



# REMOTE WORK TRENDS

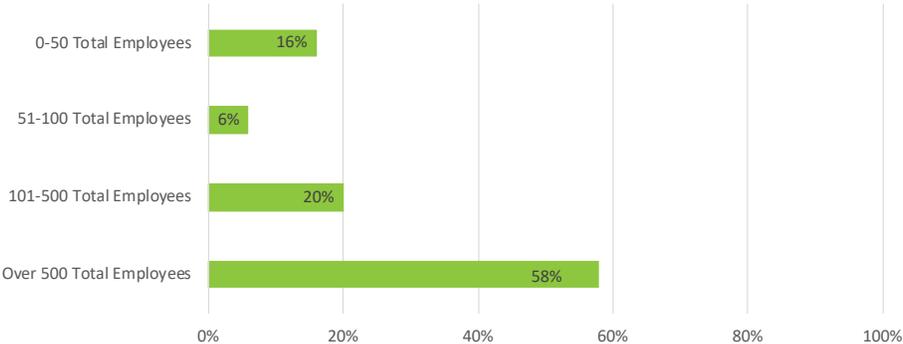
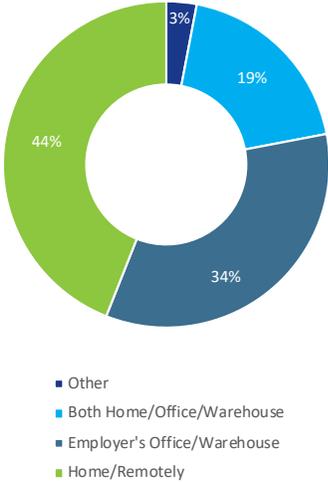
An MHI Survey Report  
May 10, 2021

# REMOTE WORK TRENDS

MHI recently conducted a survey on Remote Work Trends. The survey was conducted in March 2021 and received 670 responses from members of MHI, MHEDA, WiM, and WERC. The purpose of this survey was to understand the industry’s employees’ sentiment to the work environment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most respondents represent WiM (67%), followed by MHI (24%), MHEDA (17%) and WERC (2%). Engineering (38%) is the leading job function, with C-suite (14%), marketing (12%) and operations (11%) forming a second tier. Most employees (71%) have over five years of experience and 79% are female. Almost 8-in-10 respondents represent companies with more than 100 employees. Over half (58%) are from companies with 500+ workers in total. 63% of respondents are primarily working from home/remotely or working a hybrid schedule. 34% are working entirely on-site.

*From where are you working during the majority of your work week?*



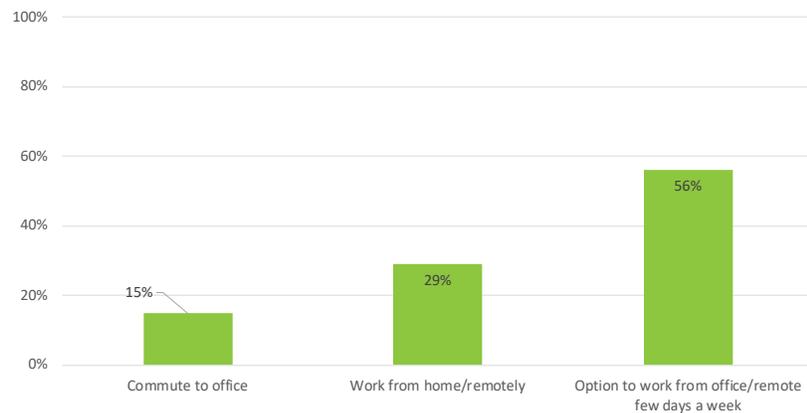
*How many employees work for your company (including all locations)?*

## Remote Work Sentiment and Work/Life Balance

The pandemic forced companies to experiment with remote work, often when there were no plans for the workforce to move in that direction. Many anecdotal worries cited by employers were things like reduced productivity and suffering employee relationships.

