

Attitudes to Hybrid Working.

The impact of hybrid work on employees and employers

2022



Contents.

Introduction.	03
01 Changing desires.	
Employees want the best of both worlds	06
Satisfying changed desires	08
Recommendation tool	11
02 Employee well-being.	
Mental and physical well-being are essential	
Unmet needs	16
Employment prospects	17
03 A tech-enabled future.	
Shifting management perspectives	20
Investing in tech	21
Fresh opportunities	22
Conclusion.	24
Sources.	26

Introduction.

The US is at a tipping point in terms of work. Populations are more confident about their health, businesses are rapidly reopening and employees are experimenting with new hybrid working structures in which they are the key decision-makers.

People's expectations have fundamentally changed – work gets done on their terms, in their way. The world hasn't just survived an enforced period of flexible working, it has thrived from it.

So, to attract employees back into a communal working environment, leaders need to work out new ways to incentivize and empower them. To create an office that they want to come to rather than one that they feel obliged to attend.

Alongside Hall & Partners, we have new quantitative and qualitative evidence to show that employees are increasingly demanding a working life that is more collaborative and socialized. And which, in tandem with their home lives, can add to their positive mental and physical well-being.

Yet while employers understand this, they are hampered by the technological means to satisfy these demands. Yes, hybrid working makes sense – but how can best practice be attained, with which tools and in what manner?

Staggeringly, only half of employees in our survey believed their employers had made the right efforts in this area. Supplying technology that allows them to decide how and where they work, alone or together, at a desk or in a meeting room, with ease and flexibility that makes the most of resources.

Technology is the means by which hybrid working can be created, sustained, and constantly improved. And leaders need to act swiftly, reconsidering how workplace tech can become the backbone to growth strategies.

These two factors combined – the trust that comes from a dynamic new hybrid working environment and the technology with which to make it happen – creates the third key element of today's workplace. Happier, healthier, more positive employees.

The Great Resignation or Reshuffle is far from over. Workers are choosing employment based on well-being, mental health, work-life balance, and flexibility. So leaders need to make the office worth the commute. Its role needs to be reanalyzed and redesigned. They need to be better at answering the key question employees have: Why should I come in?

It's not just getting employees into the office – it's making the most of their time, ensuring that the experience is seamless, fulfilling, and worthwhile.

Using technology so that teams become more connected and less siloed, so that relationships are strengthened and shared responsibilities clearer, and so that greater trust, innovation and creativity result.

01

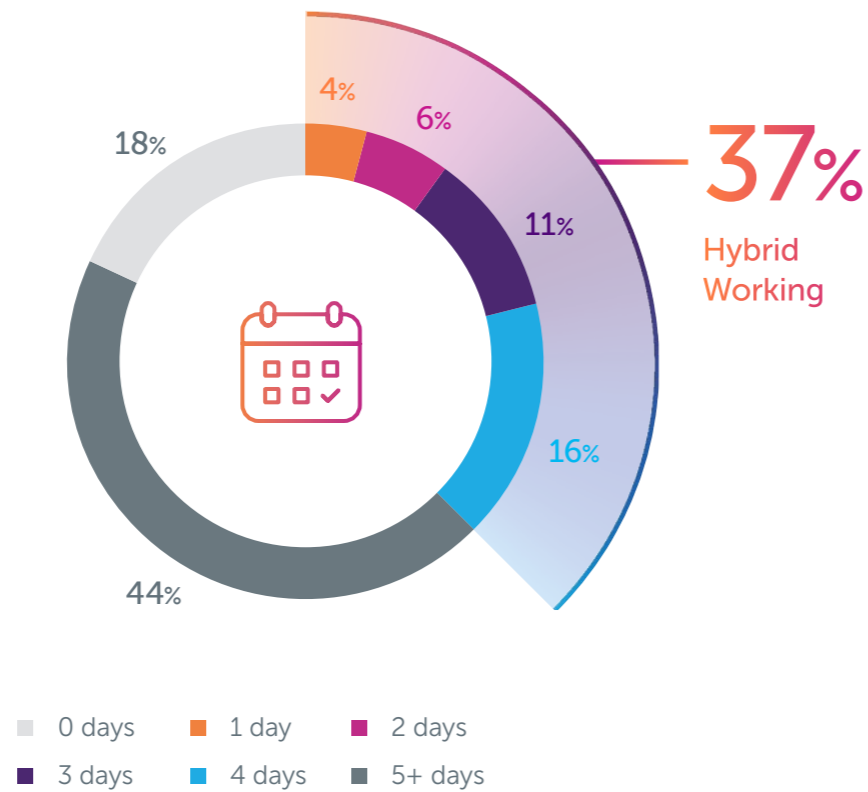
Changing
desires.



Employees want the best of both worlds.

Our research shows that less than half of employees work in the same way that they did just two years ago. Only 44% spend their full workweek in-person at an office. Almost one in five has not returned to a communal environment at all, while over a third of employees (37%) work in a hybrid arrangement (spending 1-4 days in the office).

Current working behaviour
(days in office)



Over
1 in 3
employees currently split their time between their home and their workplace



Senior employees in most industries are more likely to be spending their time between home and the office, with over half (51%) of the C-suite working in a hybrid way compared, to less than a third of those in non-managerial roles.

