The 'Thrive at Work at Home' Survey is now in full swing!

Below are some initial findings from the sample of **560 participants** who took part in the first wave between 21st April-5th May 2020. Our plan is to build on these results with information provided to us at each of the 9 working from home surveys over the next 6 months. Together, these findings will paint a picture of how our participants phase into (and out of) working from home options during the COVID-19 pandemic.

First, let's learn a bit about our survey participants:

33% Male
66% Female

Age Range:

20 – 74 years.
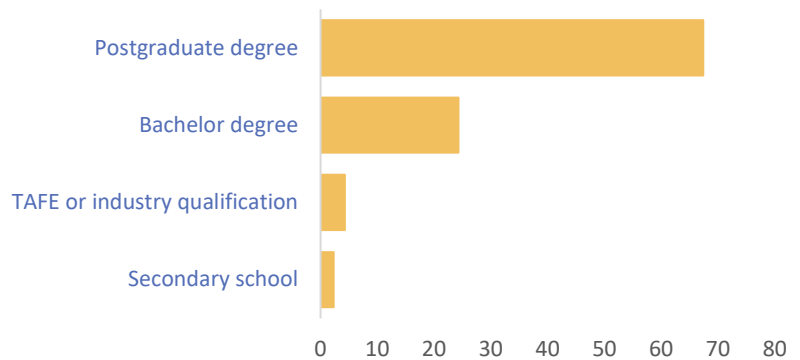
This includes:

