



**2006 National Mixer Driver Championship
Survey and Focus Group
10-16-06**

Final Report

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2006 National Mixer Driver Championship Survey and Focus Group Executive Summary

On October 16, 2006, 27 of the 29 industry drivers who competed in NRMCA's First National Mixer Driver Championship participated in a job satisfaction survey and focus group. With the clear understanding that this group was not a valid data sample that could reflect the views of the industry's approximate 60,000 drivers, NRMCA's Educational Activities Committee as well as the Operations, Environmental and Safety Committee still recommended these drivers act as a test sample. As competitors in the driver championship, their skill as well as their understanding about their job could shed light on the job's challenges and help establish a direction for further study about the job segment.

NRMCA's goal for the two hour meeting was to not only ascertain the positive and negative aspects about the champion mixer drivers' job from their point-of-view, but in the ensuing analysis, also include a comparison of the drivers' results against an appropriate external norm. The drivers' job satisfaction indicators were determined by producer operations-focused managers who participated in mixer driver recruitment and retention focus groups in March 2006. The group's collective companies produced 40% of the concrete poured in the US in 2004.

The survey asked drivers for scaled responses to 35 job satisfaction factors based on their current employer's practices. The scale range was "5" Most Satisfied to "1" Least Satisfied. An external norm juxtaposed the drivers' responses in the survey's statistical report. The external norm source was from a firm that not only specializes in job satisfaction surveys and corporate exit interviewing but also has clients in the ready mixed concrete industry. The norm includes data from entry level, front line production jobs, including linemen and CDL drivers.

In the total aggregate from the 35 job satisfaction indicators, the external normal score was moderately above the job satisfaction point. Additionally, the external norm responded positively to 57% of the 35 job satisfaction factors. The mixer drivers responded positively to 37% of the 35 job satisfaction factors. Drivers scored higher than the external norm in eight of the 35 responses.

A normal statistical variance in the individual job satisfaction indicators between a study group and the external norm should be no more than 15%. Scores with a spread greater than 15% indicate a job satisfaction factor that should be noted by the survey client. In the total aggregate score, champion mixer drivers not only fell below the satisfied job indicator, but their score was exactly at the 15% marker, indicating further analysis for the job sector.

Notably, of the 35 mixer driver job satisfaction indicators the producer management group put together, five did not have a comparable external norm. Therefore, NRMCA

used the 30 indicators that could be cross referenced in the gap analysis. Twenty-one of the specific 30 mixer driver job satisfaction indicators varied beyond the acceptable 15 point spread.

The five largest negative spreads between the external norm and the drivers were, in order: work hours, work schedule (.78) involving employees in improvement efforts (.67), overtime notification policies (.53), customer relationships with drivers (.50), and on-the-job training (.49). In the second part of the survey, the champion drivers ranked their perceptions why driver quit. There was consistency with the negative results from the first part of the survey. Scheduling or work hours ranked first; pay, compensation, rewards, 2nd; supervision and management, 3rd; job duties, 4th; and, lack of respect or appreciation, 5th. Finally, in the focus group, drivers forcefully expressed their concerns with scheduling, pay check calculations, hours of service, and communication with superiors and management as negative satisfiers.

The second largest statistical spread for a single job satisfaction indicator was positive on the drivers' side. It was "condition of equipment, truck, tools and materials" (.76). Mixers drivers ranked it second out of the 35 job satisfaction indicators, and seventh (of 13) when ranking reasons why mixer drivers quit. In the focus group, drivers made it clear that they had a personal connection to their individual trucks, had pride in their trucks, and felt personal ownership of them. They wanted management policies that respected their relationship with their vehicle. One of their key points was that dispatchers tend radio them by truck number; while the truck was the mixer driver's responsibility, they wanted the respect to be addressed by their name, not by a truck number.

The mixer drivers' top five job satisfaction factors are: 1. relations with co-workers, 2. condition of their truck, equipment, and tools, 3. their company's reputation, 4. their company's emphasis on safety's and safety practices, and 5. their company valuing diversity. In the external norm category, only two factors overlapped with the drivers' top ten, both related to safety practices; none overlapped in the top five. "Condition of equipment, truck, tools," "health care benefits, pension, retirement, or profit sharing plan" ranked in the bottom half for the external norm while in the drivers' top ten job satisfiers.

The five least satisfying job factors for mixer drivers are: 35. management's lack of involvement with drivers for company improvement, 34. drivers' supervisor's disciplinary actions, 33. supervisor's hiring-interviewing-driver selection process, 32. management's lack of recognition and appreciation for a job well done, and 31. management not encouraging drivers' to share ideas, suggestions, or feedback. Recognition and appreciation for a job well done was the only factor that ranked in both the drivers' and external norm's bottom five.

The external norm bottom five are, starting from last place: recognition and appreciation for a job well done, compensation and pay, condition of equipment, truck, tools, materials, management's willingness to address employees not performing well, and job performance feedback.

Also of note, when ranking the 35 job satisfiers, mixer driver's ranked pension, retirement/profit sharing as #9; compensation and pay, #24.

When the drivers completed the survey, the facilitator led them in an hour and a half discussion about their jobs. Drivers were asked to comment on the positive aspects of their job first. Many answers related the job's independence, challenging work, and the ability to be outside and drive to different locations. When asked to discuss the things they like least about their job, they focused on management's lack of respect and communication with them, scheduling issues, management's manipulation of safety policies to assure delivery of concrete, and manipulation of pay calculations and vacation compensation. One key point mixer drivers emphasized was management's inconsistency in policies and methods.

