



RESEARCH REPORT

Navigating the US Election: Corporate Politics and Employee Expectations

Introduction

Political divisions are playing out in communities and workplaces across the U.S. as the 2024 presidential election heats up. The nation is increasingly divided across partisan lines and tensions are on the rise. In this context, skillfully and proactively navigating politics in the workplace is business critical.

In the current climate of heightened political division, DEI and talent executives looking to retain top talent must consistently engage with [national](#) and [international](#) issues entering into the workplace with increasing frequency.

Towards this end, today's DEI and talent leaders need trustworthy information about what their employees perceive and want, especially those from Historically Excluded Talent (HET) groups.

This report summarizes insights on the political dimensions of workplace culture from Seramount's recent 2024 National DEI Survey.

Methodology

This report's insights are drawn from a **nationally representative May 2024 Seramount survey of 3,000+ US white-collar and frontline employees** at companies with at least 500 employees.

The survey's more than 3,000 responses include more than 1,600 white-collar employees and more than 1,300 frontline workers. Quotas were implemented to ensure accurate representation across race/ethnicity, geography, gender, political affiliation, age, job level, and other key demographics.

Seramount's 2024 survey offers a deep dive into employees' perceptions of politics in the workplace, fielding a battery of questions around their attitudes toward corporate engagement in politics. Several corporate partners helped sponsor this research.

Key Findings

In these turbulent political times, what do employees want from their organizations?

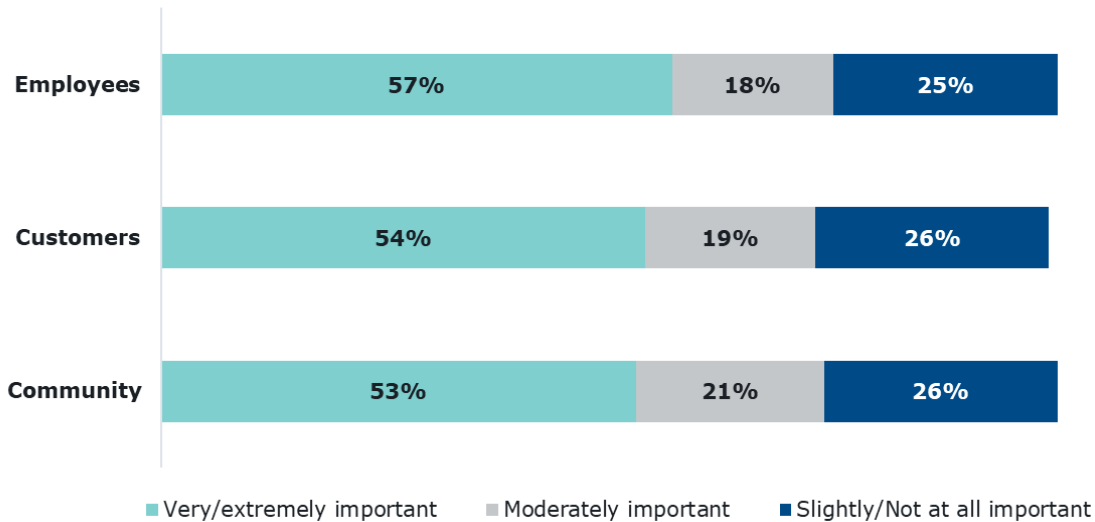
- More than half indicated that it's **very important for their company to issue a statement on a national or global political issue** impacting its employees (57 percent), customers (54 percent), and/or community (53 percent).
- **But many would prefer that their organizations avoid explicitly political issues.** Almost half (47 percent) of employees agreed with the statement "Politics should have no place in the workplace," and 28 percent supported legally prohibiting companies from taking stands/being involved in politics.
- **Support for fighting racism and injustice remains strong**, despite a slight decline since 2021: 76 percent of respondents agree with the statement "I am committed to helping my company fight racism and injustice within the organization" compared with 83 percent in 2021.
- 40 percent of employees have **taken action against a company whose political stance did not align with theirs**, and one in five have engaged in **"quiet-quitting" over politics.**

Navigating the Divide: Employee Expectations

Most employees want their companies to stand up for them on issues that matter.

