

Reimagining the workplace

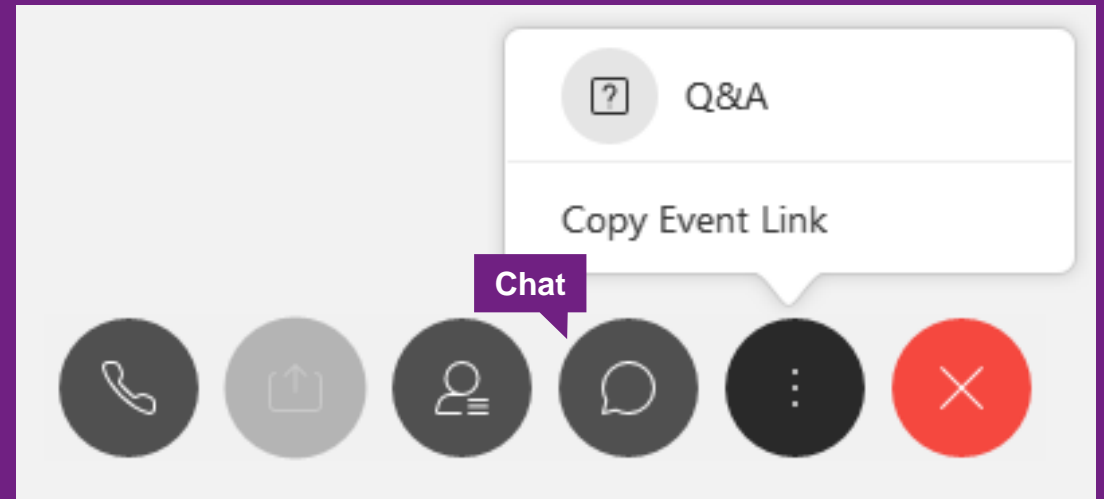
Employee wellbeing in the new normal

May 21, 2020



Requests

- Submit questions to the **panelists** using the Q&A panel
 - Q&A will automatically open, but use the toolbar to reopen this panel if necessary
- Message the **host** using the chat panel



Today's speakers



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Willis Towers Watson
Managing Director and
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Host



Dr. Jeff Levin-Scherz

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North American Health
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Agenda



Setting the stage:
The world as we knew
it has changed



Key questions around
returning to the
workplace



State of employee
wellbeing and what
organizations are doing
to manage it



Expectations of leaders
as we restore stability

Setting the stage: The world as we knew it has changed

Setting the stage: The world as we knew it has changed



Most organizations are now preparing to restore stability

Reimagining our new workplaces using everything we've learned in the past few weeks



Key questions around returning to the workplace

Today is a time like no other in our collective experience as people, communities and organizations

Initially associated with exposure to seafood and meat market in China

- **>5 million** confirmed cases
- Over **320,000** deaths
- Current mortality rate **0.6% – 3.4%** (as of May 21)



Declared a **worldwide pandemic** on March 11



Most common **incubation period: 2-14** days (mean 4 days)



Method of spread:

Respiratory droplets in air or on contaminated surfaces



Symptoms

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- New loss of taste and smell



About 1/5 of those with COVID-19 have **serious illness** – many require hospitalization and some require mechanical ventilation

- The aged, those with chronic diseases, and smokers are at highest risk



“ The global COVID-19 outbreak now sports **exponential growth rates** for cases and deaths...we are also in the midst of an **unprecedented blow** to global output, income, and employment. In financial markets, the **pace of decline** for equity and corporate bond prices exceeds any on record.

”
*Barbera, Norris, and Wright;
Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center*

Source: [Vox.com](https://www.vox.com), [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int), [Johns Hopkins](https://www.jhu.edu)

Six key questions

- When should we return to the workplace?**
1
- Who should return to the workplace?**
2
- How can we best protect workers?**
3
- How can we meet new emotional wellbeing needs?**
4
- What are new skills our managers and supervisors need?**
5
- How should we communicate around return to the workplace?**
6

1. When should we return to the workplace?



Public health decisions will be local and based on:

- Decreased number of new cases
- Decreased portion of positive tests
- Widespread availability of tests
- Capacity in health care system



Business decisions will also depend upon:

- Customer demand
- Decrement to effectiveness from remote work
- Transportation
- Workplace layout and density

Be prepared for local reimposition of restrictions to quell new outbreaks



What about business travel?

