

MAINTAINING WORKPLACE CULTURE

in a Time of Uncertainty, Change, and Division



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Many thanks to the Center for Executive Succession partner CHROs for their support of our research

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 HR@Moore Survey of Chief Human Resource Officers asked CHROs about highly salient issues in the current environment which might serve as potential threats to their company's culture. The survey particularly focused on the economic, technological, and geopolitical/political threats. Our results suggest that while none of the threats are broadly perceived by CHROs as major threats to organizational culture, economic uncertainty and technological disruptions are seen as the most important threats.

In addition, while CHROs shared some specific actions they are taking to neutralize what they perceived as the most critical threat, in general they are not extremely proactive in managing these potential threats. CHROs reported they were not engaging in many formal policies for managing potential conflicts that may arise from these external issues. In addition, CHROs characterized their typical climate for conflict as encouraging employees to examine an issue from all sides before coming to a conclusion, which perhaps may help stem any disruptions that may otherwise occur as a result of these environmental issues.

We discuss the implications of these results.



INTRODUCTION

A number of highly divisive events and issues have emerged on the global stage in recent years. Wars in Ukraine and Gaza, escalating tensions between China and Taiwan, and a host of other geopolitical issues have inflamed contentious debate and protest around the globe. In the United States, the coming Presidential election features two candidates with widely divergent political agendas that threaten to further divide an already polarized American electorate. Finally, economic (e.g., inflation, interest rises) and technological advances (e.g., generative artificial intelligence or GenAI) threaten to disrupt the future of work, creating anxiety among the workforce. These divisive issues can result in polarized factions, threaten friendships and endanger family unity.

Most importantly from the standpoint of organizations, these divisive issues may result in conflicts which spill over into the workplace. If managed well, organizations can exemplify cultures that promote diversity of thought while building unity of purpose. If not managed well, organizations may experience a level of conflict and division that threatens the powerful cultures they have worked hard to create. Thus, the 2024 HR@Moore Survey of Chief Human Resource Officers (CHROs) sought to explore the extent to which a number of environmental issues may threaten organizational cultures and what CHROs are doing or plan on doing to manage the potential for dysfunctional conflict in the workplace.



The survey was sent to approximately 400 CHROs in April/May of 2024 with over 150 responding. The survey covered a number of topics including the CHRO role, various aspects of how they address particular talent challenges, and some issues regarding CEO succession. This report focuses on the potential for conflict between employees and the strategies for managing these conflicts in the workplace.



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Thank you for your interest in our research.

To gain access to the full report, “**Maintaining Workplace Culture in a Time of Uncertainty, Change and Division**” please contact CES@moore.sc.edu and provide your name, title, and company for which you work and we will send you the full report in PDF format.



Learn more about the [Center for Executive Succession](#) (CES) in the Darla Moore School of Business at the University of South Carolina. Our corporate partners have *exclusive first access* to research conducted by the Center. We are celebrating 10 years of research excellence and now is the perfect time to join our growing roster of prestigious [corporate partners](#).

OUR PURPOSE

The Center for Executive Succession provides a forum for exploring and sharing experiences and learnings regarding executive succession, which is increasingly one of the board's top governance priorities. Our partners have the opportunity to contribute to sound research that challenges the status quo and is empirically driven to further the success of C-suite succession.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Center for Executive Succession is to be the objective source of knowledge about the issues, challenges and best practices regarding C-suite succession, and to advance the identification, development, selection and transition of executive and board talent.

CES seeks to appeal to board members, CEOs, CHROs and other C-suite members by providing state-of-the-art research and practice on executive succession. It does so through a) conducting innovative research projects, b) organizing interactive events, c) disseminating academic research findings, and d) delivering educational programs for all stakeholders engaged in executive succession. The corporate/academic collaboration between CES and its partner companies generates credible, unique and unbiased knowledge to further the effectiveness of executive succession practices in firms.

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The Center for Executive Succession serves as an independent, objective source of knowledge regarding C-suite succession practices. The center provides a forum for corporate leaders to shape the future direction of succession practices, which are increasingly one of the board's top governance priorities. Our partners have the opportunity to contribute to cutting-edge research that challenges the status quo and is empirically driven to further success in C-suite succession planning. For more information or to inquire about potential membership, please visit our website or contact us at sc.edu/moore/ces.



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The Darla Moore School of Business at the University of South Carolina is home to a world-class faculty and 13 major research centers. It is committed to educating leaders in global business and to playing a central role in the economic growth of the state by bringing the world to South Carolina and South Carolina to the world.

Founded in 1919, the Moore School has a history of innovative educational leadership, blending academic preparation with real-world experience through internships, consulting projects, study abroad programs and entrepreneurial opportunities. The Moore School has grown into a thriving site of academic excellence with an enrollment of more than 5,300 undergraduate students and more than 700 graduate students. The school offers a wide range of programs in nine undergraduate concentrations, seven master's degrees and two Ph.D. degrees as well as executive education programs and consulting services to the business community.

In 1998, the school was named for South Carolina native Darla Moore, making the University of South Carolina the first major university to name its business school after a woman.



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