

# *remote workforce*

SURVEY

**PRIDESTAFF<sup>®</sup>**

**The Remote Work Experience:**  
What Employees Want You to Know

# ABOUT PRIDESTAFF

PrideStaff was founded in the 1970s as 100% company-owned units and began staffing franchising in 1995. They operate over 80 offices in North America to serve over 5,000 clients and are headquartered in Fresno, CA. With over 40 years in the staffing business, PrideStaff offers the resources and expertise of a national firm with the spirit, dedication and personal service of smaller, entrepreneurial firms. PrideStaff is the only nationwide commercial staffing firm in the U.S. and Canada with over \$100 million in annual revenue to earn ClearlyRated's prestigious Best of Staffing Diamond Award eight years in a row highlighting exceptional client and talent service quality.



## About This Study

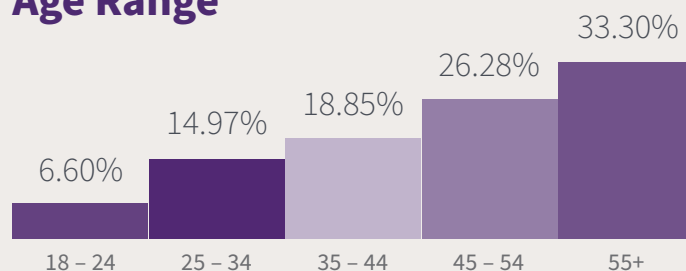
In December 2020, PrideStaff conducted a survey to find out how employees feel about remote work – the benefits, the challenges and how employers can manage remote workers more effectively. The survey was completed by over 1,100 individuals (both employed and unemployed) located throughout the U.S., representing a wide range of industries and company sizes.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

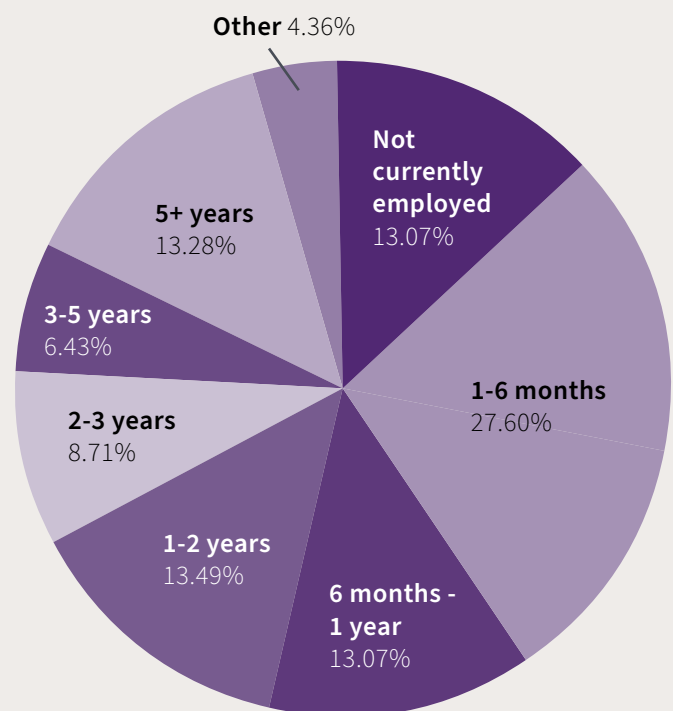
### Gender



### Age Range



## Time at Current Job



# 2020 WAS THE YEAR NO ONE COULD HAVE ANTICIPATED

The global coronavirus pandemic required companies to rethink the way they do business. Many employers offered at least some of their team members remote working options all or part of the time.

## A recent **Gallup Poll** found:

- The average number of telecommuting days per month more than doubled over the past year, from 2.4 to 5.8.
- A whopping **26% of U.S. workers are working entirely from home**, at least temporarily.

This development is likely to continue. According to the **World Economic Forum**, the number of permanent remote workers is expected to rise from 16.4% to 34.4% in 2021.

## But how do affected employees feel about this change?

- What impact did this alternative have on the way people perceive their work life?
- Do they prefer remote work?
- Will they seek this option in new job opportunities, or are they eager to get back to the office?

**THE BEST  
WAY TO  
FIND OUT  
IS TO ASK!**

*We surveyed over 1,100 associates and compiled their responses here.*



# WHO WORKED FROM HOME IN 2020?

This survey began by finding out just how many people had the opportunity to work remotely.

Of 1,135 respondents, 43% did not work remotely at all, 40% worked all or most of the time remotely, and 17% did work remotely for at least part of 2020 but are now back on-site.



