Below are some initial findings from the sample of 1135 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:

- **46%** Male
- **54%** Female

**Age Range**
- **26%** Aged 20-30 years
- **53%** Aged 31-40 years
- **11%** Aged 41-50 years
- **10%** Aged over 51 years

**Level of Education as a Percentage**
- Post graduate degree
- Bachelor degree
- TAFE or industry qualification
- Secondary school

**Participant Numbers by Industry**
- Activities of extraterritorial organisations
- Other service activities
- Art, entertainment and recreation
- Human health and social work
- Education
- Compulsory social security
- 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 equipment
- Wholesale and retail trade
- Construction
- Sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
- Water supply
- Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning services
- Manufacturing
- Mining and quarrying
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing
Next, here’s the current home situation:

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

92% of our respondents reported being somewhere between ‘moderate’, to ‘full’ lockdown, meaning they were considerably limiting activities outside of the house.

Over 76% of our sample were working from home most days of the week. That’s more than usual for 38% of people.
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 people working under 10 hours and more working 30-39 hours during the week prior to the survey.
Associations with Psychological Distress
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
- Mistrust from supervisors
- Experiencing I.T hassles
- Having one’s work closely monitored.

Overall, participants who were aged 45 and over were more likely to indicate poor or very poor mental health than those aged under 45. According to this validated mental health measure, 38.1% of our participants reported experiencing high or very high psychological distress.

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.

Mental Health by Age

Overall, participants who were aged 45 and over were more likely to indicate poor or very poor mental health than those aged under 45. According to this validated mental health measure, 38.1% of our participants reported experiencing high or very high psychological distress.
During the week prior to the survey, at least 45% 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 60% of survey respondents agreed that they were clear about their work **tasks**, **goals**, and **responsibilities**.
During the week prior to the survey, at least 60% 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 35% reported average to poor levels of listening, support and help from colleagues.

### Decision Making Autonomy

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<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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- **This week, the job provided me with significant autonomy in making decisions.**
- **This week, the job allowed me to make a lot of decisions on my own.**
- **This week, the job gave me a chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.**

### Support from Colleagues

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- **This week, my colleagues were willing to listen to my work-related problems.**
- **This week, I got the help and support I needed from colleagues.**
- **This week, if work got difficult, my colleagues helped me.**
Over the week prior to the survey, at least **30%** 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?
- Don’t closely monitor employees. Instead, manage by results
- 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.
Tips on how to thrive while working from home

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.

For further information and help, check out our Thrive at Work at Home video and blog series:

Visit our website