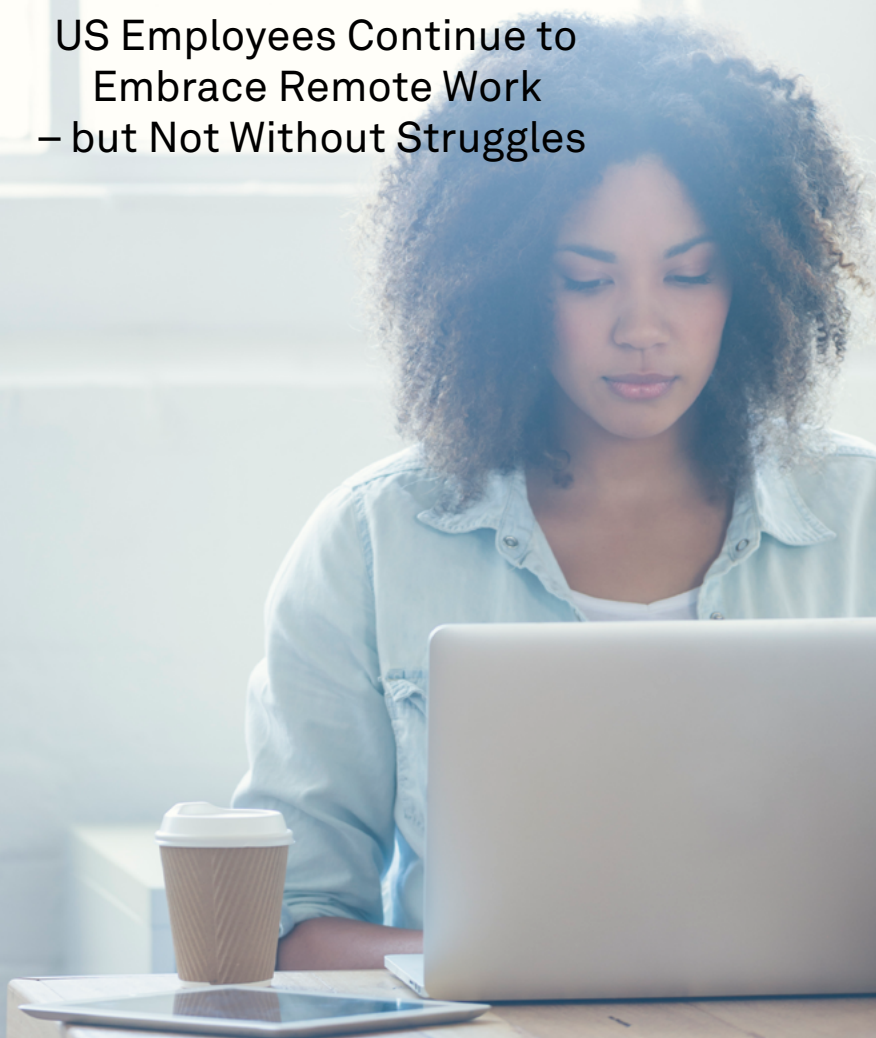




National Follow-Up Survey

US Employees Continue to
Embrace Remote Work
– but Not Without Struggles





COVID-19 has pushed employers and employees into the remote workspace in record time. An online survey conducted by getAbstract in April 2020 confirmed the popularity of remote work options among US employees. Asked about whether they would like to go back to their pre-COVID-19 work arrangement, 43% of respondents said at the time they would like to work remotely more in the future.

How have US employees fared since? Have they grown tired of sitting at home? Or have the past 6 months reinforced their enthusiasm for remote work arrangements?

