

COUNCIL 216's SURVEY REPORT ON TELEWORK AND MAXIFLEX



Since March 2020, EEOC staff has been on maximum telework, in order to safeguard personnel and the public from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Union conducted a survey in June 2021, which demonstrates that staff is overwhelmingly happy with the work-life balance and job efficiencies of maximum telework. The survey also reveals that concerns about health, office safety, and public transit persist. Survey responses were received from every District and HQ and all major field positions and a variety of HQ positions. This report provides excerpts on telework and maxiflex related questions from the broader Union survey that covered a range of issues.

The future of work at EEOC should take into consideration employee feedback on telework and maxiflex. EEOC's plans should also align with other agencies and OPM/OMB/GSA priorities. If EEOC were to fall out of sync with the goals of the administration and other agencies, then morale, recruitment and retention will suffer.

Per OMB's planning memo for safe re-entry and post re-entry work policies, M-21-25, issued June 10, 2021: "Agency leaders can leverage issues such as telework, remote work, and flexible work schedules as tools in their broader strategies for talent recruitment and retention, and for advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the Federal workforce." On July 23, 2021, OPM issued CPM 2021-17, "Additional Guidance on Post-Reentry Personnel Policies and Work Environment," which in describing how to make telework eligibility determinations fairly, states to "treat employees performing similar functions similarly."

Additionally, *GSA Future of Work, Workplace 2030* focuses on efficiencies, technology, and real estate savings. OPM's September 2021 *Climate Action Plan* leans heavily on telework to implement Executive Order (EO) 14008, "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad."

EEOC risks falling behind other agencies, if it fails to progress from its pre-pandemic options. EEOC's pre-pandemic telework program, dating back to 2013, generally caps telework at 5 days per period. Many agencies are taking note in consideration of telework expansions and hybrid workplaces in their plans for reentry, for example: EPA, DOD, NSF, GSA, NASA, and DOL. Some agencies have already formalized their expansions: Dept. of Ed. (Up to 8 days a pay period and fully remote); GPO (Options to Telework full time, part time, or return to the office); USCIS (Developing a path to fully remote); and USDA (Up to 8 days a pay period).

The good news is that EEOC is also well positioned to expand its regular telework program options, given the 20-month experience of maximum telework, agency-wide laptops, digital platforms, including the upcoming ARC system, and the implementation of TEAMS for virtual collaboration. Embracing these innovations and serving the public complement each other. Employees can work efficiently on assignments that can be accomplished from any location and come into the office for public facing duties that need to be performed onsite.

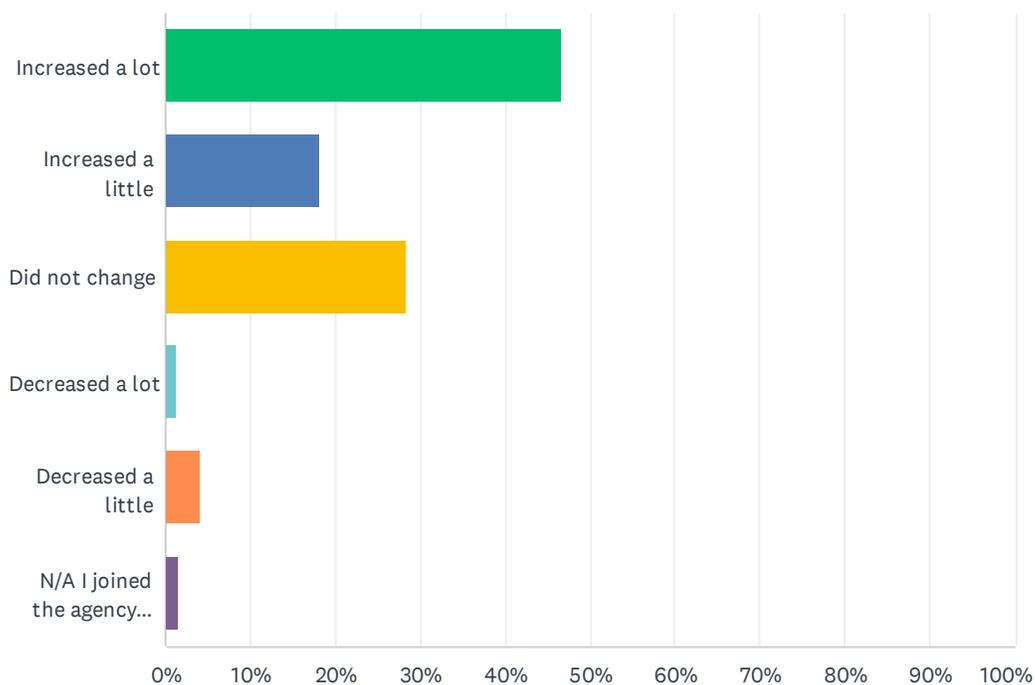
Likewise, the public benefits from EEOC deploying services that can be accessed virtually or onsite. For instance, due to the success of virtual mediations and Federal sector hearings, even when they can safely resume in-person, both formats should be available. Similarly, telephone charge intake has always and will continue to be an option. Supplementing live outreach with virtual opportunities expands access to EEOC.