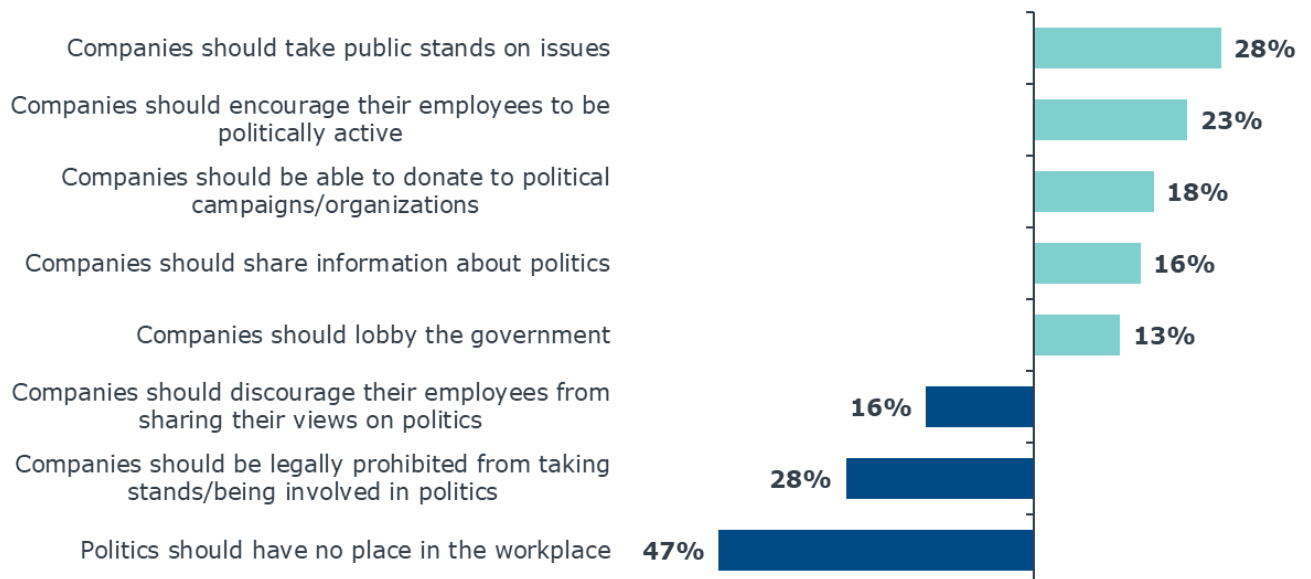
More than half indicated that it is very important for their company to issue a statement on a national or global political issue impacting its employees, community, and/or customers.

Please rate how important it is for your company to issue a statement to national or global political issues impacting its...



However, opinions varied on exactly how employees want their companies to engage with volatile political issues. While **about one in four employees agreed that companies should take public stands on issues (28 percent) and encourage their employees to be politically active (23 percent), nearly half (47 percent) believe politics should have no place in the workplace.** Furthermore, 28 percent supported legally prohibiting companies from taking stands/being involved in politics.

Which of the following statements about companies' roles in politics do you agree with?

