

Drawbacks must be addressed if remote working is to remain a long-term option

Over half of people feel like they belong at their organisation less since remote work started, new research reveals.

It's been over a year since the COVID-19 pandemic turned our ways of living and working upside down. For many, the shift to working from home was welcomed – so much so that remote and hybrid working looks set to become the norm as restrictions lift across the UK.

But a new survey, commissioned by employee engagement platform [*Workvivo*](#), has revealed that 79% of employees feel more isolated than they did prior to [*mass-WFH*](#). In addition, 64% feel more overwhelmed and 70% more burned-out.

The survey of 1,000 employees across the UK and US suggests that employee connection and company culture have taken a hit. Many report a reduced sense of belonging at work, and a lack of connection to organisational goals and culture. Overall, more than half of people surveyed 'love their job less' since the pandemic began.

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Although COVID-19 has been a stressful period in and of itself, Workvivo implies remote working would bring unique challenges even in the absence of a pandemic.

In keeping with this, workers are looking to their employers for answers – with 70% urging their employers to do more to encourage connection with colleagues and workplace values. 57% of respondents also sense their achievements are falling under the radar since working from home started.

“We are one year into this mass remote work experiment and the real long-term effects are starting to show”, says John Goulding, CEO of Workvivo. “Left unaddressed, this is likely to cause issues such as burnout and attrition. The social capital workplaces were surviving on at the beginning has now been spent and employees are feeling isolated and disconnected.”

He continues,

“What has been made clear by the survey results is that employers are unsure of the best way to deal with these issues and are inadvertently using the wrong methods of communication to do so.”

“The survey shows that tools like instant messaging, video calls and email are all fine for connecting in an instant and transactional way with colleagues and but they are *not* the correct tools for leaders to connect employees on a organizational level, to make them feel part of the bigger picture, the company’s goals and culture, and where they feel where they feel recognised, heard and a sense of belonging.”

Rather than increasing reliance on workplace tools, companies should – Workvivo suggests – acknowledge that they can be noisy and stressful. Similarly, virtual team bonding activities are on the rise – but employees are actually after shorter working hours, more check-ins and more meaningful communication in general.

