Executive summary

Envoy return to the workplace report

With an end to the pandemic in sight, many companies are planning their return to work. As they do, a new survey of 1,000 workers in the U.S. presents a strong business case for hybrid work and investments in workplace safety.

The workplace is here to stay

There’s a demand for hybrid work across age, industry, and company size. Nearly half of respondents (48%) say they want the flexibility to work remotely during some of the work week. Here are some other employee demographics calling for a hybrid model:

- 61% of office workers
- 52% of Gen Zers
- 48% of Millennials

61% of employees in healthcare, medicine, and pharmaceuticals

41% of employees in construction, manufacturing, automotives, and utilities

Fewer than one-tenth of employees want a fully remote workweek, indicating that the office will remain a critical part of their work experience.

- Only 8% of respondents want to work remotely five days a week

Employees say some work is better suited for a collaborative environment. When asked what influences their decision to go into the workplace, respondents say the top factors include:

- What they need to get done for work (39%)
- Who else plans to be at the workplace that day (37%)

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Employees remain concerned about returning to the workplace

Overall, 66% of people say they are concerned about going back into the workplace. Nearly the same number of people (62%) think employers should require people to get vaccinated to work on site. These are the employee demographics that are most concerned about returning:

- 66% of people are worried (Extremely worried 22%, Very worried 8%, Somewhat worried 16%, Not too worried 16%, Not worried at all 6%)
- 77% of office workers are worried (Extremely worried 31%, Very worried 7%, Somewhat worried 16%, Not too worried 10%, Not worried at all 10%)
- 75% of Gen Zers are worried (Extremely worried 36%, Very worried 7%, Somewhat worried 9%, Not too worried 11%, Not worried at all 9%)
- 82% of people of color are worried (Extremely worried 31%, Very worried 7%, Somewhat worried 16%, Not too worried 17%, Not worried at all 8%)

Companies must adapt or risk losing half of their workforce

There's a lot at stake for companies that don't offer flexible work options. Nearly half (47%) of people surveyed say they'd look for a new job if their employer didn't offer hybrid work. Here's a look at which employees would hit the job boards:

- 61% of office workers
- 52% of Gen Zers
- 48% of Millennials

2 out of 5 respondents say they'd take a lower salary to have a flexible work environment.

The bottom line

The data is clear; companies must meet the needs of employees or risk losing new and existing talent to employers that do. Most employees don't want to return to the traditional work setup. Employers should use this moment to think long-term and build a work model that attracts talent now and in the future. As they do, they should remember that for many employees safety and flexibility are non-negotiable.

Envoy partnered with Wakefield Research to survey 1,000 full and part-time employees over the age of 18 in the United States. Survey responses were collected between February 8 and February 16, 2021, using an email invitation and an online survey. The data was weighted to ensure an accurate representation of full-time and part-time employees. Want to see the full report? Head over to Envoy's website.