

2022 Employee Experience Trends

The 4 things your people need you to know

qualtrics^{xm}





A letter from your employees

Today we stand before you, ripping up the old playbook – yes, the one you rewrote just this past year – and demanding change.

We appreciate everything you've done for us this past year. You went the extra mile, supported us, and leaned in while we all figured this thing out.

You've worked with us and been flexible through the depths of the pandemic, but we sense the old ways are creeping back in. And, to be clear, the old ways weren't working. A two-hour commute? Every day? Sitting in traffic, waving goodbye to that workout we might have done, or wondering if the kids made it off to school okay?

No, thanks.

We choose flexibility. To work in the places that work best for us, to take time for our own well-being, our families, our friends.

To not have to sneak away for a doctor's appointment, or struggle through the day when we're sick, just to be 'seen'.

We demand change because we care. We care about our leaders who are struggling to keep up. They're leaving, if you haven't noticed, and we can't navigate this new world of work without them.



And we demand it because we care about this organization. It's capable of better – better ideas; better innovations; better performance.

We don't want this organization to become irrelevant.

We don't want to become irrelevant.

And so here are our demands:

- 1** The resources leaders need to deal with employees' evolved expectations. Emotional labor isn't free labor.
- 2** A workplace designed around our needs today. With the right technology and the right culture to thrive with hybrid work.
- 3** A sustained and visible commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Actions, not words.
- 4** Real mental health and well-being support. An app isn't going to fix it. The culture needs to change.

We can't go back to the old ways of doing things – we won't go back.

We're already living in the new normal; we need to start working there, too.

Yours (for now),

YOUR EMPLOYEES

Employee Experience in 2022:

A global snapshot

We spoke with nearly 14,000 full-time employees from 27 countries to understand how the employee experience changed in 2021. As well as showing what the experience looks like, our report highlights key areas employers can focus on in 2022 to have the biggest impact on their people.

Engagement

66%

66% in 2021

Intent to stay

65%

70% in 2021

Growth and development

68%

63% in 2021

Manager effectiveness/ trust in leadership

67%

63% in 2021

Employee well-being

72%

72% in 2021

Corporate social responsibility

66%

72% in 2021

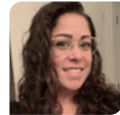
The challenges HR, technology, and People Team leaders will face in 2022 are not unlike those of the past. But the landscape has changed.

So have the solutions.

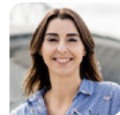
Here's what you need to know for 2022 to get ahead of the curve.

Meet The Experts

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TREND 1

**There will be an
exodus of leaders –
and women will be
the first out the door**

Trend 1

*Female leader
of leaders' intent
to stay dropped
significantly –
by 21 points.*

There will be an exodus of leaders – and women will be the first out the door

When the pandemic hit, leaders across the business – perhaps none more so than those in HR and IT – became a life raft of sorts, providing employees with steadfast emotional and technological support in an ocean of uncertainty.

But as the pandemic persisted, employees' expectations shifted – and keeping up with employee demands has caused many leaders to burn out and leave.

IT'S NO LONGER JUST ABOUT ENGAGEMENT AND RESULTS

Leaders are now expected to take on additional responsibilities, including:

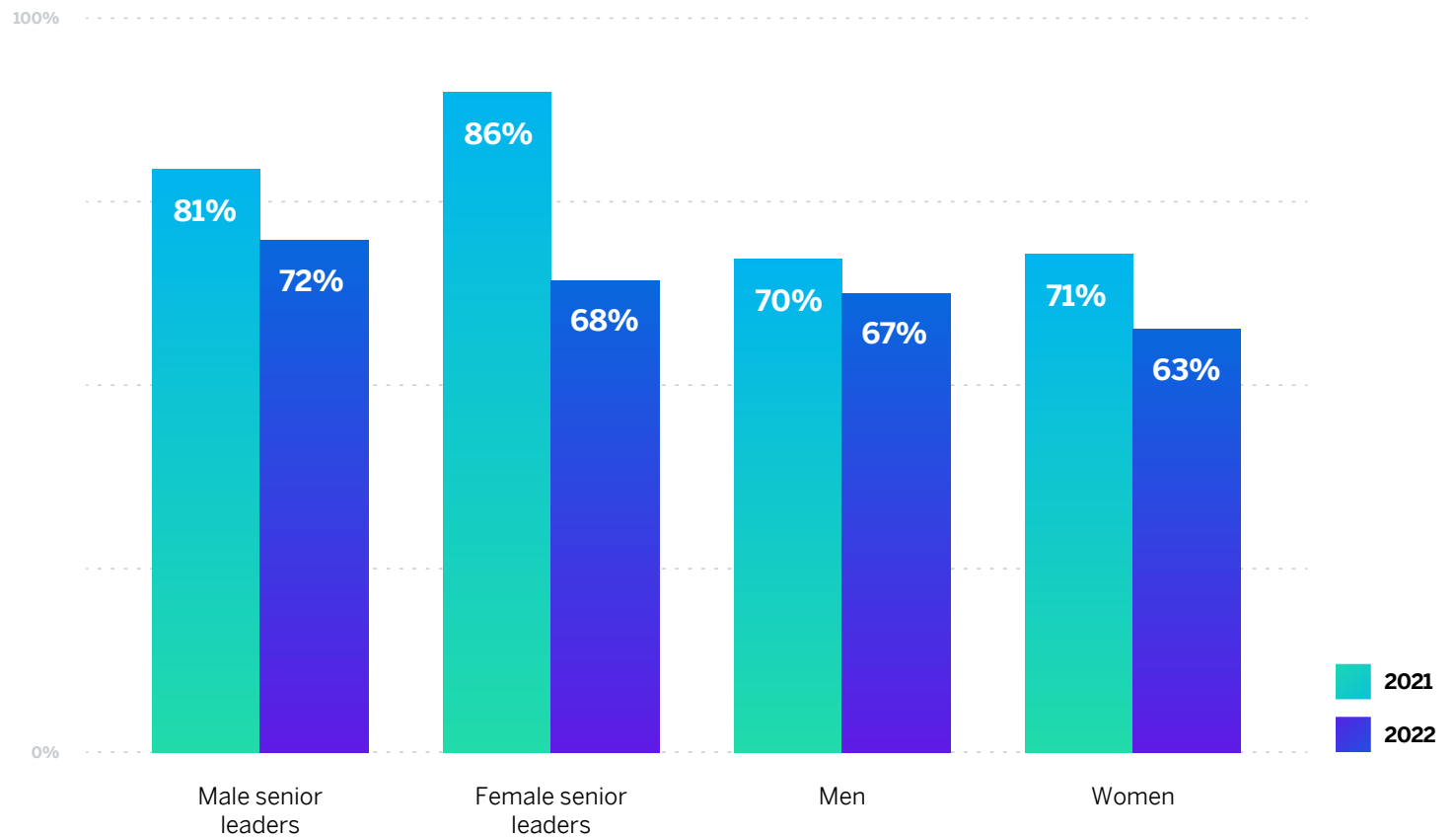
- + Driving diversity and equitable outcomes for all at work
- + Fostering a sense of belonging
- + Supporting social justice issues
- + Understanding and supporting employee's mental health

This work, while critical, is physically and emotionally exhausting. And as a result, many leaders are planning to leave (if they haven't already).

According to our research, the length of time people intend to stay at their company has shortened year over year, especially among senior leadership.