18%
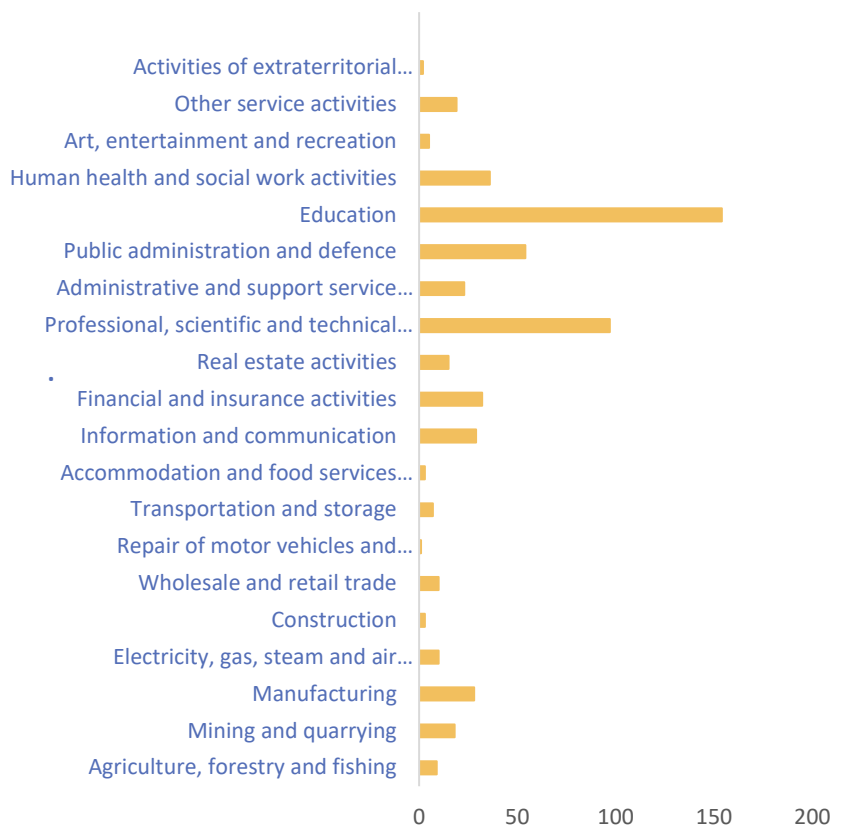Aged 20-30 years

34%
Aged 31-40 years

25%
Aged 41-50 years

21%
Aged over 51 years
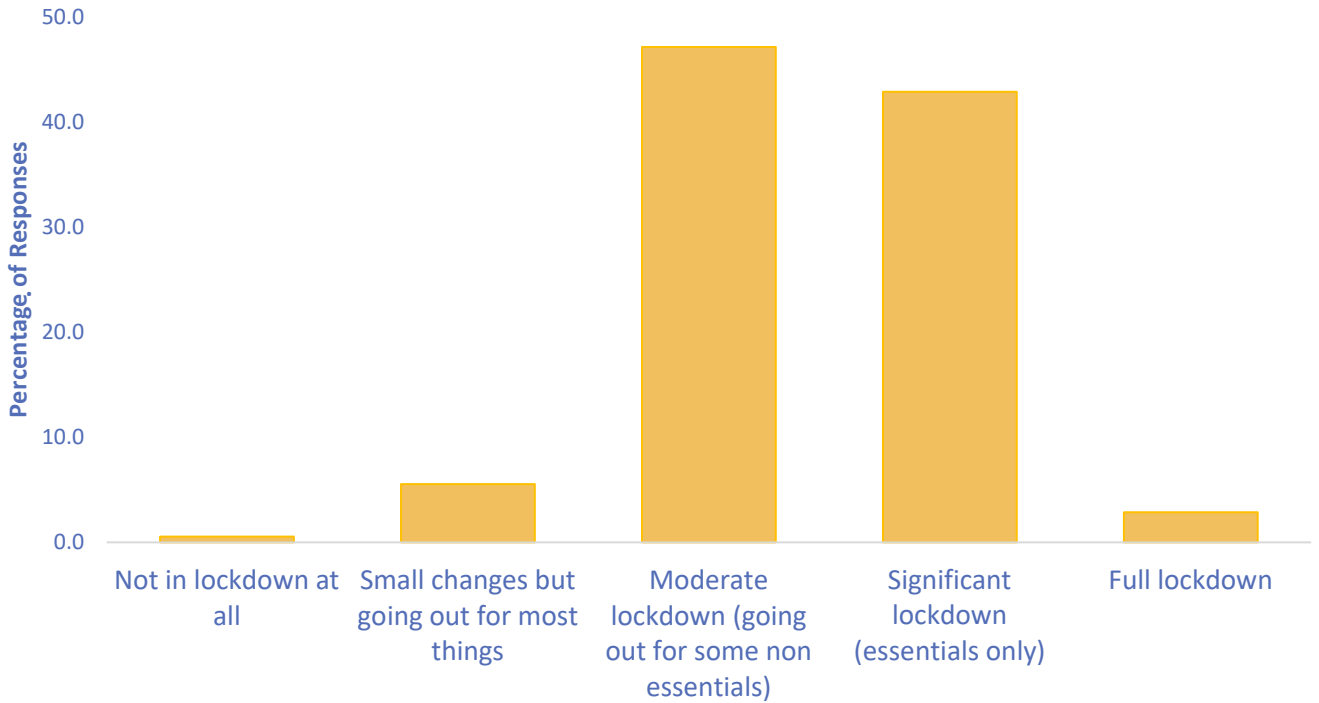
Level of Education as a Percentage

- Postgraduate degree
- Bachelor degree
- TAFE or industry qualification
- Secondary school

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

Participant Numbers by Industry

- Activities of extraterritorial...
- Other service activities
- Art, entertainment and recreation
- Human health and social work activities
- Education
- Public administration and defence
- Administrative and support service...
- Professional, scientific and technical...
- Real estate activities
- Financial and insurance activities
- Information and communication
- Accommodation and food services...
- Transportation and storage
- Repair of motor vehicles and...
- Wholesale and retail trade
- Construction
- Electricity, gas, steam and air...
- Manufacturing
- Mining and quarrying
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing

0 50 100 150 200

Which of the below best describes how much your home is in lock-down?

