



THE STATE OF WORK

2018-2019 U.S. EDITION





The survey was conducted online by Regina Corso Consulting between June 14-28, 2018, among 2,010 U.S. respondents, all of whom are employed by a company with at least 500 employees, work on a computer, and collaborate with other people on projects.

Send any inquiries to Workfront at: social@workfront.com

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE STATE OF ENTERPRISE WORK? WHAT IS ITS FUTURE? WHY DOES IT MATTER?

These are just some of the questions we explore in our fifth annual State of Work Report, now half a decade in the making. This year, as we surveyed more than 2,000 enterprise workers across the United States, we asked favorite questions from previous years and added new ones as well — all with the intent to understand and navigate the modern workforce.

As we reviewed the data, we spotted seven major takeaways:

1. **We're skeptical of our colleagues' work.**

If we could rate our colleagues like Uber drivers, on average we'd give them only 3.7 stars (out of 5). In addition, U.S. workers consistently rank themselves as the most productive employees at work.

2. **We struggle to find time to innovate.**

While 64% of workers say their workplace regularly asks employees to think of how they can do things in a completely new way, a full 58% say they're so swamped with getting day-to-day work done that they don't have time to think beyond their daily to-do list.

3. Email and wasteful meetings cripple productivity.

Emails and pointless meetings topped the list of things that keep knowledge workers from getting work done. In this vein, U.S. workers say they spend only 40% of their workday on their primary tasks.

4. We (mostly) believe our work has purpose.

On average, U.S. workers say 61% of the work they do matters to them personally, with Baby Boomers being more likely than Millennials to say so (67% vs. 53%).

5. We believe automation will help us spend more time on work that matters.

86% of U.S. workers believe that the rise of automation will help us think of work in new and innovative ways. Still, the landscape is changing

quickly, as 48% of workers say they know people who have already lost jobs because of automation.

6. We're looking for digital tools to manage modern work.

44% of respondents say they're requesting more tools to manage work, indicating a sizeable portion of the modern workforce that wants guidance when it comes to work management.

7. We're skeptical when it comes to the future of tracking our work.

Only 34% of U.S. workers believe that within 5 years their company will be able to track almost all work that is being done in the company, and even fewer believe they'll be able to see how their work maps to their company's strategic initiatives (26%) or the bottom line (24%).

Taken together, the data in this report will give you a better understanding of the state of work, as well as recommendations for how you can contribute to making it better.

WHAT DO WE THINK OF OUR COLLEAGUES?

If you saw that an Uber driver had 3.7 stars (out of 5), would you choose to get a ride with them? Probably not. And yet it's the ranking U.S. workers give their coworkers. That, coupled with the fact that U.S. workers are more likely to say they are more productive than their co-workers and company leadership, might point to signs of conflict.

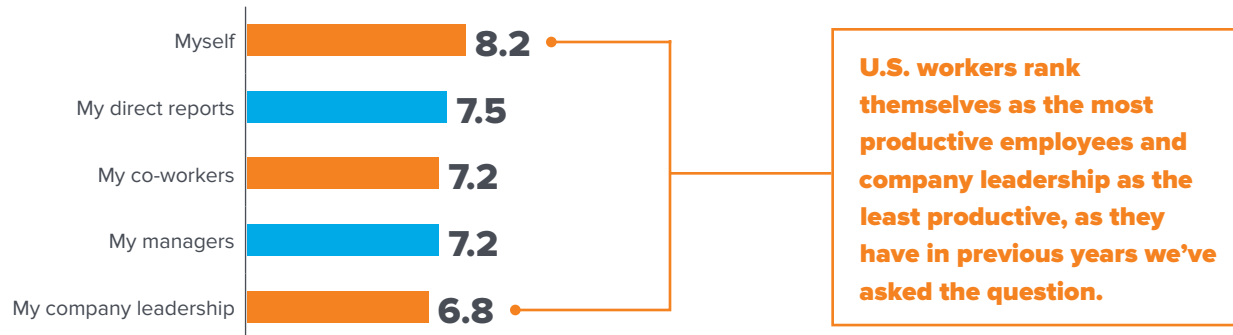


Which of the following is the most common source of conflict with other departments or teams?



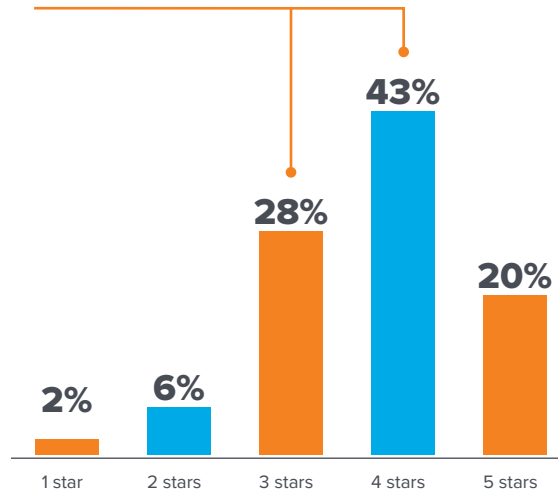
Women are more likely than men to say that lack of communication is a common source of conflict (60% vs. 53%).

