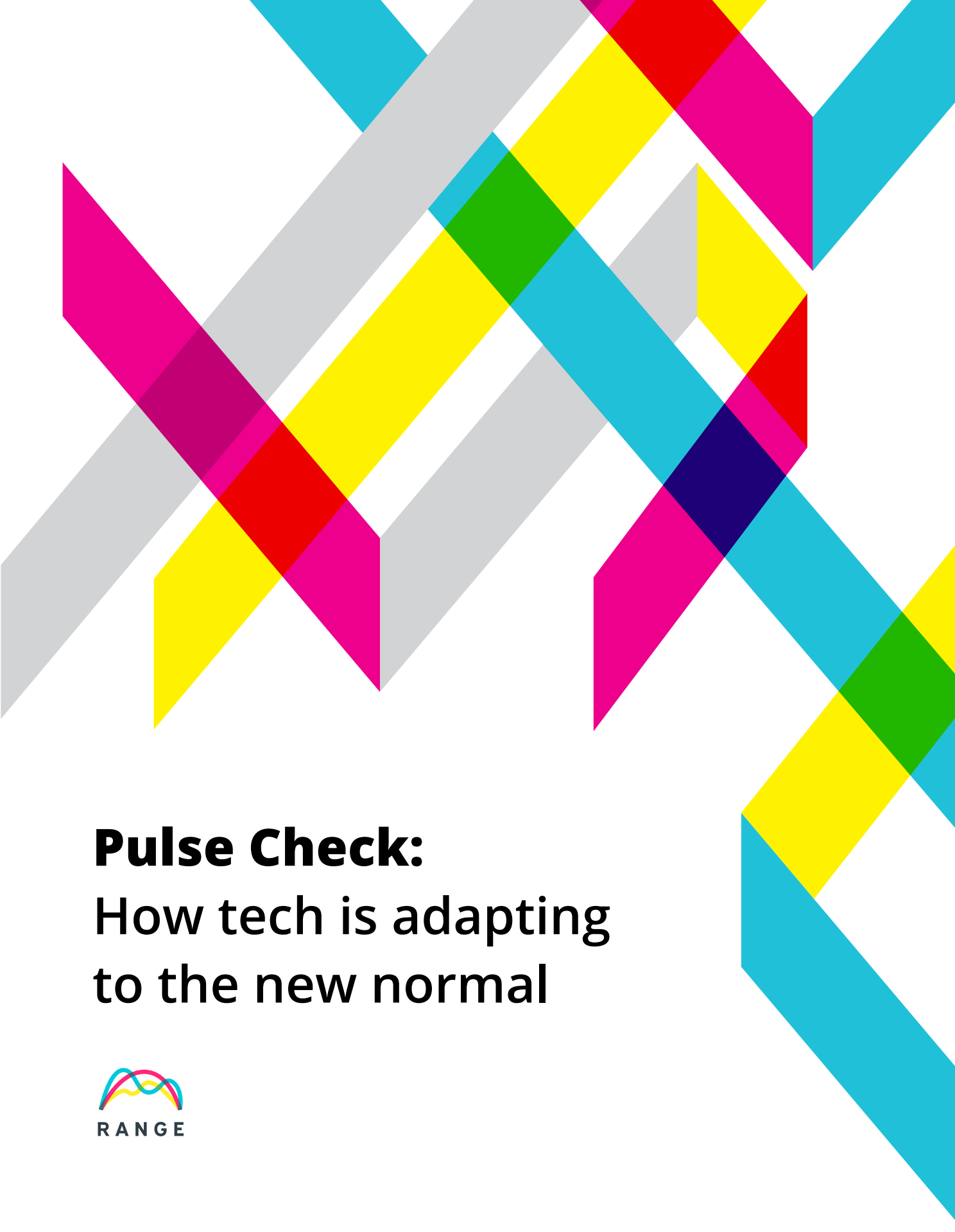




Pulse Check: How tech is adapting to the new normal

The shift in the tech industry from an office-first to a suddenly-remote model has been profound, especially because there aren't really any models. This isn't a shift to "normal" remote work – it's a massive, daunting leap into working at home while sheltering in place during a pandemic. People have had to adjust and restitch the fabric of work while the zeitgeist restiches the social fabric, seemingly daily.

