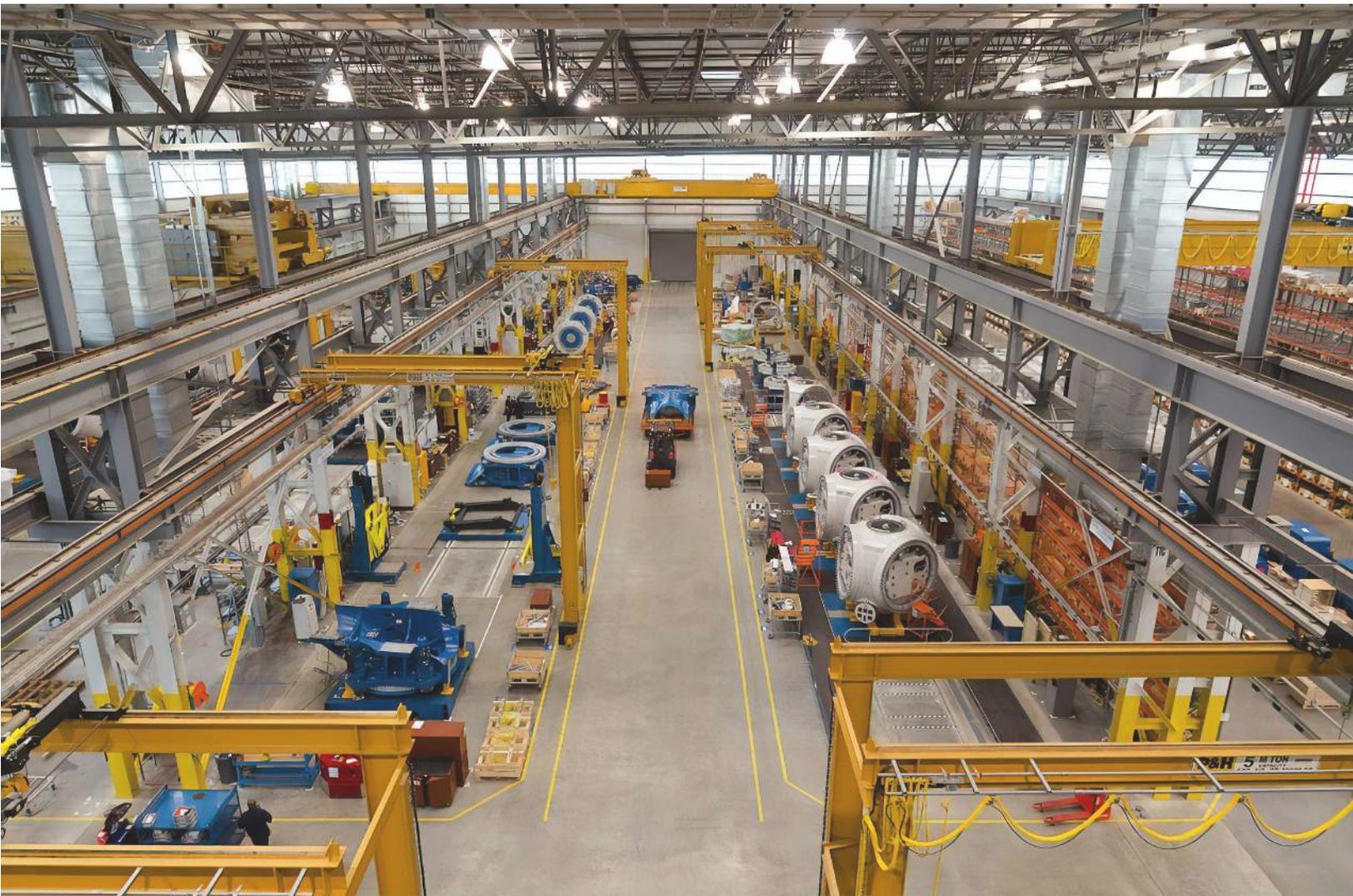


COVID-19 Survey of SWE Corporate Partnership Council

Summary Report



August 2021

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This survey was open to SWE's Corporate Partnership Council, which includes nearly 100 companies. We received 42 responses from our call for participation in the summer of 2021, 95% of which are headquartered in the United States. The following describe the survey participants and the companies that they represent.

