

CYNOPSISMEDIA

Community Poll Results – Working From Home

June 2020

Key Insights Summary: 81% of Community Staffers Say They'd Like to Continue to Work from Home Once Restrictions are Lifted – yet, 30% indicate they miss in-person interaction with colleagues.

Cynopsis conducted a poll of the community on working from home. Essentially all staff that responded to the survey are currently working from home. Ten percent of the workforce had been working from home prior to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Two-thirds of the community say they like working from home, 23% are neutral about it, and only 11% indicate they don't like working from home. Digging into a number of comments provided by the survey respondents finds that 30% of the industry say their main challenge is that they miss in-person interaction with colleagues. Eleven percent indicate they are challenged with young children at home or that other family members are also working from home. On the positive side, 14% say they like not having to commute to the office, and 8% mentioned they are more productive working from home.

The survey also asked if the staffers are getting the support they need from their company while working at home. A very large percentage of the industry workforce (96%) say, overall, they're getting the support they need from their employer. Write-in comments were also collected as part of this question, and the key findings from these is that 26% say there have been some resource and equipment access challenges, and another 9% said they have experienced some technical-related issues while working from home.

Lastly, the survey found that eight out of ten of the survey respondents would like to continue to work from home after the pandemic restrictions are lifted. The poll was conducted in May 2020 by Cynopsis and received 650 responses.

The complete findings are below.

Survey Question 1: Are you working from home as a result of the outbreak and gathering restrictions?

Essentially just about all staff that responded to the survey are currently working from home. Ten percent of the workforce had been working from home prior to the outbreak.

- Yes: 90%
- Yes, but I already worked from home prior to the outbreak: 10%
- No: <1%

Survey Question 2: How is working from home?

Two-thirds of the community say they like working from home. Twenty-three percent are neutral, and only 11% indicate they don't like working from home.

- Like it: 66%
- Neutral: 23%
- Don't like it: 11%

Top Five Key Themes in the Write-In Comments	%
Miss interaction with colleagues	30%
Mix of pros and cons	15%
No commute	14%
Challenge with young children or other family WFH	11%
More productive	8%

Comments:

- “5 days a week is too many for me. I like going to an office and seeing people.”
- “Absolutely love it and the productivity and focus it has provided!”
- “As someone in the latter part of my career, it is the best of both worlds. Let me be a room-parent for my kids while still doing meaningful branding communications work.”
- “At first hated it because our company had no WFH structure in place, no one was prepared, etc. Now that connections, communications, and expectations have improved, it's actually enjoyable to no longer have to commute two hours a day and get more zzzz's!”
- “But I do miss my teammates and the office camaraderie.”
- “Challenging when WIFI is slow, limited resources printer, copier.”
- “Communication can be challenging, but I do enjoy the comfort of being at home.”
- “Convenient but hampered by lack of human interaction.”
- “Different pros and cons.”
- “Difficult to do with three kids under age 8 to parent/teach.”

