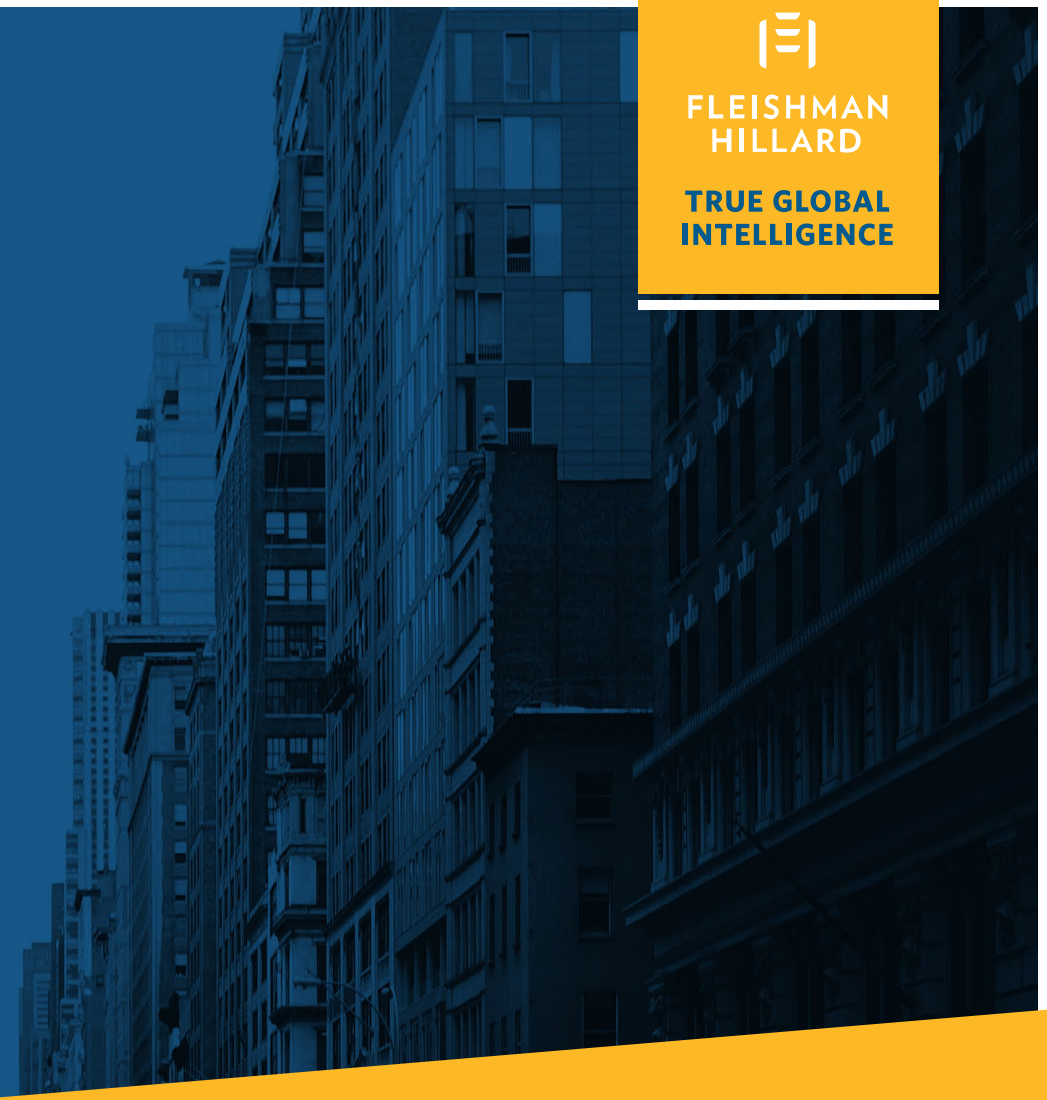
FLEISHMAN HILLARD

TRUE GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE

THE FUTURE OF WORK

HOW REMOTE WORK HAS CHANGED EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT WORK CAN BE



June 2020

The pandemic has accelerated workplace trends and forced companies and workers to adapt. Jobs we thought could only be done in a traditional workplace are being done at home. Technologies we doubted are succeeding. And ways of living we accepted as the defaults are being questioned.

At the start of lockdown, many of us were asking how we'd manage to remain in our homes for weeks. Conversations about returning to our workplaces centered on the logistical questions – how would we enable social distancing in our offices? How would they be cleaned and sanitized? There was perhaps an implicit assumption that once we solved these questions, we'd be able to return.

The conversations among and within companies and across the media changed when it became apparent some would not be able to return to the workplace when those issues were resolved. With schools closed, many reliant on public transit, and some workers and their families vulnerable, the conversation turned to how to accommodate the needs of the workforce.

Another two weeks passed, and first in offhand remarks between colleagues and clients and then once more in media, the conversation turned again, this time to whether companies should return to the workplace, and the culture and behaviors built around it, at all because of the benefits many have found in remote work.

Those benefits haven't been universal, and they don't come without challenges. This is what we wanted to understand in our survey. How has telework changed the experience of work for those fortunate enough to be able to work remotely? How do they feel about the prospect of returning to their regular workplaces? What have they learned? And most importantly, how do they want work to fit into their lives from now on? The answers to these the higher-order questions will help determine the future of work.

- Natasha Kennedy
  Global Managing Director, TRUE Global Intelligence

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METHODOLOGY

TRUE Global Intelligence, *the in-house research practice of FleishmanHillard, fielded an online survey of fulltime employees in the United States (n=502) and United Kingdom (n=498) who were working remotely at the time of the survey. The survey excluded self-employed persons and was fielded from May 8 to May 11, 2020.*

Some figures in this report have been calculated out of the total sample size while others have been calculated out of those who identified the question or content as being applicable to them.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Remote work expanded rapidly in the U.S. and U.K. as employers rushed to address the pandemic. Tens of millions of workers, including those who had never teleworked before and in jobs it was assumed had to be done in a specific workplace, are now working from home. Both for workers entirely new to telework and for seasoned telework pros, the changeover to huge swaths of the economy operating from home has been both a challenge and a boon.

It's harder to communicate with coworkers and customers, and it can be difficult to draw a line between work and home when they share a space. Parents are trying to work and teach, and many workers are also caregivers for seniors and other adults.

Simultaneously, the time and flexibility afforded by remote work has given many of these workers a better work/life balance. It's apparent that many didn't have an adequate balance before the pandemic; for some, this extended period of remote work has helped them realize what they were missing.

Now, as lockdowns begin to lift in phases and employers consider what it will take to reopen their workplaces, a broad majority of workers are not eager to go back to their normal workplace. Indeed, so long as the company can operate remotely and until there's a vaccine, they don't want to return to their workplace, and they'd rather see their employer invest in making remote work better than in changes to reopen their places of business. It's not merely that many are concerned about the virus – though 70% are – and doubt that workplaces can be made truly safe from it – though 88% do. It's that they don't want to return to the way they were balancing work and life before the pandemic. In fact, 56% say the relationship between work and life was broken before the pandemic, a sentiment shared by non-managers and executives alike.

What workers are searching for now is more than information about returning to their workplace. It's a rethinking of work and how it fits into their lives. This is a conversation they want to have inside their companies, but it's also a conversation they believe society needs to have.

THERE'S AN OPPORTUNITY TO REIMAGINE HOW WE WORK AND TO MAKE IT WORK BETTER FOR EVERYONE

1.

Plan comprehensively … and communicate your plan

- The breadth of potential pitfalls in reopening workplaces is apparent to remote workers. They need to see companies have thought through these issues with convincing and comprehensive plans.
- Flexibility is perhaps the most important component of these plans, including flexibility for employees to decide whether returning to the workplace when it reopens is best for them.
- Remember actions speak louder than words. Many workers are wary their employer will not follow through on its commitment to put their health first and let them decide for themselves.
- Beyond their own health, employees remain concerned about the health of those with whom they live and care for, including children, seniors and disabled adults.

2.

Invest in remote work … but don't forget the importance of human connection

- This is where workers would prefer to see companies making an investment right now, not in remodeling workspaces.
- For many organizations, the transition to remote work was abrupt, and while they've made the shift, there's more they can do to support employees in terms of tools, teaching and communication.
- Think about what the company can do to make remote work better for all stakeholders, including modeling positive behaviors to help workers who've been struggling to maintain a work/life balance without the separation of home and office.
- Beyond the distractions of working from home, employees miss interacting with colleagues and feeling connected to the culture, which tools alone can't solve.

3.

Create room for dialogue

- Identify ways to measure what's been learned through the experience of remote work, and engage with stakeholders on how to implement it.
- Employees want to be involved in changes to policies and creating a model of how work and life should coexist going forward.
- Consider formal and informal ways workers at all levels of seniority can participate in conversations and decisions about company culture, policies, and values.
- Work to make it a genuine dialogue so that workers feel listened to and great ideas can be shared.
- Remember that consumers and investors are focusing closely on how companies are behaving as employers, and this dynamic will likely drive corporate reputation for the foreseeable future.

4.

Embrace change and the opportunity that comes with it

- For too many workers, including executives and senior managers, the old normal wasn't working.
- Employees have a fresh perspective on what they were missing with less flexibility in their days, including time with family, feeling healthier and saving more money.
- Consider what the company can do to support workers as whole persons, including both their physical and mental health.
- Some changes are relatively minor, and some are more fundamental. Some are active changes, like adopting new tools, and some are simply not changing back to pre-pandemic practices.
- Be open-minded. The pandemic has shown us a lot of what was considered impossible was possible all along.

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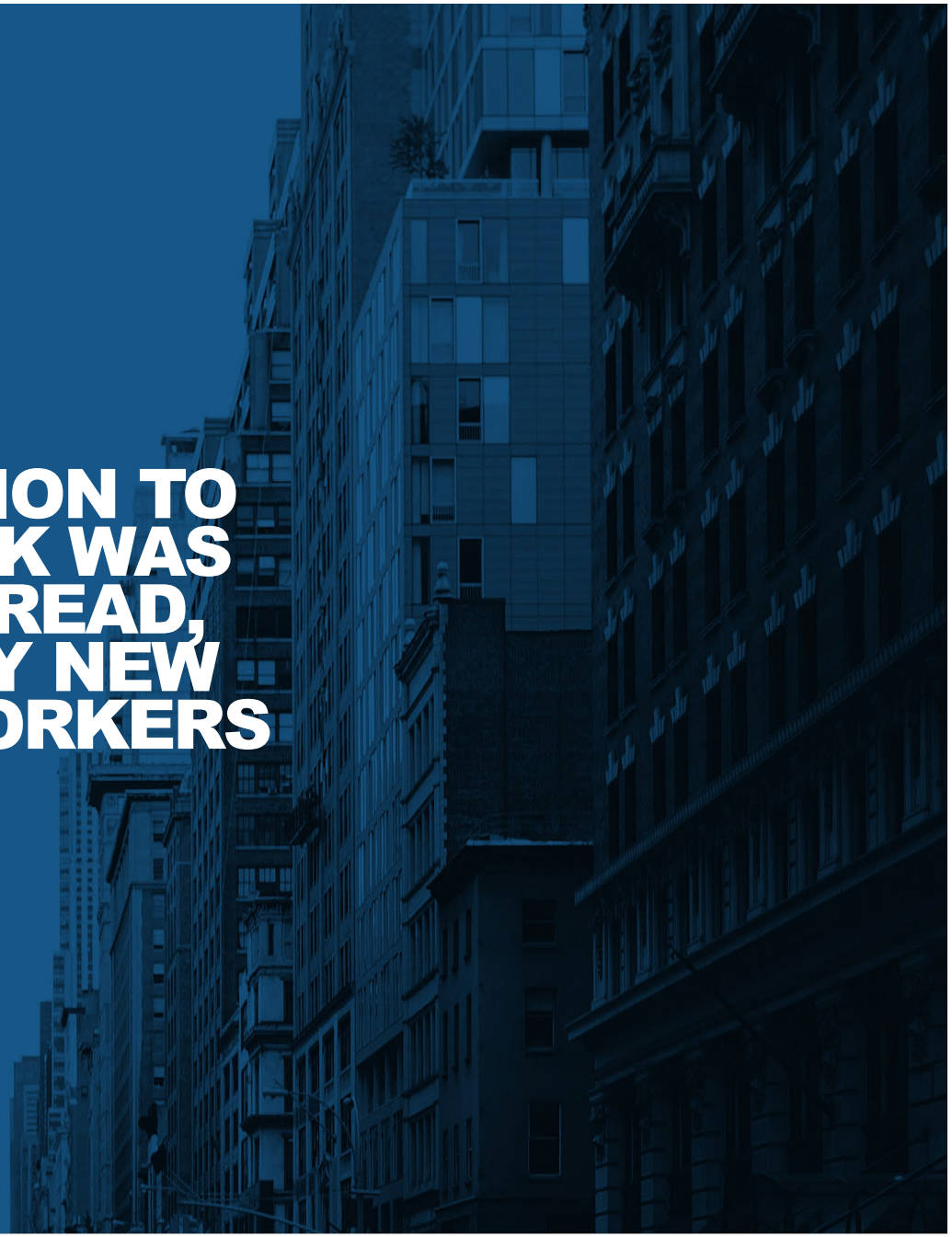
THE TRANSITION TO REMOTE WORK WAS FAST, WIDESPREAD, AND ENTIRELY NEW FOR MANY WORKERS



THE ABILITY TO WORK REMOTELY IS NOT THE COMMON EXPERIENCE OF WORKERS IN THE U.S. AND U.K.

One of the key legacies of the pandemic will be redefining what we mean when we say a job can be done remotely. COVID-19 stay-at-home requirements merely accelerated acceptance of remote working and other trends that already were gaining momentum, but in many cases were being resisted by leaders of organizations, uncertain of the impact of such change.

-Faith Howe
Director & Partner
Head of Talent Development
UK & Middle East

IN THE U.S.

Prior to the pandemic, just 29% could work from home, and just 2% worked exclusively from home 5 or more days a week.

% of total U.S. Labor Force 2017-2018

Could work from home	29%
Worked from home at least occasionally	25%
Had days they only worked from home	15%
Worked only from home 5 days or more per week	2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics

At the beginning of April 2020, an estimated 62% of American workers had worked remotely in response to the pandemic.

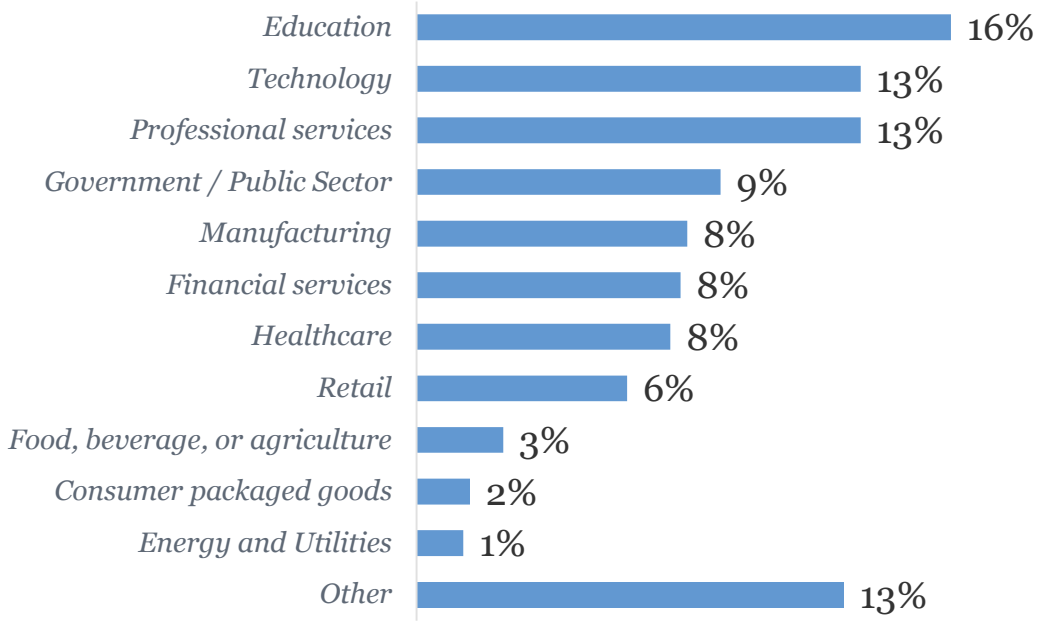
IN THE U.K.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, only 27% of workers in the UK claimed to have worked remotely, and 70% of workers had zero experience of working from home prior to the pandemic.

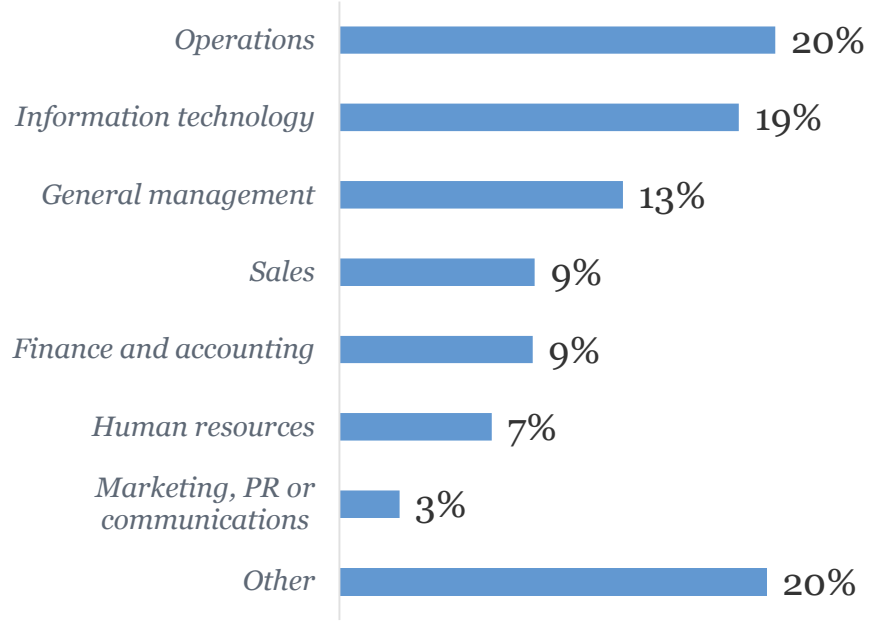
At the start of the pandemic, 7% of workers in the U.K. were working remotely full time, and that figure has grown to 55% of employed workers as of May 13.

EMPLOYEES ARE WORKING REMOTELY ACROSS SECTORS, ROLES, AND RANKS.

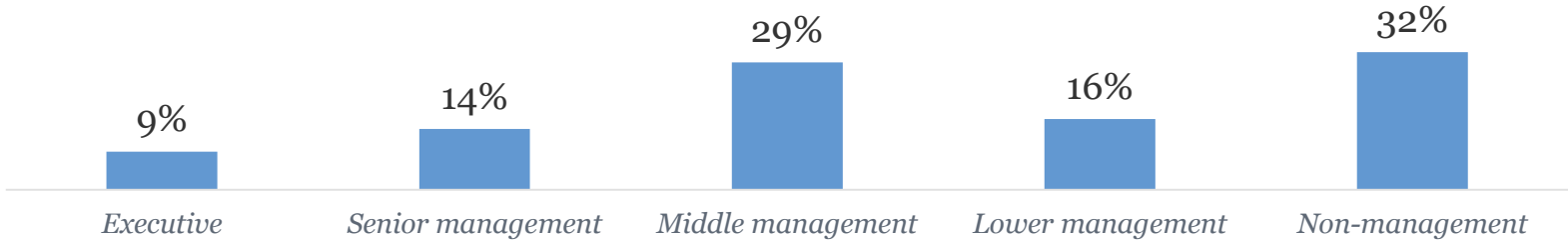
Which type of organization do you work for?



What is your primary job responsibility?