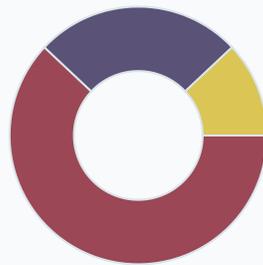
Industries Represented

29%	Manufacturing
17%	Technology
10%	Energy & Utilities

Company Size

< 10,000 employees	14%
10,001 to 25,000	10%
25,001 to 50,000	12%
50,000+	64%

Respondent's Department



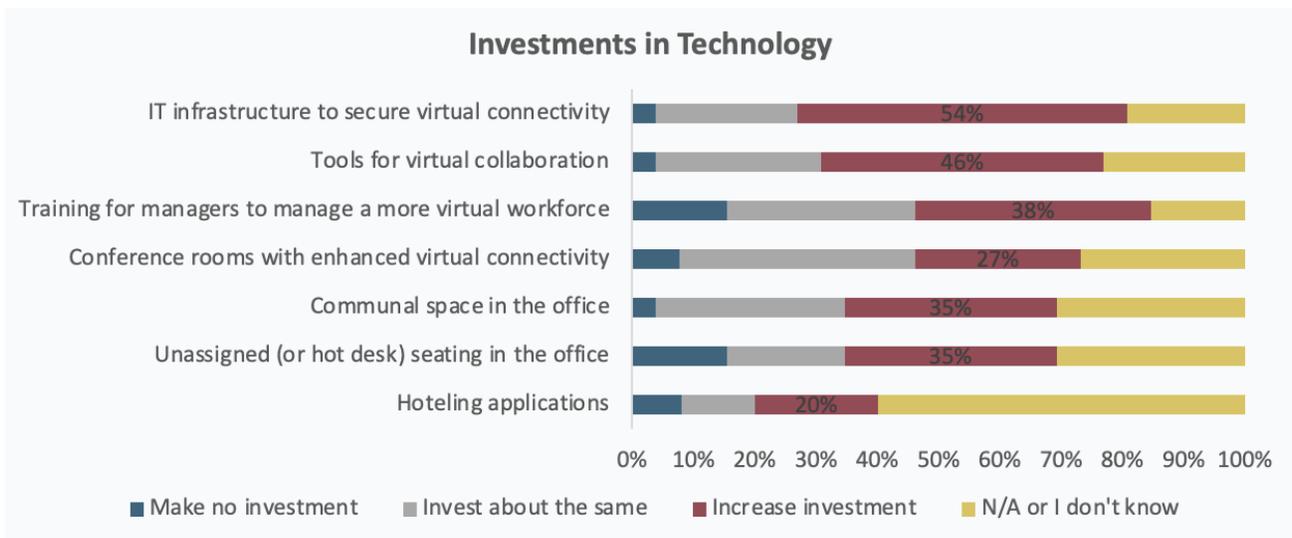
Human Resources	62%
Engineering/Technology	26%
Other	12%

Respondent's Level in Organization

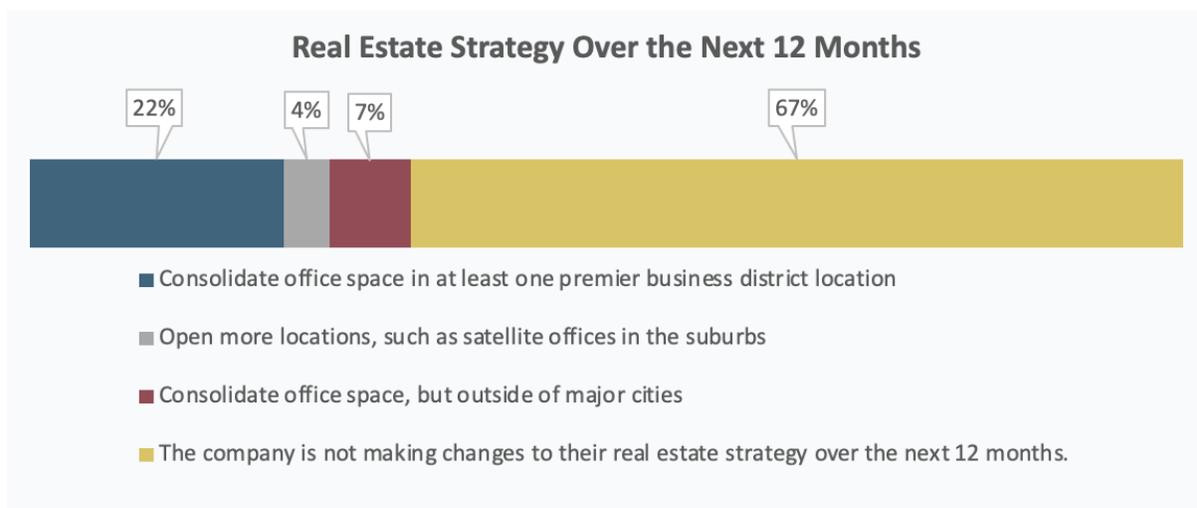


Technology Infrastructure Investments and Real Estate Needs

A majority of survey respondents reported that their company plans to invest about the same or more across several technologies and areas that would support remote work. Notably, no one reported that their organization would decrease investments in these areas.



Despite these potential investment increases in remote work technology, 67% believe that their company is not going to make any changes to their real estate strategy in the next year.



