

**Best
Workplaces™**

in Retail

**Great
Place
To
Work®**

INDIA
2026

™

Driving Retail Performance: Crafting Customer Excellence Through a High-Trust Workplace

India's Best Workplaces™ in Retail 2026

Great Place To Work®

Introduction

The Retail Context: Current Realities, Future Direction

India's retail sector drives significant growth, contributing over **10% of GDP** and ranking as the **world's third-largest market**, expected to grow from **₹81.58 lakh crore** in 2024 to **₹137.10 lakh crore** by 2030.

It is the **second-largest job creator**, set to **add 25 million jobs by 2030**. A vast majority of this workforce operates at the frontline across stores, warehouses and customer-facing roles, making employee experience a direct driver of customer experience and business outcomes.

At the same time, the nature of retail work is evolving rapidly. Technology adoption, omnichannel growth, and rising customer expectations are transforming both how work gets done and what customers expect from every interaction.

Five shifts shaping the Indian Retail Industry



Omnichannel and digital acceleration:

Retail is moving toward integrated physical and digital experiences, requiring a more agile, tech-enabled and responsive workforce.



Value-conscious yet experience-driven consumers:

Customers now expect quality, personalization and service consistency, increasing demands on frontline employees.



Expansion beyond metros:

Tier-2 and Tier-3 markets are driving the next phase of growth, requiring scalable culture and leadership capability across geographies.



Younger and more diverse workforce:

Gen Z participation is rising and women's representation is gradually increasing, bringing new expectations around flexibility, growth and workplace experience.



Intensifying cost and competition pressures:

Margin pressures, D2C disruption, and supply chain complexity are pushing retailers to achieve more with the same or fewer resources, making workforce stability and productivity critical.

Success in the Retail sector will not be defined by store expansion or product availability alone. It will increasingly depend on the ability to build a **stable, engaged** and **customer-ready** workforce at scale.

In Indian retail industry, employee experience is fast becoming the foundation of customer experience, brand differentiation and sustainable growth.



Source: IBEF

Gradual Recovery and Scope to Strengthen Employee Experience

The retail sector is seeing a gradual improvement in employee experience, with the **Trust Index® Grand Mean rising to 86%**, reflecting a **+1% increase from last year**. This suggests that trust continues to strengthen despite frontline intensity, workforce complexity and evolving business models.

However, the **overall employee sentiment remains at 88%**, unchanged from last year, indicating that while trust is building, the broader employee experience has stabilised rather than accelerated.

Employees report a slight improvement in pride and confidence in management competence, but perceptions have declined in critical areas that shape long-term engagement and retention like fair performance evaluation, action on employee feedback, attracting and developing future leaders and preparing talent for leadership roles.



Retail organisations that convert rising Trust into a stronger everyday experience will be better positioned to retain talent and deliver a consistent customer experience.

Across all Best Workplaces in India, only 5% belong to the Retail Sector.

A significant portion of the Indian retail industry still has considerable ground to cover to earn recognition as a Best Workplace. Despite being one of India's largest employers and fastest-growing sectors, retail continues to be under-represented among high-trust, high-performance workplace cultures.

This gap highlights a clear opportunity for retail organisations to strengthen employee experience and build long-term competitive advantage.

Among India's Best Workplaces, retail representation remains among the lowest at 5%, ahead of only Biotech & Pharma (4%). This is significantly lower than:

- Information Technology – 42%
- Financial Services & Insurance – 23%
- Manufacturing & Production – 21%