- “Don’t miss the commute but miss office interactions.”
- “Don’t miss the commute.”
- “Don't love it but necessary right now.”
- “Enjoy the flexibility, but miss the interactions with co-workers.”
- “Extremely difficult with spouse also working and a 4 year old not in school.”
- “Feel that I am saving money by working from home but I miss interacting with my colleagues.”
- “Generally like it, but some aspects such as transferring files is more cumbersome. Also miss talking to coworkers!”
- “Good and bad. Great to be around the family. Very hard to fit everything in.”
- “Good days and bad but mostly I like it.”
- “Good days and bad days, monotonous.”
- “Half the week I like it, and then the other half I hate it.”
- “Hated it but am getting used to it.”
- “I actually find that that are less distractions from home, no commute time and am not taking long lunch breaks. I'm actually more productive from home.”
- “I did this very occasionally before the pandemic. But it is very isolating. I enjoy the people interaction of the office.”
- “I don't miss the commute but I do miss working with my colleagues in person.”
- “I find I am pulled away for family needs, but I don't lose 3 hours a day to my commute.
- “I hope my company follows in Twitter’s footsteps!”
- “I like it and don't like it. I'm having a hard time convincing myself to take a break vs. being working all the time. No need for a commute has definitely made folks work longer days on my team.”
- “I like it but miss my co-workers/work space.”
- “I like it but would be better if I could go out of the house too.”
- “I like it in the sense of doing my job on the convenience of my home, but this is also wfh during a crisis which is stressful and lonely.”
- “I like it normally but not with my kids home!”
- “I like it, but balancing being a full time working parent and a stay at home parent simultaneously is difficult. I’d love to WFH permanently if there was childcare/school.”
- “I like it, but I did go into the office before 2-days a/wk and miss that.”
- “I like it, but I miss social interaction with my coworkers outside of Zoom.”
- “I like it, but miss the social interaction at work.”
- “I like it. I think especially with everyone working at home, the conversations are more genuine. We're all dealing with this together and in similar situations. Dogs are barking, kids are yelling, spouses walking into Zoom calls...we get to see another side of each other and it's refreshing. While we've had video capability via our phone system for years, never once did I, or anyone use it. Now it's the norm. Some elements of tech got fast tracked into use.”
- “I like not commuting, but miss seeing team.”
- “I like that it took out my commute, but finding space in a 1 bedroom apartment with 2 people has been challenging.”
- “I like the freedom of schedule, but missing the in-person relationships with co-workers.
- “I like the productivity of my time, but I do miss an element of camaraderie. We still communicate effectively about work, but off-the-cuff sharing of thought is lacking.”
- “I like working from home, but I would also like the option to go into the office if I wanted to.”

- "I live solo so that's a bit boring and my furniture has become uncomfortable."
- "I love working from home because I get to spend more time with my children. The downside is I spend more time with my children, which means more distractions, home schooling, cooking three meals a day, etc - I have no break!"
- "I miss my office and the people!"
- "I miss person to person contact."
- "I miss the direct human interaction. I think decisions can be made faster and are more concrete when you are with a decision maker face to face."
- "I miss the human interaction."
- "I miss the office interaction."
- "I miss the sense of teamwork."
- "I save three hours per day in travel time."
- "I seem to put in more hours than I would if I was going to the office. But I miss interactions with others."
- "I was working from home before the pandemic, but my company got acquired and moved into an office in January. I love working from home and have become skilled at time management, self-discipline and setting my own routine. That said, I also really enjoyed having an office space to go to when the scenery and distractions of a home office became too much. There is also such great value in face to face interactions - it's a lot easier to get quick answers or ask for a favor internally if you've recently shared a friendly conversation over morning coffee or strolled together to grab lunch. After all of this is over, the key, I think, will be to find that balance between WFH and going into an office. I think the flexibility and option for workers to do both could actually increase productivity."
- "I would like to do it one day a week."
- "I would like working from home, however, I have two school age children that are also home and that makes it difficult."
- "I would love it if my kids were in school. Teaching and working in the home is a difficult balance."
- "I'm glad I can, but I much prefer working alongside others."
- "I'd like it for maybe one-two days a week but not all 5."
- "I'd prefer to work with people in person, I feel much more productive that way."
- "I'd rather be in the office or in the field, but I'm making the best of it. It's not the worst now that I've gotten used to it, but I miss the office atmosphere."
- "I'm not a fan in this current quarantine world. I thrive off of other's energy and really miss being able to spitball ideas with coworkers without having to schedule a dang call."
- "In theory I like it, but I have to also parent/do distance learning full time as well as WFH"
- "It can liberating and one can feel like they can take on the world one day, and feel the loneliest they could ever feel the next."
- "It has good and bad points that mostly even out."
- "It has its' pluses and minuses and eventually would like to WFH 2 days a week max."
- "It was a challenge long term, that became more positive as I got better at managing my time and absolving myself from guilt at not being an expert at it!"
- "It was wonderful when I was on my own, but challenging now that I have family office mates."
- "It's convenient but has been complicated by simultaneously parenting and homeschooling."
- "Its amazing!"