89% of our respondents reported being in somewhere between 'moderate', to 'full' lockdown, meaning they were considerably limiting activities outside of the house.
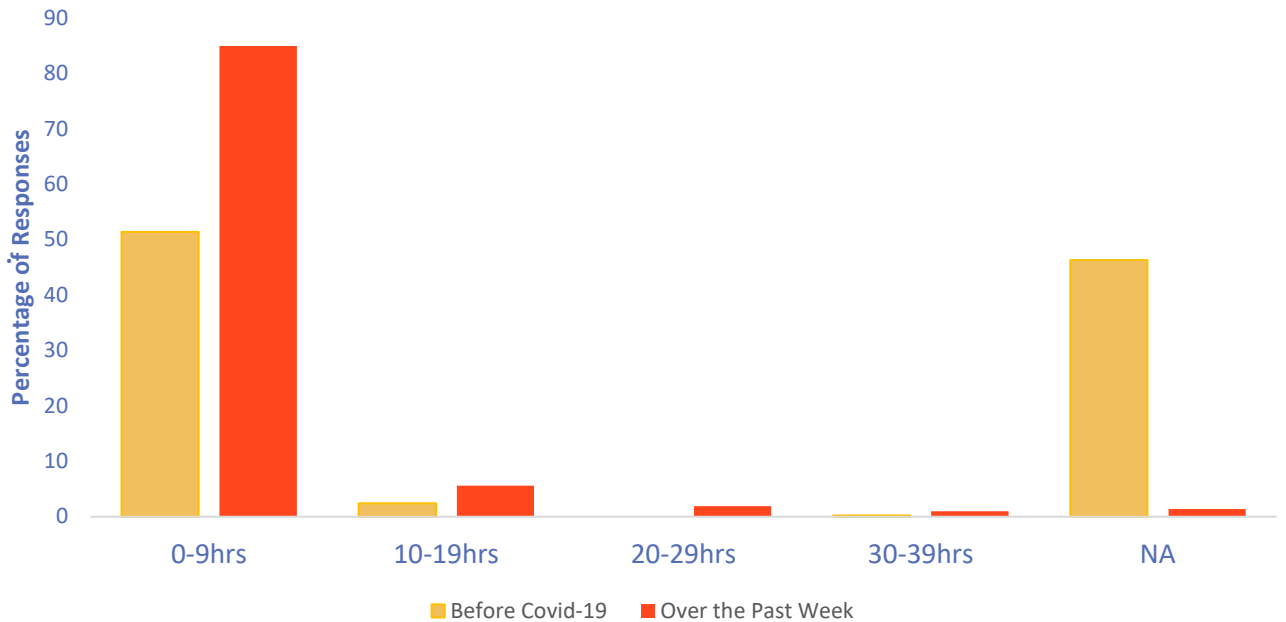
Over 80% of our sample were working from home most days of the week. That's more than usual for 60% of people.

How often did you work from home over the past week?
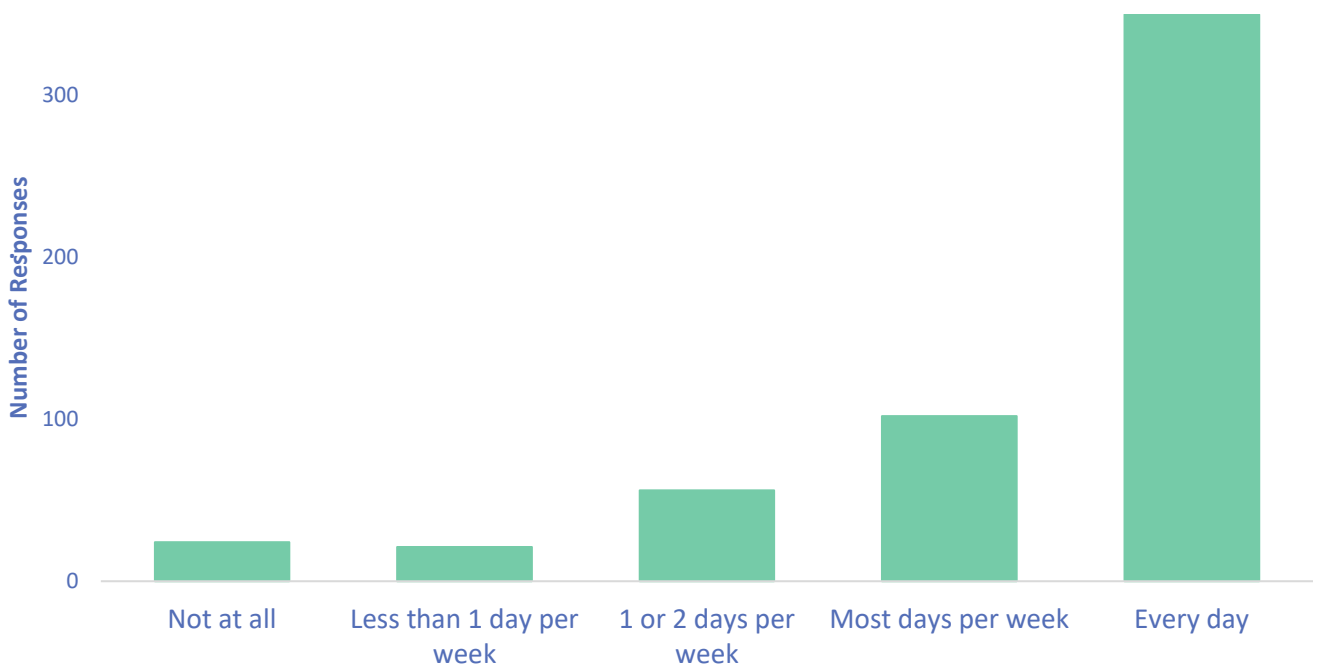
Hours Per Day Spent Simultaneously Working and Caring for Children

