



# Generational Perspectives on Hybrid Work

Heather Tinsley-Fix, Senior Advisor, AARP

# Let's Start with the Basics: Hybrid Landscape

Gartner: Redesigning Work for the Hybrid World, April 2021



Source: Gartner

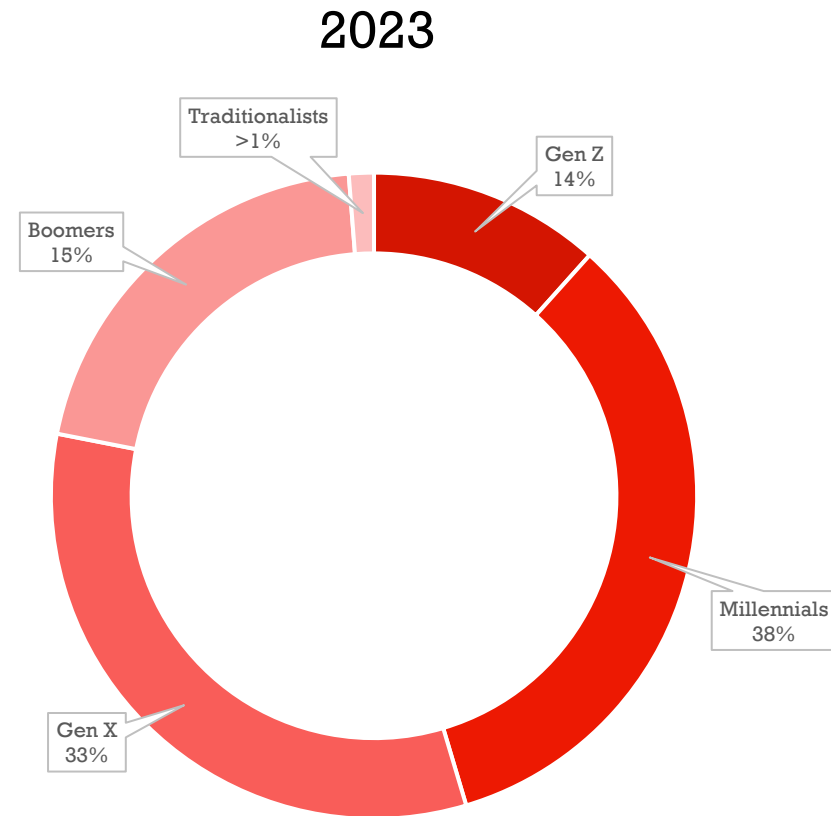
RESTRICTED DISTRIBUTION

© 2019 Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved.

Gartner

# Let's Start with the Basics: Which Generations?

- 52% of the workforce is 40+
- By 2026, workers 50+ will make up 35% of the labor force.
- By 2044 whites will no longer be the majority population

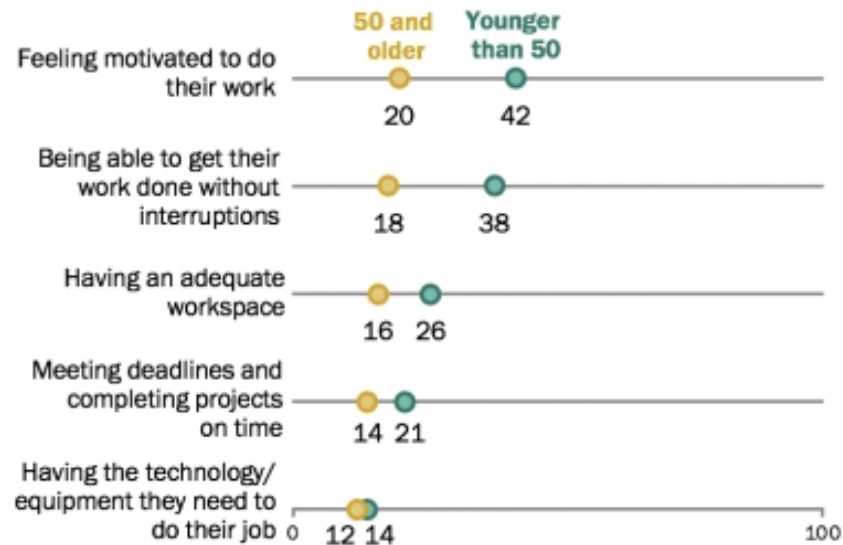


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

# Effect of Pandemic on Different Generations

## Among those working from home, younger workers more likely to say they face barriers to productivity

Among employed adults currently working from home all or most of the time, % saying, since the beginning of the coronavirus outbreak, each has been *very or somewhat difficult* for them



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 13-19, 2020.