- “It's fine. I feel lucky. But I miss my coworkers and feeling like there's a purpose to my job in the office.”
- “It's great, but really hard with 2 young kids and the wife also working full time.”
- “It's more convenient in terms of managing my personal life but I miss the energy of the office.”
- “It's nice not having a commute, but miss daily interactions with my coworkers.”
- “It's not as efficient or easy without company level printers, ease of connecting with colleagues to discuss issues, etc.”
- “It's OK, but I miss the energy of the office.”
- “It's okay, but my house isn't really set up for this.”
- “I've always liked it. A lot less meetings and interruptions. I find it more productive while at the same time allowing for more family time without a commute.”
- “I've found I can be just as productive with conferencing tools.”
- “I've worked at home for six years. I loved it until now. Working at home was a privilege but was balanced out by socializing outside the working hours. With all of that stolen away, it makes it unbearable.”
- “Just needed to buy a monitor.”
- “Just wish I had a dedicated space since I live in a 1 bedroom apartment with my husband and dog.”
- “Like it, but also a mother of two children under 3, makes it very stressful.”
- “Like it, but difficult with family home too.”
- “Like not dealing with commute and open office distractions, but miss co-workers and normal life.”
- “Like the additional family time, don't like not seeing coworkers.”
- “Love it, get so much done with less distractions. Saves me \$\$ and 3 hours of time commuting.”
- “Love it. Quality of my life has improved 100%.”
- “Love my non-existent commute but miss interaction with my coworkers in the office.”
- “Love no commute, miss the social aspects a lot.”
- “Love the time I get back from the commute.”
- “Love/Hate Relationship - No commute is great! I get so much time back to do other things. However, as an extrovert, the lack of human interaction takes its toll.”
- “Miss interacting with co-workers, colleagues.”
- “Miss the people and the ability to discuss the business and get advice.”
- “Miss the socialization with a team.”
- “More family time, more exercise, more meaningful zoom meetings and long calls, but I miss the office.”
- “More productive to work at home.”
- “My focus is not 100% on clients - too easy to get distracted. And my home set up is not ideal for and 'office' area.”
- “My job is sales - that's hard(er) to do virtually.”
- “Not having to do the 1:40 commute from suburbs into NYC is a huge perk, but doing this long ten without in-person interaction and getting it if the house makes you a little crazy. But I'm fortunate to be able to do my job from home, and Systems like OFFICE 365 and it's TEAMS is a huge part of making it possible. As a working parent, that adds other challenges. All in all though, it's going well.”

- “Overall I don’t prefer it to going into an office but I’ve gotten into a routine and there are some perks.”
- “Overall I prefer it over my 50-mile/day commute, but it has it's stresses.”
- “Pretty great overall! I got a two monitor set up on a make shift desk on my dresser. I had close to four hours commuting 4 days a week and this is a welcome change.”
- “Pros are the short commute and relaxed dress code. Cons are too many unnecessary meetings (never had this many under "normal" circumstances) and lack of personal interaction.”
- “Ready to get back to normal.”
- “Saves me time on my commute and I can manage my own hours.”
- “Simply miss the people.”
- “Some challenges present that are not present in office.”
- “Some days are better than others.”
- “Some days I like it, but it’s tough on a semi-permanent basis.”
- “Some days it’s hard. Like the movie Groundhogs Day.”
- “Some good days some bad. Would be easier if the kids were at school.”
- “Some tasks are location neutral, but the interactive and onsite technology parts of my job have greatly suffered.”
- “There are pluses and minuses. Nice to be home more, but miss popping down the hall for a quick question, and very tired of constant video meetings and calls.”
- “There are pros and cons, but overall I like it.”
- “Trying to adjust - I'm the type of employee who appreciates the office atmosphere and engagement opportunities.”
- “Very mixed feelings - things I like/things I don’t like.”
- “While its working out ok, miss my co-workers!”
- “Working from home every other week. In office when not at home.”
- “You never get to leave the office!”

Survey Question 3: Do you get the support you need from your company while working at home/remotely?

A very large percentage (96%) of the industry workforce say they are getting the support they need from their company while working from home.

