2022
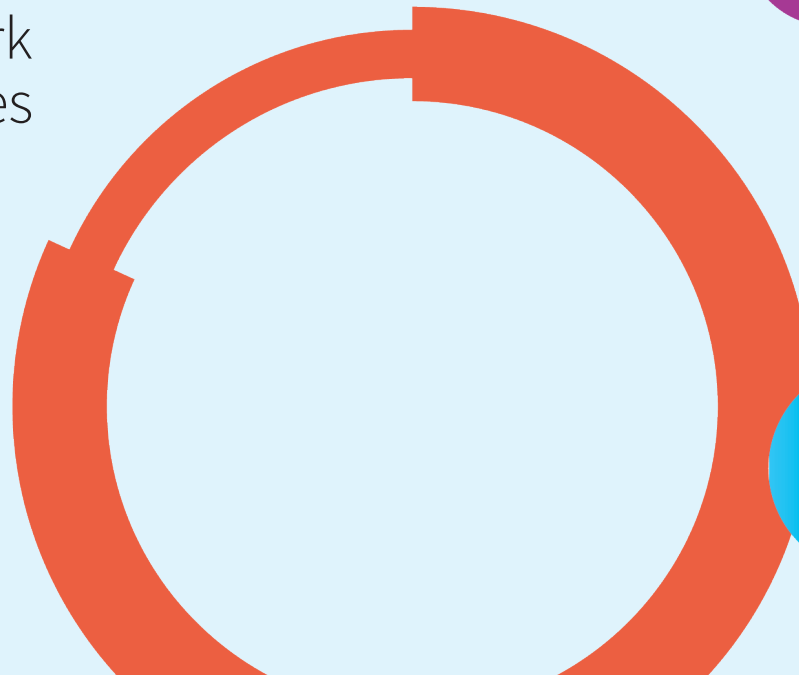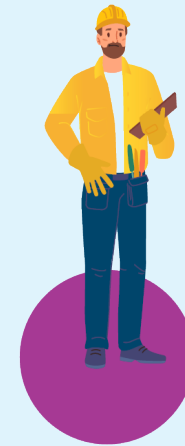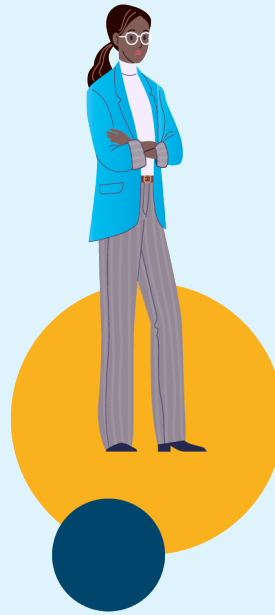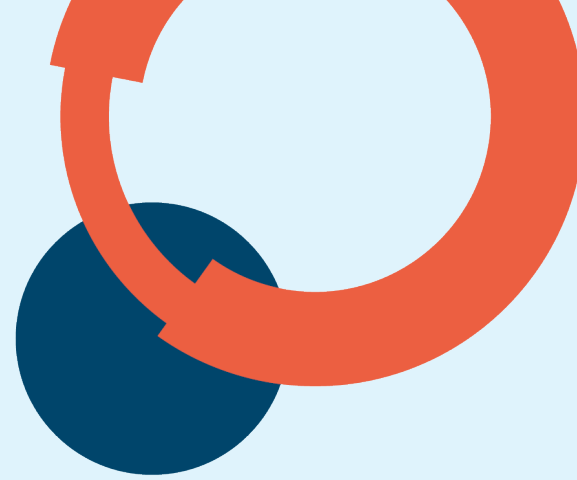
CULTURE CHECK-IN SURVEY

Learn what's making work meaningful for employees in today's workplace.

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THE **2022** CULTURE CHECK-IN SURVEY

As we rang in 2022, the working world had already been through the ringer. Today, the talent pools are vast, opportunity aplenty, and the workforce landscape is still shifting.

That's where the Culture Check-In Survey comes in. Of the 1200 employees surveyed, **38% resigned over the past 12 months**. The #1 reason cited for leaving was a "toxic company culture". Those moving on chose their next opportunities primarily based on compensation, flexible work environments and opportunity for growth at their new employers.

| **38%** | Resigned in the last 12 months |

From there we set out to understand why people left, what's truly engaging and concerning them today, the importance, frequency and form of feedback, and what skills managers need to develop in order to deliver positive experiences for employees in today's world of work.

