

Better Together™

Employee Experience in Uncertain Times



Great
Place
To
Work®

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

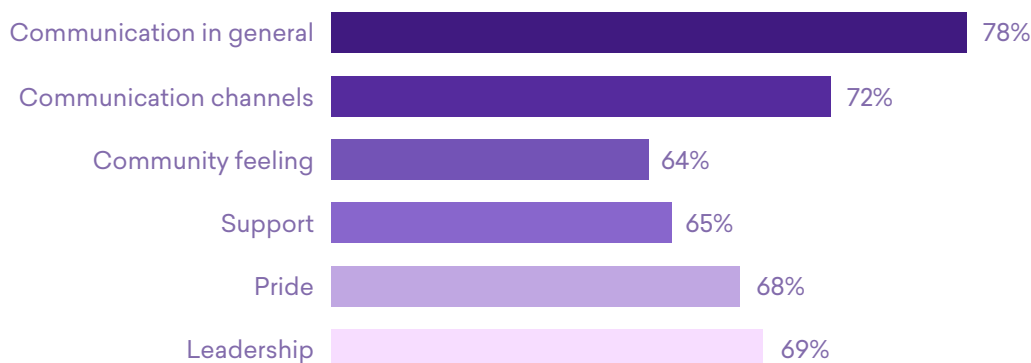
The current COVID-19 pandemic challenges organisations in countless ways. With so many rapid changes, one could argue if this is the best time to survey your employees? Of course, it is! In fact, listening to your employees during this turbulent situation not only shows that you are committed to their well-being, it also provides you with useful insights in how to navigate the recession with success. As the Great Place to Work® Institute we gave organizations the opportunity to send out a **Covid-19 pulse survey** to get a deeper understanding of how well they have managed this crisis according to their employees.



What Matters?

Literature research points out the importance of transparency, decisive leadership, effective communication and solidarity when it comes to crisis management. After an additional field research, we therefore conducted six closed questions referring to **communication, community feeling, support, pride and leadership**. We also asked employees **open feedback** about the positive and negative experiences they are facing related to their work environment. Curious about the results? This brief report will discuss the main findings of this research, consisting data of approximately 4000 employees across multiple companies within Belgium.

Statistics



Across all organisations, employees reported that **communication** was handled well. Organisations have made great efforts to communicate clearly and effectively through communication channels that allow feedback. Less positive are the results concerning **community feeling and support**. Employees express their struggle to stay connected with the organisation. According to them, the necessary support from their organisation is lacking and little attention is given to everyone's personal situation. In addition, **pride and leadership** show the strongest relationship. How well management deals with the crisis according to an employee will therefore be strongly related to the feeling of pride the employee experiences towards his employer and vice versa.

■ Open feedback

What's on the mind of employees when talking about work-related positive and stressful experiences, caused by COVID-19?



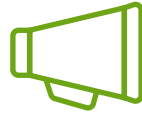
Deployment of remote work

More productive home office working days without the stress of commuting and loosing time.



Flexibility and Autonomy

Increasing employee autonomy as employees get more control over their work place and time.



Structured information flows

Well-considered communication channels to spread information across the organisation.



Digital transformation

Investment in technological innovation to organise work in an efficient way.



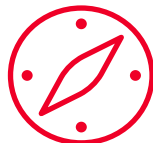
Solidarity

Vulnerable situations increase the level of empathy and solidarity across colleagues.



Facility Management

The need for a safe working environment with available equipment to work in a productive way.



Uncertainty

As the anxiety of job insecurity increases, the need for authentic, open and honest communication arises.



Connection

Employees feel more distant towards the organisation and risk alienation.



Feeling of Work Pressure

Boundaries between work and private life are becoming more and more fluent.



Meeting Madness

Lack of physical contact points cause an increase in meeting requests.

■ FOR ALL

The importance of **inclusion** becomes even more visible nowadays, as differences in personal situations cause variations in experience of crisis management. Taking into account diverse demographic backgrounds when analysing the data, some inconsistencies in experience emerge.

- Both **women and part-time employees** score the Covid-19 approach of their organisations significantly less positive as opposed to respectively men and full-time employees.
- On the contrary, **employees who recently joined a new employer** (tenure < 2 years) rated their organisation significantly more positive than all other groups.