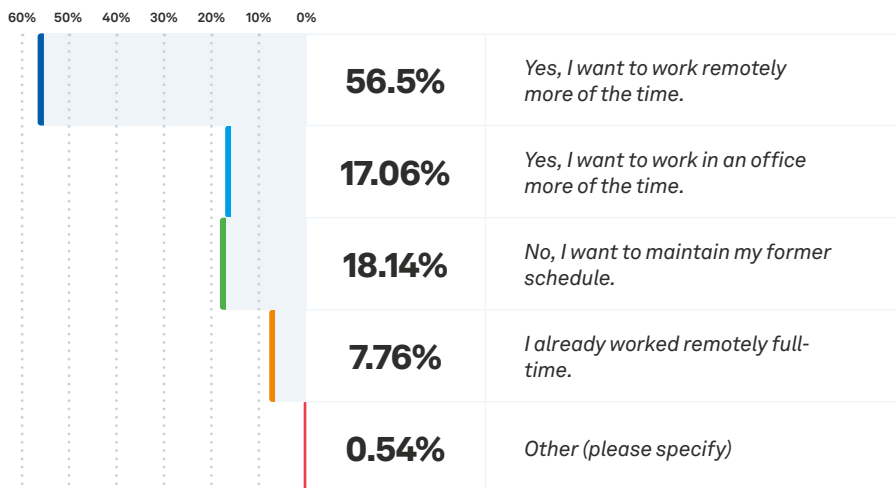
In September 2020, getAbstract conducted a follow-up survey. Like in April, the survey included over 1200 people who are working from home full-time in the United States. Survey participants included a nearly equal number of women and men from a range of ages, income levels and industries.





In April, 43% of respondents said they would like to work remotely more of the time after pandemic has passed. This percentage has since risen to 56%, indicating a 13% increase in the percentage of workers wanting to work from home more often. The percentage of employees saying they want to spend more time in an office environment post-pandemic has also increased – from 12% to 17%.

After working remotely for the past six months, do you want to change your schedule after COVID-19 (after the risk of infection has been minimized, and schools, offices and other institutions have reopened)?

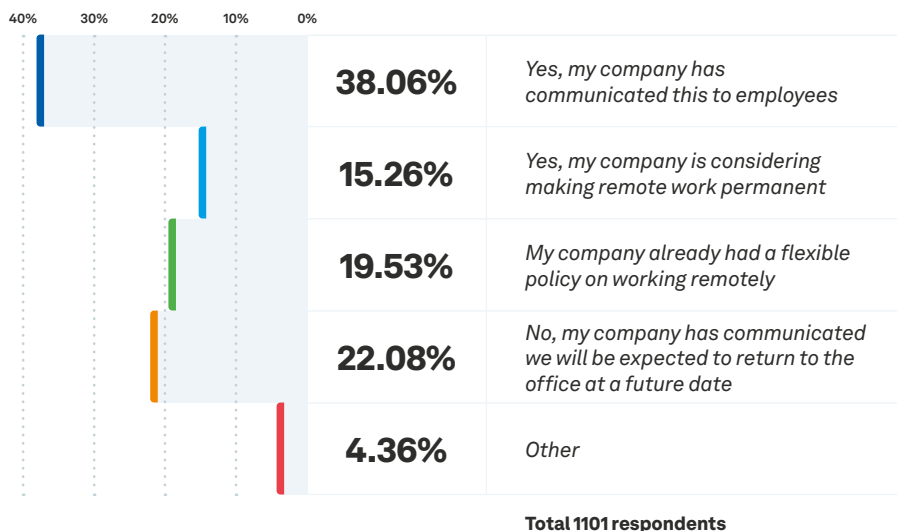


Total 1108 respondents



In April, an open question was how employers would respond to shifting employee attitudes toward telecommuting and flexible work arrangements. Six months on, 38% of respondents confirmed that their company has implemented a new flexible workplace policy for the duration of the pandemic. Among the 38%, almost half said their company is considering making remote work permanent.