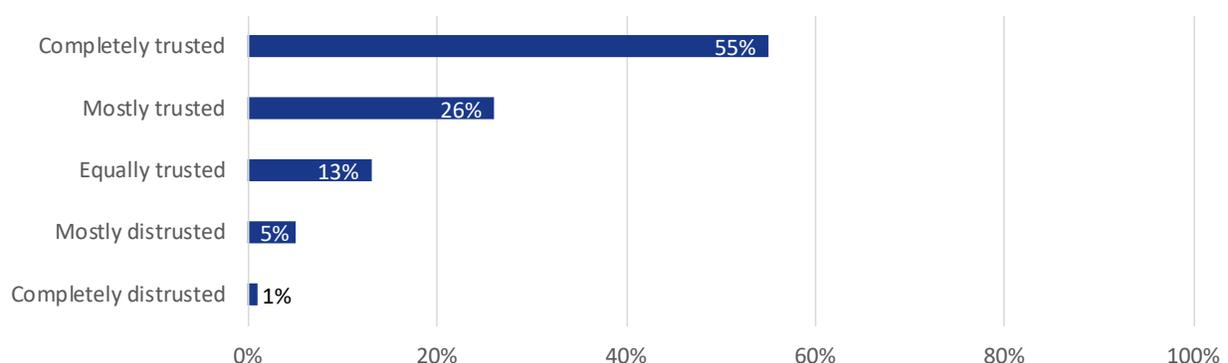
However, 80% of employees cite equal or greater productivity from a remote/WFH environment than from working in their employer's office. 64% indicate more engagement or no change after the WFH shift and respondents seem generally positive to the remote model.

After trying working from home, 85% of respondents prefer a WFH/remote-working environment or a hybrid approach that combines remote work with office time. Over half (51%) of the employees feel their work/life balance favors work; 43% indicate a 50/50 work/life balance; and six percent indicate a life focus.



*In the winter of 2021, what is your preferred work environment?*

Remote work requires high levels of trust in a company, not only from the top down, but among coworkers. 94% of the respondents believe management trusts their abilities to get the work done in a remote context - and that is the key to making remote work successful. The remote work wave has created a permanent shift in employee/employer expectations and on company culture.



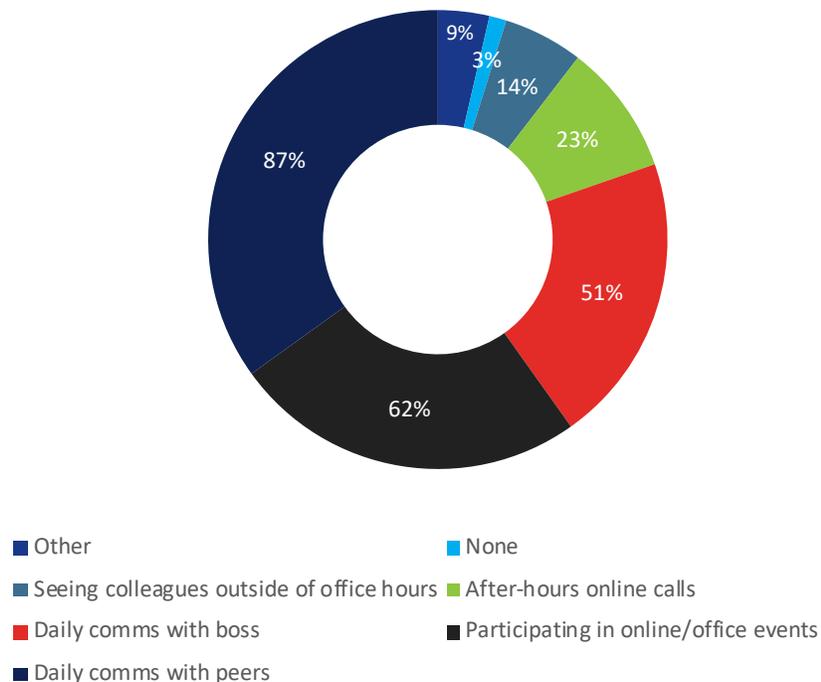
*When working from home/remote (full-part-time), to what degree do you feel management trusts your abilities to complete the work?*

## Remote Work and Company Culture

The fact of 94% of member employees feeling management's trust, coupled with respondents are more productive in a remote/WFH context, is a plus for building remote-work, employee engagement, and loyalty shaping policies.