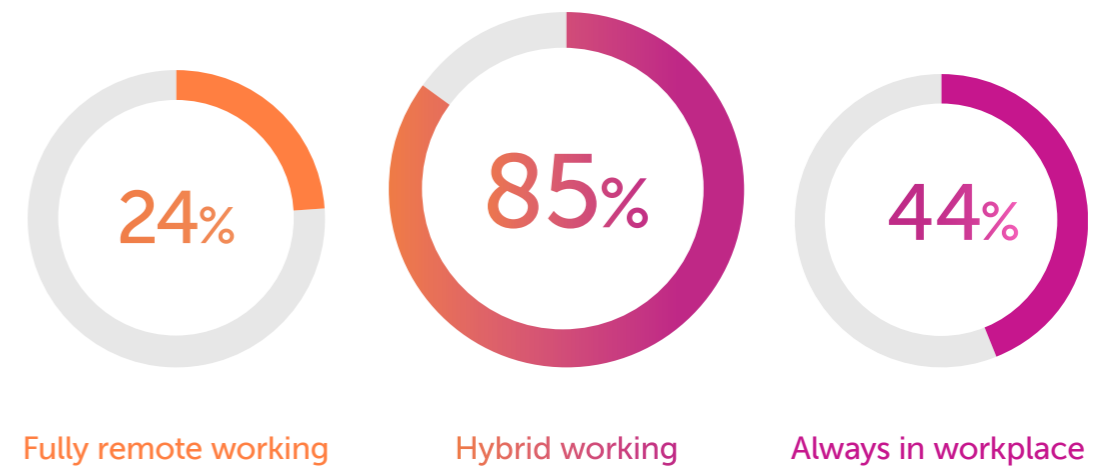
However, most intriguing is the growing desire for reimagined working conditions. Only a quarter of people wish to remain fully remote, while 85% want to combine home and office (with between 1-4 days spent amongst their colleagues).

Regardless of how and where employees currently work, hybrid is their chosen future model. Almost half (44%) of employees who are always in the workplace said they would like to split their time between home and the office. Those who have already had a taste of hybrid are overwhelmingly in favor of retaining that flexibility.

With resignation rates at an all-time high among mid-career employees and a record number of open positions in the US, this is something to consider for businesses that are looking to attract and maintain top talent¹.

Desire for hybrid working in future

Amongst total within each working category (1-4 days in the office)



Satisfying changed desires.

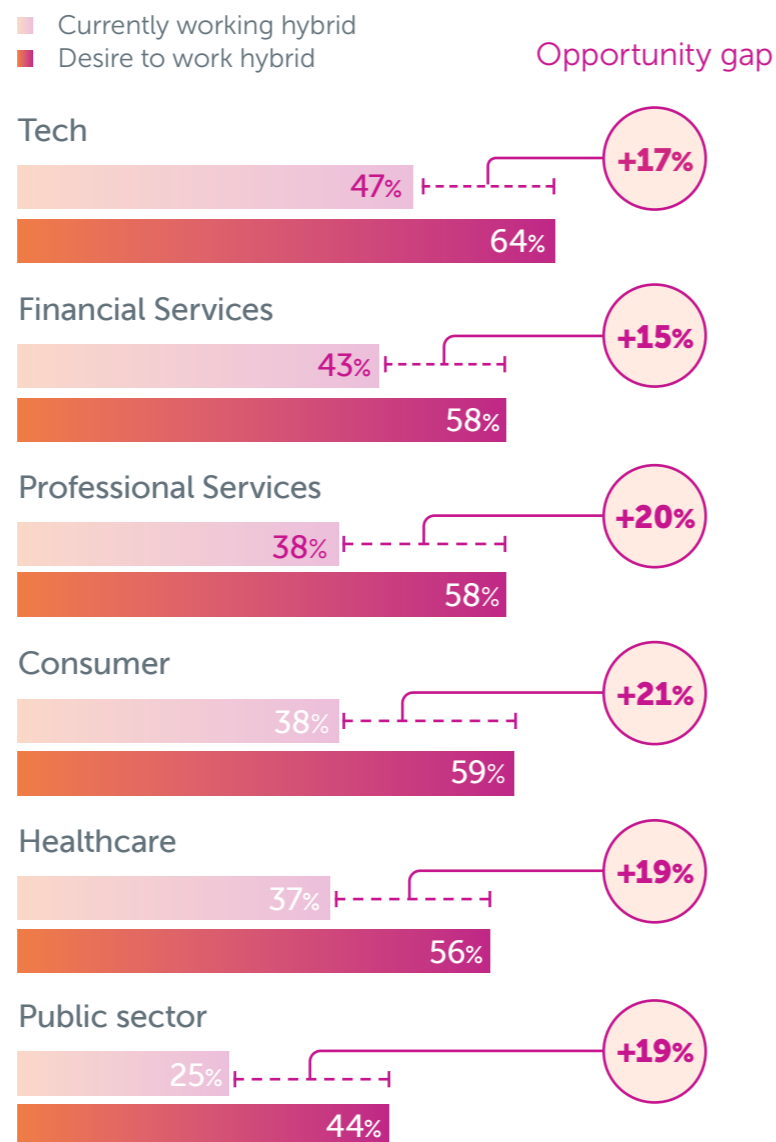


Almost half of employees who are back in the office full-time want more hybrid working in the future.