Trend 1

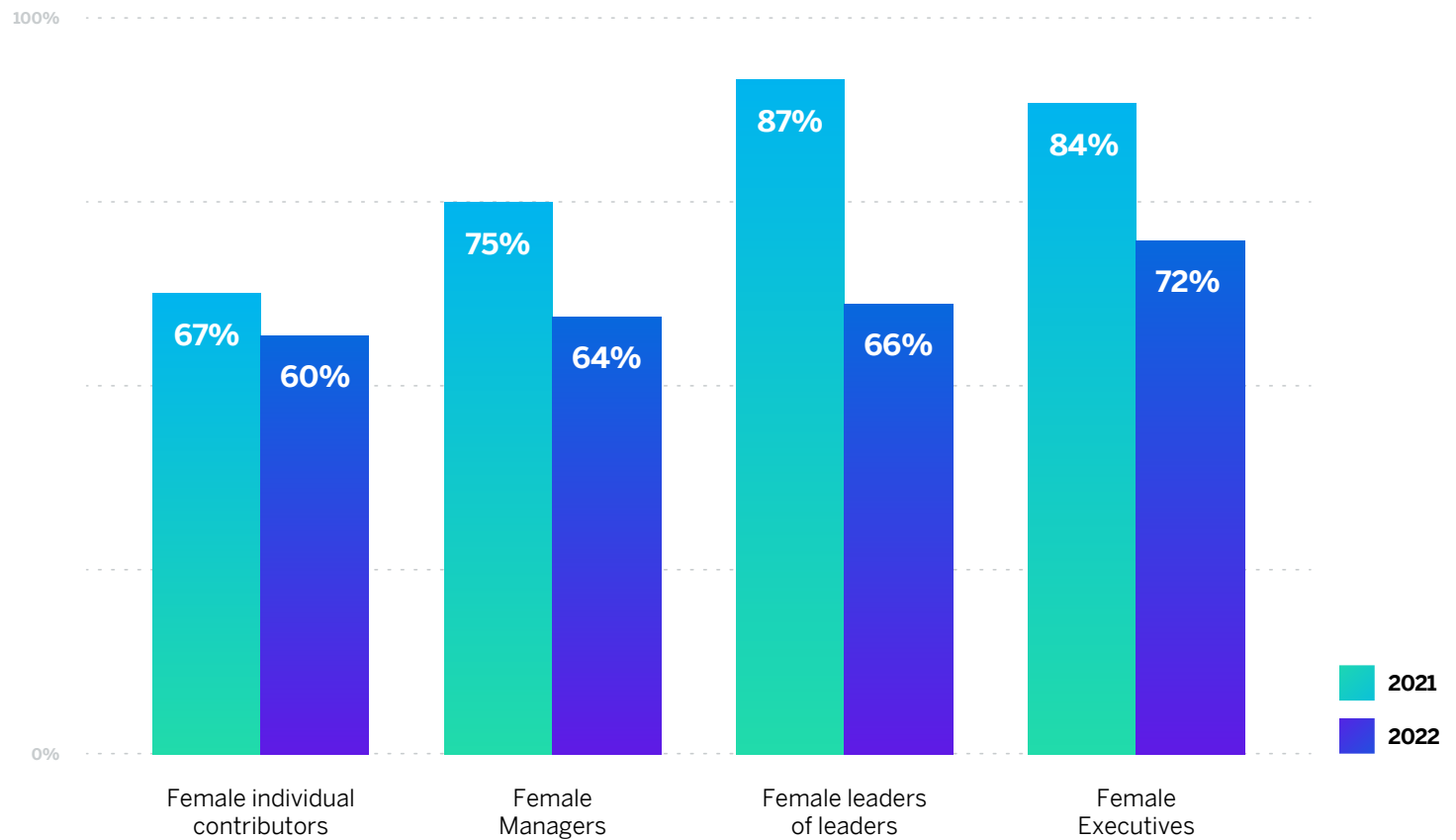
LEADERS' INTENT TO STAY DROPPED SIGNIFICANTLY



Trend 1

YOU'RE MOST AT RISK OF LOSING FEMALE LEADERS

Since last year, women's intent to stay dropped 8 points. And female leaders of leaders' intent to stay dropped even more significantly – by 21 points.





