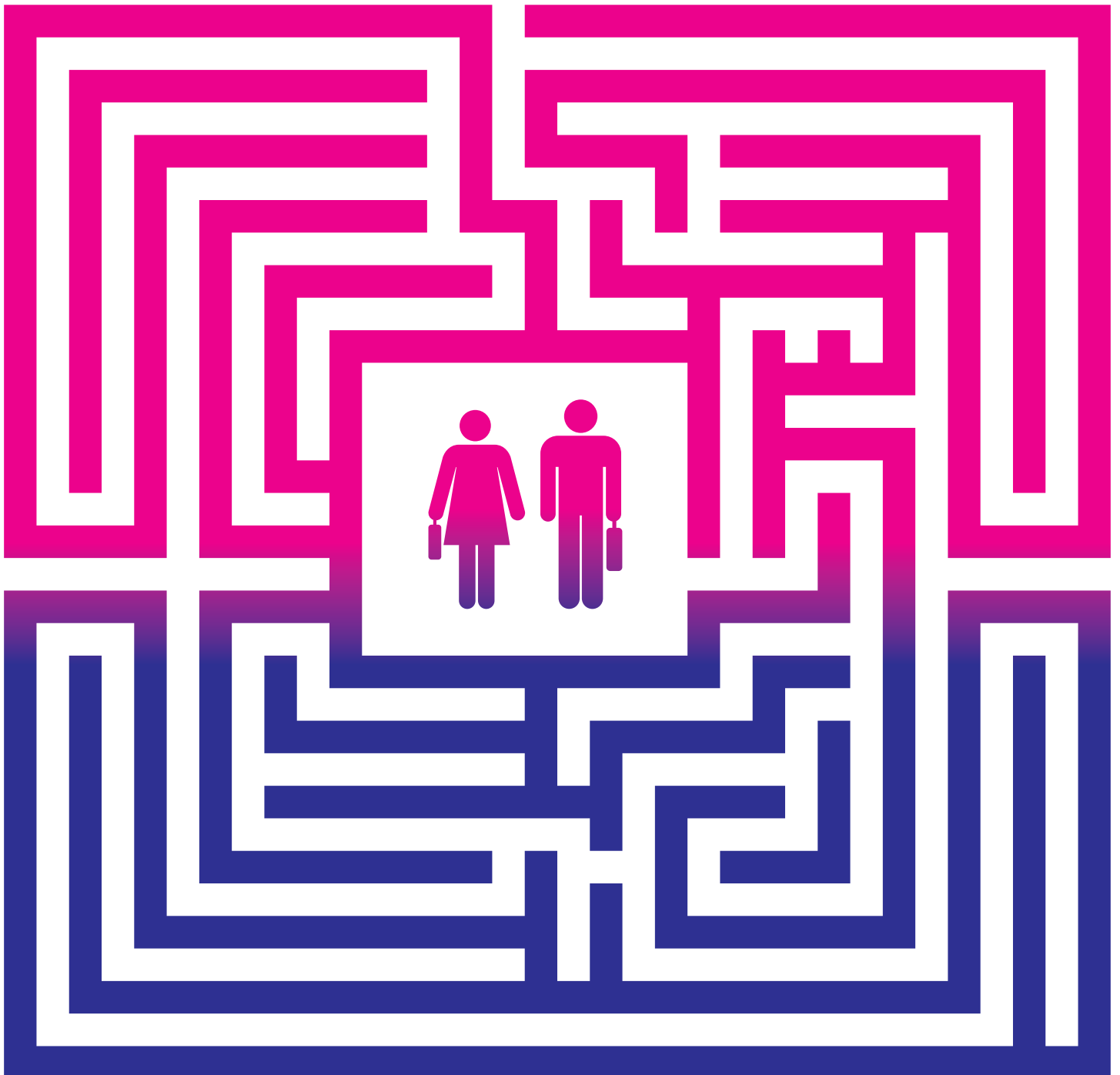


Managers and the moral maze

A summary of findings from a survey on workplace ethics

September 2013



Foreword



The only way is ethics...

On the front cover of the 2013 CMI Annual Report, we featured the frightening statistic that 43 per cent of line managers are deemed ineffective or highly ineffective.

Hard on its heels comes another equally dispiriting revelation: over 80 per cent of workers don't think their manager sets a good moral example. Hardly surprising, when over a third of managers confess to telling at least one white lie a day at work.

These latest findings are from a CMI-commissioned survey into ethics in the workplace, summarised in these pages.

In the last few years, we've seen numerous companies and organisations fall foul of ethical scandals. The costs are huge, not only financially but in the damage inflicted on hard-won reputations.

It's time for managers to step up – by re-focusing on their principles and leading by example, and by confronting unethical behaviour whenever and wherever they encounter it.