As EEOC plans reentry, utilizing expanded telework is the key for a safe increased return of employees to the physical workplace. Expanded telework assists with occupancy rates, while cohort scheduling assists with contact tracing. Using a cohort-based reentry schedule, employees can come to the office once a week for in-person interaction and any office-based work (e.g., legal one day, mediation and hearings one day, enforcement spread typically by units over three days). When the public can safely return, employees may need to come to the office additional days for essential activities that cannot be accomplished remotely, such as in-person intake.

The Union looks forward to working with management to ensure a safe reentry and a successful post-reentry.

Q7 While teleworking during the pandemic, my productivity has?

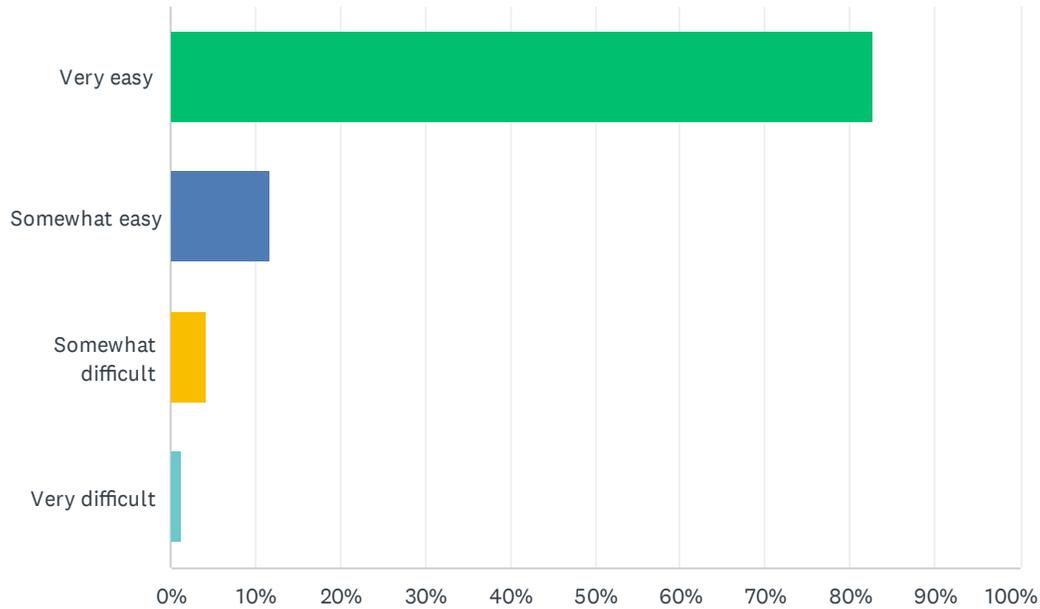
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increased a lot	46.60%	151
Increased a little	18.21%	59
Did not change	28.40%	92
Decreased a lot	1.23%	4
Decreased a little	4.01%	13
N/A I joined the agency since March 2020	1.54%	5
TOTAL		324

Q8 While teleworking during the pandemic, describe your ability to communicate with your supervisor and/or manager regarding your work?