The desire for hybrid is uniformly shared across the working sectors we analyzed. However, tech employees have adapted fastest - almost half (47%) work the hybrid model, compared to just a quarter in the public sector.

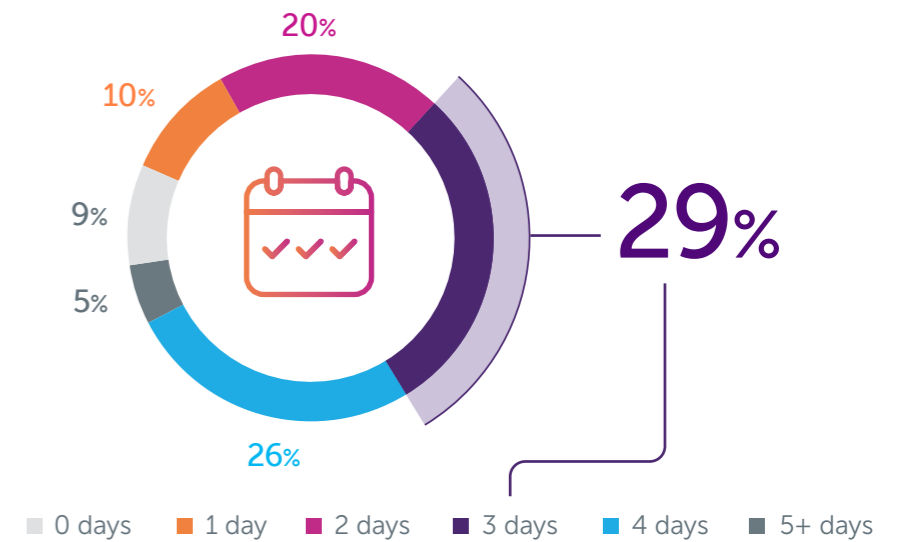
What's clear is that the current reality is not satisfying changed desires. People are not being offered the chance to work in a hybrid way, or do not feel that current conditions enable them to achieve tasks outside of the office. Demand is only likely to grow, which means businesses that can satisfy such demand could have the edge.

Desire for hybrid working in future Amongst total within each working category



The greatest opportunity appears to be amongst those who wish to spend more than half of the working week in an office environment – 55% of Hybrid workers prefer spending 3-4 days working away from home. Just under one in five prefer two days in an office. Together, this cohort make up three quarters of those surveyed.

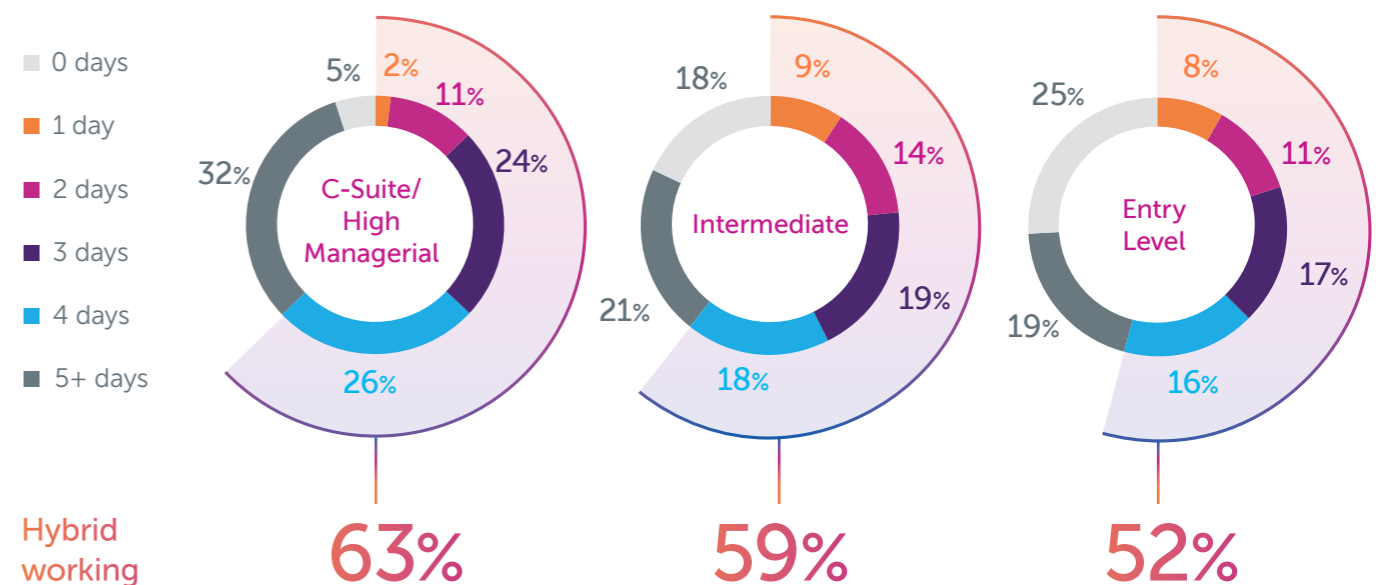
Desire for future working amongst current hybrid workers (days in office)



Focusing on their desires and satisfying their needs – no matter the sector or individual seniority – is key to tapping into this new Hybrid world. Particularly amongst C-suite employees, where almost two thirds say they want to spend between two and four days in the office. This compares with half of those on an intermediate level and 44% of those just beginning their careers or in non-managerial roles.