How productive do you rate the following? (Out of 10)



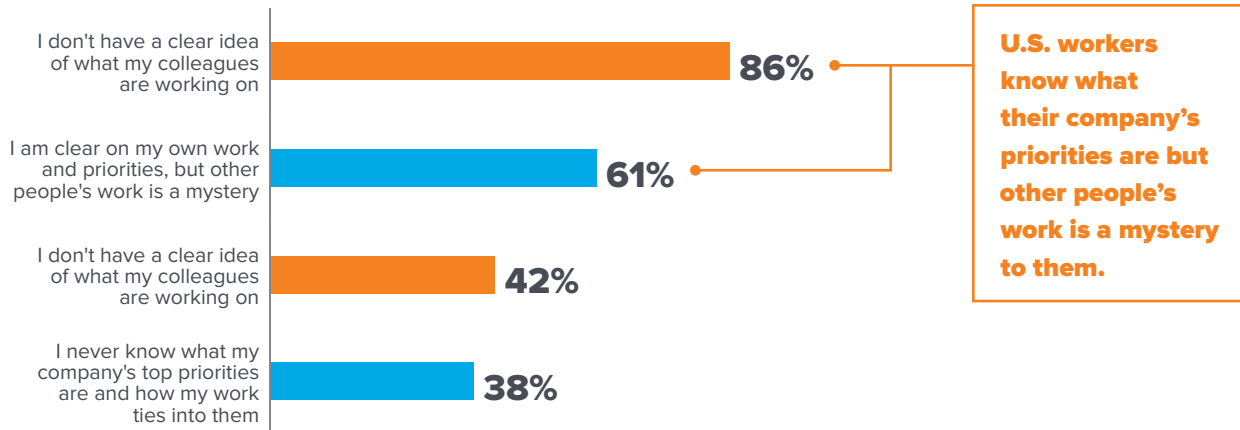
If you could rate your co-workers the way you do your Uber driver, how many stars would you give them?

If we could rate our colleagues like Uber drivers, on average we'd give them only 3.7 stars (out of 5).



How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

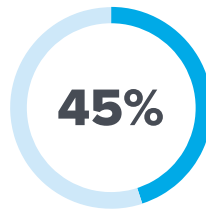
(% saying strongly/somewhat agree)



Overall, how effective or ineffective do you think instant messaging is at your company?



70% say instant messaging is very or somewhat effective for communication “between my team and other business units.”



45% say instant messaging is very or somewhat effective for communication “between my company leadership and employees like me.”

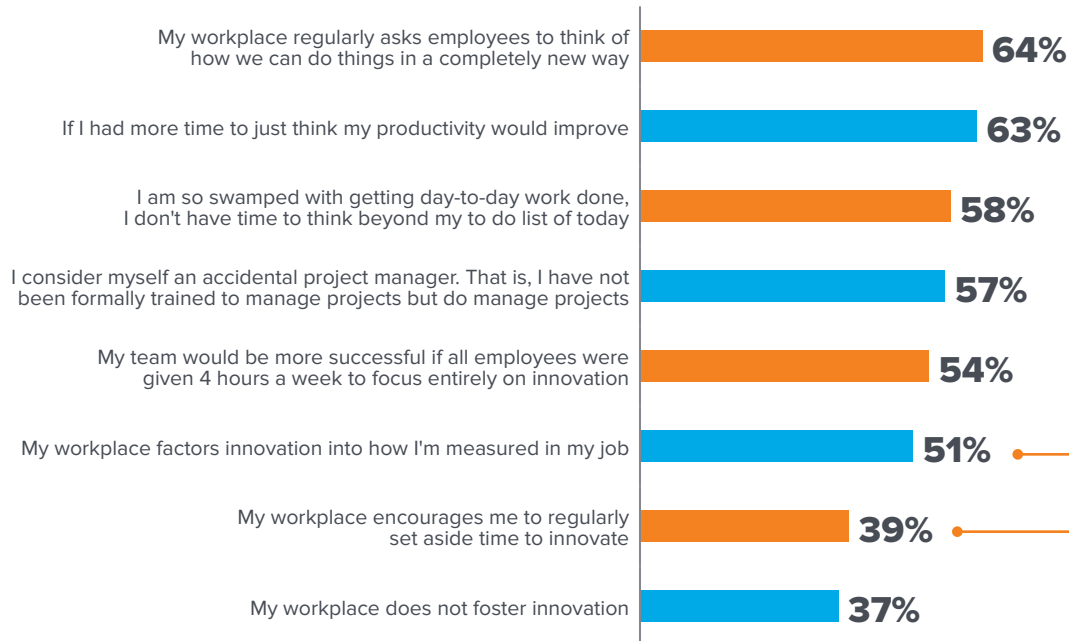
Millennials are more likely than Baby Boomers to say IM is an effective means of communicating between teams (78% vs. 63%) and between company leadership and employees (54% vs. 39%).

DO WE HAVE TIME TO INNOVATE?

While most U.S. workers (64%) say that their company leadership asks them to think of how to do things in a completely new way, 58% say they're so swamped with day-to-day work they don't have time to think beyond their daily task list. This points to a conundrum: Do employees *really* feel free to innovate?

