

GCC Hopes & Fears

2021

New world. New skills.



Overview



It has been one year since the pandemic shut down a large part of the global economy, forcing many employees into a fully remote work environment and challenging employers to rethink how they support and engage their workforce.

The last year has also pushed workers to demand more from their employers and the business world as a whole -- to be more purpose-led as the world simultaneously deals with a global health crisis, economic turmoil and racial unrest.

Even as we look to return to some sense of “normal” in the coming year, the way people work and the expectations they have for their employers have forever changed. It’s time for business leaders to reimagine how, where and why we all work, figure out how to best support their people in this new world, and recognize the larger role they play in society.

To determine how work has changed and what employees expect from their employers, we surveyed 2,500 workers in the GCC in February 2021 to share their thoughts, hopes and fears about the future.

What do people really think about the impact of technology acceleration due to the pandemic on their jobs?

Worker Sentiment About the Future is Positive.

One year into a global health crisis and ensuing economic fallout,

61%

of workers say they are excited or confident about what the future holds.

27%

of workers say they are worried.

Worker Sentiment About the Future is Split.



One year into a global health crisis and ensuing economic fallout,

50%

of workers say they are excited or confident about what the future holds.

50%

of workers say they are worried.

 GCC  Global



COVID Accelerated the Digital Transformation of Work.

With many people working remotely due to the pandemic, we've seen greater digital transformation in the last 12 months than ever before. The employers that had already provided the proper skills and technology as we migrated our work online were able to make a seamless transition into this new way of working, while others were forced to play catch-up. **Here's what people are saying about digital's role in the future of work:**

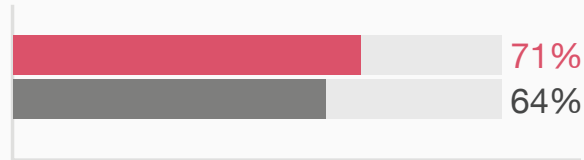
COVID Drove More Upskilling, as People Are Positive About Technology's Impact On Jobs

■ GCC ■ Global - - - - - Very confident

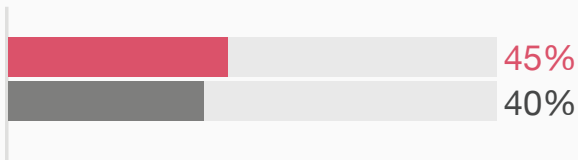
People who say they began the pandemic without adequate digital skills.



People who believe that technology provides more opportunities than risks.



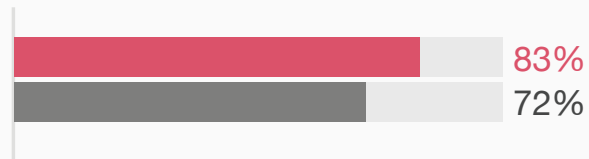
People who claim they successfully improved their digital skills during the pandemic.



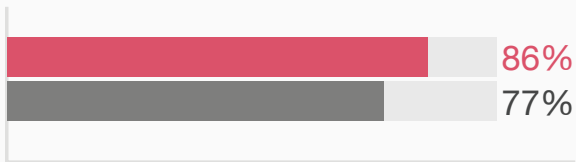
People who are confident they can adapt to new technology entering their workplace.



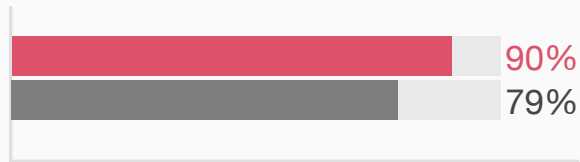
People with high school education or lower.



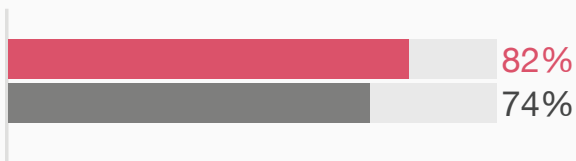
People who are ready to learn new skills or completely re-train in order to remain employable in the future.