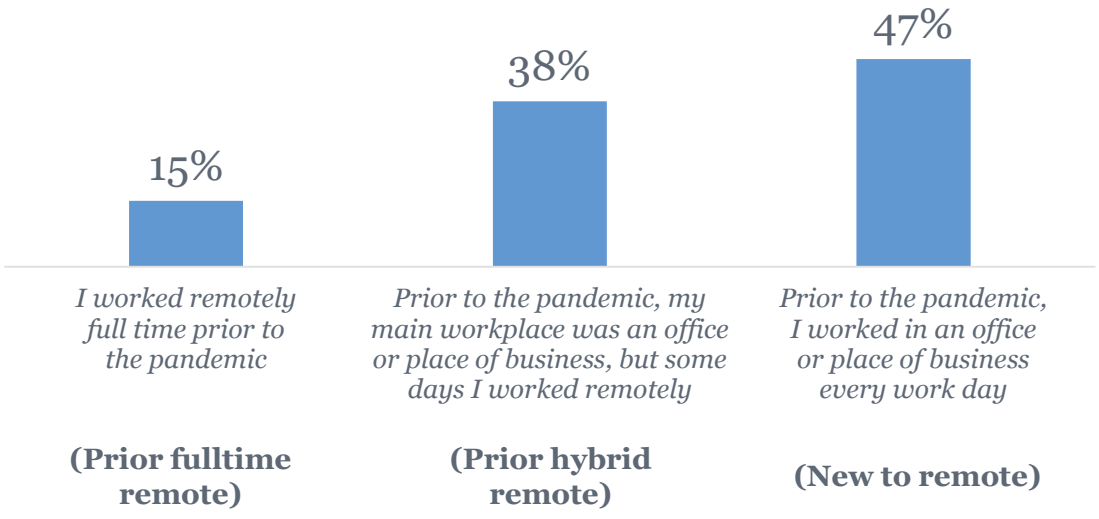


Level of Seniority

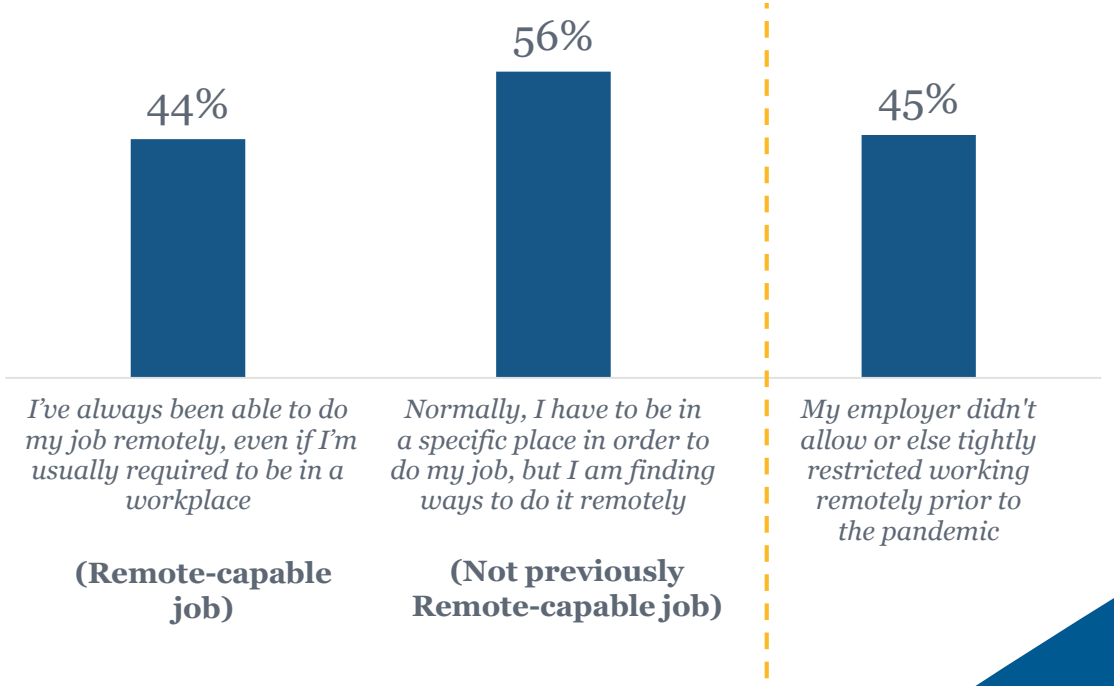


NEARLY HALF REPORT REMOTE WORK WAS RESTRICTED PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC, AND A MAJORITY REPORT THEIR JOB WAS PREVIOUSLY SOMETHING THEY COULD ONLY DO FROM A SPECIFIC PLACE.

Remote work status prior to the pandemic



Ability to work remotely prior to the pandemic



Q: Which of the following best describes you? Thinking about working remotely for this question, please think about the major parts of your job and not things like answering after-hours emails or phone calls.

Q: Which of the following describes your job?

Q: Which of the following apply to you?

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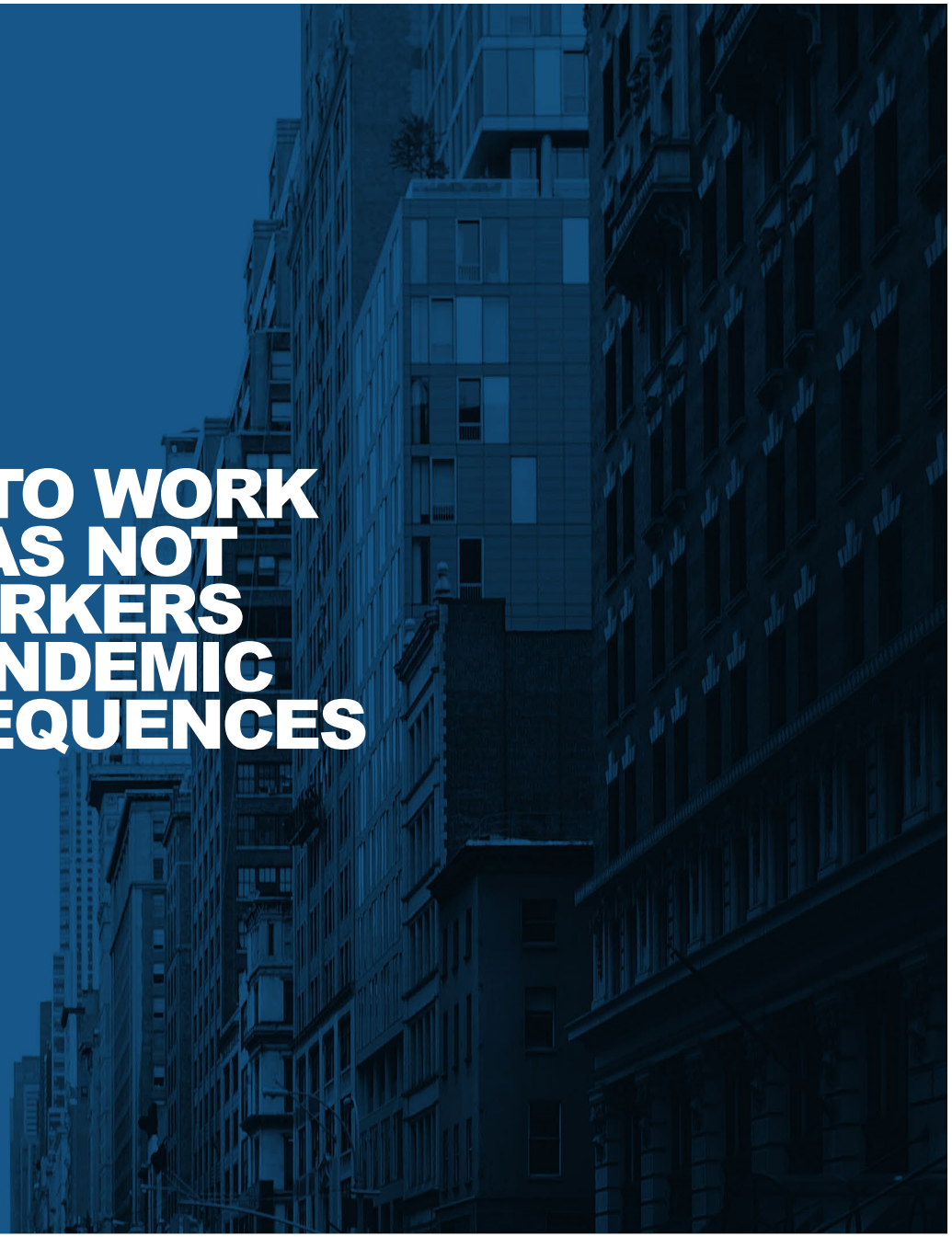
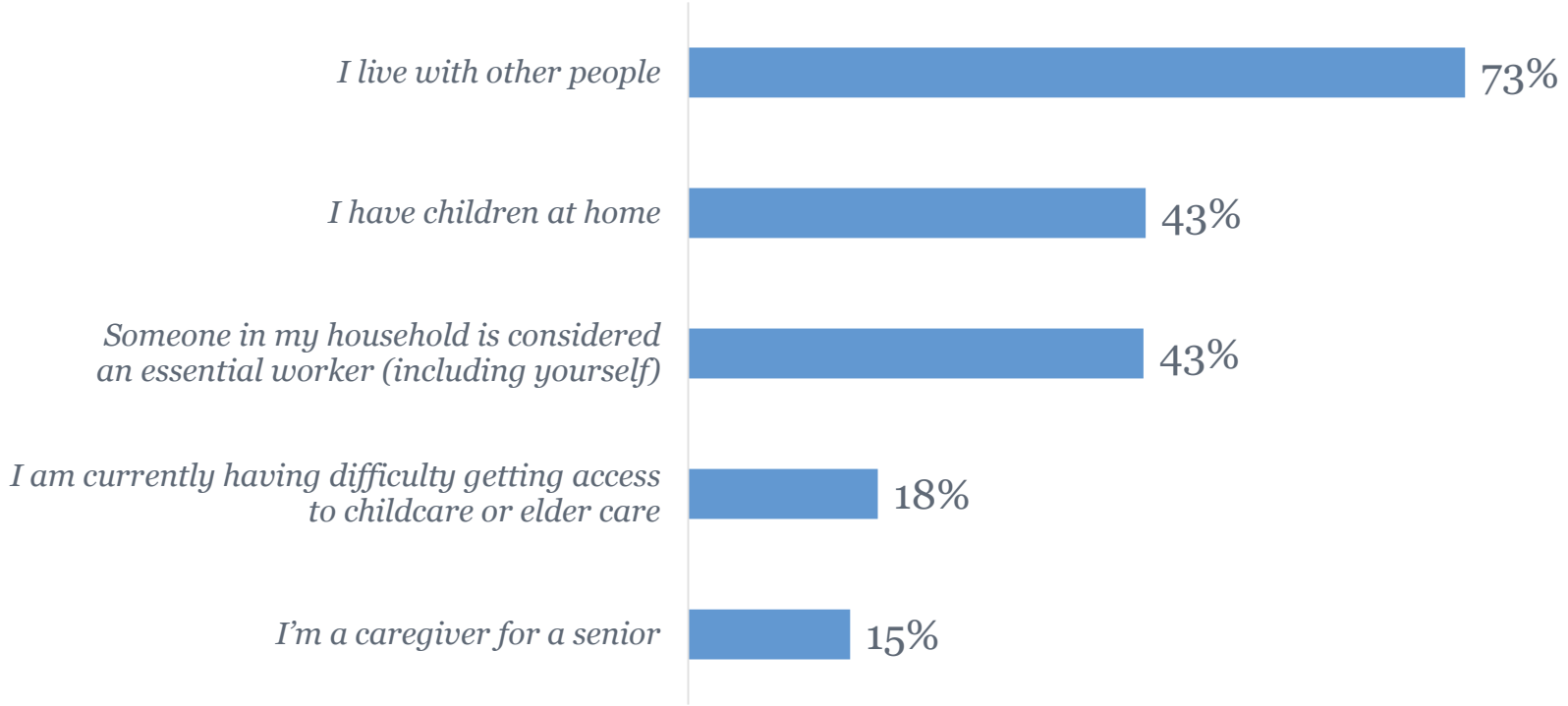
THE ABILITY TO WORK REMOTELY HAS NOT ISOLATED WORKERS FROM THE PANDEMIC OR ITS CONSEQUENCES



MANY REMOTE WORKERS ARE BALANCING DEMANDING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES SIMULTANEOUSLY.

2-in-5 remote workers have children at home, and many are caring for seniors and disabled adults

Q: Which of the following apply to you?



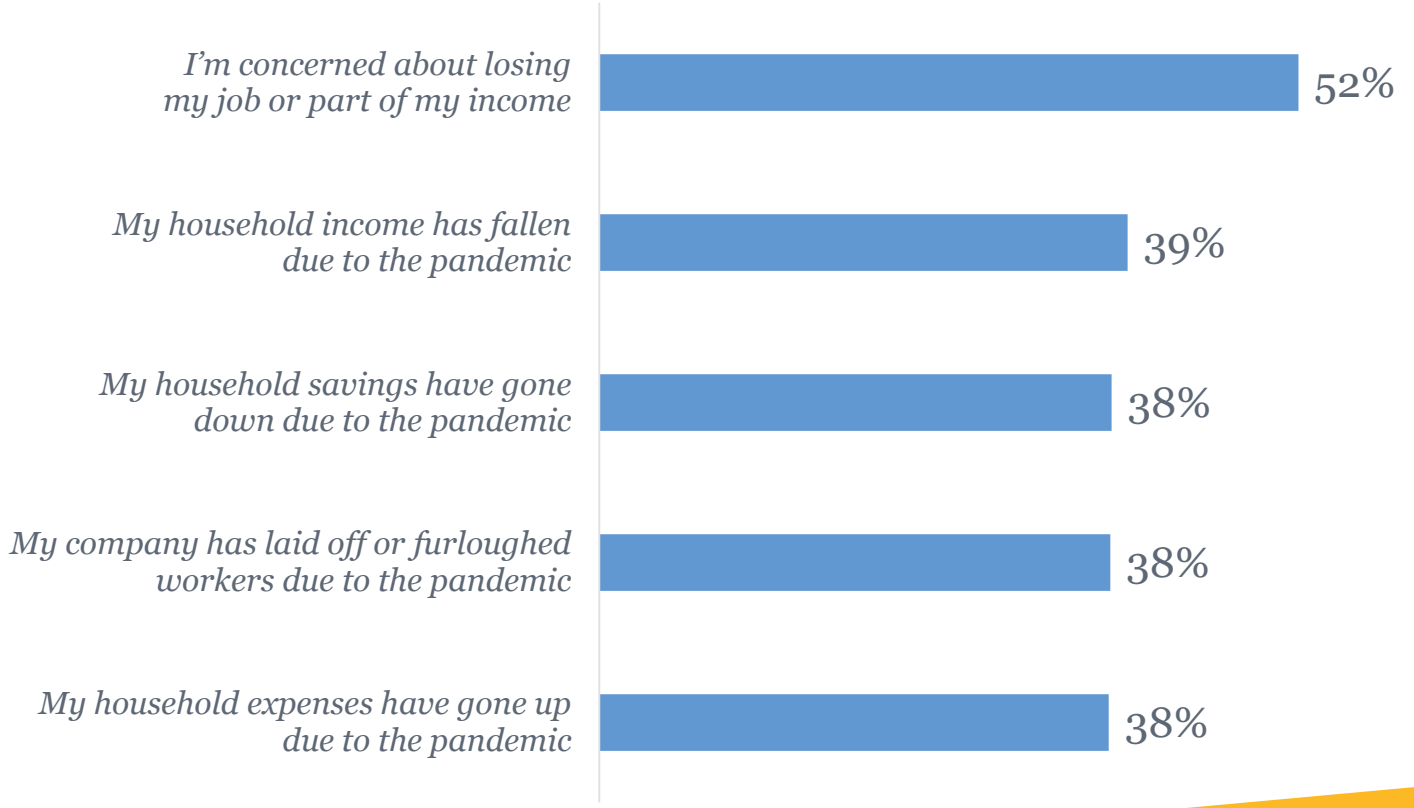
While more remote workers have children living at home than are caring for seniors or adults with disabilities, it's important to consider the needs of both. Past research has shown the strain on those caring for older loved ones often is compounded by the feeling that colleagues and employers are less understanding about taking time off to care for a parent than for a child.

Amy Bollinger
SVP & Partner
Reputation Management

REMOTE WORKERS HAVE NOT BEEN WHOLLY PROTECTED FROM THE FINANCIAL FALLOUT OF THE PANDEMIC

Approximately 2-in-5 remote workers have seen their household income fall, and half are afraid of losing their job or income

Q: Which of the following apply to you?



It's important to remember that while those who can work remotely are fortunate to be able to do so, that doesn't mean the pandemic hasn't touched them financially. Even some salaried laptop jockeys have taken pay cuts, their spouses and partners may have lost jobs or income, they may have new expenses to cover, and of course they're facing the stress of uncertainty like everyone else is.

Ryan Tandler
Research Director
TRUE Global Intelligence

FLEISHMANHILLARD

IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DISENTANGLE THE IMPACT THE TRANSITION TO REMOTE WORK HAS HAD ON PRODUCTIVITY IN THIS BUSINESS AND SOCIAL CLIMATE.

MOST CONTINUE TO BE AS BUSY AND PRODUCTIVE AS BEFORE, THOUGH MANY ARE NOT.

This drop in productivity is tied in part to the company's business activity as well as the switch to remote work.

	Total	Prior fulltime remote	Prior hybrid remote	New to remote	Remote-capable job	Not previously remote-capable job
Busier or the same as before	56%	57%	61%	52%	66%	49%
Not as busy now	44%	43%	39%	48%	34%	51%
More productive or the same as before	60%	63%	66%	54%	69%	53%
Less productive now	40%	**37%**	**34%**	**46%**	**31%**	**47%**

	Company revenue is up	Company revenue is same	Company revenue is down
Busier or the same as before	69%	60%	52%
Not as busy now	31%	40%	48%
More productive or the same as before	69%	70%	55%
Less productive now	**31%**	**30%**	**45%**

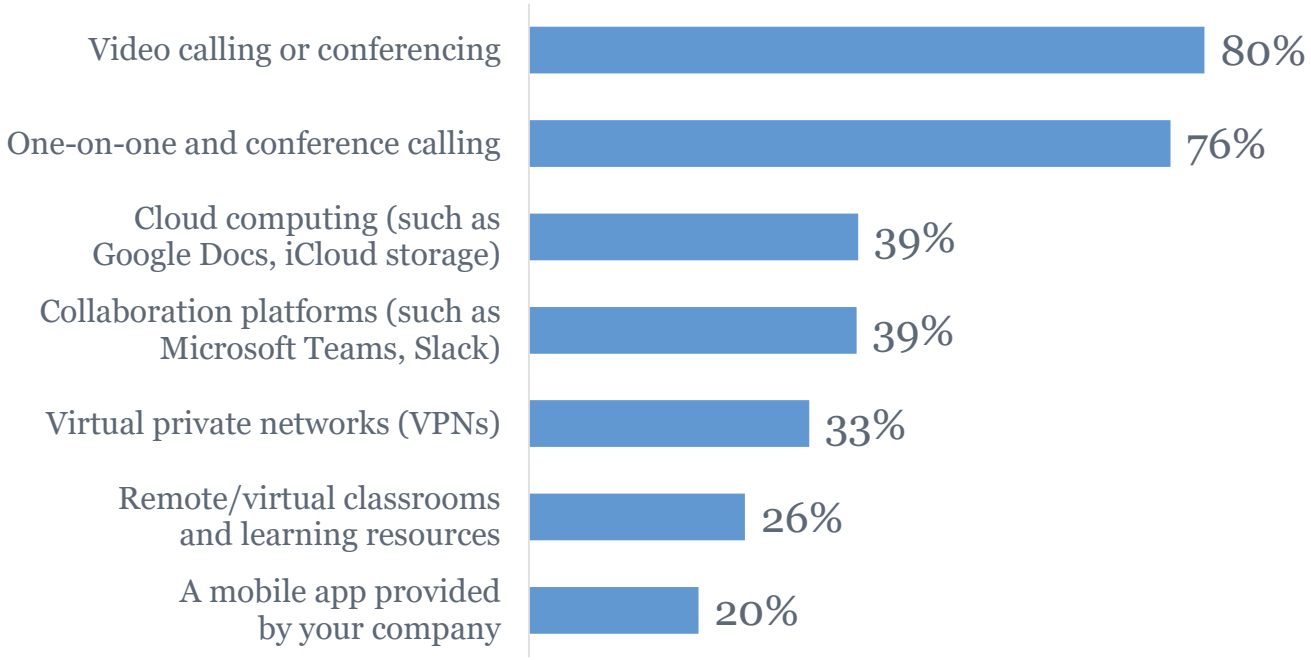
Q: Compared to before the pandemic, are you...?
Q: Compared to before the pandemic, have you been a...?