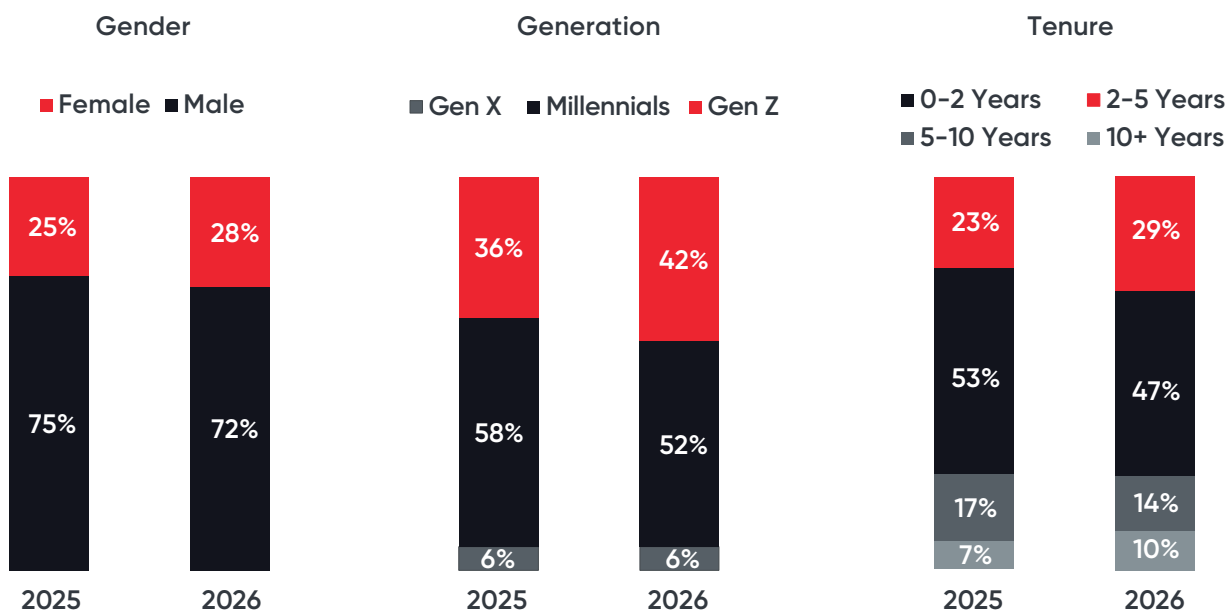


Workforce Shifts in the Retail Sector

India's retail workforce is becoming younger, with a modest rise in women's participation. While tenure maturity is improving, the workforce continues to be dominated by early-tenure employees, reinforcing the need for stronger engagement & retention strategies.

Over the past year, the retail workforce composition has moved in a positive direction:

- Female representation increased by 3%
- Gen Z representation increased by 6%
- Mid-tenure employees (2–5 years) increased by 6%



These shifts highlight a more diverse and evolving workforce and bring new expectations around growth, flexibility, recognition and leadership connection.

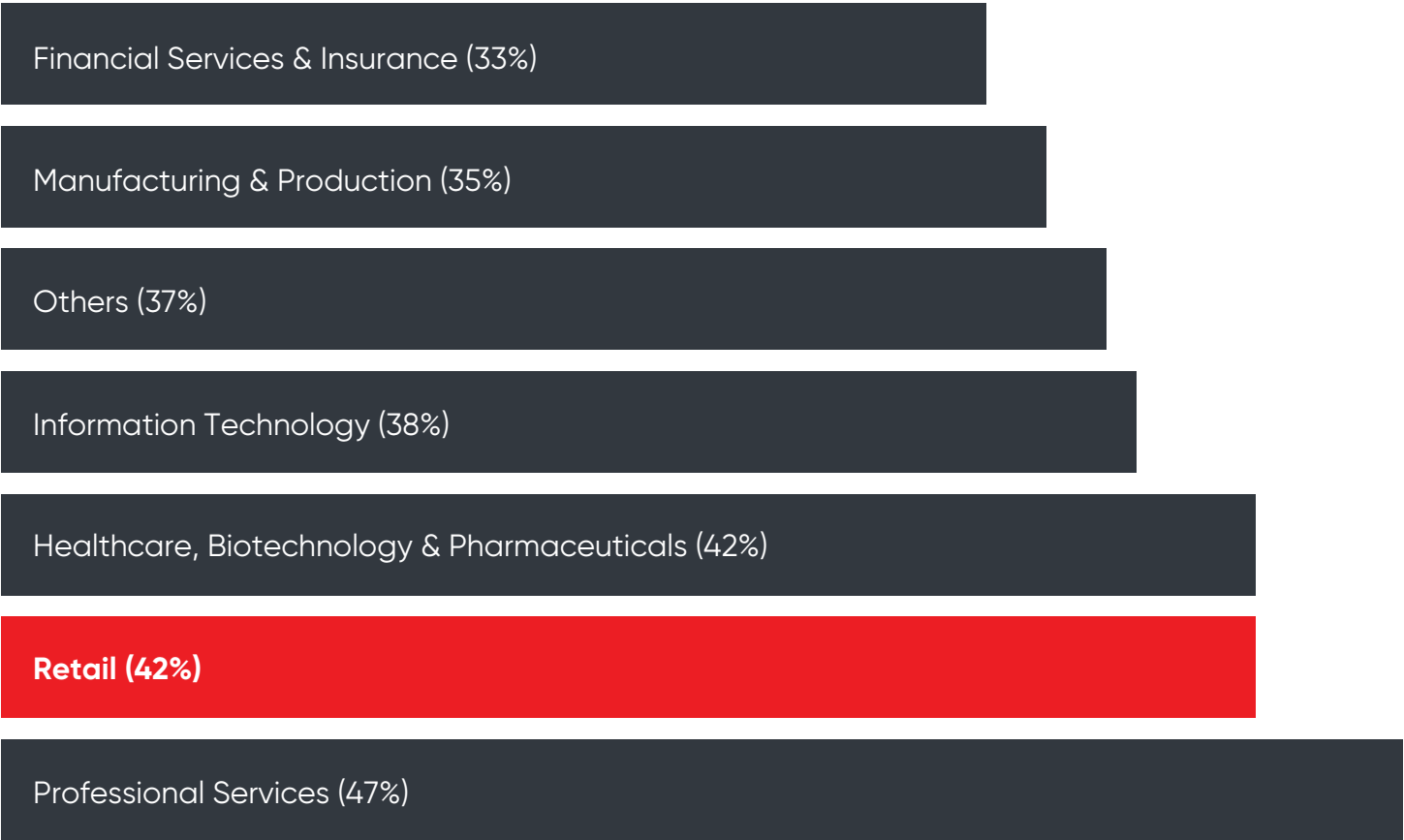
Key focus areas for this new emerging workforce		
Women	Gen Z	Mid-Tenure
• Female seek stronger, more genuine connection with managers, currently at 81%, 4 points lower than male counterparts. • Desire greater recognition for extra effort and performance. Positive perception around appreciation for women currently at 81% remains 4 points lower than men.	• Experience for Gen Z employees around aspects of work-life balance (83%), genuine connection with the management (82%) and job security (80%) remains at a low as compared to Millennials, an evident gap of 2 points, each.	• Mid-Tenured faces a 8 point gap in perception around fair promotions (85%) as compared to Early-Tenured, a group largely dominating the sector. • Mid-Tenured faces a 6 point gap each in perception around management delivering on promises (79%) and Fair performance evaluation (78%) as compared to Early-Tenured.