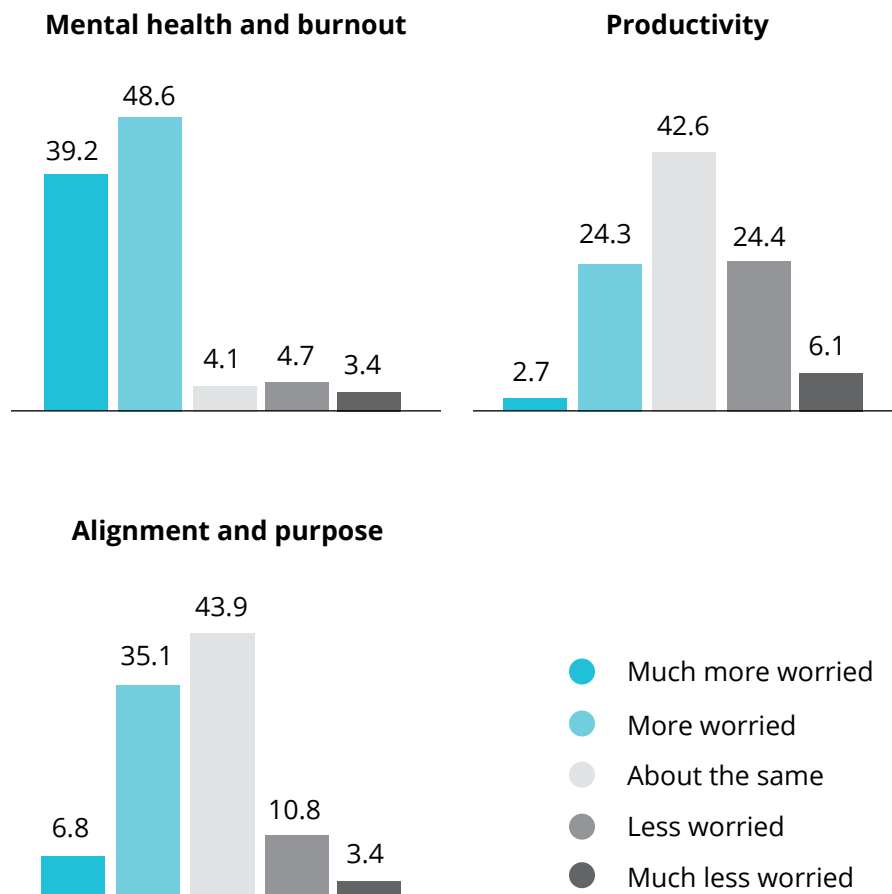
To help us understand how people in the tech industry are dealing with these shifts, we reached out to a representative sample of leaders, managers, and individual contributors for their input. The responses provide insights into the balance people are trying to strike between well being and performance. One clear picture that arose is that in the post-COVID world mental health is more of a concern than productivity.

We'll look at three top takeaways, then examine select insights around how perspectives on work are changing, what people are worried about, and how people are feeling about the future.



1. In the post-COVID world mental health is more of a concern than productivity

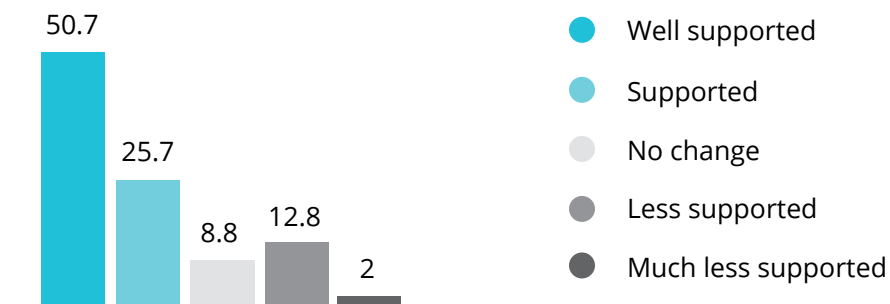
While productivity is a concern as people try to adapt to new remote work practices, 3/4 of people surveyed were more worried about connection and belonging than before the pandemic and 80 percent are more worried about mental health and burnout.



By far the greatest challenge to me seems like Zoom meeting burnout – screen time all day may have negative effects on mental health, compounded by the challenges we're facing in our personal lives already.

Go team: And while connections feel frayed, as teams have become the main unit of work, we see them playing a critical role in well-being. More than half of respondents feel well supported by their teams and managers.