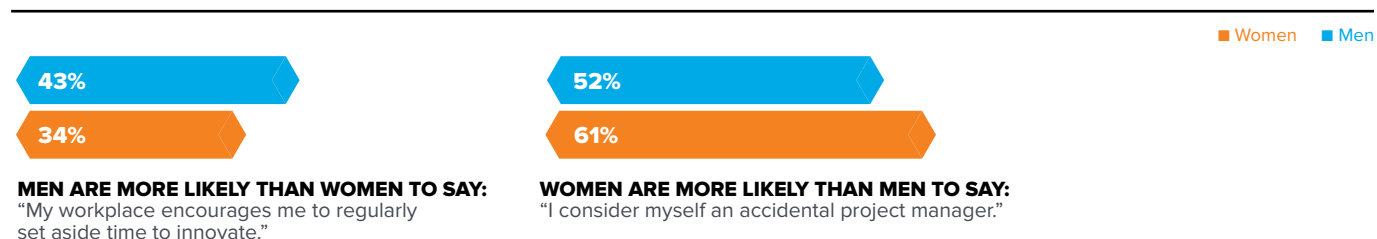


How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

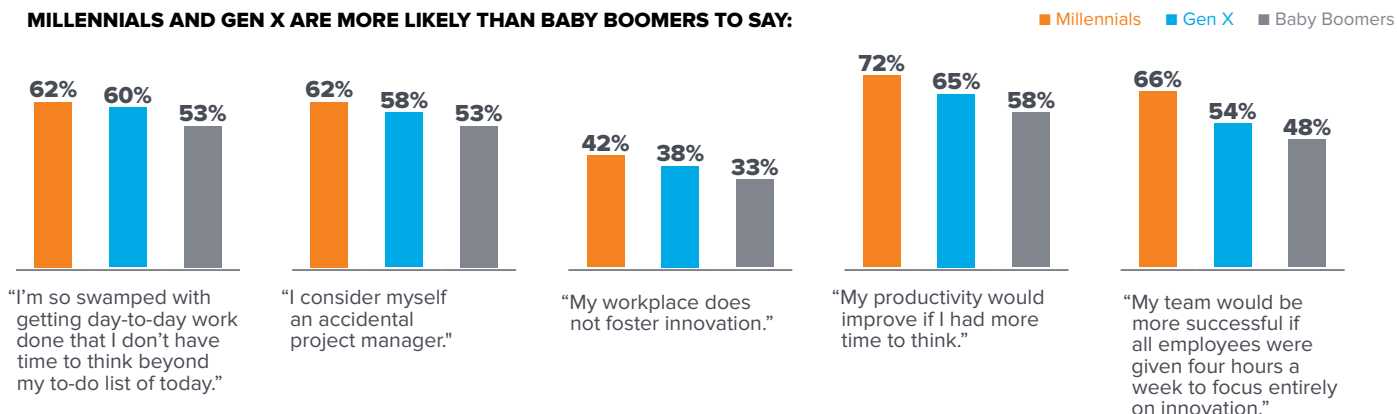


While half of U.S. workers say innovation is factored into their performance, just two in five say their companies encourage them to set aside time for it.

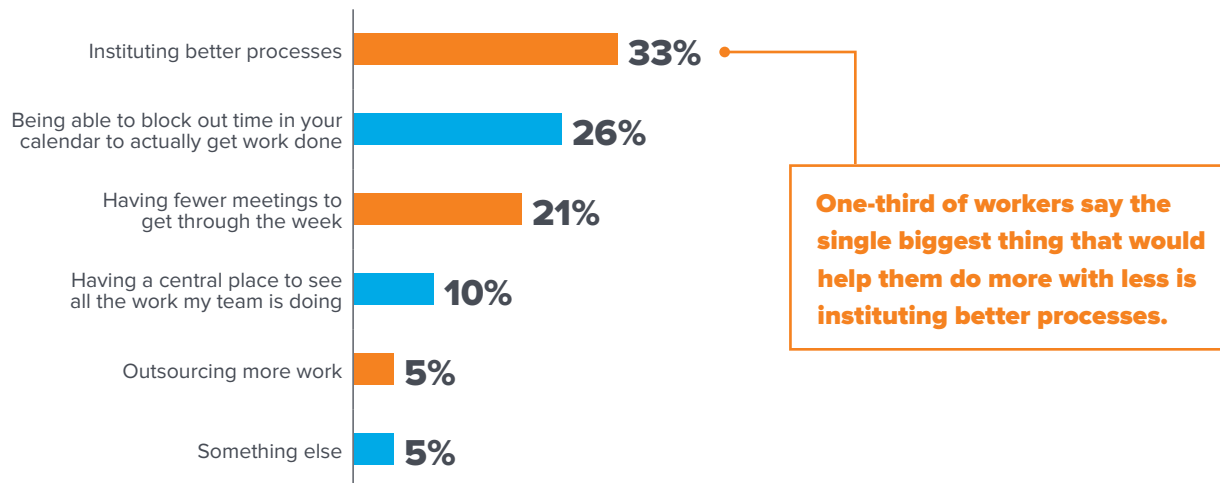
What Demographic Differences Show Us About Innovation in the Workforce



MILLENNIALS AND GEN X ARE MORE LIKELY THAN BABY BOOMERS TO SAY:



Of these, what is the biggest thing that would help you do more with less?

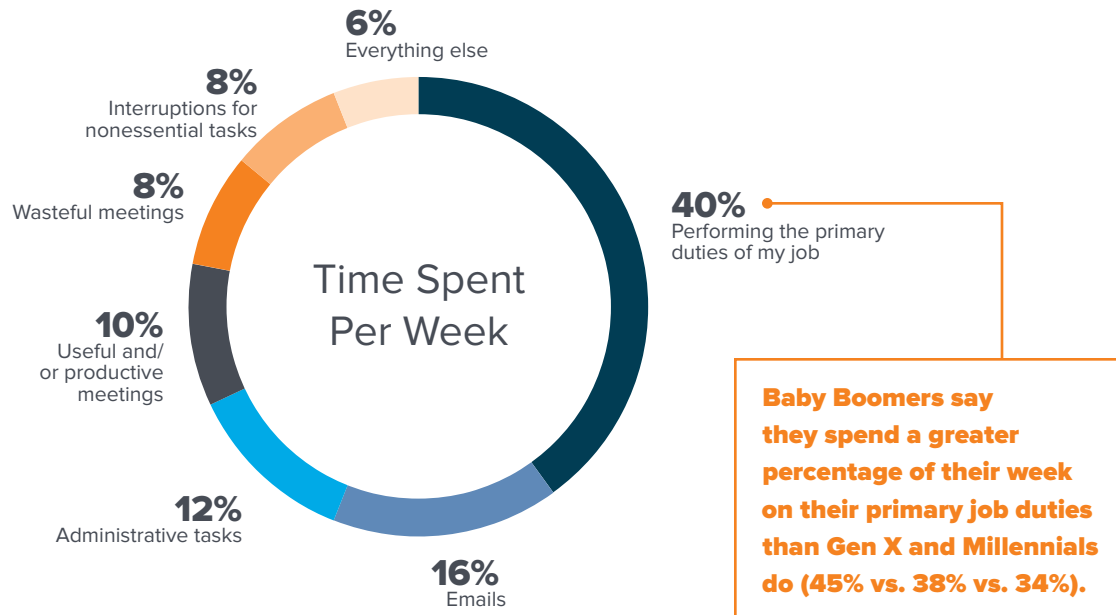


WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF PRODUCTIVITY?

We know what we're supposed to be doing at work — our primary job duties — but we have a hard time fulfilling those duties because of emails, meetings, interruptions, and more. We also experience delayed projects, mostly because the scope of our projects isn't understood and the work isn't prioritized correctly.