VIDEO CONFERENCING AND PHONE CALLS HAVE BEEN DOMINANT TECHNOLOGIES DURING THIS PERIOD, WITH CLOUD AND COLLABORATION PLATFORMS WELL BEHIND.

Q: Which of the following technologies have you been using during the pandemic?

Technologies Remote Workers Have Been Using During the Pandemic

% selecting

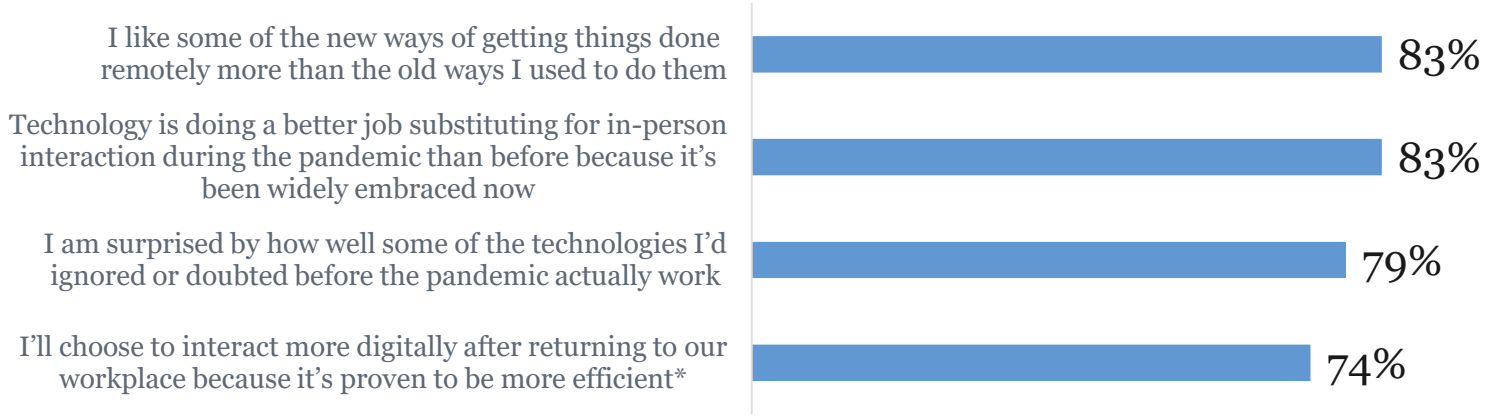


Prior hybrid remote workers are tech-centric users, most likely to use any given technology, while prior full-timers are least likely with one exception – company-provided mobile apps.

Usage of online platforms (cloud and collaboration) falls off with age, from a high of 60% among workers 18-44 to a low of 47% among workers 55+ (54% among 45- to 54-year-olds).

MOST NOW PREFER SOME OF THE APPROACHES THEY'VE DEVELOPED TO WORK REMOTELY AND WILL CONTINUE THEM.

The effectiveness of some technology has surprised most workers



Part of the reason remote work is viewed so favorably is because of how widely embraced it now is at virtually every level of organizations. When everyone does it, processes and cultures form to make it work. That formation was accelerated, and holdouts who may have been barriers were forced to adapt.

- Paul Vosloo
SVP & Senior Partner
Talent + Transformation

	Total	18-29	30-44	45-54	55+
I like some of the new ways better	83%	78%	88%	86%	77%
Technology is doing a better job because it's been widely embraced now	83%	82%	85%	85%	81%
I am surprised by how well some of the technologies actually work	79%	79%	81%	83%	70%
I'll choose to interact more digitally after returning to our workplace because it's proven to be more efficient	74%	72%	79%	76%	68%

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?
**Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.*

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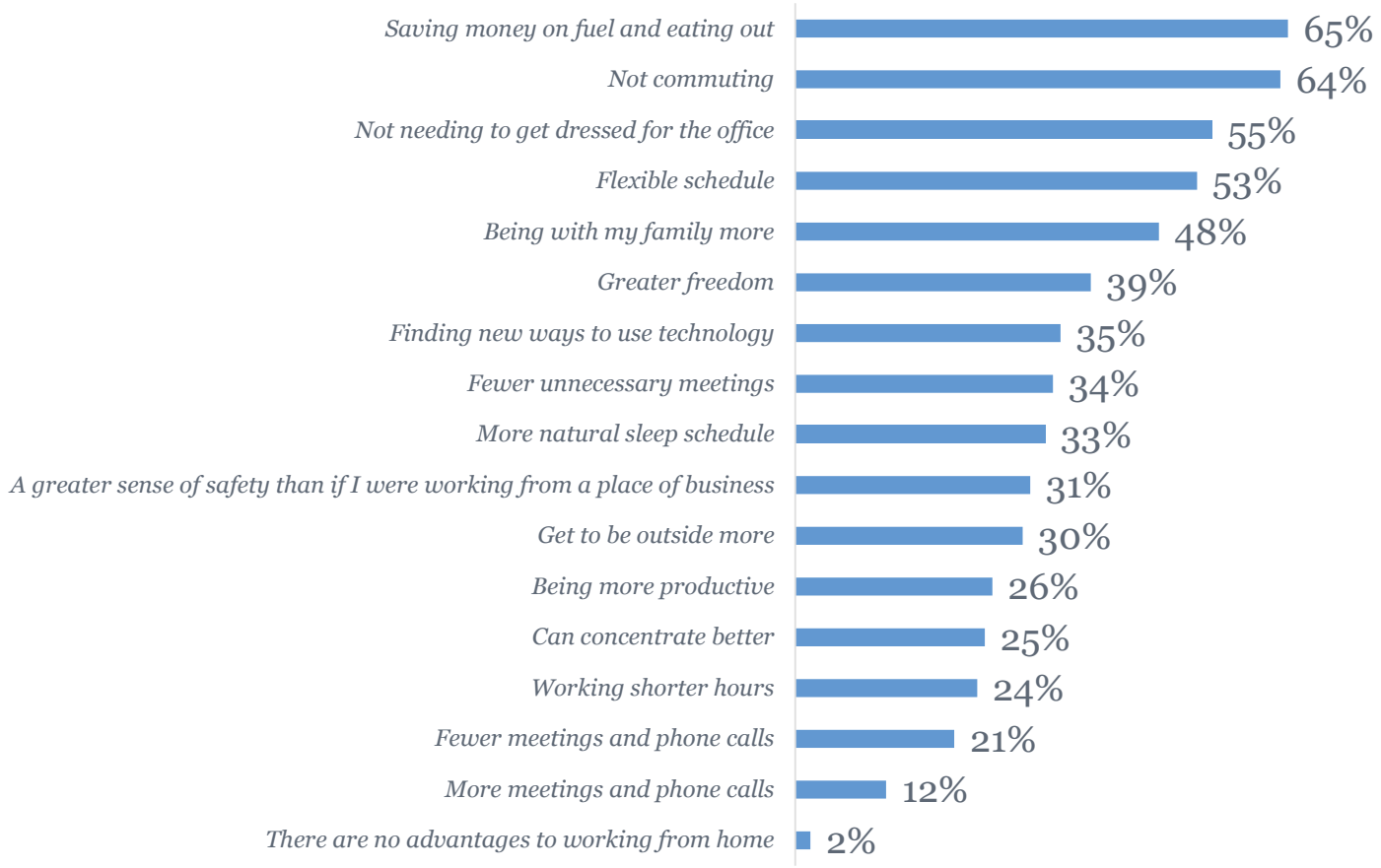
REMOTE WORK PRESENTS ADVANTAGES IN COMMUNICATIONS AND WORK/LIFE BALANCE

THE ADVANTAGES OF REMOTE WORK ACCUMULATE FOR THE WHOLE PERSON.

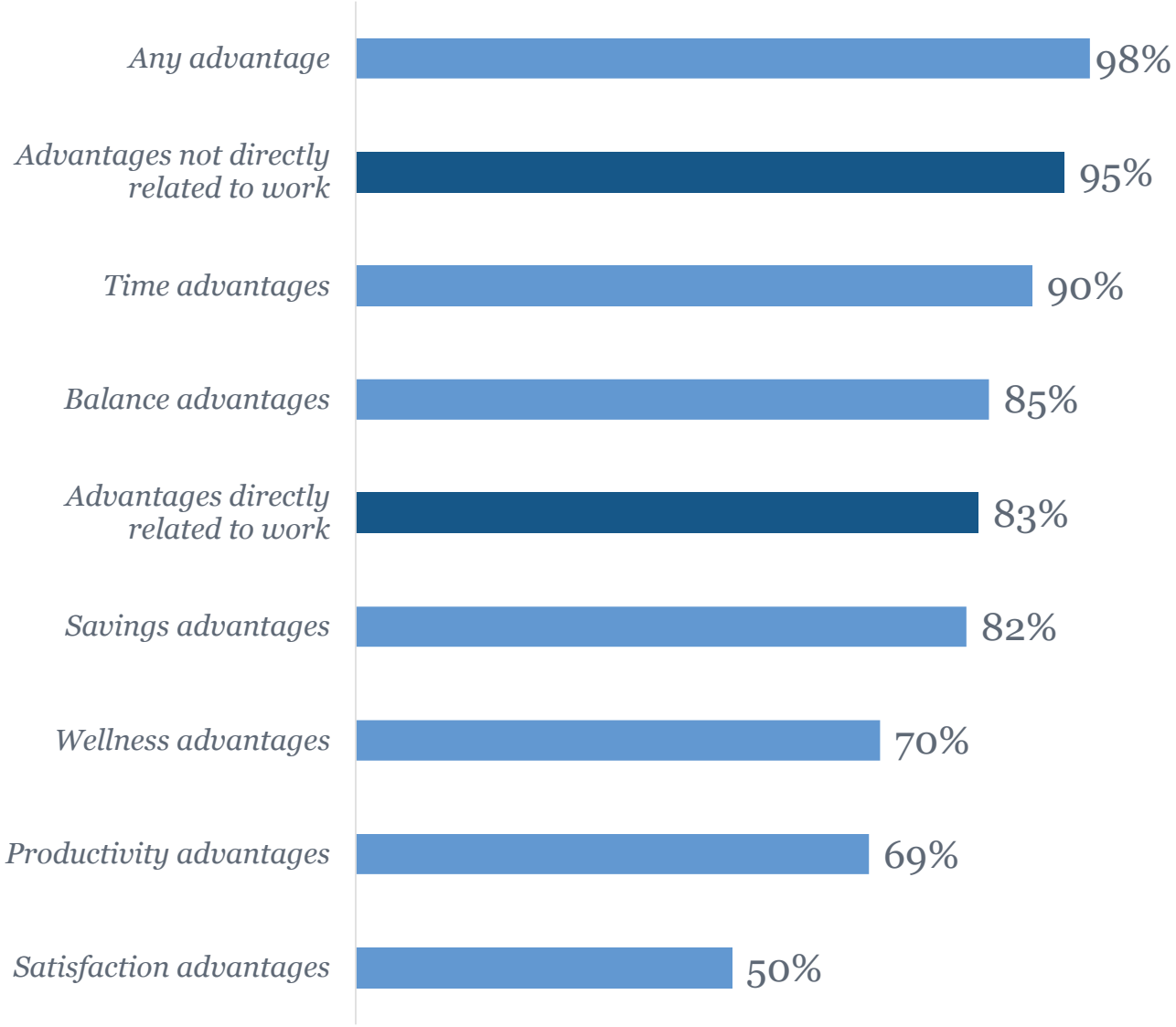
Advantages of Working Remotely
% selecting item



Which translates to…

TIME
PRODUCTIVITY
SATISFACTION
SAVINGS
BALANCE
WELLNESS

Q: Thinking about work specifically, which of the following advantages of working remotely have you experienced?



THESE ADVANTAGES OVERLAP IN DIFFERENT WAYS, RELATING DIRECTLY TO THE JOB AS WELL AS TO PEOPLE'S PERSONAL LIVES.

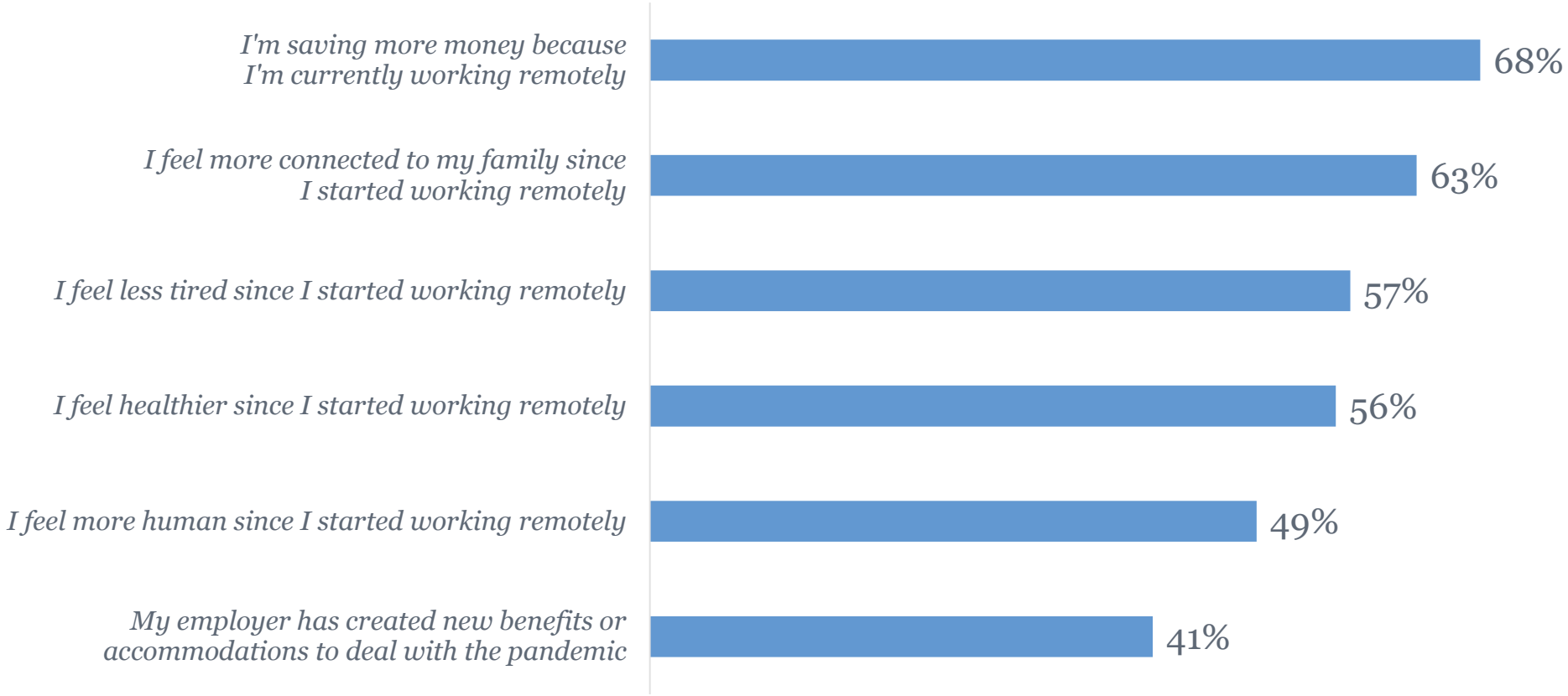
Advantages of Working Remotely
Net categories based on selections

Q: Thinking about work specifically, which of the following advantages of working remotely have you experienced?

These net categories are not mutually exclusive.

MANY ARE FEELING PHYSICALLY BETTER SINCE MAKING THE SHIFT TO REMOTE WORK.

Remote work is saving people money and time, and they feel healthier and less tired

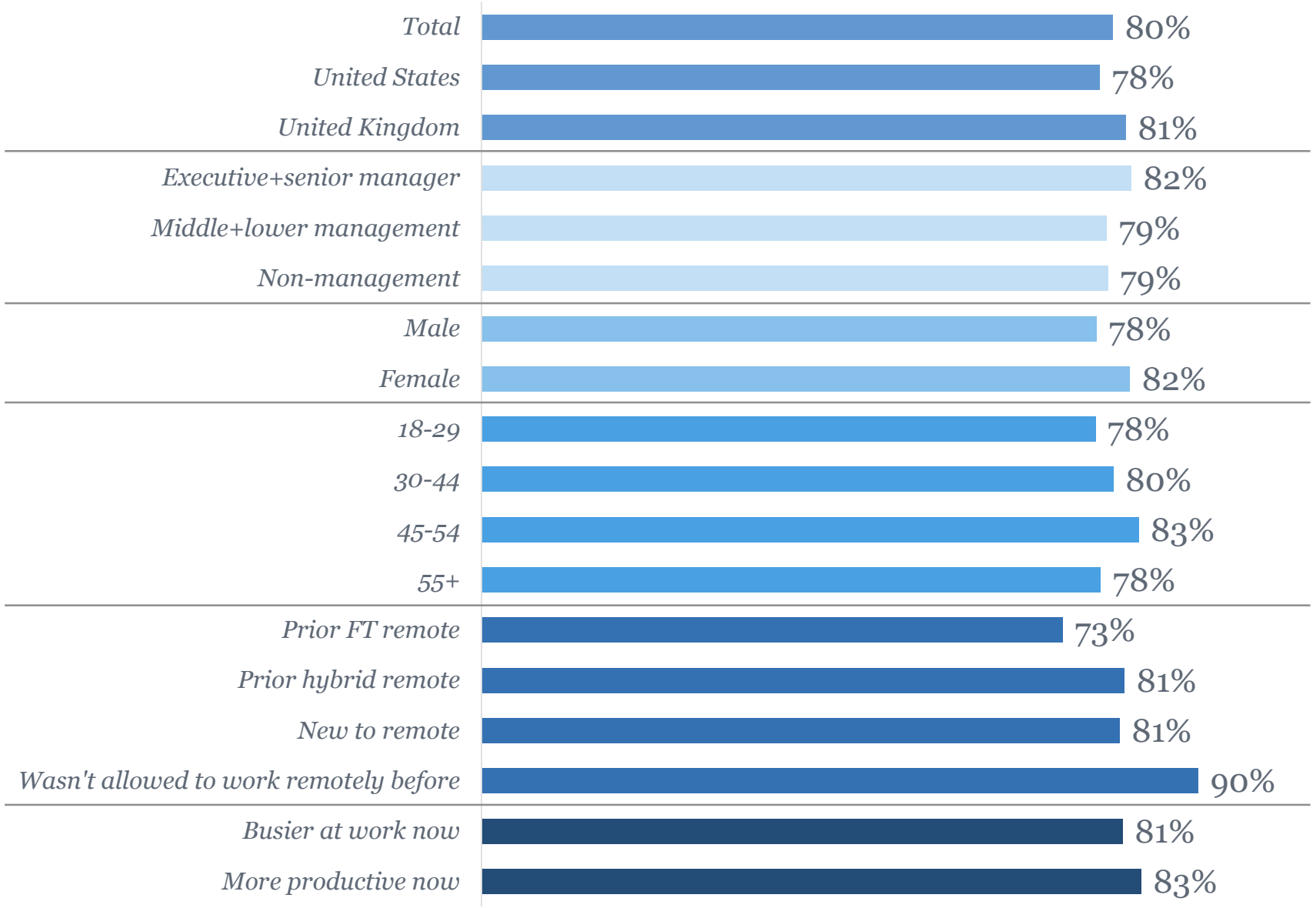


Q: Which of the following apply to you?

