engagement levels for all workers at the companies surveyed have dropped 9 percent since last year, and close to 25 percent for top performers.

Additionally, 36 percent of top performers say their employer's situation has worsened in the past 12 months and the number who would recommend others take jobs at their company has declined by nearly 20 percent.

Compared with last year, top-performing employees are 26 percent less likely to be satisfied with advancement opportunities at their company. They are also 14 percent less likely to want to remain with their company versus take a job elsewhere.

"The fallout from the actions employers have taken in response to the recession is now coming to light, and it is significant," said Laura Sejen, global director of strategic rewards consulting at Watson Wyatt.

The survey also found that top-performing employees are 29 percent less confident in management's ability to grow the business. And 41 percent believe that pay and benefit changes made by their employer in the past year have had a negative effect on work quality and customer service.

The survey was conducted in May and is based on responses from 1,300 full-time workers at large U.S. employers.

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