Just as revealing is how complete this change is. Only 5% of people wish to work in an office as part of the traditional five-day-a-week model – and almost twice as many have no wish to return to a communal working environment.

Desire for future working amongst total within each seniority



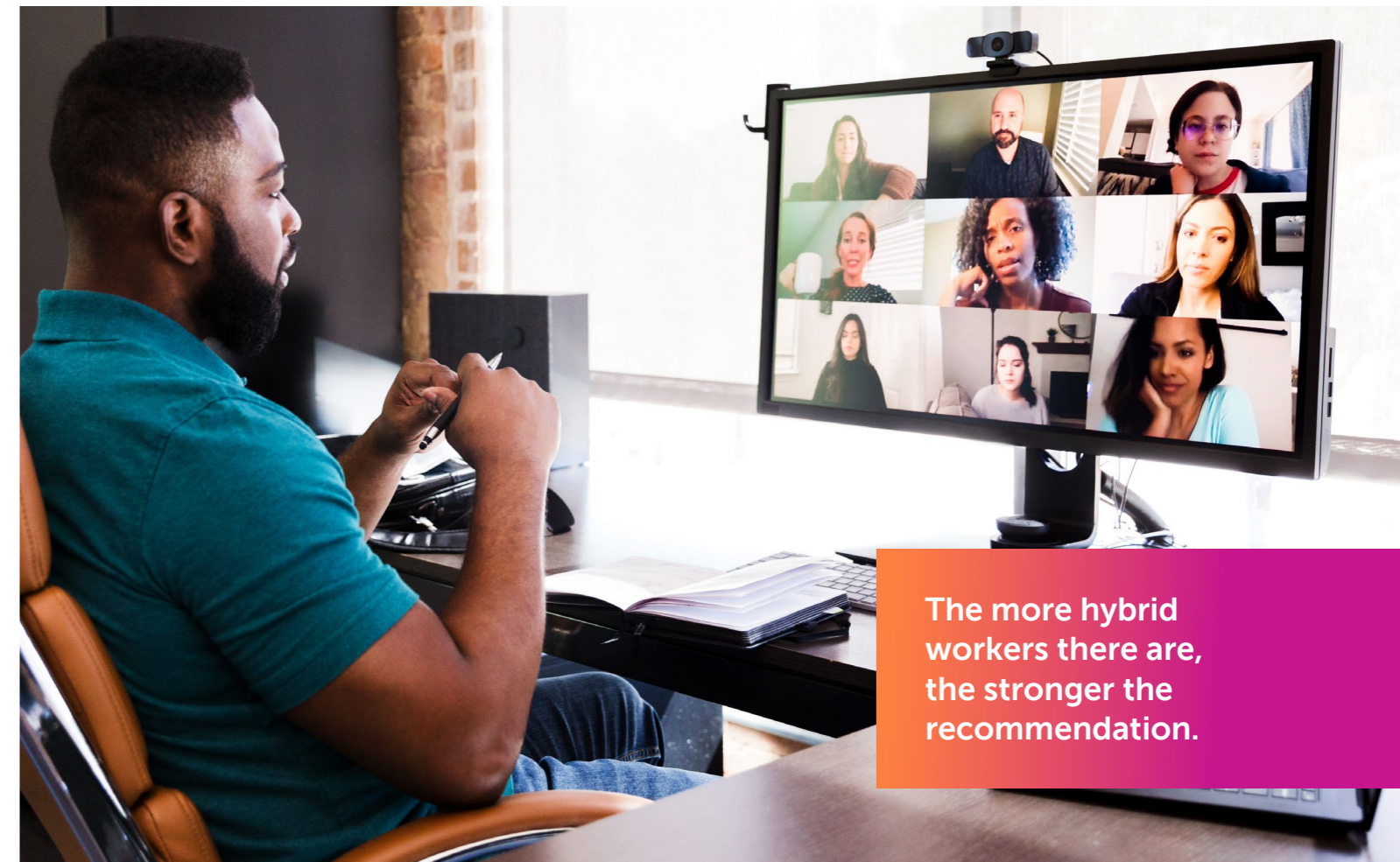
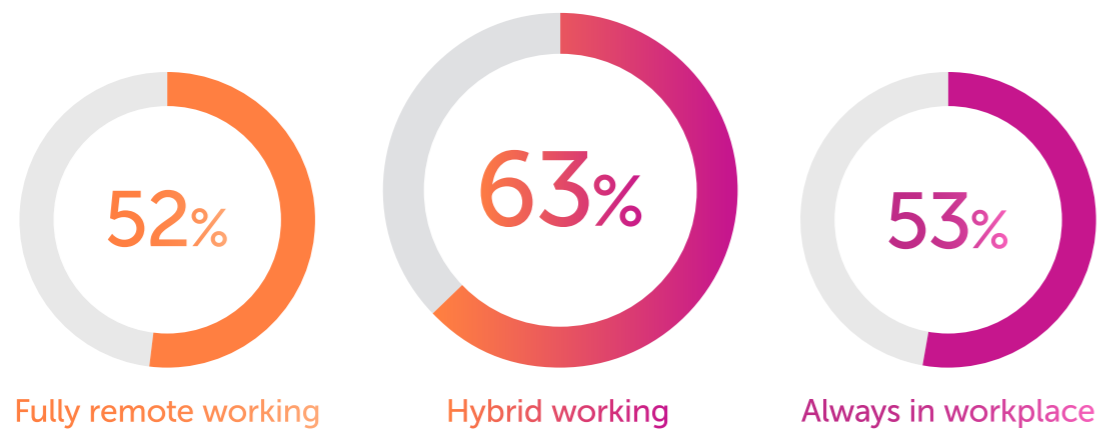
Recommendation tool.