The survey data in this document was collected and conducted by a third-party service to ensure data that represents a variety of roles, age, experience, and education across industries.

So, what did we find?

Five themes emerged that tell an interesting story:

- Managers need help (especially senior managers)
- Meaningful development is a clear priority for people
- Mental health concerns are here (and here to stay?!)
- Feedback & recognition are more desired than ever
- In-person teammates are feeling ignored

It's no surprise that the need for recognition and feedback are greater today than they were even a year ago. Our survey proves this and points us toward exactly who values these behaviors from their managers the most. Speaking of managers, they need some help. It's clear from our survey responses that managers are struggling to know their people and to provide the experiences that make them stick.

Employees have given us a pretty clear road map. Now, here's what we need to do:

1 Develop an inclusive plan for engaging your teams (in-person, flexible, and remote)

2 Double down on feedback and recognition

3 Prioritize meaningful development opportunities that align with the professional goals of your people

4 Set managers up with tools to keep up with the changing priorities of their people

5 Create the space where they can be at their best - including discussions about mental health

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WHY ARE THEY LEAVING?

Over a third of people surveyed chose to leave their roles in the last 12 months. Take a deeper look at why they're leaving and it would appear the talent transfer still has legs. The pandemic may feel like it's behind us, but the chaos it caused is lingering.

Toxic workplace culture seems to be plaguing the employee experience for almost half of those that chose to leave. Close behind are a slew of reasons rooted in uncertainty and professional growth.

🚩 **RED FLAG ALERT:**

56% of senior managers have resigned from a position in the last 12 months.

Has the stress of managing in the new environment taken a toll? Time to check-in with some of your most experienced teammates.

BYE!

38%
of everyone surveyed resigned from a position in the last 12 months...

Here are their top reasons for leaving:

1. **Toxic Workplace Culture (45%)**
2. **Job stability/Security (38%)**
3. **Low Compensation (37%)**
4. **Benefits & PTO (30%)**
5. **Lack of Advancement (27%)**
6. **Poor Management (27%)**

Who's feeling Toxic Workplace Culture the most?

61% Senior Managers

52% Male Workers

52% Workers Age 25-44

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WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

While a toxic workplace culture led people's reason for leaving, a variety of priorities were used to determine their next employers.

TOP 3 REASONS PEOPLE CHOSE A NEW EMPLOYER:

1. **Compensation (49%)**
2. **Flexible Work Environment (47%)**
3. **Opportunities for growth (43%)**

Notably, there are some outlying groups with stronger responses than others.

Men

Men's top 3 reasons for landing their next job were the same, but more decisively so.

TOP 3

57% Compensation
49% Opportunities for growth
49% Flexible work environment

Women

Women prioritize flexibility and benefits over growth opportunities.

TOP 3

43% Flexible work environment
38% Compensation
38% Benefits/PTO

Under 25

Money didn't even crack the top 5 reasons why our youngest workers took new jobs.

TOP 3

38% Flexible work environment
37% Opportunities for growth
34% Benefits/PTO

Ages 25-44

Compensation led the way for Millennials.

TOP 3

63% Compensation
59% Flexible work environment
52% Benefits/PTO

WE WANT MORE!

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MANAGERS NEED HELP!

This year, support for professional development has been identified as a key behavior managers can use to create belonging in their teams.

Overall, development has risen in importance as a key to attraction and retention. **The trouble is, managers lack the tools to understand the priorities of their people.** While participants focused on development priorities, they indicated their managers didn't know their aspirations, abilities, and learning styles to provide the most meaningful development.

Employees are providing a clear path. They are asking us to know how they define success and for a clear path that can get them there. All we need to do is give managers the tools and listen.

