

COVID impact  
employee pulse survey

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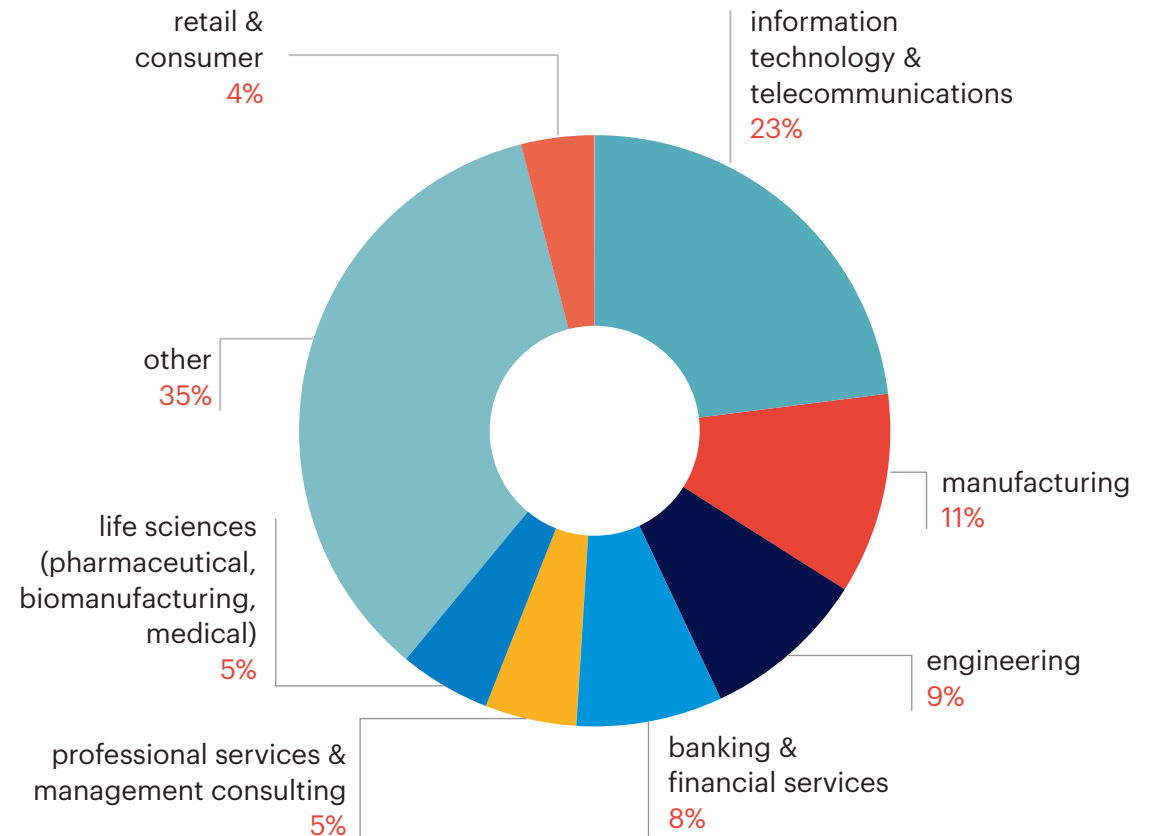


# about the survey

The Covid-19 pandemic has irrevocably changed the outlook of the Indian job market in 2020 and beyond. In a bid to understand the implications of the pandemic on employee sentiment and outlook, Randstad India commissioned the 2020 COVID-19 Employee Pulse Survey.

Conducted between June 2020 and August 2020, the survey seeks to extrapolate market sentiments based on the answers of 1562 local employees across a wide range of industries. The survey also identifies areas of concern that employers can leverage to boost employee morale.

Sample distribution by Industry



A man in a dark blue polo shirt and white trousers is sitting on a white ledge, working on a silver laptop. He is looking down at the screen. On the wall behind him is a Unicorn brand dartboard. The background is a bright, yellowish-white wall with a doorway visible in the distance.

# employee expectation and satisfaction

**58%**

of respondents expected employers to proactively implement a mandatory work-from-home.