Integrity and trust are key to getting the best from people and creating the right culture for organisational growth, but at the moment the majority of staff distrust their bosses' sense of ethics. The moral lead is missing.

Employers have to set clear expectations and create a culture that rewards ethical behaviour. Every manager has a particular responsibility to take the lead.

Here at CMI, it's our remit to support those managers.

Ann Francke

Chief Executive, Chartered Management Institute

Code of Practice for Professional Managers



Help us crack the Code.

Our Code of Practice for Professional Managers has always stood at the heart of everything we think, feel and do at CMI.

Now we're asking for your input as we set about revising the Code – to give it even greater relevance and wider application in the working lives of today's managers.

The revision process has been kickstarted by the research summarised here, but we want you – CMI member or not – to tell us what you think should be included in a definitive code of management practice.

To get involved in our online consultation, please visit www.managers.org.uk/codeconsultation

THE RESEARCH

The summary that follows is based on research conducted by OnePoll on behalf of CMI in August/September 2013.

Over 2,000 respondents across private, public and not-for-profit sectors were surveyed, split equally between managers and non-management employees.

Summary of findings

It all starts off so positively.

Over two-thirds of UK managers think it's important to be seen as being ethical at work.

Their heart is in the right place. The spirit is willing.

So how come 36 per cent of managers – across all sectors, of both sexes, up and down the country – confess to telling white lies in the workplace on a daily basis?

And why, when faced with a moral dilemma, do nearly 30 per cent of managers abandon their ethics and knowingly choose not to do the right thing?

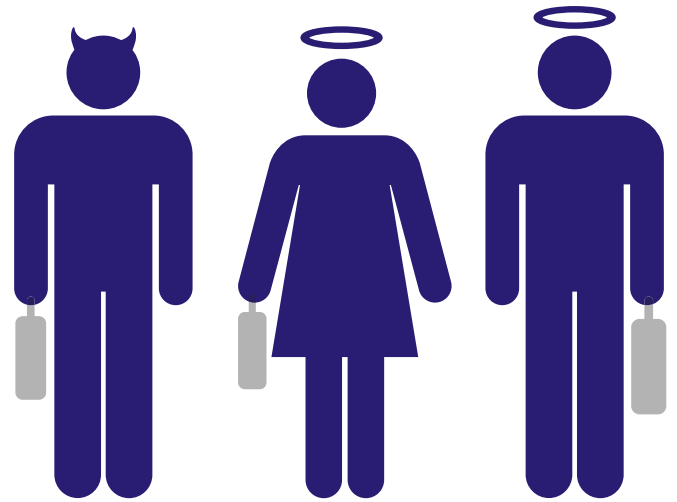
Two words: career progression.

Managers distort the truth and bend the rules to get ahead – to get a promotion or a pay rise.

The flesh is weak. Ambition overrides ethics.

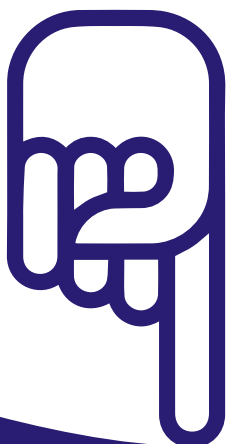
TWO THIRDS

OF UK MANAGERS WANT TO BE SEEN AS ETHICAL



36%

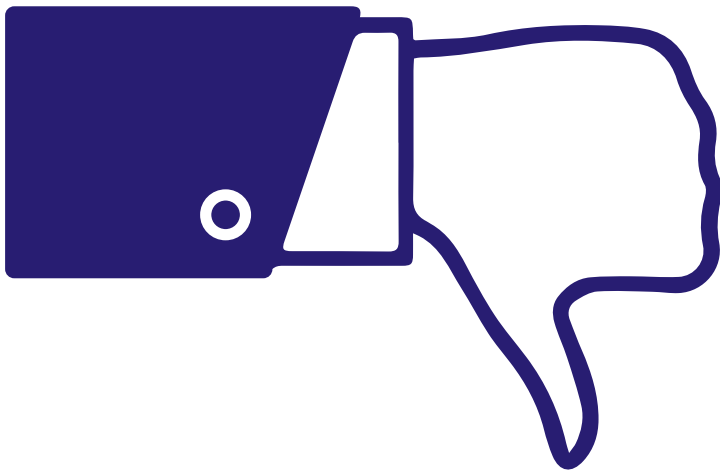
OF MANAGERS TELL WHITE LIES IN THE WORKPLACE EVERY DAY



30%

OF MANAGERS BEND THE RULES FOR THEIR OWN SELF-INTEREST





80%

**OF WORKERS DON'T THINK THEIR
MANAGER SETS A GOOD EXAMPLE**

It appears that this 'me-first' management behaviour doesn't necessarily go unrewarded. Too many employers fail to make the distinction between selfless professionalism and selfish pragmatism.