■ Focus Areas

Invest time in team bonding. Digital coffee breaks, happy hours, team building games over Zoom,... Such initiatives will encourage people to catch up in an informal setting. These practices also help relieve stress and motivate employees to perform well in their jobs.

Provide technical support for effective remote work. In order to maintain the productivity of employees, it is important to invest in equipment that makes working remotely efficient. Consider financing equipment like headsets, second monitors, comfortable office chairs, ...

Designate time to individualized support. Employees have varying family situations, housing conditions and diverse degrees of experience with remote work technologies. It is therefore important to check-in with individual team members on a regular basis. When doing so, empathize on a personal level first, and then concentrate on work.

Limit the number of meetings. To counteract Zoom fatigue, video meetings can be alternated with one-on-one phone calls when people already know each other. Companies can also implement a “meeting free zone” from 12 AM to 2 PM in which employees can take a break from mandatory appointments and have the time to perform their daily tasks.

Address concerns about job security. As the pandemic has far-reaching economic consequences, employees are often worried about losing their jobs. Management should ensure employees that their employment is guaranteed when this is indeed the case. When it is not, employees appreciate transparent and honest communication so they can plan accordingly .

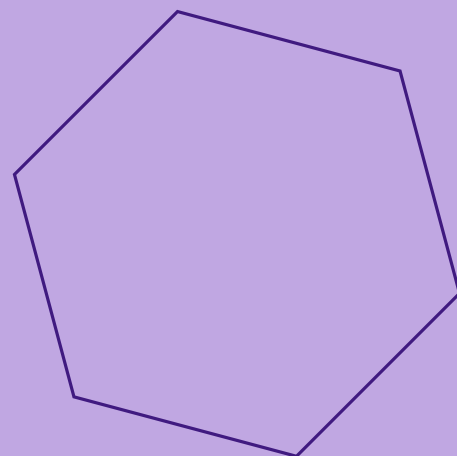
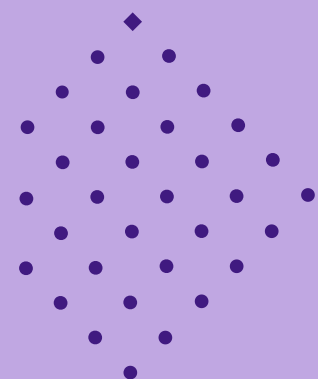
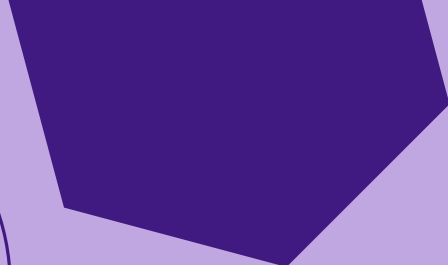
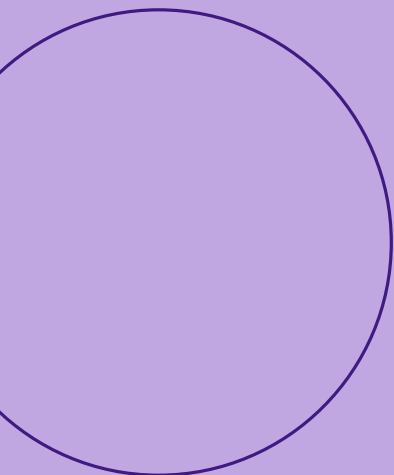
Maintain an inclusive focus. Since the way of working has changed drastically, companies will need to more actively monitor how the pandemic impacts various minority groups. In addition, they need to ensure that traditional diversity practices are reinvented and can persist in the digital workplace .

■ Eager for more inspiration?

It is our mission to build a better world by helping organisations become Great Places to Work® For All. Especially in times like these, we are dedicated to support you in any kind of way. Stay tuned by subscribing for our quarterly [newsletter](#) or by checking our [blog](#)!

References

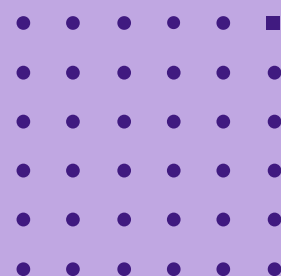
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