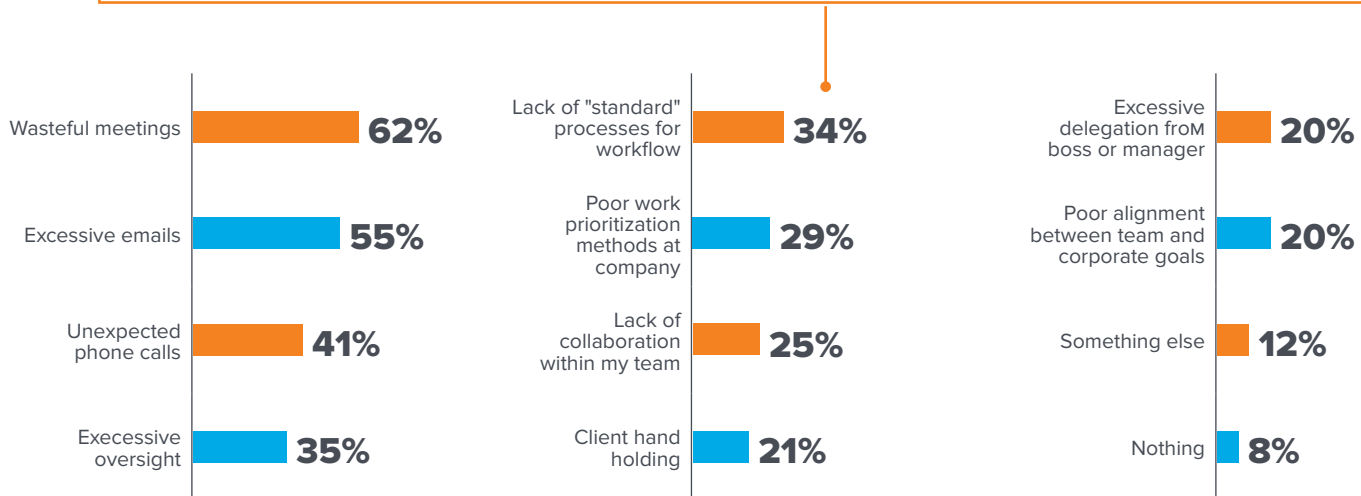


What percentage of the week is taken up by the following?

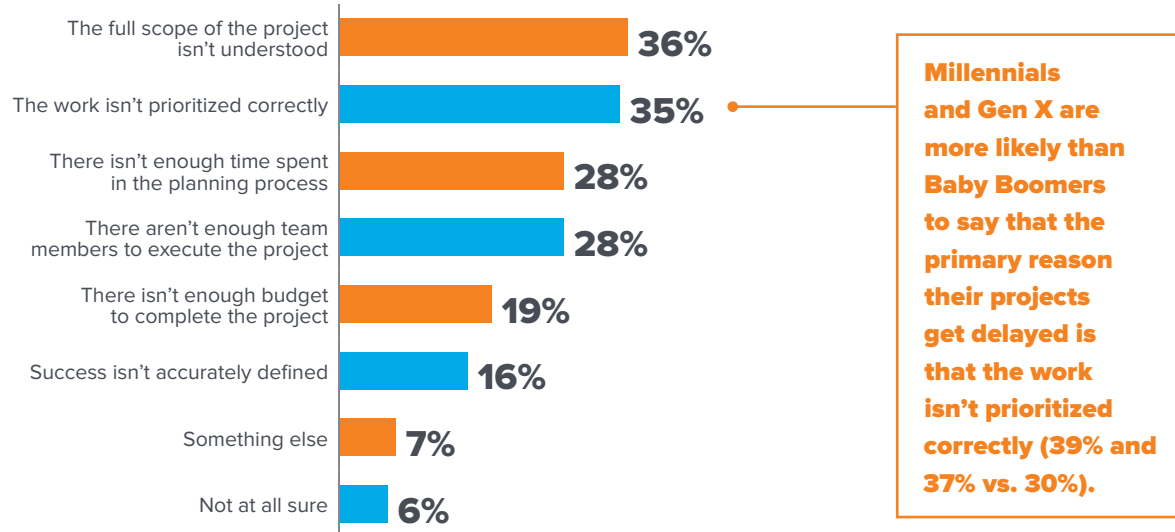


What gets in the way of work? Choose all that apply.

Millennials are more likely than Baby Boomers to say that a lack of standard workflow processes gets in the way of their work (42% to 24%).



What are the primary one or two reasons a typical project gets delayed? While all may be a reason, please select only the 1 or 2 that are primary reasons.

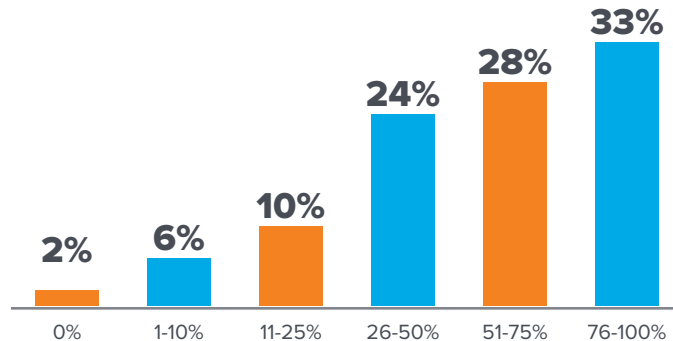


DO WE BELIEVE OUR WORK MATTERS?

Employees at enterprises across the United States are looking to make their work matter. They want to focus on their primary duties, have time to innovate, and automate mundane tasks. While a majority of the work we do matters to us personally, there are moments that give us less fulfillment.



What percentage of your work matters to you personally?

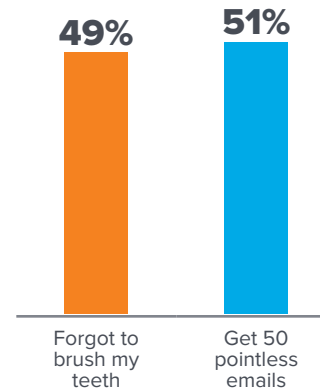


On average, U.S. workers say 61% of the work they do matters to them personally.

