

THE PEOPLE EXPERIENCE ADVANTAGE

HOW COMPANIES CAN MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR
THEIR MOST IMPORTANT ASSETS

#GetTheFutureYouWant

Executive Summary

Now more than ever before, organizations must look after their employees. Today's competitive labor market, fueled by economic and financial pressures and ravaged by the physical and mental toll of living and working through a pandemic, is driving employees to reevaluate their attitudes and approaches to work. Remote working has brought advantages of flexibility and, indeed, personal safety for many workers, but also a host of new challenges for employers, who must maintain cybersecurity, inclusivity, productivity, and workforce morale in this new, bifurcated working environment.

The results of this research confirm the benefits of a positive employee experience, ranging from encouraging retention to improving employee engagement and customer satisfaction. Remarkably, however, many employers continue to fail to recognize the importance of optimizing their employee experience. Our research

found that many of today's employees are, to some degree, unsatisfied or unhappy at work. Leaders are largely unaware of this dynamic, despite the clear impact a positive people experience can have on business metrics.

Only 28% of employees in our survey say they are satisfied at work today, compared to 80% of leaders who believe their employees are satisfied. Underlining this gap in perception, only one-third of employees say they feel happy at work today versus a much greater percentage of leaders (92%) who believe their employees to be happy. The key barriers to employee satisfaction – which we examine closely in this report – are linked to challenges around career progression and skill development, manager behaviors and relationships, compensation and recognition, and data and technology. The disconnect between how leaders perceive their

Executive Summary

workforces and how employees actually think and feel about their work suggests that leaders must allow their employees a voice with which to express their sentiments without fear of repercussions – and must then listen carefully to that voice.

In this report, we highlight 10 key actions that organizational leadership should take to improve people experience. These include recommendations such as coaching leaders to be more empathetic, clearly linking job performance to outcomes, and defining career-growth potential. They also encompass cultural changes, including building a continuous learning environment and ensuring new hires feel welcome from onboarding forward. We also offer recommendations related to organizational practices regarding employee feedback and, lastly, recommendations related to technology, including optimizing self-services and collaboration tools.

28%

of employees say they are satisfied at work today.

Introduction

A strong employee experience is integral to company health. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, employees had begun to shift their priorities, their expectations of working life, and their perceptions of their relationships with their employers. The pandemic accelerated this shift, driving many workers to rethink their career trajectories and goals, reconsidering what they were prepared to accept in terms of working conditions. Labor and talent shortages add to the complexity of workforce management today and place critical emphasis on the need to retain increasingly thinly spread talent. In this environment, employee churn rate and factors driving attrition are business imperatives.

In such a challenging labor market, we sought to understand whether employees are satisfied with their experience today and whether that has changed since the pandemic. Are employees engaged at work? Which dimensions of the employee experience impact their personal well-being and productivity? And what can employers improve in order to retain talent and drive business outcomes?

To find answers to these questions, we conducted a research study covering large organizations across 10 countries in key industries such as consumer products and retail, automotive, manufacturing, energy and utilities, financial services, healthcare and life sciences, and the public sector. The research structure includes:

Introduction

A survey of 2,250 respondents from 750 organizations, comprising the following profiles:

01

750 leaders from across the organizational structure, including human resources, strategy, customer service/experience, engineering, marketing and sales, accounting and finance, and technology teams;

02

1,500 employees including 511 employees in middle management and 989 “individual contributors” (i.e., employees in non-supervisory positions);

03

for every two employees surveyed at a specific company, we surveyed one leader from the same company.

Introduction

In-depth interviews with HR and employee experience executives (more details on the research methodology are available at the end of the report).

Broadly, this report explores four themes:

01

The benefits in terms of business outcomes of a positive people experience

02

The level of satisfaction and contentment employees feel at work today compared to before the pandemic

03

Reasons for employee dissatisfaction

04

Key recommendations for how organizations can improve the people experience

CATEGORIES OF WORKER

Throughout this report, we have categorized the surveyed workers into the following groups:

EMPLOYEES

Individual contributors defined as *“employees in a non-supervisory role who do not manage people or control a budget.”*

MANAGERS

Executives with the designation “manager” or “senior manager.”

LEADERS

Executives with designations “director” or above (“director,” “senior director,” “assistant vice president,” “vice president,” “senior vice president,” “president,” or equivalent, and “C-suite”) who manage or supervise employees in certain business units.

We further defined three types of employee, based on their roles:

Frontline worker

– employees whose work involves a high rate of direct face-to-face interaction with customers or the general public (e.g., salespersons, restaurant workers, cashiers, personal financial planners, local government workers, nurses/physicians)

Industrial worker

– employees whose work tends to be manual in nature and generally requires something to be physically built or maintained (e.g., factory workers, delivery-truck drivers, construction workers, machine-service technicians, mechanics)

Knowledge worker

– employees who largely perform desk jobs using skills attained through formal training, and do not generally perform manual labor (e.g., web programmers, writers, accountants, engineers, analysts)

Source: Capgemini Research Institute analysis.

WHAT IS THE “PEOPLE EXPERIENCE”?

For the purposes of this research, we define the people experience as the nature of the relationship and the cumulative interaction and professional journey that an employee has with their employer. This encompasses interactions with other people, organizational culture, operational systems, policies, and the physical and virtual workspace. The people experience involves day-to-day work, interactions with other departments or functions, and occasional events employees might be requested to attend. It is the overall impact of the job and the organization on the individual: how this makes the employee feel over time, how they perceive their potential and abilities, and the effect on their engagement and well-being.

In this research, people experience encompasses both permanent, full- or part-time workers and fluid workers, defined as temporary employees working on a contract or a gig/project basis.

In our survey, we assessed various elements of the people experience:

- day-to-day interaction and relationships – e.g., career progression, autonomy, work-life balance, relationship with manager, team composition, feedback process;
- organizational and structural dimensions – e.g., physical workplace, remote and hybrid working, learning and development, compensation and recognition;
- technology and data dimensions – e.g., IT support, collaboration tools, infrastructure and systems;
- human and people dimensions – e.g., health and wellness, company purpose, enjoyment and happiness.

This research defines the below terms as follows:

- “Engagement”: feeling motivated or energized to show up each day at work;
- “Satisfaction”: a state of inner contentment, the perception that one’s needs, wants, and expectations are fulfilled (this is accrued over time and reflects the employee’s personal relationship with their work, workplace, and employer);
- “Happiness”: an emotional and intellectual state assessed at a specific moment – usually a spontaneous manifestation of satisfaction.

Please refer to the Appendix for a list of all the dimensions we included in our questions to assess the experience of survey respondents.

Source: Capgemini Invent, Capgemini Research Institute analysis.



01

**PEOPLE EXPERIENCE
MATTERS – NOW MORE
THAN EVER**

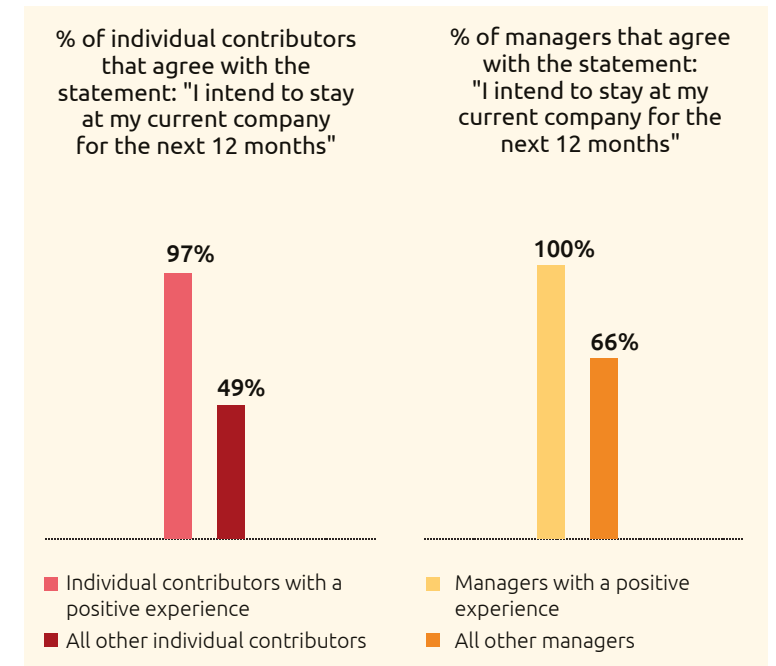
We analyzed the impact of a positive people experience on business outcomes, specifically on retention, employee engagement, likelihood for employees to recommend their company as a place to work, and customer satisfaction. In today's feverishly competitive talent market, these metrics are no longer a concern solely for human resources but, rather, affect organizational strategy to the extent that top-level leadership must be involved. We identified a group of individual contributors and managers that report the most positive experiences. This group comprised the top 10% of individual contributors surveyed (n = 100) and top 10% of managers surveyed (n = 51). We found a significant positive difference in outcomes for this group of employees compared with employees reporting an inferior experience at their organizations. As this section indicates, those companies that provide a superior people experience stand to benefit through indirect impact on growth (e.g., retention). More data and research is needed to measure the direct impact of people experience on growth metrics, such as productivity or revenue.

A positive people experience encourages retention

Nearly all employees (97%) who rate their experience as positive say they intend to stay at their current company for (at least) the next 12 months. Only 49% of all other employees say the same. Responses from managers follow the same trend (see Figure 1). A talent director at a multinational cosmetics company says: *"When employees are provided a positive experience and feel more engaged, the benefit is that we can retain them."*

Fig.1

97% of employees with a positive experience intend to stay with their company for the next year



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 100 individual contributors with a positive experience, N = 889 other individual contributors; N = 51 managers with a positive experience, N = 460 other managers.

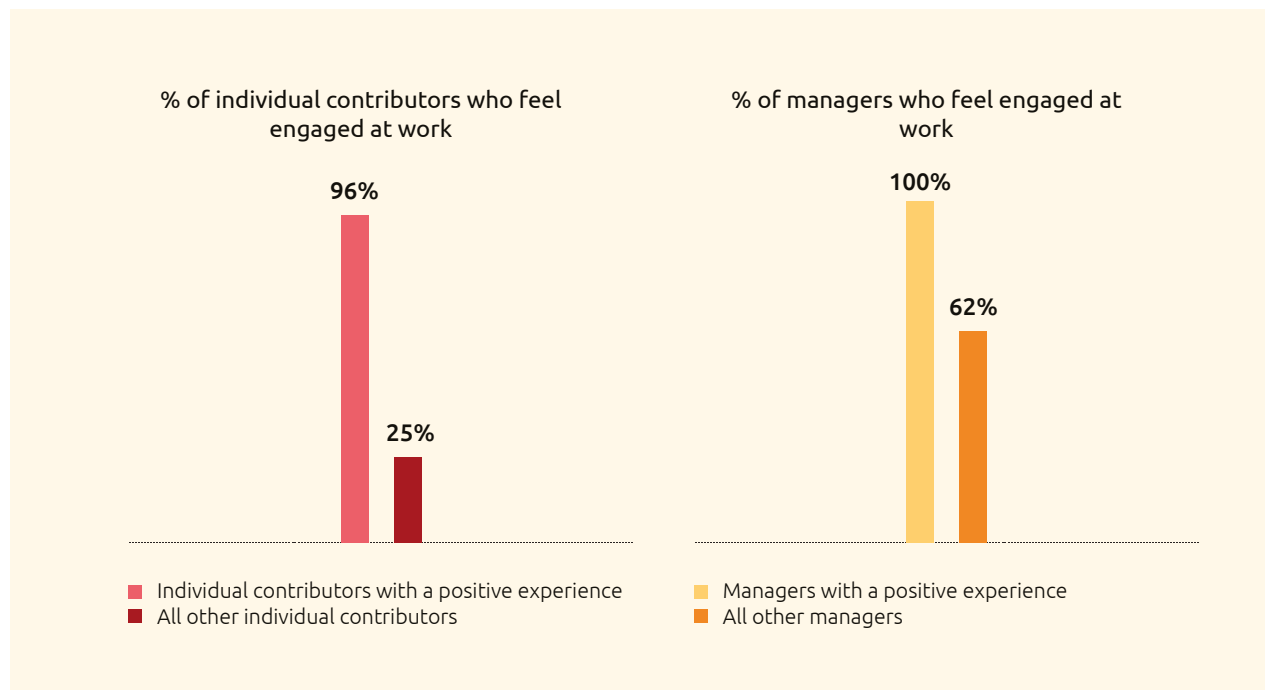
Fig.2

96% of employees with a positive experience are engaged at work

A positive people experience results in higher engagement

The vast majority (96%) of employees reporting a positive experience feel more engaged at work, meaning they feel motivated or energized to show up each day, compared with only one-quarter of employees that report a less positive experience. Managers follow the same trend (see Figure 2). Managers, having typically shown strong commitment and self-motivation in order to reach their positions in the business, would be expected to show strong engagement.

Oliver Grohmann, Senior Vice President of Human Resources at Dubai-based Emirates Group, adds: *"If you have happy and engaged employees, you will get much more output from your business. Instead of solely focusing on reducing costs, companies should work on engaging and motivating employees."*



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 100 individual contributors with a positive experience, N = 889 other individual contributors; N = 51 managers with a positive experience, N = 460 other managers.

96%

of employees reporting a positive experience feel more engaged at work, meaning they feel motivated or energized to show up each day.

Positive people experiences turn employees into promoters

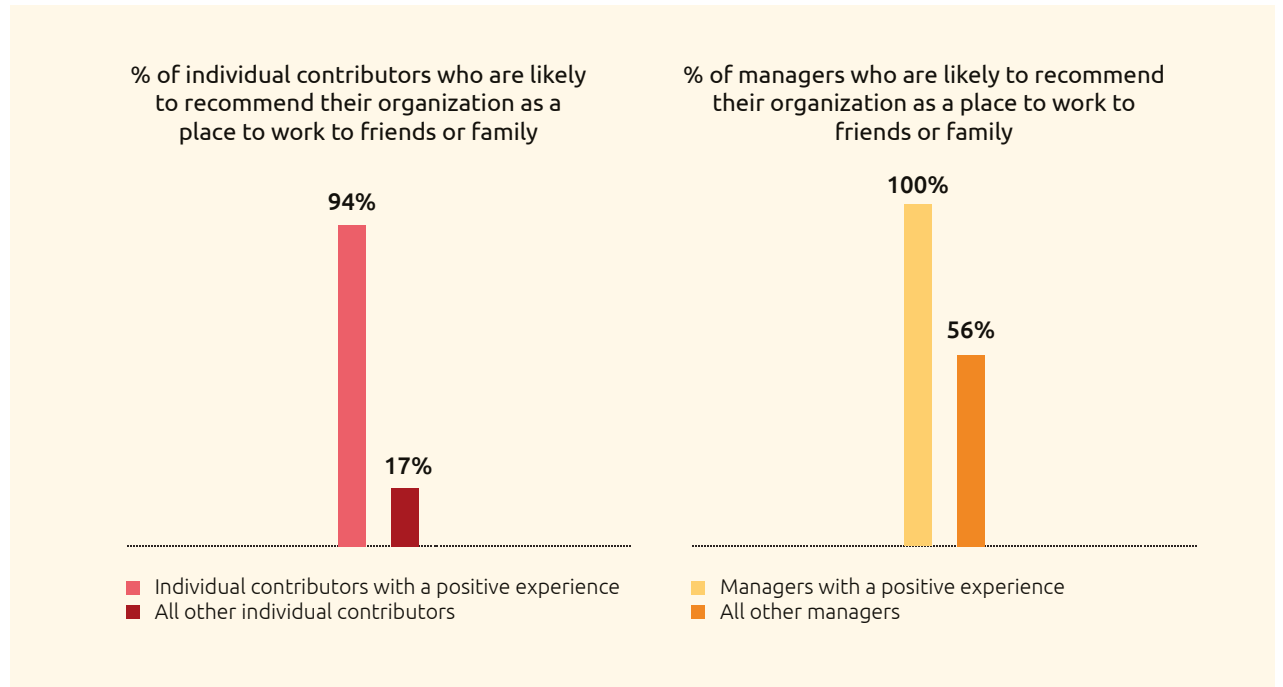
Ninety-four percent of employees with a positive experience are likely to recommend their organization as a place to work to their friends or family; only 17% of all other employees say the same (see Figure 3). Agnès Le Guern, Human Resources Transformation Project Director at Air Liquide, a leading supplier of industrial gases and related services, says: *“A positive employee experience is vital to creating a strong employer brand that appeals to both current employees and to future hires. A positive experience also helps in making people more inclined to recommend the organization.”*

94%

of employees with a positive experience are likely to recommend their organization as a place to work to their friends or family.