Offering such hybrid working benefits is also a key factor in terms of recommendation and advocacy. Those most likely to encourage others to join them at a company are those who are able to operate most flexibly. Our data proves that employees who have the best of both worlds are the happiest.

Almost two thirds of hybrid workers would recommend working for their company, compared to just 53% for those always in the workplace and 52% for those always working remotely.

Current working pattern

Recommendation of current employer



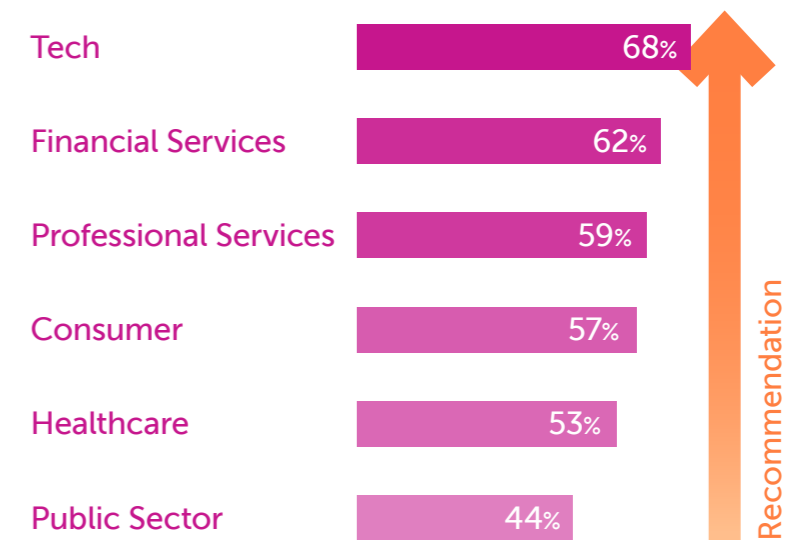
The more hybrid workers there are, the stronger the recommendation.



And the more hybrid workers there are, the stronger the recommendation. Those working in hybrid-friendly environments like Technology and Financial Services are more likely to recommend their company compared to those who work in Healthcare or Public Sector jobs.

Current working pattern

Recommendation amongst total within each industry



02

**Employee
well-being.**



Mental and physical well-being are essential.

7 in 10

employees agree that hybrid working shows their company cares about employee emotional and mental well-being.



As an employer, having a happy workforce is key – and creating a hybrid structure is most likely to maximize employee well-being. Workers are more productive and engaged, allowing them to be better leaders and produce better output².

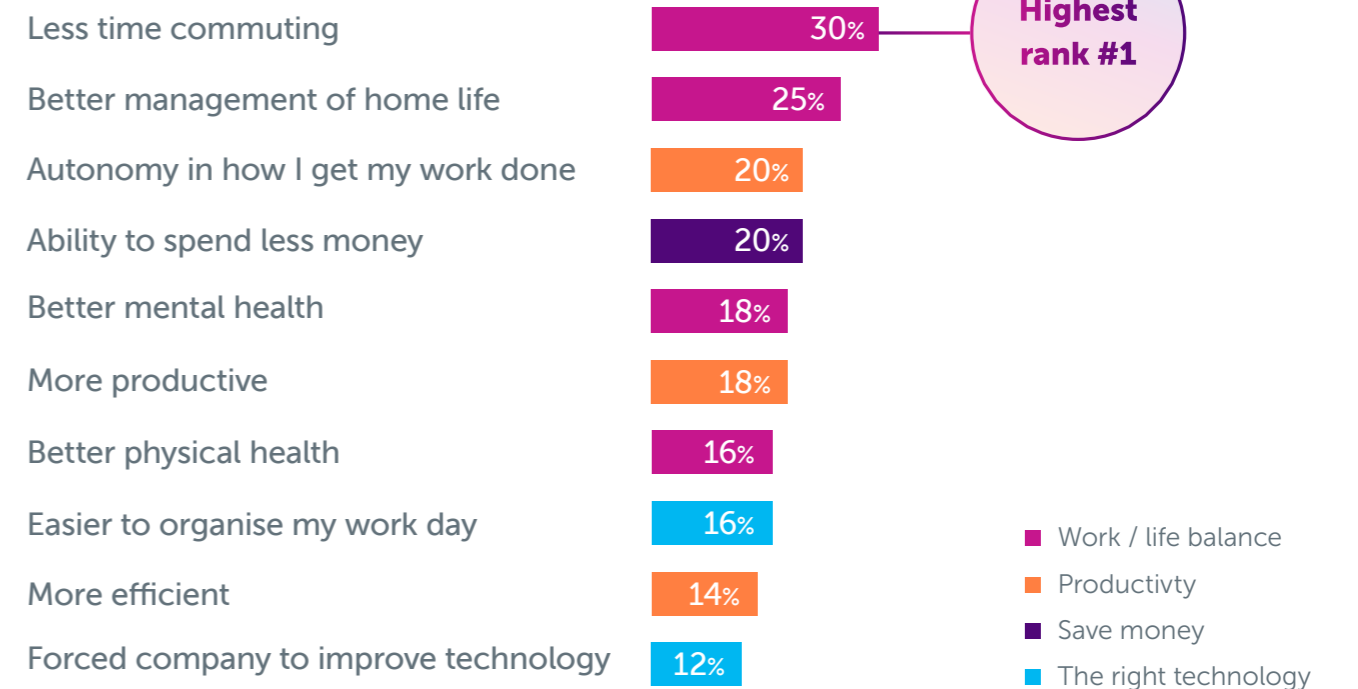
Almost a third of those questioned say that because they commute less, they can fit in more tasks, and a quarter say that they are better able to manage home lives because they are spending less time in an office.