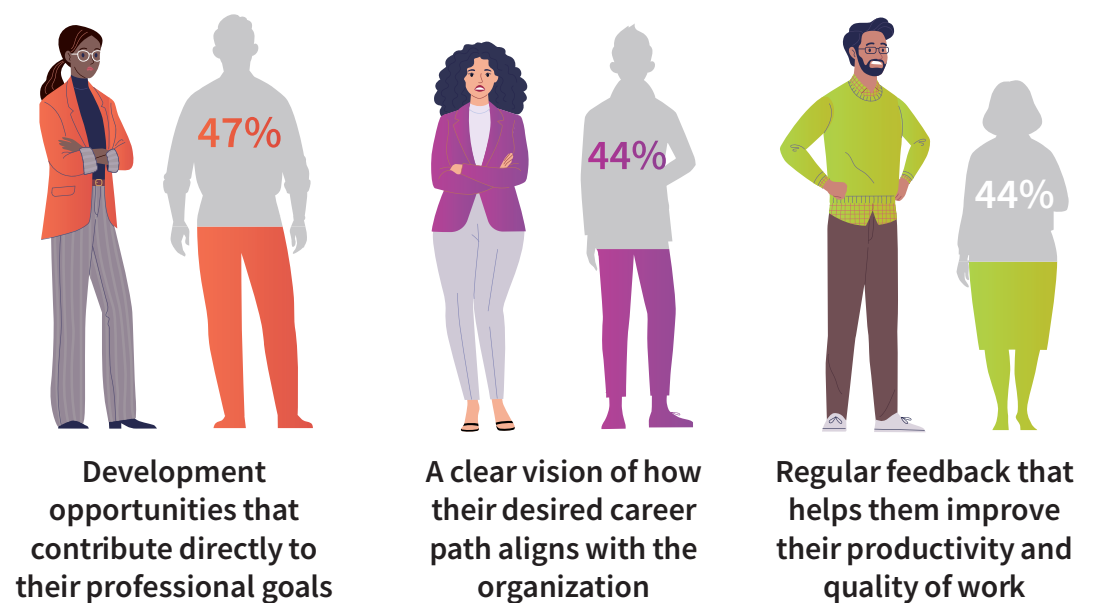## What people wish their managers knew about them:

TOP 3

57% Professional goals

54% Unique skills & abilities

46% Learning style

55% of survey respondents wished their managers knew about their professional goals.

What people believe they are missing from their managers:

TOP 3

47% Development opportunities that contribute directly to their professional goals

44% A clear vision of how their desired career path aligns with the organization

44% Regular feedback that helps them improve their productivity and quality of work

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DEVELOPMENT DEFINES BELONGING

Belonging has taken shape in the workplace over the last several years as a primary contributor to positive culture. What that means exactly, especially in a landscape where disruption is a constant, continues to be redefined - or refocused.
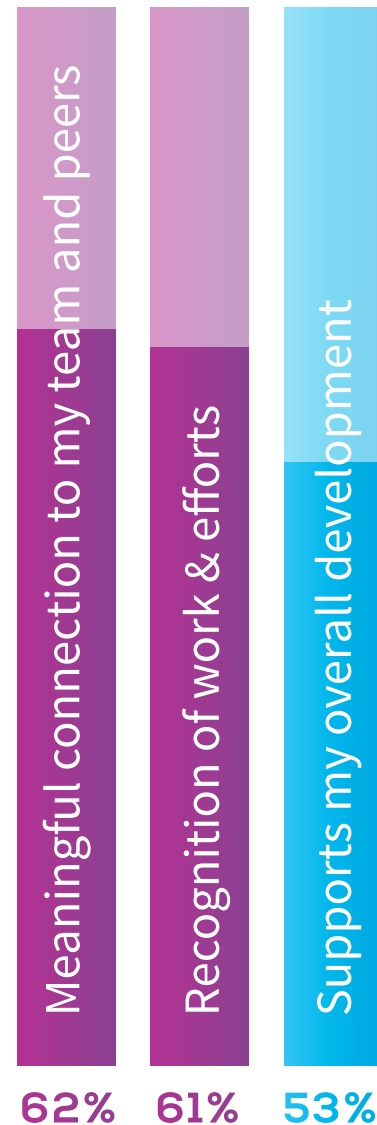
Over the last several years, we have come to understand from our respondents that **belonging is defined by feeling connected to their teams, receiving recognition, and understanding how their roles align to the organization.**

This year, a new response has emerged! Over half (53%) of respondents cited their managers' "support of my overall development" as a vital part of their experience of belonging. But, the need for development doesn't stop there.
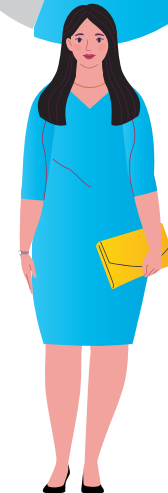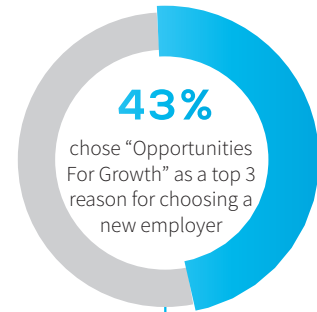
Opportunities for growth (43%) made the top three reasons people left their companies and chose another employer in the last 12 months.