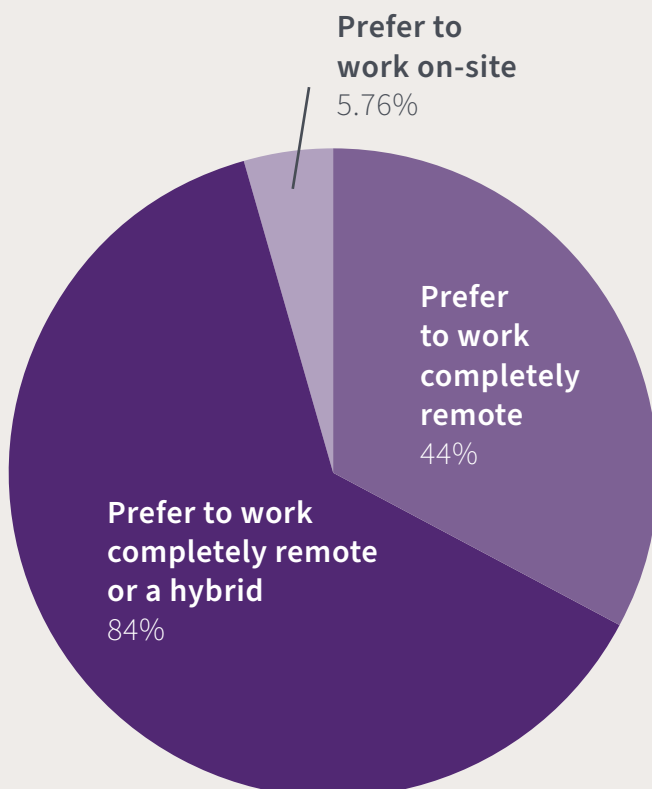
43%  
**Did not work remotely at all**



40%  
**Worked remotely all or the majority of the time**



17%  
**Worked remotely for part of 2020 but are back on-site**



Overall, respondents preferred to work remotely at least part of the time given the opportunity.

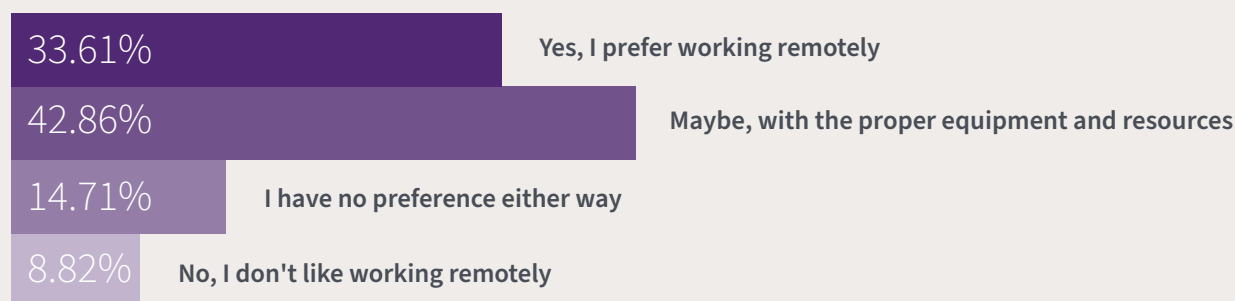


# HOW DO EMPLOYEES FEEL ABOUT REMOTE WORK?

Nearly 34% of those surveyed prefer working from home to working on-site. Another 43% would consider remote work if given the equipment and resources needed to succeed on the job.

In fact, 76% of respondents would be willing to leave their current employer for a chance to work remotely if the jobs were similar. Most – 44% – are unwilling to take a pay cut to move to a remote position, but 39% would consider it if there were other non-monetary advantages. For some, their decision would depend on the job itself, how much the reduction in pay would be, and how much time they would save on their commute.

## Do you prefer working remotely?



# EMPLOYEES WILL OFTEN TRADE HIGHER SALARY FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK FROM HOME.

While competitive pay is vital to attract and retain top talent, salary is not the only consideration.

## **The flexibility of remote work allows people to:**

- Manage their cost of living
- Move to less expensive areas without a prohibitive commute
- Spend more time with family or hobbies or interests
- Reduce or eliminate the costs associated with:
  - Commuting
  - Meals away from home
  - Professional clothing

## What do these findings mean for employers?

Employers can cast a wider net than when confined to reasonable commuting distance. They may also have more wiggle room in terms of salary. Companies are free to hire at the lower end of the range if employees are willing to work for less. Conversely, shifting to a mostly remote workforce can free up funds normally spent on rent, utilities and equipment that they can leverage into higher salary offers to attract star talent – especially when freed of geographical considerations.