THIS SENSE OF FEELING BETTER SINCE THEY BEGAN REMOTE WORK IS CONSISTENT ACROSS AGES, PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH REMOTE WORK, AND SENIORITY.

% who feel more connected to family, healthier, less tired, or more human since beginning remote work

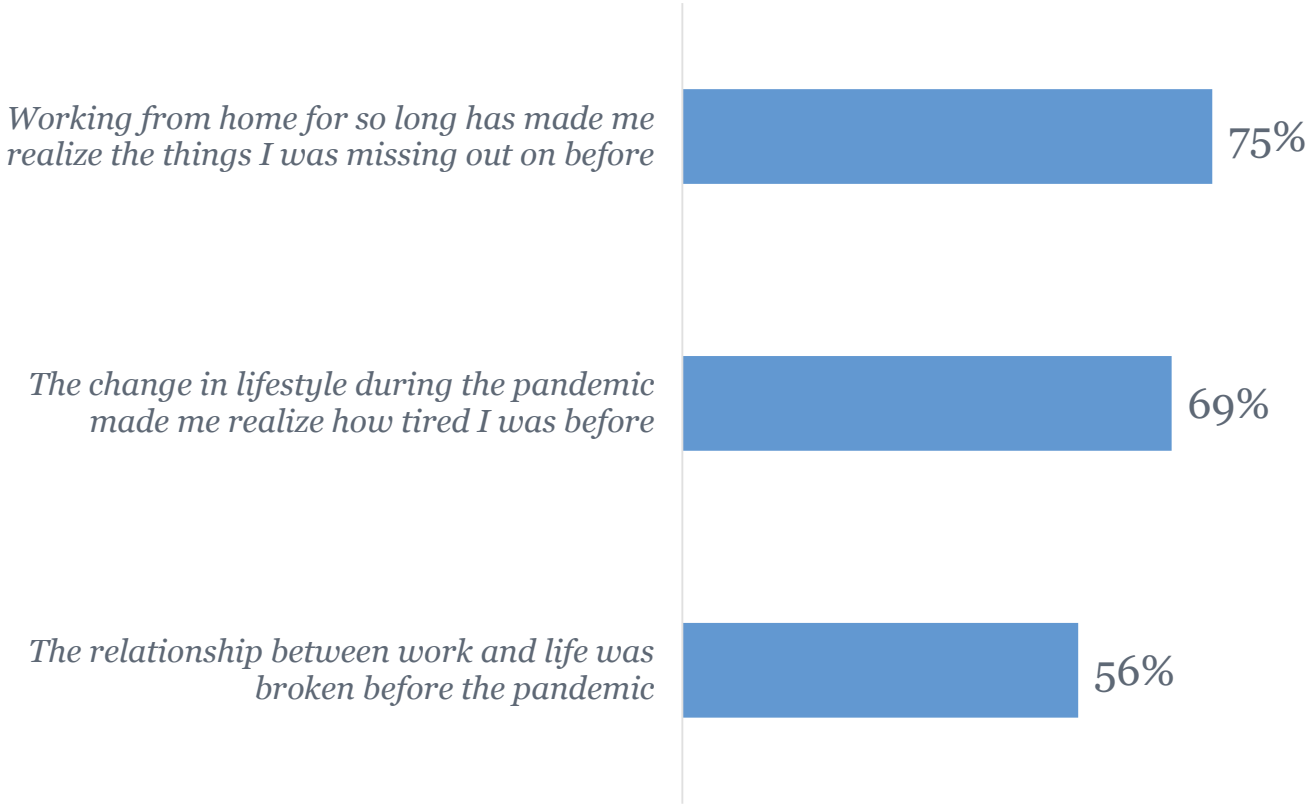
Q: Which of the following apply to you?



THE SHIFT TO REMOTE WORK, FOR MANY WORKERS, HAS HIGHLIGHTED THE WAYS IN WHICH THE OLD NORMAL DIDN'T WORK FOR THEM.

Remote workers feel they were missing out on things before and were tired; half feel the work/life relationship was broken.

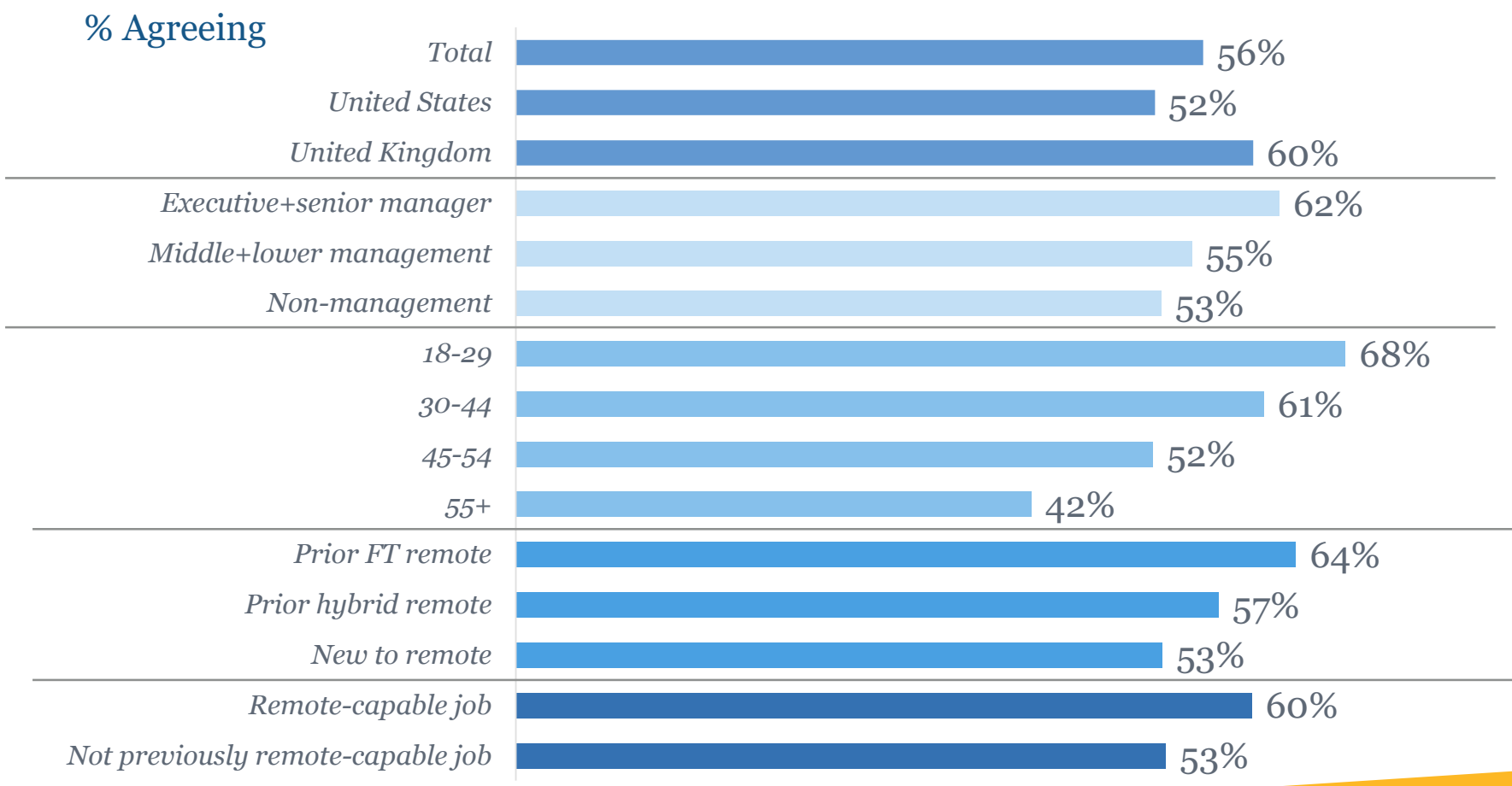
Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?



EXECUTIVES AND SENIOR MANAGERS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN NON-MANAGERS TO BELIEVE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK AND LIFE WAS BROKEN BEFORE THE PANDEMIC.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

The relationship between work and life was broken before the pandemic



What's striking are the differences we're not seeing. This is not a matter of management on one side and frontline workers on the other.

If anything, the pre-pandemic normal worked even less well for executives and senior managers.

Ryan Tandler
Research Director
TRUE Global Intelligence

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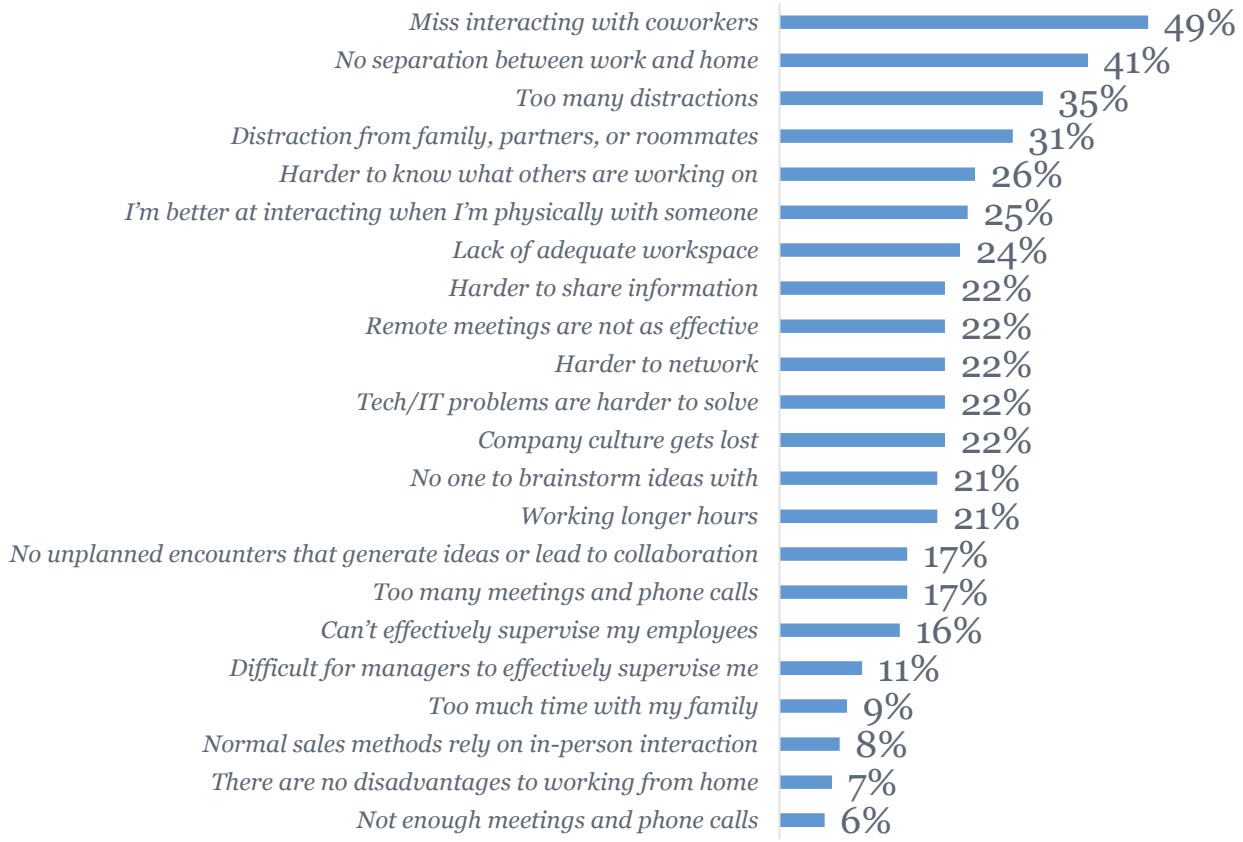
REMOTE WORK ALSO PRESENTS CHALLENGESS IN COMMUNICATIONS AND WORK/LIFE BALANCE

MANY REMOTE WORKERS MISS INTERACTING WITH THEIR COLLEAGUES AND ARE FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO SEPARATE WORK AND HOME.

Disadvantages of Working Remotely
% selecting item



Which translates to…

COMMUNICATION

BALANCE

WORKSPACE

MEETINGS

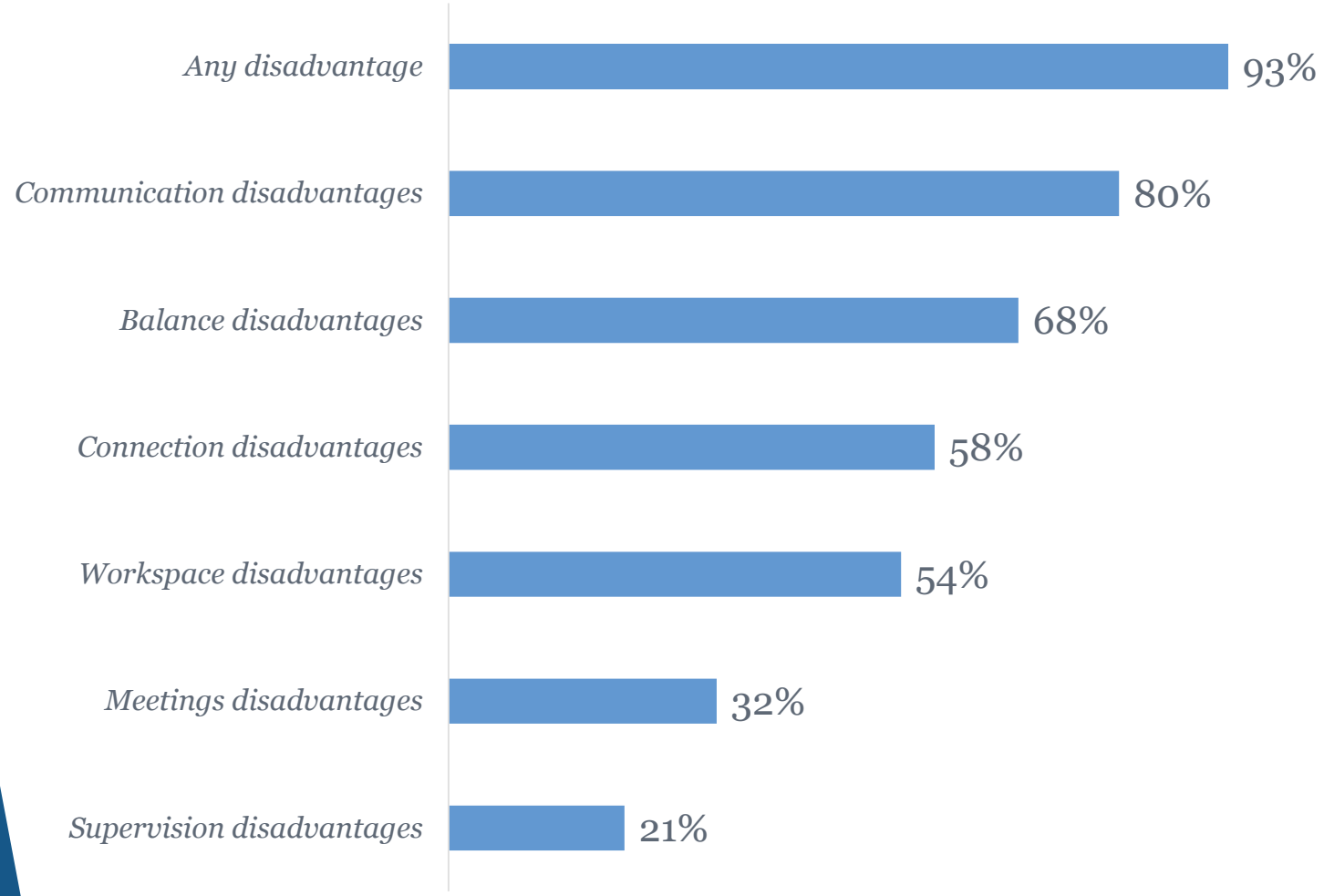
CONNECTION

SUPERVISION

Q: Thinking about work specifically, which of the following disadvantages of working remotely have you experienced?

THE MAIN DISADVANTAGES OF REMOTE WORK RELATE TO COMMUNICATION AND BALANCE.

Disadvantages of Working Remotely
Net categories based on selections



Q: Thinking about work specifically, which of the following disadvantages of working remotely have you experienced?

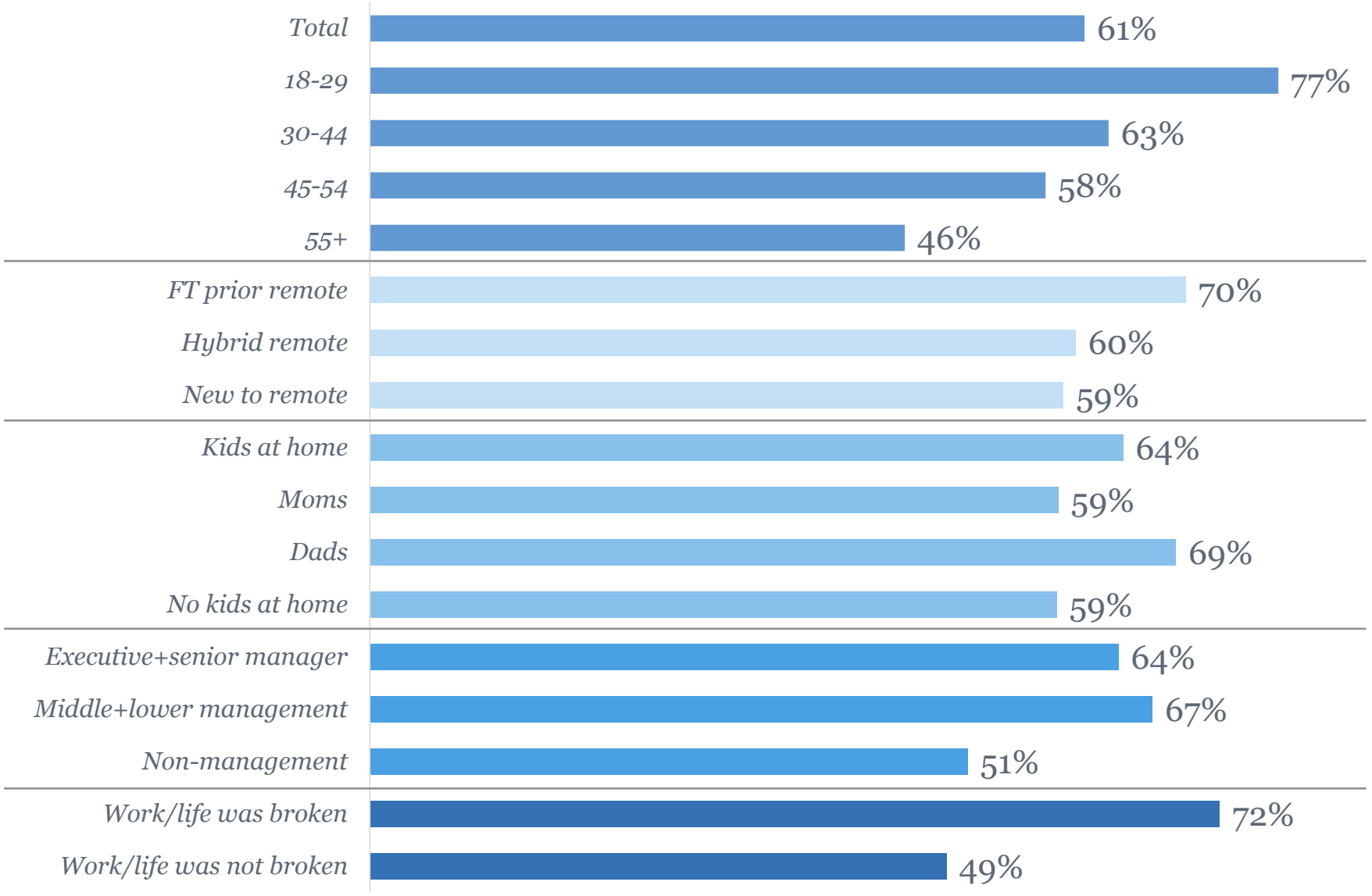
These net categories are not mutually exclusive.