# employee expectation from employers during pandemic

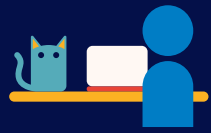
The following concerns are significant. **58%** employees expected the companies to implement a work from home arrangement until community spread had ceased. This was seen as critical to ensuring social distancing norms invoked by governments and public health authorities.

An overwhelming **39%** of respondents expected their employers to keep them updated on business progress and continuity plans, while **31%** expected technical support for remote working and **29%** expected support to maintain mental health.

These findings indicate that employees are looking for tangible assurances from employers on their commitment to employee health and well-being. With the job market being severely impacted during the

pandemic, employees are also expecting proactive communication from their organizations regarding their job security and the way ahead.

How businesses respond to employees at this critical juncture can have a long-term impact on employee motivation and engagement, loyalty, productivity, profitability and corporate reputation. With most staff working remotely, companies must proactively work towards bridging communication gaps. Regular employee focused communications can go a long way towards motivating teams, while reducing individual fatigue and stress.



58%

proactively implement a mandatory work-from-home arrangement until there is no community spread



27%

provide flexible working hours for employees who live with children or the elderly



39%

provide regular updates on business and continuity plans and reassure employment status



15%

allow employees to use paid or unpaid leave when serving quarantine order instead of remote working



31%

provide adequate technical support to help work remotely



7%

temporarily shift some resources to help frontline industries



29%

provide additional support to help employees maintain their mental health



## workforce arrangements made by company

Workforce arrangements made by companies so far indicate that they are cognizant of employee concerns. A handful of companies have taken creative measures to fulfill employee expectations. For instance, keeping in mind the unique challenges of working from home in the absence of support systems, 2% have implemented a four-day week, while 3% have introduced shorter working days and 14% have implemented flexible working arrangements.

The pandemic could present a great opportunity for companies to focus on their organizational culture. Establishing a culture of inclusivity, and care and concern for the health and well-being of employees can help businesses gain mileage and drive productivity.





**43%**  
mandatory company-wide  
work-from-home arrangement



**14%**  
asked to take unpaid leave



**14%**  
implemented a flexible  
working arrangement



**12%**  
manager decides whether to  
allow work from home or office



**11%**  
implemented a shift or  
split team arrangement



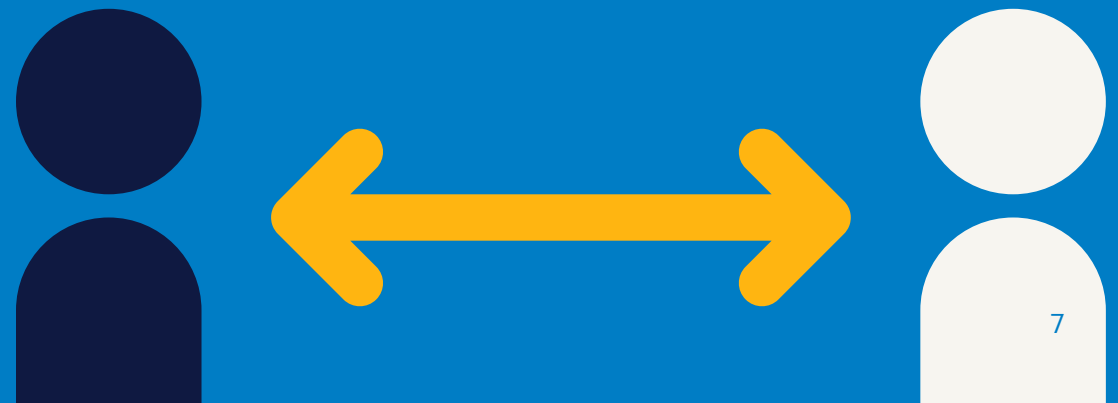
**4%**  
asked to take paid leave of absence



**3%**  
introduced shorter working days



**2%**  
implemented a four-day week





# how satisfied are employees with the company's efforts?

## 48%

employees are satisfied with the arrangements made by their employers; this could indicate that nearly half of the companies surveyed are perhaps getting the balance right.