Baby Boomers are more likely to say that the work they do matters to them personally compared to Gen X and Millennials (67% vs. 58% vs. 53%).

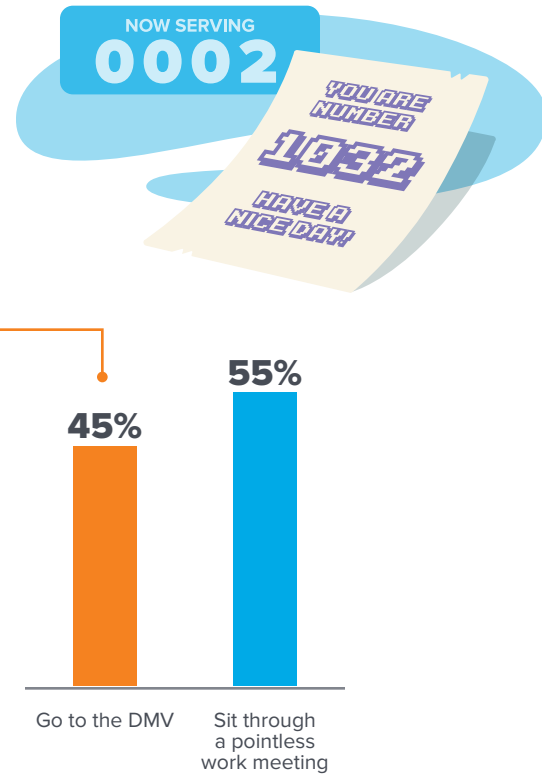
Would you rather...?

Baby Boomers are more likely than Millennials and Gen X to say they would rather forget to brush their teeth over getting 50 pointless emails (54% vs. 46% and 46%).



Would you rather...?

The DMV has a reputation of offering a bad experience, but over two in five would rather go there than sit through a pointless work meeting.



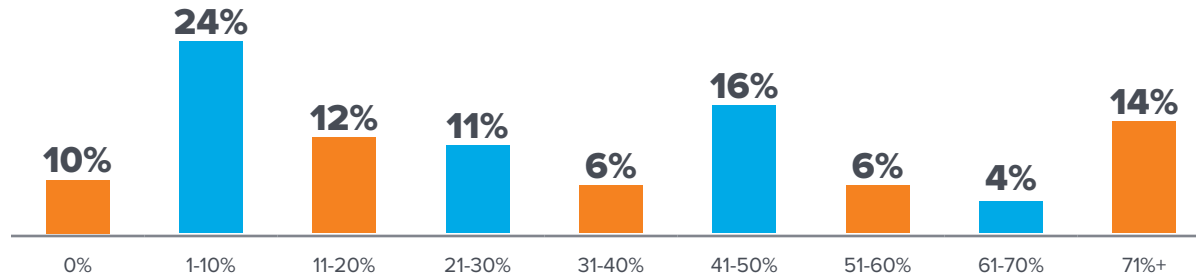
ARE WE IN THE AGE OF AUTOMATION?

On average, workers say 37% of the day-to-day aspects of their job are automated, and yet they say that only 40% of their day *should* be automated — opening the possibility that we've already reached the age of automation. At the same time, 69% of U.S. workers say that automation will give them more time to do their primary job duties...



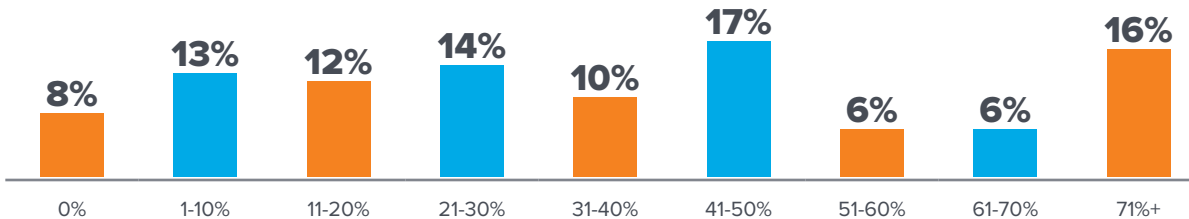
What percentage of your day is automated?

On average, workers say 37% of the day-to-day aspects of their job are automated.



What percentage should be automated?

On average, office workers say 40% of the day-to-day aspects of the job should be automated.



How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

■ Disagree (net) ■ Agree (net)



Regardless of how sophisticated artificial intelligence becomes, there will always be the need for the human touch in the workplace.



The rise of automation in the workforce will let us think of work in new and innovative ways.



I'm excited to learn new things as the workforce moves toward more automation.



Automation will give me more time to do my primary job responsibilities.