Meanwhile, when asked what they wished their managers knew about them, their **professional goals** (55%) was the number one response.

It's looking like there's a clear path between belonging and development that's emerging on the scene. Managers will need to be equipped with the knowledge and understanding of how to support the development needs of their teams if they want to retain top talent.

Meaningful connection to my team and peers
62%

Recognition of work & efforts
61%

Supports my overall development
53%

People development enters the scene in 2022:

43%
chose "Opportunities For Growth" as a top 3 reason for choosing a new employer

47%
feel they are missing meaningful development opportunities from managers

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RECOGNITION TAKES THE SPOTLIGHT

The role of recognition has increased in importance since our last survey.

This year, **61% of respondents surveyed cited recognition as a primary behavior managers can use to create belonging in their teams**.

Of course, certain cohorts are feeling the need for recognition more than others.

🚩 **RED FLAG ALERT:**

Keep an eye on your in-person teammates! A significantly higher percentage (68%) of in-person workers cited recognition as a primary contributor to sense of belonging. In-person colleagues also listed recognition as the #1 thing missing from managers.
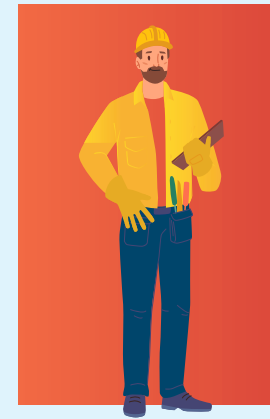
WHO NEEDS IT MOST?

While recognition was important to all, the response was **most prevalent** among people under the age of 25, in-person, and female employees.

72%

68%

65%
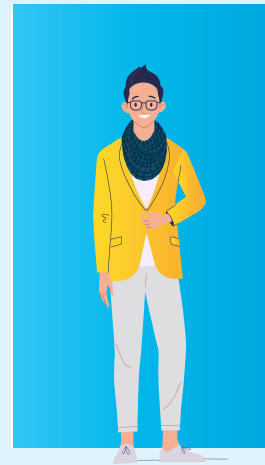
Under 25

In-Person

Women

(AND, WHO DOESN'T)

Fully-remote workers are less concerned about recognition. In fact, it didn't even crack the top 3 behaviors most important to creating belonging. Instead, they listed the following:

Makes me feel like part of the team (63%)

Acts in support of my development (56%)

Gives frequent feedback (52%)

Recognizes my work (50%)

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EMPLOYEE CONCERNS ARE, WELL, CONCERNING

We asked participants about what keeps them up at night.

The answer? A lot.

The top themes spoke to deteriorating relationships, feelings of isolation, overwhelming workloads, and mental health. While 27% labeled mental health, specifically, several other leading responses point to the same issue.

According to the American Psychological Association, 8 in 10 U.S. workers (81%) said an employer's approach to **mental health will be an important consideration** when job hunting.

TOP CONCERNS:

1. **Work relationships (33%)**
2. **Workload (31%)**
3. **Feelings of isolation (28%)**
4. **Mental health (27%)**
5. **Lack of transparency (27%)**

The groups most willing to call out mental health as a concern were the youngest employees and female colleagues.