The data shows us that female leaders are the most likely to leave. It's important that they're given the right support. Work with leaders to reassess targets. Work with them to understand what kind of support they need, rather than piling on more pressure. Make sure they know it's a collaborative process and that you're hearing their concerns and will take action to help. Including the right training, talent, and technology.

Tara Belliard, XM Scientist



Trend 1

THE WAY FORWARD

The question organizations need to answer to retain senior leadership is:
How do we support our leaders to prevent the burnout – and ultimately attrition – of leaders in our organization?

Next steps

360 Development helps organizations extend development programs to all levels of talent including leaders.

Deliver a customized development experience that gives leaders the insights and tools to grow and thrive.

Get Started >

What's happening in the workplace	How to take action (and better support leaders)
Leaders are expected to balance achieving business results as well as creating a great employee experience to attract and retain talent.	Give your leaders the resources – both the technology and talent – to better listen to and act on employee feedback.
Leaders are expected to be more inclusive.	Provide training and toolkits about how to navigate this topic.
Teams are struggling with burnout.	Work with leaders to reassess targets and productivity. They need time to regroup and the flexibility to give their team some breathing space.
Leaders need support for the tough conversations they're having about inclusion and well-being.	Make it easier for leaders to access support materials; these should be set up as a 'pull' mechanism versus 'pushing' out one-time training. Be clear as to where leaders can go to access the tools they need.

TREND 2

**People will demand
better physical and
digital workspaces**

Trend 2

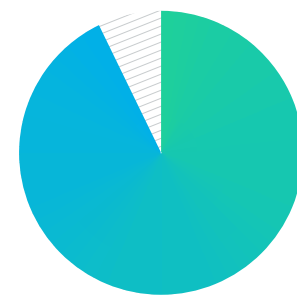
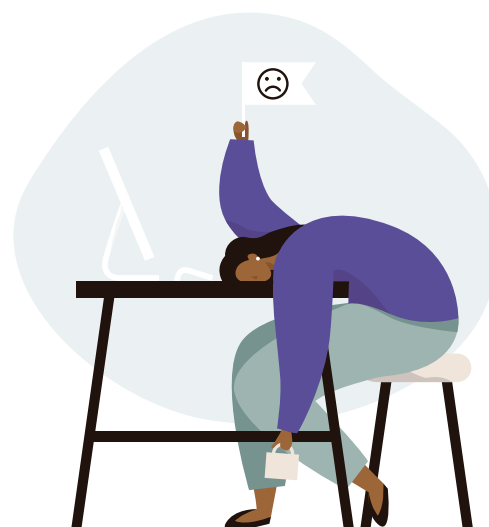
Over one-third of employees say that going back into the office full-time would make them more likely to look for a new job.

People will demand better physical and digital workspaces

Hybrid work is here to stay. Organizations that want to get their hybrid work model right must create world-class digital experiences that enable both in-person and digital collaboration.

Unfortunately, our research shows there's a gap between what organizations think they're delivering and what employees actually want when it comes to hybrid work enablement.

Only 30% of respondents said their experience with their company's technology exceeds or greatly exceeds their expectations. And only 23% of respondents feel their experience working at their office exceeds or greatly exceeds their expectations.



91%

Engagement rate among people who have productivity-enabling tech

24%

Engagement rate among people who do not have productivity-enabling tech



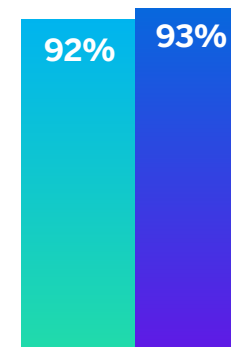
Trend 2

Our research shows a strong link between the physical and digital workspace experience, and key metrics like engagement and likelihood to recommend.



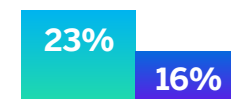
The employee experience is now deeply connected to the digital experience. If technology is hindering my productivity, it's nearly impossible for me to feel great about my overall experience.