Supported by manager

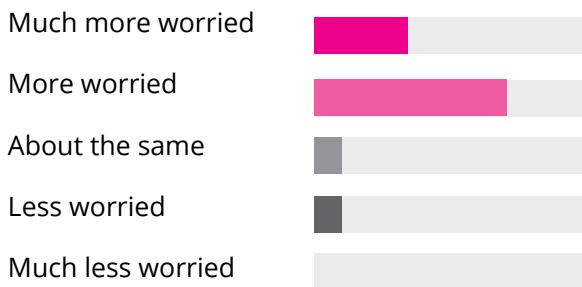


2. This isn't remote-burnout. Even people who worked remotely full time are having a hard time.

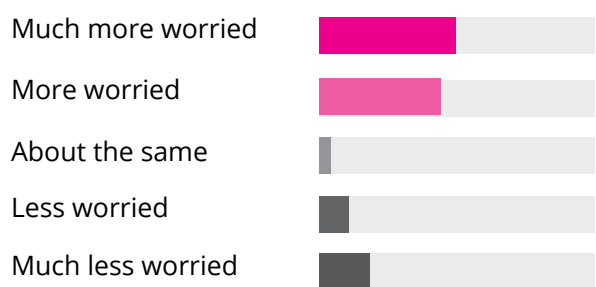
Among people who worked remotely full time prior to COVID, almost as many are worried about mental health and burnout as other groups. The impact of the zeitgeist on mental health looks to cut across remote work experience.

Did you work remotely before and how worried are you about burnout?

