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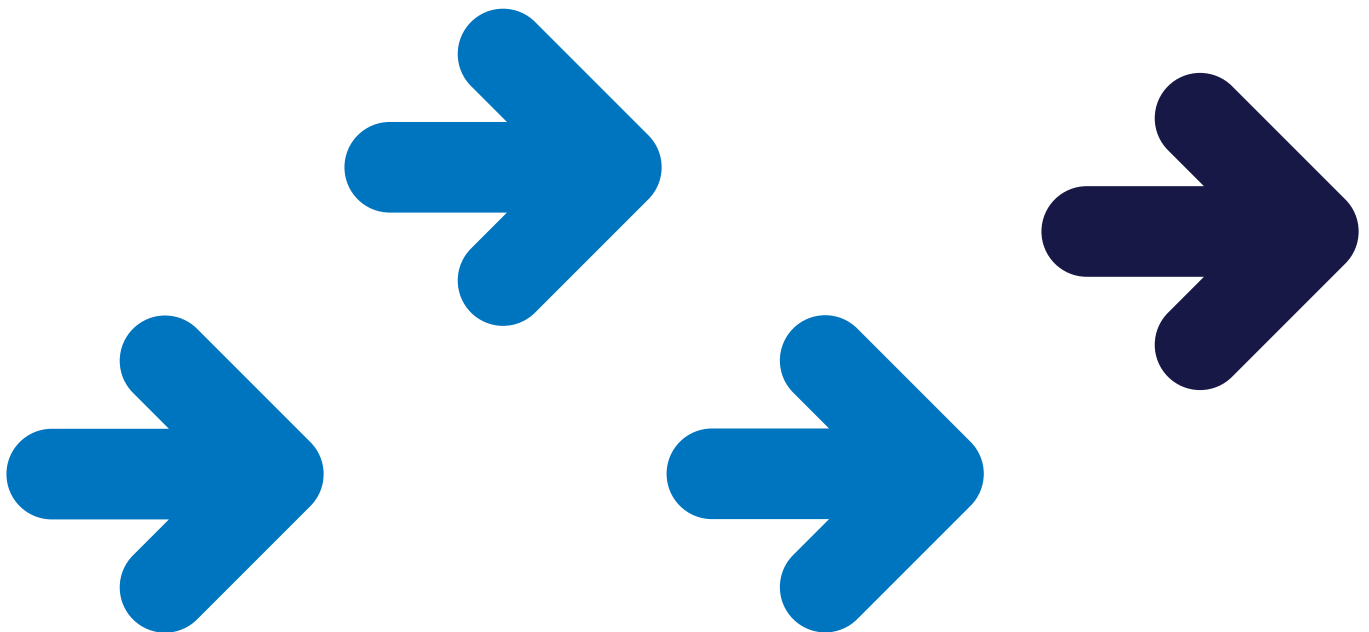


new workforce
models bring
new challenges
in the “next normal.”

The pandemic has already changed almost everything about how we live and work — and the changes will almost certainly keep on coming. Just a little over a year ago, we had in-person meetings, lunch dates with colleagues and commutes. Today, we're perhaps inching closer to reclaiming some of those traditions, but the only thing that's certain is that we can't be certain about what comes next. We may never fully go back to what we considered "normal" before the pandemic, but we will have to be prepared for even more changes — and for those constant changes to become the norm.

Adapting to this state of flux — constantly changing working conditions and locations, new health and safety requirements, emerging technologies and more — is our next normal. To find out why, how and where these changes are happening, we surveyed 1,213 American workers, along with 1,589 existing Randstad customers.

What we discovered is that the world of work is changing more — and faster — than we anticipated.



new models, new challenges

More workers than ever before went remote during the pandemic, and that means workforces across the U.S. were forced to rely on technology even more to ensure business continuity. But while millions of white-collar workers adjusted to Zoom-ing, essential workers — those whose jobs required them to be onsite — were also adjusting to new technologies designed to enable them to work safely. With so much transformation happening so quickly, it was bound to affect different generations in a variety of ways, both positively and negatively.

Our survey found that that was indeed the case — just not in the ways we were expecting.

hybrid models emerge as the new norm

Will the workforce of the future be fully remote or fully onsite? The answer, according to many, is a mix of both. A hybrid workforce model — one where some employees are onsite while others are remote — is rapidly emerging as the norm for businesses that have the option. In fact, recent data from HR software maker iCIMS found that half of companies had removed or loosened location requirements for new hires. Salesforce and Spotify, for example, both recently announced that workers will be able to work from wherever they're most comfortable.