\*How the Coronavirus Outbreak Has – and Hasn't – Changed the Way Americans Work\*

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

“

Most adults who are teleworking all or most of the time say it has been at least somewhat easy for them to feel motivated to do their work... **But there's a distinct age gap**: 42% of workers ages 18 to 49 say this has been difficult for them compared with only 20% of workers 50 and older.

Pew Research Center

The New York Times

## Why Older People Managed to Stay Happier Through the Pandemic

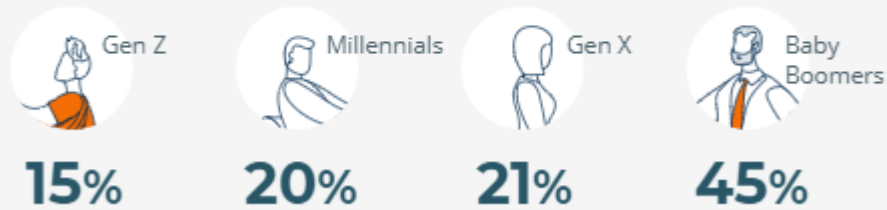
New surveys over the last year show that the ability to cope improves with age.

Published March 12, 2021

# Effect of Pandemic on Different Generations

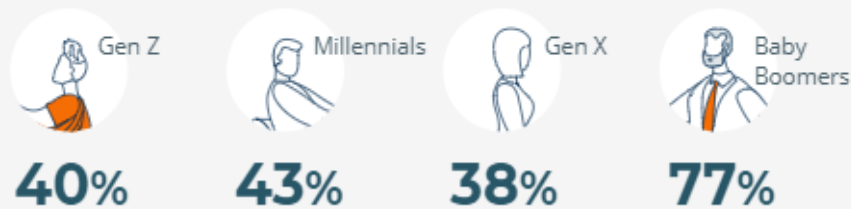
Nintex: Workplace 2021 Study

RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED "NO CHANGE" TO THEIR PERSONAL WELLNESS WORKING REMOTELY DURING THE PANDEMIC



“ The experience of working remotely is closely correlated with job level. The more senior you are **the more likely you are to adapt** to remote work and report higher productivity.

RESPONDENTS WHO SAID NON-WORK RELATED POLITICAL, PUBLIC HEALTH AND/OR GLOBAL EVENTS HAVE NOT IMPACTED THEIR PRODUCTIVITY



“ While Baby Boomers feel more apathetic toward internal and external factors during the pandemic, **younger generations may need more emotional support** in the workplace.