WORKERS ARE WARY OF REMOTE WORK LEADING TO MORE INTENSIVE DEMANDS ON THEIR PERSONAL TIME, ESPECIALLY YOUNGER WORKERS AND MANAGERS

% Agreeing with

As working remotely continues, I'm concerned I'll be expected to be even more reachable outside normal business hours than before the pandemic

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?



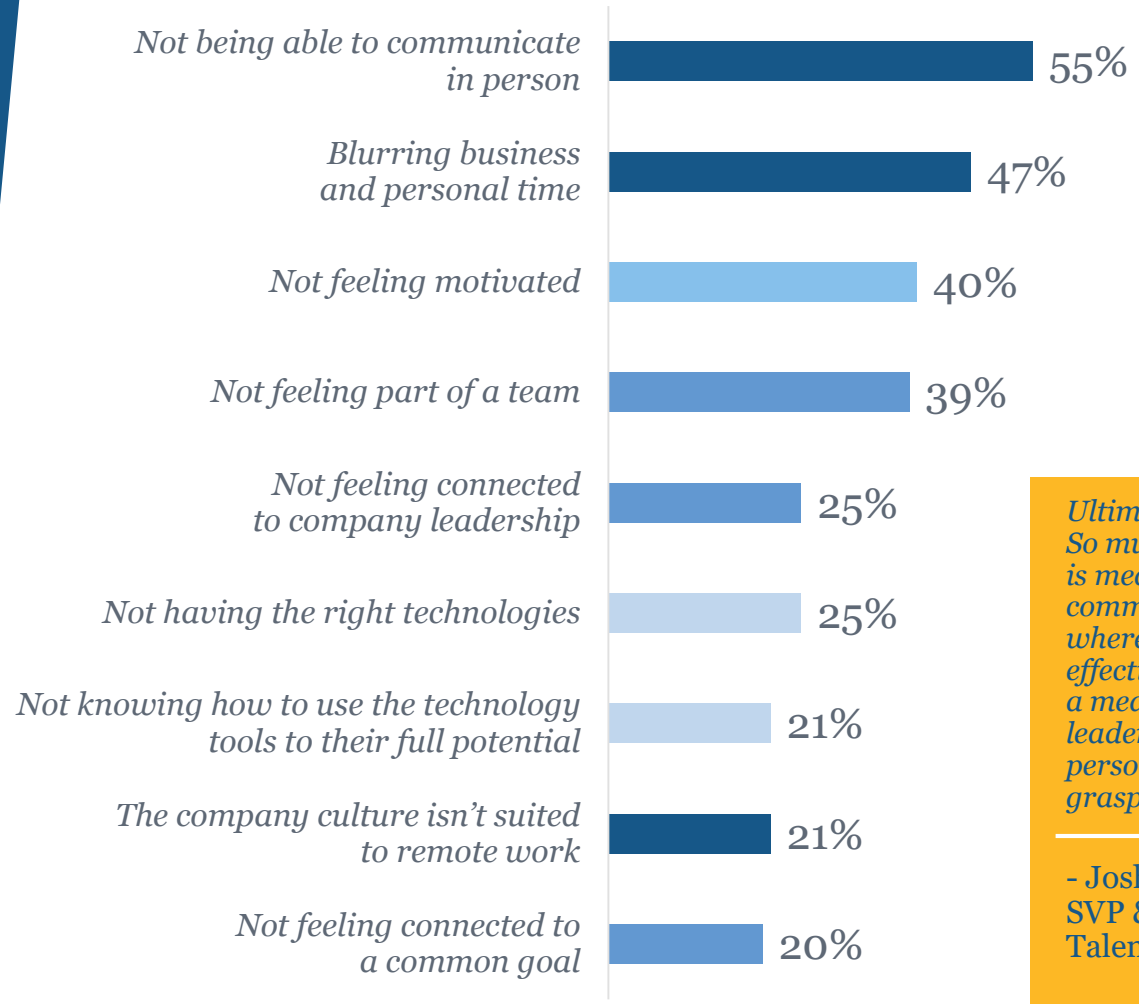
THE LACK OF IN-PERSON COMMUNICATION IS A TOP CHALLENGE FOR REMOTE WORKERS, DESPITE PROLIFIC TECHNOLOGY USE.

Q: Which of the following are your THREE biggest challenges in working remotely?

Q: [IF NOT FEELING MOTIVATED IS A CHALLENGE] Why is feeling motivated a challenge?

Biggest Challenges to Working Remotely

% selecting item



Combined, 65% cite challenges in feeling connected to the workplace, and 40% cite challenges in technology.

A narrow majority (55%) of those who find motivation a challenge blame working remotely, but 26% blame the pandemic itself (16% blame them equally).

Ultimately, these challenges are interconnected. So much of the technology enabling remote work is meant to substitute for in-person communication, but we know this is one area where there is just no substitution that's as effective. The challenge, then, is how to maintain a meaningful connection among colleagues, with leadership and to the company culture if true in-person interaction remains limited or out of grasp.

- Josh Rogers
SVP & Partner
Talent + Transformation

CONNECTION AND TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES ARE NOT UNIQUE TO THOSE NEW TO FULLTIME REMOTE WORK.

	Total	Prior fulltime remote	Prior hybrid remote	New to remote
Connection challenges (combined)	**65%**	**70%**	**67%**	**62%**
Not feeling connected to a common goal	20%	27%	18%	19%
Not feeling part of a team	39%	31%	42%	39%
Not feeling connected to company leadership	25%	33%	25%	22%
Not being able to communicate in person	**55%**	**43%**	**59%**	**56%**
Blurring business and personal time	**47%**	**42%**	**46%**	**48%**
Not feeling motivated	**40%**	**41%**	**38%**	**41%**
Technology challenges (combined)	**40%**	**45%**	**40%**	**38%**
Not having the right technologies	25%	23%	24%	25%
Not knowing how to use the technology tools to their full potential	21%	27%	22%	19%
The company culture isn't suited to remote work	**21%**	**24%**	**18%**	**24%**

Q: Which of the following are your THREE biggest challenges in working remotely?

REMOTE WORKERS, ESPECIALLY MANAGERS, REPORT NEEDING TOOLS AND TRAINING TO HELP THEM OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES OF NOT SOCIALIZING IN-PERSON.

During the pandemic, technology has done a brilliant job of helping meet our primal – and business – need to communicate. That said, ideas and relationships so often solidify through organic, unplanned interactions - open-office chats, chance conversations at conferences, side discussions during a meeting. It's for this reason that moving forward, any tech-based solve needs to be accompanied by training to make it as effective as possible, and inherently focused on our need for creativity and for human interaction.

- Sophie Scott
Global Managing Director
Technology

How helpful would each of the following be?

% selecting "Somewhat" or "Very helpful" or "Is something I must have"

Showing "Would be very helpful" + "Is something I must have"	18-29	30-44	45-54	55+	Execs & Sr. managers	Middle & Lower Management	Non-Management
New tools or capabilities that do a better job replicating the unplanned workplace encounters that result in new ideas and cooperation	56%	59%	63%	45%	**58%**	**59%**	**52%**
Training on how to interact with customers, clients, and prospects remotely	48%	48%	52%	43%	**51%**	**50%**	**40%**

Q: Which of the following would be helpful to you moving forward?

FLEISHMANHILLARD

ACCORDING TO REMOTE WORKERS, PLANS TO RETURN TO THE PHYSICAL WORKSPACE ARE STILL RARE AND INCOMPLETE

IT'S CLEAR IN THEIR OWN WORDS THAT WORKERS HAVE STRONG EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR EMPLOYERS.

Q: What do you want your employer to know about what you are experiencing, thinking, and feeling right now as you consider the pandemic, yourself, your family, and your job?

Select responses.

"I am concerned that going back to work too soon will put me at risk of coming into to contact with Covid-19 and becoming ill. I need to know plans that are in place to protect workers, our rights with regards to opting out of returning to work too soon and what will happen if we do become ill or a second lockdown occurs. Will we be paid in full etc. My biggest concern is the health of my family but also my finances, and I need to feel secure in both to be able to do my job correctly. I have felt less stressed not being in my place of work and think working patterns should be addressed going forward for a better work life balance."

"I want them to know I will go back to work but there must be social distancing, cleaning must be stepped up and anyone deliberately coughing on others or breaking distancing rules will be sent home and not be allowed back. Health of staff cannot just be ignored."

"To keep communicating and keep us updated with what's happening going forward and give us some indication of what is being put in place for a return to work"

"I want to know that when I return to work that the number one priority will be staff safety."

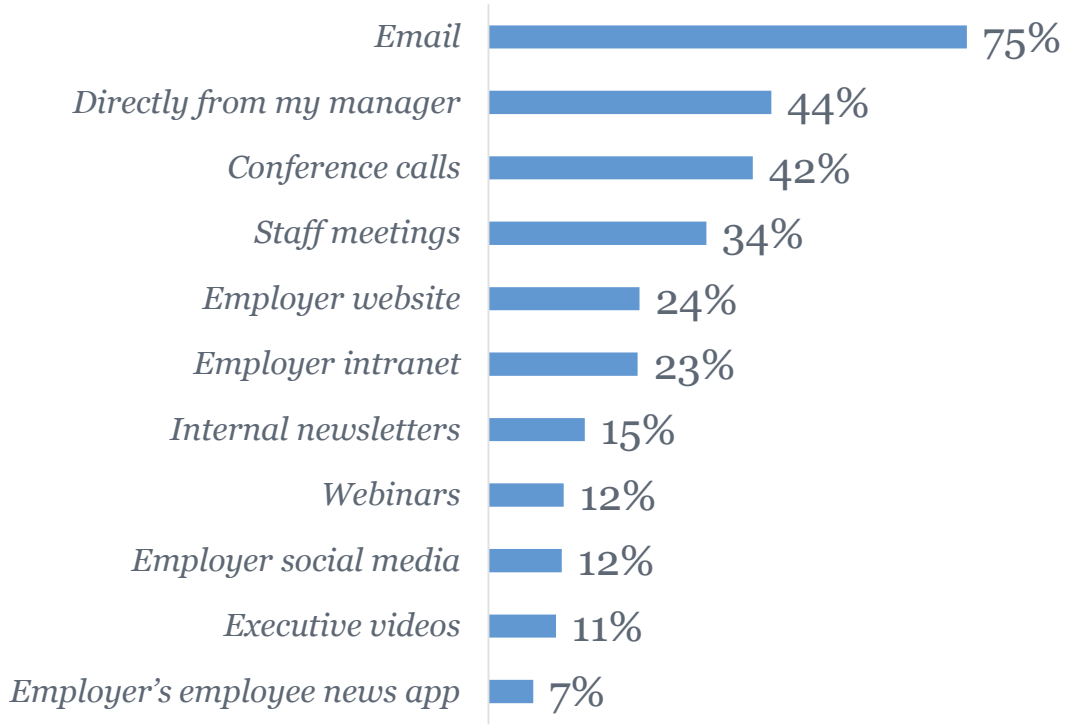
INFORMATION ON WHAT COMPANIES ARE DOING TO ENSURE THEIR SAFETY WOULD BE HELPFUL OR IS A MUST-HAVE FOR REMOTE WORKERS, AND THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE REMAIN THE MOST "LOW-TECH."

The best way to communicate with employees is, by far, email.

Q: Which of the following are the three most effective ways for your company to communicate with you about what's going on in the company?

92% REPORT "REGULAR, TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION ON HOW THE COMPANY IS ENSURING OUR SAFETY AND ANY INFORMATION I NEED TO MANAGE MY HEALTH" IS SOMETHING THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL OR IS A MUST-HAVE.

Three most effective ways for companies to communicate

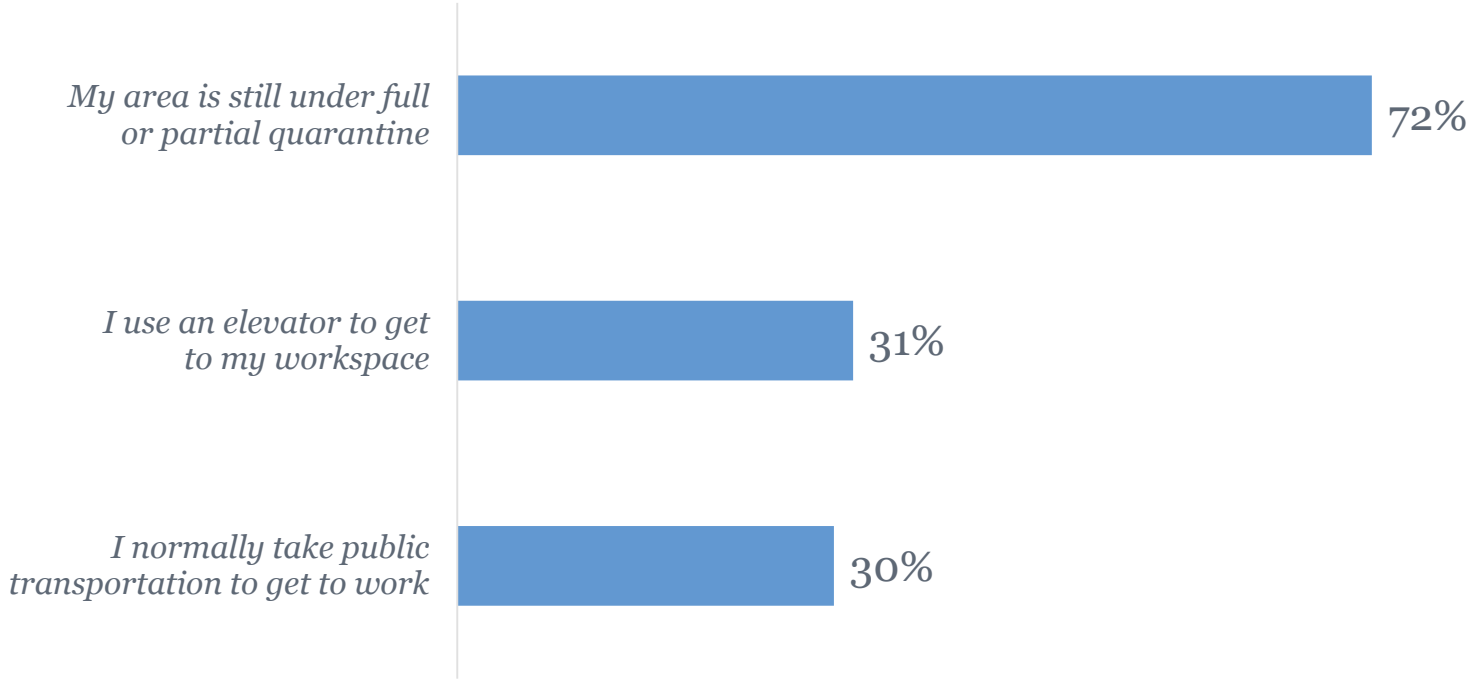


We don't need to reinvent the wheel to talk to our employees, or always use the most high-tech solution to do so: it all starts with empathetic, authentic, two-way conversation. Find out where your employee base gets their news about the business, what their preferences for communication are, and how they want to hear from you. That way, they'll be much more open and receptive to what you have to tell them.

- Sophie Scott
Global Managing Director, Technology

BUSINESSES MUST ACCOUNT FOR THE LOCAL CONDITIONS THEIR WORKERS FACE.

Most workers are still facing quarantines, and many need public transit to get to their workplace



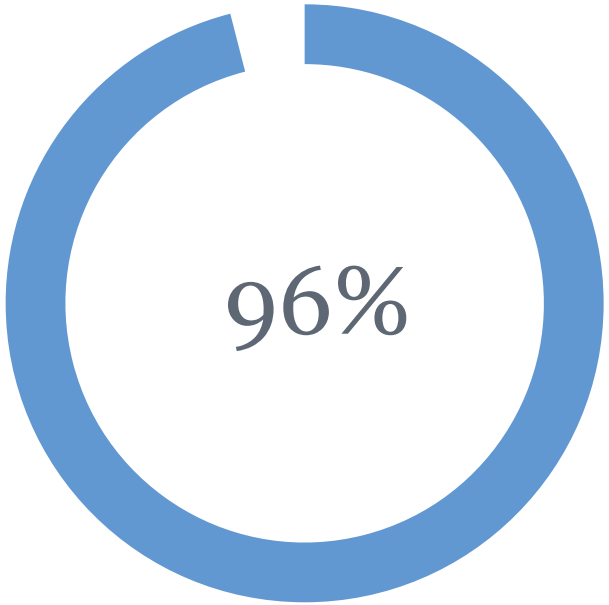
	U.S.	U.K.
My area is still under full or partial quarantine	77%	66%
I normally take public transportation to get to work	20%	40%

Q: Which of the following apply to you?

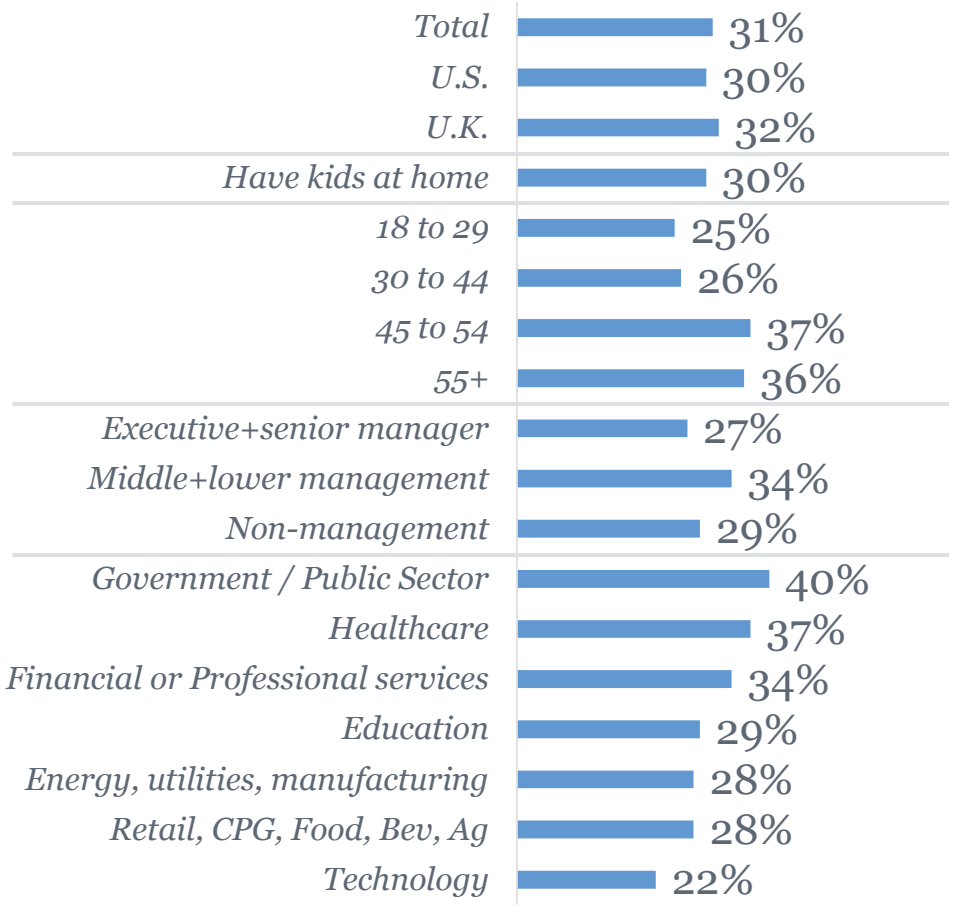
THE NEED FOR A DETAILED PLAN TO RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE IS UNIVERSAL, BUT FOR MANY, IT'S NOT A MUST-HAVE YET

How helpful would a detailed plan to return to the workplace be?