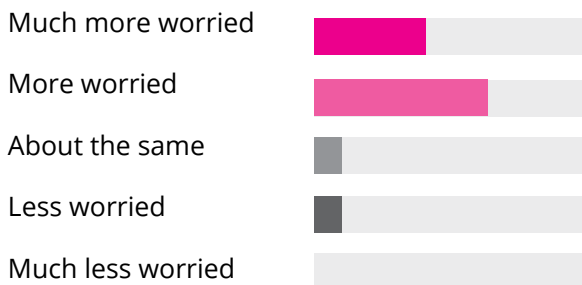
Never



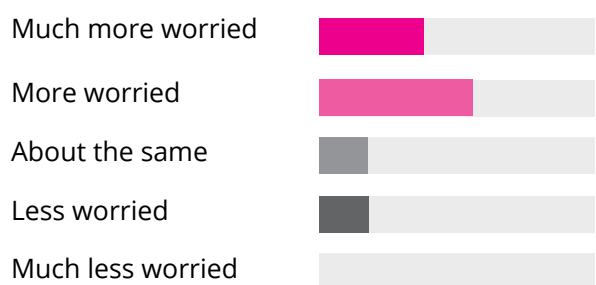
Occasionally



A few days a week

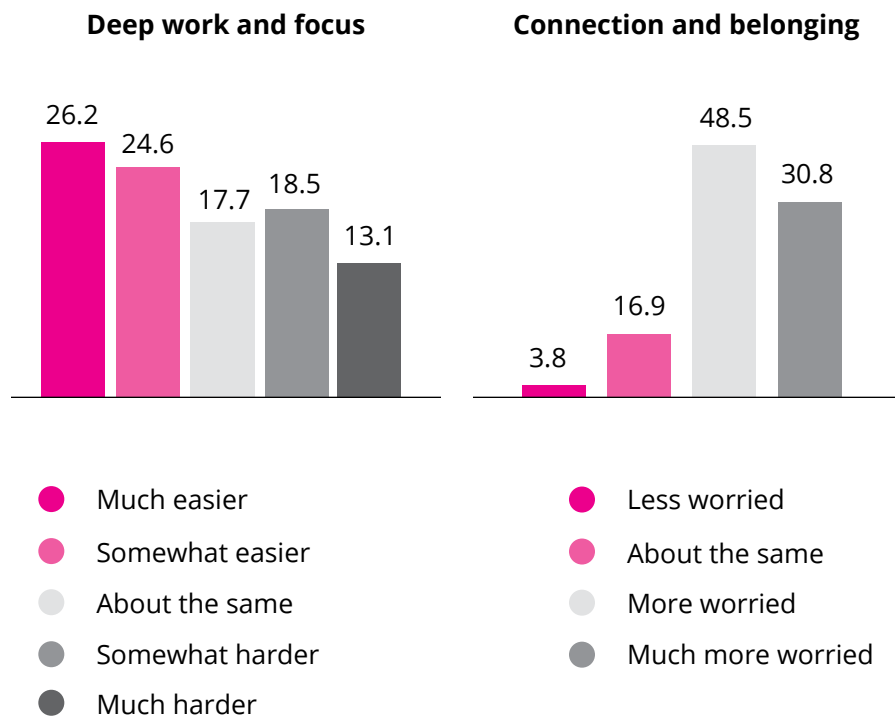


Yes, full time



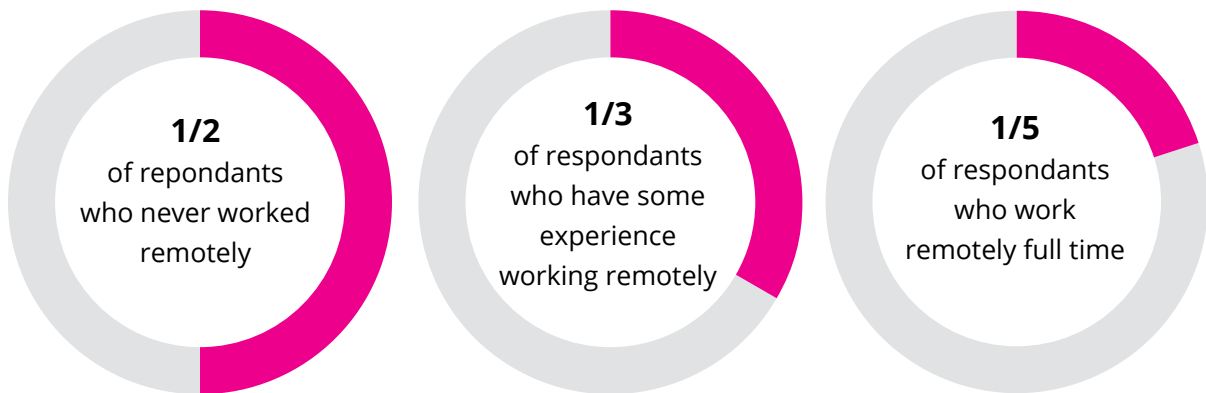
"I feel that my answers to many of these questions are more affected by the state of the outside world than what's happening in our company. If we were for some reason forced into remote work that was less concerning on a meta level I think my answers would be very different."

Finding focus but not connection: Those new to remote work are finding more time for focus and deep work than they did when they were in the office, but missing the human connection.



Beware silos: Fast tracking remote work has caused information flows to become more segmented.

How many say it's **harder** to know what's happening across the company?



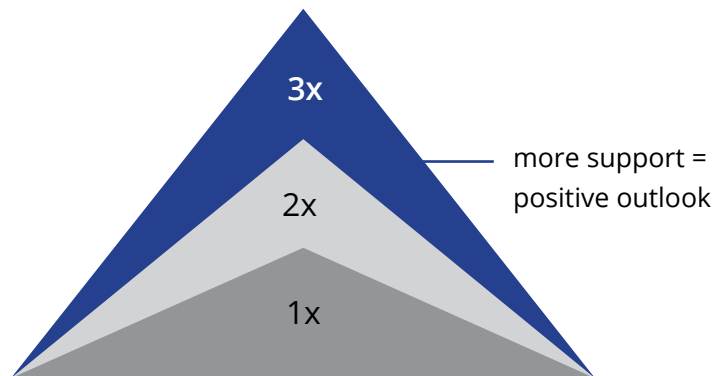
While this is not normal remote work, remote work is still novel for many: Below shows how many people worked remotely before COVID.



only **37%** of people worked remotely before COVID

3. Managers and culture really matter.

While not surprising, companies and managers who demonstrated they focused on the well-being of their employees did in fact impact their well-being, resulting in a more positive view about what's to come. Supported employees seem to clearly be more resilient employees.



People who felt well supported by their manager were **3x as likely to have a positive outlook** on the future as those who didn't feel well supported.

"In general getting things done is harder, but the broader shift towards focusing on employee wellness, discussing social equality in the workplace, and figuring out how to maintain team alignment in a full-remote work environment has re-sharpened my focus on those areas, which has made our teams stronger and me a better leader."

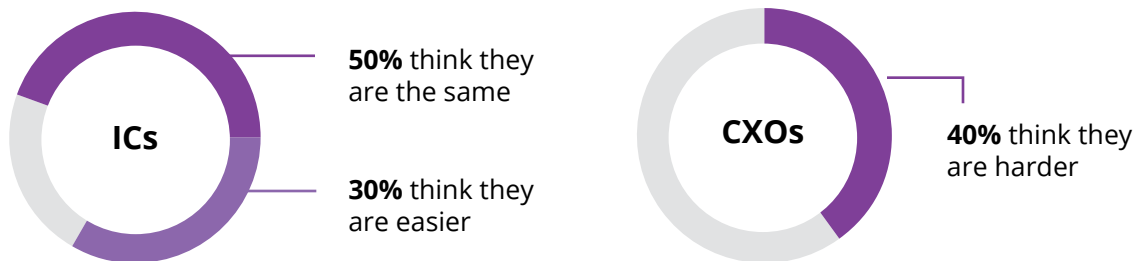


Select Insights

How have the following aspects of work changed?