When asked to project further out, 38% of respondents anticipate a reduction between 5% and 15% in their office space needs over the next three years.

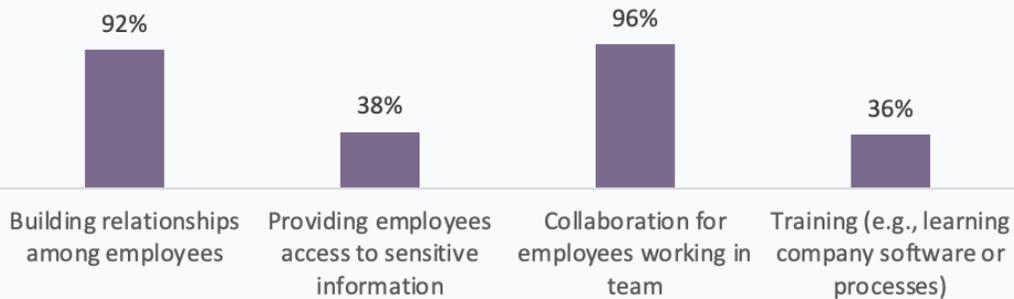
Planning for an Onsite Workforce

Respondents noted that a physical office will provide space for employees who cannot work from home or who need to meet with clients, as well as increase employee productivity and help support the local community. Most respondents also indicated that building relationships among employees and collaboration for employees working in a team were very or extremely important to foster when employees are in the office.

Why a Physical Office is Necessary

67%	Provides a space to work for employees who cannot work from home
58%	Increasing employee productivity
58%	Provides space to meet with clients
58%	Supports the local community

How important are the following for your work organization while employees are in the office? (% indicating very or extremely important)



Maintaining Company Culture

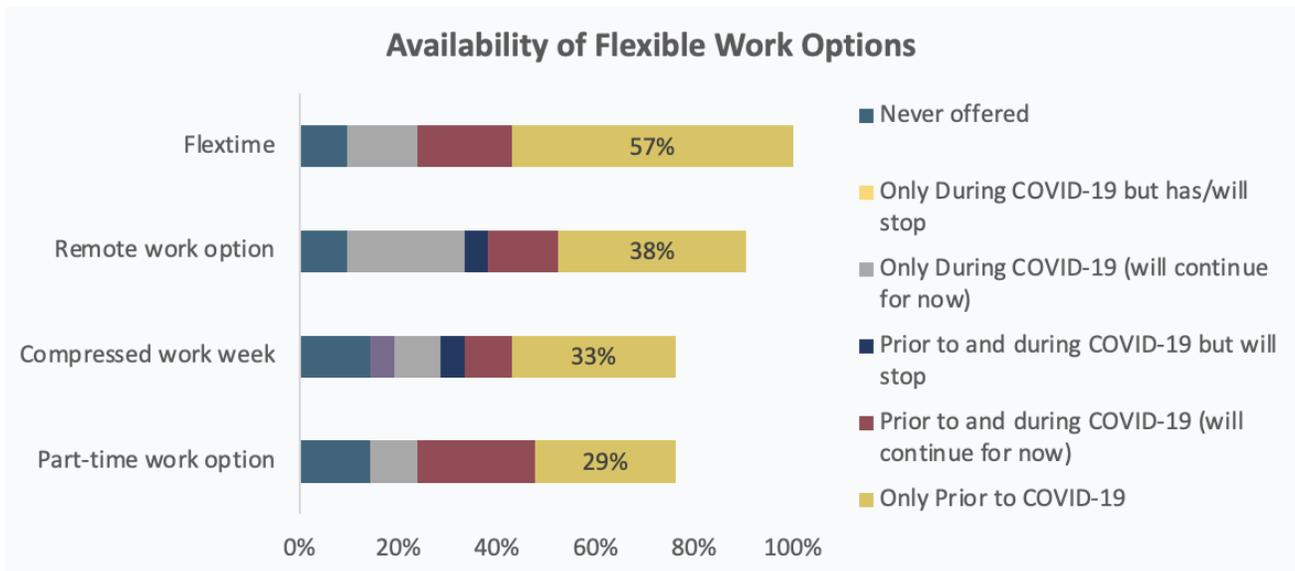
When asked how many employees their work organization thinks is needed in the office in order to maintain a distinctive culture for the company, 33% of survey participants indicated that at least half of employees would need to be in the office at least 5 days per week. However, over 90% of respondents believe that less than half of their employees would prefer to work 5 days per week in the office.

How many days do organizations believe that at least half of employees must be in the office to maintain a distinctive company culture?