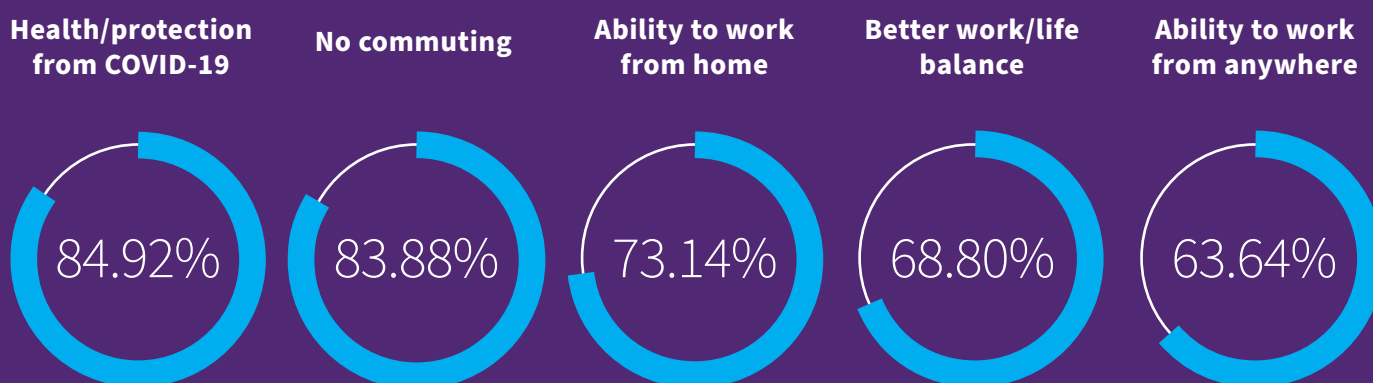




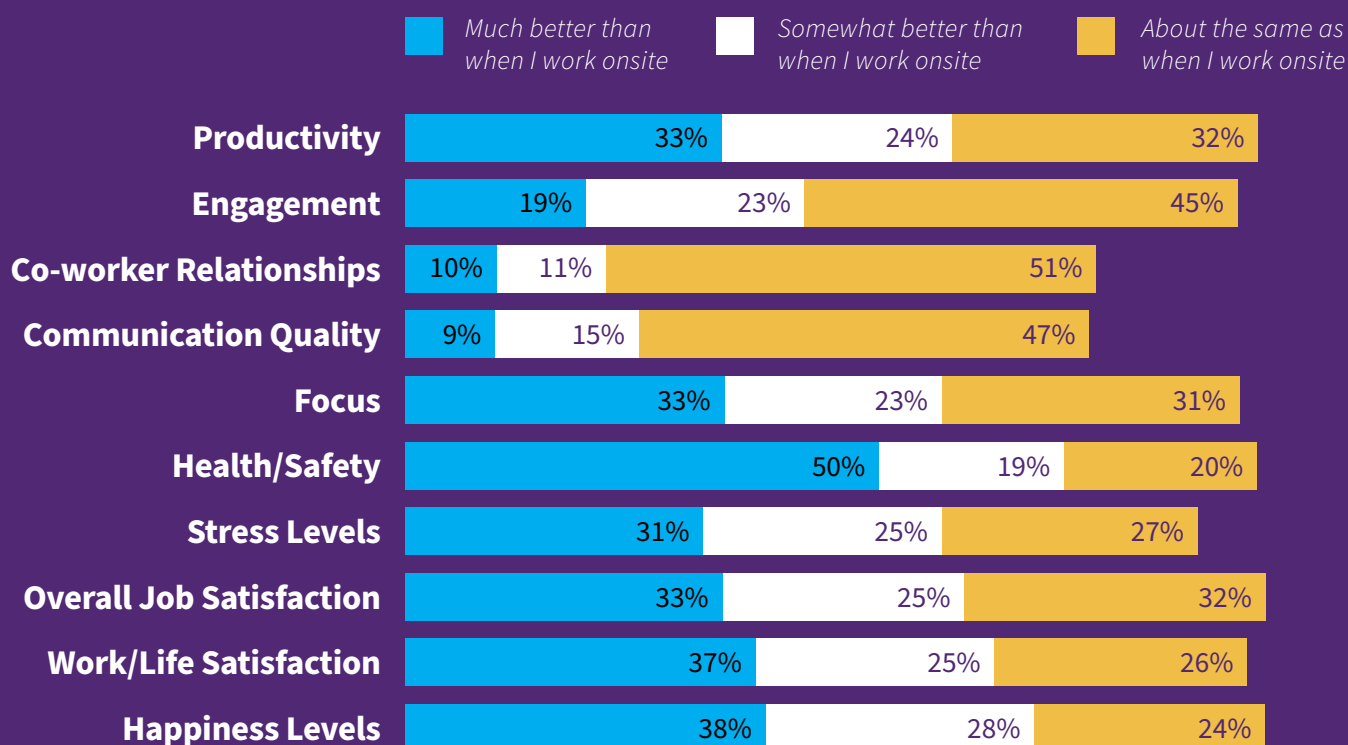
# WHY DO EMPLOYEES PREFER WORKING FROM HOME?

For respondents, the positives of working remotely included the ability to protect their health, enjoy better work/life balance and avoid commuting.

## Top Five Benefits of Working Remotely Cited by Respondents:



## How Did Going Remote Affect Work?



# WHAT MAKES REMOTE WORK SUCCESSFUL?

The level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with remote work depends heavily on balanced communications. Employees want feedback and for managers to be available when they need them, but at the same time, they don't want to be micromanaged. Employers who are understanding about issues workers may have working from home are especially appreciated.