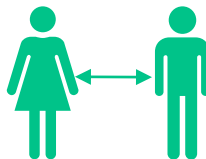
- International business travel likely to be limited until there is a vaccine, as many countries will impose 14 day quarantine upon travelers
- Domestic business travel likely to rebound slowly given potential for local lockdowns to address new outbreaks

2. Who should return to the workplace?



Not everyone

- Some employees can remain remote with little or no productivity loss
- Some employees are at higher risk for complications or death from COVID-19
- Some employees will have dependents that are at higher risk for complications or death from COVID-19
- There will be employees who are not mentally prepared to return to the workplace, even if they or their family or dependents are not physically high risk
- Employers will need to consider transportation to the workplace along with workplace setup



Not all at once

- Staging return allows time to develop new processes to promote physical (social) distancing and to provide emotional wellbeing supports to returning employees



Employees at highest risk for complications of COVID-19

- Older workers (>60)
- Obese
- Chronic lung or heart disease
- Diabetes
- Kidney failure

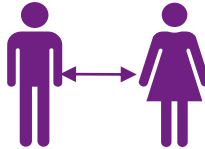
The COVID-ready workplace will have less density, making it easier for employers to provide the flexibility for some workers to remain remote

3. How can we best protect our workers?



Exclude those with or at high risk of having COVID-19

- Thermal scanning with questions on symptoms and exposure
- Pre-work or ongoing testing
- Limiting visitors



Physical distancing

- New workplace layouts
- Capacity limits for conference rooms
- Staggered hours
- Face masks
- Signs and cues



Rethinking food and fitness

- Individual portions and no more finger food
- Reopening on-site fitness with new standards of hygiene



Cleaning

- Enhanced disinfection and more sanitizer/wipes



Testing can play an important role, but is not enough!

- **Acute infection**
 - PCR (nasal swab)
 - IgM Antibody (blood)
 - Antigen (nasal swab)
- **Past infection**
 - IgG Antibody testing (blood)

Tests for acute infection have many false negatives

Tests for past infection have some false positives, might not reflect immunity

Tests are in short supply in many countries; however, this shortage will likely ease in coming months

4. How can we meet new and ongoing emotional wellbeing needs?

Emotional Wellbeing



- Resilience, mindfulness, meditation training
- Coaching support
- EAP strategy (communication, redesign)
- Virtual care options
- Caregiving (flexible work, leave, backup, policies, navigation)

We must continue to address the personal and social stigma associated with mental health

Social Wellbeing

- Virtual social networks
- Manager communications
- Charity and volunteerism
- Remote work policies and tips
- Addressing loneliness
- Connecting with personal and organizational purpose
- Recharging focus on I&D, purpose, belongingness



“Changes in how we think, behave and relate to one another — some deliberate but many made unconsciously, some temporary but others potentially permanent — are already coming to define our new normal.”

[New York Times](#), Max Fisher, April 21, 2020

5. What are the new skills our managers and supervisors need?



Critical new skills and knowledge for managers

- Managing remote workers
- Understanding leave policies and practices
- Physical/social distancing
- New workflows and policies and procedures
- Employee safety: physical and psychological
- Addressing stigma and bias
- Supporting employees with mental health issues
- Approach to known or suspected workplace exposure

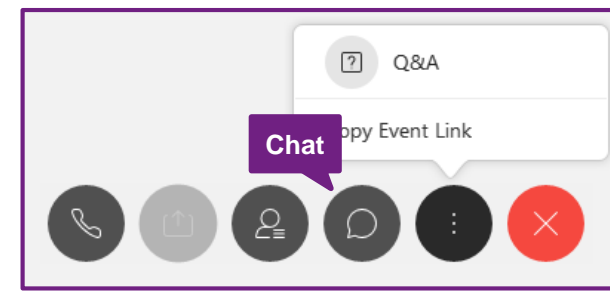
6. How should we communicate around return to the workplace?