38% Under 25

35% Women

? Men
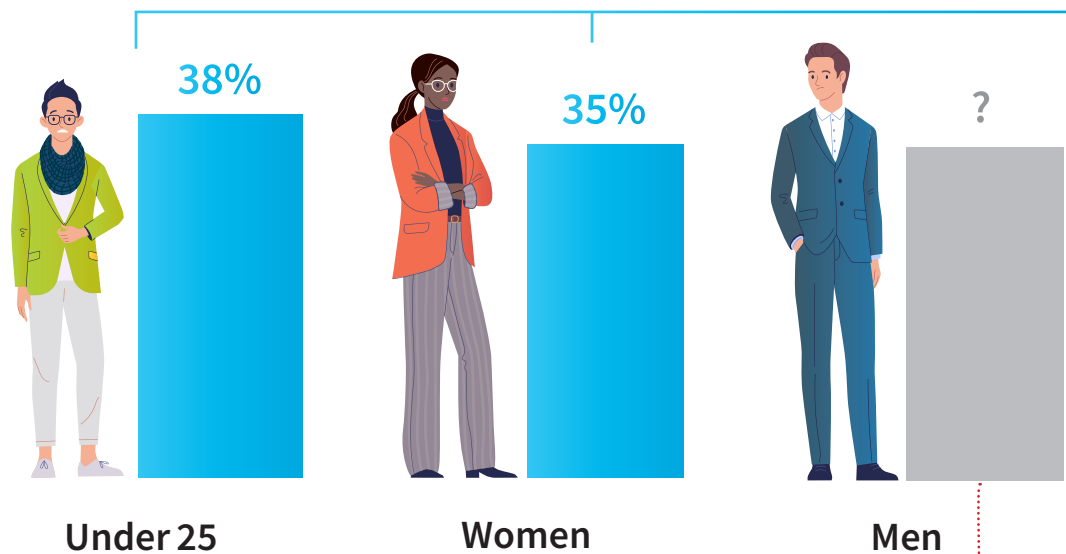
RED FLAG ALERT:
Men may be less willing to label their mental health struggles

Among their top concerns were the following:

1. Work relationships (38%)
2. Feelings of isolation (34%)
3. Workload (30%)
4. Lack of transparency (30%)

However, mental health came in at #8 on their list.

Is it possible that men are feeling the effect of mental health but are unwilling to place a label on it?

According to Forbes, *anywhere from 25-40% of men choose to hide any sign of mental health challenges or the resulting issues from their managers or co-workers, fearing that their career could be negatively affected by doing so.*
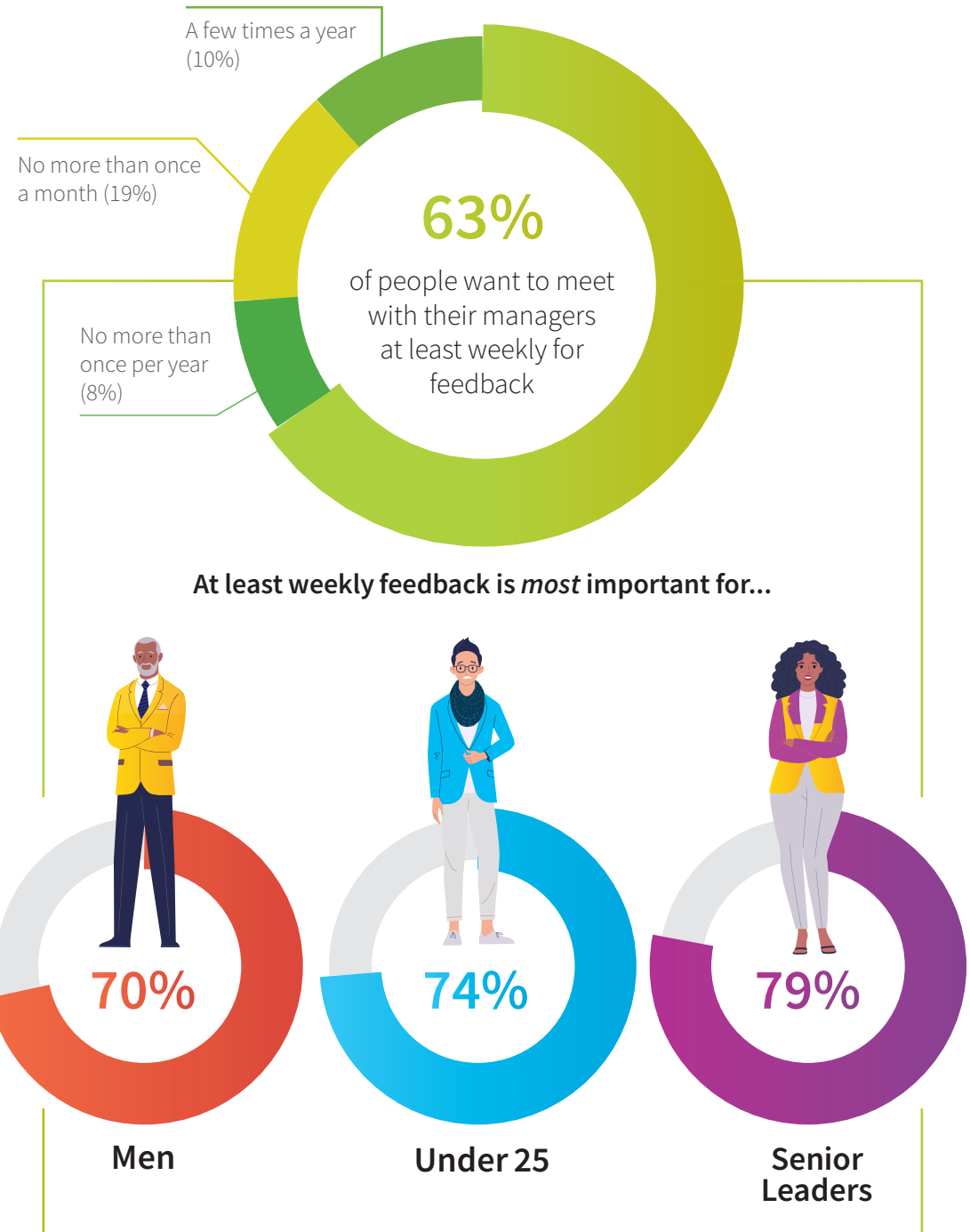
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THE RISING IMPORTANCE OF FEEDBACK