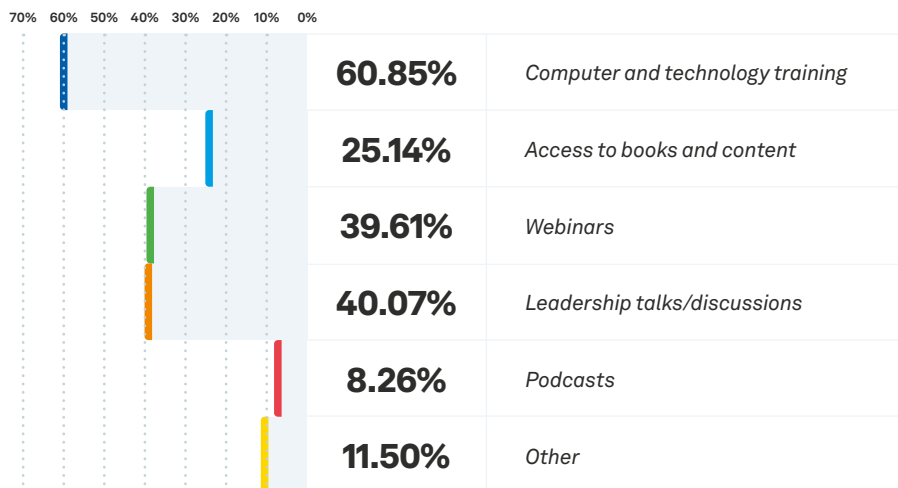
Has your company changed its policy on allowing working remotely after COVID-19?





Employers have made efforts to support their employees in their transition to a digital-only workplace. Most respondents said they received computer and technology training, and organizations appear to make ample use of webinars and podcasts to keep their workforce engaged.

What kinds of support and resources has your company provided to help you adjust to working remotely?

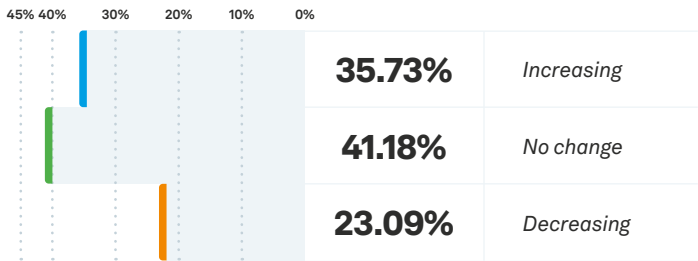


Total 1078 respondents



Despite the good news of the US workforce settling into working remotely, the arrangement is not without its challenges. Over a third of respondents said their stress levels have increased over the past six months.

After six months of working remotely, how would you describe your stress level?