## 52%

employees however are either neutral or dissatisfied, indicating that an equal number of businesses still have significant ground to cover in responding to employee expectations. Compounded by a sluggish market and a dip in employee morale, this could negatively impact company spirit, culture and the bottom-line if not addressed proactively.

employee satisfaction with the workforce arrangements made by their employer



## tech support extended to work effectively from home

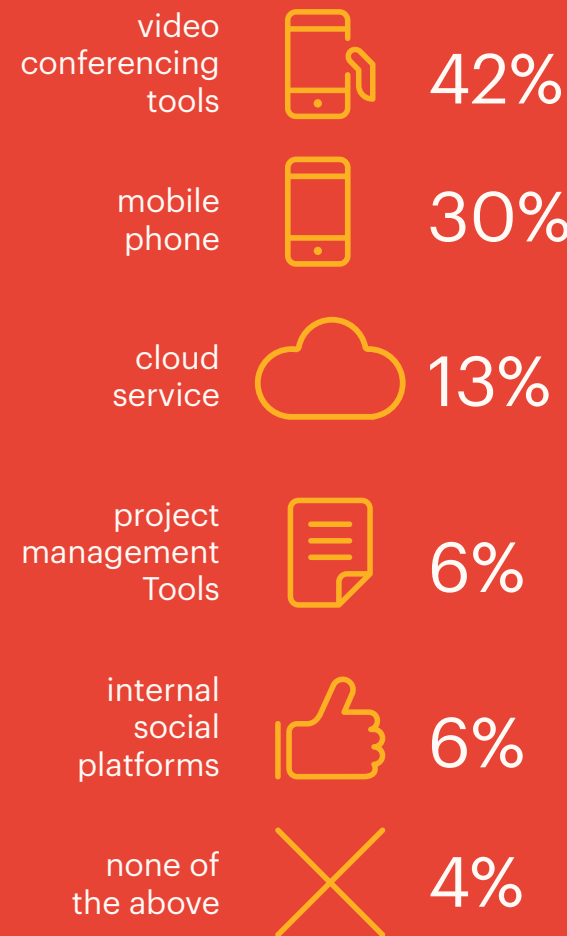
Organizations and employees alike seem to have adapted quickly to the work-from-home model. Nearly 65% of employees surveyed said they are happy with the tech support being provided to work effectively from home. While this indicates that companies are on the right track with their technology investments and response systems, 35% of the respondents are still struggling with technology, impacting the company's overall productivity.

Third-party providers are preferred over the company's internal platforms. While this considerably reduces technology investments, it also comes with inherent risks and less control. Companies could benefit from putting in place regulatory policies regarding exchange of sensitive information. Leveraging project management tools can also help to effectively document decisions for future reference.



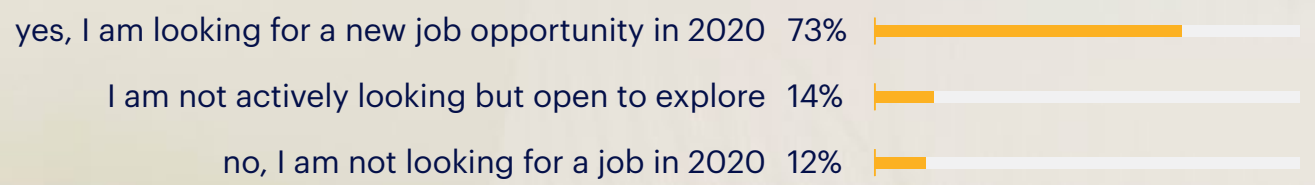
65% of the employees were happy with the tech support they received from their organization during the pandemic to work effectively during WFH.

technology tools used to communicate & collaborate with internal and external partners during COVID-19



# impact and intention to change job

In the midst of concerns about a sluggish job market, **73%** respondents said they were actively looking out for new jobs. Essentially, this means that while there are fewer jobs in the market, a wider pool of candidates are available for any given role. 14% indicated they were not “actively looking” but were open to exploring. 12% said they were not looking to change their jobs “in 2020.” Overall, the responses indicate a growing level of uncertainty regarding jobs.



## impact of job security concerns on employees

Of the 73% who were actively looking, only 28% had lost their jobs. 54% still had a job but were unsatisfied with different aspects of their compensation. 72% indicated they were apprehensive about holding their jobs, with nearly 52% stating they were “very concerned.” These findings hold grave implications for businesses. While layoffs are inevitable in the current scenario, a pervasive sense of insecurity regarding one’s job could foster a culture of fear and discouragement, negatively impacting performance and productivity.