- Yes: 96%
- No: 4%

Top Five Key Themes in the Write-In Comments	%
No issues	30%
Challenging to get resources or equipment	26%
Technical challenges	9%
Company is communicating well	6%
Need office equipment	6%
Mixed	6%

Comments:

- “Basically.”
- “But I need to get a real office chair and did need to buy a printer.”
- “Can't get any office supplies cut budget.”
- “Company is completely in shambles since we produce live events.”
- “Eventually. I have to push for everything.”
- “Feel I have to say yes otherwise there will be repercussions, more monitoring due to mistrusting employees when I actually work more hours due to missing resources.”
- “For the most part, yes. There are just things that can't be replaced. Such as, in person discussion, running down the hall to get someone's opinion, impromptu hallway conversations that result in amazing ideas.”
- “I am a freelancer. All the companies I work for have been great so far.”
- “I can do everything at home I can do at the office.”
- “I cannot imagine any company doing a better job of taking care of employees, everything has been thought of.”
- “I feel like there is an unrealistic expectation to keep everything the same as before even though we're remote and that's not possible with kids and no childcare.”
- “I get physical tech support but don't feel connected.”
- “I have some technical challenges with getting contracts signed and other word processing feats.”
- “In the beginning yes. Most of the staff was expected to have the technology needed to work from home in place already, which fortunately I did. There have been technical hiccups along the way, which I have had to deal with myself.”
- “Microsoft Teams has been a godsend! I do feel that we schedule more meetings though which is a double-edged sword.”
- “My company has been extremely supportive to us working from home.”
- “My company is trying really hard to help employees have the tools they need to work from home but they aren't quite there.”
- “Need better internet connection and accessories.”
- “Newsletters with advice and support, but no equipment or help for parents.”
- “Not that they don't try, but it's not possible.”
- “Originally no, but recently got additional equipment.”
- “Our company has been amazingly good at supporting us all.”
- “Partially. I feel like I need to advocate more for basic support in order to receive it.”
- “Sometimes I guess, somewhere in between yes or no should have been an option.”
- “Sometimes yes, sometimes no.”
- “Somewhat, but I'm incurring some costs.”
- “The company has been very supportive and the team has worked together well during the outbreak. Excellent support from the top of the network.”
- “The company was well prepared, and had IT structure and personnel in place.”
- “The new wave of cramming employees into tight spaces is not going to work. This is the smart decision.”
- “There is some disconnect but yes.”
- “They could offer more equipment.”
- “They support, but if doing this longer will need things like a printer.”

- “They try, but it’s not the same. IT is slow to react and if I need supplies, it takes longer.”
- “They’re doing what they can, but there have been some technical issues.”
- “Unsure what support means in this case.”
- “update emails periodically, all staff town hall meetings biweekly.”
- “Upgrades were made immediately to the company VPN when WFH started. 10,000 people use it daily and its near flawless.”
- “Very fortunate to have a constant source to reach out to for support.”
- “We get some support, webinars for mental wellness, but not hardware, for example.”
- “We would all appreciate supplies for be working from home. Being able to expense. And while our company overall offered this, our group has given us nothing of the sort.”
- “We're pretty low maintenance. So not a whole lot of a need for them to support us. But they had me buy zoom on their dime and are being less needy so that we can take care of personal things.”
- “Yes and no. The company and teams are doing an amazing job of keeping morale up, but post-COVID has been just as busy if not busier than pre-COVID.”
- “Yes! Our company has given us endless support to help us adjust and get what we need
- “Yes, but I don't see how more junior people can learn this way.”
- “Yes, but it's slow due to so many others encountering obstacles and needing support. I have to wait in line.”
- “Yes, good emotional support from senior leadership-- if this becomes more long term, I think our teams would love more tech support: could they ship us second monitors, for instance?”
- “Yes, the company has been awesome. Comfy chair, dual monitors, web cams, etc.”

Survey Question 4: Has working from home made you interested in working remotely when restrictions are lifted?

Eight out of ten of the survey respondents would like to continue to work from home after the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

- Yes: 81%
- No: 19%