During the week leading up to the survey, our respondents spent **more time simultaneously caring for children and working** than before COVID-19.

Hours spent working per week shifted slightly during COVID-19 with **less employees working 30-39 hours** per week during the week prior to the survey.

Hours Worked Per Week Before and After COVID-19
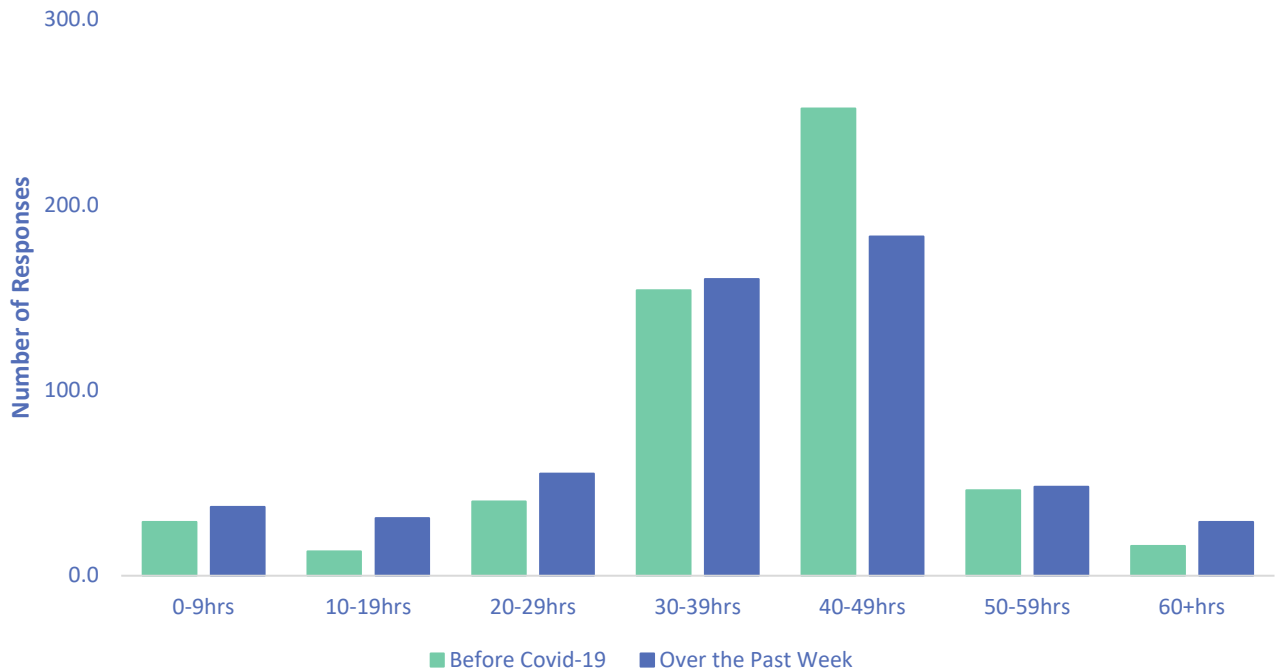
Associations between workplace issues and well-being.