Fig.3

94% of employees with a positive experience are likely to recommend their organizations



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 100 individual contributors with a positive experience, N = 889 other individual contributors; N = 51 managers with a positive experience, N = 460 other managers.

Positive people experiences benefit customer satisfaction

A positive experience for managers, in particular, can impact the satisfaction of customers. Approximately half (48%) of leaders from organizations where managers report positive experiences say they have realized improved customer satisfaction as an indirect result of an improved experience. Only 30% of leaders from companies whose managers have an inferior experience can say the same. One example of how they improve the customer experience is more frequent listening and learning from frontline managers' interactions with customers.

Frontline employees reporting a superior experience can also have an impact on customer satisfaction. Our research reveals that 89% of frontline employees say their organizations have improved their employee experience, leading to an indirect positive impact on customer experience. Additionally, 82% say that their organizational leadership listens to and learns from employee interactions with customers to improve the customer experience. The head of executive search at a global telecommunications company adds: *"I am a firm believer in 'happy employees, happy customers.' We really try to incentivize our employees and give them the tools so they can have a good experience leading to happy customers."*

“If you have happy and engaged employees, you will get much more output from your business. Instead of solely focusing on reducing costs, companies should work on engaging and motivating employees.”



Oliver Grohmann

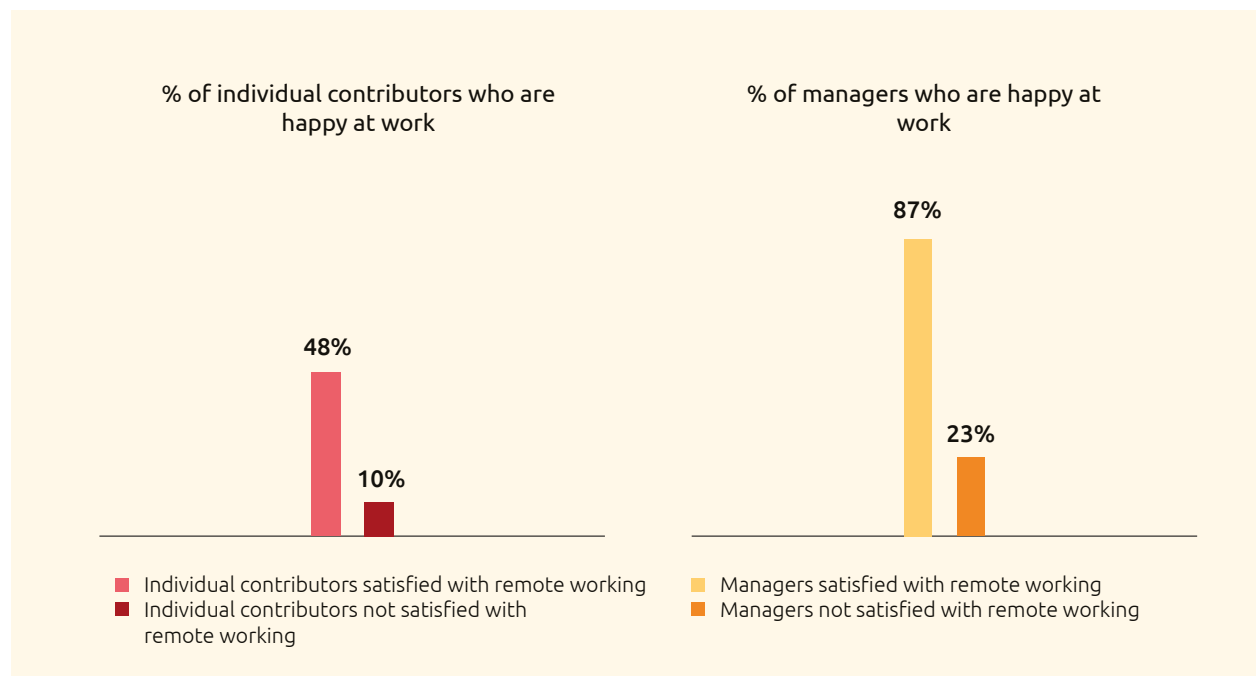
Senior Vice President of Human Resources at
Emirates Group

Satisfaction with remote work contributes to employee happiness

The percentage of both employees and managers who say they feel happy at work today indicates a significant positive correlation between happiness and satisfaction with remote-working opportunities. Nearly half (48%) of employees who are satisfied with remote-working opportunities are happy at work, compared to only 10% of employees who are not satisfied. Similarly, nearly nine in 10 (87%) of managers who are satisfied with remote-working opportunities are happy at work, compared to only 23% of those who are not satisfied (see Figure 4). Jeannette Schuh, Vice President Human Resources and Internal Communication at Plastic Omnium, a French automotive supplier, believes the opportunity to work remotely is now expected as standard: *“Yes, the pandemic made it possible to introduce remote work at our company. Remote working is less and less a criterion of distinction, it is now granted. Candidates expect it and directly ask how the company is organized for flexible and remote working. What makes the difference is the way remote work is handled. In our company it is flexible and on a voluntary basis, which is appreciated by our employees.”*

Fig.4

Nearly half of employees satisfied with remote working feel happy at work



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 126 individual contributors satisfied with remote working, N = 200 individual contributors not satisfied with remote working; N = 218 managers satisfied with remote working, N = 82 managers not satisfied with remote working.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO WORKERS OUTSIDE OF THEIR DAY-TO-DAY JOBS?

We asked respondents which aspect of work outside of their day-to-day jobs was most important to them. Work-life balance is the top-ranked factor for both employees and managers. Fabio Ficca, Head of People Empowerment Competence Center at Enel, an Italian manufacturer and distributor of electricity and gas, agrees: *“The pandemic has changed our way of working and work-life balance has become the most important aspect of our peoples’ experience.”*



For employees, learning and skill development is the next most important aspect, whereas, for managers, relationships with colleagues and peers is the second-ranked factor. Interestingly, while our previous consumer research revealed the increasing importance of company purpose to consumers when making purchasing decisions,¹ it is the fifth-ranked factor for employees (43%) and eighth-ranked factor for managers (38%) at work. There are a number of other dimensions that are given priority above company purpose in terms of their importance outside their daily work, as shown below.

“The pandemic has changed our way of working and work-life balance has become the most important aspect of our peoples’ experience.”

Fabio Ficca

Head of People Empowerment
Competence Center at Enel

Top 10 most important factors outside of daily work

RANK	% OF INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS	% OF MANAGERS	RANK	% OF INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS	% OF MANAGERS
01	 65% Work-life balance	 61% Work-life balance	06	 42% Health and wellness	 43% Fair, inclusive, and diverse work environment
02	 64% Learning and skill development	 57% Relationship with colleagues/peers	07	 37% Open-door policy*	 40% Relationship with manager
03	 54% Career growth and progression	 54% Learning and skill development	08	 35% Culture of innovation (e.g., openness to change)	 38% Company purpose (e.g., social or environmental mission)
04	 48% Culture of empowerment (e.g., ability to make autonomous decisions)	 51% Culture of empowerment (e.g., ability to make autonomous decisions)	09	 35% Fair, inclusive, and diverse work environment	 36% Open-door policy*
05	 43% Company purpose (e.g., social or environmental mission)	 44% Health and wellness	10	 32% Relationship with manager	 35% Career growth and progression

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors, N = 511 managers, N = 750 leaders.

* “Open-door policy” is defined as a culture that supports speaking up, questioning, and sharing suggestions or complaints.



02

**THE PERCEPTION GAP
IN EMPLOYEE
SATISFACTION**

Employee satisfaction plummeted during the pandemic – and is yet to recover

Our research found that many of today's employees are less than completely satisfied or happy at work. Leaders are largely unaware of this dynamic, despite the impact a positive people experience can have on their business metrics.

Employees and managers were asked to reflect on and compare their satisfaction levels with their overall experience at their current company at three different junctures: today, in 2021, and before the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders were asked to answer the same question, but based on their perceptions of the satisfaction of the employees they manage or supervise.

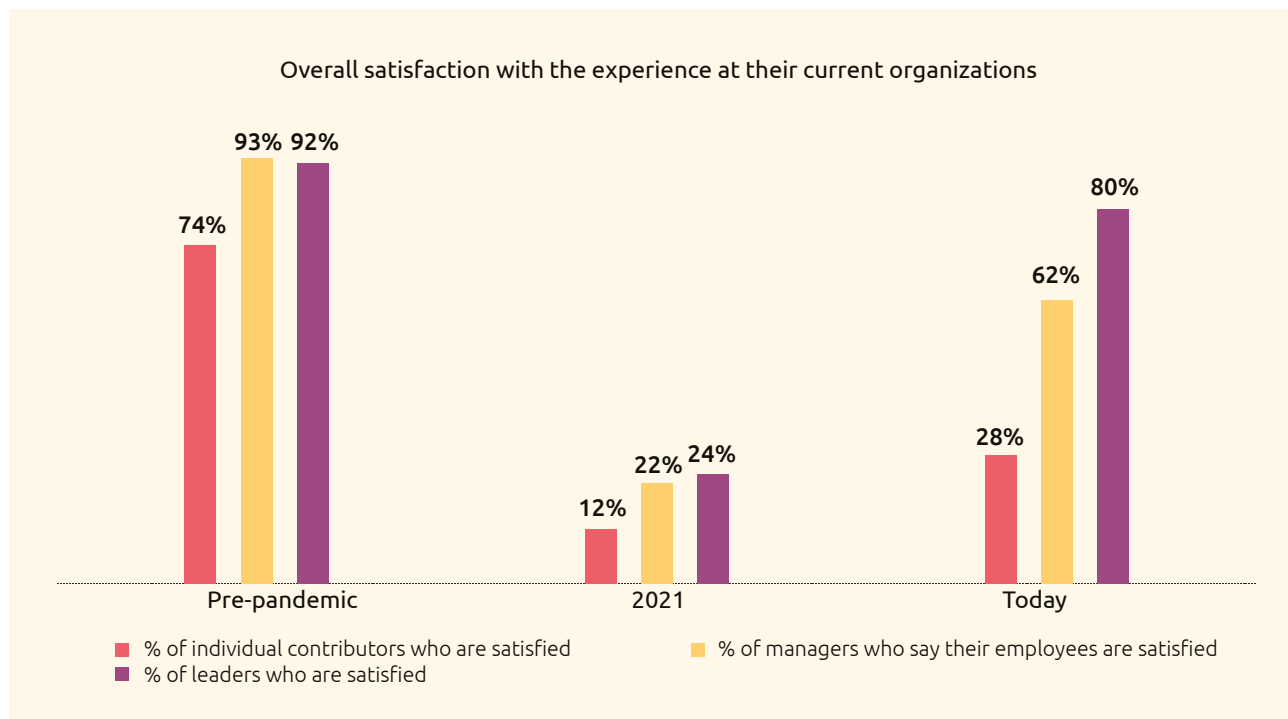
As shown in Figure 5, the satisfaction of employees and managers declined considerably in 2021 and is yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. Nearly three-quarters of individual contributors and 93% of managers said they were satisfied before the pandemic, decreasing to only 12% and 22%, respectively, in 2021, perhaps highlighting the anxiety, frustration, and potential for burnout among employees at the height of the pandemic, as our previous research has shown.² Satisfaction levels

of individual contributors have increased slightly, to 28% today. The fact that satisfaction levels are so low in 2022 (despite increased flexibility and opportunities for remote working) is surprising. In contrast, leaders' levels of satisfaction today (80%) are much higher than those reported by individual contributors, and even managers.

There are stark differences in satisfaction levels today between individual contributors and managers. The seniority of an employee appears to have a high impact on their level of satisfaction. Managers often have greater control over their work environment and time allocation, with greater flexibility and transparency afforded to them in terms of the company decisions and processes that affect them. By employee type, industrial workers in non-supervisory roles are the most satisfied today (37%), followed by frontline workers (35%), and knowledge workers (17%).

Fig.5

Less than one-third of employees are satisfied with their experience today

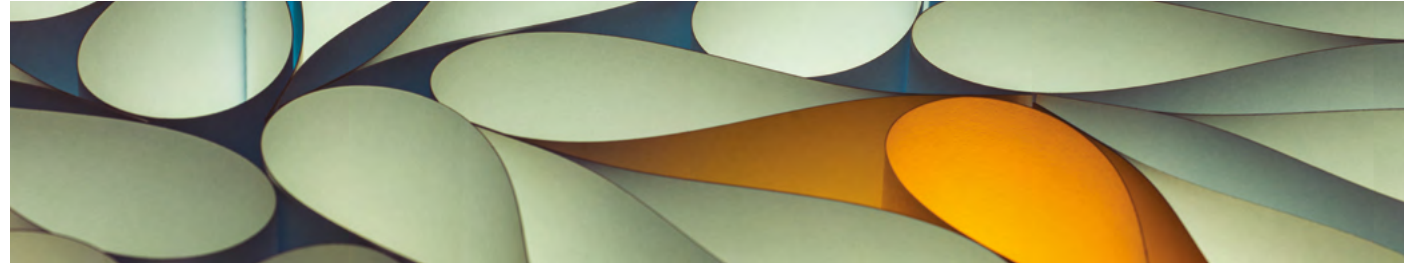


Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors, N = 511 managers, N = 750 leaders.

This pattern was born out across industries, with high levels before the pandemic, followed by a significant dip in 2021 and then gaining back some ground to the position where they are today. Healthcare and life sciences witnessed the largest decline in employee satisfaction levels from before the pandemic to 2021, and today remain the lowest in terms of overall satisfaction.

This evolutionary pattern of employee satisfaction can be explained in a few different ways:

- **Employees might be unconsciously exaggerating the satisfaction they felt in pre-pandemic times.** Given the low levels of satisfaction today with employee experience, a measure of nostalgia can kick in, prompting employees to view pre-pandemic times through rose-tinted spectacles, giving a positively biased response for that period.



- **Employees may be misapplying feelings prompted by other areas of their lives to the work context.**

Given the multitude of challenges (e.g., health, economic, political, familial) many in society have faced over the past two years, it could be that employees are no longer able to distinguish between home life and work life in terms of the emotions each provokes. Should this be the case, a general malaise brought on by radically altered living conditions could translate into a depreciatory assessment of all aspects of existence, including working life – a condition that few have escaped entirely. A recent study from the University of Chicago found that the proportion of North Americans who claim to be “very happy” with life had decreased from 31% in 2018 to 19% in 2021, and those who say they are “not too happy” increased from 13% to 24% in the same time period.³

- **Employees have higher expectations today than they did before the pandemic.**

The rapid shift to remote working at scale upended traditional models of office work. Given the proliferation of technology and tools to support this shift, particularly among knowledge workers, expectations may be elevated in terms of the employee experience, resulting in a disproportionate level of disillusionment when the new working reality fails to meet those expectations. Given the scarcity of talent at the moment, employees might also feel they are in a better position to ask for what they want – and more confident about leaving if they do not get it. A recent study found that 74% of hiring professionals have “poached” employees, with many offering bonuses (63%) and raises (58%) to incentivize talent to move companies.⁴ Given an awareness of their scarcity value on the market, and the perception that they could receive more elsewhere, employees may more readily experience feelings of dissatisfaction with their current employers.