Matt Evans, Senior EX Product Scientist



Employees who feel their physical workspace allows them to be more productive

100%



Employees who feel their physical workspace DOES NOT allow them to be more productive

100%

 Engaged  Likely to recommend

Trend 2

55%

Just 55% say their current company's technology is better than at other places they have worked



WHAT DO EMPLOYEES WANT FROM THEIR HYBRID WORK EXPERIENCE?

The office is still a valuable place for employees, but the reasons why have changed. Instead of being a place they're required to go to, employees want the flexibility to go to the office for intentional collaboration and socialization, but with the freedom to decide when and for what purpose.

Hybrid workers also want:

Flexibility: Over one-third (35%) say they're more likely to look for a new job if they're forced to work in an office full-time.

Tech that allows us to collaborate: Just 55% say their current company's technology is better than at other places they have worked.

Communication and transparency: More than one-third of people (34%) did not agree that there was open and honest communication at their company.

Support: Just over two-thirds (68%) of people feel supported in their efforts to adapt to organizational changes – a 2-point increase from 2021.

Reimagined office spaces: People still want an office, but currently more than a third (37%) do not agree it's an enjoyable place to be.

Trend 2



Successfully transitioning to a permanent hybrid model is not just about setting a work schedule and investing in new technology. Like all major transformations, realizing the full potential of a hybrid model will require leaders to adopt new mindsets, to define behavioral and working norms, and to engage in two-way dialogue with employees as they navigate this change.

*Matt Evans, Senior EX
Product Scientist*

THE WAY FORWARD

Throw out the old playbook and never look back. Employees are underwhelmed by their current technology and office experiences.

To improve the employee experience, IT and HR leaders must work together to take better, more clear action on the experience data they collect.

It's time to design a hybrid workplace experience that works for everyone – no matter where they're working.