Enhance Employee Experience to increase Long-Term Association

Indian Retail Industry is experiencing a visible shift in demographic representation, with younger talent, particularly Gen-Z, expanding its presence, even as Millennials continue to form the core of the workforce. Yet, both Gen-Z and Millennials tend to view retail as a **temporary employment avenue**, resulting in lower **long-term stay intentions**, especially among the younger cohort. This mindset challenge is further reflected in the sector's overall retention risk: retail ranks among the industries with the highest intent to leave, with 42% of employees indicating they are considering exiting the organisation.

With the changing nature of the demographics that comprises the workforce, the overall Management Style needs to adapt to cater to this workforce.

Intent to Leave across Industries



Among industries with the highest intent to leave, retail stands out, with 42% of employees expressing an intention to leave.

Annual attrition: 30–35% (Highest across industries)

Source: Voice of India Survey

Barrier to Building a Sustainable Customer-Centric, High-Trust Retail Culture



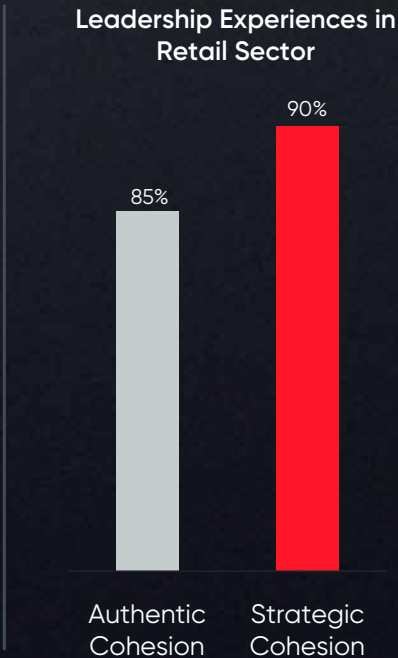
Barrier 1 to Building a Customer-Centric, Employee-Empowered Culture

Employee Speak:

"If I could change one thing about the company, I would focus on improving the relationship between management and employees..... At times, employees may feel that management decisions are made without enough input or understanding of day-to-day challenges."

"Leadership should be more interactive with store team and give guidance on how they can improve themselves for the next level. Behave like a mentor."

Employee feedback shows that although leadership competence scores are high at 90%, employees do not consistently experience the human side of leadership. A **5-point gap** in authentic connection highlights the need for greater empathy, listening, fairness, psychological safety, and genuine engagement.



Strong competence scores, while genuine connection lags reflecting Trust gaps

Reinventing Manager's Capability to Elevate Authentic Connection

Addressing Barriers to a Building a Customer-Centric, Employee-Empowered Culture

Leaders may need to rethink the sequence; customer-centricity is the outcome, but employee-centricity is the enabler. High-touch service begins with a connected, supported workforce.