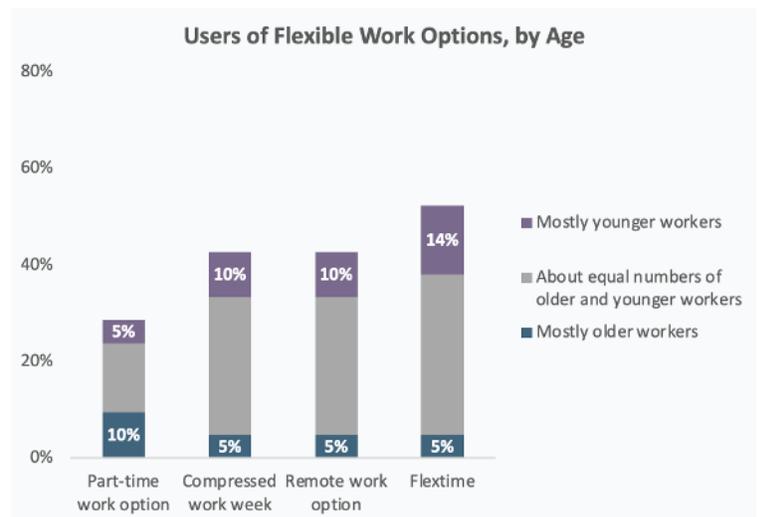
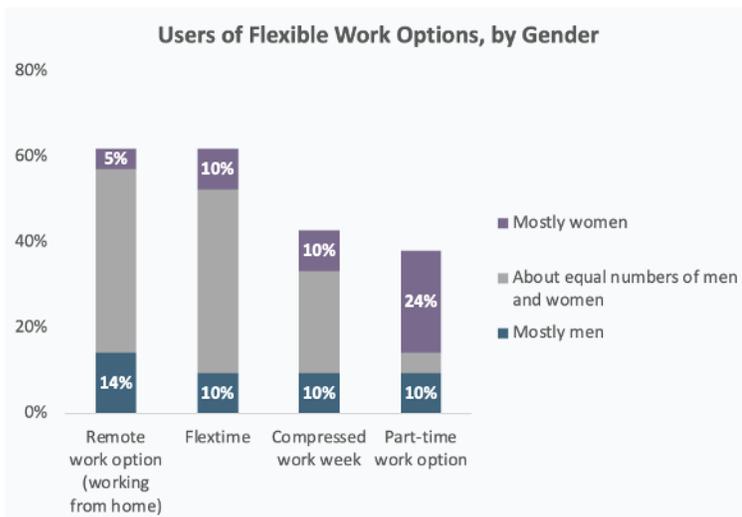


Availability and Use of Flexible Work Options

In general, most (81%) respondents agree that employees feel free to use flexible work options offered by their companies. Slightly less (71%) agree that using flexible work options will not jeopardize employees' future with the company.



When asked about employees' use of various flexible work options, respondents reported that about the same number of men and women tend to use flextime and compressed workweek options. However, respondents indicated that more men than women work remotely, while the reverse was true when reporting on those who work part-time, with mostly women selecting this option. Similarly, a higher proportion of respondents reported that about equal numbers of older and younger workers used flexible work options than those who reported that users of flexible work options were mostly younger or older employees.



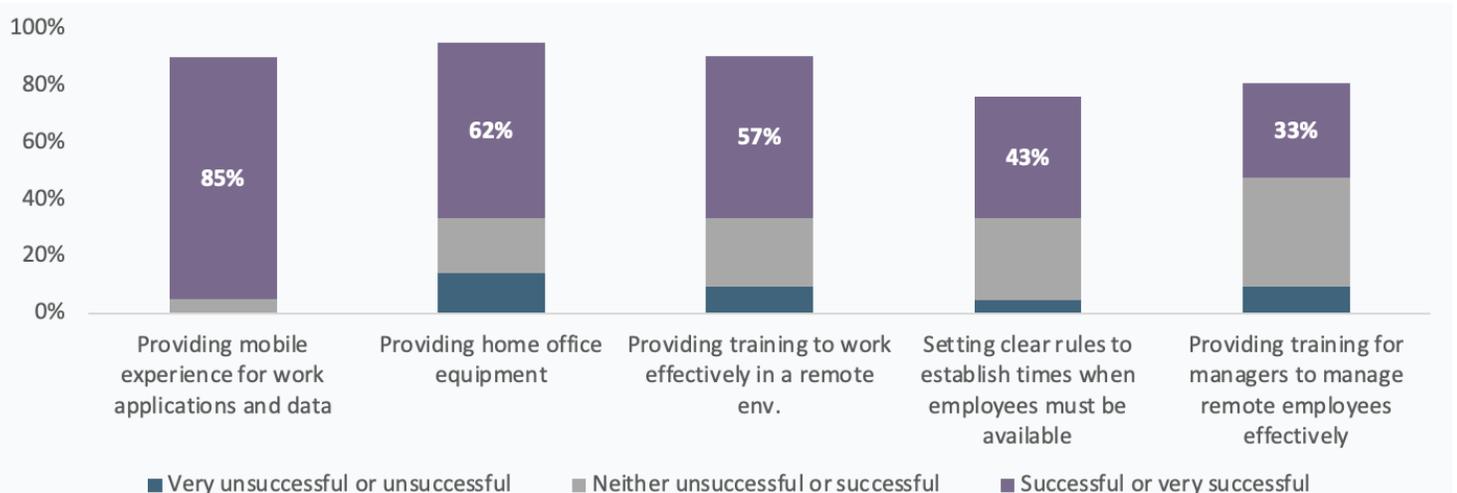
Success in Moving to a Hybrid Environment