# Different Generations' Attitudes to Remote Work

The Conference Board: Return to Work Survey, June 2021

## Percent of respondents who do not see the need to return to the office

- Individual contributors: 56%
- CEOs: 18%
  
- Women: 50%
- Men: 33%
  
- Millennials: 55%
- Gen X: 45%
- Baby Boomers: 36%

Generation Gap

## Percent of respondents who are comfortable returning to the office

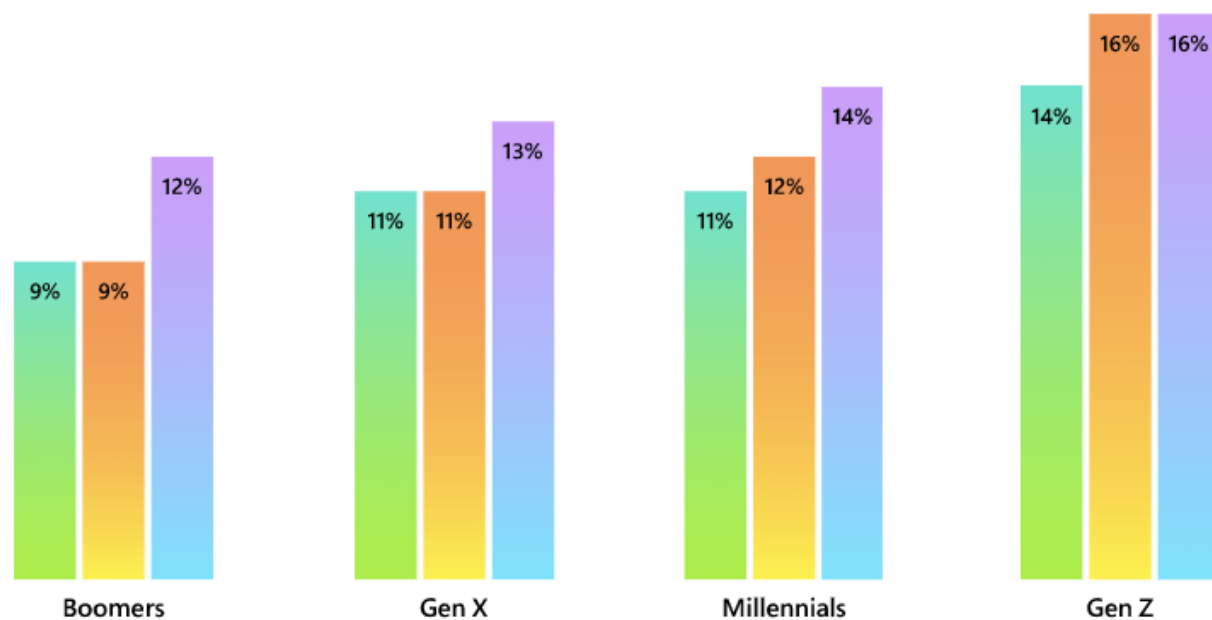
- Individual contributors: 23%
- CEOs: 66%
  
- Women: 31%
- Men: 49%
  
- Millennials: 24%
- Gen X: 38%
- Baby Boomers: 43%

# Different Generations' Remote Work Experience

Microsoft: Work Trend Index, March 2021

## Gen Z is struggling more than other generations

The last year has been more challenging for Gen Z in many ways — from bringing new ideas to the table, to simply feeling engaged or excited about work.



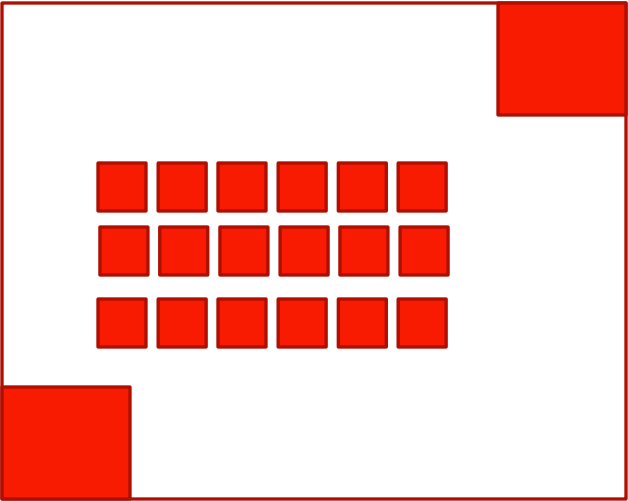
The Work Trend Index survey was conducted by an independent research firm, Edelman Data x Intelligence, among 31,092 full-time employed or self-employed workers across 31 markets between January 12, 2021 to January 25, 2021.

## Gen Z is More Likely to Say They're Struggling than Older Generations on These Aspects at Work

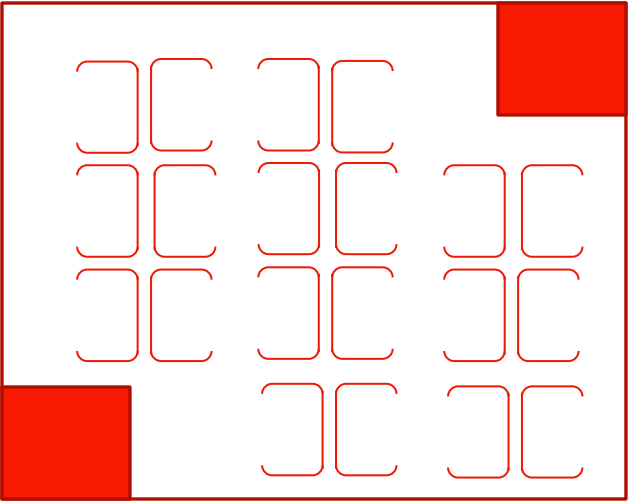
- Being able to bring new ideas to the table
- Getting a word in during conference calls / meetings
- Feeling engaged or excited about work