The session completed with a team exercise, asking the champion drivers to suggest solutions to the following broad issues: management's relationship with employees about showing respect, appreciation, and recognition, pay, work rules and policies, getting promoted and training, and job security. They are detailed in the report.

In conclusion, the champion mixer drivers endorsed a national paper survey to all mixer drivers to help improve their work conditions.

**2006 National Mixer Driver Championship
Survey and Focus Group
Minutes and Analysis**

Facilitated by Human Systems Development, Inc.

After their driver championship competition ended, the 29 mixer drivers participants were asked to voluntarily attend a two hour workshop to explore driver job satisfaction issues. The workshop had two parts, a survey completion exercise followed immediately by a focus group. This report not only contains the minutes of the focus group but also a summary and analysis of the survey the drivers took that afternoon.

Attendance

- **27 mixer driver attendees. Two drivers did not participate.**
- **NRMCA Staff: Kathleen Carr Smith, Eileen Dickson, Robert Garbini**
- **RMC Research Foundation: Jennifer LeFevre.**
- **Deb Dwyer, Human Systems Development, Inc.**

Demographic information

The attendees were approximately 50% union-non union. Six were pay-by-load. Responses did not probe either circumstance but were noted in the ensuing dialog with the drivers.

The only demographic information gathered was from the 29 entry/application forms from the championship months before the workshop. The demographic information that follows is for all 29 drivers.

The average time a driver worked at his company was 11.2 years, with a low of two years, a high of 26 years and a mean of nine years. The same corresponding drivers drove a mixer truck for an average of 13.1 years, with a low of two years, a high of 30 years, and a mean of 10 years. Eight of the 29 (28%) drivers worked as a mixer driver longer than they worked for their current employer. One driver worked in another capacity for a year with his current employer before becoming a mixer driver. Seventy percent (20 drivers) reported that they started as a mixer driver when they were hired by their current employer.

The 29 mixer driver championship competitors represented 16 states. Missing regions were NE and NW states. The biggest US concrete producer states, CA, FL, and TX (~25% US annual capacity), represented 31% of the driver championship participants. The sample pool of drivers is not a valid data set for comparison against mixer drivers in the industry-at-large. (See attachment: Appendix 1: Mixer Driver 2006 Championship Participant Demographics.)

Minutes from the session

After the drivers introduced themselves to the group, the session facilitator asked the drivers to describe their job in one word. The adjectives are in order of their responses.

thankless, challenging, different, interesting, interesting, something different every day, exciting, variety, inconsistent hours, outstanding-fun-challenging, very challenging, challenging, challenging to keep plant managers around to help with job, interesting and challenging, unpredictable, muddy, tiresome-can't stand the hours, tiring, challenging, blessed, rewarding, fun, universal, have to learn to work with people, different every day, challenging, unpredictable and aggravating, unpredictable.

Once this exercise was complete, one agitated driver forcefully stated that as a result of Peter Brewin's and Eileen Dickson's morning remarks, this afternoon's session would be their opportunity to express thoughts about their jobs. A few had talked among themselves after their morning exam and assumed the two hours would be an open discussion. He did not think the session should be moderated. Others felt the same way.

With agreement that the session would be more fruitful if it followed a predetermined process, a few minutes in the beginning would now be used by the drivers to openly express comments they wanted management to know. Four drivers spoke. Comments are as close to quotes as possible.

1. We aren't children; management needs to know how to talk with us; talk to us with respect.
2. Treat us like a human, not a piece of meat thrown to wolves. The greed by mgt. controls our job and lives. They do this for the money, not because something is right.
3. We need the backing by our management when we go to a job site. The customer is not always right. Management pushes problems and negative solutions on the drivers. They let us carry the burden to the customer when it is not always our fault or problem.
4. Dispatchers control our lives in a negative way. They don't respect us. They always want to know where a truck is by number. Humans drive the trucks; call us by name, not by a truck number. (There was a lot of comment among themselves about the ;point that they want to be called by a name.)

The group then refocused and took a job satisfaction survey.

Workshop Part One: Survey

The issues in question were determined by ready mixed concrete operations-oriented management who volunteered to participate in focus groups about driver recruitment and retention, in March, 2007, sponsored by NRMCA. That group represented 40% of the concrete poured in the US in 2004.

The data to be gleaned from the survey would have three goals:

1. Gather information from the mixer drivers' point-of-view about factors and conditions that impact job satisfaction. Specifically, these championship mixer drivers because they should have insight based on their high level of performance and professionalism.
2. Ascertain if this specific survey delivered data that could be used to analyze the critical factors for mixer driver retention on a national scale.
3. Evaluate the vendor's data gathering-survey techniques for a possible national driver survey.

All 27 present drivers filled out the survey. All responded to every question. Drivers received the following verbal instructions before they filled it out:

1. Be honest and candid. We value your opinion and your knowledge.
2. The survey is not a test; there are no right or wrong answers.
3. Individual responses or companies can not be identified.

The survey took about ten minutes. It had two distinct sections: 1. Personal job satisfaction indicators, and, 2. Ranking of mixer driver turnover issues.