An employee listening strategy will be the most effective way to understand what employees need and value as they return to the workplace



Communication in the COVID-19 world should be:

- Empathetic
- Timely
- Clear
- Focused on employee safety (physical and psychological)
- Address issues of stigma and bias

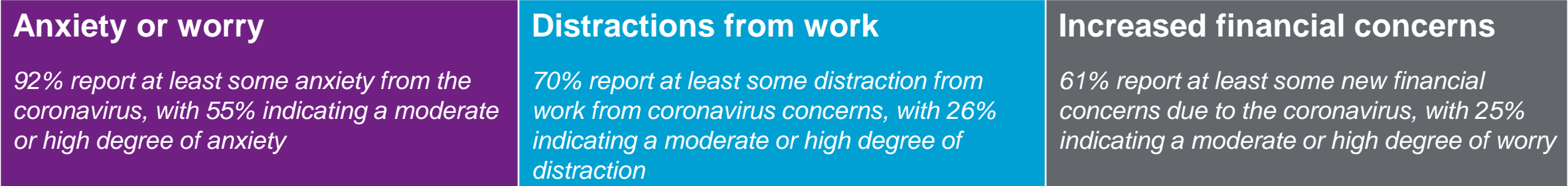


State of employee wellbeing and what organizations are doing to manage it

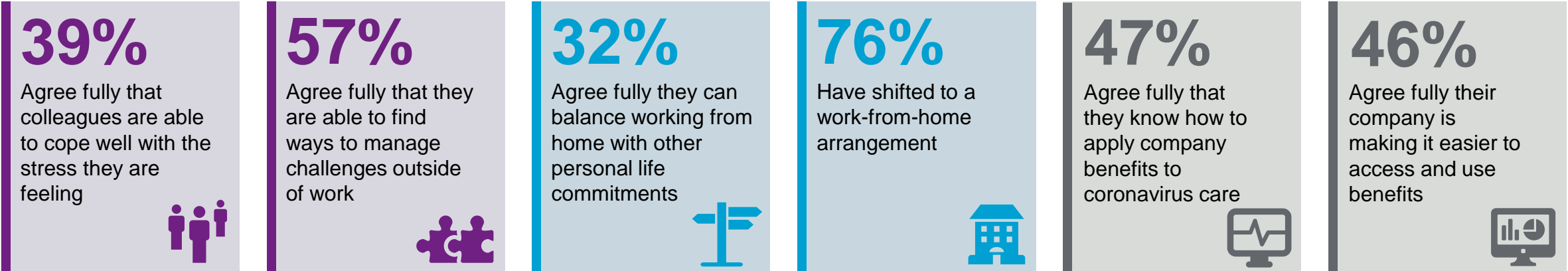
Employee wellbeing from their perspective

Employees are deeply concerned and their experiences are significantly impacted

Majorities of employees reporting. . .