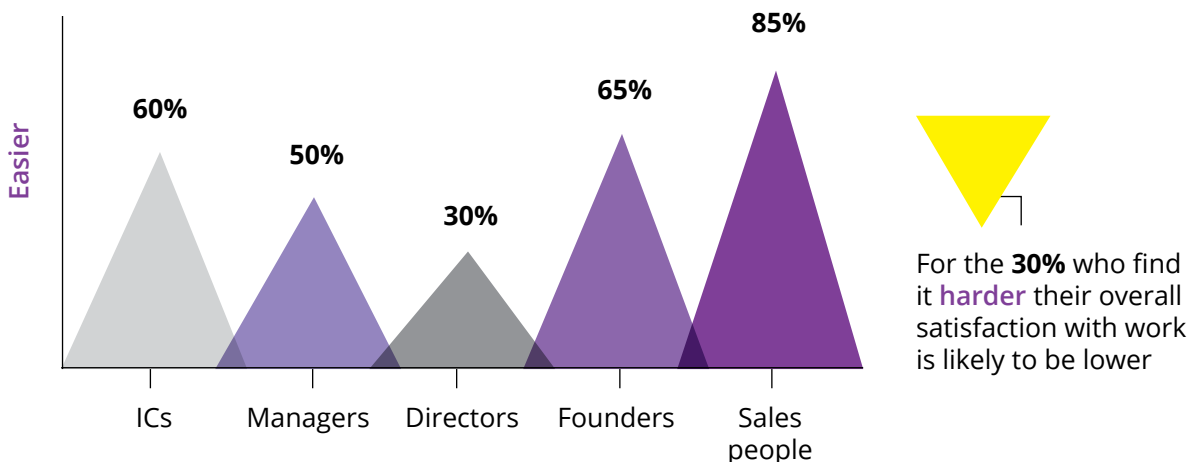
1:1s | Most respondents think they are the same, unless you have kids at home.

Shifting childcare schedules and schooling support make consistent, focused 1:1s more challenging during lockdown. Parents of kids in virtual school or with no help at home are more likely to think 1:1s are harder.



Deep Work / Focus | Half of respondents find it easier to focus on deep work.

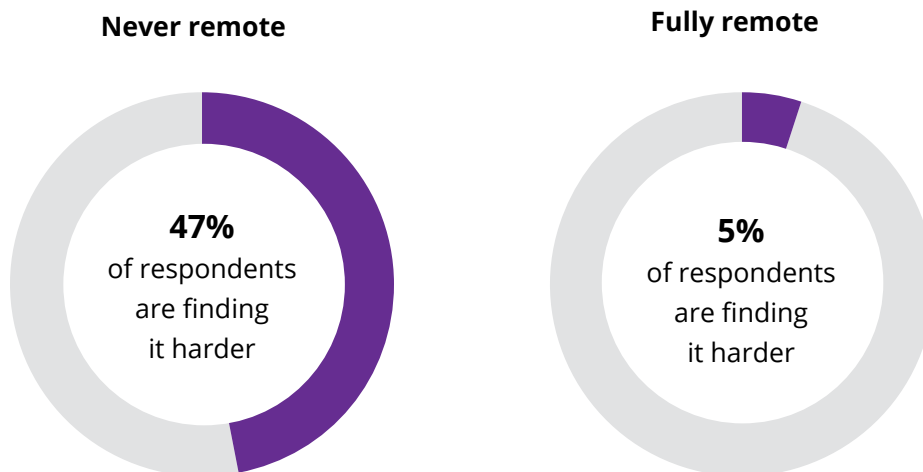
An office environment doesn't necessarily translate to more focused environment, especially when individual contributors.



"This pandemic has also improved some aspects of collaboration and decision making, like pushing people to express their ideas in writing and collaborating asynchronously over a shared proposal. In many cases this has replaced overcrowded meetings supposedly for decision making but in reality just sharing context, and Slack follow-ups which are exclusive and virtually disappear in a matter of days."