Personal job satisfaction indicators

The first part of the survey asked for a scaled response to 35 questions to job satisfaction factors based on the mixer drivers' current employer's practices. The 35 questions were divided into nine broad categories. The external norm source was from entry level, front line production jobs which included categories like linemen and CDL drivers. A score of 3.50 or better is a positive job satisfaction indicator. A 15% point spread between the drivers' total responses and the external norm flags an issue. The greater the disparity, the grater the issue.

Appendix 2, "Ready Mixed Concrete – Driver Retention Survey: Most to Least Satisfied" shows all 35 specific factors about a job that drivers responded positively or negatively. The external norm's scoring responses shows 20 (57%) of the 35 factors garnered a positive response above 3.5. The driver's responded above a 3.5 for 13 (37%) of the 35 job factors. Drivers scored higher than the norm in eight of the 35 responses.

The analysis will first look at the drivers' and the external norm's responses in the broad categories of job indicators then move to compare responses to individual job factors.

Categorical Champion Mixer Driver Job Satisfaction Scores (See Chart 1-A)

The external normal “Total” job satisfaction was above 3.50; the drivers’ “Total” Job satisfaction score was below 3.50.

Both the drivers and the external norm responded over 3.5 in four of the nine categories. Three overlapped: “Customer Relations,” “Co-Worker Relations,” and “Safety-Safety Training.” In one category, “Equipment and Working Conditions,” the drivers not only scored higher than the external norm but also scored above the 3.50 threshold while the norm scored below 3.5. This positive response was also seen in the focus group. It should be noted that the drivers defined “equipment” as their truck. If a future survey is delivered, this question might need expanded or clarified.

Chart 1-A: Categorical Champion Mixer Driver Job Satisfaction Scores

JOB SATISFACTION CATEGORIES (NUMBER OF FACTORS PER CATEGORY)	DRIVERS’ RANKING MOST SATISFING (1) TO LEAST SATISFING (9)	DRIVERS’ MEAN (5.0 – 1.0 AGREE/ DISAGREE)	NORM RANKING FROM MOST SATISFIED (1) TO LEAST SATISFIED (9)	EXTERNAL CATEGORY NORM
Customer Relations (2)	1	3.72	1	4.02
Equipment and Working Conditions (2)	2	3.68	7	3.38
Training - Safety (3)	3	3.65	2	3.95
Co-worker Relations, Management Addressing Worker Job Performance (4)	4	3.55	4	3.55
Pay and Benefits (3)	5	3.39	5	3.42
Supervision and Management (9)	6	3.39	5	3.42
Work Policies and Practices (6)	7	3.18	3	3.58
Hiring Practices (2)	8	3.03	Norm not given	Norm not given
Appreciation, Employee Involvement (4)	9	2.93	8	3.37
TOTAL (35)		3.35		3.55

(Above 3.50 - positive job satisfaction category indicator)

The critical .15 decimal differential between the drivers and the external norm was found in five categories, plus in the survey’s total score. The following orders the largest to smallest point spread:

Chart 1-B: Categorical Driver/Norm Job Satisfaction Score Differentials

JOB SATISFACTION CATEGORIES	PERCENTAGE SPREAD	DRIVER SATISFACTION SCORE	EXERNAL NORM SCORE
Appreciation, Employee Involvement	.44	2.93	3.37
Work Policies and Practices	.40	3.18	3.58
Safety – Safety Training	.30	3.65	3.95
Equipment and Working Conditions	.30	3.68	3.38
Customer Relations	.28	3.72	4.02
TOTAL	.20	3.35	3.55

(Above 3.50 - positive job satisfaction category indicator)

Analysis of Chart 1-B: Categorical Driver-Norm Job Satisfaction Score Differentials

Scores of a .15+ point spread between the drivers and the external norm are statistically significant.

Using *Appendix 2, “Ready Mixed Concrete – Driver Retention Survey: Most to Least Satisfied”* as a detailed reference, notable negative gaps between the drivers’ response and the norm were in two areas. First, the responses to factors under “Appreciation, Employee Involvement” were the lowest scores and below 3.5 for both groups, yet the factor also had the largest gap between the drivers and the norm. Second, drivers’ responses to all six indicators under “Work Policies & Practices” were under a 3.5 while the external norm had two below 3.5.

The drivers “Total” response to their all-over job satisfaction fell below 3.5 with a .20 point spread from the norm.

From a positive response, there was a .30 gap between the drivers’ (3.5+) response to “Equipment and Working Conditions” to the norm.

As for a specific summary of individual job satisfaction factors, the Charts 2 and 3 analyze the top 10 and bottom 10 specific responses. They are as follows:

Chart 2-A: Champion Mixer Driver’s Ten Most Satisfying Job Factors

SPECIFIC DRIVER JOB SATISFACTION INDICATOR (FACTOR) 1-10 RANK	JOB SATISFACTION CATEGORY	EXTERNAL NORM FOR SPECIFIC INDICATOR 1-35 RANK	DRIVERS’ MEAN: 5.0 MOST SATISFIED TO 1.0 LEAST SATISFIED	EXTERNAL NORM MEAN	% MEAN SPREAD
1. Relations with co-workers	Co-worker relationship, addressing performance	12	4.00	3.66	.34
2. Condition of equipment, truck, tools, materials	Equipment and Working Conditions	28	3.93	3.17	.76
3. Company reputation	Customer relations	XX	3.93	Norm not given	XX
4. Company emphasis on safety, encouraging safety practices	Training and Safety	3	3.85	3.95	.10
5. Valuing diversity (race, gender, ethnicity, appearance, and lifestyle differences)	Co-worker relationship, addressing performance	10	3.85	3.68	.17
6. Your supervisor is easy to approach, listens, and cares about you	Supervision & Management	13	3.70	3.61	.09
7. The company you work for is making changes needed to compete and grown in the future	Supervision & Management	11	3.70	3.67	.03
8. Health care benefits	Pay and Benefits	19	3.63	3.56	.07
9. Pension, retirement, or profit sharing plan	Pay and Benefits	19	3.63	3.56	.07
10. Safety Training	Training and Safety	4	3.59	3.89	.30

(Below 3.50 - negative job satisfaction)

(Drivers score above the external norm.)