## Feedback From Respondents Who Were Satisfied With Remote Work:

### Ongoing Communication Is Key

*"I am satisfied because I'm trusted to do my job just as I did when I was sitting in a cubicle in the office. My manager is not a micromanager, so I think that has a lot to do with it. I'm also home with a preschooler and elementary-age child who is doing virtual school. My company has been amazing."*

*"Our management has ensured our team stays on track and connected by checking in frequently, ensuring we have the tools we need, and providing clear expectations of remote work."*

*"With Zoom, I can attend meetings and communicate with my co-workers at any time at working hours."*

*"We have good communication using email and Teams chatting system, so I never feel alone or abandoned."*

*"We have 1:1 each week, which allows me to get my manager's input and advice."*



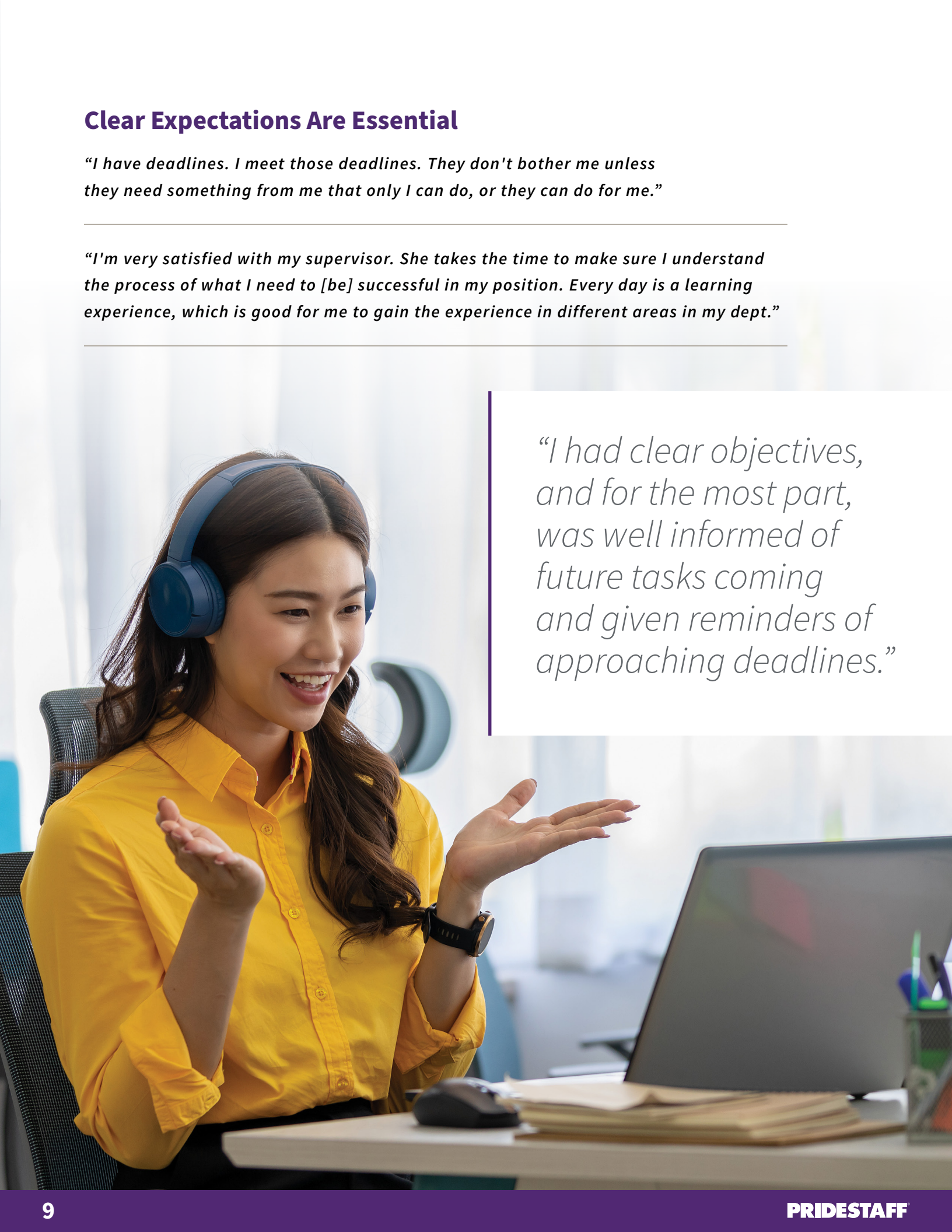
## Clear Expectations Are Essential

*"I have deadlines. I meet those deadlines. They don't bother me unless they need something from me that only I can do, or they can do for me."*

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*"I'm very satisfied with my supervisor. She takes the time to make sure I understand the process of what I need to [be] successful in my position. Every day is a learning experience, which is good for me to gain the experience in different areas in my dept."*

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*"I had clear objectives, and for the most part, was well informed of future tasks coming and given reminders of approaching deadlines."*



## Comforts of Home Are Not To Be Underestimated

*"I'm motivated to work because I'm comfortable."*

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*"I get to be home with fewer distractions. I'm able to work overtime more easily and don't have to worry about traffic and traveling."*

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*"It gives me the flexibility to live where I was happy. I have the autonomy to work at will and enjoy the setting I was in."*

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*"With no commuting, I saved time and gas and was able to stay warm and comfortable inside my home."*

