



Strengthening Workplace Culture:

A Tool for Retaining and Empowering Employees Globally

Executive Summary | 2022





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Two years after the pandemic began, organizations are still adjusting to the COVID-19 world. From government shutdowns and supply chain disruptions to a mental health crisis, the pandemic has adversely affected the world of work in myriad ways. Today's employers are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit new staff, making it all the more challenging to grow their business and the economy. The elusiveness of talent is unprecedented.

But there is good news to be found, if you look for it. In 2019, SHRM published *The High Cost of a Toxic Workplace Culture: How Culture Impacts the Workforce—and the Bottom Line*, which outlined the monetary and psychological costs of a negative workplace culture. In 2021, SHRM published a follow-up report, *The Culture Effect: Why a Positive Workplace Culture Is the New Currency*, which found that positive workplace culture was a guiding light that helped U.S. workers and businesses make it through the pandemic. But do these trends also hold on a global scale? To better understand the importance of workplace culture, SHRM conducted a study in 12 countries to identify workplace trends across the globe.



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SHRM found, by and large, that workplace culture remains positive across the 12 countries. Even a pandemic couldn't wreak havoc on workplace culture, which speaks to the strides that organizations have made in recent years. For the organizations that dedicated themselves to cultural change before the pandemic, their commitment to positive work environments bore fruit at a time of crisis. Workers generally feel safe and heard at work, increasing their productivity and benefiting the bottom line.

Still, organizations must remain vigilant. New economic trends, namely the Great Resignation, make it all the more imperative to prioritize culture. Based on SHRM's survey of workers from 12 different countries, workplace culture will spell the difference between success and failure in a post-pandemic world. Now is the time to focus on communication, transparency, trust and all of the other tenets of a strong work environment—one that puts workers first.

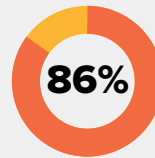


Key Findings

- Despite the turmoil of the COVID-19 pandemic, workplace cultures have remained unwaveringly positive. Globally, **nearly 3 in 4** workers (72%) rate their workplace culture as good or very good.
- Even in a pandemic, workers feel safe at work. **Nearly 9 in 10** workers globally (86%) feel physically safe at work and **over 4 in 5** workers (82%) feel emotionally safe at work.
- Yet, despite overwhelmingly positive and safe workplace cultures, the Great Resignation is sweeping the globe. **Almost half** of workers globally (45%) have thought about leaving their current organization.
- Negative workplace culture experiences will drive top talent to look elsewhere. Globally, workers who rate their culture as poor (**64%**) are more likely to have actively searched for a new job in the past six months, as compared with workers who rate their culture as good (**22%**).



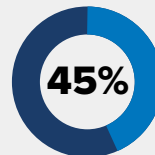
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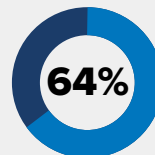
86% of workers globally feel **physically safe** at work.



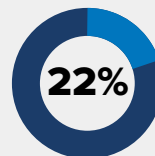
Globally, **over 4 in 5** workers (82%) feel **emotionally safe** at work.



45% of workers globally have thought about **leaving their current organization**.

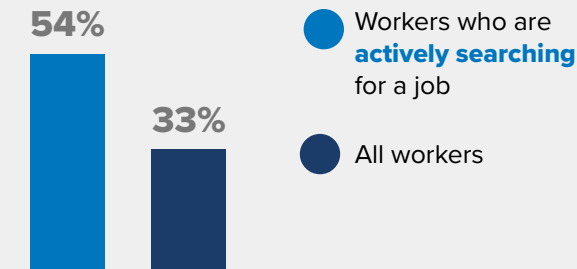


64% of workers who rate their work culture as **poor** have **actively searched for a job** in the past six months.



22% of workers who rate their work culture as **good** have **actively searched for a job** in the past six months.

Workers who say their manager **doesn't know** how to lead a team:



93% of workers globally who work at an organization that **offers empathy training** love their organization's culture.

56% of workers globally who work at an organization that **does not offer empathy training** love their organization's culture.

95% of employees who rate their workplace culture as **good** say they have a **meaningful career** working for their organization.

32% of employees who rate their workplace culture as **poor** say they have a **meaningful career** working for their organization.

- Poor workplace culture can be a consequence of poor people management. Globally, **one-third** of workers (33%) say their manager does not know how to lead a team. That number rises to **54%** among workers who are actively looking for a job.
- Organizations that fail to demonstrate empathy leave themselves vulnerable to turnover. Globally, **93%** of workers who work at an organization that offers empathy training said they love working for their organization because of the culture, compared with **56%** of workers who work at an organization that does not offer such training.
- In a post-pandemic world, the divide between organizations that empower workers and those that don't will continue to widen. Employees who rate their workplace culture as good (**95%**) are more likely to say they have a meaningful career working for their organization, as compared with those who rate their culture as poor (**32%**). Workers will take notice of the bad actors and choose to work for the good ones. Globally, one thing is clear: Workplace culture matters everywhere.

Methodology

A sample of **9,464** workers was surveyed using a third-party online panel. For the purpose of this study, we refer to "workers" as those who are working as paid employees. Respondents were from Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, India, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States. The survey was administered in September and October 2021. [Access the full report.](#)