Productivity is another benefit in the eyes of workers—nearly a fifth said they are more productive under a hybrid model. And even more employees cited the freedom to choose how and where work gets done as a top benefit.

Financial concerns are also high on the hybrid agenda – saving money because of less travel is as important as the way work is conducted.

Benefits of hybrid working

Rank 1-3



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It's having it be shaped around where you are. It's something that makes more sense versus companies historically just deciding on an office plan and the employees being an afterthought.

C-Suite

Technology industry, less than 10,000 employees

//

They're trying to empower the employee, and make you take more control over your own work and life, vs what you're expected to mold into.

Employee

Financial Services industry, 4000-10,000 employees

Unmet needs.

Only
12%

of respondents believe that the new hybrid model has persuaded their company leaders to invest in greater technology to satisfy these new working behaviors.

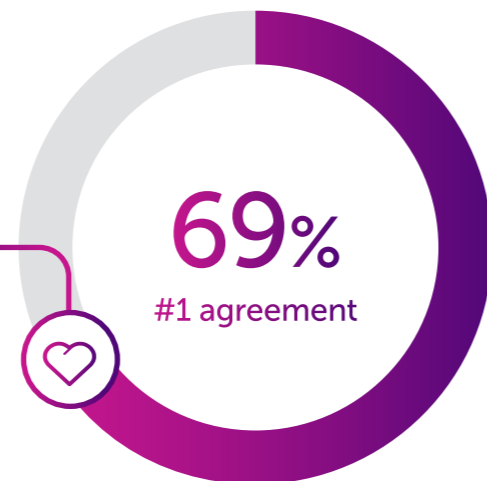
However, this data on benefits highlights a significant opportunity, addressing a need which is currently unmet – and which directly affects mental well-being.

Only 12% of respondents believe that the new hybrid model has persuaded their company leaders to invest in greater technology to satisfy these new working behaviors.

This contrasts markedly with how employees prefer the new structure of work - 69% agree that being able to split their time between home and the office shows that their company takes into consideration the emotional and mental well-being of its employees, with this rising to 76% for the hybrid working subgroup.

Effect of hybrid working on work Agreement

Hybrid working shows my company takes into consideration the emotional and mental well-being of employees.



Employment prospects.

This is reflected in what people seek in future roles. While salary was once the main – and perhaps only – priority for many job seekers, there is now increasing demand from prospective employees for roles that can offer more qualitative benefits.

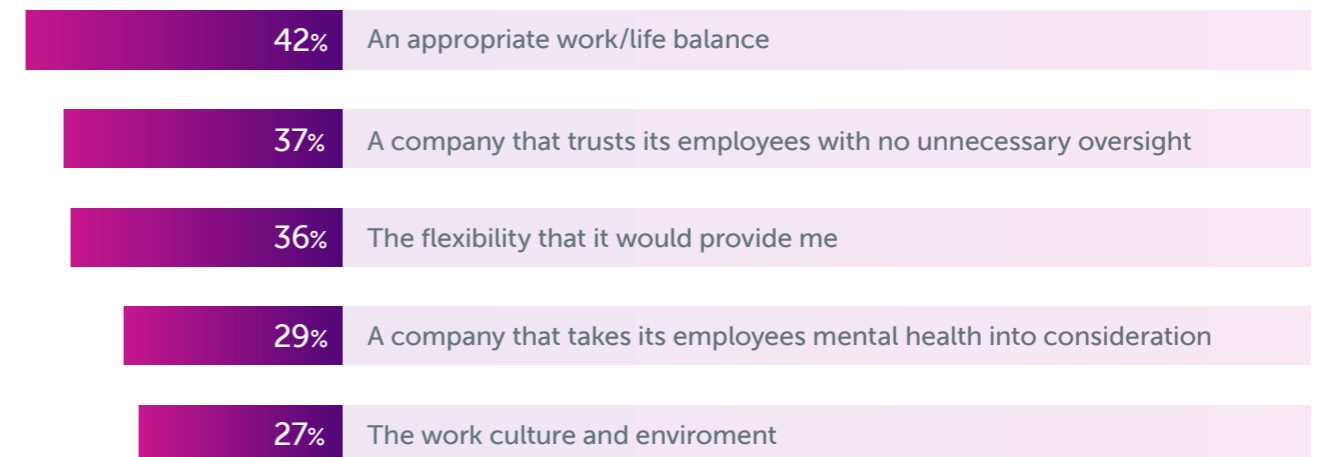
An appropriate work-life balance is the top consideration, followed by companies that allow flexibility to complete work in a way that means they are not constantly overseen. And a quarter believe that the culture and environment must be focused on well-being.