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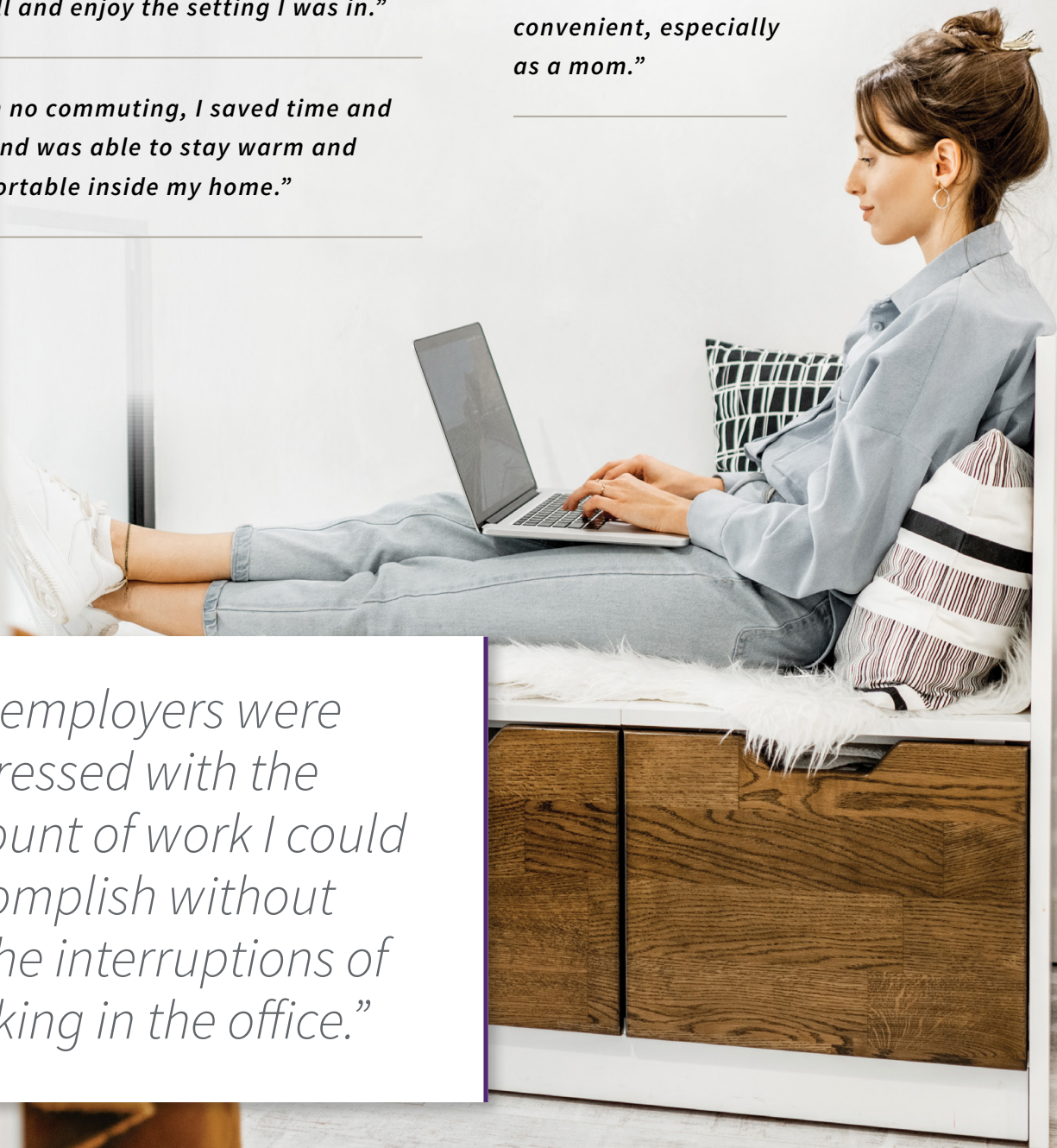
*"I was able to take breaks and use my breaks to eat healthy foods. I was able to take bathroom breaks without asking. I was able to run errands and go to doctor's appointments and still be productive. Having the option to work remotely is nice."*

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*"It's far more convenient, especially as a mom."*

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*"My employers were impressed with the amount of work I could accomplish without all the interruptions of working in the office."*



# WHAT CHALLENGES DOES REMOTE WORK PRESENT?

Respondents named the biggest drawbacks of working remotely as tech issues/connection issues, like the inability to shut off at the end of the day and dealing with loneliness and distractions.

The top five most cited challenges:

1. Technical/connectivity issues **37.89%**
2. Inability to shut off at the end of the day **26.29%**
3. Loneliness/isolation from co-workers **24.02%**
4. Avoiding distractions **20.70%**
5. Trouble collaborating and difficulty in taking time off tied at **18.01%**

## Some Miss In-Person Interaction

*“In terms of personal/team management, nothing can replace the “hands-on” support of having a manager there. Sometimes you waste too much time trying to explain an issue while a customer is on hold.”*

## Distraction Can Be an Issue

*“I do not really like working from home as I am more distracted than working in the office. I tried working at home but went back to working in the office because I could get more done there, plus I had most of my things there.”*



*“I do not feel valued working from home as much as I would in a work environment.”*