Despite differences in who is utilizing flexible work options, most respondents reported that their companies were successful in shifting to remote work amid the COVID-19 pandemic. A number of survey participants provided examples of what they believe have been the most challenging aspects of shifting to a remote work environment.

Challenges Observed in the Shift to a Remote Work Environment

- Difficulty maintaining networks and developing collaborations
- Lack of informal or ad-hoc interactions that promote impromptu collaborations
- Onboarding new employees and engaging them in the company culture
- Remote internships
- Supervisors converting to virtual management
- Less access to leadership
- Facilitating training in a hybrid environment
- Managing risk for onsite workers
- Virtual meeting burnout
- No regulated breaks from work leading to overload and fatigue
- Supporting employees to manage increased stress levels
- Uncertainty of pandemic's length made it difficult to understand the impact and how to respond

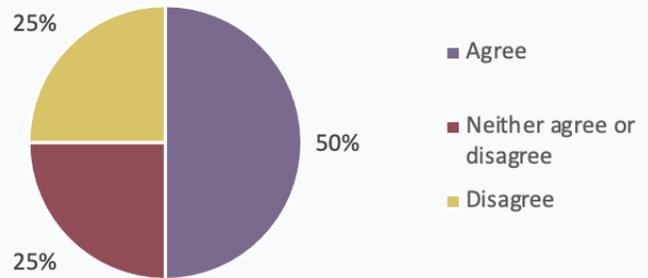
Effectiveness in Supporting Remote Work



Limiting Travel as a Cost Saving Measure

Half of survey respondents indicated that their company will try to minimize business travel over the next year to save money.

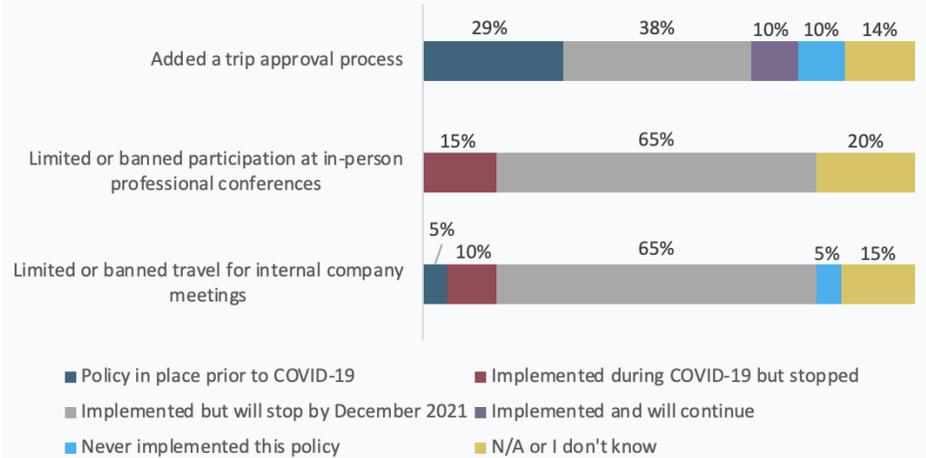
Minimizing Travel Over the Next 12 Months To Save Money



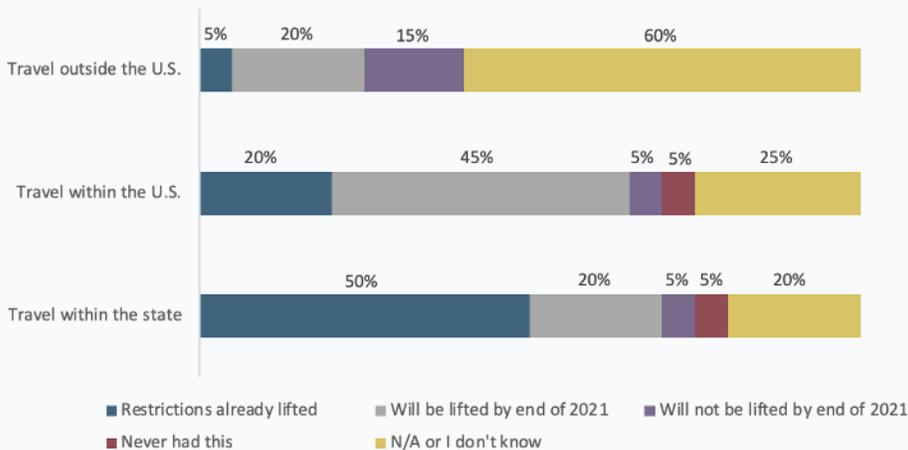
Expected Policy Changes

Over half of respondents reported that their company limited travel for internal company meetings and participation at in-person professional conferences only during COVID, but they expect these restrictions to be lifted by the end of the year.