Retail is target driven, customer-centric, and fast evolving. Indian retail industry needs to rebuild the foundation of employee experience to keep pace with the evolving needs and expectations of the new workforce entering the market. The future of retail demands deeper connection and collaboration with its leaders.

Note: Authentic Connection: Authentic connection reflects the approachability of management and how invested employees perceive their leaders to be in them.

Strategic Cohesion: Strategic cohesion reflects the management's perceived competence, vision, and clarity to effectively lead the organization.

Reinventing Manager's Capability to elevate Authentic Connection

From a forward-looking standpoint, leaders in the Indian retail industry need to adopt a more visible, hands-on leadership approach, one that actively shapes employee experience rather than assuming operational capability alone will do so.

Retail operates in a high-touch, fast-paced environment where employees interact with customers continuously. In such settings, the quality of everyday leadership interaction directly influences employee confidence, energy, and commitment.

As the workforce becomes younger and more diverse, expectations from leaders are evolving. Employees are seeking greater accessibility, real-time guidance, and genuine engagement from their managers. Leadership must therefore move beyond task supervision to actively build trust, clarity, and connection in daily interactions.

A leadership approach rooted in presence, empathy, and real-time support will not only elevate employee experience, but also directly influence the quality, consistency, and authenticity of customer interactions. This outcome is uniquely critical to the retail sector's performance and brand promise.

Actionables to strengthen authentic connection with leaders:

- **Increase leadership presence on the floor:** Establish fixed "presence hours" where managers engage with teams, observe challenges, and provide real-time support.
- **Make manager approachability a core expectation:** Build capability for managers to demonstrate warmth, curiosity and genuine interest in employees' work and growth.
- **Create structured listening moments:** Introduce regular team huddles, skip-level conversations, and open forums that enable two-way dialogue.

Best practices to elevate authentic connection

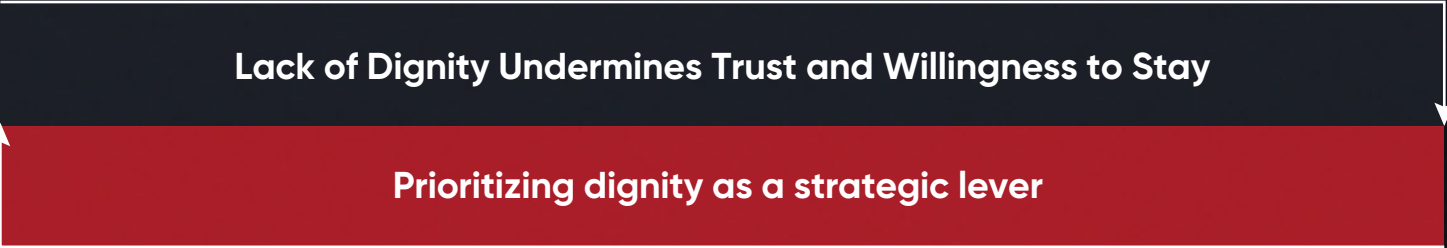
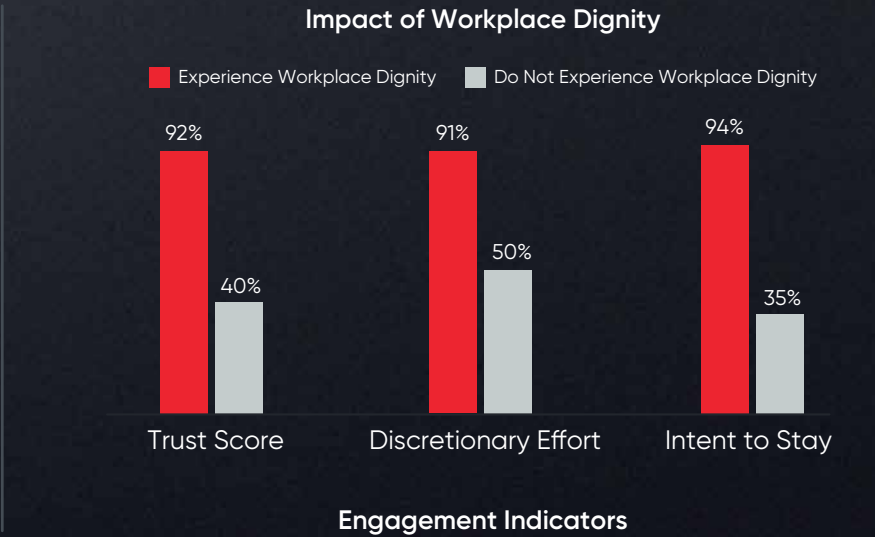
Leading OneISS is a global in-house leadership development program at ISS, delivered to country leaders and their direct teams. It builds a shared language of everyday leadership, encourages open reflection, and strengthens trust. The program helps leaders explore their purpose, enhance conversations, and develop the skills needed to support and empower their teams effectively.