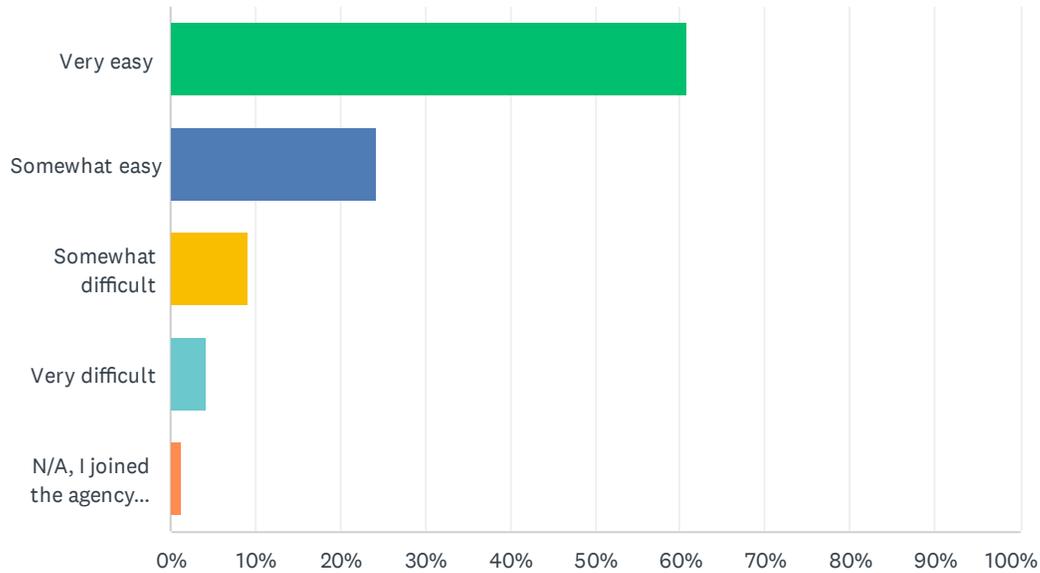
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very easy	82.72%	268
Somewhat easy	11.73%	38
Somewhat difficult	4.32%	14
Very difficult	1.23%	4
TOTAL		324

Q9 Prior to pandemic, describe your ability to communicate with your supervisor and/or manager regarding your work?

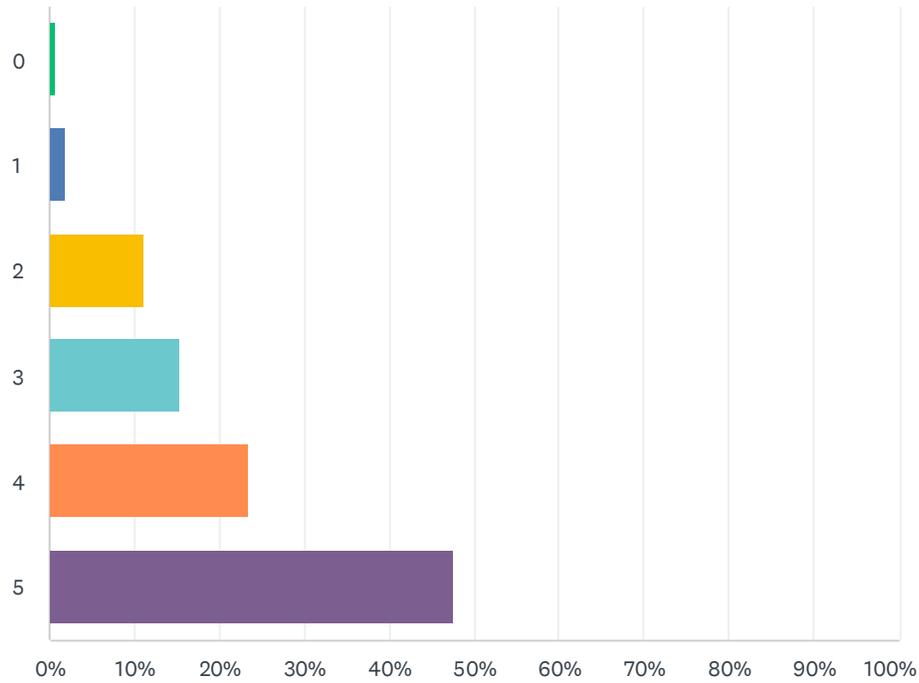
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very easy	60.80%	197
Somewhat easy	24.38%	79
Somewhat difficult	9.26%	30
Very difficult	4.32%	14
N/A, I joined the agency since March 2020	1.23%	4
TOTAL		324