# Detour: Office Environments Through History

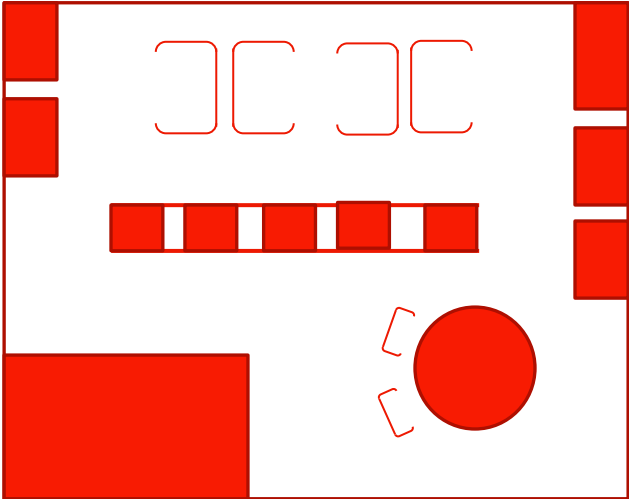
1950s



1970s



2000s →



Structure  
Control  
Conformity  
Visibility



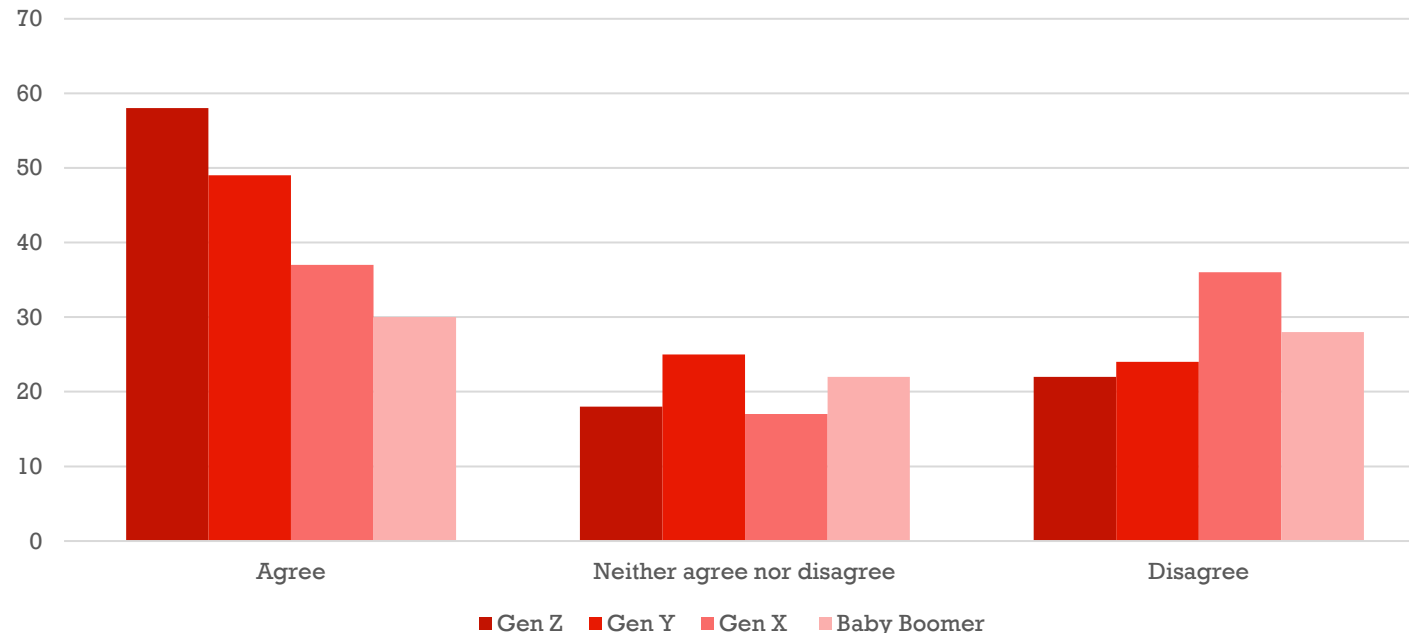
Flexibility  
Trust  
Diversity  
Invisibility