Randstad India's '**Human Forward**' library is an initiative designed to build camaraderie and human connection at work. It began as a pilot for leaders to help them get to know each other by sharing stories and experiences. The programme encourages employees to connect on a personal level, understand diverse perspectives, and appreciate individual uniqueness. It has since been expanded to include all employees.

Barrier 2 to a Building Customer-Centric, Employee-Empowered Culture

Employee Speak:

"Creating a corporate culture where staff members at all levels treat each other with respect is an effective way of improving performance throughout an organization."



Addressing Barrier to Building a Customer-Centric, Employee-Empowered Culture

Two out of every five employees do not experience dignity at work

In retail sector, environments are defined by high customer interaction and frontline intensity, **dignity at work remains a priority for elevating employee experience.**

When employees experience a workplace free from bias where they are treated fairly, feel a strong sense of belonging, are recognized as individuals beyond their roles, and are assured of a fair and transparent appeal process, it elevates their intent to stay and their willingness to go the extra mile.

Prioritizing Dignity as a strategic lever

Dignity is the vital cog in every system; remove even one piece, and the entire machine collapses. That's why the dignity of labour isn't optional; it's fundamental.

When basic dignity is upheld, trust naturally deepens, enabling employees to work more efficiently, effectively, and productively.

Ensuring dignity through consistent people practices and inclusive leadership is central to sustaining engagement on the shopfloor. **Inconsistent behaviors** and **moments of disrespect** often leave employees **disengaged and guarded**, constantly worried about making mistakes because the repercussions can feel intense.

By intentionally addressing these two areas, leaders can foster a culture where employees feel safe to bring their authentic selves to work.

Actionable practices to strengthen dignity at work

- **Setting Dignity as a Non-Negotiable Standard:** Define dignity-preserving behaviors and embed them into leadership expectations and KPIs.
- **Equip managers to handle everyday interactions well:** Build manager capability to recognize effort, address concerns respectfully, and handle difficult situations with empathy and composure, reinforcing trust in daily team interactions.
- **Reinforce dignity in daily operations:** Encourage leaders to model respectful behavior consistently, support employees during challenging customer interactions, and foster team norms that promote mutual respect across all levels.

Best practices to improve workplace dignity

Quess Corp's **TRUE EQUITY** Survey anonymously gathers insights from women employees about their experiences, needs, and suggestions. The survey helps identify gaps in policies, understand what supports retention, and shape women-focused initiatives. Insights directly inform the annual engagement plan, enabling the company to build a more equitable, supportive, and inclusive workplace.

VOIS has launched the **Withstander Programme** to build an inclusive workplace and strengthen allyship. The programme includes two modules:

Bystander Intervention: Teaches employees how to identify and address inappropriate workplace behaviour.

Active Allyship: Helps employees understand allyship and how to actively support and advocate for colleagues.

Barrier 3 to Building a Customer-Centric, Employee-Empowered Culture

Employee Speak:

"If given a chance to enhance the workplace, I would advocate for the implementation of a more robust work-life balance initiative. While the company excels in various aspects, fostering an environment that prioritizes employees' well-being outside of work could significantly improve overall satisfaction."

Emotional Wellness by Role Levels



When Emotional Wellness Is Compromised, Burnout Escalates: Engagement Declines

Redefining Wellness in Retail: Mind, Body, and Beyond

Addressing Barriers to a Building a Customer-Centric, Employee-Empowered Culture

Retail industry in India is characterized by long-working hours, where achieving work-life balance becomes a challenge. This further exacerbates during peak seasons like festivities and celebrations.

Frequent customer interaction requires sustained emotional effort, while fluctuating schedules and performance pressures further contribute to fatigue. Over time, this can lead to a decline in engagement and increased intention to leave, as employees struggle to find time for rest, recovery, and personal commitments.

When emotional wellness is compromised, employees are less engaged, less energised and less able to consistently deliver high-quality customer experiences.

Redefining Wellness in Retail: Mind, Body, and Beyond

Alongside dignity, well-being remains a core priority to sustain trust and performance.