Moreover, a workforce that is preoccupied with finding new jobs is less likely to perform optimally at current jobs. They are also more likely to be motivated by a sense of self-preservation rather than team spirit, thus reducing transparency and leading to poorer decision making.


Employers should remain aware of these undercurrents and proactively seek to establish forums where teamwork is emphasized, counseling is provided, and job security concerns are preemptively addressed. They could also seek to engage employees in activities that boost morale and interaction. At the same time, employees should actively look at remaining relevant by reskilling themselves.



## of the 73% respondents actively looking for job

35%  were unsatisfied with their current salaries

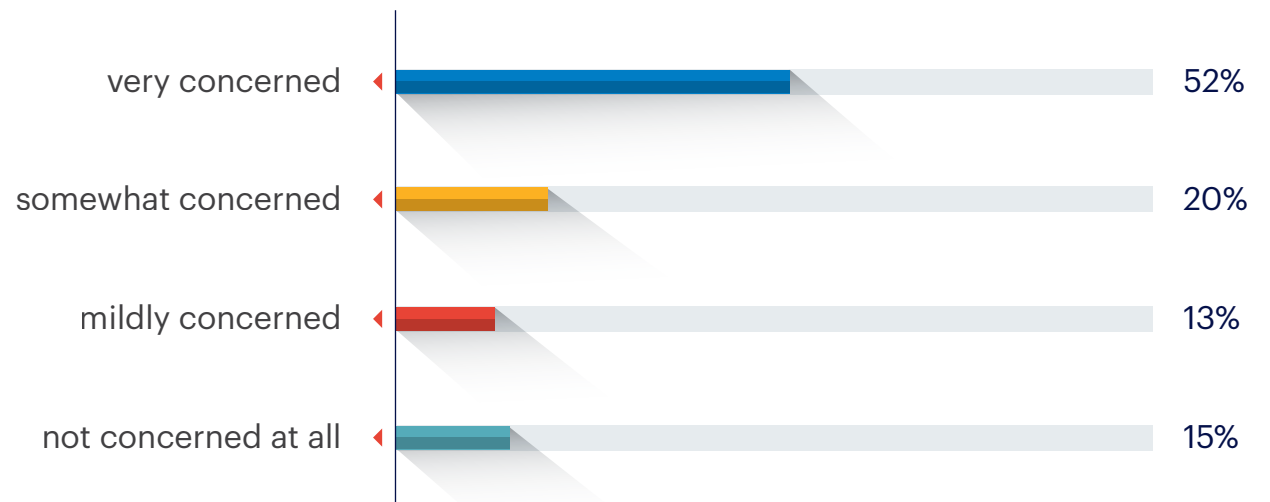
28%  of respondents said they lost job during the pandemic

19%  received a pay cut or bonus freeze in 2020



## job security a concern for 72% of the respondents

### job security concerns





# 2020 outlook for the labor market

Disruptions caused by Covid-19 has impacted the job market both in terms of skills and have had to change their entire business model. Covid-19 has also taught us what is essential and what is not, and this has propelled the birth of new sectors and closed or slowed down others. This provides new opportunities to employees but also requires them to possess new skills. The workforce will need to adapt to this change. Reskilling is extremely important to stay employable, and this would need to be a self-led initiative. Else they may find themselves out of jobs.