Organizations that empower their workforce by giving them the freedom and trust to work from home, while providing a physical space to enable collaboration, learning, networking, and socializing, will be more appealing to both current and prospective employees alike.



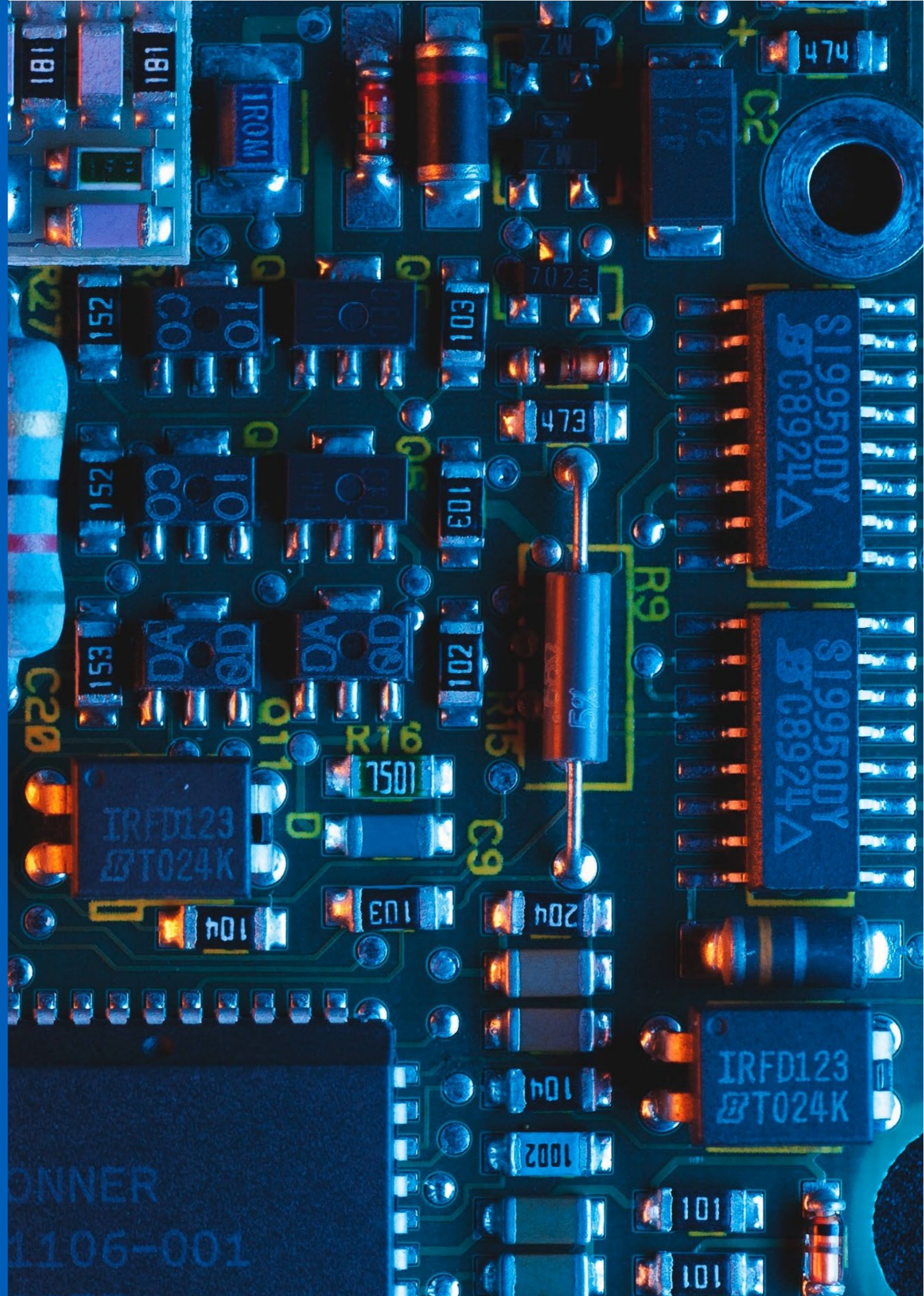
An appropriate work/life balance is the biggest attraction when looking for future job roles.