Analysis of Chart 2-A: Champion Mixer Driver’s Ten Most Satisfying Job Factors

All of the drivers’ top ten specific “most satisfying” job indicators scored above the 3.5/acceptable break point. The drivers’ top 10 satisfaction indicators were in six of the nine broad job satisfaction categories. The two questions that that fell below the norm related to safety practices.

In the external norm category, only two of factors overlapped in the drivers' top ten, both related to safety practices. "Condition of equipment, truck, tools," "Health care benefits," and "Pension, retirement, or profit sharing plan" ranked for the external norm in the bottom half while in the drivers' top ten.

Furthermore, it is appropriate to look at the drivers' responses where there was a percentage spread of more than .15. Above .15 indicates the factor's deviation from the norm is large enough for concern. The critical 15 point differential between the Drivers and the External Norm showed in four of the ten questions. In three, the drivers' satisfaction scored .15 higher than the norm. Job satisfaction category, "Co-worker relationship, addressing performance," question category repeated twice.

One gains a deeper understanding of job satisfaction factors with a reverse analysis. The External Norm Top 10 Job Indicators gives the drivers' ranking a different look.

**Chart 2-B: Ten Most Satisfying Job Factors,
External Norm Job Satisfaction Score Against Driver Responses**

EXTERNAL JOB SPECIFIC SATISFACTION INDICATOR (FACTOR) 1-10 RANK	JOB SATISFACTION CATEGORY	DRIVER RANK 1-35	EXTERNAL NORM MEAN 5.0 MOST SATISFIED TO 1.0 LEAST SATISFIED	DRIVER MEAN	% SPREAD
1. Customer relationships with drivers	Customer Relations	13	4.02	3.52	.50
2. On-the-job training	Training - Safety	12	4.01	3.52	.49
3. Company emphasis on safety, encouraging safe practices	Training - Safety	4	3.95	3.85	.10
4. Safety training	Training - Safety	10	3.89	3.59	.30
5. Your supervisor has high standards and expects the best from employees	Supervision & Management	16	3.87	3.44	.43
6. Your supervisor has the job knowledge and skills to do the job	Supervision & Management	11	3.83	3.56	.27
7. Job security	Work Policies & Practices	18	3.75	3.35	.40
8. Your work hours, work schedule	Work Policies & Practices	30	3.74	2.96	.78
9. Your supervisor shows concern for your personal issues	Supervision & Management	19	3.71	3.33	.38
10. Valuing diversity (race, gender, age, ethnicity, appearance, lifestyle differences)	Co-worker Relationships, Addressing Performance	5	3.68	3.85	.17

(Above 3.50 – positive job satisfaction) (Drivers score above the external norm.)

**Analysis of Chart 2-B: Ten Most Satisfying Job Factors,
External Norm Job Satisfaction Score Against Driver Responses**

Three factors ranked in the top ten for both the external norms and the drivers: “Company emphasis on safety, encouraging safe practices,” “Safety Training,” and “Valuing diversity.” Additionally, two of them are within acceptable .15 differential ranges. The other eight factors’ point spread differential are well beyond the .15 acceptable spread range. Three of the driver factors fall in the bottom 50%, with a fourth ranked 16/35.

Reversing the process, the next sequence of charts looks at the least satisfying job factors.

Chart 3-A: Champion Mixer Driver’s Ten Least Satisfying Job Factors

SPECIFIC DRIVER JOB SATISFACTION (FACTOR) AND 35-26 RANK	JOB SATISFACTION CATEGORY	EXTERNAL NORM RANK (1-35)	DRIVERS’ MEAN 5.0 MOST SATISFIED TO 1.0 LEAST SATISFIED	EXTERNAL NORN MEAN	% SPREAD
35. Involving employees in improvement	Appreciation, employee involvement	25	2.70	3.34	.64
34. Your supervisor disciplines correctly	Supervision and Management	Norm not given	2.78	Norm not given	Norm not given
33. Hiring, interviewing, selection process	Hiring Practices	Norm not given	2.81	Norm not given	Norm not given
32. Recognition & appreciation of job well done	Appreciation, employee involvement	30	2.89	3.11	.22
31. Encouraging your ideas, suggestions, and feedback	Supervision and Management	22	2.96	3.43	.47
30. Your work hours, work schedule	Work policies and practices	8	2.96	3.74	.78
29. Willingness to address problem performers; employers who are not meeting the job requirements	Co-worker relationship, addressing performance	27	3.00	3.28	.28
28. Overtime notification policies	Work polices and practices	18	3.04	3.57	.53
27. Opportunity for career growth, advancement, promotion	Work polices and practices	21	3.07	3.49	.42
26. Your supervisor gives you feedback on your performance	Supervision and Management	26	3.11	3.33	.22

(Above 3.50 – positive job satisfaction; rank above the 50% percentile)

Analysis of Chart 3-A: Ten Least Satisfying Job Factors

Seven of the 10 “least satisfying” champion mixer driver indicators were below the same response in the external norm. One score was the same. None of the driver responses scored above the acceptable norm of 3.5 whereas in the external norm category, two of factors were above 3.5 for other entry level, production workers.