Associations with Mental Health

We found several work aspects that strongly and significantly correlated with psychological distress. Although we cannot establish causality, a correlation could mean that changing these aspects is likely to reduce psychological distress. The strongest predictors of psychological distress were:

Financial Strain

Job insecurity

IT Hassles

Work-home interference

Cyber slacking

IT Hassles

Work to home interference

Role Clarity

Associations with Loneliness

Above are several aspects that we found strongly and significantly correlated with loneliness. While these aspects have not been established as causal, they may play a role in the degree of loneliness our participants reported.

Our validated mental health measure showed that **21.9%** of participants were experiencing **high** or **very high** psychological distress.

Mental Health by Age

Percent of Responses

- Excellent mental health
- Moderately good mental health
- Average mental health
- Slightly poor mental health
- Very poor mental health

Task Variety

Legend:
- This week, the job involved a great deal of task variety.
- This week, the job involved doing a number of different things.
- This week, the job involved performing a variety of tasks.
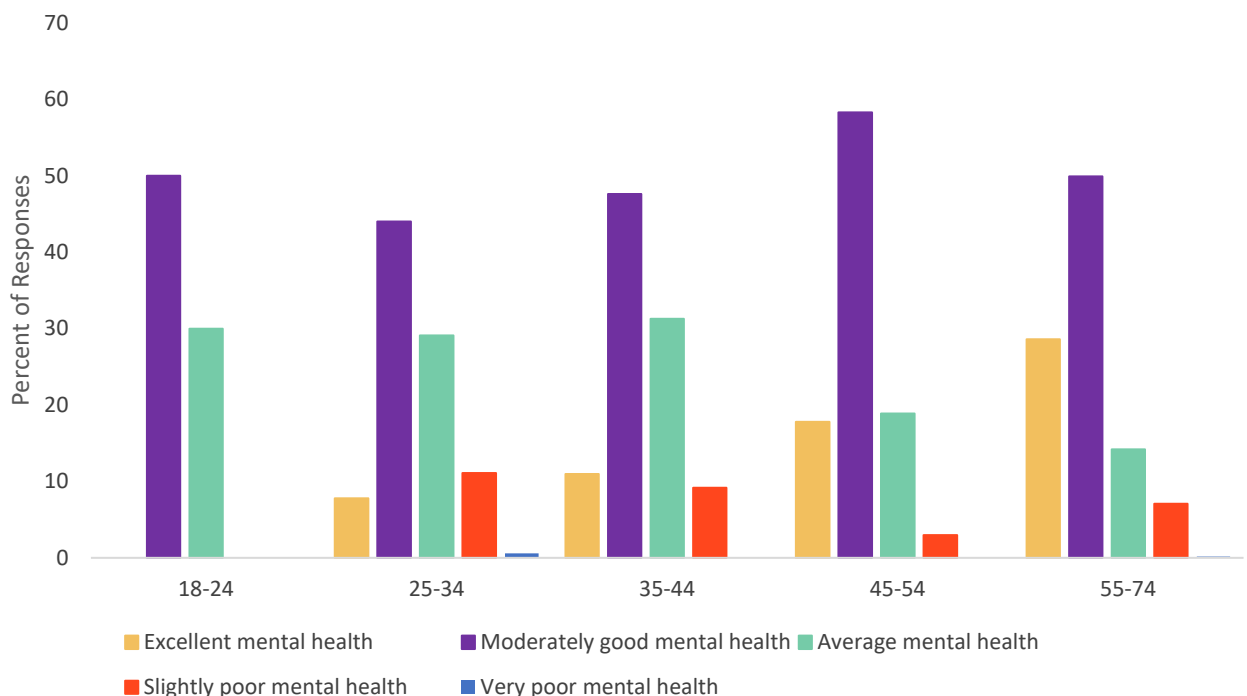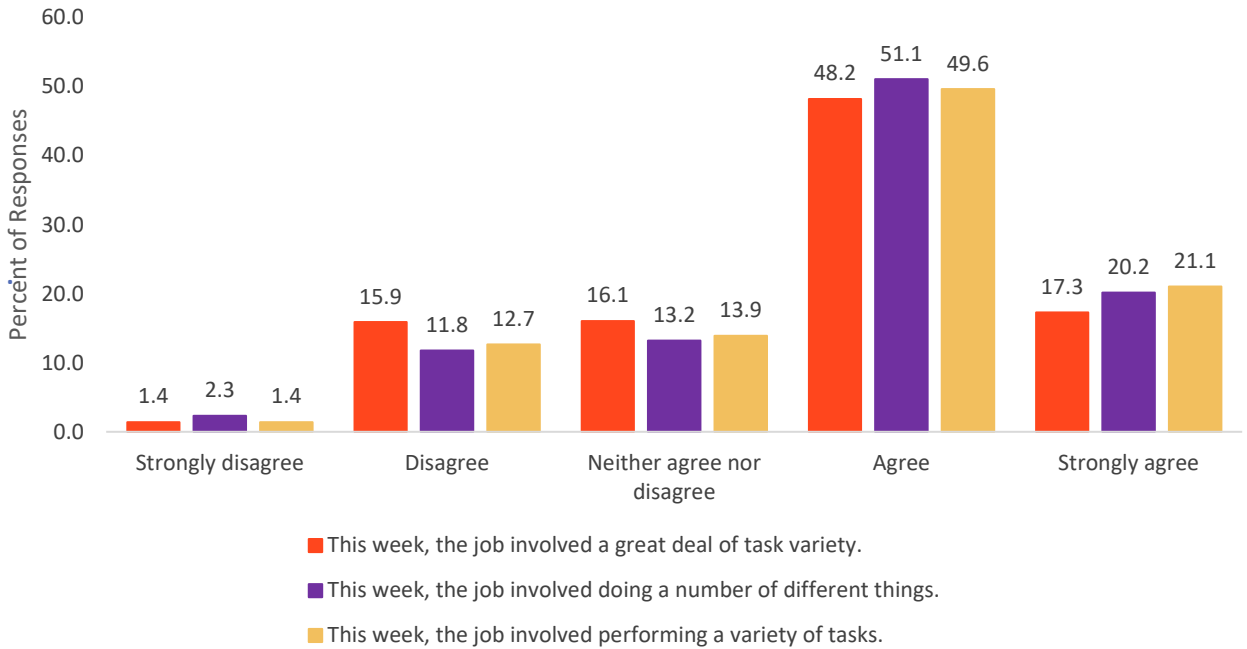
During the week prior to the survey, at least **60%** of participants reported that they felt the level of variety in the work tasks they completed was **Good** or **Very Good**.
Similarly to Task Variety, at least **77%** of survey respondents agreed that they were clear about their work **tasks, goals**, and **responsibilities**.