What attracts people to a role Rank 1-3



03

**A tech-enabled
future.**



Shifting management perspectives.

As we face this new, undeniable reality in which hybrid work is increasingly the norm, we can see why this change has been so swift and widely embraced. Going hybrid is not only realistic and achievable for many businesses – it’s good for productivity and positivity, too.

The opportunity to capitalize on these shifts is huge. Businesses can save on real estate costs. Offering hybrid models enables them to attract and hold on to the best available talent. And it also enables them to simplify reporting structures – a new level of trust has been reached in which employees are enabled to achieve tasks no matter where they are.

In fact, 78% of managers agree that “the pandemic made me realize my business can be streamlined”. This shift away from micro-management and growth in self-leadership will enable greater agility across organizations.

However, that means businesses must try harder to find the best talent. Those that focused on recruiting trustworthy, committed, and goal-oriented individuals prior to the pandemic have found themselves shifting to flexible work much more comfortably.

This shift is exemplified by the change in attitudes towards productivity, too. Three quarters of managers now believe “employees are just as productive working from home/digitally as they are in the workplace.”

8 in 10

managers now “trust their employees to get their work done when working from home”.

Views on hybrid working

Managerial agreement

#1 Agreement

I trust my employees/colleagues to get their work done when working from home/digitally

80%



#2 Agreement

The pandemic has made me realise that the way we conduct business can be streamlined

78%



#3 Agreement

My employees are just as productive working from home/digitally as they are working in the workplace

80%



Investing in tech.



//

I think it is going to be a hybrid model. You should embrace this virtual environment when it matters, but in some cases, there is no substitute for face-to-face contact.

C-Suite

Financial Services industry, 10,000+ employees

So if the hybrid model is the agreed future, how can management ensure the right conditions are there to achieve, sustain, and develop it? Transitioning to different working behaviors takes proper planning and constant finessing.

And, in particular, it takes more investment in the right technology tools.

Our research discovered two crucial insights. Firstly, almost half (48%) of employees said that “making sure the right digital tools are in place” is vital to ensure successful hybrid working – higher than all other points. Secondly, and arguably a more striking statistic, is that half of employees felt their company was not currently

using the right tools for hybrid working.

We also asked respondents what they felt were the most important things to ensure effective collaboration can continue when hybrid working – “achieving digital equality for virtual and in-room participants” came out on top (68% saying this).

Fresh opportunities.

These concerns revealed (or confirmed) by our study also point to other opportunities companies must grasp if they are to adapt successfully, create a more nurturing culture, and improve productivity. All can be addressed through technology-enabled environments designed to attract workers into the office.

1

First, to collaborate more effectively, people want to feel empowered to be a part of a more seamless in-person creative process.



2

Second, there is a concern that organisations could become siloed unless more of those pre-pandemic serendipitous “water-cooler” moments are encouraged, so enhancing a company culture.



3

Third, younger staff see the office as a means to end their work-from-home isolation, feel more inspired and socialise more than they’ve been able over the past two years.



Conclusion.



The office is going to become a treat.

C-Suite

Technology industry, 4000-10,000 employees



Workplace culture is vital, and, in a rapidly changing workplace environment, managers must push harder to ensure that their culture enables employees to achieve an invigorating work-life balance. That means recreating a physical environment where ideas, creativity, and serendipitous moments of inspiration can flourish.

Preserving that kind of culture is tricky enough in a physical environment, still more so in remote and hybrid settings.

As companies begin to formalize their long-term strategies, key questions include:

- ? What does the next phase of office life look like?
- ? What do companies need to do to ensure that workers are provided with the environments most conducive to personal fulfillment as well as business growth?
- ? What are the investments and policy shifts that need to be made?



Technology has rapidly emerged as the key answer that links all of those dilemmas.

And so companies need to take leadership, embracing new mindsets and shifting cultural norms. Adapting at speed will be essential to gaining competitive advantage, empowering employees by understanding their needs, and attracting fresh talent.

Employee experience is a top priority – and technology can make the difference between a positive and negative one, in the ways they communicate, collaborate, and connect. As a result, people remain engaged, enthused, inspired, and supported.

Culture is about the values that an organization lives and works by, and also the methods and processes employed by which to maintain that culture.

So technology becomes a tool not just to share information about what people

are working on, but one that can increase team-building and socializing, designing a workspace where people are motivated to think creatively. In the office and at home.

Hybrid working is no longer a revolution, it is a fact of life. If businesses are to stay ahead of the competition in such a transformed environment, they need to see technology as a means of achieving this new way of life – where the role of the office is more vital than ever.

No longer a place employees need to go to complete work. It's going to become somewhere they want to go. A fit-for-purpose place where every team member is connected regardless of location, eradicating any technological pain points that arise along the way.

To do this, employers must consider their workplace technology as the foundation of their strategy in the transition to a hybrid working future.



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Sources.

1. Cook, I. (2021, September 15th). Who Is Driving the Great Resignation
<https://hbr.org/2021/09/who-is-driving-the-great-resignation>
2. University of Oxford Business School. (2019, October 24th). Happy workers are 13% more productive
<https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2019-10-24-happy-workers-are-13-more-productive>



Our global presence

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