

Third of employees feel more powerful post-pandemic

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Press Release

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With pandemic-driven remote working helping to accelerate change in the way businesses operate, UK employers are now being forced to offer increasingly attractive packages to their people as new research shows that more than a third of employees feel they have more power now than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The data, from Benenden Health's 'Workforce of the Future' report (https://www.benenden.co.uk/media/8133/11730520_bh_q2-workforce-of-the-future_leaflet_a5-clean.pdf), found that half of working adults (46%) believe that the pandemic has changed their relationship with their employer, with this rising to 70% for employees under the age of 25.

The effect of this change is a significant power shift from employers to employees, with more than a third (37%) of workers feeling that they have more power now than before the pandemic, putting pressure on businesses to carefully consider what they are able to offer workers amidst the 'Great Resignation' and debates over return to workplace policies.

The survey of 2,000 employees in the UK also found that workers are now increasingly likely to extend future job searches to wider geographical areas in the hunt for employment that provides their desired flexibility, satisfaction and benefits.

Whilst the average employee today lives 15 miles away from their designated workplace, workers revealed that – with many still remote or hybrid working – they would now be willing to take jobs 45 miles away from home on average.

With more than 3,000 workers at 60 companies in the UK trialling a four-day working week from June this year, three-day weekends (46%) were revealed to be the number one thing that employees would like to see introduced in the next five years, with as many as a third identifying this as an 'essential' offering from a new employer, whilst a fifth (18%) now believe that an offer of wraparound healthcare is a necessity.

Benenden Health is encouraging businesses to consider their approach to recruiting and retaining talent as we move away from the pandemic with this new dynamic in play.

Naomi Thompson, Head of OD at Benenden Health, said:

"The Great Resignation and the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on traditional working structures will be historic, and our research shows a hugely significant shift in the power balance between employers and employees and with the average worker telling us that they plan on leaving their current job in the next five years, businesses are now facing a crucial crossroads.

“Whilst employees have increasingly open minds with regards to where they work and what their role consists of, employers still need to take action to be an attractive proposition to the talent pool.

“The world of work has undoubtedly changed for good and it has never been more important for businesses to consult with their employees and ensure that they are providing the necessary tools and support to create a healthy workplace where people want to be in an increasingly competitive job market.”

Benenden Health is a mutual organisation offering high quality, private healthcare at the same affordable cost for everyone. This includes round the clock care such as 24/7 GP and Mental Health helplines, plus speedy access to services such as physiotherapy and medical treatment.

For more information about Benenden Health and to view its ‘Workforce of the Future’ report, go to <https://www.benenden.co.uk>.

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Note to Editors

Survey carried out on 2,017 full time employees in the UK by Censuswide in March-April 2022.

Benenden Health is a not-for-profit organisation, founded in 1905 with the purpose of people joining together to help pay for medical care. It is one of the UK’s longest serving and most respected mutual healthcare societies, offering an affordable alternative to health insurance to more than 820,000 members.

Many UK businesses have also chosen to offer Benenden Health membership as part of their employee benefits package.

Further data from the survey is available on request.