- **Certain aspects of people experience may carry more weight than they did previously.**

Given the social, economic, and health challenges that have occurred over the past two years or so, employees’ priorities have shifted. The pandemic brought certain priorities into sharper focus. Common practices of managers and leaders have not kept pace with these changing employee expectations. In our survey, we found a number of dimensions to be more closely correlated with employees’ overall satisfaction today than before the pandemic.⁵



For example:

- **Processes**

- Receiving timely support from their IT department
- Receiving timely communications on organizational and policy changes from HR

- **Enjoyment and career growth**

- Enjoyment in performing their job
- Feeling encouraged and supported in their personal career development

- **Culture**

- Feeling they can speak to their manager about mental or physical health challenges faced outside of work
- Leadership being motivated by purpose in addition to profit
- Feeling listened to
- Having an empathetic manager
- Receiving perks in addition to agreed compensation

Christian Schmeichel, SVP and Chief Future of Work Officer at SAP, the German multinational software company, says: *"The attention, focus, and personal priorities of employees have shifted significantly. The highest priority topics are different than before the pandemic. For example, with the increased use of technology for remote working, employees value human connection and empathy more today."*

Fig.6

Only 30% of employees are happy at work

Leaders are overly optimistic about their employees' happiness

Less than one-third of employees say they are happy at work. In contrast, the vast majority of leaders (92%) believe the employees they manage or supervise are happy at work (see Figure 6). Among individual contributors, millennials are slightly happier (31%) than Gen Z and Gen X colleagues (25% and 27%, respectively).

Only **30%**

of individual contributors say they are happy at work.



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, employee experience survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors, N = 511 managers, N = 750 leaders.

“The attention, focus, and personal priorities of employees have shifted significantly. The highest priority topics are different than before the pandemic. For example, with the increased use of technology for remote working, employees value human connection and empathy more today.”



Christian Schmeichel

SVP and Chief Future of Work Officer at SAP

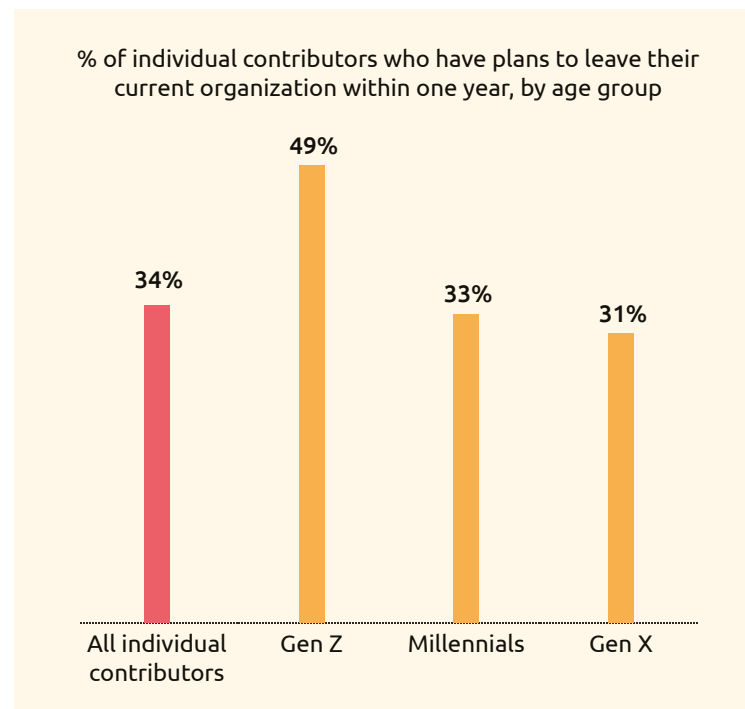
Fig.7

One-half of Gen Z employees plan to leave their organizations

Consequently, one-third of all employees are likely to leave their current company

One-third of employees say they have plans to leave their current company within a year. Of all employees who intend to leave, most (66%) plan to do so within the next 3-9 months. By age group, nearly half of all Gen Z employees – those aged 18 to 24 – say they have plans to leave (see Figure 7).

- By worker type, employees in industrial roles are more likely to say they have plans to leave their current company (40%) than the knowledge (32%) and frontline (31%) workers in our survey.
- The industries that have the greatest share of employees who say they are likely to leave are energy (44%) and utilities (40%).



In addition, employees were asked about the likelihood of their leaving if they were offered the *same job at a different company with the same compensation*. An even greater share (52%) of all individual contributors said they were likely to leave under this scenario. Gen Z employees are slightly more likely to leave in this situation (59%) than their Gen X (57%) and millennial (51%) counterparts. While this may reflect a natural human desire for change more than anything else, again, the difference in perception between employees and their organizational leaders is striking: only 6% of leaders believe that their employees are likely to leave if they were offered the same job with the same pay at another company.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, employee experience survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO PERMANENT AND FLUID EMPLOYEES AT WORK?

Our previous research revealed that nearly 80% of organizations surveyed have used a fluid workforce over the past year, often helping to fill skills gaps and even as a talent-acquisition strategy.⁶ In the current research, fluid workers include temporary employees working on a contract or a gig/project basis and represent 26% of all individual contributors surveyed.

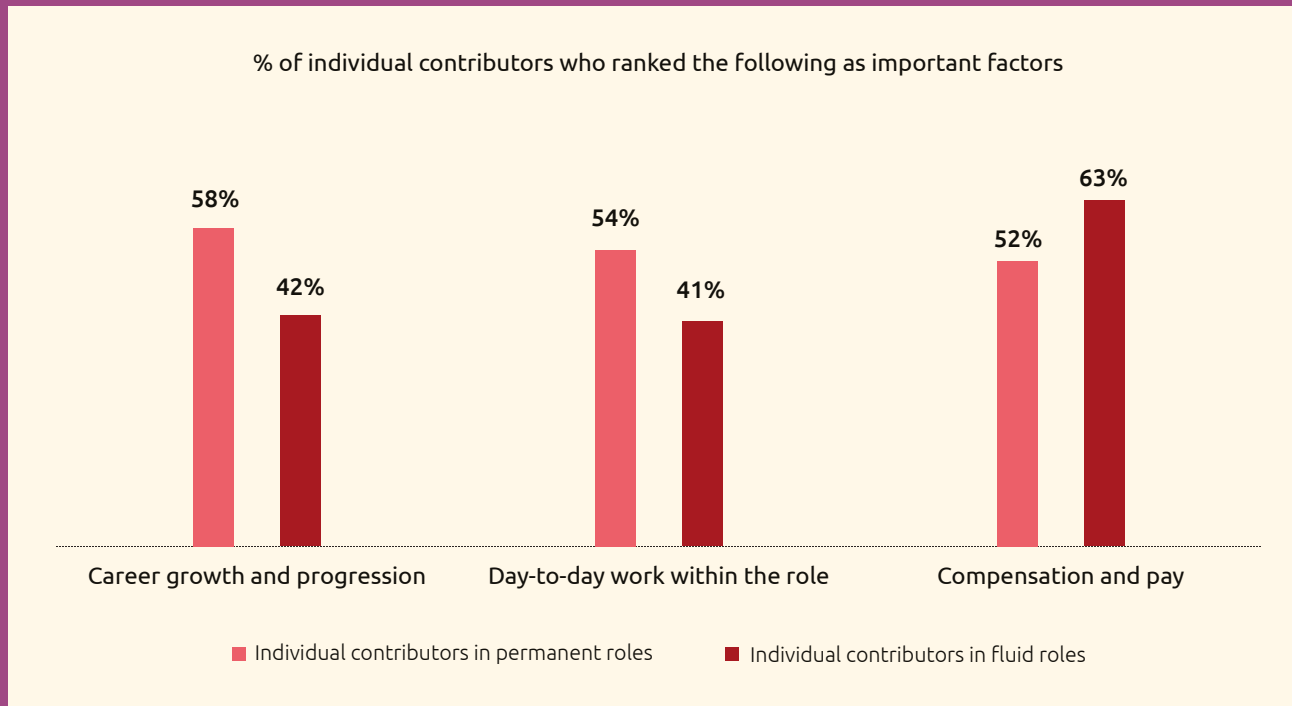
Our survey indicates that both permanent and fluid employees rank clarity of work (e.g., knowing why you are doing what you are doing) as the most important factor at work (72% and 70%, respectively). The second-most important factor for permanent employees is work-life balance (71%), whereas, for fluid employees, it is learning and skill development (68%). Interestingly, there are some differences in the level of importance that permanent and fluid employees place on key parameters. For example, 58% of permanent employees find career growth and progression important at work, compared to 42% of fluid employees, whose progression relies on other factors (see Figure 8). The prominence of compensation relative to career growth and daily work raises the question of whether pay is moving from a “hygiene” factor (i.e., an essential requirement) to a key incentive, especially in a scarce talent market that often provokes bidding wars.

72%

of permanent employees find clarity of work (e.g., knowing why you are doing what you are doing) as the most important factor at work.

Fig.8

Career growth and day-to-day work are more important to permanent employees than fluid employees



The findings were similar for managers: those in permanent roles found day-to-day work more important (49% for permanent versus 33% for fluid roles), and those in fluid roles found compensation more important (50% for fluid versus 38% for permanent roles). Moreover, we found that managers in fluid roles place far greater importance on company purpose (e.g., social or environmental mission) than those in permanent roles (67% versus 38%).

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.



03

**WHAT IS LACKING IN
THE CURRENT PEOPLE
EXPERIENCE?**

In this section, we explore the reasons why individual contributors are dissatisfied with their current employee experience. The key drivers of employee dissatisfaction are linked to challenges with career progression and skill development, manager behaviors and relationships, compensation and performance recognition, and issues with data and technology use and availability. According to our research, the dimensions we present in this section are correlated with the current levels of satisfaction of employees in our survey.

Many employees fail to see how they are contributing to the team effort, feel they are not being offered the necessary skill development, or feel they lack autonomy in their roles

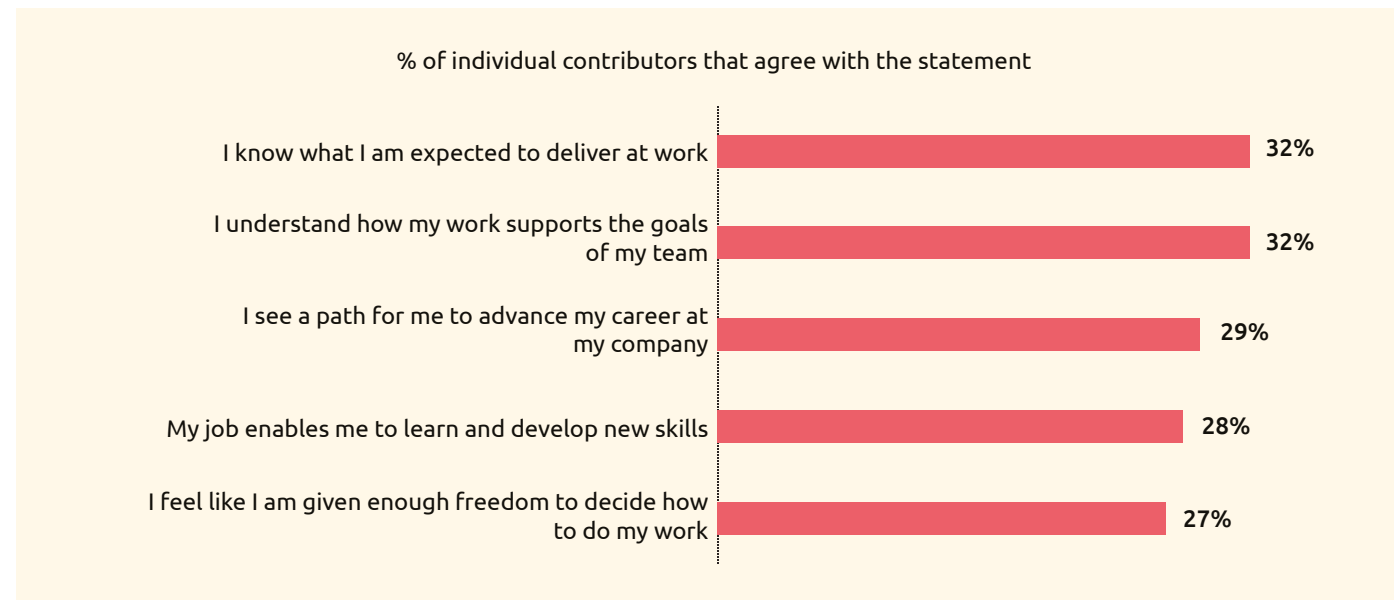
Employees want to feel that their work contributes to the larger goals of their teams and the organization overall. The majority (70%) of employees say clarity of work purpose (i.e., knowing why you are doing what you are doing) is the aspect of work most important to them, and 65% highlight learning and skill development as most

important to them. A minority of employees feel that they understand what is expected of them; how their work supports their team's goals; and also that they are advancing in their careers, able to learn new skills, and have sufficient freedom to shape and direct their work (see Figure 9). It is probable that the issue of a perceived

lack of clear purpose in work roles is one that has long been festering and has been catalyzed by pandemic conditions, rather than arising subsequently. The rise of remote working has also exacerbated these issues, as many employees have limited in-person co-working or collaboration time with peers and managers.

Fig.9

Many employees do not know what is expected of them



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

As Stefania Sammartano, Head of People and Organization at Enel X Way, the eMobility arm of Italian energy manufacturer Enel, confirms: *“Employees crave transparency and want to have all the information that gives them the ability to be autonomous and take decisions by themselves.”*

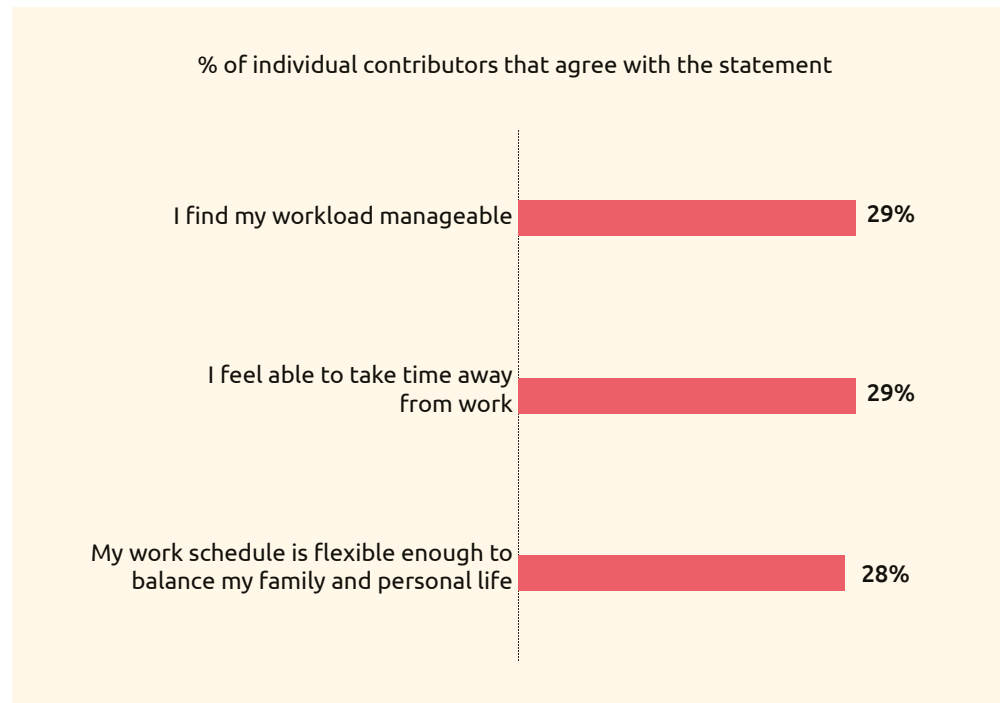
Employees are not satisfied with their workload and flexibility

The majority (65%) of employees say work-life balance is most important to them, yet only 28% feel their work schedule is sufficiently flexible to allow them to achieve this balance. Only 29% find their workload manageable and feel they can take time off when they want (see Figure 10).