But at the coalface – on the office floor, around the water cooler, in the smoking shed – it hasn't gone unnoticed.

In fact, 80 per cent of workers don't think their manager sets a good moral example. Six out of ten claim to have witnessed work colleagues acting unethically for their own ends, with two-thirds of the culprits being managers.

Perversely proving that it's 'do as I say' not 'do as I do', comparatively few workers abandon their ethics compared to managers (13 per cent and 30 per cent respectively).

Quizzed on the reasons for their behavioural lapses, the two groups responded tellingly.

Managers ditch ethics primarily for pay and promotion. Workers compromise themselves because they feel pressured into it.

By whom, you might ask?

Well, you could start by asking their managers.



43%

**OF WORKERS WHO
ABANDON THEIR ETHICS
FEEL PRESSURED INTO IT...**

...WHILST

42%

**OF MANAGERS DO
IT TO GAIN PAY AND
PROMOTION**



**A moral maze.
A values vacuum.**

Going to work shouldn't present us all with a moral maze.

If we can't take our lead from our managers, who can we turn to for guidance?

Not the body corporate, it seems, as only 17 per cent of all employees claim to be aware that their organisation has a values statement and they know what's in it.

It's no wonder that the moral compass in the workplace points here, there and everywhere.

If every organisation was to foster a culture of openness, honesty and integrity, we'd be heading in the right direction.

If every manager adhered to and promoted those values, they would be leading the way.

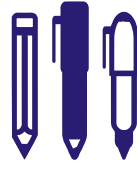
This is why we're looking to revise the CMI Code of Practice. You can help, by joining our online consultation at www.managers.org.uk/codeconsultation

ONLY 17% OF EMPLOYEES ARE
AWARE OF THEIR ORGANISATION'S VALUES





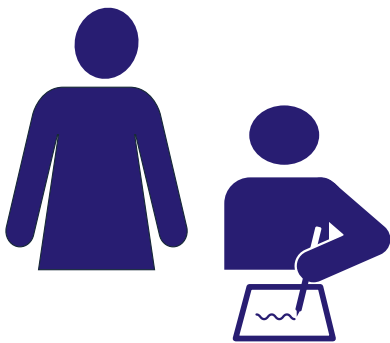
Confessions of a Manager



10%
HAVE HELPED
THEMSELVES TO
COMPANY STOCK



9%
HAVE MADE INFLATED
CLAIMS ON THEIR CV



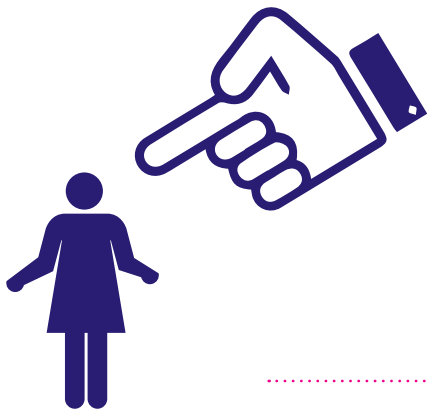
4%
HAVE TAKEN CREDIT FOR
SOMEONE ELSE'S WORK



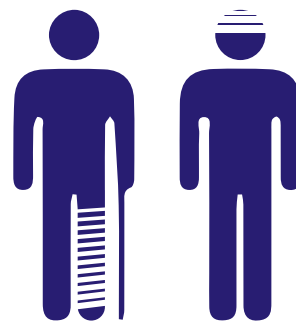
3%
HAVE 'FORGOTTEN' TO DECLARE
CORPORATE GIFTS



7%
HAVE TAKEN LIBERTIES
WITH EXPENSES



3%
HAVE LET A COLLEAGUE TAKE
THE BLAME UNFAIRLY



8%
HAVE FEIGNED ILLNESS TO AVOID
UNDESIRABLE ACTIVITY AT WORK

Chartered Management Institute

The Chartered Management Institute is the only chartered professional body in the UK dedicated to promoting the highest standards of management and leadership excellence. CMI sets the standard that others follow.

As a membership organisation, CMI has been providing forward-thinking advice and support to individuals and businesses for more than 50 years, and continues to give managers and leaders, and the organisations they work in, the tools they need to improve their performance and make an impact. As well as equipping individuals with the skills, knowledge and experience to be excellent managers and leaders, CMI's products and services support the development of management and leadership excellence across both public and private sector organisations.

Through in-depth research and policy surveys among our member community of over 100,000 managers, CMI maintains its position as the premier authority on key management and leadership issues.

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