85% indicate company culture is extremely/very/somewhat influential when deciding to stay with an employer, and 79% indicate extremely likely/likely to stay with an employer as the result of the WFH model. However, it's not a deal breaker. 71% are extremely likely/likely to stay with an employer if the company were to return to a work-from-the-office model despite the high desire to continue a remote work/hybrid model.

*How are you personally helping to maintain your company's culture?*



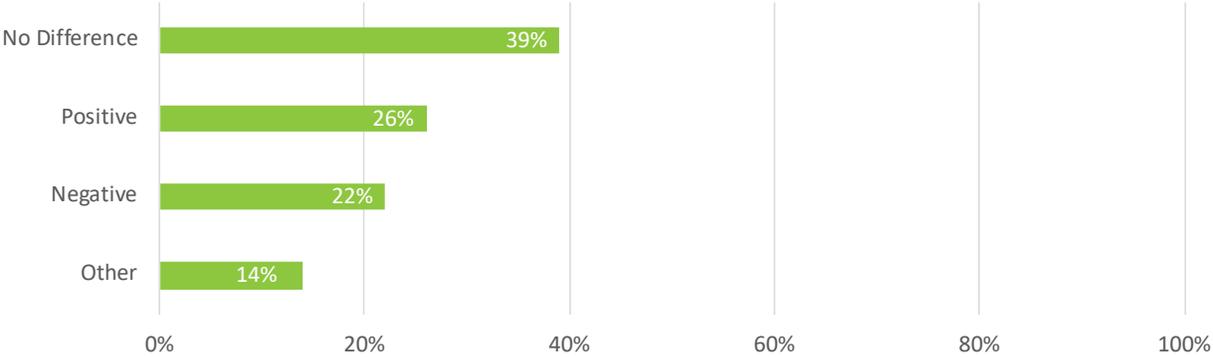
Employees' top ways for maintaining company culture include daily communication with peers (87%), participating in online events (62%) and daily interactions with immediate bosses (51%).

The downward trend indicates more affinity for the WFH/remote vs. the at-the-office model and may signal which model is best for employee retention. For 2021, majorities of employee respondents want their company culture to include flexibility in work locations (74%), work schedules (73%) and management's trust and transparency (68%). Respondents rank these same attributes as the most important for their workplace. However, management's trust/transparency is #1 with work-schedule and work-location flexibility to follow.

**Essential vs. Remote Workforce**

For the employees who cannot work remotely (on-site/essentials), company leadership/management may need to equalize work schedules and flexibility to reduce opportunities for alienating essential, on-site employees. 65% of employee respondents indicate a positive or see no impact of companies having remote and on-site employees during the pandemic. Thirty-five percent have a negative/other view.

In the context of company culture being a driver of employee retention, there may be opportunities for companies to foster more communication between on-site and off-site employees, further strengthening company bonds.



*Does having remote and on-site employees during the pandemic have a positive or negative impact on your company's culture?*

**Next Steps for Leaders**

To help ensure employee loyalty, leadership needs to communicate, offer autonomy, transparency, and the flexibility for employees to work in locations and with schedules that offer work/life balance.

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The remote-work genie bottle has opened. Employees will be hesitant to return to the full-scale, back-to-the-office model from pre-COVID-19 years. Employees find they're equally or more productive by working remotely than from working in their employers' offices. Companies can foster productivity and innovation by offering work-place flexibility and leadership can help employees to succeed by offering the employer-sponsored elements they require for efficient work operations and execution (e.g., IT support).