Burnout in the retail industry **stands at 24%** among employees; however, this **reduces to half (12%)** when employees feel that the manager is approachable and shows sincere interest beyond mandate. Hence, when employees experience an authentic connection with the management, the wellness perception improves.

Retail thrives best when Individual Contributors, who form the largest share of the workforce, feel empowered, supported, and heard. Creating an environment where employees feel seen and valued is essential to sustaining energy, engagement, and service quality.

In high-pressure retail settings characterized by long hours, fluctuating schedules, and continuous customer interaction, well-being must move from being an occasional conversation to a structured leadership priority embedded in everyday operations.

What leaders can do to strengthen wellness in retail

- **Incorporating Flexible and Fair Work Design:** Offer rotational shifts, micro-breaks, and schedule flexibility to reduce fatigue and sustain energy.
- **Integrating Wellness as a Daily Rhythm:** Integrate quick wellness check-ins into shift huddles, reviews, and floor-walks to make support continuous.
- **Strengthen Managerial Capability to Support Teams:** Equip managers to recognize signs of burnout, encourage open conversations, and provide practical support when employees face workload or personal pressures.

Best practices to improve wellness

Zifo's **Happiness Index** allows employees to anonymously share daily emotions and flag concerns, helping HR track departmental mood trends and act on critical issues. Employees can also request one-on-one conversations with leaders or HR through the platform, enabling open dialogue, feedback sharing, and timely support. This creates a more transparent, responsive, and emotionally aware workplace.

ISS Facility Services India's **ISS4U** program provides confidential, multilingual support to employees through counselling, wellness connects, and webinars. Run in collaboration with **Maya Care Foundation** where differently-abled individuals manage the helpdesk, it addresses stress, health issues, family challenges, and work-life balance, promoting employee wellbeing and a healthier, more productive workplace.

Higher authentic connection
with leadership, Higher
experienced dignity, and an
Absence of burnout results in a

~1.5x

Increase in employees' belief of
delivered customer experience
as excellent.

Employee Experience Translates Directly into Consumer Experience

Despite automation, 70–75% of jobs still sit at the customer interface. Technology enhances the human touch; it doesn't replace it.

Retail employee experience does not stay internal; it **shows up directly in consumer interactions**. Thus, engaged employees who feel supported and proud of their workplace are more likely to deliver attentive service, resolve issues proactively, and represent the brand positively. Conversely, fatigue, disengagement, or perceived unfairness often manifest as transactional service, lower energy, and reduced customer connection.

In retail, where brand perception is shaped in real time at the point of sale, employee experience becomes a visible extension of the customer experience.

Trust fuels customer excellence by 11%



Employees consider customer service as excellent



What's in the future?

The retail sector is growing at a rapid pace.

1. With the rising middle and high-income classes, the Indian Retail Industry is being globalized & privatized.
2. AI-led Innovations are being introduced in the market to enhance immersive consumer experience.
3. Expansion into Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, essentially going from cities to hyperlocal areas.
4. Trust in brand image and value becomes the key factor for consumers seeking a long-term association.

As the industry evolves, ensuring dignity at work for employees in the workplace, building genuine connections, and prioritizing the holistic well-being of employees, who are the first touchpoints of consumer interaction has never been more important. Employers who build a sustainable, high-trust workplace will hold a clear competitive advantage.



India's Best Workplaces in Retail 2026

(List is in alphabetical order)

TOP 4 - Retail: E-Commerce

1. bigbasket (Innovative Retail Concepts Private Limited).
2. Flipkart Group (Flipkart Internet Pvt. Ltd., Cleartrip, Flipkart Wholesale)
3. Myntra Designs Private Limited
4. XYXX Apparels Private Limited

TOP 15 - Retail

1. Bhima Gold Private Limited
2. FSN Brands Marketing Private Ltd (Nykaa Beauty)
3. Hardcastle Restaurants Private Limited
4. Joyalukkas India Limited
5. Jubilant FoodWorks Limited
6. Kalyan Jewellers India Limited
7. Lifestyle International Private Limited
8. Max Hypermarket India Private Limited
9. P N Gadgil Jewellers Limited
10. Reliance Retail Limited
11. Shoppers Stop Limited
12. Tarz Distribution India Private Limited
13. TATA Starbucks Private Limited
14. Titan Company Limited
15. United Foodbrands Limited (Formerly known as Barbeque-Nation Hospitality Limited)

The Great Place To Work For All Methodology

Backed by 30 years of data, Great Place To Work® is the global authority on workplace culture. Great Place To Work's methodology, derived from years of studying Best Workplaces across the globe, is recognized as rigorous and objective and is considered the gold standard for defining great workplaces across business, academia, and government organizations. The proprietary methodology and platform enable leaders to truly capture, analyze and understand the experience of every employee, and compare outcomes with data collected from more than 100 million employees in 150 countries worldwide.