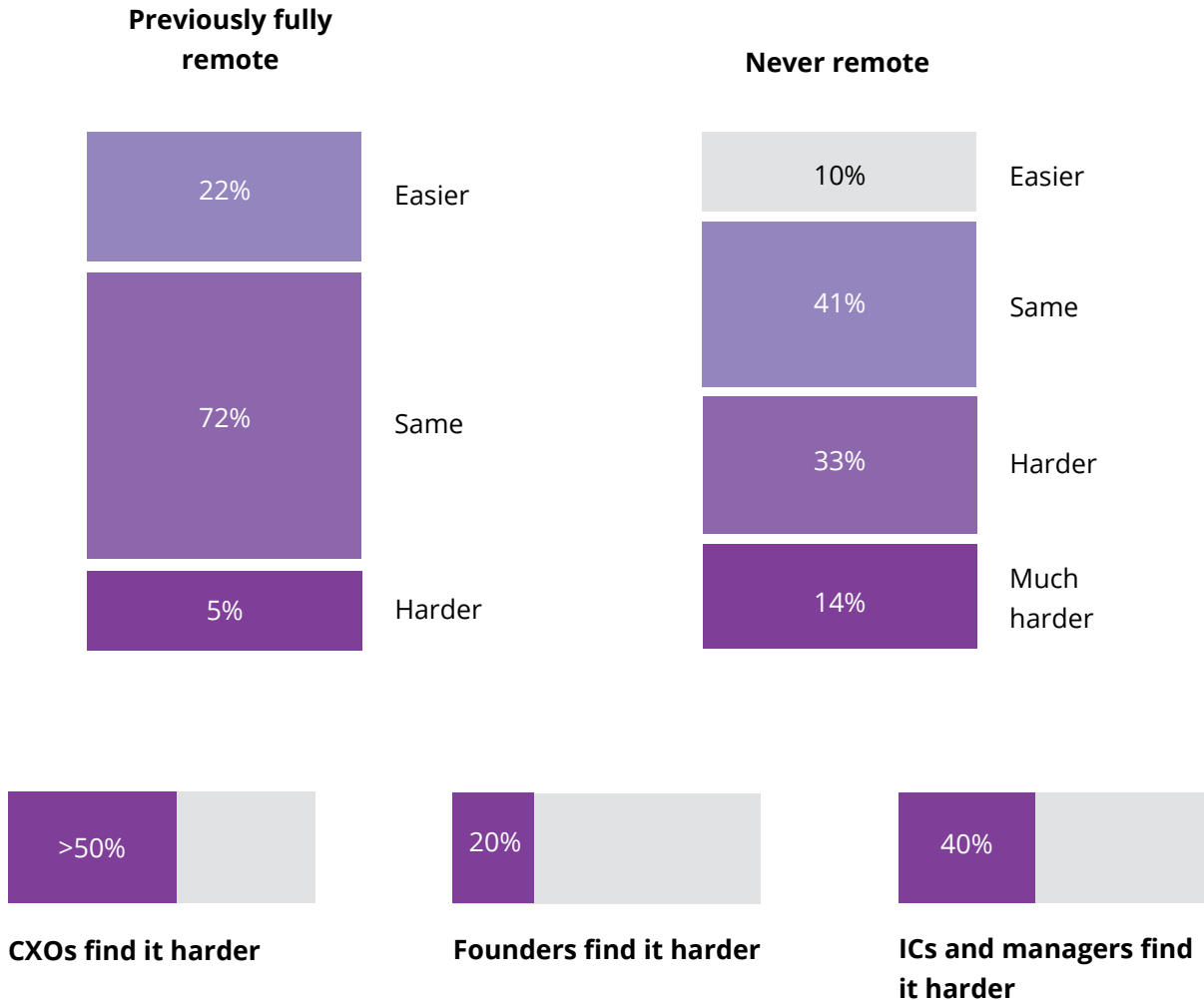
Getting help or advice from teammates | Tougher for the newly remote

Remote practice, and practices, really help people help — most people who didn't work remotely previously are finding connecting with teammates for help during the pandemic harder.



Giving and receiving feedback | Also tougher for the newly remote

Most people think it's about the same or harder. Again people who worked remotely previously are likely to have a better time.



Harder

Easier

Goal setting | There's a big gap between C-levels and managers

More than half of CXOs think setting goals during the COVID-19 lockdown is harder, while 80% of managers think it's about the same or actually easier.



Knowing what's happening on your team | Teams are more likely to be out of sync than in-sync

A third of all respondents think it's harder to know what's happening, showing that people's ability to stay connected is eroding.



Know what's happening across the company | CXOs feel out of touch

Half of respondents think they had as much of a sense of events across their organizations now as they did before COVID-19.

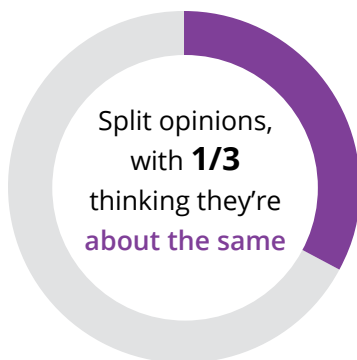


Watch out for silos: with teams feeling out of sync, and CXOs finding it hard to be in sync with teams, this indicates silos are forming

Making decisions | It's not getting easier

The majority of respondents reported making decisions during the COVID-19 lockdown is about the same or maybe harder.

Team meetings | The larger the organization, the worse they are
"Harder meetings" can mean many things, from lack of participation to limited progress. Individual Contributors feel the pain most, executives the least, while a third think they're about the same.