Feedback emerges as one of the top themes this year, in the full survey and for sub-groups that might surprise you.

When we slice the data by work environment, gender, age, and role, we find the following groups place greater value on feedback than the overall.

RED FLAG ALERT:

Despite needing it, remote workers are missing frequent feedback from their managers.

- **67%** said they want feedback at least weekly
- **50%** believe frequent feedback creates a sense of belonging
- **47%** say they are missing feedback from their managers

A few times a year (10%)

No more than once a month (19%)

No more than once per year (8%)

63%
of people want to meet with their managers at least weekly for feedback

At least weekly feedback is *most* important for...

70%

Men

74%

Under 25

79%

Senior Leaders

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# KEEP AN EYE ON SENIOR LEADERS

The closer you get to the sun, the more you feel the burn. This year, we isolated roles around senior management. The data tells a very troubling story in 2022.

What exactly did we learn? It appears that senior leaders have been tasked with delivering positive culture in a very difficult environment while receiving little in the way of support from those around (or above) them.

They listed feelings of isolation, work relationships, and the effects of working from home on their careers among their greatest concerns.

They are quitting more rapidly, feeling the effects of toxic culture more acutely, working more remotely and receiving little support from their organizations.

Let's take a look.
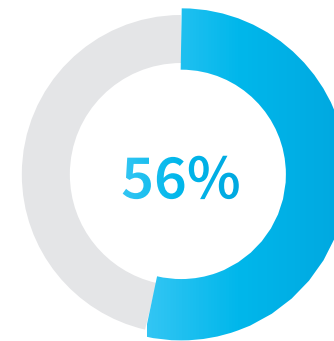
44% overall
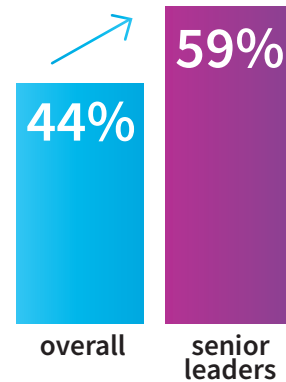
59% senior leaders

The biggest thing senior leaders are missing from their managers?
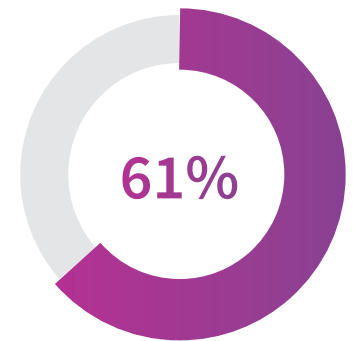
A clear vision aligning their career paths with the organization - **59%** compared to **44%** for the overall survey.
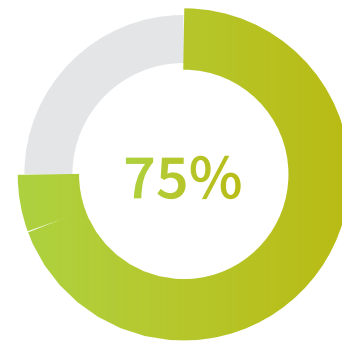
75% of senior leaders worked in remote or flexible environments