Deliver exceptional technology experiences
with Qualtrics **Get Started**

TREND 3

**Lack of DEI/B progress
won't be accepted**

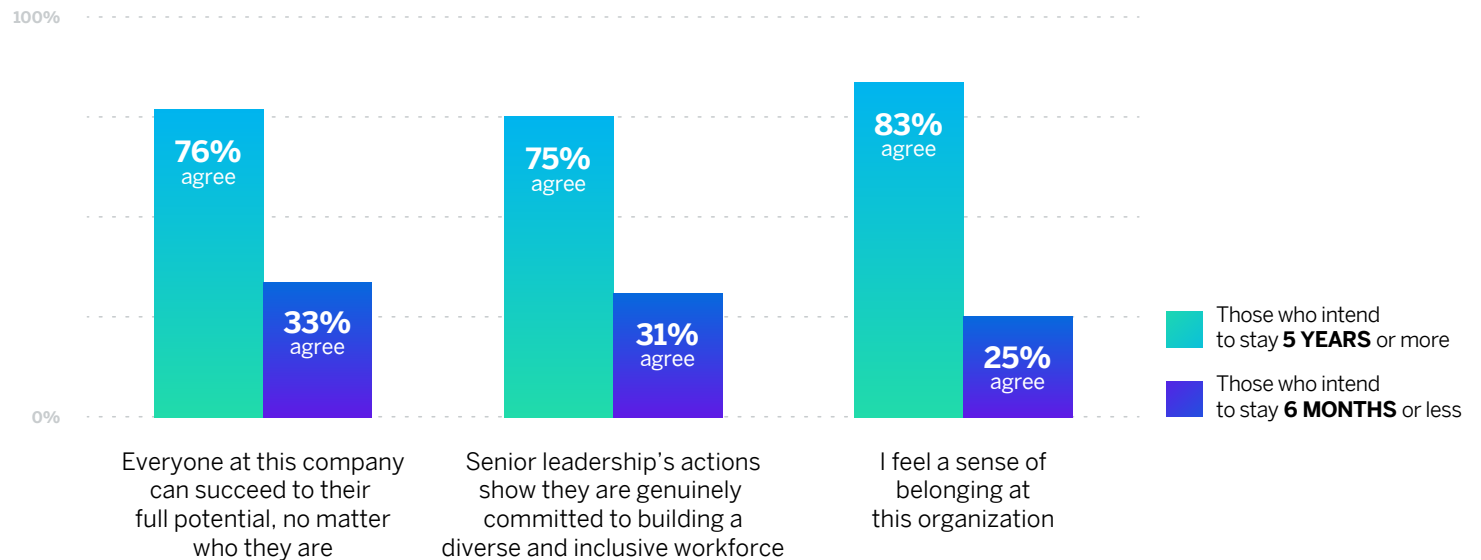
Trend 3

Lack of DEIB progress won't be accepted

With social injustice brought to the forefront, many organizations made public diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) promises, but there is still more to be done.

Our research shows that only 70% of employees say their organizations have made sufficient progress towards greater DEIB.

Fewer (67%) say that senior leadership's actions show they are genuinely committed to building a diverse and inclusive company. And those who self-identify as non-binary/transgender view the DEIB efforts at their company as much less favorable overall.



Trend 3

WANT TO THRIVE IN THE GREAT RESIGNATION? FOCUS ON YOUR DEIB EFFORTS

With companies competing for the same highly skilled talent, action on DEIB and fostering a culture of belonging will be a key differentiator. But our research shows there's still a ways to go. Four in five (80 percent) senior leaders say their actions show they are genuinely committed to greater DEIB, while only three in five (58 percent) individual contributors say the same. Closing this gap will play a leading role in retaining people too, making it one of the key areas of focus to get right during the Great Resignation.



Employees are keen to see DEIB progress happen. Many of them are wondering why it hasn't already. Without DEIB, you can't harness the full intellectual power of your organization. That's why we need to be intentional about including diversity – diverse perspectives, diversity of thought – and giving everyone not just a chance to contribute, but also making them feel like it's safe to do so.

Yesenia Cancel, XM Scientist

Trend 3



It's great to see employers making progress in the last year, but many companies are still at the very early stages of this journey. To accelerate that progress and truly embed DEIB into the culture and operating rhythm of a company, make sure it's measurable and actionable so you can hold leaders to account and meet the commitments made to your people.

Farren Roper, Head of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Qualtrics

THE WAY FORWARD

Your employees are saying loud and clear: Double down on your DEIB efforts.

The good news is that employee perceptions of DEIB efforts and corporate social responsibility have improved year-over-year. In other words, employees recognize and appreciate the efforts organizations have made over the past year and a half. The challenge will be sustaining these efforts and ensuring that this focus isn't temporary.

Make sure DEIB is part of your employee listening program. Listen to what your people are telling you and then action them. It's critical to set bold, but achievable targets. And make sure your stakeholders are held accountable for achieving them.

Drive measurable change
with our DEIB solution **Get Started**

TREND 4

**Lack of well-being is
a countdown to disaster**


Trend 4

Almost a third of all employees say they won't always take a sick day if they're not feeling well enough for work

Lack of well-being is a countdown to disaster

For almost two years, many have been working longer hours without a clear start or end to the workday. The pandemic – and the pivot to remote and hybrid work – exacerbated employees' built-in boundaries with work.

As a result, people's well-being and resilience have suffered.



People have been digging deep over these past two years working at home. For many people, the things we have taken for granted such as good health and job stability are now under threat. Employees and leaders are trying to get back to some sense of normality but struggling to get the balance right.

Antonio Pangallo, Senior EX Product Scientist

Trend 4

But that's not the only reason why: People are also burnt out from a workplace culture that doesn't support, sustain, or restore employee well-being.

Our research shows:



29% won't always
take a sick day

61% of those who won't take
a sick day cite a heavy
workload as the reason

20% often worry
about work problems

Trend 4

THE WAY FORWARD

We know well-being and resilience have a huge impact on mental health, engagement, and productivity.