## Communication Gaps Can Be a Problem

*"I didn't hear from my manager for a week or two and found that unsettling. Turns out they were handling a crisis that I didn't have visibility of since we were both off-site."*

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*"I don't get a lot of communication from management, i.e., deadlines, changes, no morale boosters."*

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*"I received mixed messages on how to do the job. One supervisor says to do a job one way, another wants a different way. They're not in sync."*

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## Not All Employers Handle Remote Work Well

*"Absolutely no reason why a job can't be done 100% remotely, but management still wants staff in office part time without requiring mask wearing."*

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*"My boss detested his people working from home, so he avoided making it easy for anyone."*

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*"Uncertainty about work, unable to get help solving problems, no training, feel like I am interrupting him when I do make contact."*

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*"I do not feel I have access to management working remotely that is necessary for work."*





## How Can Employers Address These Issues and Keep Remote Employees Happy?

### **Make communication a priority.**

Because you can't stop by to chat with an employee to see how they're doing or coach them through a challenging task, it's crucial to overcommunicate. This can be accomplished by:

- Checking in on employees regularly.
- Sending frequent email updates.
- Collaborating with shared platforms like Google docs, Microsoft Teams or Slack.
- Encouraging informal chats among employees, not just business updates.
- Using short, frequent team meetings to stay connected.

### **Resolve technology problems.**

Connectivity interruptions, equipment failures, unfamiliar systems exist in any workplace, but remote workers are less likely to have backup or support.

- A failed piece of equipment that could be easily swapped out by in-house tech support can bring a remote worker's day to a screeching halt.
- If email goes down in the office, you can wander down the hall to ask your manager a question. That's not possible when working from home.
- Speedy resolution is a must to keep your remote team happy and efficient.

## **Provide the tools employees need to succeed.**

Remote workers often cite communication issues, technical glitches, and distractions as challenges that make it difficult to do their jobs. Here's how you can help:

- Screen-sharing software can make training easier to follow.
- Mobile hotspots provide a creative solution to connectivity issues.
- Focus apps can help employees stay on task.

## **Set clear expectations.**

If remote employees know what they're accountable for, you can be confident in their performance and they can enjoy a bit more freedom – a true win-win. Be sure every employee understands expectations regarding:

- Work hours and tracking
- Communication and documentation policies
- Meeting attendance
- Prioritizing tasks and meeting deadlines

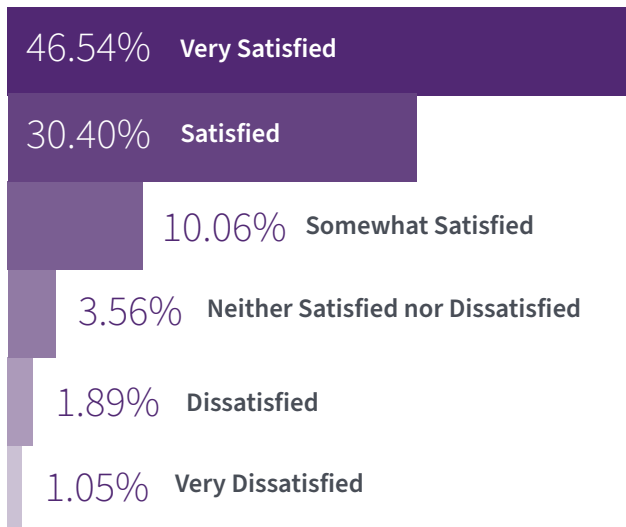




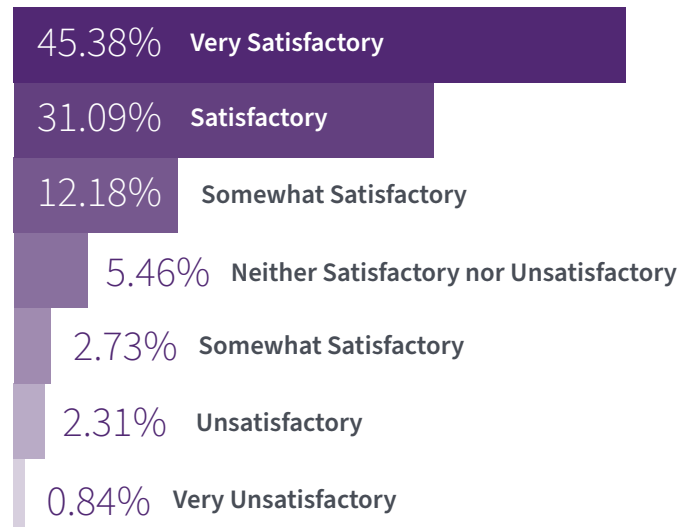
# HOW ARE EMPLOYERS DOING WITH SUPPORTING REMOTE EMPLOYEES?

Most respondents are happy with the equipment, training and support they received from their employer while working remotely.