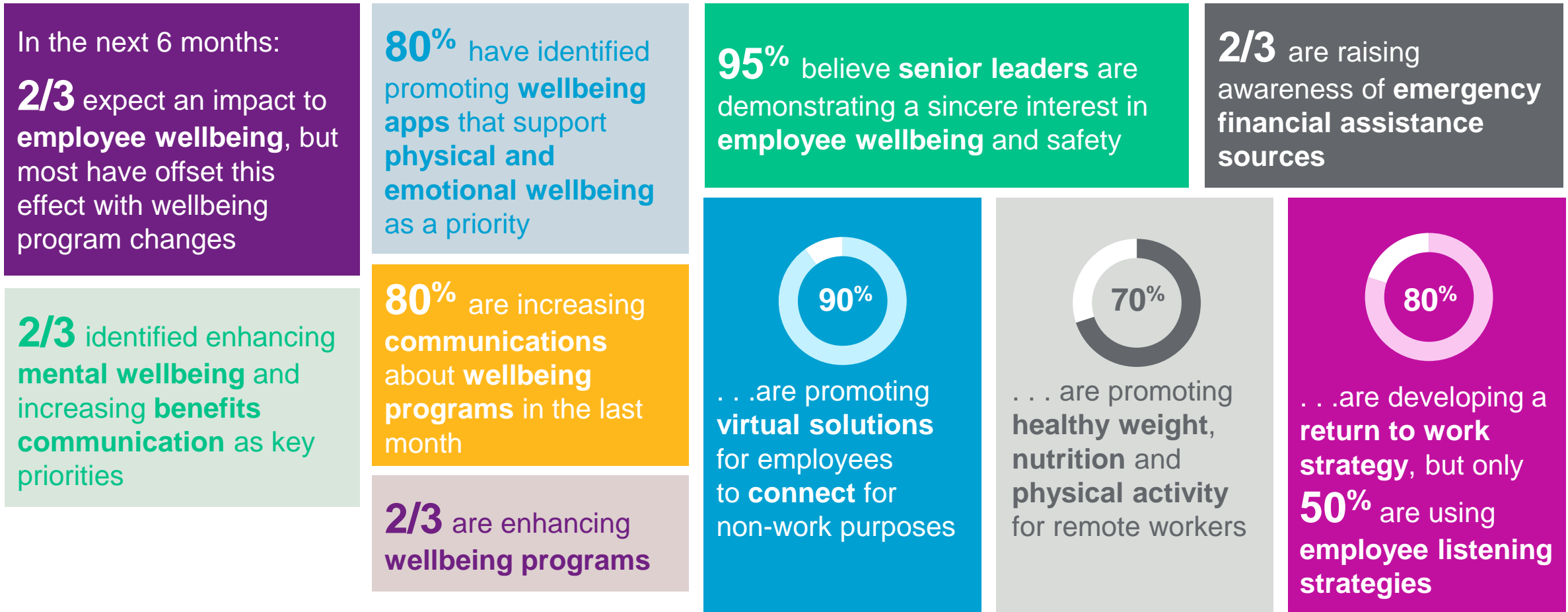
Impacts on the Employee Experience. . .



Source: Willis Towers Watson Employee Opinion Norm Database

How are organizations managing?

Employers are changing wellbeing programs to effectively support employees



Source: 2020 COVID-19 Benefits Survey, HQ perspective. 2020 Talent Implications Survey.

How are organizations managing?

Financial wellbeing considerations with COVID-19

Prior to COVID-19

More than a third of households are living paycheck to paycheck

38%



Strongly agree or agree

No significant savings

Negatively impacted by financial problems

32%



Strongly agree or agree

Potential immediate actions:

- Support employees who may be balancing short-term financial priorities with long-term savings needs
- Consider options available within plan design and new related legislation
- Be mindful of varying populations (hourly, part-time, essential employees, collectively bargained, etc.)
- Understand the key provisions both legislative and employer upon leave, time-off and reduced hours

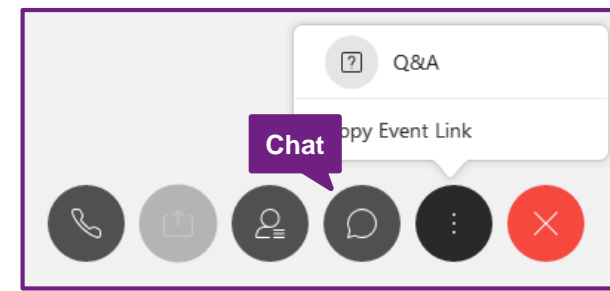
While managing:

- Implement changes to support employees (loan availability, in-service distributions, match true-up)
- Partner with vendors to monitor employee behaviour and adjust response/communications accordingly
- Reallocate benefit spending based on organizational objectives and rewards philosophy
- Ensure ongoing governance and plan operations are maintained

Source: 2019/2020 Global Benefits Attitudes Survey, North America

How are organizations managing?