% selecting "Somewhat" or "Very helpful" or "Is something I must have"



% describing as "Is something I must have"

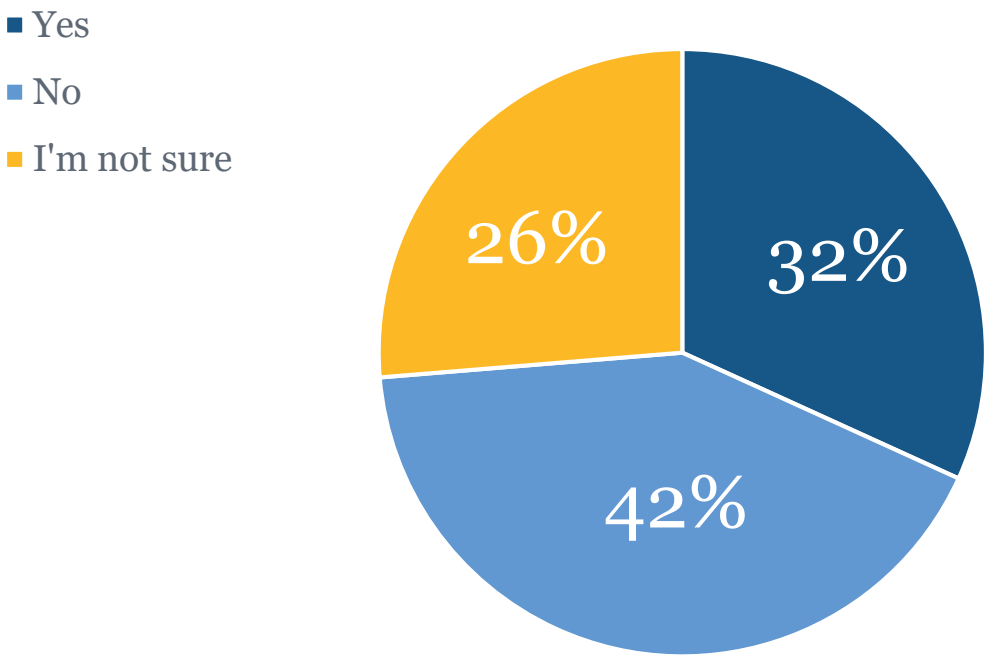


Q: Which of the following would be helpful to you moving forward?

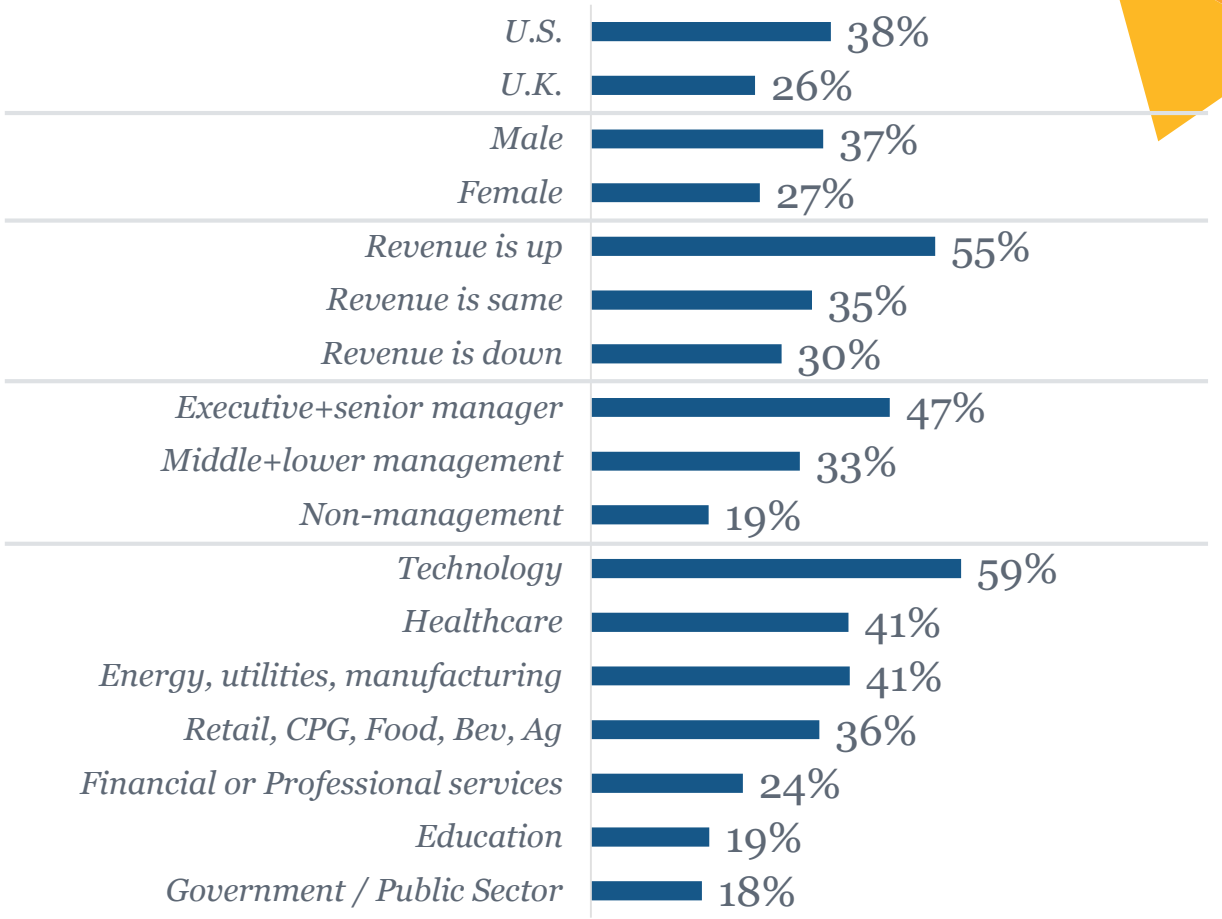
Not asked of prior fulltime remote workers.

JUST 32% OF REMOTE WORKERS REPORT THEIR COMPANY HAS A PLAN TO RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE

Does your company have a return-to-work plan in place?



% reporting company has a return-to-work plan in place



Q: Does your company have a return to work plan in place?

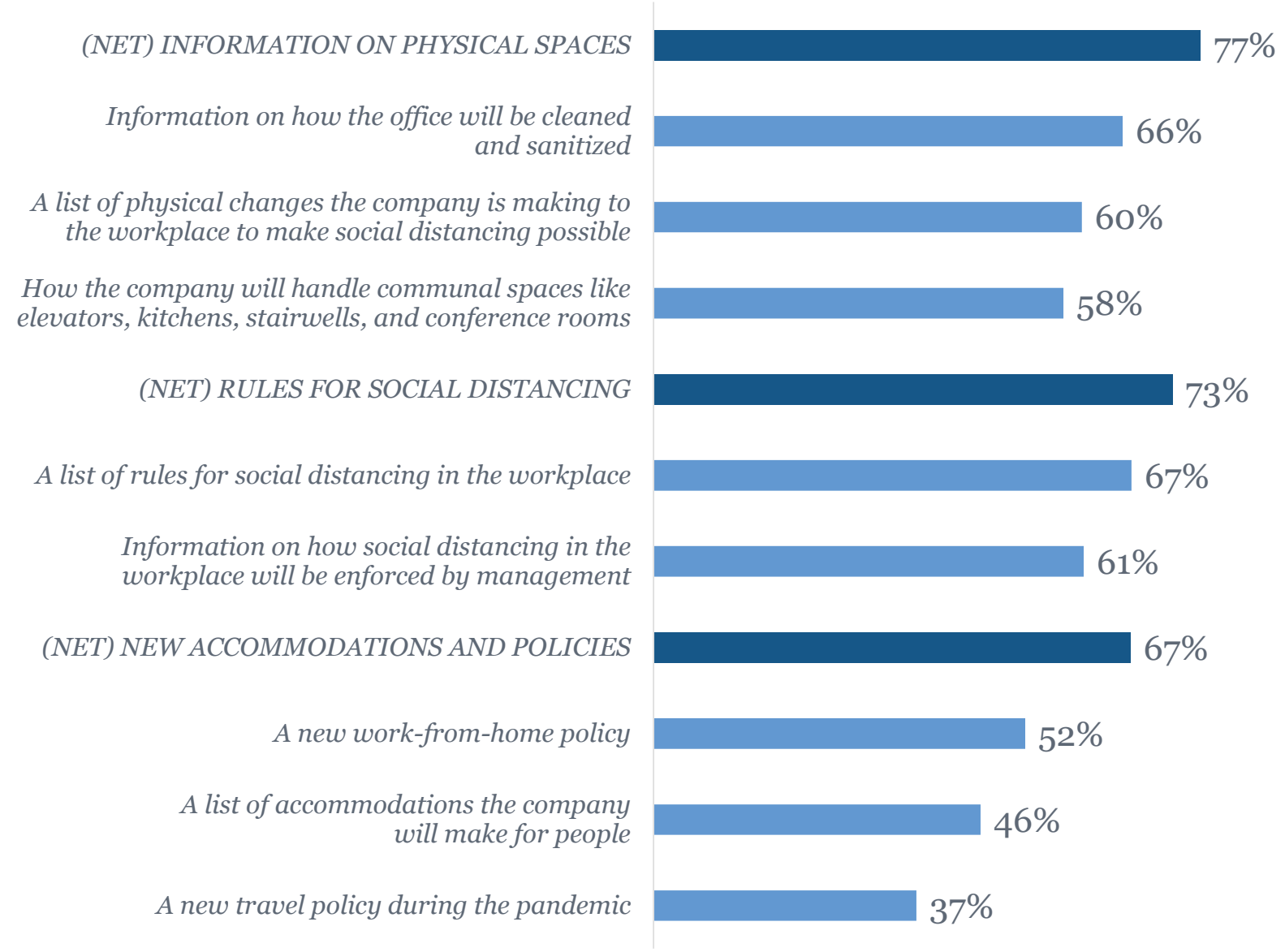
REMOTE WORKERS BELIEVE THEIR EMPLOYERS' RETURN-TO-WORK PLANS SHOULD INCLUDE WHAT THEIR EMPLOYERS WILL DO TO MAKE PHYSICAL SPACES SAFER AND IMPLEMENT SOCIAL DISTANCING.

Q: Thinking about your company's plan to return to the workplace, please indicate what elements that plan should have.

Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.

Employer's plan to return to the workplace should include…

% selecting



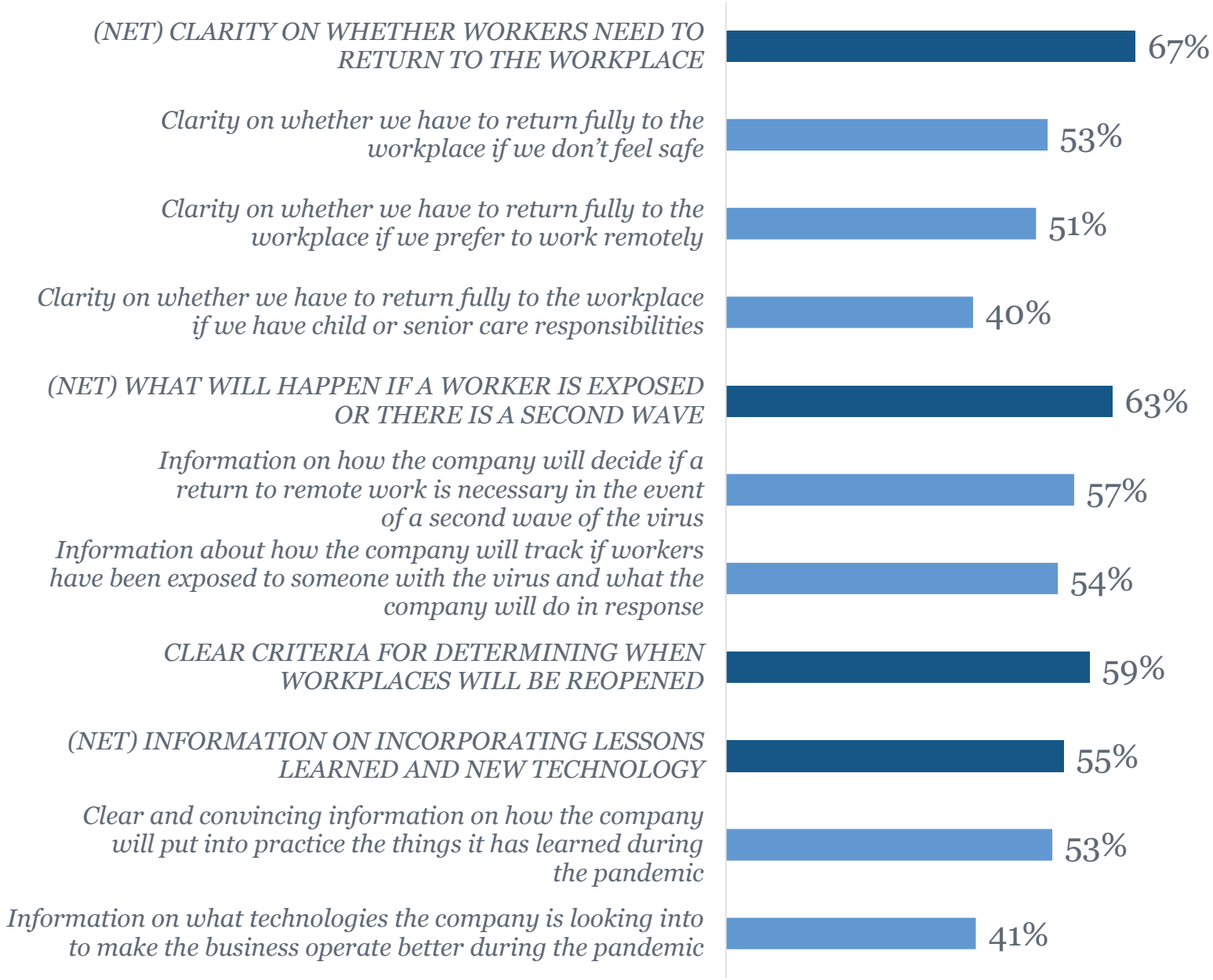
TWO-THIRDS WANT CLARITY NOT JUST ON HOW RETURN-TO-WORK WILL BE MANAGED BUT WHETHER THEY'LL BE REQUIRED TO RETURN TO THEIR NORMAL WORKSPACE.

Q: Thinking about your company's plan to return to the workplace, please indicate what elements that plan should have.

Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.

Employer's plan to return to the workplace should include…

% selecting



RELATIVE TO WHAT WORKERS SAY RETURN-TO-WORK PLANS SHOULD INCLUDE, THERE ARE SUBSTANTIAL GAPS IN EMPLOYERS' PLANS AS WORKERS UNDERSTAND THEM.

	What Plans SHOULD Have	What Employer's Plan CURRENTLY Has*
(NET) Information on physical spaces	77%	69%
(NET) Rules for social distancing	**73%**	**54%**
(NET) New accommodations or policies	67%	60%
(NET) Clarity on whether workers need to return to the workplace	67%	58%
(NET) What will happen if a worker is exposed or there is a second wave	**63%**	**42%**
Clear criteria for determining when workplaces will be reopened	59%	52%
(NET) Information on incorporating lessons learned and new technology	**55%**	**32%**

**Asked of workers who report their employer has a plan*

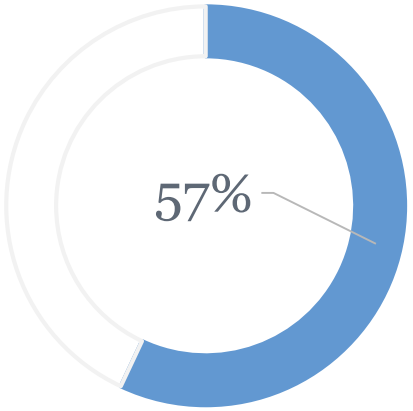
Q: Thinking about your company's plan to return to the workplace, please indicate what elements that plan should have.

Q: Thinking about your company's plan to return to the workplace, as you currently understand it, please indicate what elements the plan does have.

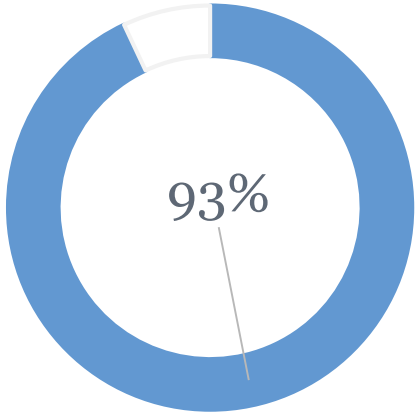
Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.

MANY EMPLOYEES DON'T FEEL THEIR NEEDS HAVE BEEN REPRESENTED IN RTW PLANNING, AND NEARLY ALL WOULD BENEFIT FROM A FORMAL WAY TO GIVE FEEDBACK.

% Agreeing:
As my employer talks about returning to the workplace, I don't feel like what I want and need have been factored in



% saying this would be helpful or is a must have:
A formal way for me to give my employer feedback about what I need and want right now



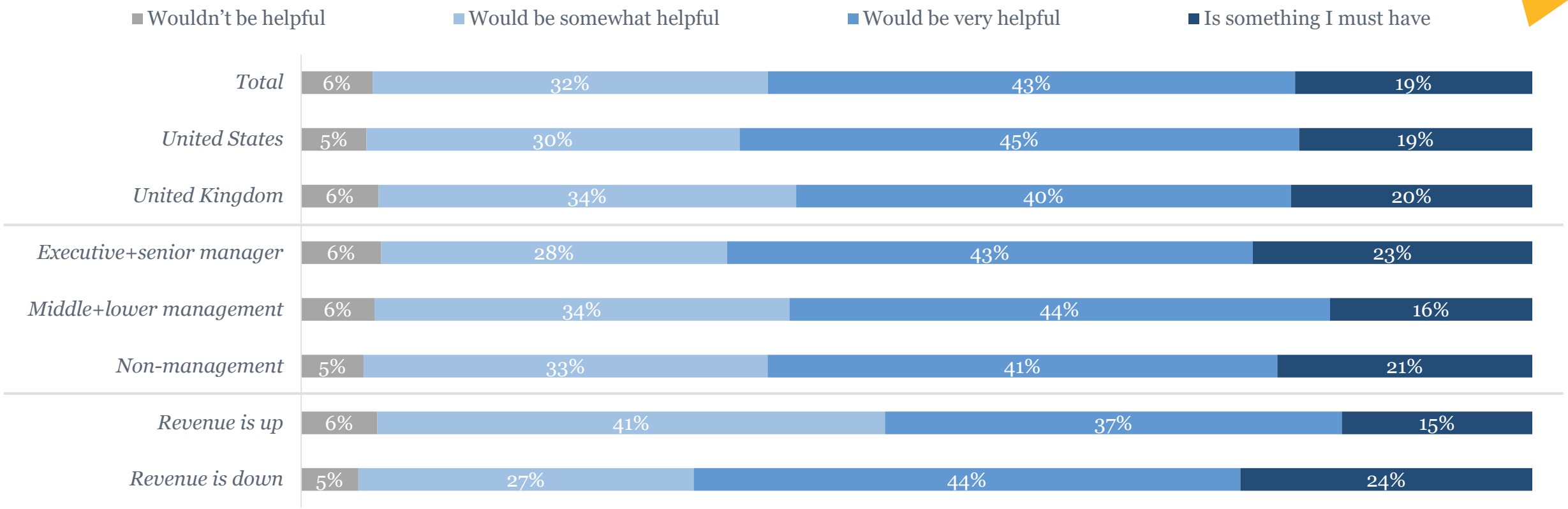
Management reports a stronger need for the ability to give feedback on what they need and want right now.