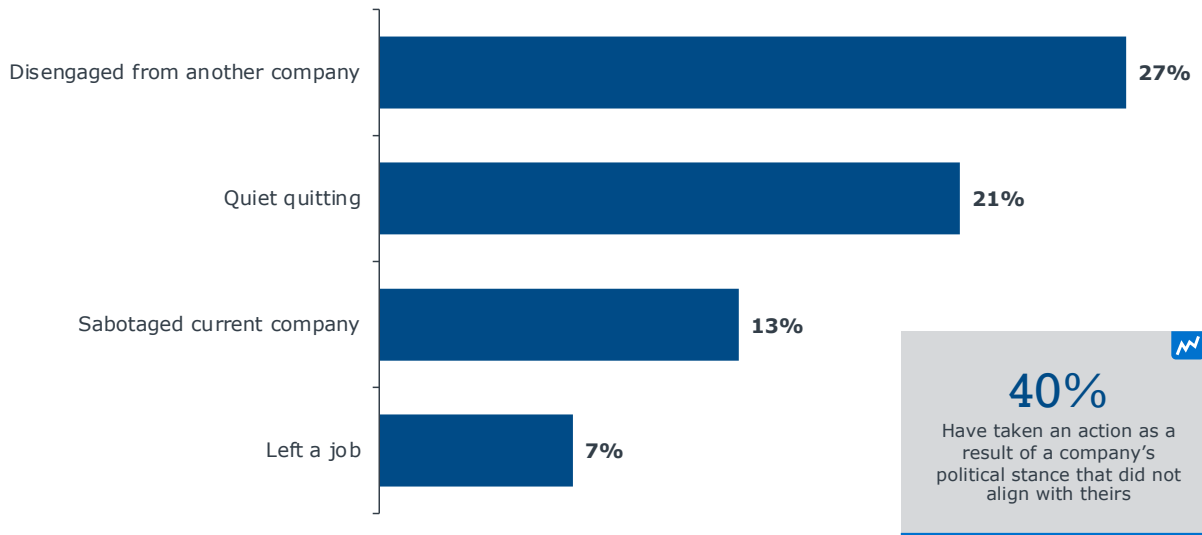


Political Discontent: Workplace Ramifications

Many employees recalled having had a specific negative reaction to a company’s political stance. Overall, **40 percent of employees have taken action against a company whose political stance did not align with theirs, and one in five (21 percent) have engaged in “quiet-quitting” over politics.**

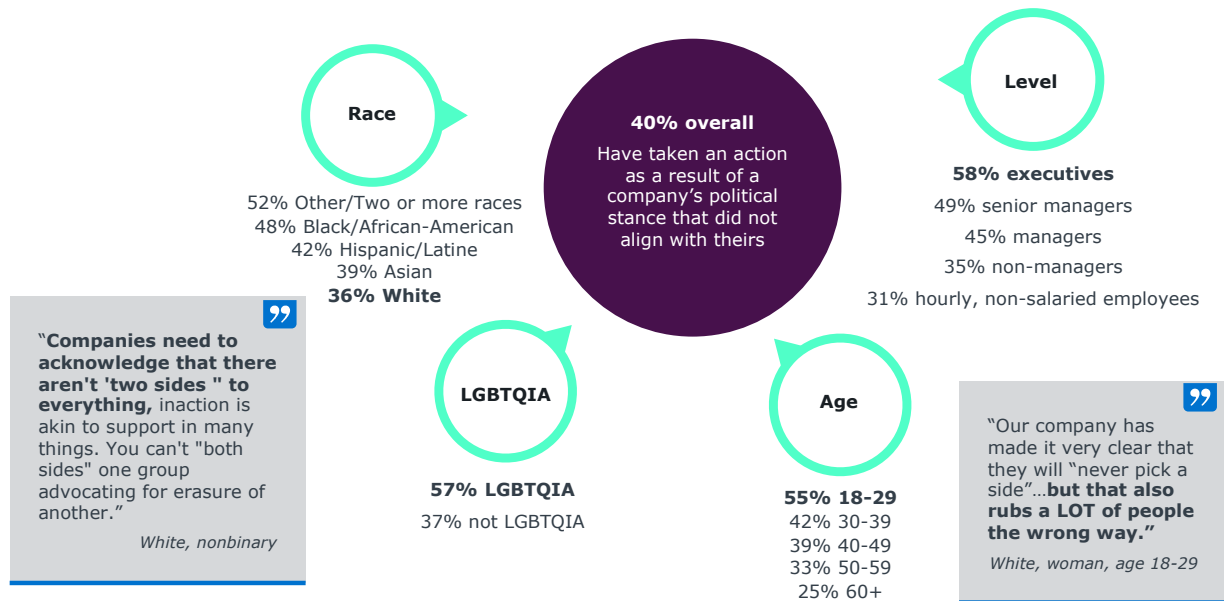
1 in 4 have acted against another company as a result of their political stance, and 1 in 5 have engaged in “quiet quitting”

Have you ever taken any of the following actions as a result of a company’s political stance that did not align with yours? Select all that apply.



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More executives, youngest employees, and LGBTQIA employees have taken action in response



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More of those who have experienced bias have taken action

“It’s not enough to just say you are going to support a group. You need to put money towards groups that are working to fight certain legislation.”

White, woman, LGBTQIA, manager, age 30-39

“[I want to see] Direct alignment between company values and societal/political stance. It’s challenging to believe one or the other if there’s a disconnect.”

White, man, age 30-39

40% overall
Have taken an action as a result of a company’s political stance that did not align with theirs

Experienced Bias

74% Colleagues think I was only hired to fill a quota
19% Have not experienced a microaggression at work

Location

44% urban
40% suburban
37% rural

Political Party

48% Democrats
40% Republicans
32% Independent

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In 2021, the CEO of the project management platform Basecamp asked employees to **refrain from political talk** in company communication channels.

1 in 3

of the company’s employees **quit** as a result.



Sources: [EAB](#)

Bridging the Divide: Taking Action

So what do employees actually want?

“Any public statement should provide actions related to the incident, like that the company is withdrawing/extending support, or offers resources to its employees. No bland “thoughts and prayers.” Say what we’re doing about it.”