Great Place To Work's For All™ methodology is based on fast-changing competitive landscapes, need for speed & agility indicate and that healthy business is about improving results by creating workplace cultures where leaders empower all individuals to reach their full potential and where every employee feels a sense of belonging regardless of their demography.

Great Place To Work invites applications from Retail organizations to be assessed and evaluated for being considered among India's Best Workplaces in Retail. This is the 9th edition of the recognition where 40 organizations from the retail sector undertook this rigorous assessment.

This assessment aims at studying the ways in which organizations completely channelize their people power and create inclusive workplaces through effective leadership, meaningful values, and a culture where all employees experience high levels of trust, such that each employee is able to bring their best self to work.

Criteria for selecting the Best Workplaces in Retail

1. **TRUST INDEX** - 75% weightage
(An employee survey seeking anonymous feedback)
2. **CULTURE AUDIT** - 25% weightage
(A study of the people practices of an organization)

Great Place To Work undertakes a robust validation process on the data gathered through the assessment process. The cumulative score of Trust Index and Culture Audit determines an organization's inclusion in India's Best Workplaces in Retail List 2026. No individual or jury has a say in who makes it to the list—only employee feedback and quality of Culture Audit determine if an organization is a great workplace. This year, we are recognizing the Top 10 organizations in Retail and Top 3 organizations in e-commerce. The list is published in alphabetical order.