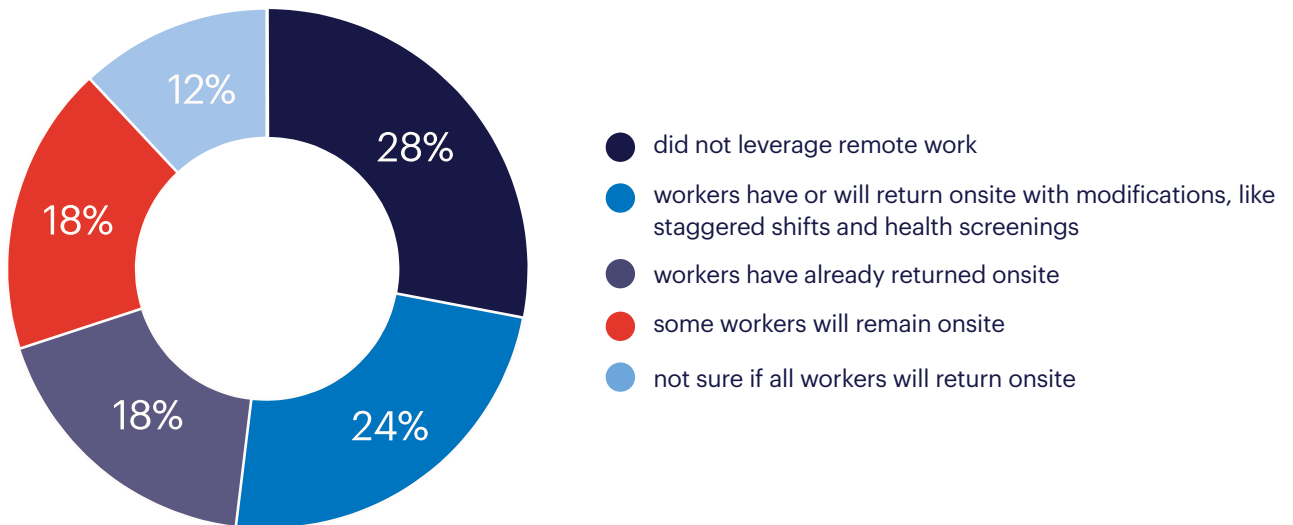
Our own findings were somewhat more measured, with 18 percent of employers planning to continue leveraging remote work in some capacity, while 12 percent said they were still weighing their options about bringing workers back. All told, 30 percent of respondents either plan to stay at least partially remote or are considering it.



But even though workers clearly enjoy having the option to work remotely, not everyone wants to be remote all of the time. Randstad's Workmonitor, a semiannual survey of the global workforce, found that nearly four out of five (78%) of workers want to return to their workplaces at least part of the time. This may be due in large part to the fact that more than half (52%) reported missing their in-person interactions with colleagues. That's likely why 54 percent said they prefer a hybrid workplace in which they have the freedom to choose where they work.

Employers that have the option to capitalize on this trend should seriously consider implementing it, albeit not without first giving it careful consideration. After all, if some workers have the ability to work remotely but others don't — and especially if those who can be remote are managing those who can't — employers may risk a fractured workplace plagued by a culture of resentment and toxicity.

For white-collar employers, a hybrid model may mean a smaller physical footprint, with a downsized office that now functions mostly as a collaboration space, rather than housing the entire workforce day to day. This assumes everyone has the option to work remotely or onsite when they choose. Google, for example, plans to allow workers to work remotely two days a week, while Siemens will allow employees to work remotely up to three days a week.



For blue-collar organizations, however, adopting a hybrid model will require a bit more nuance. Ford is currently planning to allow 30,000 of its white-collar workers to continue working remotely, although how much time they spend at the office versus at home remains at the discretion of employees' managers. Production workers will remain onsite, and while the auto giant doesn't currently plan to require vaccinations, all onsite workers will receive daily temperature screenings, and the organization will continue contact tracing and proactive cleaning and sanitation protocols. Amazon and Toyota are following suit, allowing office staff to remain remote while keeping production workers onsite.