# Impact of In-Person on: Career Development

Nationwide and Ipsos Poll, March 2021

During 2020, many people have spent more time working at home. With this in mind, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: - I need to spend time with my colleagues face to face in order to carry out my work effectively



“ One of the most important developmental milestones for young adults is establishing a professional identity and as such, work opportunities and professional relationships play a huge role in this. COVID has taken away the opportunity to have that **crucial in-person and ad-hoc contact** that helps build a professional identity.

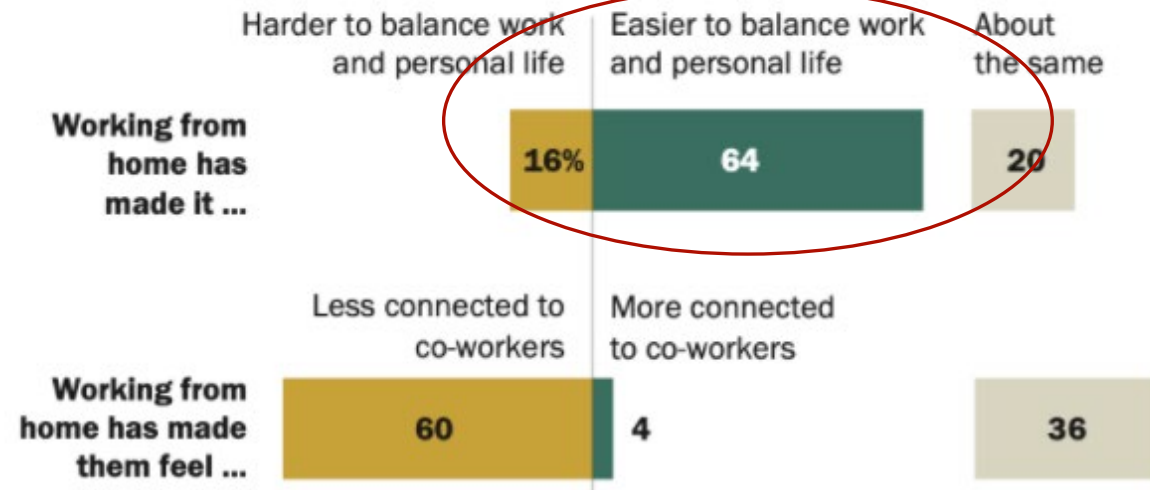
Dr Linda Papadopoulos  
*Unfollow: Living Your Life on Your Own Terms*

# Impact of Remote Work on: Work Life Balance

Pew Social Trends Survey,  
February 2022

## For workers who've made the switch to teleworking, most have found more balance but less connection with co-workers

Among employed adults who rarely or never worked from home before COVID-19 and are working from home at least some of the time now, % saying ...



Note: Based on those who say, for the most part, the responsibilities of their job can be done from home. Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 24-30, 2022.

"COVID-19 Pandemic Continues To Reshape Work in America"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



# Impact of Remote Work on: Productivity

---

Work From Home Research, May 2020 - March 2021

- Nearly **six out of 10** workers reported being more productive working from home than they expected to be, compared with 14 percent who said they got less done.
- On average, respondents' productivity at home was **7 percent higher** than they expected.
- **Forty percent of workers** reported they were more productive at home during the pandemic than they had been when in the office, and only 15 percent said the opposite was true.