The dissatisfaction indicators fell in six of the nine broad question categories. Two categories of questions fell in both the upper ten and bottom ten job satisfaction question categories: “Supervision and Management” and “Co-worker Relationships, Addressing Performance.”

While the management driver focus group believed salary, pension/benefits, and scheduling were key issues for driver retention, among the champion drivers only scheduling was on their bottom ten. It was #30; pay was #24. The bottom five factors responded to communication and administration issues. Benefits and pensions were on champion drivers’ top ten list. It is not known if this would remain true in the broad driver sample. Pay and benefits were topics that the drivers brought up in the focus group after the survey. Verbally, their remarks were stronger than indicated in the survey.

The critical .15 differential between the Drivers and the External Norm showed in seven of the ten questions, with two indicators not having a comparative norm.

Following suit, the next step is to reverse the process and look at the external norm's Bottom 10 Job Indicators against the driver's mean scores.

**Chart 3-B: Ten Least Satisfying Job Factors,
External Norm Job Satisfaction Score Against Driver Responses**

EXTERNAL JOB SATISFACTION INDICATOR (FACTOR) *30-21 RANK	JOB SATISFACTION CATEGORY	DRIVER RANK 1-35	EXTERNAL NORM MEAN	DRIVER MEAN	% SPREAD
30 Recognition and appreciation for a job well done	Appreciation, Employee Involvement	32	3.11	2.89	.22
29 Compensation and pay	Pay and Benefits	24	3.15	3.19	.04
28 Condition of equipment, truck, tools, materials	Equipment working conditions	2	3.17	3.93 3.93	.76
27 Willingness to address problem performers; employees who are not meeting the job requirements	Co-worker Relationships, Addressing Performance	29	3.28	3.00	.28
26 Your supervisor gives you feedback on your performance	Supervision & Management	26	3.33	3.11	.22
25 Involving employees in improvement efforts	Appreciation, employee involvement	35	3.34	2.70	.64
24 Management above your supervisor is easy to approach and communicate with	Supervision & Management	25	3.39	3.26	.13
23 Fair and reasonable company policies	Work Policies & Practices	22	3.40	3.19	.21
22 Encouraging your ideas, suggestions, and feedback	Appreciation, Employee Involvement	31	3.43	2.96	.53
21 Opportunity for career growth, advancement, promotion	Work Policies & Practices	27	3.49	3.07	.42

* 5 driver job satisfaction indicators were not ranked in the External Norm. Those external factors were not used in this analysis.

(Above 3.50 – positive job satisfaction) (Drivers score above the external norm.)

Analysis of Chart 3-B: Ten Least Satisfying Job Factors, External Norm Job Satisfaction Score Against Driver Responses

Six factors rank in the bottom ten for both the external norms and the drivers:

1. Recognition and appreciation for a job well done,
2. Willingness to address problem performers
3. Your supervisor gives you feedback on your performance
4. Involving employees in improvement effort
5. Opportunity for career growth, advancement, promotion ,
6. Encouraging your ideas, suggestions, and feedback.

If one considers that there were five champion driver mixer job satisfaction indications that did not have an equivalent norm, three of the remaining four driver factors do fall within the comparable least satisfying, external norms range. Only “Condition of equipment, truck, tools, materials” (#2 Most Satisfying job indicators) is not within the bottom range. Additionally, eight factors’ point spread differentials are beyond the .15 acceptable spread range.

Chart 4- Job Factors with a 15% or more Variance between the Drivers' & External Norm (21 of 35 Factors)

(Above 3.50 – positive job satisfaction) (Drivers score above the external norm.)

