

CLIENT PERCEPTION SURVEY 2008

Measuring real results



Real people. Real skills. Real results.

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Carole Haddow
Director, Penhurst Associates

NOTE FROM THE **RESEARCHER**

I was involved in the research that Hymans Robertson conducted with their clients two years ago and was therefore very pleased to be asked to conduct that research again this year. It's been very reassuring to see that the overall results have remained as good, and in some areas better, than those from two years ago.

Technical expertise in this industry is a given. What clients continually say makes Hymans Robertson different is the quality and approach of their people and the high level of communication skills they possess.

The current financial situation we find ourselves in means trusted partnerships between client and advisor are even more crucial. On the basis of this and previous surveys, it is clear that Hymans Robertson is committed to building and strengthening those relationships.

Carole Haddow.



95% of clients rated their overall client experience as **good or very good**

BACKGROUND

At Hymans Robertson, we believe in building long-term relationships with our clients that deliver genuine, sustainable value. In order to assess how well we are meeting the needs and expectations of our clients we commission regular independent research into our service delivery.

SAMPLE

This year 66 organisations were invited to participate in the research and over 86% agreed. Penhurst Associates, the appointed independent research company, interviewed these 57 clients, either face-to-face or by telephone. They represented a cross section of our client base; public and private sector, small and large, recent acquisitions and longstanding relationships.

ONLINE SURVEY

For the first time we also conducted an online survey, which was sent to over 540 contacts across our client base. 120 individual responses, representing 92 organisations, were received. We were pleased to see that the results of the online survey very closely mirrored the opinions expressed in the face-to-face and telephone interviews. This gives us confidence that these independent survey results are reflective of the overall opinions of our clients.

The results in this document refer to those clients from the public sector who took part in Penhurst Associates' interviews. A further document, which gives the results specifically for the private sector, is also available. Where results are given in percentages this is the percentage of those individuals who answered that specific question.

RESULTS

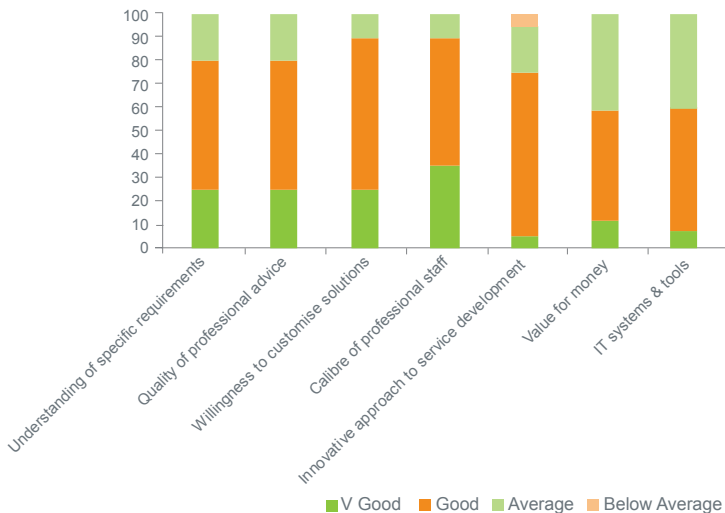
What we do well

Clients express a very strong level of satisfaction with the overall client experience provided by Hymans Robertson, with 95% rating us as very good or good.

“ 85% of our clients consider the quality of our service to be good or very good ”

Quality of client service

Aiming to deliver the highest standards of service is our priority at Hymans Robertson. 85% of our clients consider the quality of our service to be good or very good. 15% feel service is average but no clients considered that it fell below average. Our clients observe that the roles played by key individuals are crucial to the level of client service they receive.



Relationship management ability

Working in partnership with our clients is vitally important. 57% of clients say that our relationship management is better in comparison with other advisors in professional services. 31% say that we are similar to other advisors, but several clients pointed out that the ability to identify excellent relationship management is becoming more difficult as the bar is being raised across the wider market place.

“Written reports are rated good or very good by over 94% of our clients with 93% rating formal meetings and, presentations as good or very good”

Quality of communication

All clients note communication skills as being a key element of our relationship with them and we are viewed positively in terms of verbal and written communications. Written reports are rated good or very good by over 94% of our clients, with 93% rating formal meetings and presentations as good or very good. 85% say our communication overall is good or very good. 15% rate us as average in this respect and no one says our communications are below average. Our publications are perceived to have improved, especially where customised for the public sector, and our written reports contain less jargon, making them easier to follow.

The ongoing development of the benefits consulting team is seen as very beneficial as we are now able to offer expertise that we did not previously have in-house.



Innovation, delivery and project management

Clients are positive about adopting e-business services, and we are seen to demonstrate innovation to our clients through our products and services. There was a high interest in e-business developments such as online member services and modelling tools.

Regarding timeliness and delivery, 25% of our sample feel timeliness has improved, however some clients experience what they call 'just in time' delivery and also noted that there is sometimes a difference in performance between our business areas providing in their timeliness and delivery, with our actuarial practice providing the most consistent performance.

Project management is becoming more important to clients and 70% rate us as good or very good in this area. However 10% felt it was poor or below average and said that they often had to remind us to give regular progress updates.

we demonstrate innovation to our clients
through our products and services



AREAS FOR ATTENTION

Focus on client relationship management - Clients continually identify the calibre and friendliness of our employees as one of the key features of working with Hymans Robertson. To ensure that the challenges of an expanding and growing organisation do not negatively impact on existing clients, we are giving particular focus to client relationships. The quality of service we deliver to you, and our relationships with existing clients will always come before growing our business.

Keep growing, but keep talking - Some clients felt that they had not been fully briefed about changes in their client teams, or about succession planning across the firm. We have therefore committed to taking more proactive steps in communicating changes and plans such as these.

Feedback also showed that we need to review the distribution of our publications as some clients do not receive some or all of them.

Fees and charging - Clients want us to keep a close eye on fees and charging - something that we acknowledge, especially in these challenging economic times, and to which we will be paying close attention over the coming months.

THANK YOU

Thanks to all those clients who took part in this important research, whether face to face, by telephone or online.

We are always keen to receive feedback from clients and are always looking for ways to improve what we do and how we do it. If you have any feedback, please contact feedback@hymans.co.uk or talk with your usual contact.