Travel Policy Changes



Business Travel Restrictions

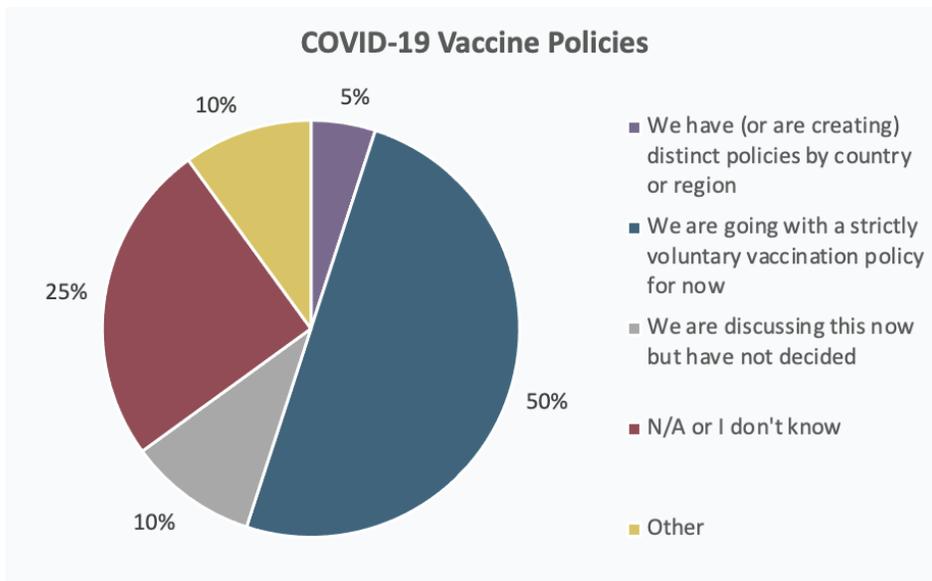
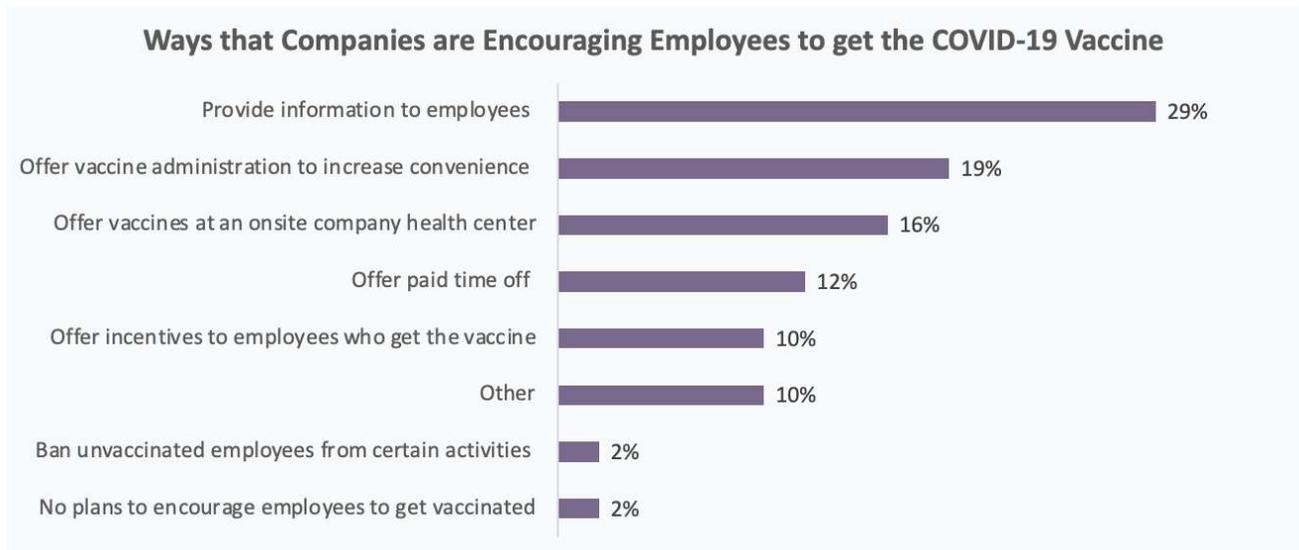


Lifting Travel Restrictions

Business travel is improving, as the majority of respondents reported that restrictions for in-state and U.S. travel have either been lifted or will be lifted by the end of the year. However, restrictions on international travel will likely be in place longer.

COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements

Very few survey participants reported that their companies would take any action to encourage their employees to get a COVID-19 vaccine. For instance, only 29% report that their company has or will provide information to employees about the vaccine, including the benefits of getting vaccinated or how to get vaccinated. Some respondents stated that their companies were planning to change PPE requirements for U.S. employees who self-identify as having been vaccinated, while others who were not requiring vaccinations indicated that their company had no mask or social distancing requirements in place.



COVID-19 Vaccine Policies

Regarding their specific vaccination policy, half of respondents reported that their company will utilize a strictly voluntary policy for now.

Returning to the Physical Workplace

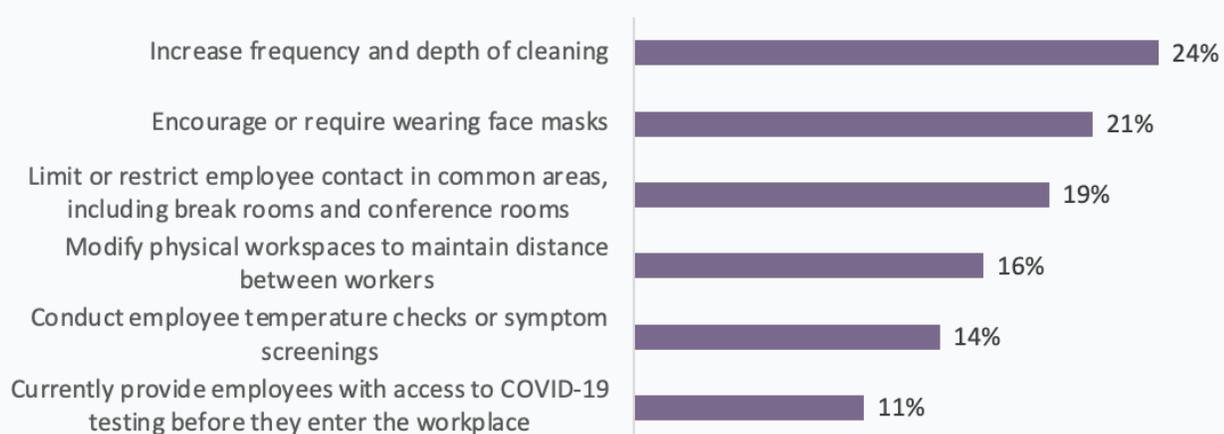
Most companies have employees who have returned to the workplace, with 20% of respondents reporting that most or all of their employees have returned. Many survey participants indicated that their companies are continuing to support remote workers, at least until the fall.

Plans to Bring Remote Workers Back to the Workplace



Over half of respondents stated that their organizations are concerned about providing reasonable accommodations for those who are not vaccinated. Companies have implemented certain precautionary measures to promote a safer working environment for employees who are working onsite, with most respondents stating that they have increased the frequency and depth of cleaning and/or encouraged mask wearing in the workplace. However, only 11% reported that they provide access to COVID-19 testing to employees before they enter the workplace.

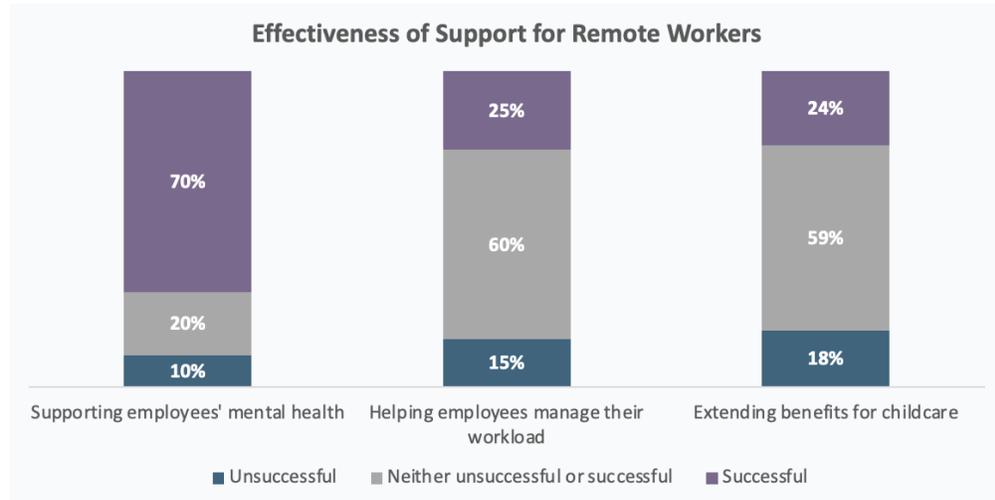
COVID-19 Precautions



NOTE: Multiple responses permitted.