DRIVER JOB SATISFACTION FACTOR (FROM GREATEST GAP, REDUCING PERCENTAGE)	JOB SATISFACTION CATEGORY	% SPREAD FROM NORM	DRIVER MEAN	EXTERNAL NORM MEAN	DRIVER RANK (1-BEST TO 35-WORST)	EXTERNAL RANK (1-BEST TO 35-WORST)
1. Your work hours, work schedule	Work Policies & Practices	.78	2.96	3.74	30	8
2. Condition of equipment, truck, tools, materials	Equipment, Working conditions	.76	3.93	3.17	2	28
3. Involving employees in improvement efforts	Appreciation, Employee Involvement	.67	2.70	3.34	35	25
4. Overtime notification policies	Work Policies & Practices	.53	3.04	3.57	28	19
5. Customer relationships with drivers	Customer Relations	.50	3.52	4.02	13	1
6. On-the-job training	Training - Safety	.49	3.52	4.01	12	2
7. Encouraging your ideas, suggestions, and feedback	Appreciation, Employee Involvement	.47	2.96	3.43	31	22
8. Your supervisor has high standards and expects the best from employees	Supervision & Management	.43	3.44	3.87	16	5
9. Opportunity for career growth, advancement, promotion	Work Policies & Practices	.42	.3.07	3.49	27	21
10. Communication, information on company goals and business results	Appreciation, Employee Involvement	.41	3.19	3.60	23	17
11. Job security	Work Policies & Practices	.40	3.35	3.75	8	7
12. Your supervisor shows concern for your personal issues	Supervision & Management	.38	3.33	3.71	19	9
13. Relationships with co-workers	Co-Worker Relationships, Addressing Performance	.34	4.00 4.00	3.66	1	12
14. Safety training	Training-Safety	.30	3.59	3.89	10	4
15. Willingness to address problem performers; employees who are not meeting the job requirements	Co-Worker Relationships, Addressing Performance	.28	3.00	3.28	29	27
16. Your supervisor has the job knowledge and skills to do the job	Supervision & Management	.27	3.56	3.83	11	6
17. Your supervisor gives you feedback on your performance	Supervision & Management	.22	3.11	3.33	26	26
18. Recognition and appreciation for a job well done	Appreciation, Employee Involvement	.22	2.89	3.11	32	30
19. Fair and reasonable company policies	Work Policies & Practices	.21	3.19	3.40	22	23
20. Teamwork; team environment	Co-Worker Relationships, Addressing Performance	.21	3.37	3.58	17	18
21. Valuing diversity (race, gender, age, ethnicity, appearance, lifestyle differences)	Co-Worker Relationships, Addressing Performance	.17	3.85 3.85	3.68	5	10

Analysis of Chart 4- Job Factors with a 15% or more Variance between the Drivers' & External Norm

There are clear themes when the gaps in the job satisfiers are grouped together by their categories: all four factors under “Appreciation, Employment Involvement,” all four factors under “ Co-Worker Relationships, Addressing Performance,” and four of seven under “Supervision and Management” are included. Every one of them deals with communication. Additionally, five of the six factors under “Work Policies and Practices” are noted. They tie into work scheduling, overtime, fair company policies, job security, and opportunity for growth and advancement, challenges the industry has struggled with for years.

Workshop Part Two: Survey: Ranking of mixer driver turnover issues

The second part of the survey asked the mixer driver to rank 13 turnover issues. The issues in question were determined by ready mix industry management who volunteered to participate in focus groups about driver recruitment and retention, in March, 2007, by NRMCA. That group represented 40% of the concrete poured in the US.

Analysis of Workshop Part Two: Survey: Ranking of mixer driver turnover issues

The rankings were consistent with the previous section of the survey. Drivers ranked their relationship with co workers as most positive (number one) in both cases. Safety and benefits were also consistently positive between the two exercises. Scheduling, supervision and management issues, as well as lack of respect and recognition, ranked in the bottom of both survey exercises. Specific rankings can be found in Appendix “Ready Mixed Concrete - Driver Perceptions of Turnover Causes.”

Workshop Part Two: Champion Mixer Driver Focus Group

When the drivers completed the survey, the facilitator led them in an hour and a half discussion about their jobs. The following minutes reflect the drivers' responses. To start, in an organized fashion around the room, drivers were individually asked to tell the group what they like about their job the most. Responses are as follows, in order:

What I like about my job

- When I work at a new plant or get a new truck
- Driving to different locations all the time
- Benefits and making good money
- Benefits
- Making money
- Variety of tasks
- Meet different people every day
- Benefits
- Be my own boss
- Work is outside
- My independence
- The job is unique. Because we carry a perishable load, people are always interested in hearing about what I do and my responsibilities. Most people will tell you that they don't know anyone who does my job so my job is special. We belong to a very small fraternity.
- Driving off road - this is challenging.
- Being my own boss
- Bonus and benefits. I meet interesting new people all the time.
- Early shift
- Guaranteed 40 hours
- As an African American, I am accepted here more than other industries
- Customers recognition of my clean truck
- My truck
- Working outside
- Earning a bonus
- Benefits
- Interesting people at a pour
- Working outside
- Challenging issues to deal with at the job site. And it changes all the time
- Knowing my customers and doing a good job for them
- Working for a respected company
- Independence
- Short commute to work
- Good pay
- Meeting new customers
- Never boring
- Co-workers
- Winter layoff
- Pay by load
- Don't have to drive the Peterbuilt (old truck)