Role Clarity

Legend:
- This week, I had clear planned goals and objectives for my job.
- This week, I knew what my responsibilities were.
- This week, I knew exactly what was expected of me.

SMART Work Design
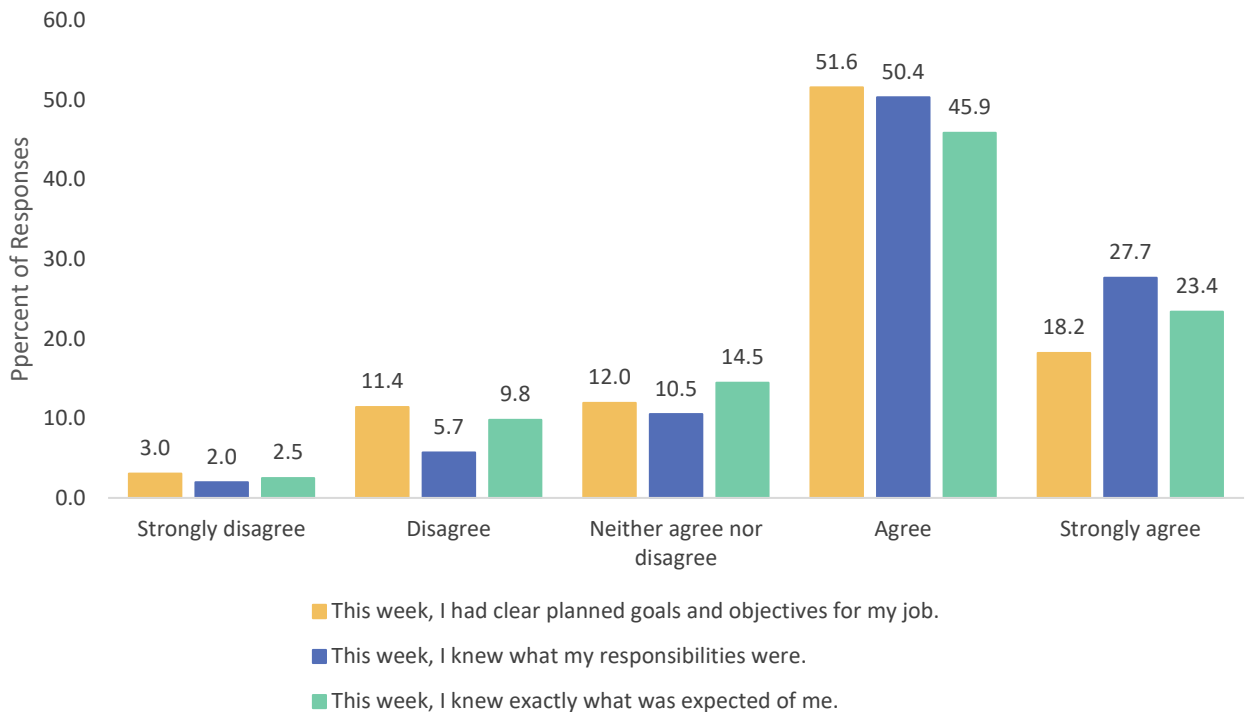
Decision Making Autonomy

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
This week, the job gave me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.	0.7	5.0	6.8	45.4	37.1
This week, the job allowed me to make a lot of decisions on my own.	1.3	6.4	10.2	43.0	34.3
This week, the job provided me with significant autonomy in making decisions.	1.4	7.0	10.7	44.6	31.3

■ This week, the job gave me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.
■ This week, the job allowed me to make a lot of decisions on my own.
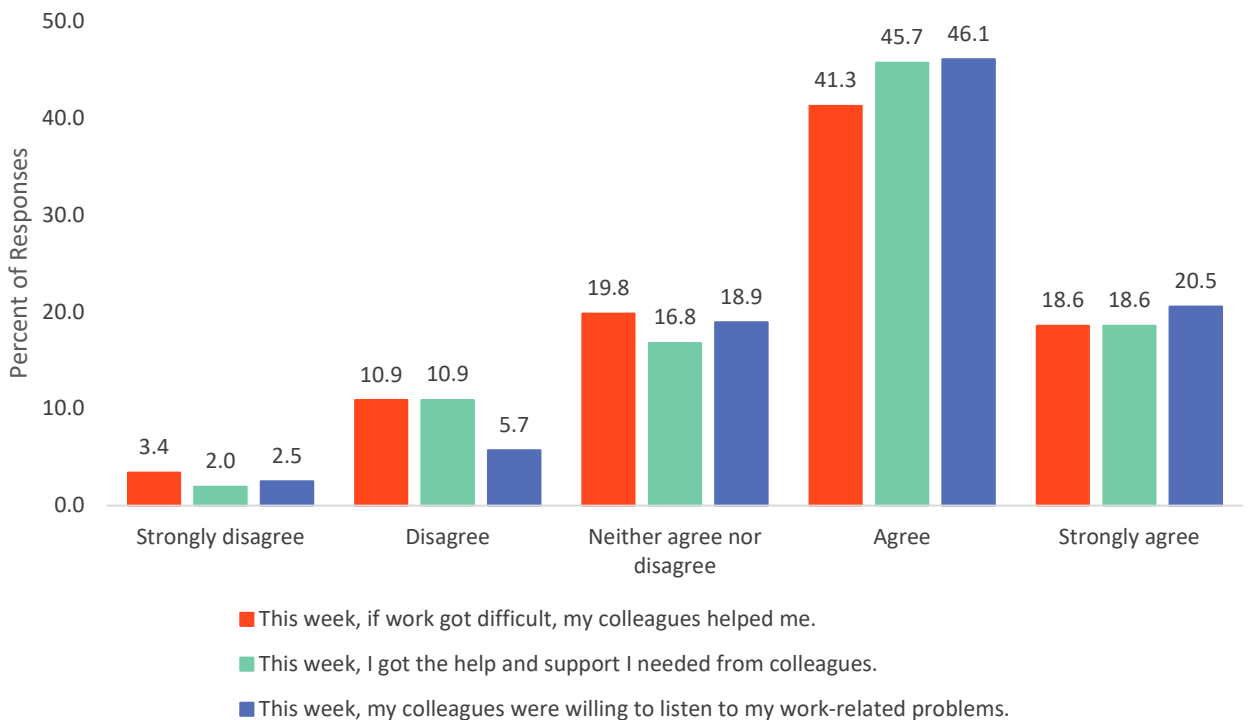■ This week, the job provided me with significant autonomy in making decisions.