In our previous research on hybrid working, we found that 56% of employees fear the stresses and demands of being “always on,” specifically when working remotely. There is a strong correlation between employees feeling that they are “not trusted” to manage themselves and burnout rates. Of the employees who feel they are being micromanaged, 66% also feel burned out in a remote setup. Even one-third of employees (34%) who do not feel micromanaged also feel burned out working remotely.⁷

Fig.10

Less than one-third of employees feel they are able to find a balance at work



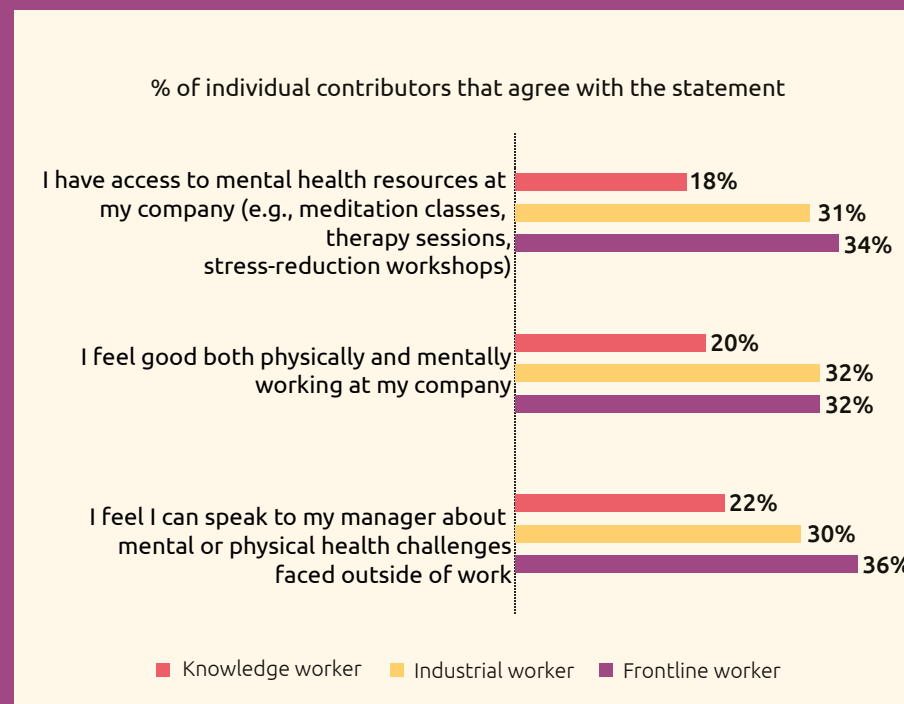
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

ALL TYPES OF EMPLOYEES FACE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AT WORK

We assessed the responses of employees working in knowledge, industrial, and frontline roles. In our survey, around one-third of industrial and frontline employees say they have access to mental health resources, feel good physically and mentally at work, and can speak to their managers about physical or mental health challenges. Fewer knowledge workers can say the same (see Figure 11).

Fig.11

More industrial and frontline employees than knowledge employees have mental health support



It may be that employees working in knowledge roles, which are more conducive to working remotely or in a hybrid setup, are feeling the pressures of remote work to a greater degree than industrial and frontline employees, who are largely working in person and for whom remote working is no more than an occasional novelty. Our previous research on hybrid working found that remote workers feel the impacts of burnout and exhaustion as boundaries between work and life become blurred.⁸

Interestingly, when analyzing knowledge workers and comparing individual contributors to managers in knowledge roles, managers fare much better. For example, only 18% of employees in knowledge roles say they have access to mental health resources at their company, and just 20% say they feel good physically and mentally, compared to 49% and 55% of managers, respectively. There might be an awareness gap between junior employees and managers in terms of the resources available, or junior employees might not feel comfortable broaching these subjects due to company culture, fear of reprisals, or other sensitivities.

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

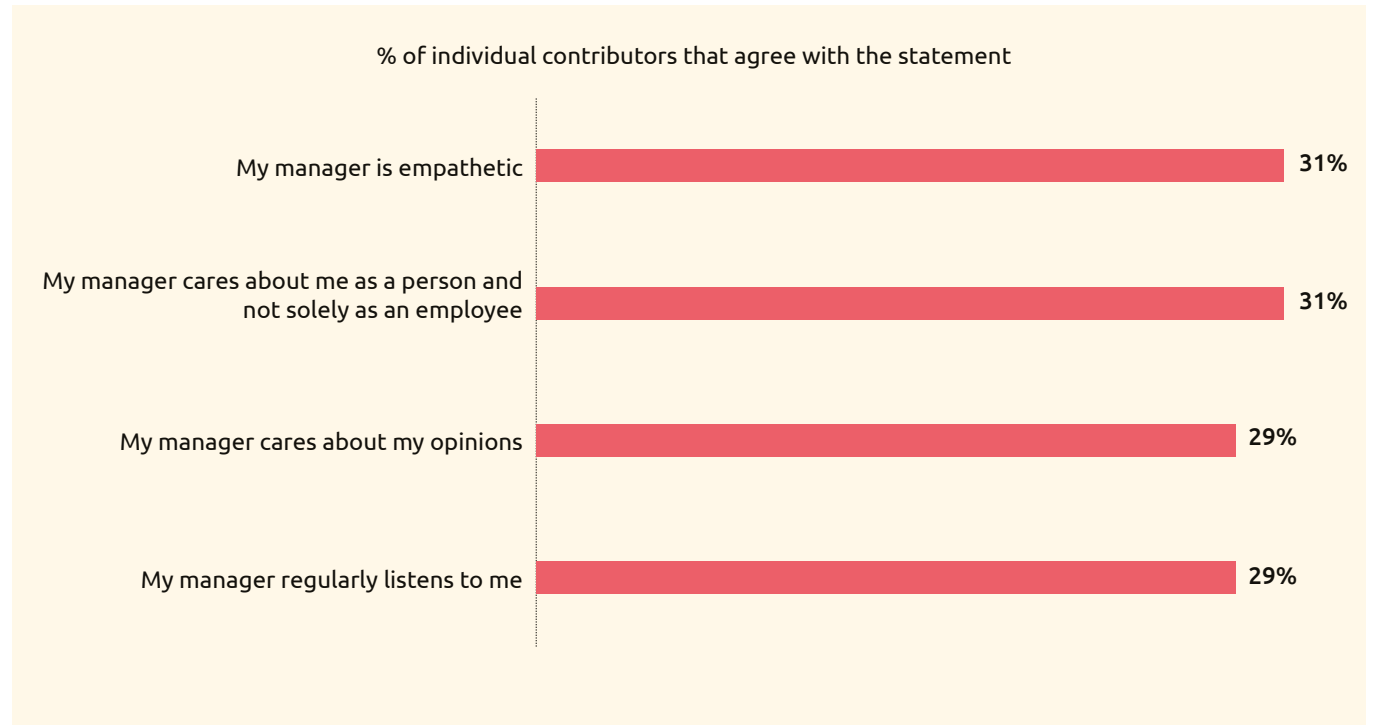
Managers are failing to demonstrate empathetic behavior

Less than one-third of employees believe that their manager demonstrates empathetic behavior towards them, such as listening to and considering their opinions (see Figure 12).

Our previous research found that emotional intelligence is a key attribute of effective leadership. However, over 50% of employees do not believe that their leaders have reached a high level of proficiency in emotional intelligence. For critical leadership skillsets and attributes to take root in the organization, change must be driven from the top. It is essential that executives and managers actively embody people-centric leadership behaviors, such as empathy, authenticity, and transparency. These are particularly important in hybrid working environments.⁹ Fabio Ficca from Enel says: *“We prefer to talk about ‘human experience’ rather than employee experience. We believe that an experience has many more aspects beyond what is directly related to an employee’s role.”*

Fig.12

Only 30% of employees believe their manager to be empathetic



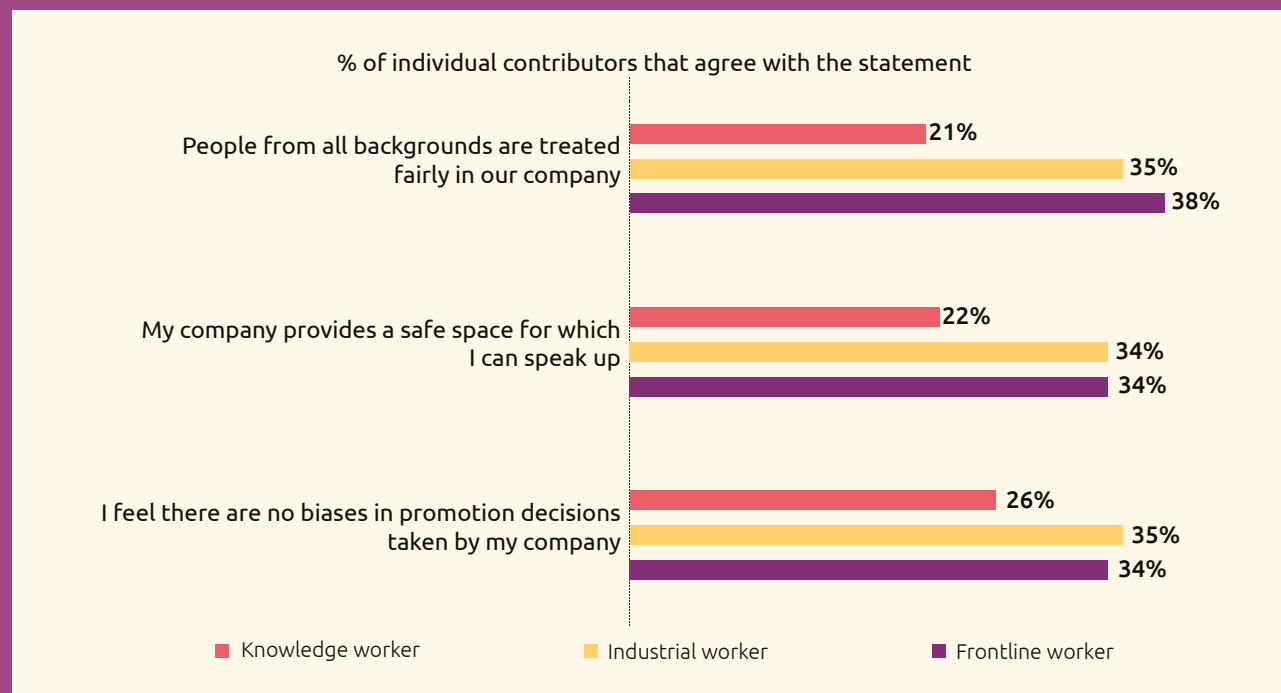
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACROSS WORKER TYPE

In our survey, we asked employees to explain their perceptions of diversity and inclusion at their organizations. Around one-third of industrial and frontline employees say that people from all backgrounds are treated fairly, that they are provided a safe space in which to speak up, and that promotional processes are unbiased. Only about one-quarter of knowledge workers agree with this (see Figure 13). Of those employees who are planning to leave their organizations within a year, 45% say that if their company had a more inclusive and diverse culture, it might help them change their mind about leaving.

Fig.13

More industrial and frontline employees believe employees from all backgrounds are treated fairly



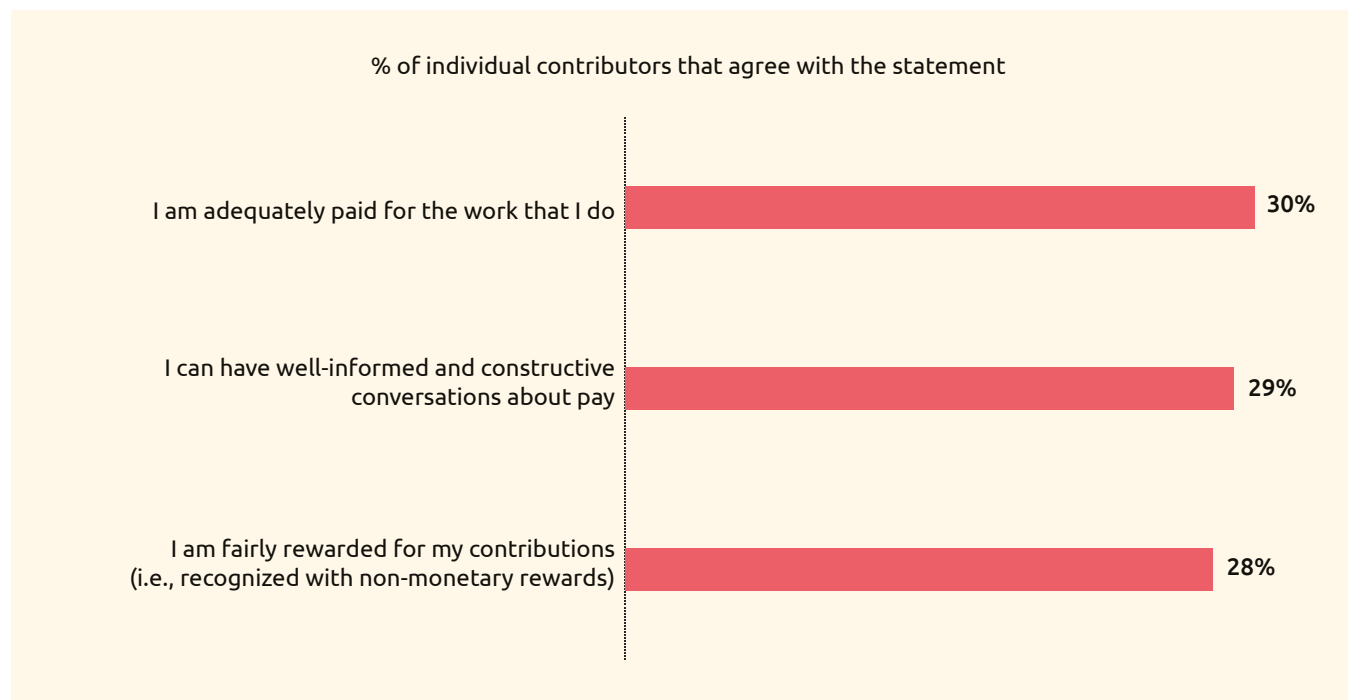
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

Fig.14

30% of employees believe they are adequately paid

Pay is an issue

Only **30%**
of employees believe they are
adequately paid.



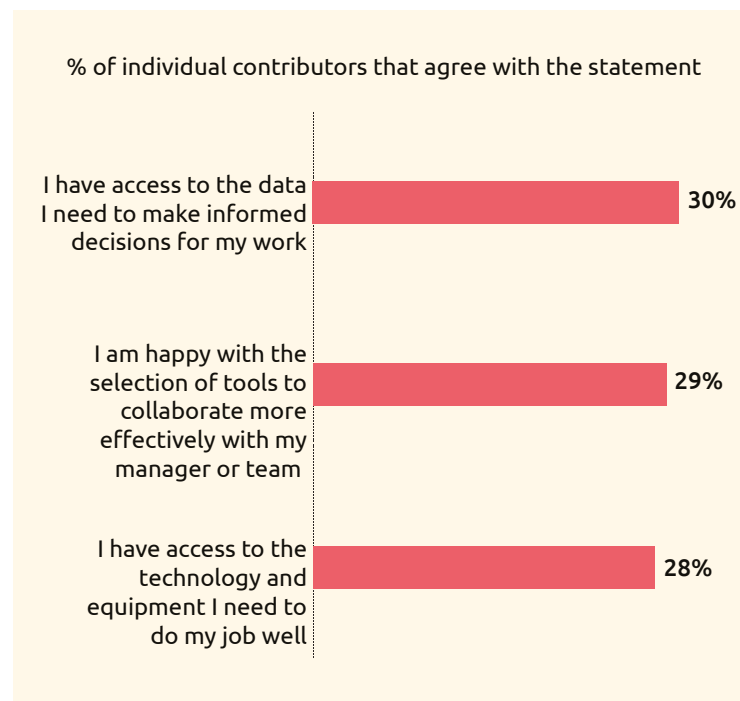
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

Fig.15

Less than one-third of employees believe they have the data, technology, or tools that they need to do their work

Employees feel they lack the necessary technology and data to carry out their work

Less than one-third of employees (29%) say they are happy with collaboration tools at work. Around 30% say they have access to the technology, equipment, and data they need to execute their jobs to the highest standard and make informed work-related decisions (see Figure 15). Investments in technologies that benefit customer experience have long been a focus for many companies, perhaps to the detriment of investments in HR technology. In one recent study, 48% of chief human resource officers said that their current HR technology solutions hinder, rather than improve, employee experience.¹⁰ This issue has been exacerbated by the pandemic with the transition to hybrid working.