What I don't like about my job

- Getting cut off by cars on road, especially when I have a full load because I'm top heavy then.
- It is a dirty and dusty job.
- My bonus is tied to my company's performance and not individual's performance. My hard work gets others rewards who don't work as hard.
- Fluctuating start times
- My company always changes policies because management wants them that way and it is not right to do that so many times.
- No more seniority (pay by load driver)
- Paid by the load. When you go on vacation, my pay is not based on my average hourly wage. It is based on the company's hourly pay rate so when I go on vacation I make a lot less than my normal pay. (Lots of buzz/talk among drivers – had to calm them down.)
- I don't trust my management. They are not loyal to good drivers.
- There are different rules for different drivers
- We are pushed to hurry but not allowed to have accident. There is the continual threat to get the work done and to deliver quality concrete. They push for production but don't allow us to make mistakes. Their pushing is what makes the mistakes.
- Being lied to by management and they know it.
- Being required to haul more weight than truck is allowed to haul legally and management knows it.
- Dispatchers and order takers are over scheduling us. You can't do what they schedule in the time they want. This upsets customers and they take it out on drivers. Dispatch actions put us drivers on the line, not them. When the customers call, dispatch blames it on us.
- Driving in inclement weather, especially snow. I do it all: sales, driving, and customer relations. This is too many responsibilities.
- Sales driving customers relations.
- I don't have a pension. I don't like not having any retirement (money).
- It is OK if your start time varies but I never know when I get off from work.
- I have worn out 20 alarm clocks since I started to work for this company eight years ago. This is because they are always changing start times. I'm always resetting clocks so I wear out the clock buttons. I want a consistent start time.
- Lack of respect by dispatchers. They treat drivers like children; they talk down to drivers.
- No more seniority or our labor union. It is unfair because my pay is not that different from a new driver. And that new person can even get a new truck.
- Not enough pay for the risk. Drivers get fatigued and management does not care if it is not safe. We can kill people with families on the road and we can die, too.
- Management makes us drive when we are tired because we are the better drivers. Management knows if they load drivers when they hit 11 hours and 58 minutes (referring to drivers' hours of service). Then a driver can work another 4 hours. If you refuse to drive any more, they can fire you. I'm too tired and I physically hurt. (Comment caused room to into an uproar in agreement. Five minutes to get them to move on.)

- Being rushed all the time and the pressure to deliver on time because I'm not scheduled correctly. Dispatch does not have a clue where places are and how long it takes to get there. They just want me to rush and that is dangerous.
- Saturday work. I want to work 5 days a week. If I have to give up Saturday, I want two days off in a row.
- Rotating hours; swing shift
- I sit home one day in the middle of the week because of lack of work; next day I work way too long or I am called in and have to work a Saturday. Because they called me in in the middle of the week, I don't get weekend overtime time pay. The company does this on purpose and this abuses drivers. We need consistent hours because it is so tough on our home life.
- There is a lack of trucks which is caused by management. Then the work is there but we don't get called in and the pour gets delayed.
- Though most drivers work six days a week, when we go on vacation, we get paid for five days of vacation. (Drivers then all shared how they get paid the hourly wage during vacation, not getting compensating for overtime. They reported this can mean a 1/3 cut in pay for the vacation period which means they can't afford to take vacation.
- When business slows down, the company plays around with the layoff list. Sometimes a driver is laid off by date of hire (seniority). Some senior drivers would like to get laid off and let the younger ones work (because the younger ones need money; older driver wants to sit home for a while, etc.) Sometimes my company cuts everyone back to same hours so senior drivers get the same hours and money as a new hire; this is not fair. Senior drivers should have a say when cutting back or increasing hours. (Comments were inconsistent but reflected frustration with the fairness of hours by seniority concept and how there is a state of powerlessness among senior drivers in regards of having a say about the hours they work – a punishment for being competent and loyal.)
- Companies need to obey the laws that when you work longer than the 15 hour time limit (Florida). We should not work any more. Drivers should not be asked to drive or work beyond the state limit for hours. When a driver is in an accident because he's tired from driving over time, companies punish driver for the accident when they forced the driver to continue to work (or be fired).
- Companies don't respect someone who keeps his truck clean; it is my truck. I don't let anyone else drive my truck. No rookies in my truck. If someone else drives my truck, bring back same way you got it; (This was a very BIG issue: drivers feel they have ownership in their truck as if it truly were their own piece of equipment. They all had pride in their specific truck.)
- When a holiday is in middle week, we work 48 hours so we don't get overtime pay for holidays.
- When paid by load, when on vacation, we drop to the hourly rate which is at least ¼ less pay in vacation pay. We should get the average of what make. We get penalized for taking vacation.
- Drivers don't get management's backing or they just avoid the customer problem and then it's the driver who has to deal with it. I don't mind dealing with it, but don't treat me like a child. A big part of the problem is that dispatch has too much impact on how work is assigned to drivers.

Driver suggestions for key issues

The 27 drivers counted off and were divided into five groups. Each group was given a topic to brainstorm solutions and report back to everyone orally. After they finished, the full group could contribute comments. “What are your suggestions to management (about the following).....”

A. Management’s relationship with employees about showing respect, appreciation, and recognition?

- Don’t change rules (at least let them sit a year). Have one set for everyone. Rules get changed to benefit the management and company or because of the economy. Wait a year. Make rules “concrete.” Don’t change them on a whim.
- Be consistent with rules and disciplinary actions; one set rules for all drivers, no favorites.
- Drivers who work for 35-40 years need to be recognized as senior drivers and get respect. For example, a senior driver should get a choice when to go home. Don’t always keep him over because he is experienced. Companies punish competence, reward inexperience and incompetence.
- How companies recognize drivers is important. We should be called by our names and not our truck numbers. They need to recognize us individually, like with safety awards. Recognize drivers for cleanliness, even if it’s just a handshake, pat on back, or face to face. Don’t do it in letter or over the radio. And yell at drivers in private. Don’t make us lose face when dispatchers yell at drivers publicly over the radio when a dispatcher might not know whole story. Talk to us like adults. Ask us questions and tell us things about helping the business. This is a form of respect for us and recognizes that we are the big contributors that make the business work.