Organizations that plan to keep employees onsite going forward may avoid the potential pitfalls of having workers in multiple locations, but they may do so at the cost of attracting the best professional talent. After so many professionals experienced the benefits of remote work, asking them to come back onsite five days a week will inevitably turn some off — and send them running to job boards as a result.

fully onsite

pros

- ✓ easier to maintain a cohesive culture
- ✓ easier to manage a workforce in a single location

cons

- ✗ difficult to attract location-specific professional talent
- ✗ no potential cost savings from downsizing to a smaller workspace

fully remote

pros

- ✓ greater hiring flexibility
- ✓ significant real estate cost savings

cons

- ✗ difficult to maintain a cohesive culture
- ✗ more challenging to manage due to lower visibility into team interactions and productivity

hybrid

pros

- ✓ cost savings due to smaller real estate footprint
- ✓ ability to offer flexibility to some employees

cons

- ✗ risk of creating a fractured company culture

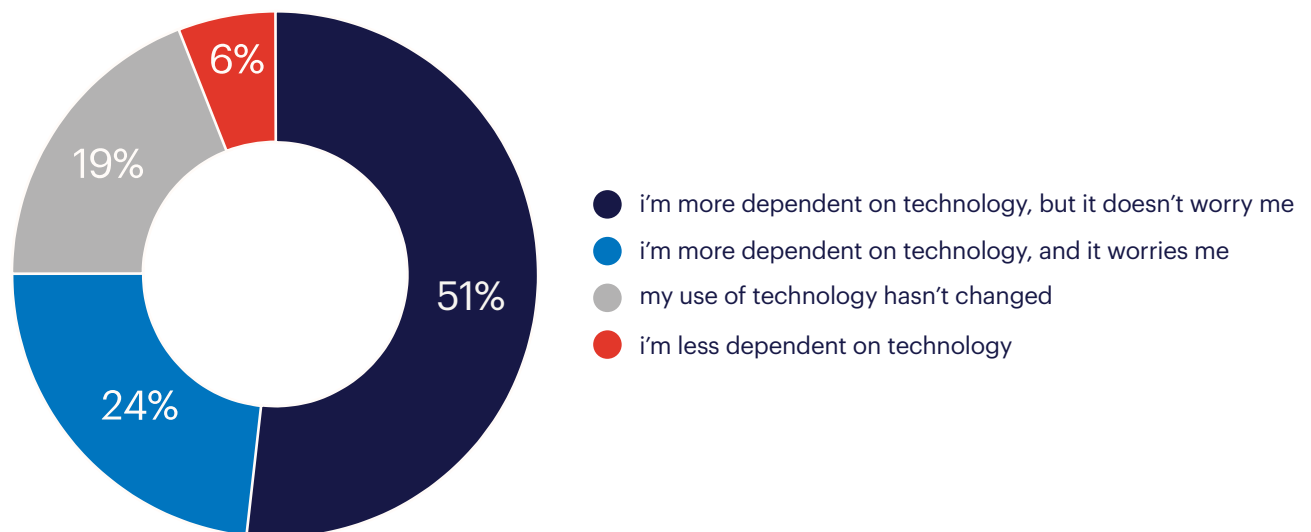
different generations, different responses to changing tech

more tech is no sweat for millennials and gen z

Of course, not every company has that option. Manufacturing, logistics, hospitality, healthcare and a raft of other industries won't be able to take advantage of hybrid models to the same degree as companies in other industries. But as so many companies across the board venture into hybrid models, our survey found that those that do so should be very aware that the technological challenges they'll face may not be the most obvious ones.

For example, hybrid working models naturally create an even greater reliance on technology, but not every generation seems to welcome that notion equally. According to our survey, among those who work remotely, 75 percent said they were more reliant on technology than before the pandemic. However, just 24 percent said that fact worried them. Those aged 45 to 54 were most likely (35%) to say an increased reliance on tech was worrisome, while those aged 18 to 24 were most likely (60%) to say more tech time didn't bother them at all.

how has your use of technology changed as a result of remote work?



without a commute, some struggle to turn off

The technology that enables us to work remotely has also changed not just how we work, but when we work. More than a quarter of respondents (26%) said they start work earlier, and 24 percent said they work later as a result of remote work. And while just 13 percent of all respondents told us they work more hours total, 18 percent of those aged 45 to 54 and 17 percent of those aged 35 to 44 agreed. The fact that those putting in more hours are mid- to late-career professionals is likely due to the fact that workers in those age brackets are more likely to have management or leadership roles, and the tech that enables remote work may make it easier not to “switch off” at the end of the workday. Instead of commuting at the usual time, tech gives them an extra hour or two to clear out their inboxes, get work done or even mentor younger workers.

how has your workday changed as a result of remote work?

i take a break during the middle of the day

31%

i start earlier

26%

i work about the same number of hours

25%

it is easier to adapt my hours around my home life

24%

i work later

24%

when “working from home” becomes “living at work”

Even though some mid- to late-career professionals may struggle to close the laptop at quitting time, it’s millennials and Gen Z who are struggling the most with the rigors of remote work.