Q10 Going forward, given the option, I would like to have a regular telework schedule for this many days per week:

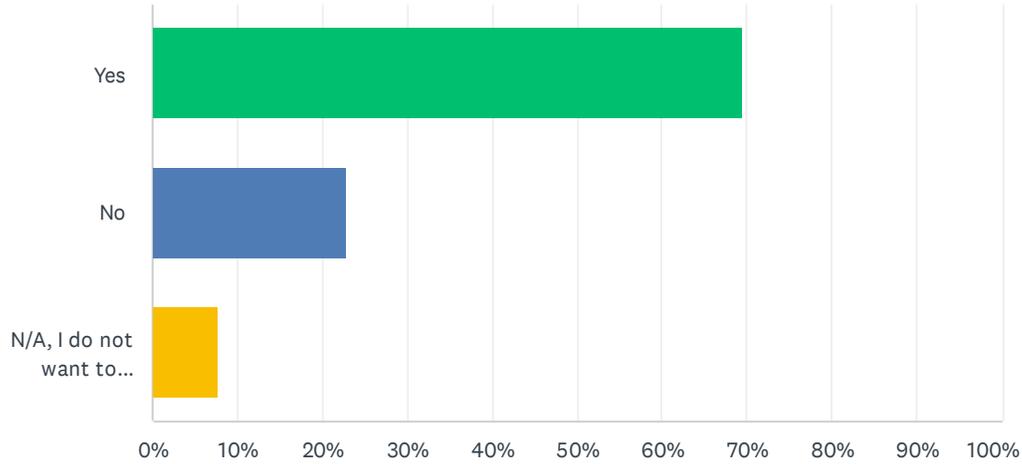
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	0.62%	2
1	1.85%	6
2	11.11%	36
3	15.43%	50
4	23.46%	76
5	47.53%	154
TOTAL		324

Q11 Going forward, given the option to telework 3 or more days a week, would you be willing to give up your dedicated work space?

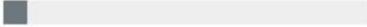
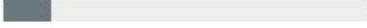
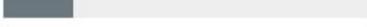
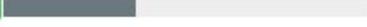
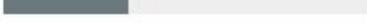
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	69.44%	225
No	22.84%	74
N/A, I do not want to telework 3 or more days a week	7.72%	25
TOTAL		324

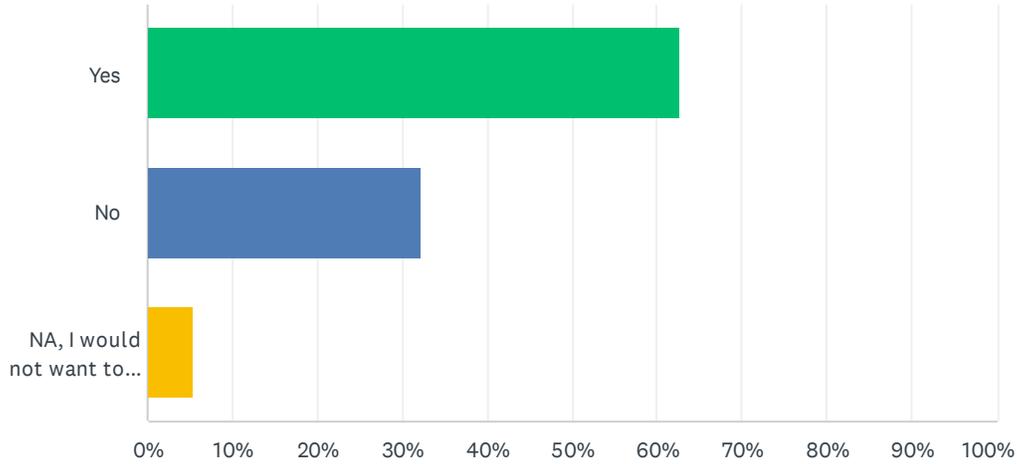
Representative Comments:

Q.11 Going forward, given the option to telework 3 or more days a week, would you be willing to give up your dedicated work space?

if pvt/storage		4.26%	2	View all	Edit	Delete
N/A or not sure		6.38%	3	View all	Edit	Delete
Saves agency \$		12.77%	6	View all	Edit	Delete
Want office		19.15%	9	View all	Edit	Delete
Want to keep teleworking		36.17%	17	View all	Edit	Delete
Would: give up/share		34.04%	16	View all	Edit	Delete
Untagged		6.38%	3	View all		

Q12 Going forward, given the option to telework 3 or more days a week, would you be willing to share an office?