Woman, 2 or more races, LGBTQIA, Non-Manager, 18-29

“It’s not enough to issue statements or take public stances - those are just words. I want my company to take action, make a difference, and genuinely help people.”

Woman, White, LGBTQIA, Non-Manager, 30-39

“Provide support that might be needed to those impacted by the turmoil.”

Woman, White, 18-29

“Provide tangible resources to communities impacted.”

Gender non-conforming, White, Manager, LGBTQIA, 30-39

“Provide training on how to address societal and political turmoil. Sometimes I do not know how to start the conversation without potentially offending someone.”

Woman, Hispanic/Latine, Senior Manager, 40-49

“Encourage open discussion with people who disagree. Build bridges, not barriers and push the fact that it’s okay for people to have different opinions.”

Man, White, Manager, 30-39

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Staying the Course: DEI and Social Responsibility

Many have been attracted by a company’s commitment to DEI and corporate social responsibility

“I originally joined my company because of the public commitment to DEI with accountability baked in.”

Man, White, LGBTQIA, Non-Manager, 18-29

“I was attracted to the fact that my company drives DEI and ERG development.”

Man, White, LGBTQIA, Non-Manager, 30-39

“Social responsibility is one of the most important factors to me in looking for a job.”

Woman, Black/African American, Non-Manager, 30-39

“One of the things I was most excited about when I joined my current company was the commitment to DEI.”

Man, Black/African American, LGBTQIA, Senior Manager, 40-49



65% of employees want to work for organizations with a strong social and environmental conscience.

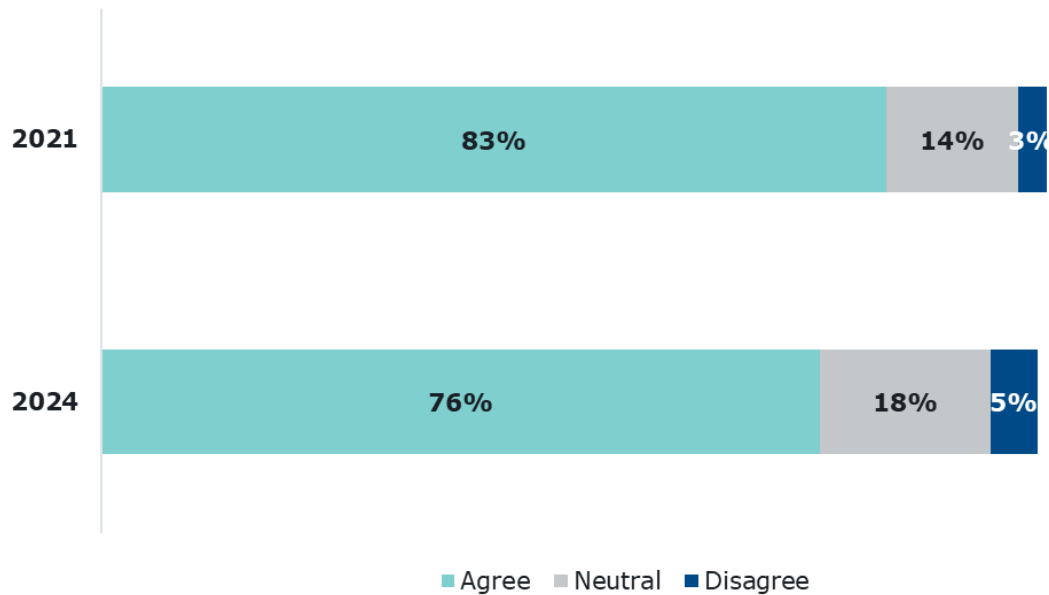
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Source: [Gartner](#)

Support for Fighting Racism and Inequality

Support for fighting racism and injustice remains strong, despite a slight decline since a previous Seramount research study four years ago: 76 percent of respondents agreed with the statement “I am committed to helping my company fight racism and injustice within the organization” compared with 83 percent in 2021. Only 5 percent of employees in 2024 disagreed with the statement, a slight increase from 3 percent in 2021.

I am committed to helping my company fight racism and injustice within the organization.



Source: Seramount’s 2024 DEI National Survey & *From Pledge to Progress: Corporate America One Year After George Floyd’s Death*

Conclusion

Employees want companies to be ethical and take a stand, but many insist on keeping politics out of the office. Seramount is tracking these trends to help our partners understand what's next and how to adapt in an ever-evolving DEI and talent landscape.

Join Seramount’s [Diversity Best Practices](#) to election-proof your DEI strategy.