B. Pay

- We need more money.
- New mixer drivers need better starting pay so they can meet bills. They cannot afford to stay because of the hours they get and their schedules. It is tough on young families.
- You need to pay enough to meet cost of living and housing.
- Health insurance coverage needs to be better because we don’t make a lot of money but we work long hours and the job is (physically) tough on us. We hurt a lot of the time. It’s doing your work.
- There should be higher pay for senior drivers (pay by load driver);
- Benefits like a company picnic are OK – don’t overlook picnics and rewards. On the other hand, management still gets good rewards like fancy dinners and meetings, while drivers rewards are lowered to cover management costs. It is a double standard. Share the wealth with those who make it all happen.

C. Work rules and policies

- No cell phones when driving is a good policy. Enforce it. There is a double standard on cells for salesmen and management. Why are drivers targeted but not sales and management?
- Clock in times need to be consistent. Look big picture. A few minutes late is ok. Continually late one thing. Deal with worst offenders. Give those that try some leeway. Traffic is unpredictable.
- New drivers get such inconsistent hours they cannot afford to support their families so they quit. Senior drivers get preference but there has to be common sense for new drivers to be able to make a consistent living.
- Senior driver should get preference time. The union says they must always come in first. This is not always good. A non-union guy can make choice to come in or not/time to come in. Find a way to work with drivers.
- The industry should study fair work schedules. Honor seniority but don't forget newer drivers.
- Management and drivers need to work together on how to come up with a fair schedule that deals with inconsistent hours and seniority. Look for better ways to solve work schedule problems. Give new guys some time, too, or they leave. They also need to know what their schedule is day to day.
- When it comes to work rules, everyone needs to pull their own weight. There needs to be teamwork. If not, then management needs to deal with non-performers. Management needs to be consistent no matter what.
- Sometimes you have more orders than we can pour. Management needs to recognize drivers are tired or you don't have enough drivers. Dispatchers/plant operators/supervisors should not be so busy that they can't solve delivery schedule issues.

D. Getting promoted and training

- Set more definite training times for new drivers. Sometimes training gets completed in two weeks then another driver will get three months. When we are busy, trainers push new hires into truck faster; when slower, trainers take more time. Pushing new drivers too fast is not safe. It is wrong and management knows it.
- Just because a driver has a CDL does not mean he can be a mixer driver in a hurry. These drivers can be short changed. Set an established training time and mandatory program for everyone to go through. If someone is really good, then let the trainer decide to speed it up.
- It is management's fault many times when drivers are bad drivers because they have not been trained right. It is too risky for the public if we don't have well trained drivers. Management is just concerned moving concrete and making product. They are not as interested in the public's safety. Safety is something we can never compromise. Set times and policies that are correct. Don't push too fast. The company must leave training up to trainer and not push new drivers too soon.
- Simulators good idea in training.
- Governors are a great idea
- J Brakes for safety is a great idea.

- Plant operators are too busy and don't have enough training to deal with drivers. Senior drivers can help the system if companies would ask them. We know a lot more than management thinks we know.
- Drivers should have their duties laid out clearly. Training should do that. Training should also help build job security, keep drivers safe, as well as our equipment working.
- Companies are too busy pouring and push drivers too much. Drivers are not treated as professionals. We are technical professionals who happen to drive a unique, dangerous truck to the job site. Our job is what happens at the job site. Companies don't see it that way.
- The drivers' jobs are all about getting the customer the right concrete at the right place at the right time.
- We need more training, need respect from our management to see our need to get more technical knowledge. For example, we can tell the slump by sight and how to manipulate slump by manipulating pulling the cone on the job. When a contractor does the slump test wrong, we should be able to get our company's support when we call it in and not get put down by the dispatcher or the sales rep.
- We should all get ACI training but not have to take the test. The company needs to let the contractors know we have technical knowledge (by on-the-job, experiential training).
- Dispatchers should be able to get us to the right place/right address – they need map training and order taker training.
- Dispatchers need to schedule the right delivery time and truck pacing. Scheduling needs to be done correctly. Respect the driver because when we get to the job site at the wrong time, we get yelled at and the dispatcher always tells the contractor it is the driver's fault.

E. Job security

- Our supervisors and managers are book smart but they have absolutely no street knowledge about front line staff and family needs when we are called in to work or not called in. They don't respect that we have families. Drivers influence the job satisfaction of other drivers. Don't they know that?
- Senior drivers should coach the new drivers and management needs to respect the skill and knowledge we have learned by doing our job right.
- All drivers have families and children to take care of. When weather is bad, management needs to know we should not be driving a 30T truck.
- We are attached to our truck; dispatchers need to know and respect that. If they don't, we can quit because we get so upset about the lack of care for our individual truck.
- Equipment that works well is critical. Drivers and management know that older equipment need replaced but management is slow to replace it. It is playing with our lives, our families security and public safety. Don't ever send us out with a truck over loaded or in conditions that are unsafe just to pour more yardage.
- Monthly mentor meetings is needed to continue if we really want better quality. Drivers make a difference if we have good attitudes about our jobs. Drivers can work together to work through problems.

Closing questions

Should we survey RMC drivers all through out the USA?

YES!

Would drivers fill out the survey?

YES!

What are key questions to ask?

- What should be changed?
- What is a fair system of compensation?
- What is a fair system for scheduling drivers?

What format should the survey be?

- Paper
- Self-returned envelope that the driver mails back, not the company. Don't trust the company.

Can NRMCA recommend to drivers that this mixer driver championship group says it is OK to take the survey, that drivers can trust the survey?

YES.

- Management has to listen to drivers' opinions and work on a dialog to make changes.

Submitted by Eileen Dickson

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Appendix 1