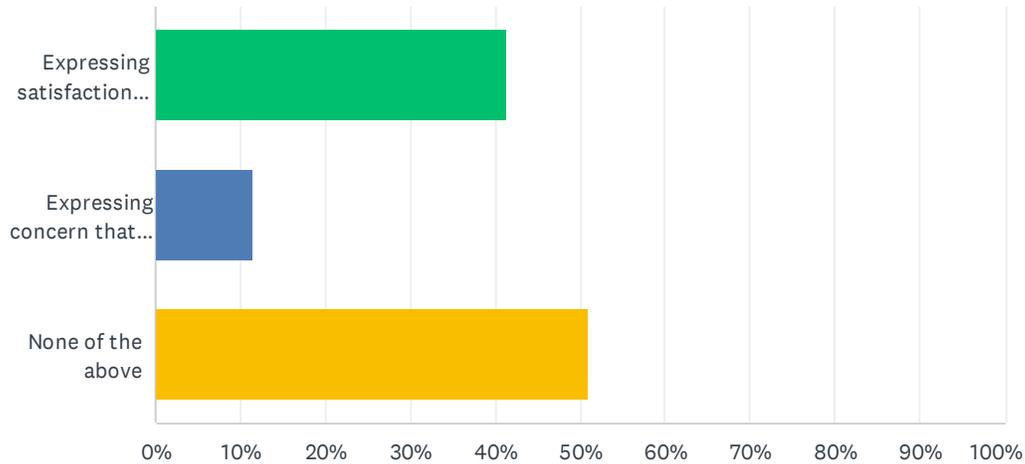
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	62.65%	203
No	32.10%	104
NA, I would not want to telework 3 or more days a week	5.25%	17
TOTAL		324

Q13 During the pandemic, did members of the public make any of the below comments to you? (select all that apply)

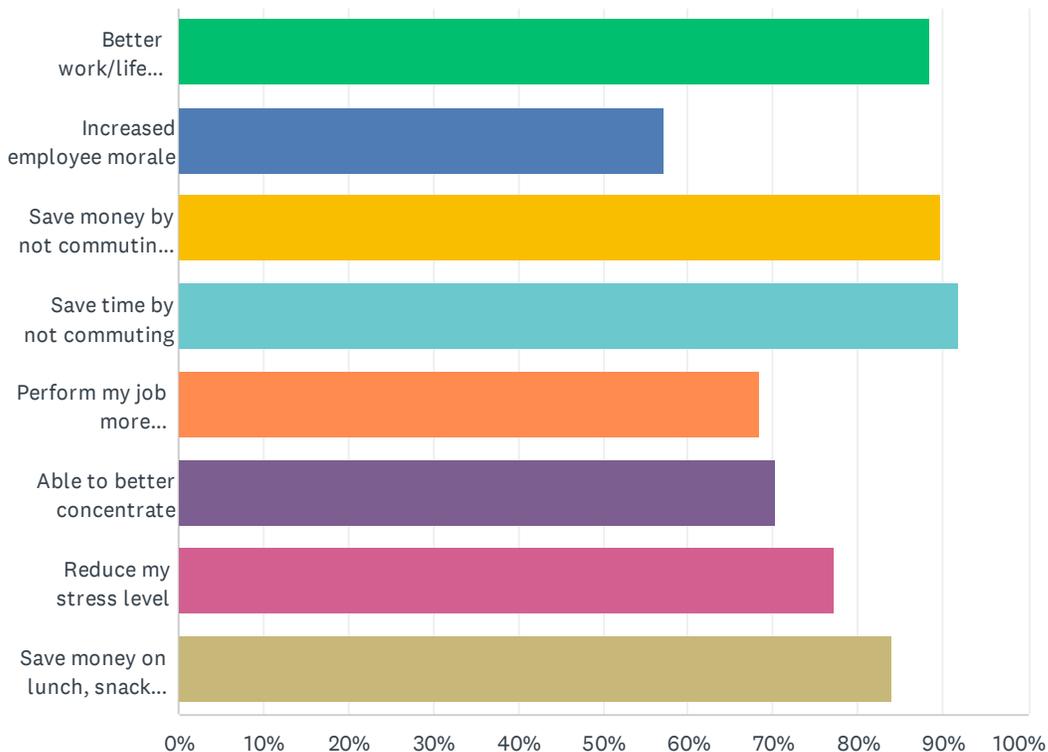
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Expressing satisfaction that they did not have to come into the office in person to have their case processed	41.30%	133
Expressing concern that they were not able to come into the office in person to have their case processed	11.49%	37
None of the above	50.93%	164
Total Respondents: 322		

Q14 What are the main benefits for you of teleworking? (Choose as many as applicable to you).