Emotional wellbeing considerations are more important than ever



Prior to COVID-19

52%



of employees have taken actions to tackle their mental health issues by seeking support from their employer

(social network at work, manager support or employer-provided services)

Employees' current state: feeling overwhelmed by changing information, stress and anxiety of COVID-19, stress and anxiety of the panic surrounding COVID-19, safety, fear, caregiving from afar, managing work while caregiving, childcare, loneliness, guilt, helplessness, grief and uncertainty

Employer Interventions

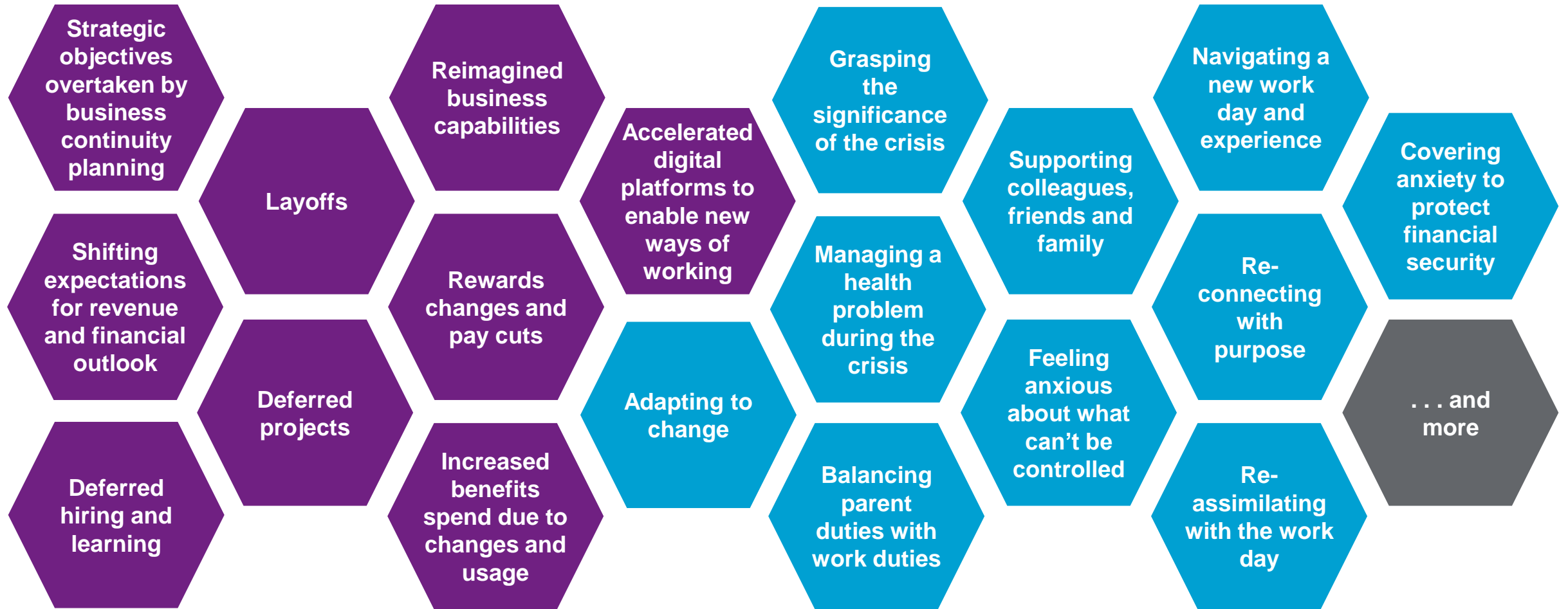


Source: 2019/2020 Global Benefits Attitudes Survey

Expectations of leaders as we restore stability

This is a business experience

And, it's a human experience



69% of organizations have increased their listening efforts

Here's what a high-performance employee experience sounds like through the pandemic. . .



