

## The impact of Covid-19 on the future of work

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It is a year since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and following a dramatic transformation of the workplace, not much else has changed. Employees who packed their bags in anticipation of a month-long lockdown continue to work from home and connect with colleagues remotely with little insight into when things will return to normal. However, in these unpredictable times, one thing is certain – the crisis could be a catalyst for a new future of work that we could never have imagined.

In 2020, the workforce jumped forward with large-scale shifts to remote working and e-commerce. What was expected to take years suddenly transformed seemingly overnight, with continued shifts expected ahead. However, with all of this change, employees are looking for a level of certainty and want companies to provide some reassurance of what the future holds for them. This is supported by McKinsey<sup>1</sup> which found that employees want to hear more about their employer's post-Covid-19 plans and the working arrangements that will be adopted. In particular, while companies may have announced the intent to embrace a hybrid working model, employees still want more information about the detailed guideline, policies, expectations and more.

### Employee's expectations of work post-Covid-19

As lockdowns lift and restrictions ease, employees want to feel reassured that health, safety and wellbeing come first when returning to the workplace. Trust and transparency have never been more important and the best employers know they need data and insight to instil confidence.

Further many employees have already declared that post-pandemic, they will opt to work remotely, and if companies do not accommodate for this, they will not work for them. In fact, 43% of workers believe that 2020 marked the end of the office 9-5 and 77% won't miss it. While only 5% don't want to return to the office at all, most want the ability to collaborate and connect in person at least two days a week<sup>2</sup>. Looking forward, workers are looking to both socialising (30%) and collaborating (29%) with colleagues in person when they return to the office.

### Employer's expectations of work post Covid-19

As organisations begin to evaluate and plan their workforce strategies post-Covid, they will be returning to a new normal. According to ManpowerGroup's Q4 2020 Employment Outlook Survey<sup>3</sup>, over half (59%) of employers are planning to offer flexible work options for the long-term, with 20% offering the option to work remotely 100% of the time, and 39% planning to support remote work some of the time. At the same time, 48% of employees will likely work remotely at least part of the time after Covid-19 vs. 30% before the pandemic.

The increased acceptance of remote work is creating an opportunity to untether talent from location, opening up new opportunities for organisations to optimise their talent, including

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/what-employees-are-saying-about-the-future-of-remote-work?cid=other-eml-alt-mip-mck&hdpid=0021455d-3425-466e-9495-557663b86f8d&hctky=9188719&hlkid=9520a553e0a14add807286d3c51f3bdd>

<sup>2</sup> <https://go.manpowergroup.com/futureforworkers>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.manpowergroup.com/workforce-insights/data-driven-workforce-insights/manpowergroup-employment-outlook-survey-results#%20>

workforce mix and where and how they source talent. As they shift to remote work, companies need to understand how they will manage their physical assets while engaging and developing their talent for the future.

### **The NextGen Workforce**

With people working remotely for over a year, the opportunity for the NextGen Workforce has become an attractive one for many people. NextGen Work allows people to supplement incomes over the short-term, provides freedom to explore different roles and develop in-demand skills to be more employable over the long-term. In addition, people can also control where, when and how they work, reducing stress and allowing flexibility for work-life-balance.

As many people have dabbled with working from home over the past year, there is increased interest to opt for alternative models of work over traditional, full-time, permanent roles with 87% of workers stating that they would do NextGen work in the future<sup>4</sup>. This includes part-time, contract, temporary and freelance roles which are on the rise as businesses and people want choice, flexibility and alternative ways of working which provide resilience for less predictable futures.

While the Covid-19 pandemic has taught us that the future is unpredictable, people are seeking a level of certainty about what lies ahead. Particularly since the last year of work from home has opened up a larger opportunity for workers to show that they do not have to be present at the office to do their work. As such people are choosing to work differently and new ways of getting work done are on the rise. In many instances, people are looking for safety and security, however, some individuals believe that with an unpredictable future, there is an opportunity to create your own work and leverage opportunities that help to prepare for unpredictable futures.

### **About ManpowerGroup**

ManpowerGroup® (NYSE: MAN), the leading global workforce solutions company, helps organisations transform in a fast-changing world of work by sourcing, assessing, developing and managing the talent that enables them to win. We develop innovative solutions for hundreds of thousands of organisations every year, providing them with skilled talent while finding meaningful, sustainable employment for millions of people across a wide range of industries and skills. Our expert family of brands – Manpower, Experis and Talent Solutions – creates substantial value for candidates and clients across more than 75 countries and territories and has done so for over 70 years. We are recognised consistently for our diversity - as a best place to work for Women, Inclusion, Equality and Disability and in 2021 ManpowerGroup was named one of the World's Most Ethical Companies for the twelfth year - all confirming our position as the brand of choice for in-demand talent.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.manpowergroup.com/wcm/connect/cf010c08-826a-4f00-bd27-70a63144083d/manpowergroup-next-GEN-work.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=IYcpMqx>