During the week prior to the survey, at least **75%** of participants reported that they have a considerable amount of autonomy to make workplace decisions that affect their work.

While most participants indicated a good level of support from colleagues, approximately **30%** reported average to poor levels of **listening, support** and **help** from colleagues.

Support from Colleagues

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
This week, if work got difficult, my colleagues helped me.	3.4	10.9	19.8	41.3	18.6
This week, I got the help and support I needed from colleagues.	2.0	10.9	16.8	45.7	18.6
This week, my colleagues were willing to listen to my work-related problems.	2.5	5.7	18.9	46.1	20.5

■ This week, if work got difficult, my colleagues helped me.
■ This week, I got the help and support I needed from colleagues.
■ This week, my colleagues were willing to listen to my work-related problems.

SMART Work Design

Workload

Bar chart showing Percent of Responses (y-axis, 0.0 to 50.0) across response categories (x-axis: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree, Strongly agree) for three statements:

- This week, my job required me to work very hard.
- This week, my job left me with little time to get things done.
- This week, there was a great deal to be done in my job.

Response	This week, my job required me to work very hard.	This week, my job left me with little time to get things done.	This week, there was a great deal to be done in my job.
Strongly disagree	2.0	7.1	2.1
Disagree	10.2	24.5	8.9
Neither agree nor disagree	22.5	23.8	15.5
Agree	39.6	25.4	44.6
Strongly agree	18.2	11.8	21.3

Over the week prior to the survey, at least **55%** of our participants experienced a high workload that required them to work very hard with little time to complete tasks.

Key Messages for Workers

Use the findings from this survey as a way to take stock of your work-from-home experiences. Here are a few tips:

- **Structure your day by writing a plan & setting clear boundaries between work & home.**
- **Ask for feedback and clarity on your role and performance.**
- **Actively plan to connect with colleagues to build high quality relationships.**
- **Are there aspects of your role that you can craft to better fit your skills and interests?**

Most importantly, practice self compassion in all your work, home, and recovery activities to maintain good mental health.

Key Messages for Managers

Use the findings from this survey as an opportunity to check in on the well-being of your employees during the COVID_19 pandemic. For example:

- **Do your employees have variety in their work tasks?**
- **Are your employees' projects meaningful?**
- **Have you built feedback into virtual meetings (don't wait for appraisals)?**
- **Do employees have adequate downtime?**
- **Is there an expectation of constant availability from employees?**
- **Are flexibility & autonomy built into employees' roles to help them deal with the changing nature of their work?**

It's important to look out for signs of stress and take immediate action. Providing employees with emotional and practical support, such as regular check-ins, will aid in increasing well-being and productivity. Check out this video & blog post for expert advice on setting your team up for success.

Below is a visual of the highest frequency words used by our participants when we asked them for their tips on how to thrive while working from home.

Here are some tips from our participants about how to set yourself up for success whilst working from home:

- Sleep well
- Clearly define a space at home for work activities.
- Try to keep your [usual] routine
- Keep a task and priority list
- Take regular breaks in the fresh air and sunshine
- Use headphones for video calls
- Flexibility is crucial
- Take breaks between virtual meetings
- Learn new skills to do the job 'your' way.