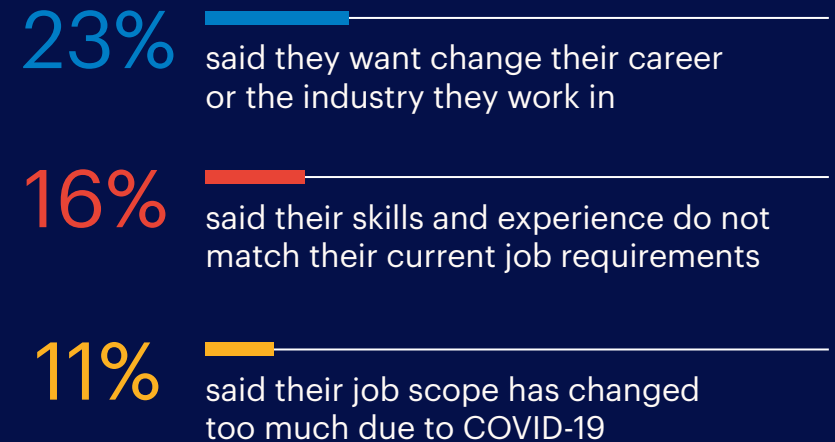
- Deepak Kapur, Head- HR, AVL India



# the pandemic has brought about significant changes in labour market, the scope of job and job expectations

The job market is also likely to see a greater degree of flux in the profile of the workforce. 23% respondents said they wanted to change the career or industry they are currently associated with. This would present a favorable opportunity for companies seeking candidates with cross functional skills. 16% said their current skills do not match the changing job requirements, while 11% indicated that the scope of their job has already changed post Covid-19.


As the business landscape rapidly changes in the wake of the pandemic, expectations of organizations from their employees will continue to evolve and they must encourage staff to reskill/upskill themselves. Employees are aware of the changing expectations and rather than being threatened by it, should invest in retraining themselves.





Only 12% staff are not looking to change their jobs in 2020. Of this percentage, 58% are confident that their employer will keep them employed, while 37% are not looking at a job change because they are satisfied with their current employer. However, 27% indicated that they are only waiting for the crisis to end before making a decision, while another 16% are held back from seeking another job from fear that the sluggish job market may not provide them with adequate opportunities.




of the 12% respondents  
not looking to change job in 2020

**58%**  confident their employer will keep them employed this year

**37%**  satisfied with current employee benefits package

**27%**  want to wait until after COVID-19 before they decide whether they want to change job

**16%**  afraid that I cannot find another job in 2020 due to COVID-19

# change of priorities in a post-covid world

Work-life balance, job security and career progression are the top 3 concerns among employees in the post Covid world. While earlier, long commute hours and conflicting commitments made it difficult for employees to balance work and home, employees are now struggling to keep the lines between home and work distinct.

While an attractive salary and employee benefits was the second top priority in the pre-Covid world, job security has now moved up to become the second biggest challenge. This is a valid concern as employers too are cutting costs and leaning towards leaner operations. When employees invest in themselves by reskilling, they increase their chances of remaining relevant.



Career progression, interesting work and a pleasant work atmosphere have also assumed more importance, indicating that a larger number of employees are more seriously considering the purpose behind why they do what they do. The pandemic and ensuing time alone has given employees a break from the routine and a chance to re-evaluate their larger goals and driving ambitions.

Employers who can leverage this introspective stance of employees by imbuing a sense of purpose and meaningful work would stand to gain from highly engaged employees. Driving home the organization's values and mission through relatable, tangible employee experiences can up the game for both the organization and the employee.

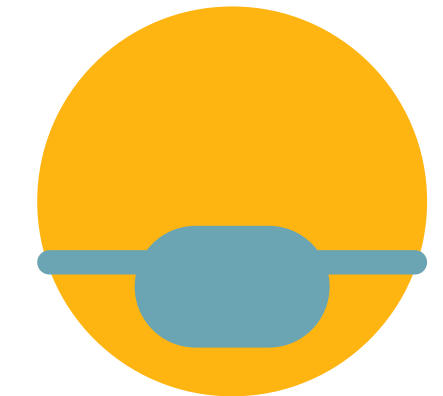


### top attribute in order of importance during Covid

- a. work-life balance ↑
- b. job security ↑
- c. career progression ↑
- d. attractive salary & employee benefits ↓
- e. pleasant work atmosphere ↑
- f. financial health ↓
- g. good corporate reputation ↓
- h. interesting job content ↑
- i. uses latest technology ↓
- j. gives back to society ↓

### top attribute in order of importance before Covid

- a. work-life balance ↑
- b. attractive salary & employee benefits ↑
- c. job security ↓
- d. financial health ↑
- e. career progression ↓
- f. good corporate reputation ↑
- g. uses latest technology ↑
- h. gives back to society ↑
- i. pleasant work atmosphere ↓
- j. interesting job content ↓





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