Unfortunately, many organizations are choosing to address burnout (and attrition) with superfluous benefits (i.e. a mental health app or a week off) rather than doing the hard work at the root of the problem – a toxic culture that rewards workplace martyrdom over self-care (and self-awareness).

Practice what you preach. There needs to be change from the top if employee well-being is to improve. Leaders need to be seen working reasonable hours, taking personal time, treating their mental and physical health as a priority, and then encouraging their people to do the same.

Talk to your people. Employees say the number one thing holding them back from taking care of their mental health is that leaders don't talk about it enough at work and it becomes a taboo. Leaders talking about mental health openly helps to remove the stigma.

Encourage a culture of well-being. Organizations build the environment where culture takes place by creating the structure around how, where, and when work gets done work; taking time off; focusing on well-being; and so on.

Trend 4



Organizations should focus on making sure employees are well-aligned to the responsibilities of their roles, as well as feel connected to the organization overall. It is the responsibility of managers and leaders to ensure employees are not overloaded with tasks that they are unable to finish within the scope of work.

Laura Harding, EX Product Scientist

But ultimately, it's employees who dictate the culture by establishing their own boundaries with work, communicating with their managers about workload, and taking ownership of restorative time outside of work.

THE HR LEADER'S WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE TOOLKIT:

Tips and advice for fostering a culture of wellness

- + A comprehensive guide on employee burnout – and what to do about it
- + Expert advice for supporting employee mental health
- + Understand the delicate balance between work, life, and workplace tech
- + 3 steps to take to boost employee well-being
- + How to get started with employee wellness programs

Check in regularly with your people
using our Pulse solution **Get Started**

Appendix: methodology and demographics

Appendix

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in August and September 2021 and included 13,936 respondents 18 years of age or older who were currently employed full-time.

DEMOGRAPHICS

This study spoke with employees across 27 countries and 4 regions. Numbers are based on the individual's selection of where they consider their country of residence, including regional distinctions.

+ Australia 611	+ Mexico 327
+ Belgium 308	+ Netherlands 617
+ Brazil 329	+ New Zealand 306
+ Canada 327	+ Philippines 314
+ China 628	+ Singapore 526
+ France 639	+ South Korea 326
+ Germany 628	+ Spain 329
+ Hong Kong (SAR) 306	+ Sweden/Norway/ Finland 273
+ India 656	+ Thailand 300
+ Indonesia 314	+ UAE 297
+ Italy 326	+ UK 616
+ Japan 639	+ US 3,647
+ Malaysia 310	

INDUSTRIES

- + Academia 621
- + Arts and Entertainment 143
- + B2B Manufacturing 867
- + Business Services 702
- + Consumer Goods 528
- + Federal Government 375
- + Financial Services 1,250
- + Healthcare Providers 1,218
- + High Tech 936
- + Market Research 90
- + Media and Communications 219
- + Municipal Government 259
- + Non-Profit & Associations 203
- + Professional Services 921
(e.g. legal, advertising)
- + Restaurant 310
- + Retail 1,090
- + State Government 299
- + Travel & Hospitality 326
- + Unknown 41
- + Utilities or Energy 333
- + Wholesale 314
- + Other 2,891

The study examined influencing factors including age, tenure, and job roles among others.

AGE

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| + Under 20 148 | + 40-49 3,231 |
| + 20-25 1,464 | + 50-59 1,961 |
| + 26-29 1,539 | + 60 and over 793 |
| + 30-39 4,786 | + Prefer not to say 8 |

GENDER

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| + Women 6,970 | + Prefer to self describe 2 |
| + Men 6,903 | + Non-binary / Transgender / |
| + Prefer not to say 14 | Third gender 47 |

JOB LEVEL/ROLE

- | | |
|--|---|
| + Executive 1,206
(e.g. Vice President and above) | + Leaders of Leaders 2,229 |
| + Individual Contributor 6,734 | + Manager/Leader of
Individual Contributor 3,767 |

WANT TO SEE HOW IT ALL WORKS?

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