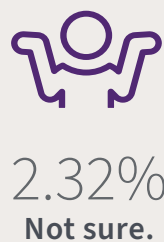
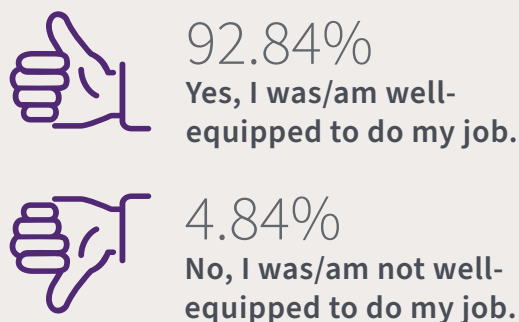
Most Were Satisfied with How They Were Managed Remotely



They Gave High Ratings to the Support Received While Working Remotely



They Had the Tools and Resources They Needed to Be Successful



*40% say they work more hours than they do working on-site.*

# DO EMPLOYEES UNDERSTAND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM?

Understanding expectations is not a problem for most remote workers. Those who are unsure are able to get clarification from their managers.



51.55%

**The work-from-home policy is clear**



29.19%

**I understand what is expected of me every day**



9.73%

**I know my goals and objectives for the week**



9.52%

**I can get clarification on my manager's expectations when needed**

Even those who were new to their company and working remotely felt they had a good understanding of their job, the company culture, and had the resources required to perform their job.



96.42%

**I understand my job**



93.30%

**I understand the company (structure, goals, mission)**



90.41%

**I understand the company culture**

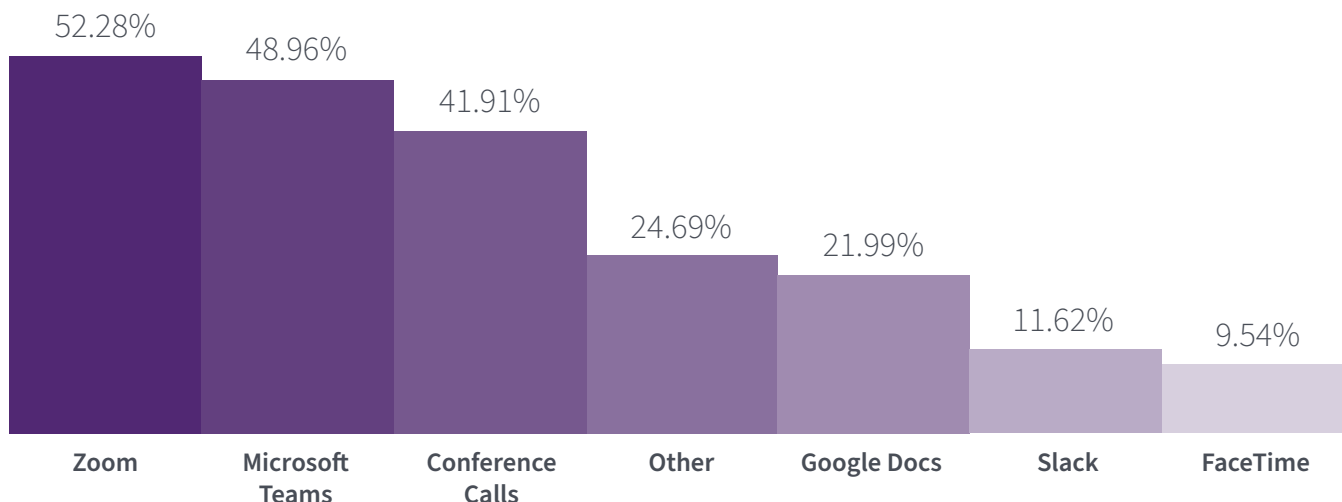


94.16%

**I have the resources I need to perform my job**

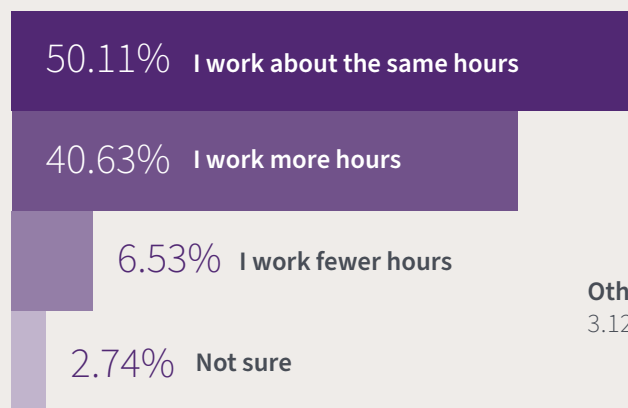
# WHAT TOOLS ARE EMPLOYERS USING TO COMMUNICATE?

Zoom, Microsoft Teams and conference calls were the most common methods of communicating and collaborating with managers and co-workers.