	18-29	30-44	45-54	55+	Execs & Sr. managers	Middle & Lower Management	Non-Management
***Agree**: As my employer talks about returning to the workplace, I don't feel like what I want and need have been factored in*	67%	61%	51%	46%	**63%**	**60%**	**47%**
*"**Very helpful**" or "**Must have**": A formal way for me to give my employer feedback about what I need and want right now*	52%	58%	60%	45%	**56%**	**58%**	**48%**

Q: Which of the following would be helpful to you moving forward?

FOR MANY WORKERS, THERE'S AN UNDERLYING TRUST ISSUE THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED AS PART OF ANY PLAN TO RETURN TO THE PHYSICAL WORKPLACE.

Something that demonstrates my company can be trusted to follow through on its commitments to employees to put our health first and allowing us to decide what's best for ourselves



Q: Which of the following would be helpful to you moving forward?

FLEISHMANHILLARD

PLANS ASIDE, HOWEVER, MANY REMOTE WORKERS ARE NOT EAGER TO GO BACK TO THEIR WORKPLACES

MANY NEED MORE INFORMATION THAN THEY HAVE.

Q: What do you want your employer to know about what you are experiencing, thinking, and feeling right now as you consider the pandemic, yourself, your family, and your job?

Select responses.

"I want my employer to know that a definitive post-coronavirus plan has to be in place in the incidence of a second wave of infection. A detailed coronavirus remote home plan should be in place, so that that the work continues before the pandemic."

"I'm scared of bringing the virus into my home. I've taken social distancing very seriously to protect my family and I don't want to be put at risk when I'm forced to return to the office."

"I am still very scared of catching the virus plus being very worried about going back to work. Example of using public transport and how clean will the office be! Also we will need hand cleaning stations everywhere in the building plus in the lift! The biggest fear is a second wave, what will happen then!"

"That honesty and transparency are key, we all know things are tough (for ourselves, the economy, the business as a whole). The most important thing we can do is listen to each other and be honest when there are struggles or potential issues - that way we can support each other and be prepared for any future issues."

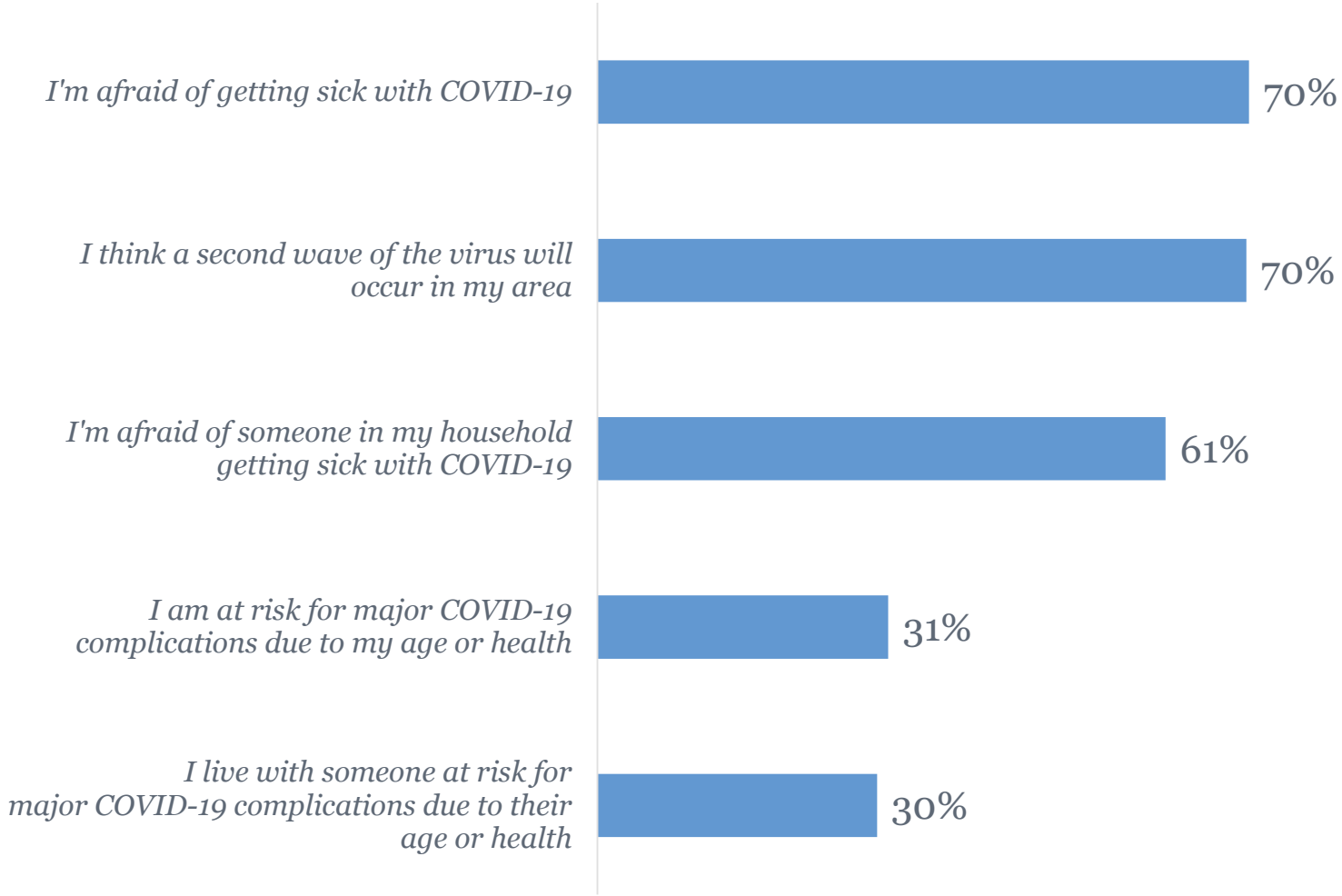
"I think going back too early would put a lot of people at risk, and I'm afraid we may be doing what seems best to us without considering all the people who are at risk."

"Concerns regarding a return to work in so much as social distancing is almost impossible without full PPE - close contact with children is inevitable as part of my job and I feel incredibly vulnerable as a result."

MOST ARE STILL CONCERNED ABOUT THE VIRUS, AND NEARLY A THIRD ARE AT AN ELEVATED RISK OF MAJOR COMPLICATIONS.

Q: Which of the following apply to you?

Nearly 3-in-4 remote workers believes their area will experience a second wave of the virus

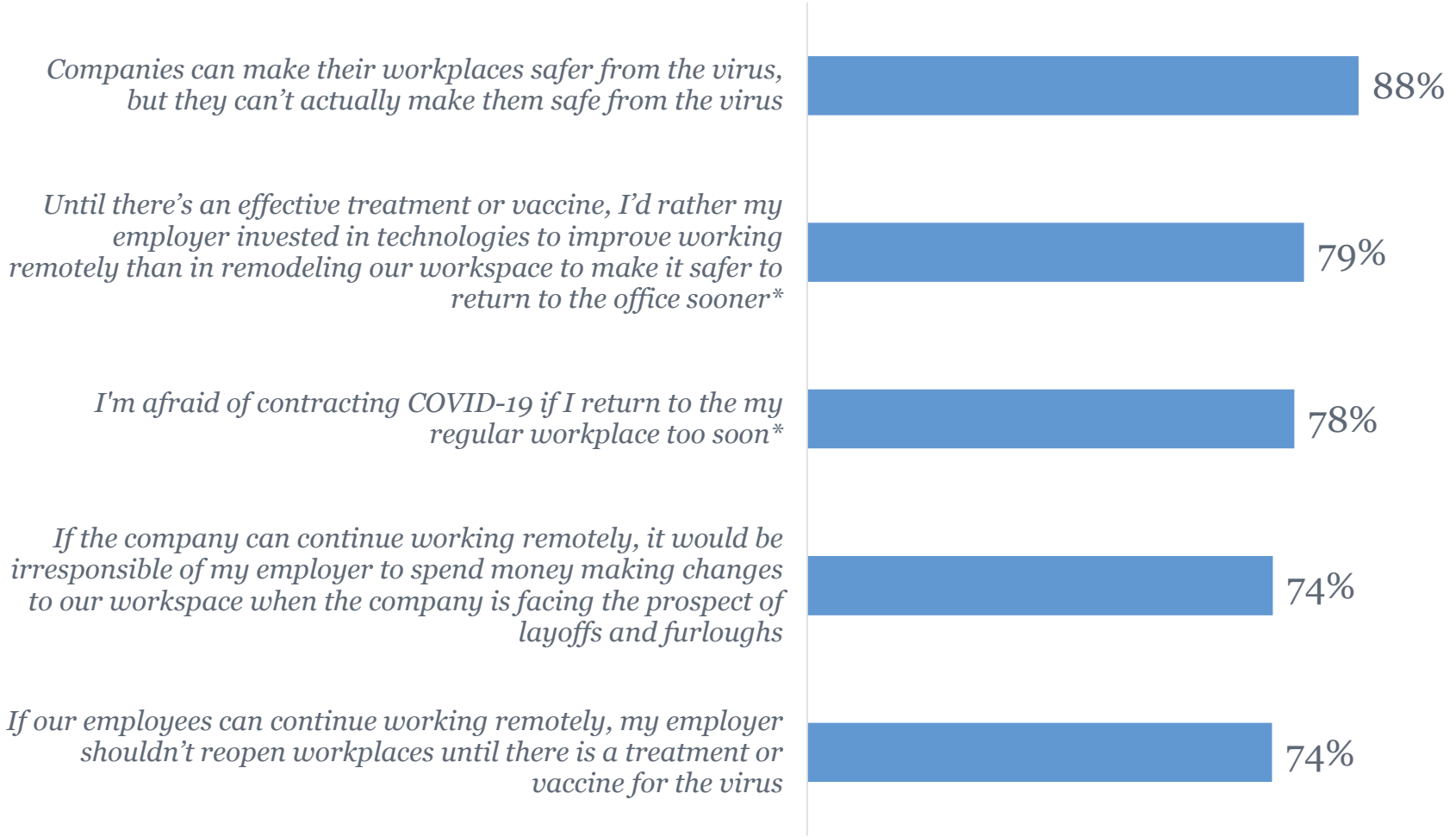


ABSENT A TREATMENT OR VACCINE, MOST REMOTE WORKERS BELIEVE THEIR COMPANIES SHOULDN'T REOPEN WORKSPACES AND SHOULD INVEST IN MAKING REMOTE WORK BETTER INSTEAD.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

**Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.*

So long as the company can continue remotely, some perceive it as irresponsible to invest in reopening workspaces



FLEISHMANHILLARD

MORE FUNDAMENTALLY, MANY DON'T LIKE THE WAY WORK AND LIFE COEXISTED BEFORE THE PANDEMIC AND EXPRESS STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT IT

MANY WANT THEIR EMPLOYER TO UNDERSTAND THE WAYS THAT REMOTE WORK HAS BEEN BENEFICIAL TO THEM.

Q: What do you want your employer to know about what you are experiencing, thinking, and feeling right now as you consider the pandemic, yourself, your family, and your job?

Select responses.

"I want to keep working remotely and it's making me a better person."

"Life is very chaotic right now and employees can be facing a lot of stress and mental/physical health issues. Please take this into consideration!"

"We need the technology to work from home more often and they need a more beneficial work-at-home plan for workers."

"Coronavirus has provided a great opportunity to improve on work-from-home practices. It has made home life a lot easier, and more comfortable."

"How much better the company could be as a whole if we completely reviewed our work environment policies and explored new ways of navigating this new landscape."

"That it is challenging to work from home with kids and to have greater understanding and flexibility when it comes to getting things done."

"That I would like to stay working remotely for a while longer because of my children and fears of the virus"

HAVING REALIZED THE BENEFITS OF REMOTE WORK IN THEIR PERSONAL LIVES, LARGE MAJORITIES ACROSS GENERATIONS AND LEVELS OF SENIORITY DON'T WANT TO GIVE THEM UP.

Statements like 'I don't want to go back" to the old way are indicative of how strong feelings are

	U.S.	U.K.	18-29	30-44	45-54	55+	Busier at work now	More Productive now	Execs & Sr. managers	Middle & lower managers	Non-management
I don't want to give up the benefits of working remotely when it becomes safe to return to my normal place of business	70%	76%	66%	76%	79%	68%	75%	84%	**76%**	**72%**	**73%**
I don't want to go back to how I balanced work and life before the pandemic	53%	72%	66%	64%	64%	57%	67%	78%	**65%**	**62%**	**62%**

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

**Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.*

***Q: Which of the following apply to you?*

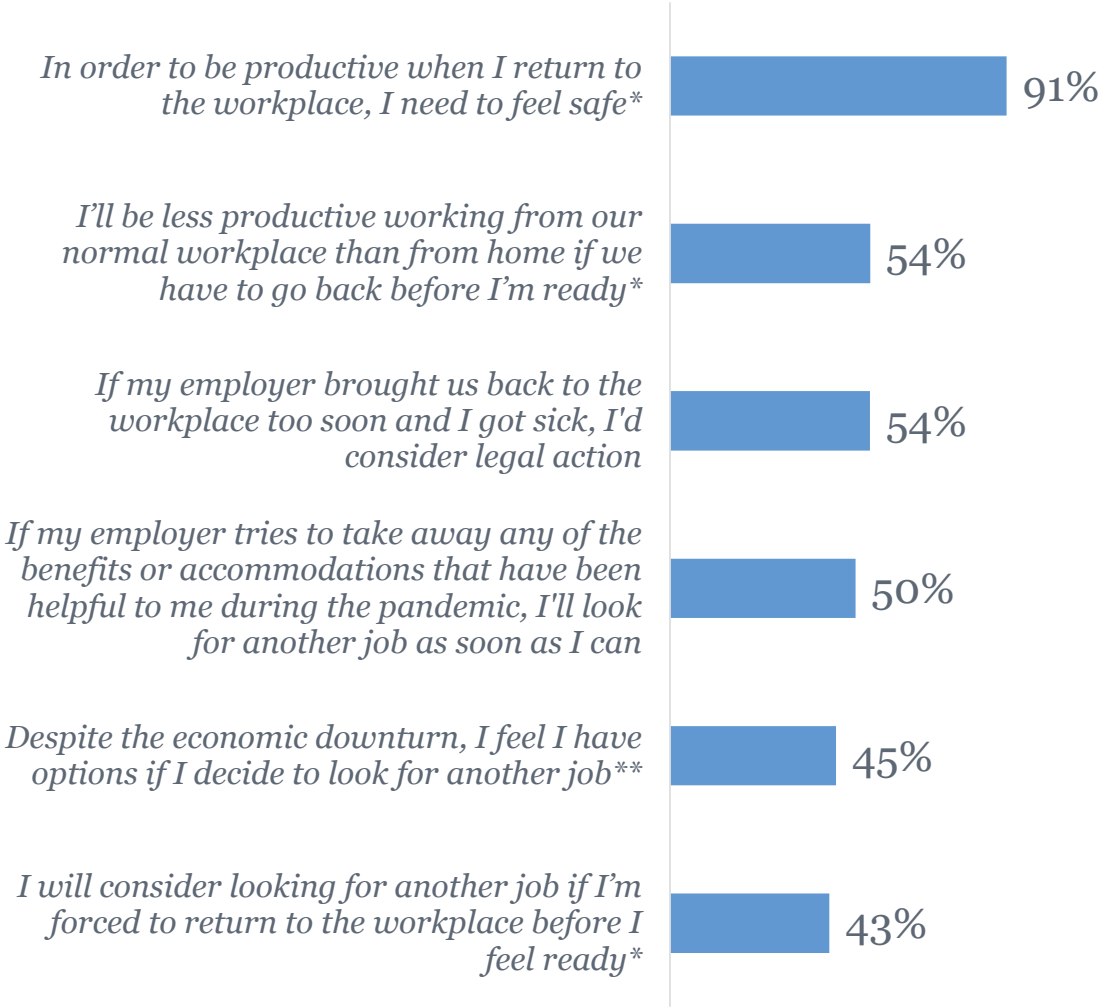
A MISMANAGED RETURN COULD COMPOUND THE CHALLENGES BUSINESSES ARE ALREADY FACING.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

**Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.*

***Q: Which of the following apply to you?*

Returning too soon or in the wrong way could result in lost productivity, retention challenges, and legal action



Even in a tough job market, talented employees always have options. Companies risk driving away their best employees if they don't do the work of listening to employees and making deliberate choices about how work culture adapts to new realities. They may not leave tomorrow, but they may start planning to leave – and make that their focus. Employees will remember how the company behaved during this crisis and they will hold you accountable.

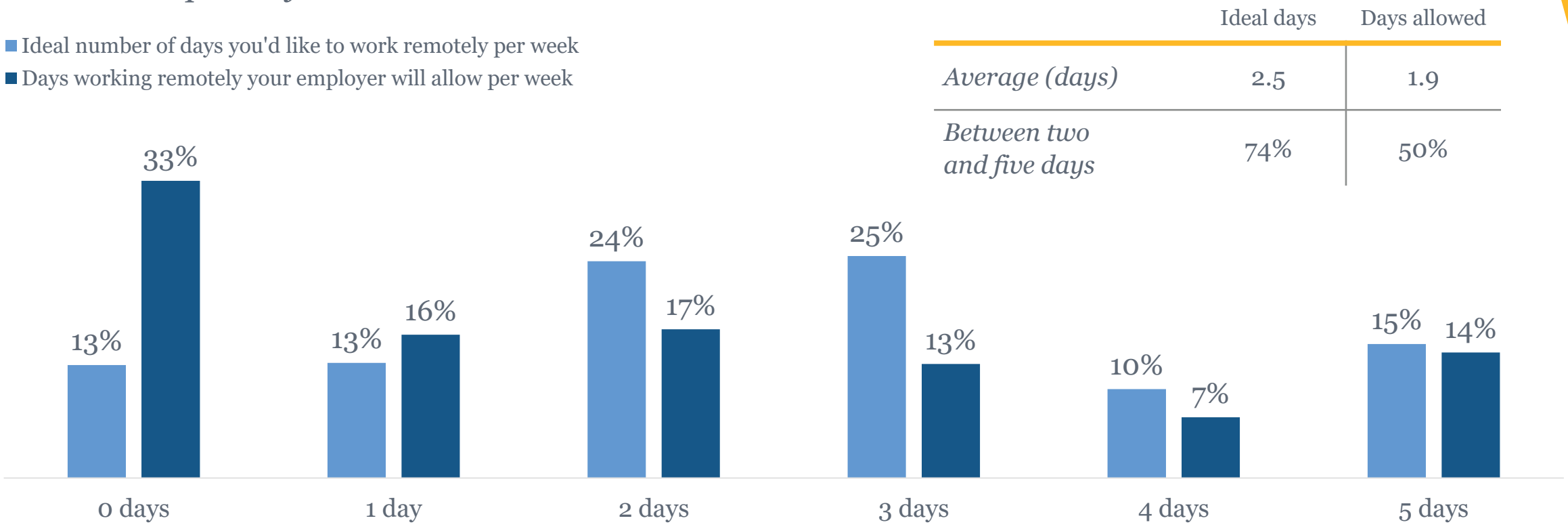
- Elaine Branding
SVP
Talent + Transformation

FLEISHMANHILLARD

THINKING AHEAD TO THE FUTURE, WORKERS WANT TO WORK REMOTELY MORE OFTEN, AND THEY WANT A SAY IN POLICY

MOST WORKERS WANT TO CONTINUE REMOTE WORK IN THE FUTURE, AN AVERAGE 2.5 DAYS OUT OF A 5-DAY WORKWEEK.

