

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Is Your Boss Presidential?

*Randstad Work Watch survey compares employers' management styles to presidential personality types; reveals employees' favorable ratings*

**ATLANTA**, February 11, 2009 – Transforming the economy will surely test the resolve of the new Obama administration and, in particular, President Obama himself. His management style around this issue will be closely scrutinized by Congress, political pundits, media and the average citizen. Just as all eyes will be judging America's CEO, employees also are assessing the performance of their boss's leadership during this current tenuous economy. Results of a recent survey of American adults indicate that today's economic troubles don't seem to be negatively impacting employees' perception of their employers' performance. In fact, when asked whether they would "re-elect" their boss if given the opportunity, a surprising 66 percent of respondents said they would, according to a survey released today by Randstad US.

This optimism is reflected through employees' feelings toward their boss's leadership style and characteristics. Nearly two-thirds of those who have a boss and have an opinion on the topic (63 percent) agreed that their boss handles stress and adversity well, while 51 percent believe that their boss's management style brings out the best in their work. Likewise, about half (49 percent) said they wish to possess similar or the same traits as their boss; interestingly, this jumps to 56 percent among Gen Y, often considered the most impressionable generation.

So what should employers be doing to keep their "approval ratings" high in the eyes of their employees? "Employers must create a more collaborative culture where employees' objectives are aligned with that of the company's," offered Genia Spencer, managing director of operations and human resources for Randstad US. "Central to this success is developing a transparent, balanced relationship, communicating a clear understanding of each employee's job responsibilities and showing respect for how each role works within the larger context to achieve company goals."

The Randstad survey, inspired by comparisons made of the recent presidential candidates, also sought to reveal employees' perceptions of their boss's management style compared to eight distinct types of presidential personalities<sup>1</sup>. While the results disclose that the majority of employees who expressed feelings on the matter (65 percent) believe that their boss's personality is right for his/her responsibilities, no singular presidential personality type emerged as the frontrunner.

When provided descriptions of each presidential personality, 20 percent of employees describe their boss as a "Dominator," someone prone to being bossy, demanding and domineering (traits possessed by LBJ, Nixon and Teddy Roosevelt), while 19 percent believe their boss's personality is more of a "Good Guy," one who doesn't feel overwhelmed by stress (traits possessed by Eisenhower and Washington). Only 15 percent of employees consider their boss a "Maintainer," characterized as staying focused on the job and working slowly, but steadily such as presidents George H. W. Bush and Harry Truman.

Only 12 percent of those surveyed consider their boss an "Actor" (spirited, charming) or an "Extrovert" (enthusiastic and vivacious) – characteristics possessed by presidents Clinton and Reagan, who were, ironically, the two presidents employees wished their boss was most like (28 and 24 percent, respectively). Of seven presidents listed in the survey, employees were least likely to wish their boss was like George W. Bush (5 percent) and George Washington (4 percent).

While employees seem to still have faith in their boss's leadership, it may not have come without some bumps along the way. More than half of employees who expressed an opinion (55 percent) said they have changed their work style/habits based on their boss's personality; additionally, more Gen Y employees echo this sentiment than Matures, as do men over women.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: "The Personality and the Presidency Project"; Steve Rubenzer Ph. D. and Dr. Thomas R. Faschingbauer; [www.personalitiesinhistory.com](http://www.personalitiesinhistory.com) Note: study conducted on presidents through Bill Clinton.

Furthermore, 38 percent said that their boss is respected for his/her business expertise, but doesn't have people skills. Boomers and Matures more strongly agree with this (43 and 41 percent, respectively).

<b>% With An Opinion Who Agree Strongly / Somewhat</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Gen Y 18-34</b>	<b>Gen X 35-44</b>	<b>Boomers 45-54</b>	<b>Matures 55+</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
I have changed my work style/habits based on my boss's personality.	55	59	57	55	45	61	49
My boss is respected for his/her business expertise, but doesn't have people skills.	38	37	32	43	41	41	36

"It is important for employers to recognize employee value to the organization," added Spencer. "Traits of a collaborative culture are found in organizations that help employees achieve company goals; examples include encouraging innovative thinking and providing honest input on business issues."

Additional interesting Randstad Work Watch survey findings include:

- Forty-five percent of employees whose boss has a BlackBerry and who have an opinion on the matter agree with the statement "Similar to President Obama, my boss is constantly using his/her BlackBerry."
- When asked whether their boss's personality traits were worthy of impeachment proceedings, 27 percent of employees agreed.
- When shown a list of seven presidents and asked "Which president do you wish your boss was most like," 19 percent of Gen Y respondents (18-34) said Abraham Lincoln. (Could there be an "Obama factor" at play?)
- Twice as many women (22 percent) than men (11 percent) wished their boss was most like John Kennedy.
- Twenty-eight percent of men wished their boss was most like Ronald Reagan, compared to only 19 percent of women.
- Only seven percent of employees believe their boss to be "Philosopher," one who is curious and inquisitive (like Thomas Jefferson and Jimmy Carter).

For more information, please visit [www.us.randstad.com](http://www.us.randstad.com) or contact:  
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### **Survey Methodology**

Harris Interactive® fielded the study on behalf of Randstad US from January 21-23, 2009 and from January 27-29, 2009, via its QuickQuery<sup>SM</sup> online omnibus, on January 21-23 interviewing a nationwide sample of 2,333 U.S. adults aged 18 and over, among whom 1,291 were employed full time or part time, and on January 27-29 interviewing a nationwide sample of 2,491 U.S. adults aged 18 and over, among whom 1,345 were employed full time or part time. For the purpose of this survey, the generations were divided as: Gen Y, ages 18-34; Gen X, ages 35-44; Boomers, ages 45-54; and Matures, age 55+. Data were weighted separately for each individual survey, using propensity score weighting to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income, race/ethnicity, and propensity to be online. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.

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