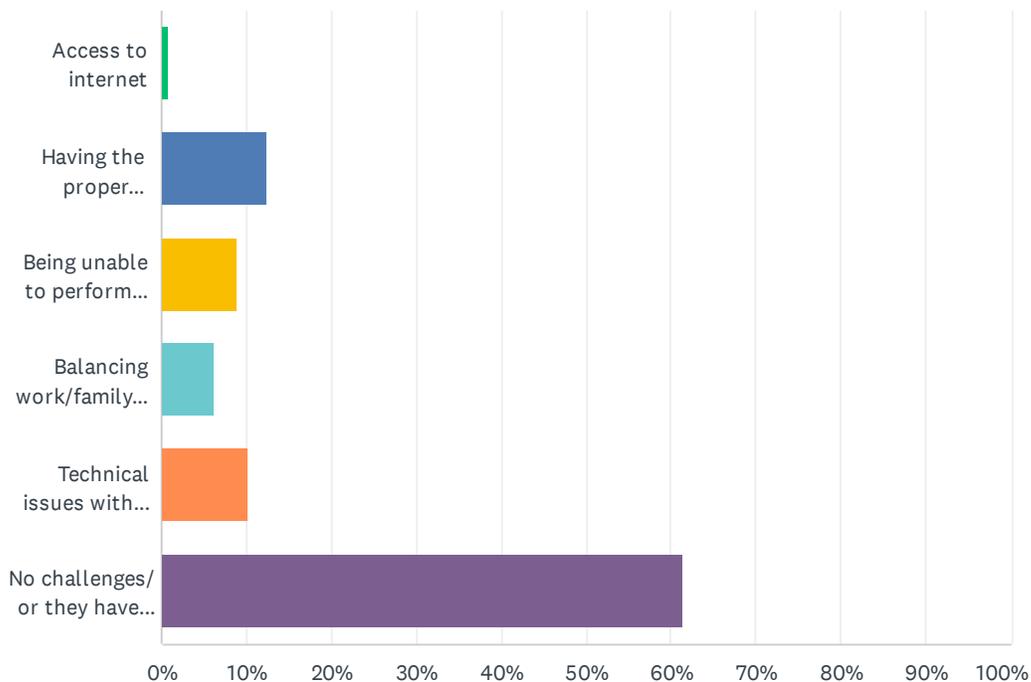
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Better work/life balance	88.58%	287
Increased employee morale	57.10%	185
Save money by not commuting (gas, tolls, parking, public transit fare)	89.81%	291
Save time by not commuting	91.98%	298
Perform my job more effectively	68.52%	222
Able to better concentrate	70.37%	228
Reduce my stress level	77.16%	250
Save money on lunch, snacks, or dry-cleaning	83.95%	272
Total Respondents: 324		

Q15 What has been the biggest challenge teleworking at home during the pandemic that was NOT able to be resolved?