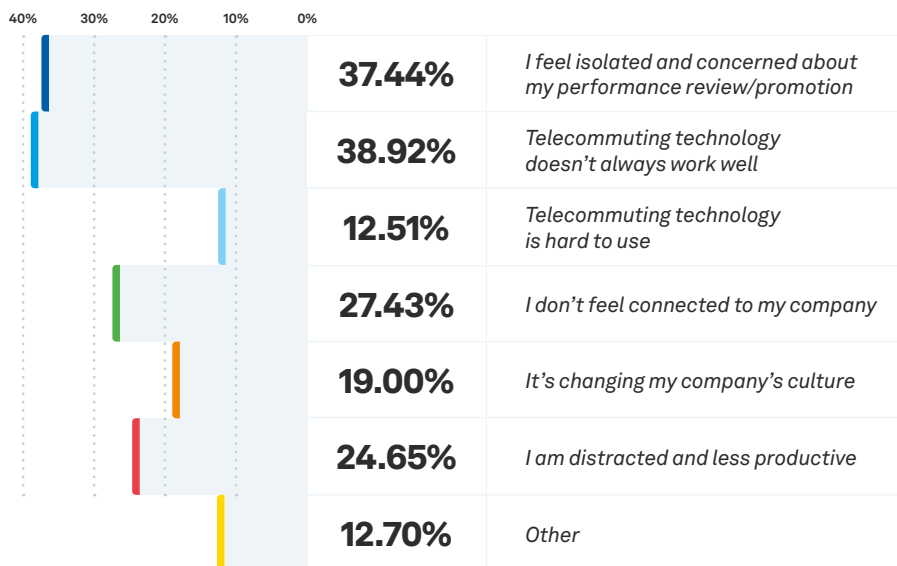


Total 1100 respondents



Anxiety levels among remote workers have also grown over the same period. More respondents now express fears of becoming detached from their company and co-workers and complain about technology being hard to use or not working properly. While in April, a little over a quarter of respondents expressed feelings of isolation, that percentage has since climbed to 37%. A growing number of respondents now also worry about distractions and a loss in productivity. While 17% of respondents expected home-based distractions to be an issue for them back in April, 24% of respondents now feel that distractions are hurting their productivity.

What, if any, are your biggest anxieties about working from home the past six months during COVID-19?

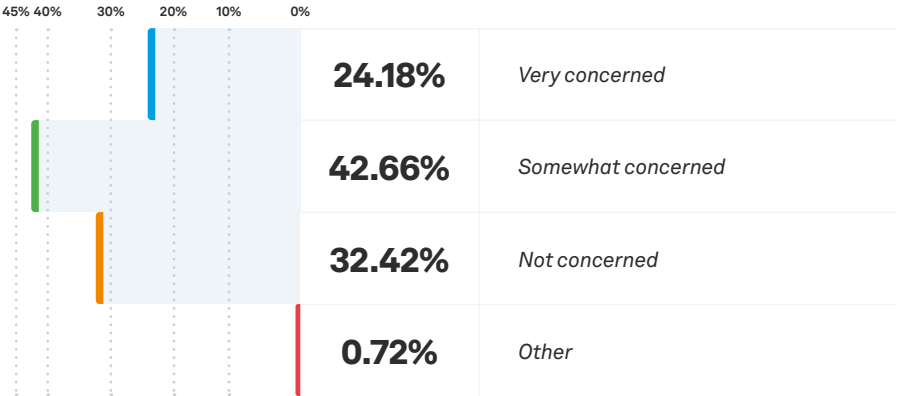


Total 1079 respondents



Worries about job security are adding to the anxieties of remote workers, with two thirds of respondents saying they feel somewhat or very concerned about the future of their jobs.

How concerned have you been about your job security during the past six months since the COVID pandemic began?



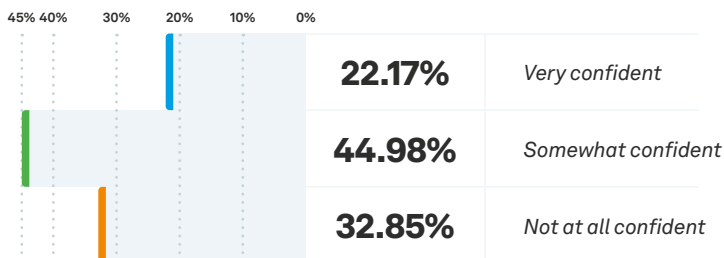
Total 1104 respondents





Virus-related health and safety concerns have also become more prevalent. Between April and September, the fraction of respondents who said they did not feel safe returning to the office after the pandemic increased from a quarter to a third.

How confident are you that you will be safe from COVID if you return to work?



Total 1096 respondents



Although remote work has increased in popularity among the employees surveyed, months of working from home and continued uncertainty about the future are taking a toll on employees' emotional wellbeing. Our follow-up survey clearly documents rising levels of isolation and anxieties about the future, as well as growing levels of frustration with technology issues.

Yet it is hard to imagine that organizations will go back to how things were once COVID-19 is contained. *“It’s becoming increasingly clear that widespread adoption of remote work is not going to be a temporary phenomenon during COVID,”* says Andrew Savikas, chief strategy officer at getAbstract. *“As the pandemic drags on, employees and employers are embracing remote work, finding solutions and getting training to make it easier, and laying the groundwork for this to be a permanent change post pandemic.”*

As workers are settling into working from home, it is now up to employers to make remote work arrangements more productive and satisfying for all employees.