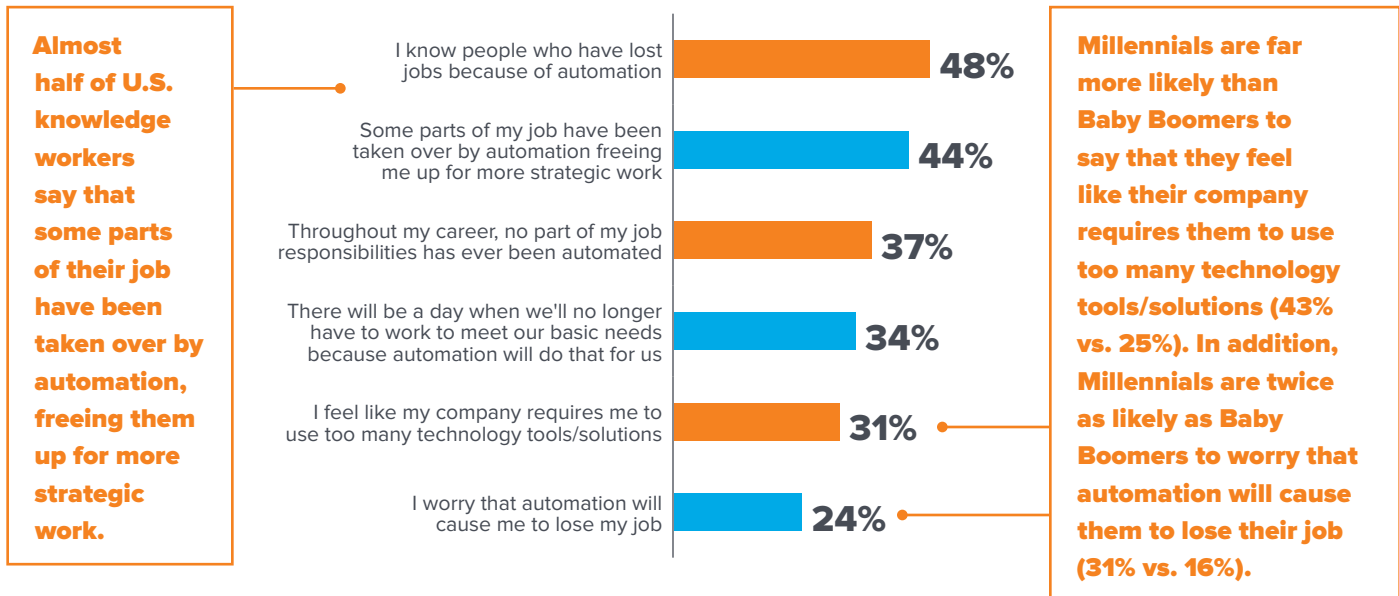
In the not so distant future, men and women in my line of work will be competing with robots, machines and/or artificial intelligence for jobs.

Only one-third of workers say people will be competing with robots, machines and AI for jobs in the not so distant future.

Millennials are more likely than Baby Boomers to say there will be a day when we'll no longer have to work to meet our basic needs because automation will do that for us (44% vs. 26%).

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(% saying strongly/somewhat agree)



HOW DO WE MANAGE OUR WORK?

We're all looking for ways to be more productive so we can spend less time on mundane activities. Work management best practices can help us do just that — especially if these best practices are a component of a digital transformation strategy.



How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(% saying strongly/somewhat agree)

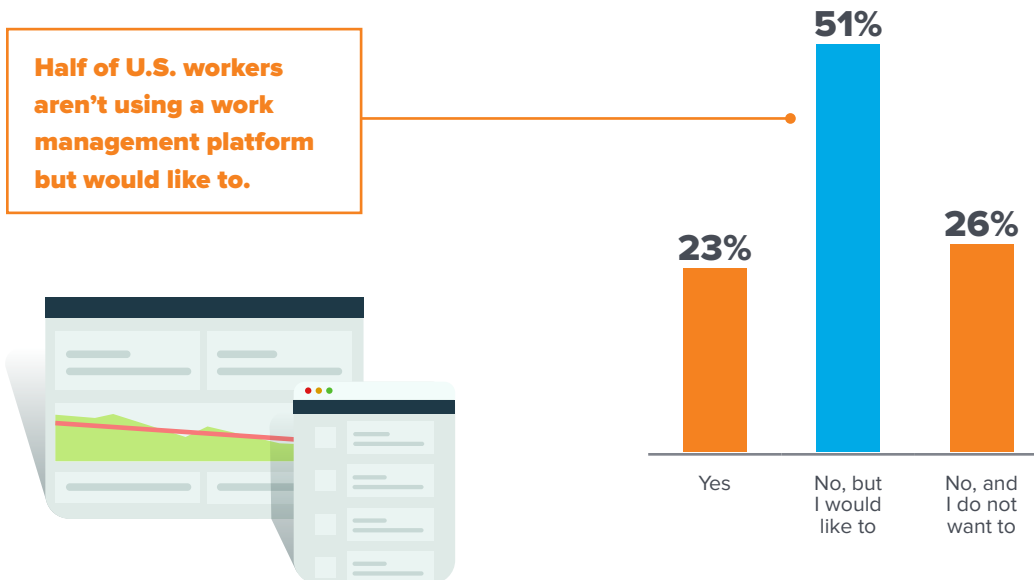
Almost three in five U.S. workers say their company is going through a digital transformation.

My organization is going through a digital transformation **58%**

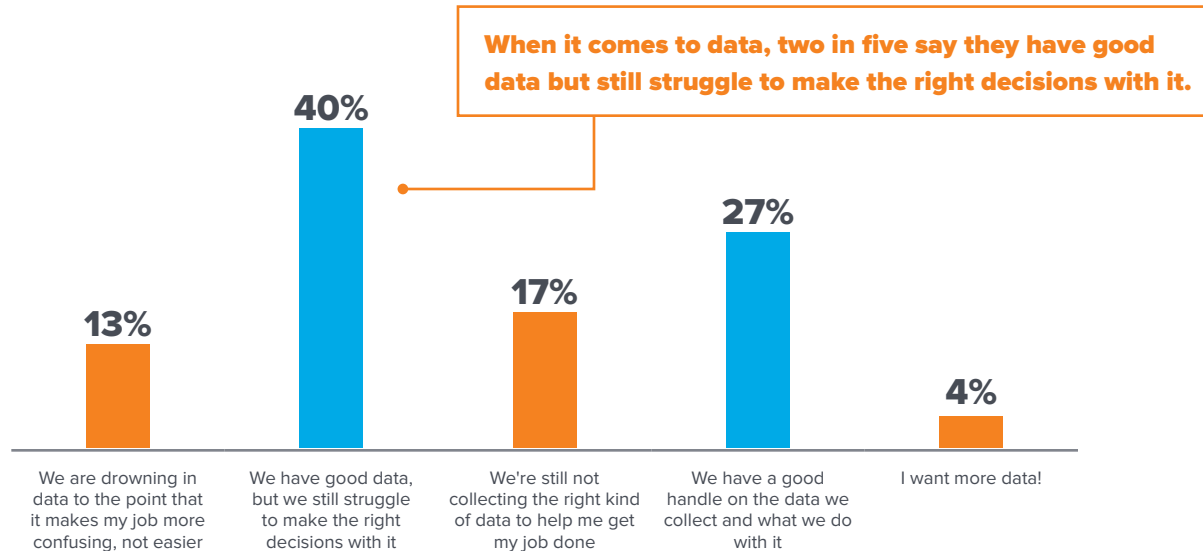
My team is requesting more tools to manage our work but our executives are not on board **44%**

Millennials are more likely than Gen X and Baby Boomers to say their team is requesting more tools to manage their work, but their executives are not on board (51% and 46% vs. 40%).