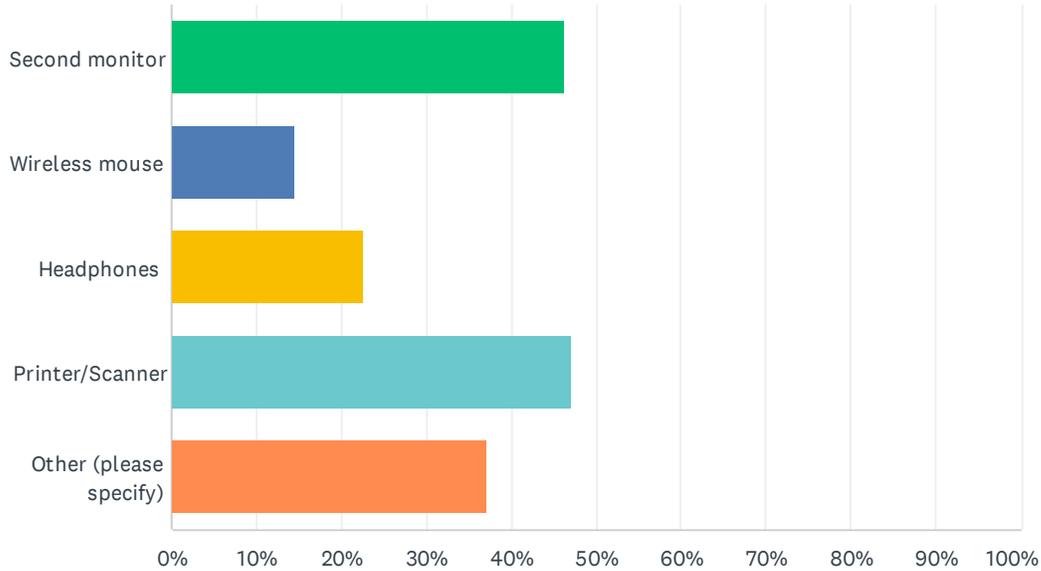
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Access to internet	0.93%	3
Having the proper equipment to do my job	12.35%	40
Being unable to perform certain tasks at home	8.95%	29
Balancing work/family obligations	6.17%	20
Technical issues with TEAMS, IMS, PIV cards, or Zoom	10.19%	33
No challenges/ or they have been resolved	61.42%	199
TOTAL		324

Q16 What equipment would allow you to work more effectively at home? (select all that apply)

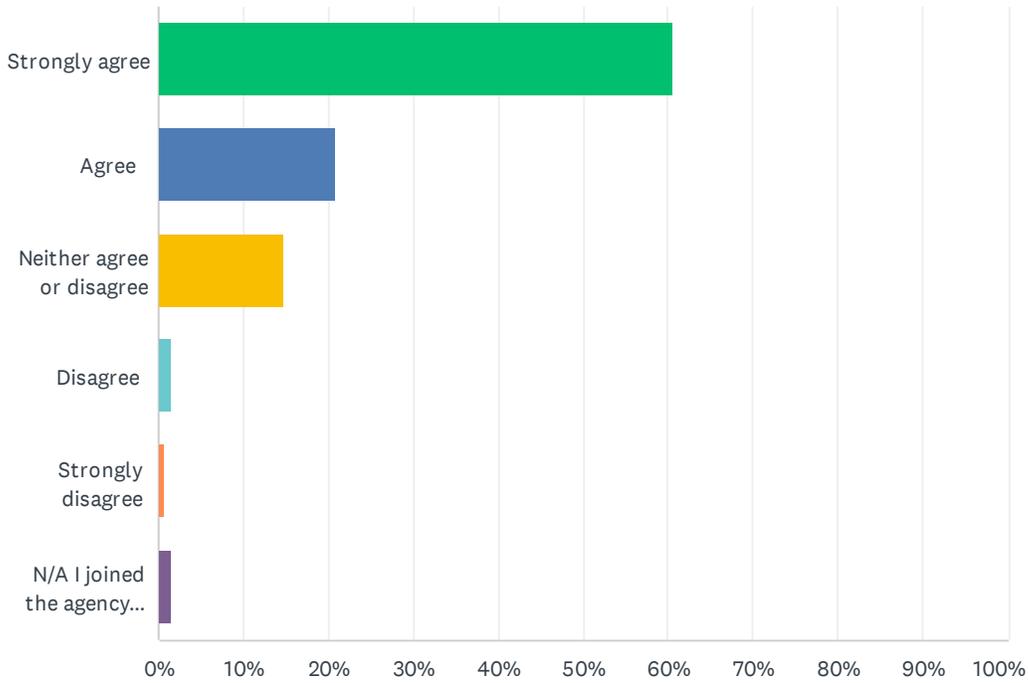
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Second monitor	46.30% 150
Wireless mouse	14.51% 47
Headphones	22.53% 73
Printer/Scanner	47.22% 153
Other (please specify)	37.04% 120
Total Respondents: 324	

Q17 Increased telework since March 2020 has increased my job satisfaction:

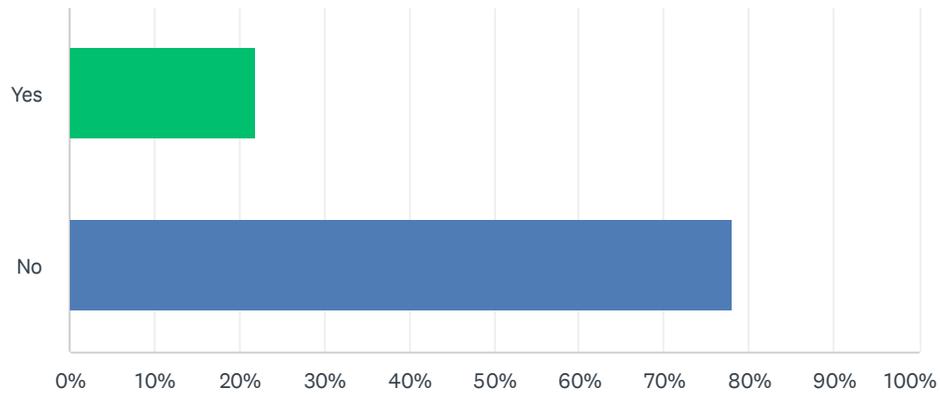
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	60.49%	196
Agree	20.99%	68
Neither agree or disagree	14.81%	48
Disagree	1.54%	5
Strongly disagree	0.62%	2
N/A I joined the agency since March 2020	1.54%	5
TOTAL		324

Q18 Given the option, would you return to the office now?

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	21.91%	71
No	78.09%	253
TOTAL		324

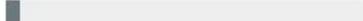
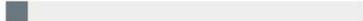
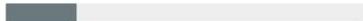
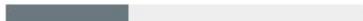
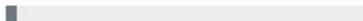
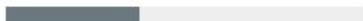
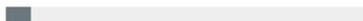
Representative Comments:
Q.18 Given the option, would you return to the office now?

RESPONSES (96) WORD CLOUD TAGS (7)

+ New Tag

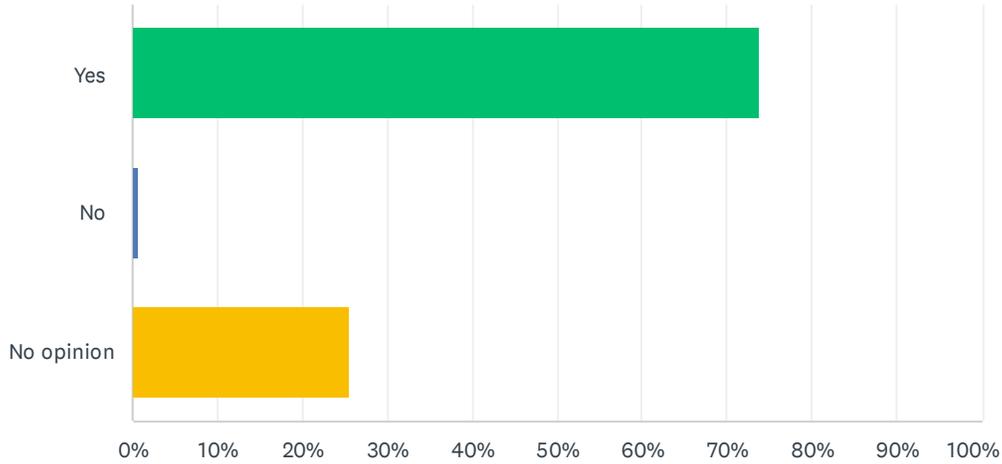
Search responses  

You've added 7 tags

childcare/eldercare		4.17%	4	View all	Edit	Delete
Coworkers		6.25%	6	View all	Edit	Delete
Don't miss commute		15.63%	15	View all	Edit	Delete
Prefer hybrid schedule		19.79%	19	View all	Edit	Delete
Prefer max telework		34.38%	33	View all	Edit	Delete
Prefer office		3.13%	3	View all	Edit	Delete
Safety		37.50%	36	View all	Edit	Delete
Untagged		7.29%	7	View all		

Q21 Would you like to see the emergency Maxiflex program offered during the pandemic become a permanent option?

Answered: 324 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.77%	239
No	0.62%	2
No opinion	25.62%	83
TOTAL		324