Authors:

Jose Maria Barrero, Mexico  
Autonomous Institute of  
Technology

Nicholas Bloom, Stanford  
University

Steven J. Davis, University of  
Chicago Booth School of  
Business



# Impact of Remote Work on: **Burnout**

---

The Conference Board: Return to Work Survey, June 2021

## Percent of respondents who are concerned about mental health & burnout

- Individual contributors: 61%
- CEOs: 30%
  
- Women: 62%
- Men: 43%
  
- Millennials: **70%**
- Gen X: **59%**
- Baby Boomers: **42%**

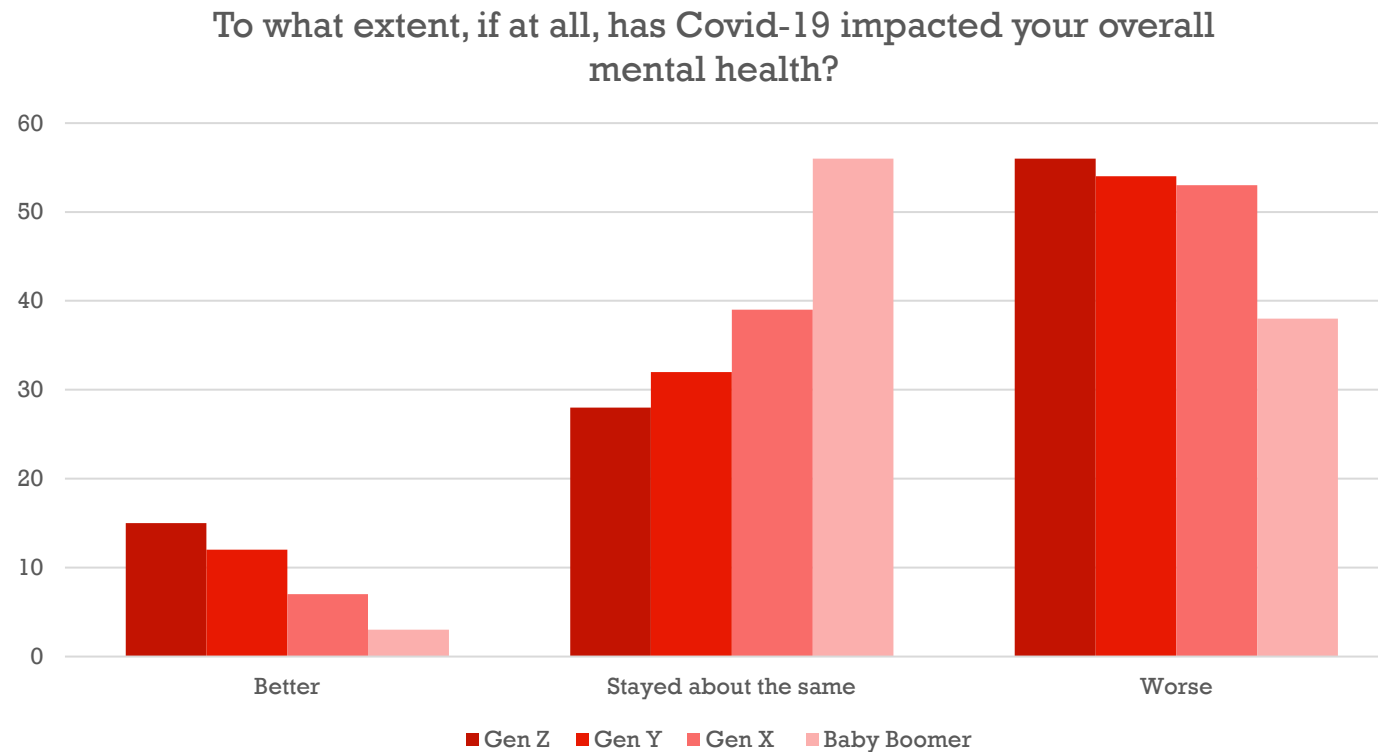
“What’s striking is that **the same workers** who question returning to the workplace given high productivity while working remotely have also expressed greater concerns about mental health, stress, and burnout.