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

An HR vice president at a leading banking and financial services company says: *“Frontline employees who interact with the clients directly require even quicker and easier access to technology, data, and tools than the people who are in the office.”* Indeed, significantly more frontline employees (36%) say they have access to the data they need to make decisions than do employees in knowledge roles (24%). To promote transparency, Kraft Heinz, an American multinational food company, now offers data access to its managers that was previously available only to HR business partners. Moreover, they created a portal called Live Well, which serves as a hub for all well-being information, so that employees can easily locate relevant information.¹¹

Only **28%**

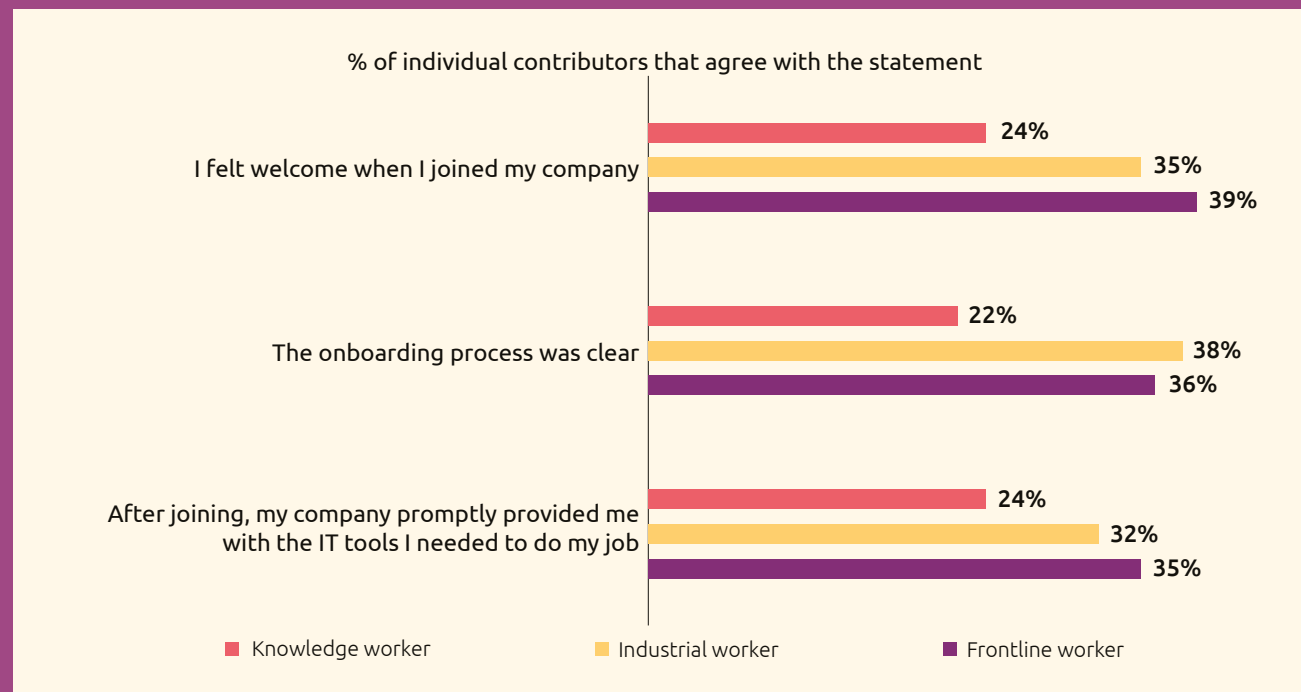
of employees have access to the technology and equipment they need to do their job well.

Moments that matter: The onboarding experience

In our survey, only one-third of industrial and frontline employees say they felt welcome on joining their respective organizations, feel they experienced a comprehensive onboarding process, and felt that their managers had provided them promptly with the appropriate IT tools. Around one-quarter of knowledge workers can say the same (see Figure 16).

Fig.16

Industrial and frontline employees have a smoother onboarding experience than do knowledge employees



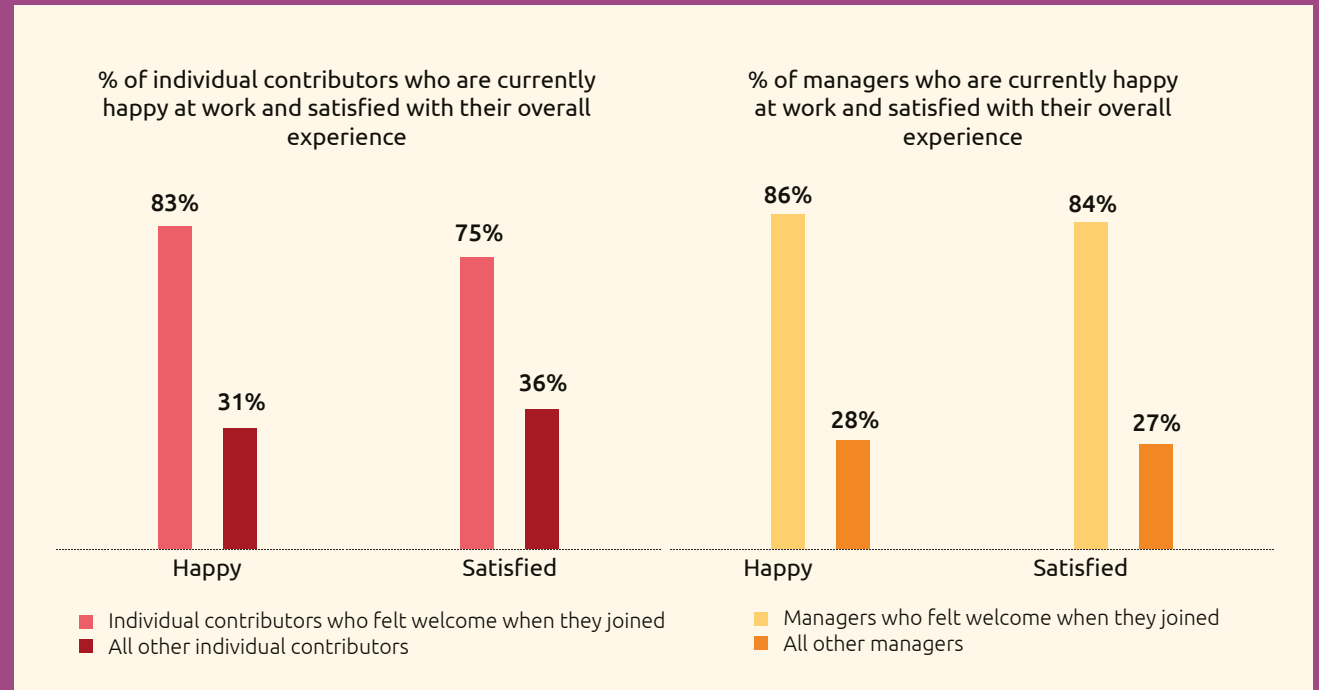
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors.

Fig.17

Employees who felt welcome when they joined their companies are happier and more satisfied today

Knowledge employees in manager roles have a more positive perception of these aspects of work than do individual contributors. For example, only 24% of employees in knowledge roles say they felt welcome when they joined the company, and only 22% said the onboarding process was clear, but 65% of managers said the same. This may indicate that seniority influences the onboarding experience, with employees in managerial roles benefitting from greater transparency and clarity, and better communication. Alternatively, it may be indicative that, for junior employees, who will typically be less professionally and personally assured than their more experienced senior colleagues and will lack professional support networks, the lack of personal connection offered by the modern virtual onboarding process is damaging. In fact, in our previous research on remote working, 51% of new joiners claimed not to feel adequately onboarded and enabled to work in a remote environment.¹²

Across all individual contributors and managers, the degree to which an employee feels welcome impacts their level of happiness and satisfaction. For example, 83% of employees who felt welcome when they joined their company say they are happy at work today, compared to only 31% of other employees (see Figure 17).



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors, N = 311 individual contributors who felt welcome when they joined; N = 327 managers who felt welcome when they joined.



04

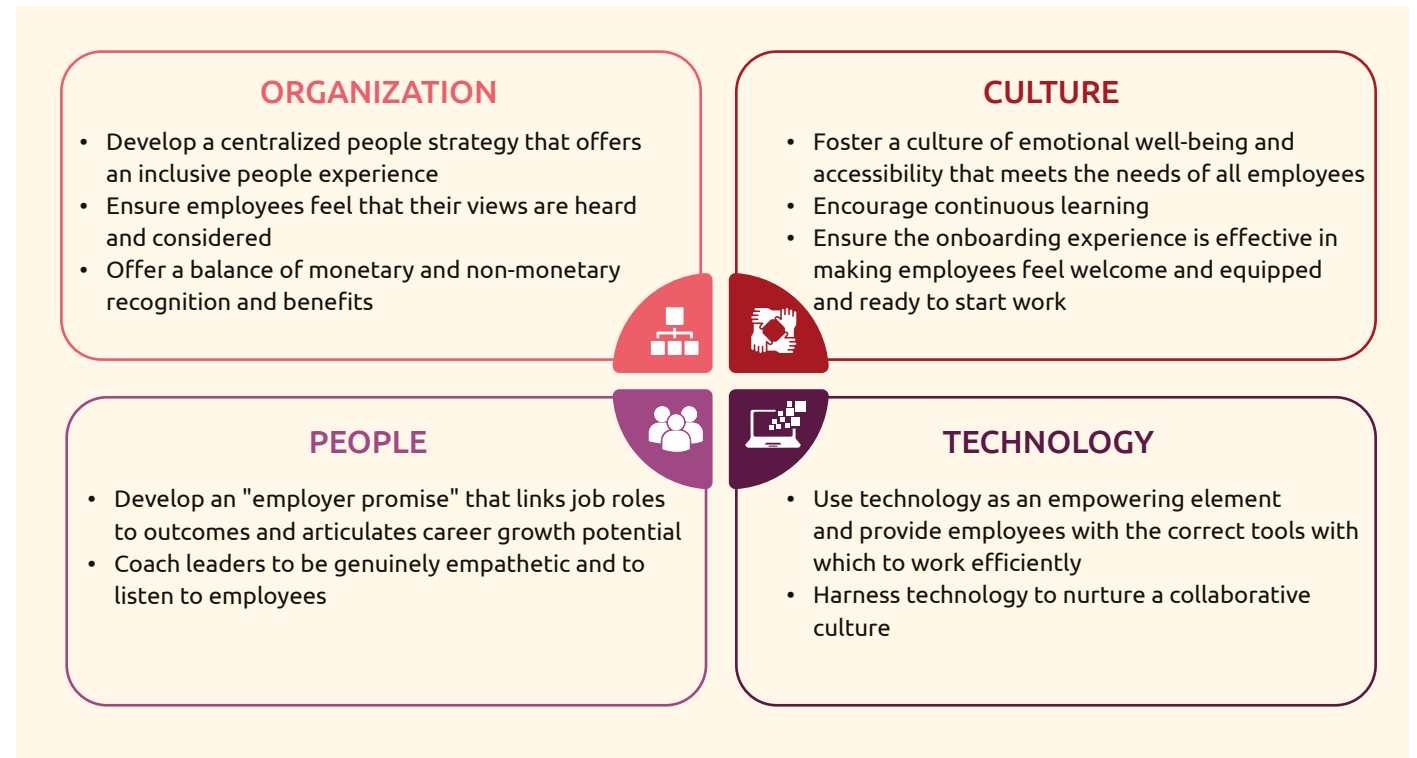
HOW CAN COMPANIES IMPROVE THEIR PEOPLE EXPERIENCE?

Fig.18

10 key actions for companies to improve their people experiences

There is a gap in perception of the experience at work between employees and leaders. While many of today's employees are unsatisfied or unhappy at work, leaders are largely unaware of this. An effective modern people experience constitutes so much more than the traditional HR talent lifecycle of onboarding to exit; organizations must recognize that the nature of the employee experience is essentially determined by daily work, interactions, and relationships.

To showcase what leading organizations are doing to provide an improved experience, we focused on the companies identified as providing the most positive people experiences (i.e., the 100 employees analyzed in the first section of this report), boasting the most satisfied and happy employees in our sample. We have incorporated these key findings into our proposed 10 key actions for companies to take to improve the experience of their people (see Figure 18).



Source: Capgemini Research Institute analysis.

Fig.19

Leading organizations offer an employee experience aligned with overall business strategy

Organization

Develop a centralized people strategy that offers an inclusive people experience

Companies need to develop an enterprise-wide people strategy that includes all permanent employees and gig workers across different functions. It should also account for key demographics, such as young and older employees and new joiners as well as longer-tenured employees. Top leadership, including the CEO and other C-suite executives, must be aligned on the people strategy and invested in the outcomes. All too often, experience can be deprioritized as an “HR issue,” when in fact – as the results of this research show – it is a critical business issue that impacts growth and viability. Leading organizations offer a well-defined employee experience that is aligned with the overall business strategy (see Figure 19).



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 750 companies, N = 750 leaders, N = 94 leading companies whose employees are the most satisfied and happy. whose employees are the most satisfied and happy.

A centralized people strategy can help to level up disparate experiences across business entities. An HR executive at a multinational electric utility company says: *“Because we are so decentralized, each business unit is very independent. Therefore, the businesses are siloed, and the cultures are exceptionally different. There is a need to be consistent and, in my experience, it is very difficult to deliver a high-quality, consistent people experience without a common strategy.”*

The chief people officer at a global restaurant franchise adds: *“Irrespective of the company, function, hierarchy, or the location of the workforce, employee experience has the same goal for everyone. Therefore, while some nuances of employee experience strategy can be different, as per employee segments, at macro level you have to reach out to every single person with the same centralized strategy.”*

Fabio Ficca of Enel says: *“We have classified our employee journey into six phases: Brand Awareness, Application, Recruiting, Onboarding, Professional Experience, and Offboarding. Our strategy is centralized and is the same worldwide.”* At the same time, companies must also allow for localized, personal components to be built into the broader centralized people experience, ensuring equality of employee experience exists alongside the possibility of a more nuanced, tailored offering. Nathalie Jus-Kassis, Head of HR Transformation and Marketing at BNP Paribas Personal Finance, says: *“Corporate HR defines the global strategy, and culture and mindset, while countries are autonomous in the management of their own local employee experience initiatives.”*

Thinking of employees as consumers of your services can help structure the employee journey. Christian Schmeichel explains how SAP has a HR consumer experience KPI: *“The objective of our people strategy is to create great people experiences. To achieve this, we need to understand the journey of a regular employee, whom we call a consumer of our HR services. This subtle reframing of our employees changes the perspective. This means that, if you understand the consumption journey and measure it at each stage, you can steer that experience.”*

“Corporate HR defines the global strategy, and culture and mindset, while countries are autonomous in the management of their own local employee experience initiatives.”