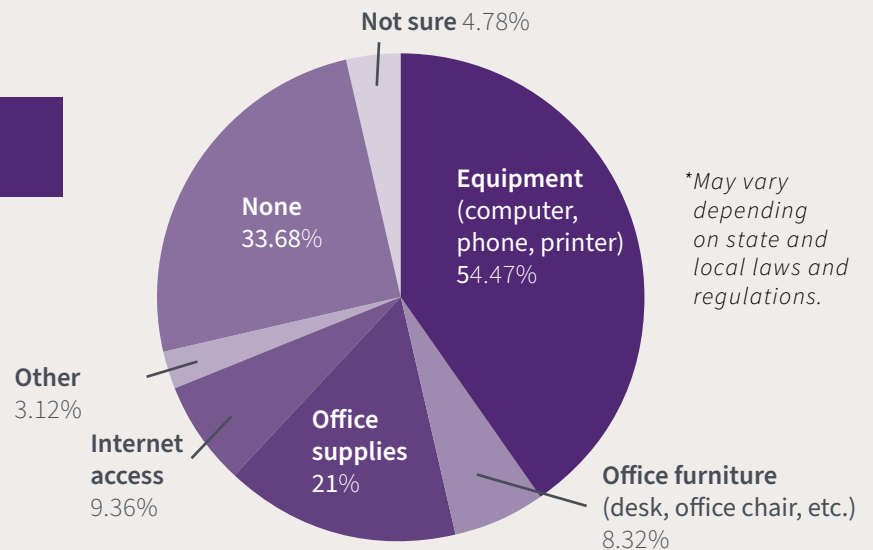
# REMOTE WORKERS ARE PUTTING IN MORE HOURS

Over 40% of remote workers report working more hours than before, and 50% state they work just as many.



# EMPLOYERS ARE PICKING UP THE TAB

A majority of employers pay for equipment and office supplies, according to respondents. Workers typically use their own furniture and incidentals.



# THE FUTURE OF REMOTE WORK

The vast majority of respondents believe companies will be more flexible with remote work going forward.

*Only 11% felt companies would return to mostly on-site after COVID-19.*



38.45%  
Yes, more companies will shift to fully remote



50.26%  
Yes, companies will be somewhat more flexible



11.29%  
No, once the pandemic is over, we will go back to mostly on-site



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS WITH REMOTE TEAMS

To ensure success, check in with remote employees regularly. Train managers on remote management best practices, including how to recognize signs of excess stress or burnout.



## Foster Employee Relationships

Host virtual happy hours or coffee breaks to give employees opportunities for casual chat. It can keep them engaged and prevent them from feeling isolated.



## Communicate Expectations

Give team members measurable KPIs. It can assure them they are on the right track or indicate when they may need guidance.



## Focus on Easing Transitions

Some employees noted an initial drop in productivity while adjusting to remote work but were quickly able to put systems in place with employer support.



## Make Time for Collaboration

Plan ahead for brainstorming sessions or other collaborative meetings. Sending an agenda and relevant materials can help keep the meeting productive.



## Keep Lines of Communication Open

Keep everyone updated on when their co-workers and managers are available to them by sharing calendars or working hours. Reassure employees they don't always have to be available.



## Watch For Symptoms of Burnout

Encourage employees to take breaks throughout the day and PTO as needed. Point them to mental health resources available through your EAP or insurance, such as video counseling which is accessible and effective.



## Stay Flexible

Plan for the unexpected. Whether the challenge is childcare issues, illness or an unexpected increase in business, be ready to adapt to whatever may arise.



## Employees Appreciate the Little Things

They value saving time and money not needing to commute, pack lunch and dress professionally. They enjoy being able to eat meals at home or take a break for a walk during daylight hours.



# PROTECT YOUR COMPANY FROM EMPLOYMENT RISKS

Adding remote workers to your organization brings the potential for exposure to risks that had not previously existed. Laws and regulations can vary among states, counties and even towns. When hiring remote employees located where you do not have an office, be sure you are up to date on applicable employment laws:

- Threshold for creating a “taxable presence” in each location as it relates to income or other taxes
- Laws on application or interview questions and permitted background checks
- How to address workspace set-up and accommodation requests
- Compensation, workweek scheduling, wage and hour and expense reimbursement regulations
- Required employee benefits, health and safety standards and training, and workers’ compensation

# PRIDESTAFF IS HERE TO HELP WITH REMOTE WORK.

2020 was a challenging year. Many of those challenges are likely to continue and new ones pile on in 2021. PrideStaff can help you anticipate and overcome in-house, hybrid or remote workforce challenges. We'll keep you staffed, flexible and prepared for what's next.

## With PrideStaff, you can:

- Quickly access temporary workers for last-minute call-offs as well as long-term needs.
- Supplement your workforce to keep up with unpredictable demand – without adding overhead.
- Build a talent bench to draw from when you're ready to grow your business.
- Cast a wider net to find top talent – no matter where they're located.
- Recruit candidates who thrive in a distributed workplace.

# PRIDESTAFF®

**pridestaff.com**

### **Our Mission:**

Consistently provide client experiences focused on what they value most.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR MANAGING REMOTE EMPLOYEES

<https://www.pridestaff.com/blog/remote-workforce-management-guide/>

<https://www.pridestaff.com/blog/tools-for-remote-employees/>

<https://www.pridestaff.com/blog/get-ahead-3-remote-work-predictions/>

<https://www.pridestaff.com/blog/tools-for-remote-employees/>

<https://www.pridestaff.com/blog/remote-workforce-management-guide/>

<https://www.pridestaff.com/blog/are-you-micromanaging-to-death-how-to-spot-and-avoid-it/>