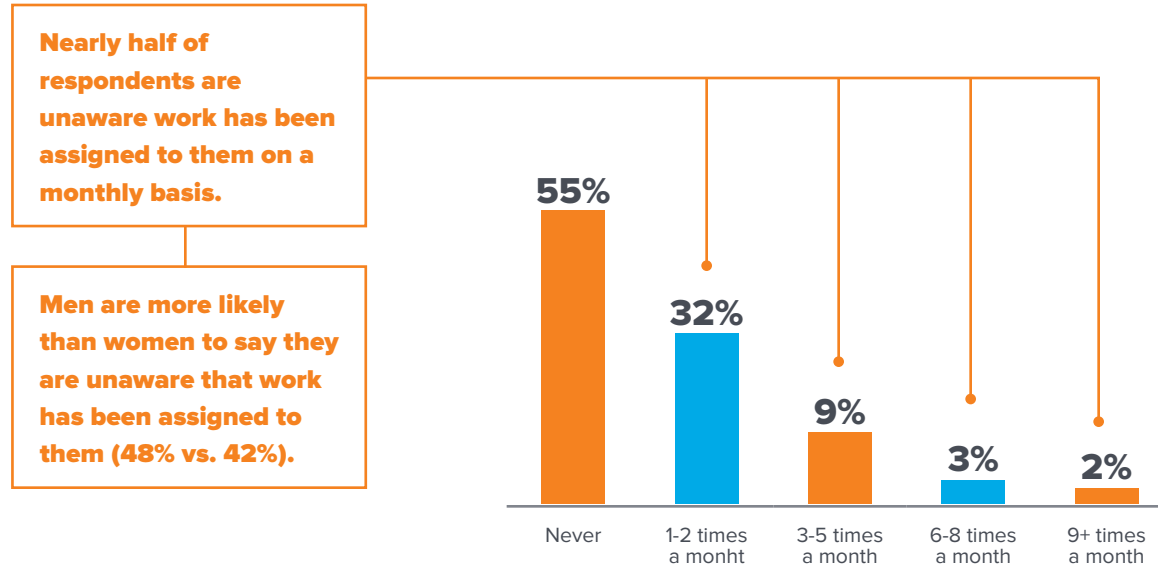
Do you use a modern work management platform that combines project management, intelligent work automation and in-context collaboration to empower teams to do the right work and their best work faster?



When it comes to the data available in your organization, which of the following best describes how you feel most of the time?

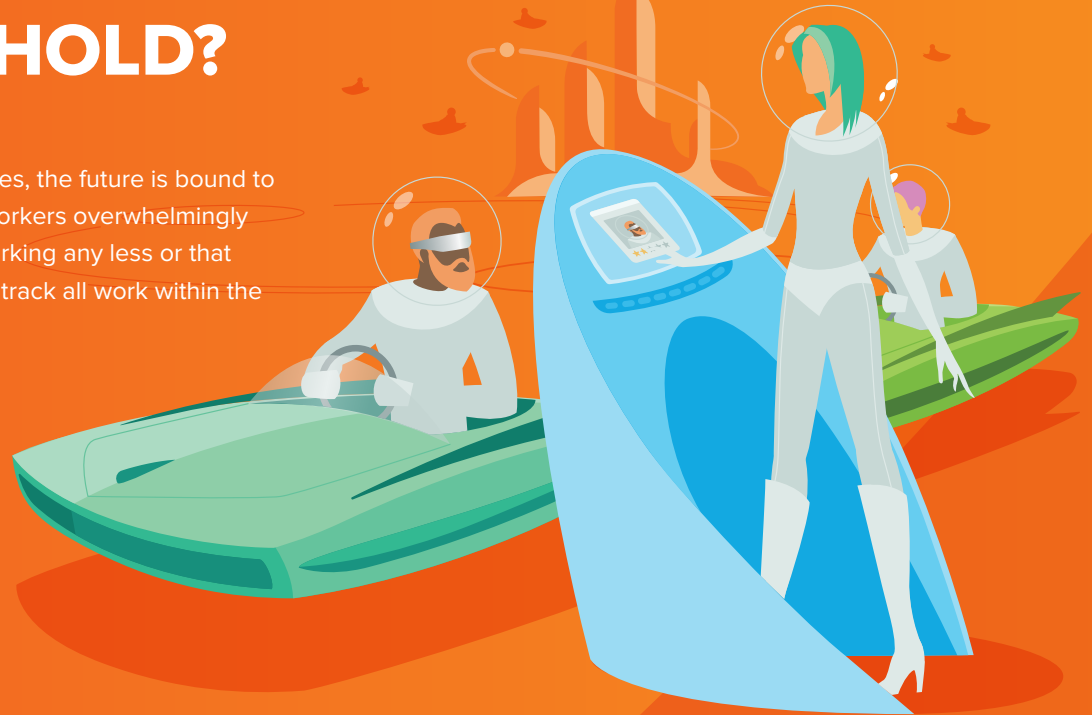


On average, how often are you unaware that work has been assigned to you?