Nathalie Jus-Kassis

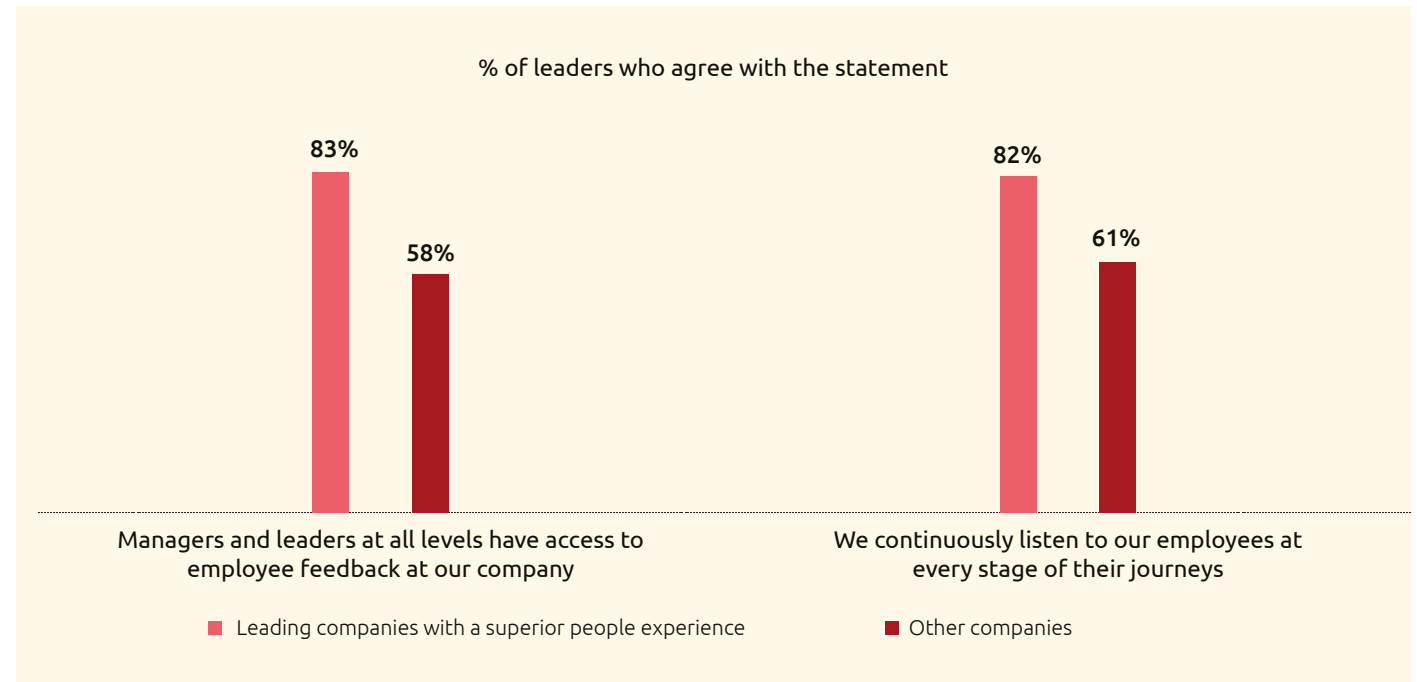
Head of HR Transformation and Marketing at BNP Paribas Personal Finance

Fig.20

Companies whose employees have a superior experience continuously listen to employees and are transparent with feedback

Ensure employees feel that their views are heard and considered

To develop a comprehensive people strategy, companies can make use of employee-listening programs and surveys to gather feedback. Eighty-two percent of companies that offer a superior experience to their employees listen to them continuously, compared to 61% of other companies. Leading companies are also more likely to grant organizational access to employee feedback (see Figure 20). The head of talent management at a global food and beverage company says: *“You cannot have a one-off listening program and then try to build employee experience from the kind of response you receive on a single survey. Companies need a listening program that combines each of the moments that matter in the employee lifecycle, which means a comprehensive listening strategy must be created.”* Manuel Scotto, Head of People and Culture at Roche, a Swiss multinational healthcare company, adds: *“I believe employees always know at least as much as leaders do. Their fresh energy and ideas can be tapped if we develop a structure to continuously crowdsource their feedback.”*



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 750 companies, N = 750 leaders, N = 94 leading companies whose employees are the most satisfied and happy.

Beyond collecting feedback, a key challenge is ensuring employees feel listened to and that they see action being taken based on their feedback. An HR vice president at a transportation manufacturer says: *“It is extremely difficult for the HR team and business leaders to move the needle after collecting employee feedback. Only through sheer persistence, combined with creativity, does action happen.”* In our research, only one-third of employees say they feel listened to. It is critical that companies are proactive in rectifying this.

Christian Schmeichel of SAP has developed a continuous listening strategy and suggests that a key step is to communicate back to employees and trigger action post-feedback: *“We moved from an annual employee satisfaction survey to a continuous listening approach, where we took the pulse of the organization on a regular basis, multiple times per year. It follows the notion of listening, understanding, and then acting.”* Listening strategies should cover all

steps in the talent journey, from pre-hire through to exit, with particular attention paid to onboarding. As the results of this research show, many employees found the onboarding experience unwelcoming and unclear – the opposite of the desired outcome.

The chief people officer at a global restaurant franchise confirms that KPIs are built into the process at the company: *“We have introduced calendarized roundtable discussions as part of our KPIs, which combine team members with HR and business leaders. It is used to action the lessons learned from the feedback our team members share. Being transparent and vocal about how feedback is actioned and sharing the rationale of why something might not be implemented is essential.”*

Mickaël Locoh, Vice President Southern Europe and Africa at Steelcase, a US-based office furniture

manufacturer, says an action plan and follow-up are critical in the post-feedback process: *“We share back what we learned from employees in an internal communication. We follow this up with an action plan, clearly showing how we will implement their feedback. We are transparent with our progress and share the evolution of the results every six months.”*

The HR team at BNP Paribas Personal Finance takes a three-step approach to employee listening. At group level, they conduct a yearly survey; at country level, each country implements a survey customized to their location; and at team level, the aim is for employees to share feedback on a monthly basis, which is a strategy still under construction. A dedicated action plan that addresses key feedback and provides transparency on steps to be taken must be completed within each country.¹³

Offer a balance of monetary and non-monetary recognition and benefits

Compensation remains a key criterion for many employees in assessing their happiness and reinforcing their decision to stay, especially in today's challenging labor market and economic environment. Less than one-third (30%) of employees believe they are adequately paid for the work that they do. A similarly small share (28%) say they are fairly rewarded for their contributions (i.e., they are recognized with non-monetary perks or rewards). Conversely, over half (55%) of employees say that offering non-monetary recognition for their ideas and contributions could help to improve their current experience and satisfaction in their job. Moreover, 78% of employees say a higher salary would help dissuade them from considering leaving their current organization.

Companies need to ensure organizational structure and policies around pay scales, rewards, and benefits are geared towards a hybrid workplace and are customized to ensure they are fair, irrespective of whether they are working remotely or on site. Companies can also offer creative options for employees to recharge and reduce burnout. The head of talent management at a global food and beverage company says: *"A continuous culture of day-to-day recognition across both remote and in-person employees is very powerful. It is also crucial to creating benefits and policies (e.g., around flexibility, inclusion, maternity and paternity leave, and benefit packages) that give you a competitive advantage versus other companies."*

Outdoor-clothing retailer Patagonia has created a handbook called Let my people go surfing, which encourages its employees to take time off work and surf when the ocean waves are crashing temptingly. They also allow employees who have been with the company for a year to take two months off to volunteer at an environmental organization.¹⁴



Culture

Foster a culture of emotional well-being and accessibility that meets the needs of all employees

Fostering employee well-being as part of a healthy organizational culture should be a priority for all leaders, who must focus on preventive measures to anticipate (and thereby avoid) employee burnout. Our previous research suggested that 55% of all employees surveyed globally feel burned out because of working remotely, with the figure rising to 61% for employees aged 31–40.¹⁵ Only 27% of employees in our survey said they feel good, both physically and mentally, at work. Paying more attention to these basic tenets of employee well-being could have a significant positive impact on elements such as retention.

Eline Bagnolet, Head of HR Integration and Transformation at Euronext, agrees: *“Our employees and candidates interested in joining Euronext are increasingly interested in hybrid working modes and flexibility of work timing, especially when their personal life makes it a need and when their job function can allow it. Allowing them this flexibility contributes to a better employee experience and work-life balance.”* Over half (57%) of employees suggested that a better work-life balance could dissuade them from leaving their current organizations. In this respect, leaders can use the results of their employee listening programs. Solutions should target a range of employee groups and personas, recognizing their different needs and preferences (for example, new joiners versus longer-tenured employees, or primarily remote versus on-site employees). Companies that offer a superior experience to their employees are more likely to have customized the experience to different demographics and employee personas (see Figure 21).

Fig.21

Leading organizations customize employee experiences to different employee groups



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 750 companies, N = 750 leaders, N = 94 leading companies whose employees are the most satisfied and happy.

Lenneke Alves-Bakker, Head of Change and Adoption, Digital Workplace at Airbus, says: *“Different types of worker have different needs. If we want to fulfill all those needs, we need to categorize our employees into different personas. Our mid-term vision is developing a persona-model approach based on those differing needs and desires. Separately, we launched ‘Better Workplace,’ which tackles the short-term issues that we urgently need to address to improve the day-to-day working environment.”*

Helena Dreisig, Executive Vice President People and Organization at TOMRA, a Norwegian manufacturer of sensor-based solutions, says: *“We have quite a young workforce, with almost half being under 40 years old. We see many differences in expectations in this generation. For example, they have higher expectations of flexibility and tool availability. They also have less patience and will not stick around if they are not happy. We need to be more dynamic in the experiences we offer, and we need to be more proactive and invest more than we have in the past.”*

Oliver Grohmann of Emirates Group says: *“When formulating our employee experience strategy, we need to look after all our employees, younger and older. We also need to consider those who have joined us for a gig or temporary project, as well as those looking for lifelong employment. The key for us, and other companies as well, is to have an agile approach to strategy formulation and policy that can be customized to different types of employees.”*

To monitor employee mental health, UK oil and gas multinational BP has included mental well-being questions in its regular employee surveys to understand in real time how teams are feeling and build positive steps to nurture mental well-being.¹⁶ Marriott’s TakeCare well-being program builds on the relationship between the company and its associates, encouraging them to invest in their own well-being and that of others. The program includes fitness events and challenges, financial-wellness tools, emotional health, career-development training, and opportunities for community involvement.¹⁷

“Different types of worker have different needs. If we want to fulfill all those needs, we need to categorize our employees into different personas. Our mid-term vision is developing a persona model approach based on those differing needs and desires.”

Lenneke Alves-Bakker

Head of Change and Adoption, Digital Workplace at Airbus

Encourage continuous learning

The majority (65%) of employees say learning and skill development is the most important aspect of their work; however, employees are largely dissatisfied, with only 28% saying their organization enables them to learn and develop new skills. Companies need to build a culture that promotes autonomy and trust, particularly for remote workers, and offer frequent opportunities to upskill or gain new experience. Employees must also feel safe to take risks, as Mickaël Locoh at Steelcase confirms: *“Employees need to enjoy their work and find meaning in what they do. This helps to provide them with a psychologically safe environment, meaning they feel accepted and can take risks without fear of negative consequences from their team or manager.”*

Louis-Laurent Preux, Talent and Strategic Foresight Director at Carrefour, adds: *“Psychological safety is extremely important for employees, which means that they can propose an idea – even if it is a bad idea – and have the freedom to do so without fearing consequences from their managers or peers. If there is no psychological safety in the workplace, there cannot be creativity.”*

Companies can harness technology to help build a learning culture. Agnès Le Guern at Air Liquide affirms: *“Our goal is to continue being an organization that learns and grows continuously. We are creating a self-service infrastructure, so that employees can easily share their experiences, knowledge, and insights.”*

In our research, only 39% of employees say they enjoy their job, and only 40% have access to personalized learning and development data to track their career-development progress. Organizations can use learning systems to encourage employees to upskill, pursue new endeavors within their work, or take advanced certification courses. They can also help employees to set out clear career trajectories and identify roles within the same company to which they can aspire, facilitating internal mobility. Louis-Laurent Preux adds: *“When we recruit young employees, i.e., Gen Z, the most important thing influencing their experience is for them to have good training. The next most important thing for them is internal mobility. They want to know where they will be in three years’ time. Could they potentially perform a different job?”*

Psychological safety is extremely important for employees, which means that they can propose an idea – even if it is a bad idea – and have the freedom to do so without fearing consequences from their managers or peers. If there is no psychological safety in the workplace, there cannot be creativity.”

Louis-Laurent Preux

Talent and Strategic Foresight
Director at Carrefour

The head of talent management at a global food and beverage company adds: *“Employees appreciate when a company encourages capability building and provides the tools for them to develop. That means not only traditional training, but also how companies digitally enable employees to learn and grow, either in their specific job roles or by allowing movement to different projects to develop certain key skills.”* A recent workplace learning study found that those companies that allow a high degree of internal mobility retain employees for an

average of 5.4 years, nearly twice the average length of time attained by companies that struggle with it.¹⁸

AT&T is working to build a culture of in-house perpetual learning. The company offers structured learning through AT&T University, which includes tuition aid and formal training, and is developing personalized learning programs. To this end, the organization is mapping more than 30,000 employees to more than 50 personas and creating a persona-based learning path for each.¹⁹

Ensure the onboarding experience is effective in making employees feel welcome and equipped and ready to start work

As this research reveals, a large share of employees do not feel particularly welcome in their companies. Effective onboarding dramatically reduces failure rates and increases employee engagement and retention rates.²⁰ Our research supports this: employees who report feeling welcome at onboarding are much more satisfied and happier today than those employees who did not. Jeannette Schuh of Plastic Omnium says: *“In the employee lifecycle, an interesting, attractive, and tailor-made onboarding process is key. This is a joint responsibility between management and human resources.”* Such practices should be used to provide a welcoming environment that encourages a feeling of belonging, and ultimately improve employee retention. They should be a way of making the employee feel that they are part of the company and ease their initial entry into working there, rather than overburdening them with paperwork or giving them a laundry list of activities and tasks to complete.

In today’s market, the talent lifecycle can be short, especially among younger workers. One study found an average tenure of only 1.3 years for employees in the 20-24 age range, compared to 7.2 years for those aged 45-54.²¹ It is, therefore, important to extend the



onboarding experience beyond the first few weeks and ensure employees are given the time to build a strong connection with the organizational culture.

Companies can consider the methods listed below as ways of optimizing the onboarding experience, in a virtual or in-person format:

- Be **proactive**; do not wait until the new hire's first day to begin engaging with them. Have a pre-onboarding plan in place. Send a checklist, welcome kit, and a note detailing what to expect on arrival. Also, as soon as you have given the initial welcome, provide them with access to all the tools and systems that they need to perform their work. Additionally, give the new hires access to the internal employee site to allow them to feel that they're part of the organizational team and to acclimatize themselves to the culture.
- As early as possible in the onboarding stage, introduce and demonstrate **company values**. It is crucial that new employees feel assured that they are connected to a shared purpose and set of values. To make company values seem concrete and actionable, senior executives and managers should talk about them openly and share practical examples of where employees have displayed different values.
- Have a **buddy system** (i.e., have a friend in the company from day one). This is a simple yet effective way to welcome new hires. Besides helping new hires with unfamiliar tasks or processes, buddies should help them develop relationships with their peers, within their own teams, and within other departments. They can also engage new hires socially to allow them to feel more relaxed and confident within the work environment. Buddies should introduce new hires to experienced employees, allowing the former to ask questions and seek advice.
- Most importantly, managers must have a communicated **progress framework** that can be followed from a new hire's first day and used to assess their progress against preset goals. It should be characterized by extensive face-to-face interaction between the manager and new hires in the early weeks. Coordinating in-office co-working days could help to reduce attrition of new hires in the early months. Further, managers should be approachable, encouraging new hires to discuss anything that might be impeding their progress. Managers should be free with praise and encouragement, as well as assistance.

People

Develop an “employer promise” that links job roles to outcomes and articulates career-growth potential

There is a major disconnect for many employees between their daily routines and the overarching goals of the team or organization. Only 26% of employees feel their work has a positive impact on their teams, and just 29% see a path to advancing their careers. This is striking when considering that the majority (63%) of employees say that providing new growth opportunities can help in improving their experience and satisfaction in their job.

As part of their people strategies, organizations can consider offering new learning opportunities that also increase employees' value to the company, such as job sharing, secondment to another department, and international assignments. Australia-based software

company Atlassian has a long-running secondment program, which places its employees in a different functional area internally for a 6-to-12-month period. It helps employees grow their skills and advance their careers without leaving the company.²² Setting clear goals and tracking progress within performance management is also critical to allowing employees to understand what is expected of them. Lastly, the employer promise should be consistent with the external employer branding in order to support hiring and recruitment. The head of executive search at a global telecommunications company adds: *“Candidates and employees want more than ‘just a job.’ Culture and values are really celebrated and focused upon at our company. Talking about and promoting these elements internally and externally helps us create a positive employer brand.”*

“In the employee lifecycle, an interesting, attractive, and tailormade onboarding process is key. This is a joint responsibility between management and human resources.”