INSPIRATION

"I am inspired by what our company stands for and my role in shaping our future"

DRIVE

"I'm ready and able to work in new ways to transform our business"

GROWTH

"I know how to grow my career and stay focused on achieving my ambition and potential"

TRUST

"I trust our leaders to use good judgment while living our values and protecting our wellbeing"



INCLUSION

"I feel a deep sense of connection to achieving our mission"

VOICE

"I can openly communicate my views and contribute to solving our business challenges"

CAPABILITY

"I am learning the skills I need to adapt and be resilient during this time"

COLLABORATION

"As colleagues, we have strong regard for each other and our shared experiences"



UNDERSTANDING

"I understand how my job contributes to our current business priorities"

ORGANIZATION

"I know where to find the information, tools, and resources I need to get the job done"

FAIR PAY

"I have access to the resources and benefits needed to manage my wellbeing"

SUPPORT

My manager understands my current needs for support, and I know where to seek answers when I have concerns"

PURPOSE

WORK

REWARD

PEOPLE

Source: Willis Towers Watson 2020 COVID-19 Talent Implications Survey.

No matter where in the world or in which sector, the crisis is having a dramatic impact on the world's workforce.

This is a **defining moment for leadership** – as they steer their organizations through uncertain times, **focus on workforce principles that align to the Employee Experience** and forge the 'new normal'

Source: Joint Whitepaper with WEF: Workforce Principles for the COVID-19 Pandemic: Stakeholder Capitalism in a Time of Crisis



Adopt an agile and continuous **learning mindset**



Understand the perspectives of and **engage all stakeholders**

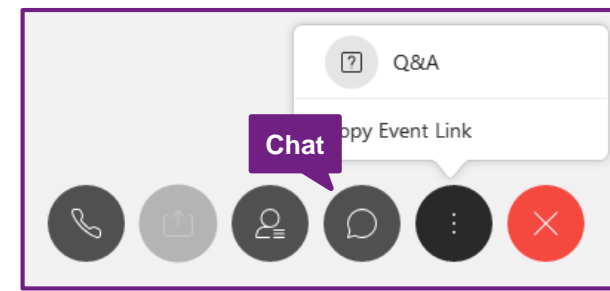


Focus on employee and company **wellbeing**



Balance medium-term needs and longer-term business objectives

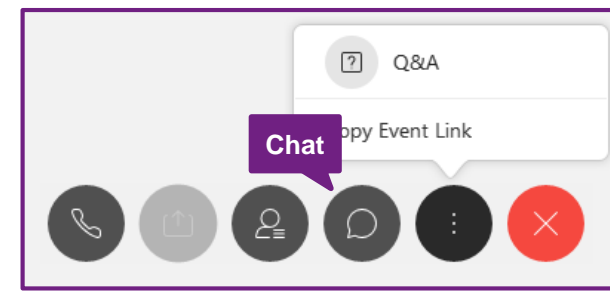
Leadership expectations as we shift to restoring stability



	Protect and preserve	In the immediate term, leaders focus on managing through the crisis, clarifying current priorities, and sustaining and adapting the organization for survival
	Feel safe and secure	Leaders ensure employees have access to resources to manage their wellbeing, tools they need to work, and are enabled and supported on what's important
	Feel included and valued	Leaders seek out diverse employee input to co-create new ways of working, build purpose and resilience, and strengthen collaboration and shared experiences
	Evolve and thrive	Leaders focus on learning lessons from the crisis and articulating a purpose that goes beyond profit, anticipating customer needs and leading to deliver in new ways
	Feel inspired and invigorated	Leaders build confidence and trust with employees setting them up to work smarter, achieve their ambitions and potential, and protect their wellbeing

Source: [Download Global crisis: Human capital road map from willistowerswatson.com](https://www.willistowerswatson.com)

Key takeaways



The world as we knew it has changed – in many ways for the better. How do we sustain the agility?



Ask critical questions about who and how employees can safely return to the workplace using new paradigms



Don't only address employee's acute wellbeing needs. Use this opportunity to build a culture of wellbeing



Leaders are being tested like never before – what you do (or don't do) in a crisis will be remembered