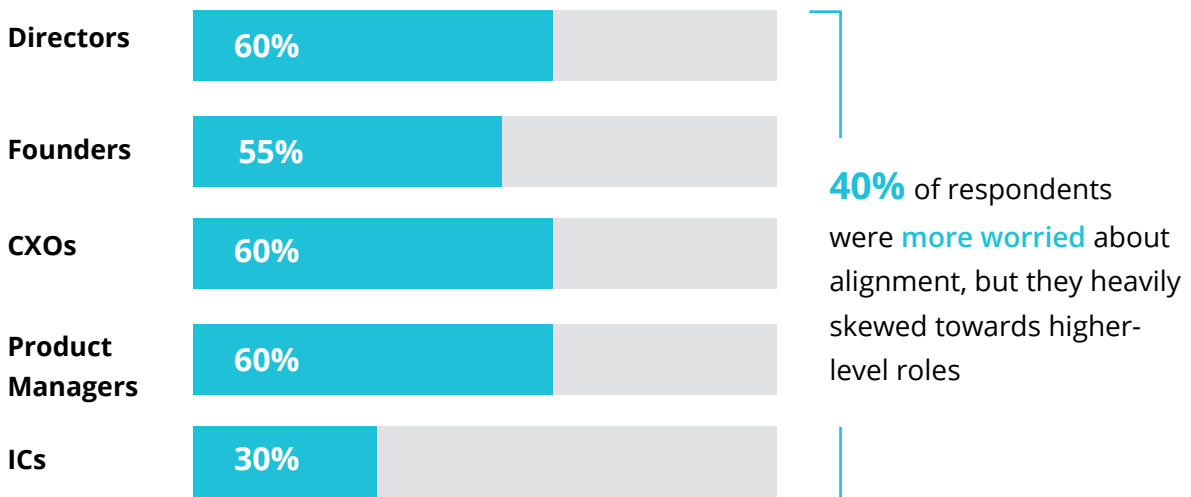


- 35% of ICs think they're harder
- 33% of VPs think they're much easier
- Even amongst people who were fully remote before, 16% are finding meetings harder
- Parents are more likely to find them harder
- Bigger companies seem to be faring worse than smaller companies

How much do you worry about?

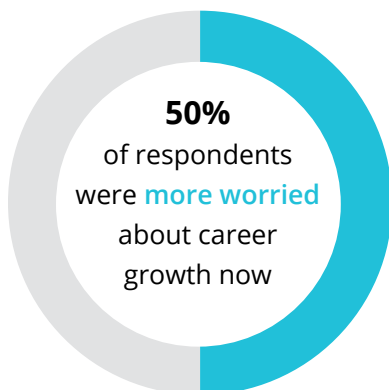
Alignment and Purpose | The more senior your are the more worried you are

Only 40% of respondents were more worried about alignment during the lockdown, but they are heavily skewed towards higher level roles.



Career Growth | Lack of child-care support is a leading indicator

Nearly half the respondents were more worried about career growth since the onset of the pandemic, especially those wrestling with the challenges of childcare.



- Parents without in-home child care are more likely to be worried about career growth
- Founders least worried, with 30% actually less worried now
- 50% of CXOs more worried

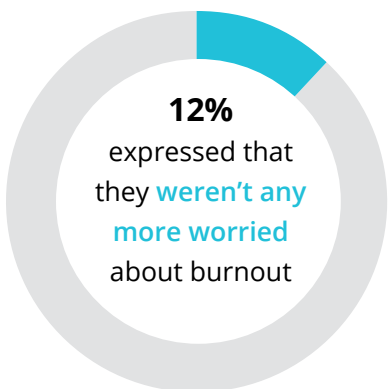
Connection and Belonging | Teams are feeling less like teams

The erosion of the team looks to be one of the biggest challenges to arise during the COVID-19 lockdown. 2/3 of respondents are more worried about connection and belonging. Only 5% are less worried.



- 80% of people in management roles are more worried
- 50% of CXOs are much more worried
- People at small startups least likely to be worried