Jeannette Schuh

Plastic Omnium
Vice President Human Resources and
Internal Communication

Coach leaders to be genuinely empathetic and to listen to employees

Our survey reveals that employees do not widely regard their managers as empathetic, nor do they consider them as displaying important empathetic behaviors, such as listening to and considering their opinions or caring about them as people, which is consistent with our previous research on new leadership traits.²³ This, on top of a sense that they cannot share their non-work struggles with their managers or easily access mental health resources, provides a stark picture of failure for many employees.

It is critical that managers and employees alike are coached to demonstrate people-centric leadership qualities such as empathy, authenticity, and transparency. This change must be driven from the top. Top leadership beginning from the CEO must actively embody the behaviors that they are encouraging in their employees. Leaders must be aligned with these new behaviors, and willing to adapt and hold one another accountable.

In addition, given the huge discrepancies between the satisfaction and happiness of individual contributors and managers at work today, managers must take greater care with their own teams and direct reports. An individual contributor's experience can be shaped by the quality of their interactions and relationship with their manager. Managers must recognize the influence that they can have on their teams and improve their listening skills to develop more effective personal and professional relationships. This is especially important in a remote or hybrid work environment, where creating trust between the manager and employee is a vital component of building team unity and a positive work culture.

Charise Le, the Chief Human Resources Officer at Schneider Electric, an energy management and automation company, says: *"We are training our managers to engage employees with more empathy and care and to adjust their leadership and communication styles with remote working. And employees are learning that empowerment comes with responsibility in this new hybrid model."*²⁴

The Head of Talent and Organizational Development at a leading pharmaceutical company, adds: *"Most leaders do not take into account the importance of providing a safe employee experience, which means creating a space for employees where they can openly share problems with their leaders and expect their leaders to be empathetic about it."* The HR function at Airbnb was redefined to focus on the goal of building a welcoming and inclusive culture for the organization's new hires. Encouraging a sense of belonging is at the core of the employee journey and is incorporated into everything from recruiting and onboarding to citizenship, physical facilities, and food. For example, after listening to the needs of its employees, Airbnb introduced a "live and work anywhere initiative," where employees are given the flexibility to work from anywhere remotely.²⁵

Technology

Use technology as an empowering element and provide employees with the correct tools with which to work efficiently

A common challenge uncovered in this research is the differing experiences employees feel when interacting with other functions (e.g., IT, HR) on an everyday level (for example, submitting a timesheet). Often, these functional experiences are awkward and leave employees feeling frustrated or overburdened. Every application an employee uses impacts their experience, whether they are common systems, such as time entry and expense management or conferencing and video application, or business-specific applications. Addressing this subject, Eline Bagnolet of Euronext says: *“Offering a seamless experience with different support tools such as HR, admin, and finance is extremely important to contribute to both efficiency and employee experience today.”*

Providing intuitive applications and integrating them across the application landscape should be a top priority for companies. Companies utilizing shared services can consider moving to global business services to dissolve

silos. Self-service capabilities in HR and non-HR systems can provide time savings, provided they are efficient. Ensuring that such self-service systems work well, can be accessed on mobile devices, and have simple workflows that can easily be followed to completion will create easy wins.

Currently, only 38% of employees say that they enjoy such access. Françoise Bragard, Digital HR Manager at a luxury company, says: *“There is a need to reorganize, simplify, and streamline several processes in the company (such as finance, admin, performance management) as, today, employees need separate validation for each process and have to memorize different sets of guidelines to access and work with different software. For instance, if you are from the HR department, then working on the HR software will be simple for you, but it’s not the case for employees and managers [in other functions].”*

Companies should use the right intranet platform, with a personalized dashboard for each employee. Unilever’s Employee Experience team is consolidating a one-stop digital chat-based help desk, which coordinates employee support across finance, IT, and HR. This came out of an analysis that revealed that 20% of tickets were raised

by people contacting the wrong helpdesk.²⁶ Christian Schmeichel from SAP says: *“When you want to create holistic and sustainable positive employee experiences, you need to think beyond the traditional HR boundaries. That requires us to partner closely with functional areas like IT and facility management. This is not so easy because other functions have different KPIs and, historically, different goals. Therefore, to create that experience, it is very important to manage centrally.”*

Furthermore, giving employees appropriate digital tools to carry out their jobs more effectively is a powerful way to provide employees with an experience that they will find exciting and rewarding, especially in a hybrid work setup. Our findings indicate that many employees are underwhelmed by their current technology experiences; only one-third of employees say they have access to the technology and data they need to do their job to the highest standard and make informed decisions. While empowering employees and giving them the autonomy to do their jobs is important, equipping them with the tools and technology to carry out their jobs is equally so. This is especially important for remote workers, who can feel isolated if left without this level of support from the outset.

Harness technology to nurture a collaborative culture

Our research found that many employees are unhappy with collaboration tools at work. In this era of hybrid working, companies should provide the appropriate online collaboration tools to improve the way in which employees work together. This will enable greater agility by moving any siloed information to one central location, so that it can be accessed by whomever needs it, via permissions based on role, project, or team. It will also help bring people from various designations, backgrounds, and experiences together to collaborate (see Figure 22).

Fig.22

Companies that offer a superior employee experience adopt new digital tools



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 750 companies, N = 750 leaders, N = 94 leading companies whose employees are the most satisfied and happy.

“There is a need to reorganize, simplify, and streamline several processes in the company (such as finance, admin, performance management) as, today, employees need separate validation for each process and have to memorize different sets of guidelines to access and work with different software.”

Françoise Bragard,

Digital HR Manager at a luxury company

CONCLUSION

Our research reveals that many of today's employees are, to some degree, unsatisfied or unhappy with their experience at work. Leaders are largely unaware of this dynamic, despite the clear impact a positive people experience can have on business metrics. The reasons driving this dissatisfaction cut across many different dimensions, from employees' day-to-day experience in their job, to their opportunities for career growth and development, to how they balance their own health and wellness and how well they feel they are paid and rewarded. The benefits of improving people experience are clear, yet not many organizations are doing so effectively.

While there is no foolproof recipe for optimizing people experience, each of the elements in our recommendations must be systematically addressed and adapted to the company's business model, market ambition, and talent pool. The refreshed employer promise must be translated into a seamless and relevant experience for all employees, including both permanent and fluid workers, and extend to frontline, industrial, and knowledge workers. A high degree of personalization and manager interaction and involvement to nurture individuals to become their best selves with a capacity to grow and develop, while ensuring they feel heard and seen, is critical. As employee needs and desires shift and change over time and their journey in life, the people experience must be under continuous review. Processes and ways of working should constantly be evaluated and updated to match employees' perceptions, feelings, and concepts of well-being. Support from the right technology, a culture of empowerment and continuous learning, and supportive and empathetic leadership are also essential elements of revamping people experience to create lasting employee engagement and satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To understand the experience of employees and how leading companies are approaching people experience, we carried out extensive research, with both qualitative and quantitative components.

In-depth interviews

We conducted 22 in-depth interviews with industry executives from various organizations. Interviewees comprised human resources executives working across HR management, talent, employee engagement, and the digital workplace.

Executive survey

We surveyed 2,250 respondents, including 750 leaders and 1,500 employees (comprising 511 managers and 989 individual contributors) at 750 organizations with more than \$1 billion in annual revenue across 10 countries. For every two employees at a specific company, we surveyed one leader from the same company. The distribution of respondents and their organizations is provided in the following figures.

The study findings reflect the views of the people who responded to our online questionnaire for this research and are aimed at providing directional guidance. Please contact a Capgemini expert listed at the end of the report to understand specific implications.

Fig.23

% of respondents by company headquarters

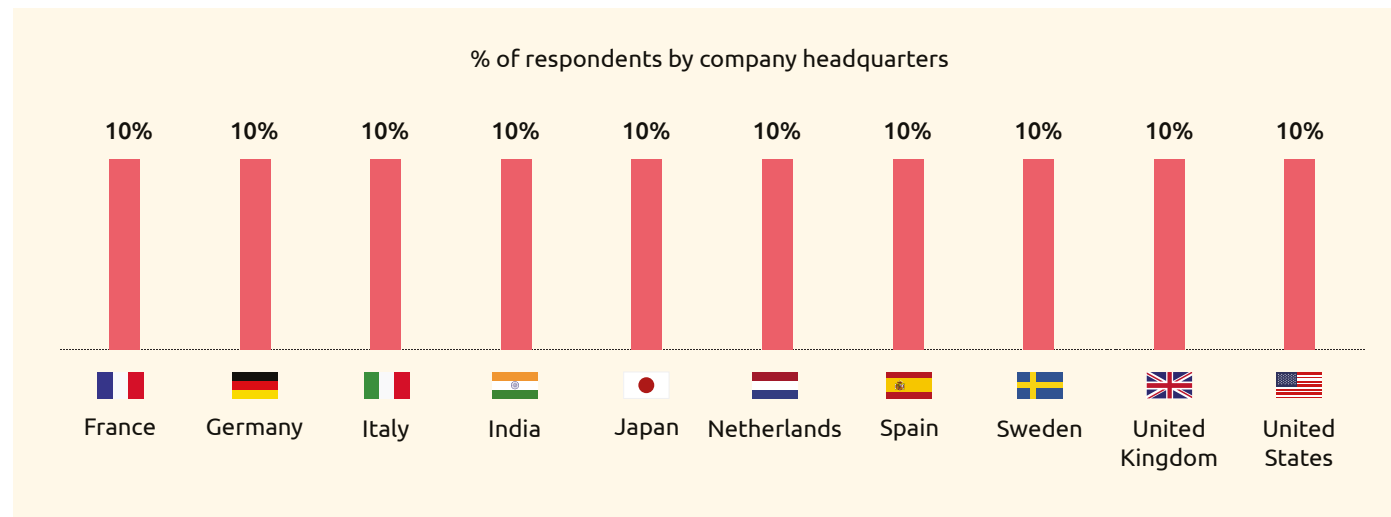


Fig.24

% of respondents by company revenue

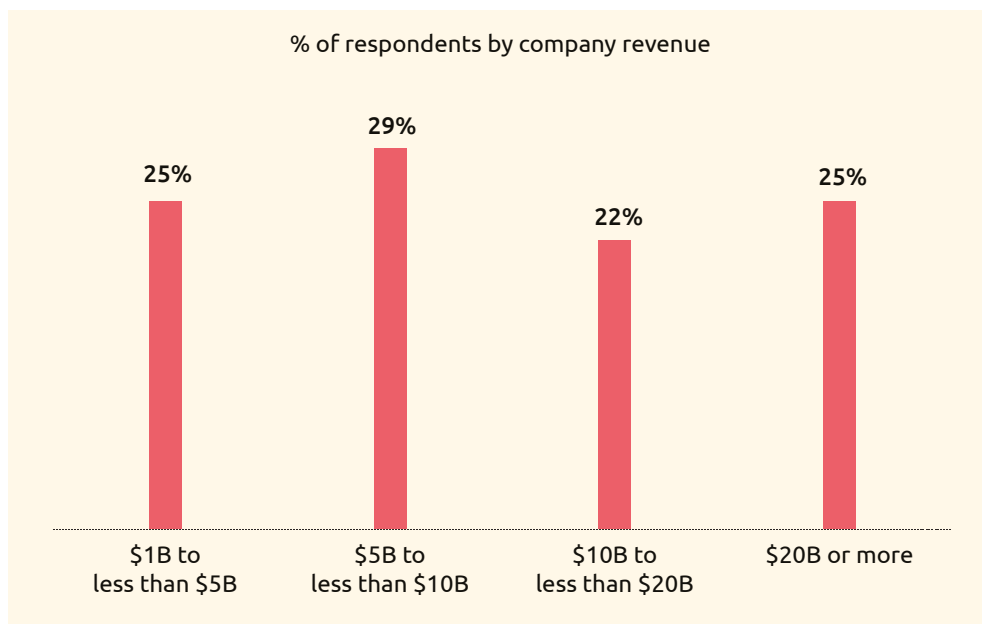


Fig.25

% of respondents by company industry

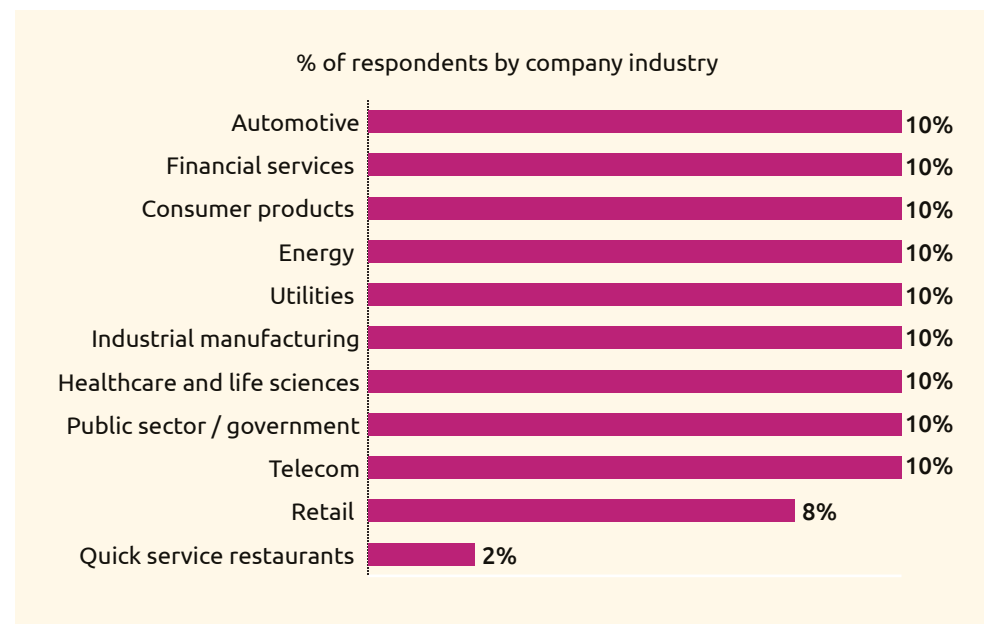
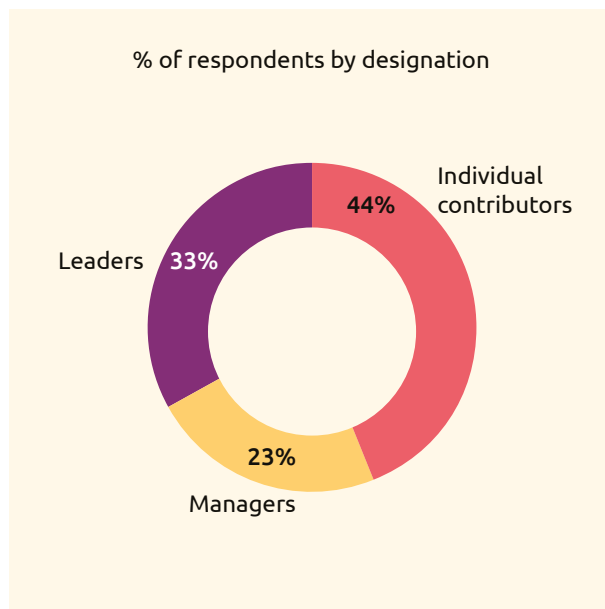
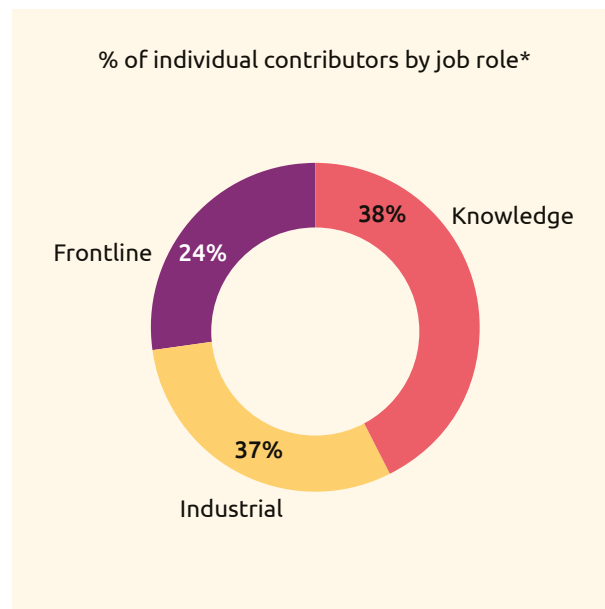