Rebecca Ray  
EVP Human Capital, The Conference Board



# Impact of Remote Work on: Mental Health

Nationwide and Ipsos Poll, March 2021

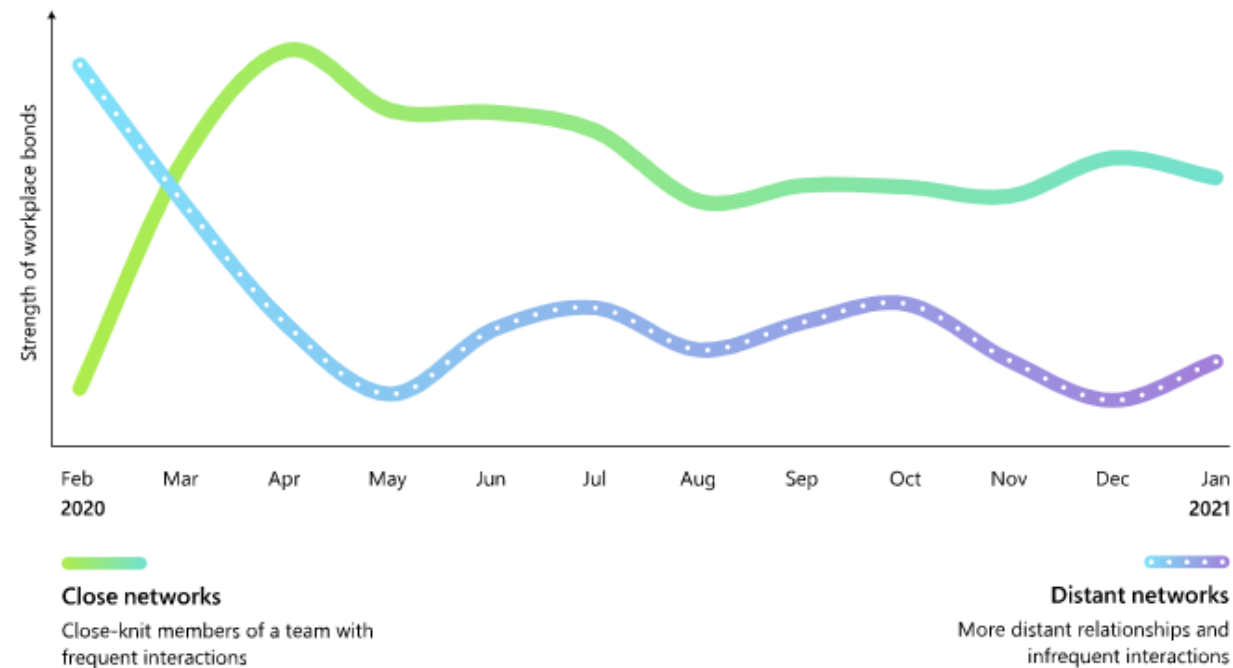


# Impact of Remote Work on: Connections

Microsoft: Work Trend Index, March 2021

## Teams are more siloed in a digital work world

Collaboration trends in Microsoft Teams and Outlook show that interactions with our immediate team, or close network, strengthened with the move to remote work. However, our interactions outside of that team, or distant networks, have diminished.



“ When you **lose connections**, you **stop innovating**. It's harder for new ideas to get in and groupthink becomes a serious possibility

Dr. Nancy Baym  
Senior Principal Researcher, Microsoft

Analysis of an aggregated 122 billion email interactions and 2.3 billion meeting interactions in Microsoft Teams and Outlook across industries and countries around the world. This visualization is based on aggregated data, without personal or organization-identifying information.

# Designing Hybrid Work to Promote Equity

---

- Ask employees what they want – look for patterns and design strategies to support emerging “clusters of need”
- Be consistent – this does not mean one-size fits all, but a consistent process or rationale for decision-making
- Be clear – employees both want and expect you to communicate clearly and often, even more so in times of change
- Equip managers – clarity and consistency from the top only go so far; ensure managers have the tools they need for this shift

# Designing Hybrid Work to Promote Equity

---

- Be fair – whether that's salary design or access to working remotely
- Be deliberate – design meetings to fit core hours, actively include remote workers in meetings and projects, continue tinkering
- Invest in togetherness – some degree of in-person gatherings will help preserve cohesion
- Keep track – monitor who is getting access to opportunity in order to maintain DEI momentum





Listen to Each Other



**Thank You**



[htinsley-fix@aarp.org](mailto:htinsley-fix@aarp.org)



[@htinsleyfix](https://twitter.com/htinsleyfix)



[www.linkedin.com/in/htinsleyfix/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/htinsleyfix/)