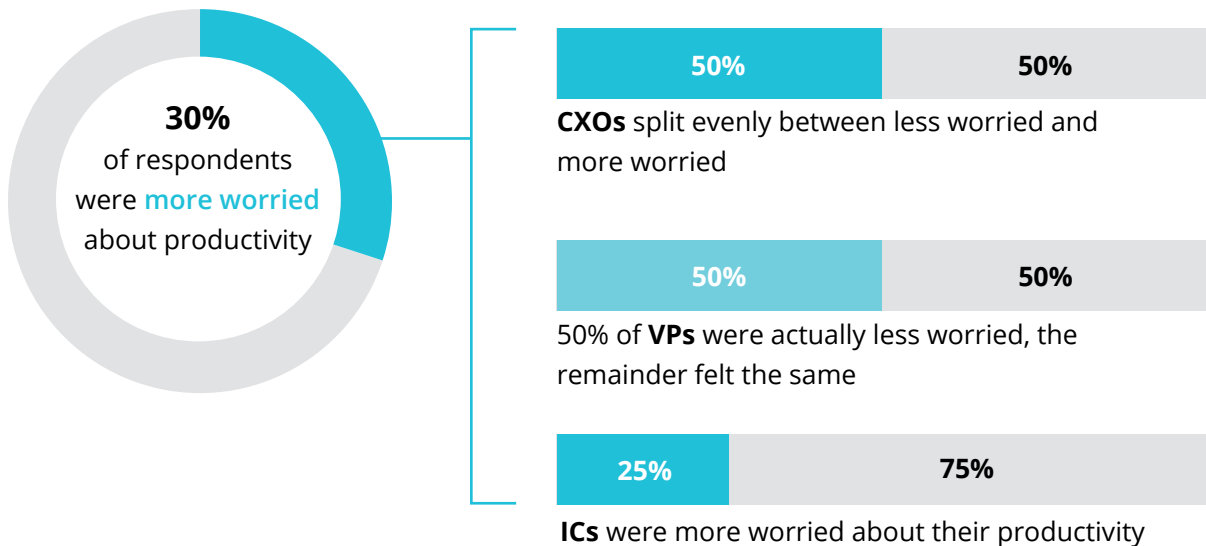
Mental Health and Burnout | A critical issue, especially among parents



- 100% of parents are more worried about mental health and burnout
- Parents with kids in virtual school were likely to be more worried than other parents
- People who had been remote previously were only slightly less likely to be worried. 75% are still more worried than they used to be

Productivity | A concern, but not as much as well-being

Only 30% of respondents were more worried about productivity since the lockdown.



Support | School and childcare makes a big difference

On the whole people feel well supported by their team and their manager. Support from the company was less resounding.

- ▼ HR is least likely to feel supported
- ▼ Parents with no school or childcare support are least likely to feel supported
- ▲ People who previously worked remotely feel very well supported
- ▼ ICs and line managers are likely to feel less supported than more senior roles

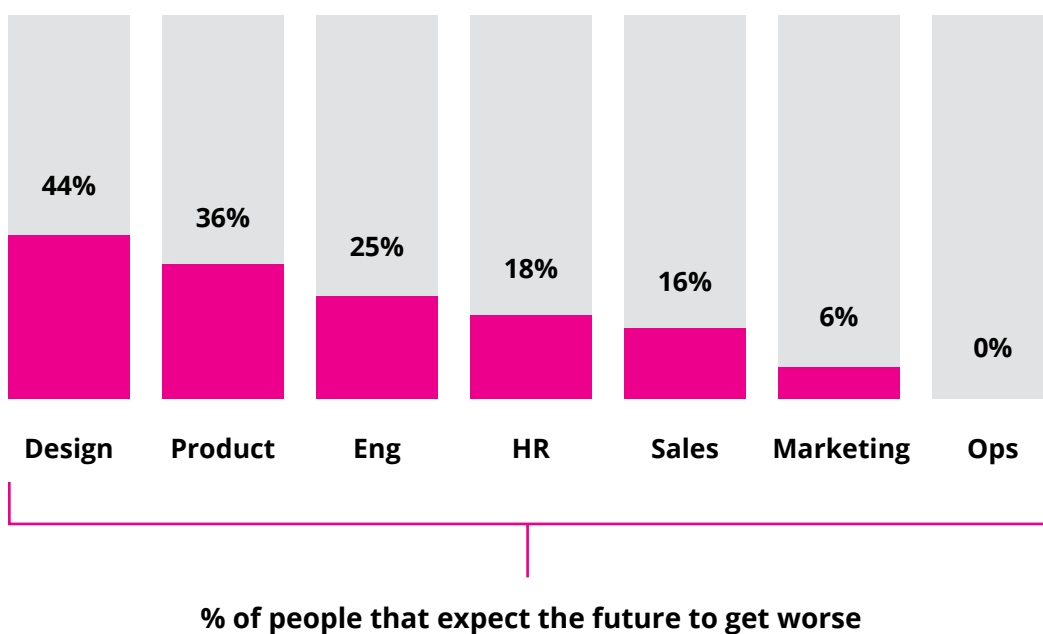
How do you feel about the future?

Future feelings | Hope springs eternal

Overall, People are generally positive about their experience at work compared to at the beginning of the pandemic, and lean neutral-positive about the next 6 months.

50% of people expect the next 6 months to **be better**

45% of parents of kids in virtual school expect it to **get worse**



"We're all still actively inventing this future, so expect the unexpected to evolve over the next few months."



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