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By The Canadian Press

A weekly scrap collection from off the business beat:

Stuck in the middle: mental health of mid-level managers shakiest, CEOs fret

TORONTO (CP) _ So you think your supervisor is deranged?

Could be: a survey of chief executive officers found that they say middle managers are the employees most vulnerable to mental health problems.

The poll of 16 prominent Canadian CEOs found they agreed that top corporate leaders should take responsibility for reducing problematic stress and eliminating the stigma of mental illness in the workplace.

The survey, commissioned by the Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health, involved 16 personal interviews with bosses of organizations including TransCanada Corp., Dofasco, Royal LePage, Maritime Life, Hewlett-Packard Canada and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

GPC Research, which conducted the survey, said the executives cited five principal threats to employee mental health: job insecurity; pressures to balance work and home obligations; increasingly complex and constantly changing work environments; a requirement to do more with fewer resources; and the effect of cellphones and e-mail in ``compelling employees to live and work in a perceived 24-hours workday."

The CEO survey indicated that middle managers, under pressure from above and below, are likely to be the most vulnerable to these stresses.

``Participating CEOs say that organizations which have a reputation for not respecting employees and addressing the issue of employee mental health will be unlikely to attract the most talented recruits," GPC Research said.

``Similarly, employees who are abused by managers who behave unacceptably _ screaming or yelling, creating conditions such as stress or burnout _ will seek employment elsewhere."