56% of senior leaders resigned in the last year

61% of senior leaders who resigned last year cited toxic culture as their reason

Top 3 reasons for taking a new role:

1. **Compensation (62%)**
2. **Flexible work environment (57%)**
3. **Opportunities for growth (54%)**

Who are your senior leaders anyway?

62% Over 35   **70%** Men
38% Under 35   **30%** Women

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IS PROXIMITY A CRUTCH?

For those organizations juggling in-person and remote crowds, you may be participating in a dangerous game when it comes to tending to your in-person employees.

In-person respondents answered consistently with others when asked about the importance of regular feedback. However, recognition seemed to be in shortest supply for them.

**Is it possible that proximity casts a shadow over providing intentional and meaningful recognition?**

RED FLAG ALERT:

It appears that management attention and intention are being applied to the flexible and fully-remote folks. The survey showed that in-person workers require more, and receive less, recognition than flexible and remote teammates. If you have a mixed team, be watchful not to overlook those working from work.

Recognition was listed most frequently in response to what people were missing from their managers.

in-person **49%**

remote **33%**

68% in-person
50% remote

Recognition was cited as the behavior most likely to create belonging for in-person teams.

45% in-person
33% remote
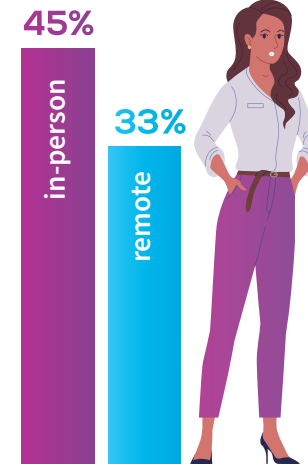
Acknowledgment of good work (aka recognition) was cited among the most important topics in 1-1 performance discussions.

31%
in-person
25% remote
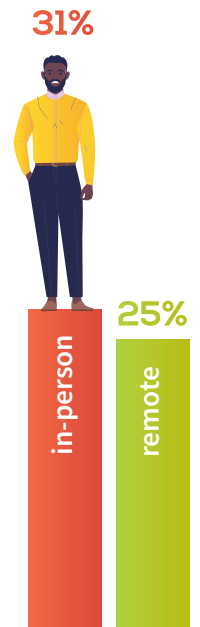
In-person workers more frequently cited fears about how mental health may affect their work than their flexible and fully-remote colleagues.

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The 2022 Culture Check-In Survey tells a deep and complex story about what employees want and value in their workplace. Not to mention the highly dynamic and ever-shifting work environments that add yet another layer to the narrative.

Having a plan to support and deliver a people strategy that prioritizes development, effective feedback, and belonging will be vital to engaging and retaining talent in the coming months. The good news?

Employees have given us a pretty clear road map.

1 **Develop an inclusive plan for engaging our teams (in-person, flexible, and remote).** One size does not fit all, so you will likely need a combination of technology resources and good old fashioned personal check-ins to reach each audience.

2 **Double down on feedback and recognition.** Chances are, you aren't providing direct feedback as often as most people want (at least weekly!). Pay attention to your in-person groups, as well as to the managers in your organization who are feeling neglected and pose as a serious flight risk.

3 **Prioritize meaningful development opportunities that align with the professional goals of your people.** Learn about the skills, aspirations, and learning styles of your people so you can give them meaningful development opportunities.

4 **Set managers up with tools to keep up with the changing priorities of their people.** They continue to represent the most critical relationships driving retention. Unfortunately, they are feeling unsupported. They need feedback and recognition alongside (perhaps more) everyone else, but even more, they need tools to deliver positive culture to their teams.

5 **Create a space where people can be at their best - including discussions about mental health.** Each of these tactics will drive a greater sense of belonging in organizations and create an environment where these discussions get easier. If we apply a little intention alongside belonging, we have a chance to hit the topic head on.

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