Fig.26

% of respondents by designation

**Fig.27**

% of individual contributors by job role*

**Fig.28**

% of individual contributors by work status**

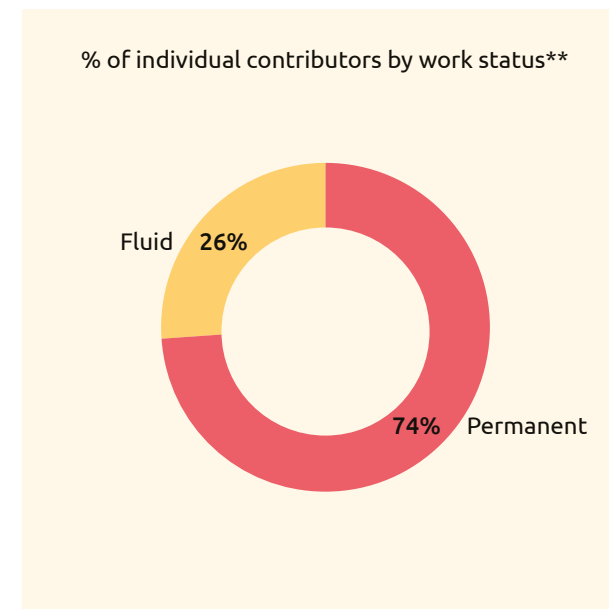


Fig.29

% of respondents by department/function

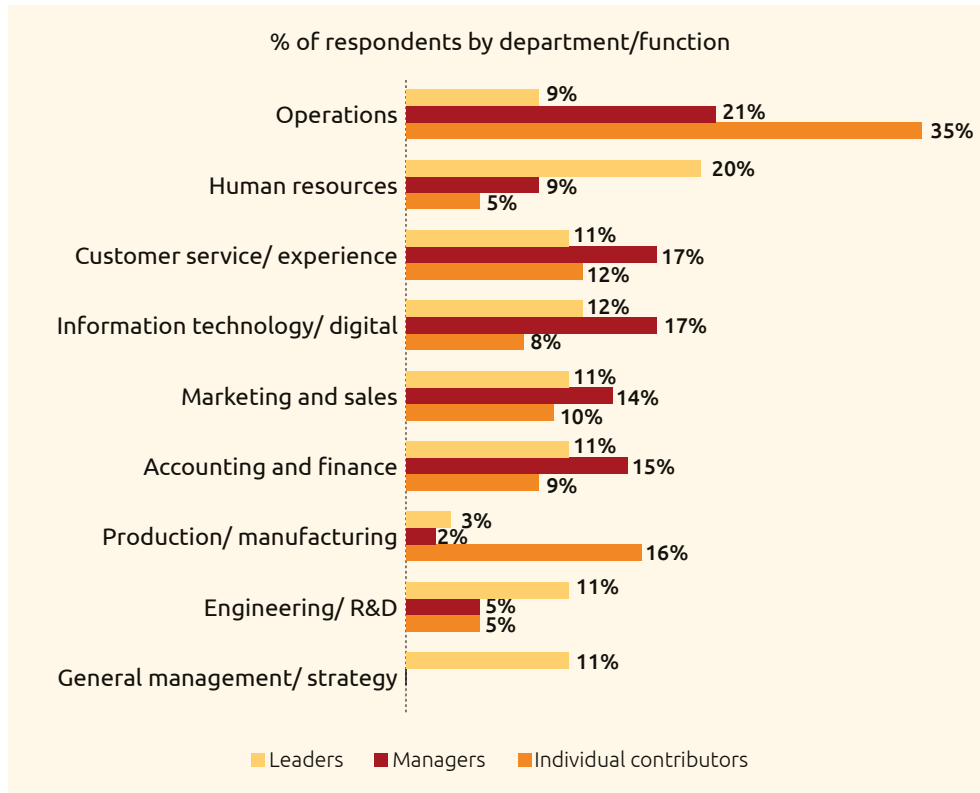
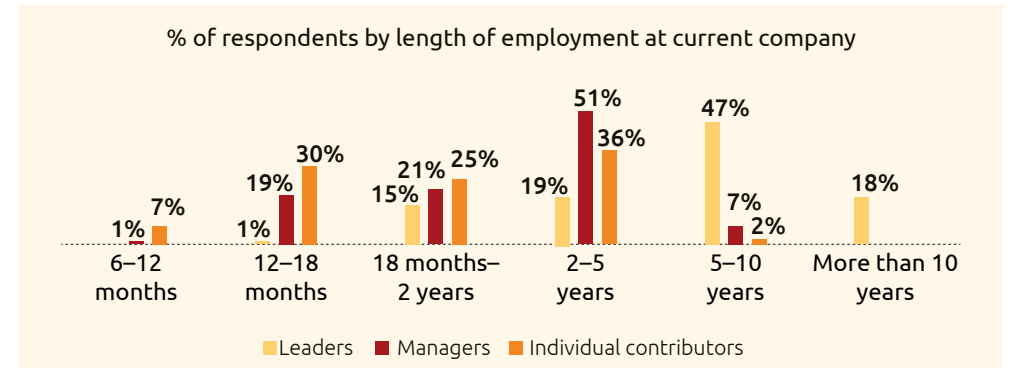


Fig.30

% of respondents by length of employment at current company



Source: Capgemini Research Institute, employee experience survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors; N = 511 managers; N = 750 leaders.

*Employees self-identified their job role. **Knowledge worker** was defined as defined as employees who largely perform desk jobs using skills attained through formal training, and do not generally perform manual labor (e.g., web programmers/designers, writers, accountants, engineers, analysts); **Frontline worker** was defined as employees whose work involves a high rate of direct face-to-face interaction with customers or the general public (e.g., salespersons, restaurant workers, cashiers, personal financial planners, local government workers, nurses/physicians); **Industrial worker** was defined as employees whose work tends to be manual in nature and generally requires something to be physically built or maintained (e.g., factory workers, delivery-truck drivers, construction workers, machine-service technicians, mechanics).

****Permanent** work status includes full- and part-time employees; **Fluid** work status includes temporary, contract (i.e., paid by a third-party, and not directly by their current company) and temporary, gig/project-based (i.e., paid directly by their current company to provide services).

APPENDIX

Detailed questions asked of survey respondents regarding their experience at work

Only asked of employees and managers:

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding your experience at your current company? Please rate on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 = strongly disagree, and 7 = strongly agree.

Only asked of Leaders:

To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the experiences of the employees you manage/supervise at your current company? Please rate on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 = strongly disagree, and 7 = strongly agree.

Human and people dimensions – health and wellness, purpose

- a. Employee health and well-being is a priority at my company
- b. I receive enough support to deal with the demands of my role
- c. I feel able to take time away from work
- d. My work schedule is flexible enough to balance my family and personal life
- e. I feel good both physically and mentally working at my company
- f. I have access to mental health resources at my company (e.g., meditation classes, therapy sessions, stress-reduction workshops)

- a. Employees believe health and well-being is a priority at our company
- b. Employees receive enough support to deal with the demands of their role
- c. Employees are able to take time away from work
- d. Employees' work schedules are flexible enough to balance their family and personal life
- e. Employees feel good both physically and mentally working at our company
- f. Employees have access to mental health resources at our company (e.g., meditation classes, therapy sessions, stress-reduction workshops)

- g. I feel I can speak to my manager about mental or physical health challenges faced outside of work
- h. I am inspired by the purpose and mission of our company
- i. Leadership is motivated by purpose and not solely by profit
- j. Leadership demonstrates high ethical standards
- k. People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our company
- l. I enjoy performing my job

- g. Employees feel they can speak to their manager about mental or physical health challenges faced outside of work
- h. Employees are inspired by the purpose and mission of our company
- i. Employees believe leadership is motivated by purpose and not solely by profit
- j. Employees believe leadership demonstrates high ethical standards
- k. Employees believe people from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our company
- l. Employees enjoy performing their jobs

Technology and data

- a. I can get timely and helpful support from our IT department when I need it
- b. I have access to the technology and equipment I need to do my job well
- c. I have access to the data I need to make informed decisions for my work
- d. I have access to a platform of HR-related services (e.g., learning content, benefits) that I can choose from to create my own experiences
- e. I have adequate tools to work effectively remotely [only asked of knowledge workers]

- a. Employees can get timely and helpful support from our IT department when they need it
- b. Employees have access to the technology and equipment they need to do their job well
- c. Employees have access to the data they need to make informed decisions for their work
- d. Employees have access to a platform of HR-related services (e.g., learning content, benefits) that they can choose from to create their own experiences

- f. I can access personalized learning and development data to track my progress
- g. I am happy with the service I receive from helpdesks while interacting with support teams such as IT, HR, Finance
- h. I find internal infrastructure systems and tools (e.g., expense, travel, time, procurement) easy to use
- i. I have access to mobile apps for our internal systems
- j. I am happy with the selection of tools to collaborate more effectively with my manager or team
- k. I have access to a central portal to read all company-related information (e.g., new guidelines, announcements) in a single location
- l. I receive timely communications from HR on organizational and policy changes

- e. Employees have adequate tools to work effectively remotely
- f. Employees can access personalized learning and development data to track their progress
- g. Employees are happy with the service they receive from helpdesks while interacting with support teams such as IT, HR, Finance
- h. Employees find internal infrastructure systems and tools (e.g., expenses, travel, time, procurement) easy to use
- i. Employees have access to mobile apps for our internal systems
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- k. Employees have access to a central portal to read all company-related information (e.g., new guidelines, announcements) in a single location
- l. Employees receive timely communications from HR on organizational and policy changes

Organization and structure – physical and digital workplace, L&D, compensation

- a. I am satisfied with my opportunities to work remotely [only asked of knowledge workers]
- b. I am satisfied with opportunities to work on a contract/temporary basis

- a. Employees are satisfied with the opportunities to work remotely
- b. Employees are satisfied with opportunities to work on a contract/temporary basis

- c. My physical work environment contributes positively to my ability to do my job
- d. The facilities and services (e.g., security, temperature, cleanliness) at my company's office are satisfactory
- e. I feel that I am growing professionally at my company
- f. I see a path for me to advance my career at my company
- g. My job enables me to learn and develop new skills
- h. I am satisfied with the opportunities to move to a new job/role within my company
- i. I can select and customize trainings relevant to my job requirements
- j. I feel encouraged and supported in my development
- k. I get enough feedback to understand whether I am doing my job well
- l. I see how my work has a positive impact on my team
- m. I am adequately paid for the work that I do
- n. I am fairly rewarded for my contributions
- o. I can have well-informed and constructive conversations about pay
- p. I can customize my own benefits
- q. I receive perks over and above my compensation for a job well done
- r. I feel there are no biases in promotion decisions taken by my company

- c. Employees' physical work environment contributes positively to their ability to do their jobs
- d. Employees believe the facilities and services (e.g., security, temperature, cleanliness) at our company's office are satisfactory
- e. Employees feel that they are growing professionally at our company
- f. Employees see a path for them to advance their career at our company
- g. Employees believe their job enables them to learn and develop new skills
- h. Employees are satisfied with the opportunities to move to a new job/role within our company
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- q. Employees receive perks over and above their compensation for a job well done
- r. Employees feel there are no biases in promotion decisions taken by our company

Business – day-to-day experience, team/manager relationships

- a. I felt welcome when I joined my company
- b. The onboarding process was clear
- c. After joining, my company promptly provided me with the IT tools I needed to do my job
- d. Most days, I feel a sense of accomplishment from what I do
- e. I have freedom to experiment and propose new ideas in my role
- f. I feel I am given enough freedom to decide how to do my work
- g. I know what I am expected to deliver at work
- h. I understand how my work supports the goals of my team
- i. I have the opportunity to do what I do best at work
- j. My work allows me to remain competitive in the industry
- k. I find my workload manageable
- l. My colleagues' welcome opinions that are different from their own
- m. I feel listened to at my company
- n. My manager cares about my opinions
- o. My manager is empathetic
- p. My manager regularly listens to me
- q. I trust that my manager will give me her/his full attention when I speak

- a. Employees feel welcome when they join our company
- b. Employees believe the onboarding process is clear
- c. After joining, employees believe our company promptly provided them with the IT tools they needed to do their job
- d. Most days, employees feel a sense of accomplishment from what they do
- e. Employees have freedom to experiment and propose new ideas in their role
- f. Employees feel they are given enough freedom to decide how to do their work
- g. Employees know what they are expected to deliver at work
- h. Employees understand how their work supports the goals of their team
- i. Employees have the opportunity to do what they do best at work
- j. Employees' work allows them to remain competitive in the industry
- k. Employees find their workload manageable
- l. Employees believe their colleagues' welcome opinions that are different from their own
- m. Employees feel listened to at our company
- n. Employees believe their manager cares about their opinions
- o. Employees believe their manager is empathetic

- r. My manager provides me with the support that I need to complete my work
- s. My manager cares about me as a person and not solely as an employee
- t. My manager regularly asks for my feedback
- u. I share feedback with my manager regularly
- v. My company provides a safe space in which I can speak up
- w. My manager supports me in failure and encourages me to learn from my mistakes
- x. I can be open and honest with my feedback
- y. My manager acts on my feedback
- z. I receive constructive feedback from my manager
- aa. I am comfortable giving upward feedback to my manager
- ab. I get along well with my colleagues/peers
- ac. I am comfortable giving horizontal feedback to my peers
- ad. I receive constructive feedback from my peers

- p. Employees believe their manager regularly listens to them
- q. Employees trust that their manager will give them her/his full attention when they speak
- r. Employees believe their manager provides them with the support that they need to complete their work
- s. Employees believe their manager cares about them as people
- t. Employees believe their manager regularly asks for their feedback
- u. Employees share their feedback with their manager regularly
- v. Employees believe our company provides a safe space in which they can speak up
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- y. Employees believe their manager acts on their feedback
- z. Employees receive constructive feedback from their manager
- aa. Employees are comfortable giving upward feedback to their manager
- ab. Employees believe they get along well with their colleagues/peers
- ac. Employees are comfortable giving horizontal feedback to their peers
- ad. Employees receive constructive feedback from their peers

Source: Capgemini Research Institute, Employee Experience Survey, April–May 2022, N = 989 individual contributors; N = 511 managers; N = 750 leaders.

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The authors would like to thank Subrahmanyam Kanakadandi from the Capgemini Research Institute for his contribution to this research.

The authors would also like to thank Alex Albano, Eythan Benichou, Aurélien Diot, Tyler Duff, Paolo Cervini, Steven Lardner, Charlotte Noel, Sarah Ouadah, Catherine Perronet, Linda Pettersson, Gabriele Rosani, Pallavi Tyagi, Bérénice Thiberge, Karine Vasselin, Lex Verweij, Marjolein Wenderich, Ashwin Yardi, and Soumik Das for their contributions to this research.

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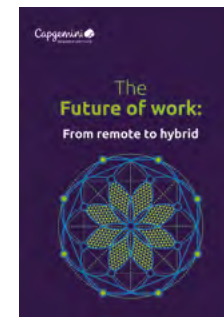
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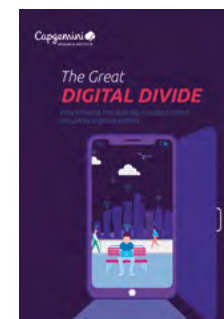
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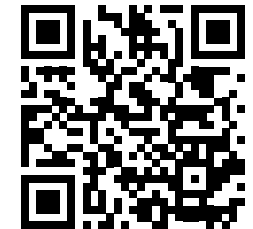
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