87% of workers want to work remotely at least 1 day a week after it is safe to return to their normal place of business



	Ideal days	Days allowed
Average (days)	2.5	1.9
Between two and five days	74%	50%

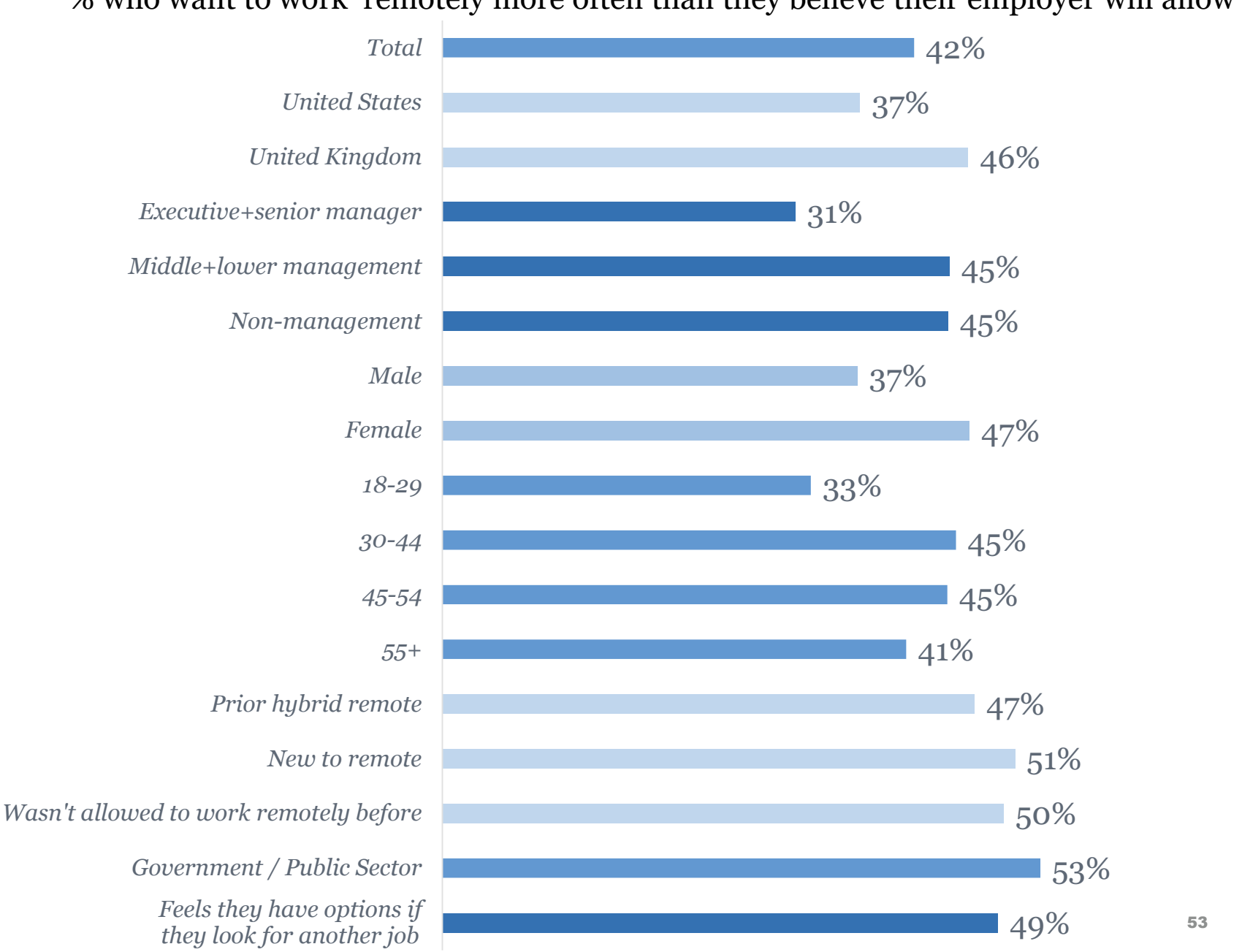
Q: Thinking about when it is safe to return to your normal place of business, in a 5-day work week, how many days would you ideally like to work remotely and how many days do you think your employer will allow you to work remotely?

Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.

OVERALL, 42% WANT TO WORK REMOTELY MORE OFTEN THAN THEY BELIEVE THEIR EMPLOYER WILL ALLOW. THIS IS A GREATER CONCERN FOR OLDER THAN YOUNGER WORKERS.

Q: Thinking about when it is safe to return to your normal place of business, in a 5-day work week, how many days would you ideally like to work remotely and how many days do you think your employer will allow you to work remotely?

Not asked of prior fulltime remote respondents.



SENIOR LEADERS WOULD BENEFIT MOST FROM POLICIES AND TECHNOLOGIES TO MAKE REMOTE WORK EASIER AND WANT EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN POLICY CHANGES.

How helpful would each of the following be?
% selecting "Somewhat" or "Very helpful" or "Is something I must have"

Showing "Would be very helpful" + "Is something I must have"	18-29	30-44	45-54	55+	Execs & Sr. managers	Middle & Lower Management	Non-Management
The ability for employees to be involved in changes to work policies, including remote work and flexible scheduling	62%	65%	66%	54%	**67%**	**60%**	**61%**
Policies that makes it easier to use remote and virtual technologies for all the things I don't want to do in person	53%	60%	60%	56%	**61%**	**58%**	**55%**

Q: Which of the following would be helpful to you moving forward?

FLEISHMANHILLARD

REMOTE WORKERS WANT TO RETHINK HOW WORK AND THE REST OF THEIR LIVES COEXIST

MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES ARE ALIGNED ON THE NEED FOR DIALOGUE, AND THE FORMER ARE MORE LIKELY TO SEE THE BENEFIT OF A NEW LOOK AT COMPANY CULTURE.

How helpful would each of the following be?
% selecting "Somewhat" or "Very helpful" or "Is something I must have"

Showing "Would be very helpful" + "Is something I must have"	18-29	30-44	45-54	55+	Execs & Sr. managers	Middle & Lower Management	Non-Management
An actual dialogue between the management and employees to set expectations for one another based on what's been learned during the pandemic	69%	65%	67%	55%	**66%**	**65%**	**63%**
A fresh look at company culture, values and purpose to reflect the new expectations of employees, customers and society	56%	60%	59%	57%	**62%**	**61%**	**53%**

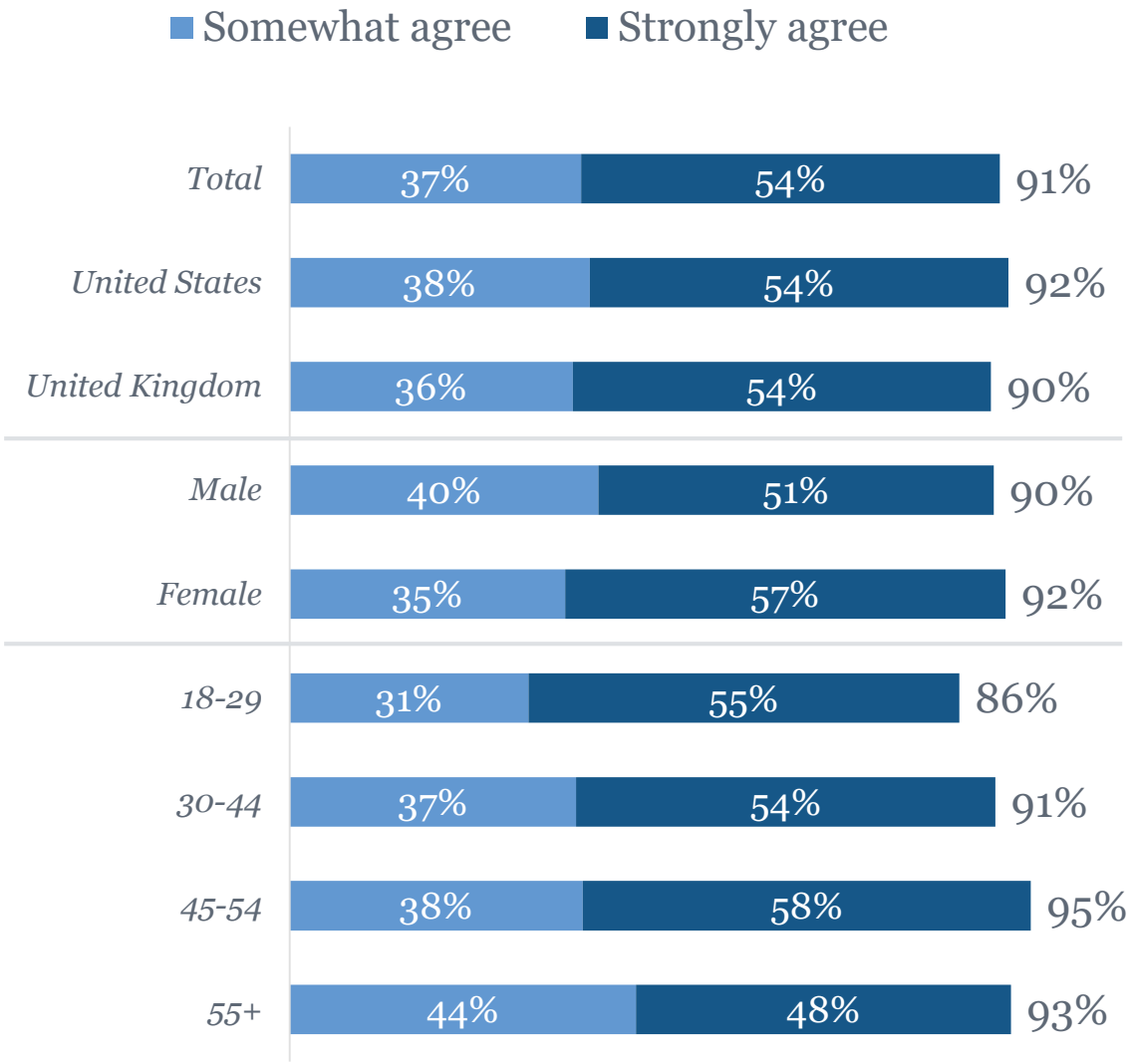
Q: Which of the following would be helpful to you moving forward?

9-IN-10 REMOTE WORKERS WANT TO USE THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS HOW WE WANT WORK AND LIFE TO COEXIST FROM NOW ON.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

We should take this opportunity to have a true discussion as a society about how work and life should coexist moving forward

% Agreeing



Societies coalesce around behaviors that in the aggregate are what social scientists call "equilibria" and everyone calls "the way things are."

Because no single actor chooses an equilibrium, inertia can keep one in place even when most people don't like the ways things are and want to change them.

Collectively, these data are telling us workers feel as though circumstances inherited them instead of the other way around, and they want to use this moment as a reset to make deliberate choices about how we make work a part of our lives moving forward.

That's a rare opportunity.

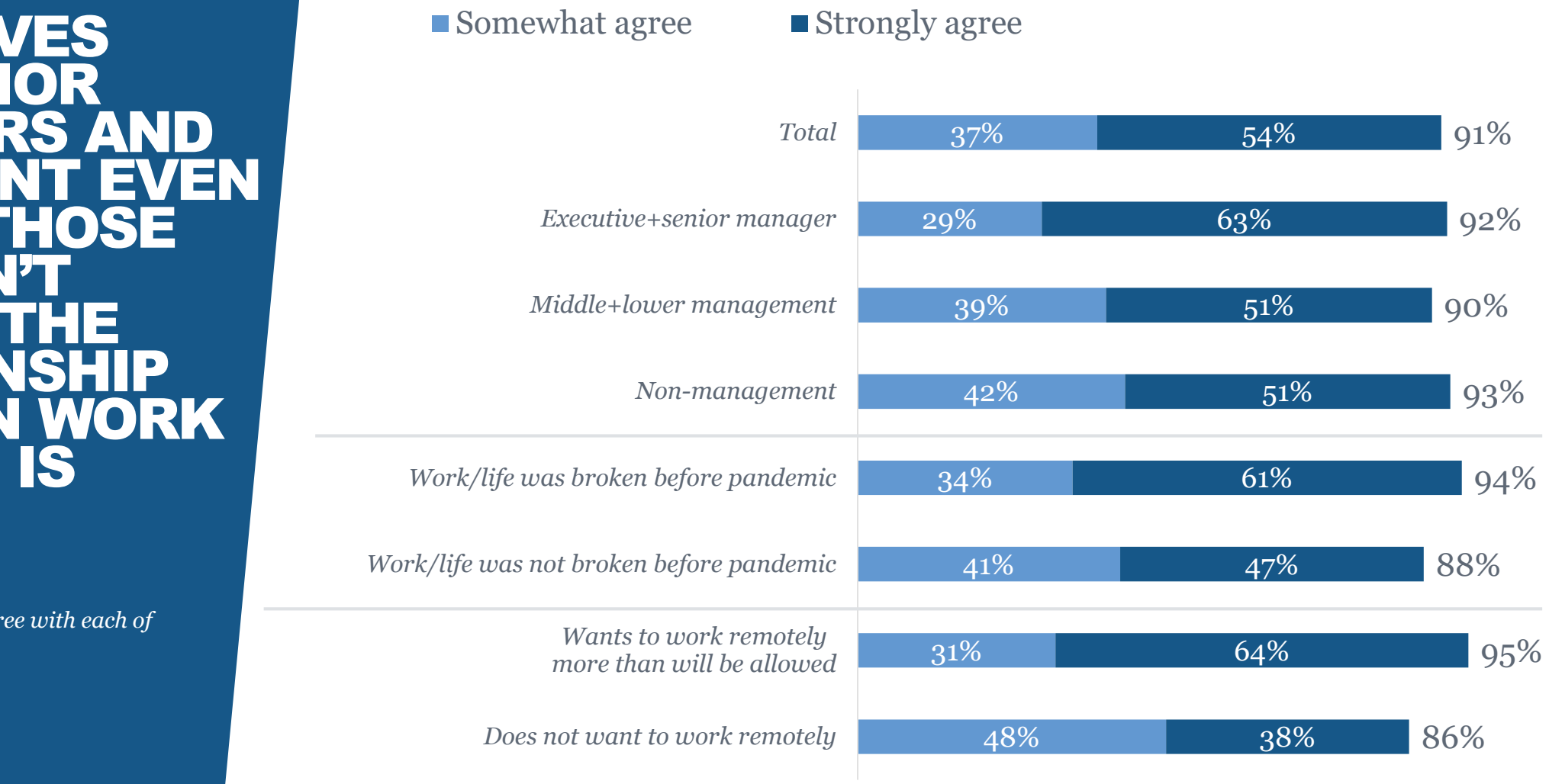
- Ryan Tandler
Research Director
TRUE Global Intelligence

THIS DESIRE IS STRONGER AMONG EXECUTIVES AND SENIOR MANAGERS AND IS PRESENT EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO DON'T BELIEVE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK AND LIFE IS BROKEN.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

We should take this opportunity to have a true discussion as a society about how work and life should coexist moving forward

% Agreeing

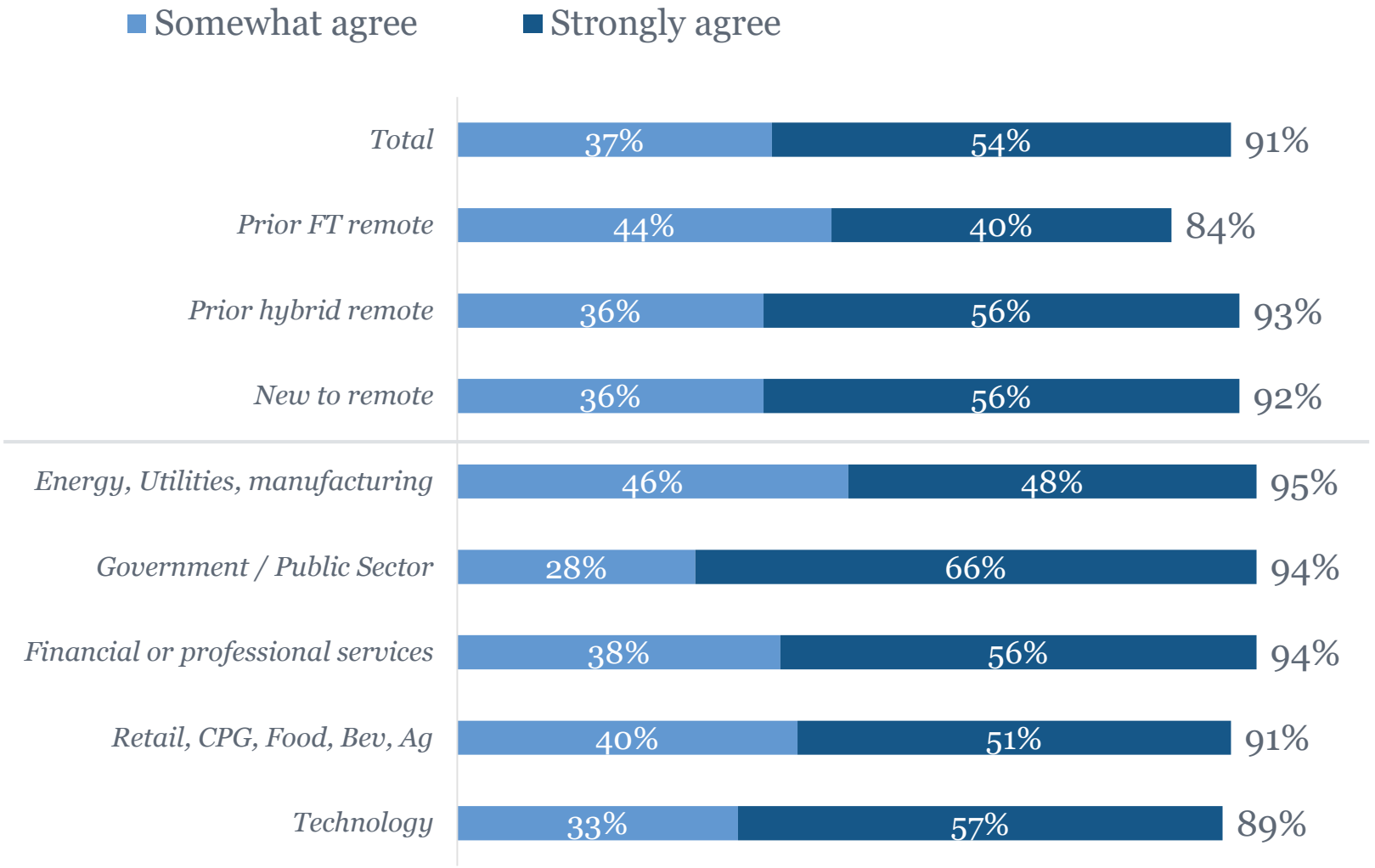


NOR IS THE DESIRE LIMITED TO THOSE WHO WERE WORKING REMOTELY PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC OR THOSE IN THE TECH SECTOR.

Q: Do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

We should take this opportunity to have a true discussion as a society about how work and life should coexist moving forward

% Agreeing



FLEISHMANHILLARD

QUESTIONS?

For questions related to the Future of Work study, contact:

Info@trueglobalintelligence.com

For support navigating COVID-19, contact:

FH.COVID19.Taskforce@fleishman.com