Support Activities for Remote Employees

Most (70%) respondents perceived that their companies were successful in supporting employees' mental health during COVID-19, but were less successful in helping employees manage their workload or extending benefits for childcare.

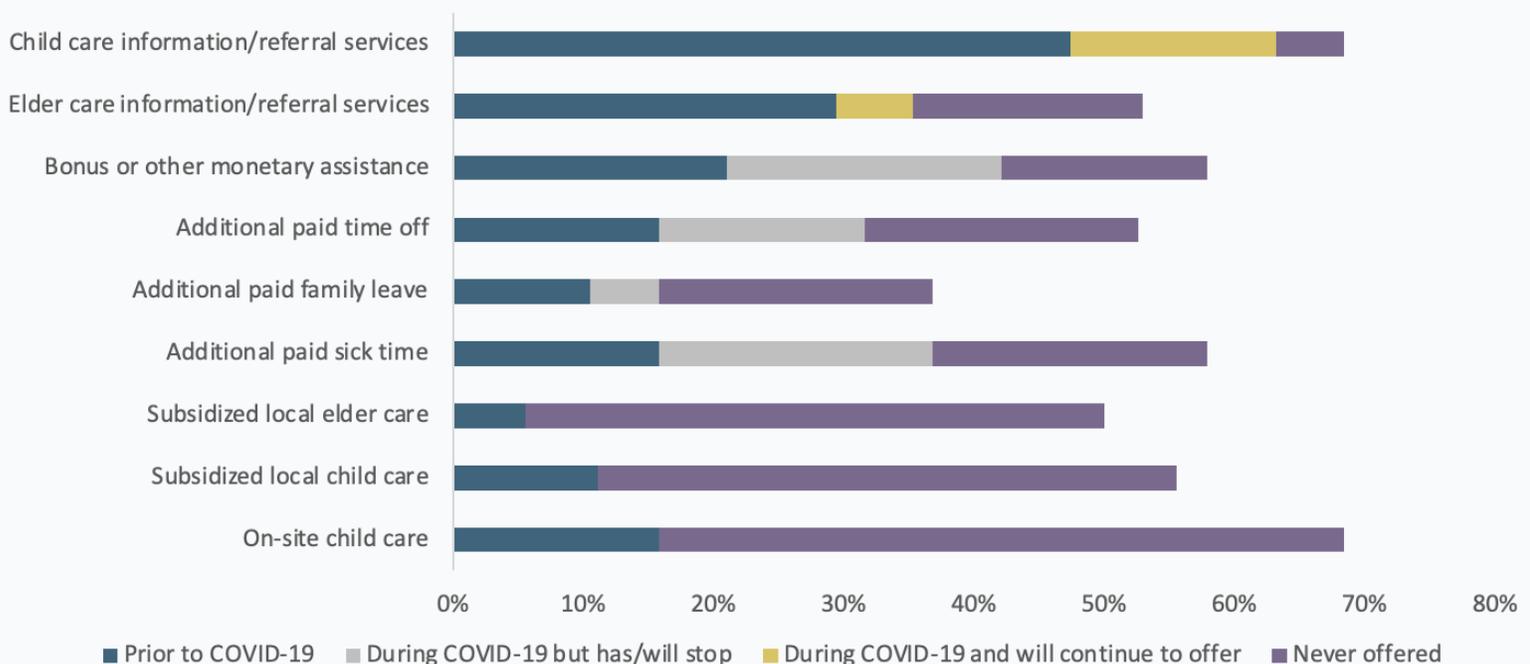


Employee Benefits Offered

Some survey participants reported that certain benefits were never offered to employees before or during the pandemic, including additional paid family leave and time off, on-site or subsidized child care, and subsidized elder care.

Researchers have shown that many working mothers have not returned to the workforce, and supports like these could potentially attract or retain working parents - especially those navigating child care responsibilities during this time.

Employer Benefits Offered



The Society of Women Engineers surveyed the SWE Corporate Partnership Council (CPC) to gain insight into their organizations' plans to move through and out of the COVID-19 pandemic. SWE developed a survey in Qualtrics for online data collection. As of June 2021, the SWE CPC had almost 100 members. The survey had a 25% completion rate. This report presents the descriptive statistics of the responses received.

SWE is grateful for the support and engagement of the CPC in our research activities. We appreciate the time and attention of those who participated in this survey.

About swe

The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) is the world's largest advocate and catalyst for change for women in engineering and technology. The not-for-profit educational and service organization is the driving force that establishes engineering as a highly desirable career aspiration for women. As a champion of diversity, SWE empowers women to succeed and advance in their personal and professional lives. For more information about SWE, please visit www.swe.org.

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