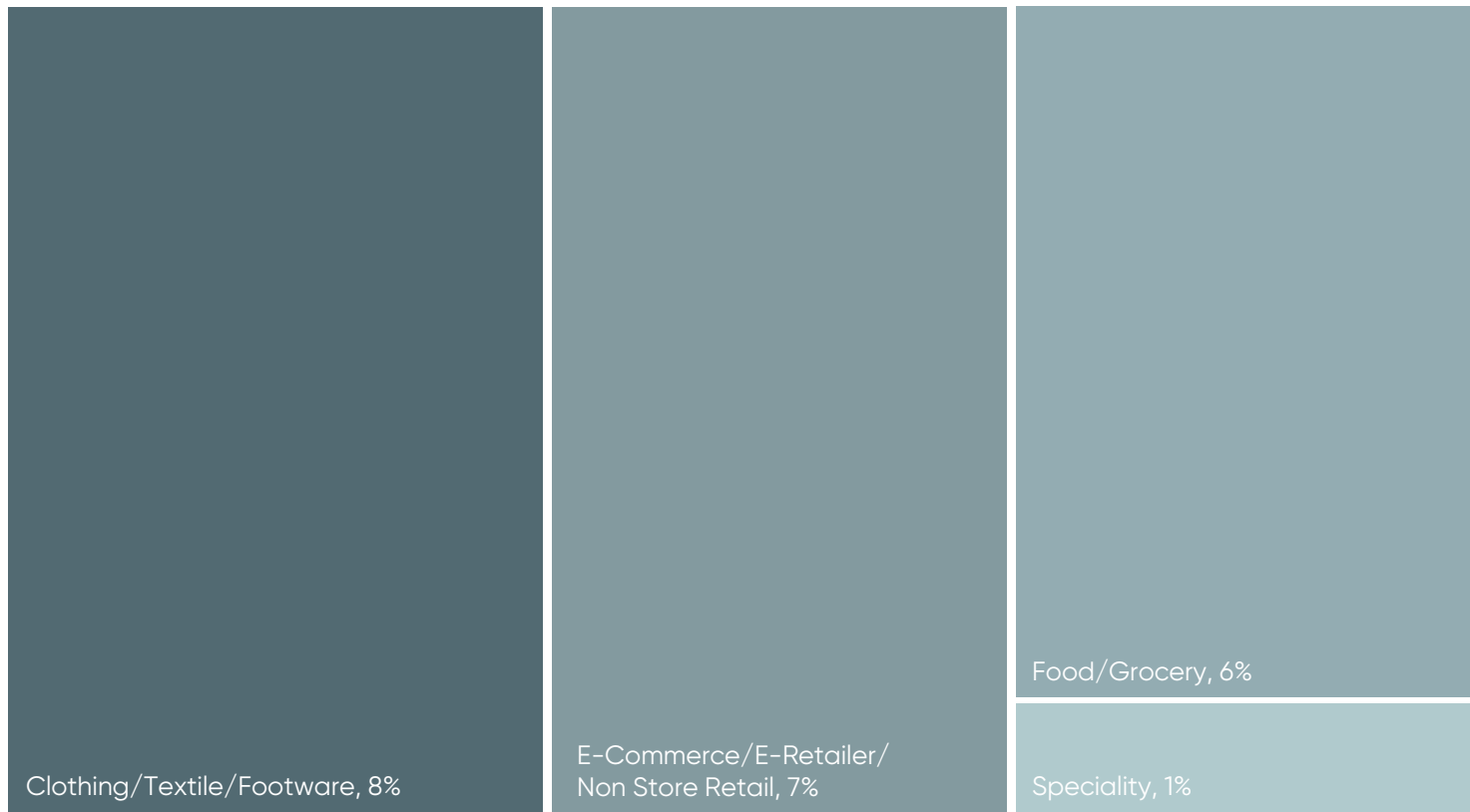
Participant Profile

45+

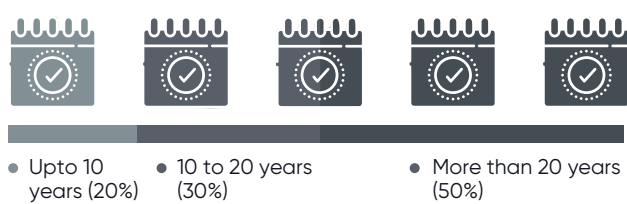
Organizations

3L+

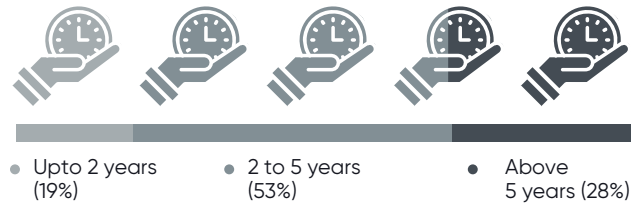
Employees Voices Represented



Years of Operations



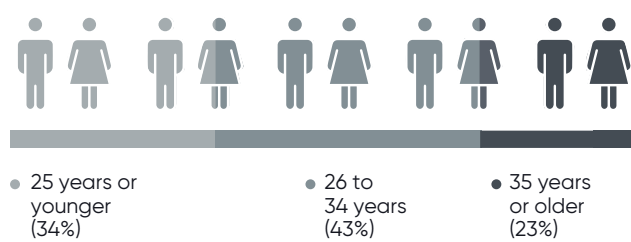
Tenure



Gender



Age



GET RECOGNIZED FOR YOUR GREAT WORK CULTURE.

As a Great Place To Work Certified™ organization, you have the opportunity to feature among the most credible Best Workplaces Lists in India and globally. Organizations are recognized across more than 20+ industries, types, sizes and themes that matter to employees.

REGISTRATIONS OPEN! BOOK YOUR SURVEY SLOT NOW!

Visit www.greatplacetowork.in/contact-us/ or write to in_getcertified@greatplacetowork.com

Note: Since the lists are announced throughout the year, there are process deadlines for each. Please reach out to us to know more.

Great Place To Work Annual Calendar

	India's Best Workplaces™ in Health & Wellness 2026	APRIL 2026		India's Best Workplaces™ in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belongingness 2026	SEPTEMBER 2026
	India's Best Workplaces™ in BFSI 2026	APRIL 2026		India's Best NGOs to Work For 2026	OCTOBER 2026
	India's Best Employers Among Nation-Builders 2026	JUNE 2026		India's Best Workplaces™ in IT & IT-BPM 2026	NOVEMBER 2026
	India's Best Companies to Work For 2026	JUNE 2026		India's Best Workplaces™ in Pharmaceuticals to Work For 2026	DECEMBER 2026
	India's Great Mid-size Workplaces™ 2026	JUNE 2026		India's Best Workplaces™ in Manufacturing 2027	JANUARY 2027
	India's Best Workplaces™ for Millennials 2026	AUGUST 2026		India's Best Workplaces™ in Retail 2026	FEBRUARY 2026
	India's Best Workplaces™ for Women 2026	SEPTEMBER 2026			



About us

Great Place To Work® is the global authority on workplace culture. Our mission is to help every place become a great place to work for all. We give leaders and organizations the recognition and tools to create a consistently and overwhelmingly positive employee experience, fostering cultures that are proven to drive business, improve lives, and better society.

Get Certified

Great Place To Work Certification™ is the most powerful way to elevate your employer brand, attract, retain, and engage the right people, and get the tools to unlock their potential.



Tell us a little about your company and someone from our team will be in touch soon.

Contributors

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Research from Great Place To Work

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