Millennials — defined as those born between 1981 and 1996 (or today’s 25- to 40-year-olds) — are more anxious, getting less sleep, feel less productive and have a harder time communicating with colleagues than they did when working onsite. And this may not be technology’s fault at all. After all, this age group is more likely to be juggling childcare or sharing space with roommates than older generations. For those coping with more demands on their time outside of work and no dedicated space for remote work, working from home may feel more like “living at work.”

These findings also align with our survey, which found that those aged 18 to 34 were most likely to say they were no longer able to take breaks during the workday.

it is more difficult to adapt my hours around my home life

17%

i often work during my former commute time

16%

i work fewer hours

13%

i work more hours

13%

i feel i can no longer take a break in the workday

13%

not everyone's willing to go back to — or stay at — work

Even though some remote workers are clearly not loving their experience so far, not everyone is chomping at the bit to return to a physical worksite. Whether it's a result of stimulus checks or the effect of seeing what it's like to spend more time with family, our clients routinely tell us that bringing workers back onsite is proving far more difficult than they expected.

This, they say, is especially true among workers from Gen Z, who are happily leaving jobs without something else lined up, simply because they were dissatisfied in their current role. This gels with [Deloitte's research](#), which found that Gen Z is perfectly willing to take nontraditional paths in their career, including incurring gaps in their resume, if it means finding a role they value.

And speaking of value, that's what work is all about for Gen Z. A [MetLife survey](#) found that while "regularly accomplishing work tasks" was most important in terms of feeling a sense of purpose at work for every other generation, among Gen Z, that factor fell several percentage points and was equal to "doing work I'm passionate about" and "doing work that adds meaning to my life." Doing work they're passionate about was also a leading factor for millennials, but it still fell somewhat behind delivering value for their employers and regularly accomplishing tasks.

For employers, this is a clear mandate to provide today's youngest workers with responsibilities that align with their interests and passions whenever possible. Otherwise, you'll have a hard time keeping them — far harder, in fact, than their older counterparts: In our survey, those under 34 were most likely to have changed jobs in the past 12 months.

On the other end of the generational spectrum, baby boomers, now approaching the twilight of their careers, have very different motivations at work. They're much more likely to be loyal to employers than other generations in general, but they're especially motivated by employers that provide benefits that contribute to long-term financial stability. Benefits like expanded health coverage, retirement benefits and a 401(k), for example, are key for retaining these seasoned workers.

In short, regardless of whether you're fully onsite, totally remote or a mix of both, every multigenerational workforce will be attracted — and repelled — by different factors. Making sure your benefits and workplace culture account for these differences will continue to be key in the next normal.

i changed jobs in the last 12 months

18 to 24 years old

26%

25 to 34 years old

32%

35 to 44 years old

22%

45 to 54 years old

18%

55 to 64 years old

7%

65+ years old

6%

making hybrid work actually work

These insights might make employers think twice about adopting a hybrid approach, but there's good news: Each of these issues can be mitigated by taking proactive steps as you build your hybrid workforce strategy.

First, make sure your remote workers have the tools and tech they need to make remote work seamless. Could they use an external monitor at home? Would they benefit from faster WiFi? What about a comfortable place to work? These things can easily be supplied up front or even financed through a home office stipend.

Next, establish boundaries for when work happens — and when it shouldn't. Instead of letting your remote workers keep plugging away long after the sun's gone down, consider setting a "no work after X o'clock" policy, and encourage your managers to not only enforce it, but model it. Make sure they're not sending emails after quitting time, and have them make it clear to their teams that they don't expect them to do so either.

Lastly, ensure that workers who are onsite, whether by necessity or by preference, feel safe. Regular, rigorous cleaning, along with solutions like elevated temperature screenings and mask-detection technology, will go a long way toward making those working onsite feel protected.

forging the partnerships you need to stay ahead in our "next normal"

With so much change afoot, it's easy to get overwhelmed finding the right workforce models you need to continue driving success in the coming months and years. But the good news is: You don't have to face those challenges alone.

A key partner like Tatum can help. With our wealth of experience in strategic planning, we're ready to deliver intuitive workforce solutions that can drive operational improvements and business value from day one. To find out why our track record of success is trusted by leaders across your industry, [get in touch with the experts at Tatum today.](#)





about tatum

Tatum provides on-demand C-suite executives and senior-level professionals to help companies manage critical initiatives in accounting, finance, compliance and transactions. Providing highly regarded executive search services, as well as senior-level interim and project consultants, Tatum's experts help you address complex issues not easily solved from within the organization.

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