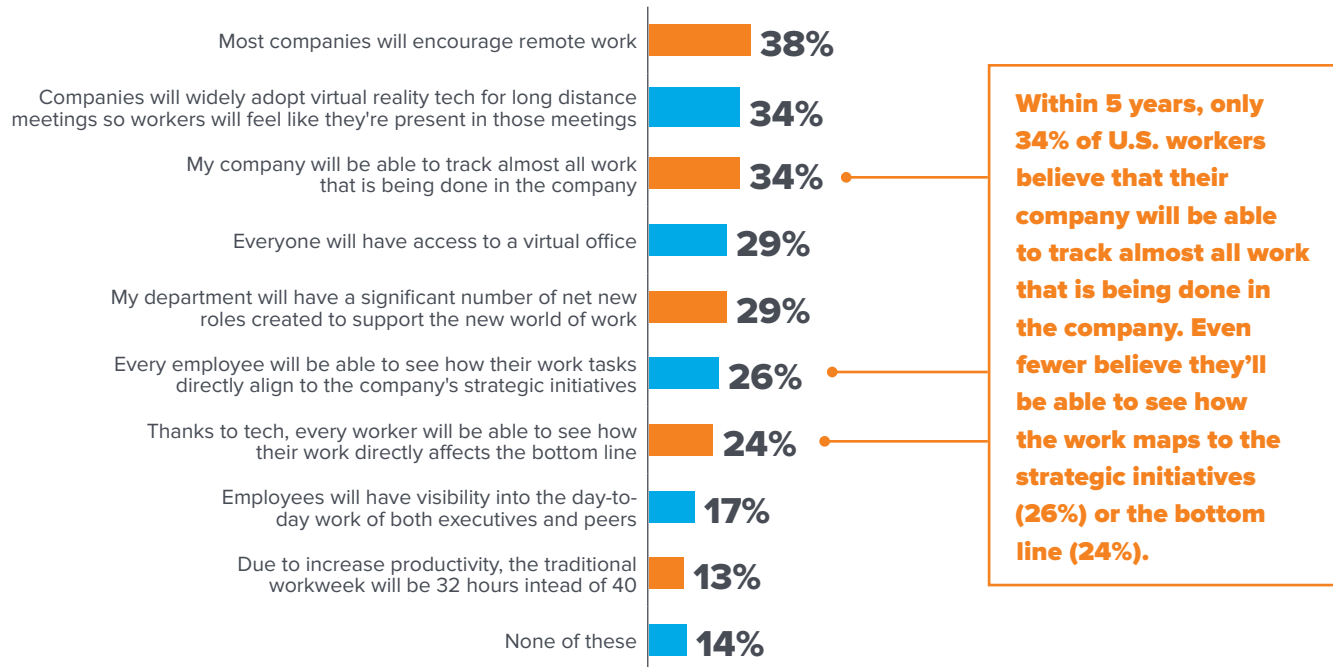


WHAT WILL THE FUTURE HOLD?

From virtual reality to new roles, the future is bound to bring change. And yet U.S. workers overwhelmingly don't believe that we'll be working any less or that we'll find a way to accurately track all work within the companies we work for.



Looking ahead 5 years, how will work change? Please select all that apply.



RECOMMENDATIONS

It's one thing to read the data in this year's State of Work Report and another thing entirely to put it to use. In light of that, here are recommendations based on the seven sections in this report to help you reach real results.

1. Improve productivity by increasing time spent on primary tasks.

- Talk with your team about how email and meetings factor into their primary tasks so they know if they're spending too little or too much on those activities.
- Ask yourself and your team how much time you each spend on primary tasks. Track that metric.
- Find ways to automate communication and processes so you can minimize menial tasks.

2. Deliberately carve out time for innovation.

- If you're a leader who asks team members to innovate, also give them time to do it.
- Since workers say that instituting better processes would help them do more with less, ask your team how your processes could improve. Then implement their suggestions.
- Make innovation part of your culture.

3. Help colleagues value each other.

- Ask your team members what they think of each other and why. Use that data to help you improve in the years to come.
- Provide visibility into the work everyone's doing so that team members can realize how much work their team members do.
- Celebrate success and accomplishments. If people are getting a lot of valuable work done, don't just show that it's progressing; celebrate major work wins.

4. Help your team find purpose.

- Ask your employees what percentage of their work they feel matters to them personally. Are you below the averages shown here? If so, fixate on changing that.

- Invite team members who have a high sense of purpose to present their views to the company.
- Take suggestions from team members who don't feel they have a sense of purpose to find out which tasks they feel could be reduced in their workday.

5. Embrace automation.

- Show your team members how automation can free their day for more meaningful and strategic work.
- Embrace technology to help solve problems and improve productivity, especially in instances where you can use tech solutions rather than adding headcount.
- No one wants to feel like their job is on the cusp of being automated. Train your

employees in new skill sets that will get them ahead of the technology curve and keep them as genuine contributors to the business.

6. Find digital tools to manage modern work.

- Teach people how to use work management tools so that your team can work faster for years going forward.
- People say they're drowning in data. Rather than focusing on acquiring more data, see if you can make better use of the data you have.
- Find ways to make sure everyone on your team knows exactly when work has been assigned to them.

7. Prepare for the future of work.

- Get ahead of tracking work across your company. With a third or fewer workers saying that they believe companies will be able to track how work aligns with initiatives, you have the opportunity to stand out by doing just that.
- Use small teams to experiment with cutting-edge technology so you can analyze the tradeoffs before fully committing.
- Start laying the foundation for remote work, as 38% of employees believe it will be commonplace within 5 years. You might run a trial period to become familiar with the tradeoffs of remote work and see if you can effectively manage the situation as a team.

COMING DECEMBER 2018

DONE RIGHT: HOW TOMORROW'S TOP LEADERS GET STUFF DONE AND DO IT RIGHT

Written by Workfront CEO, Alex Shootman, *Done Right* pulls from over 30 original interviews with experienced leaders across a variety of industries to show how tomorrow's leaders can effectively navigate the modern workforce. It explores how to:

- Motivate your team to achieve your grand vision
- Determine the best next step for every situation
- Learn where to focus your time and attention
- Discover the best way to deal with “stuff out of left field”
- Measure what really counts

In addition, *Done Right* provides exercises, templates, and worksheets so you can immediately make this knowledge actionable in your workday.

DoneRightBook.com





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Workfront provides:

- Consolidated features all in one easy-to-use tool
- Centralized feedback and approvals accessible to the entire team
- Standardized templates to save time and improve accuracy

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