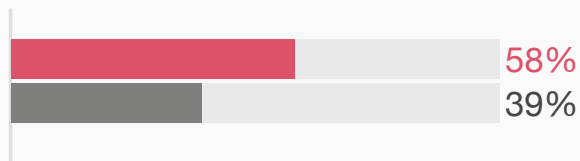
People who say they're getting at least some opportunities from their employers to improve digital skills outside of normal duties.



People who agree it is their own responsibility to update their skills rather than relying on an employer.



People who believe advances in technology could make their job obsolete in the next 5 years.



 GCC  Global



Remote working is here to stay

Of those who can work remotely,

	GCC	Global
People who prefer a mixture of in-person and remote working	68%	72%
those stating they'd like to go to the office full-time	7%	9%
People wanting to remain fully remote	24%	19%

70%

say there are elements of their current job that they could perform remotely

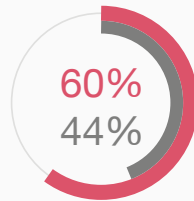
59%

say there are elements of their current job that they could perform remotely

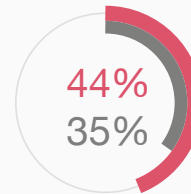
Trust in Employers is Mixed

■ GCC ■ Global

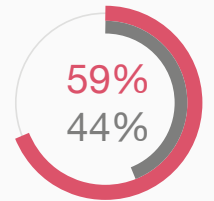
People who are happy for their employer to use technology to monitor their performance at work (including sensors and wearable devices)



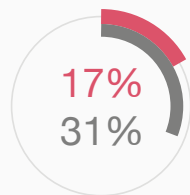
People who are willing to give their employer access to personal data, including social media profiles



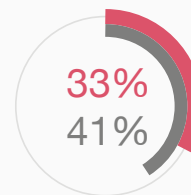
People who agreed they would consider 'treatments to enhance their brain and body if this could improve employment prospects' – for instance, drugs that improve concentration or combat fatigue.



Respondents who are unwilling



Respondents who are unwilling



Employers Are Expected to Lead With Purpose and Drive Greater Diversity & Inclusion.



2020 was a trying year for so many reasons, and as people dealt with the ramifications of a global pandemic, a sliding economy and racial unrest, workers started to demand more from the corporate world, pressing business leaders to weigh in and help solve our most pressing societal issues.

People Want Their Work And Employer to Make a Difference in Society

People who say they want to work for an organisation that will make a 'positive contribution to society'



When asked if people would rather maximize their income or do good for society, **the results were split.**

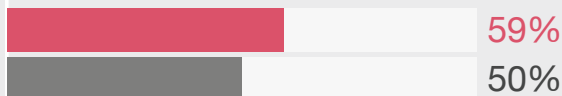
Those who said, if forced to choose, they would prefer a job that enabled them to 'take every opportunity to maximise their income'

Those who said they'd want a job that 'makes the difference'

	GCC	Global
Those who said, if forced to choose, they would prefer a job that enabled them to 'take every opportunity to maximise their income'	56%	54%
Those who said they'd want a job that 'makes the difference'	44%	46%

Workplace Discrimination is Prevalent

Workers worldwide who say they've faced discrimination at work



The majority of workers saying they've been discriminated against because of their:

Age

Gender

Race and/or ethnicity

	GCC	Global
Age	20%	22%
Gender	11%	19%
Race and/or ethnicity	21%	12%

For businesses, the pursuit of a diverse and inclusive workplace isn't just about doing the right thing. Studies and experience have come to the same conclusion: **Diversity is good for business.**

Inclusive teams lead to different perspectives, creative thinking and open collaboration. A diverse workforce and deliberate inclusion efforts help drive better outcomes that can actually lead to the broader economic development of our society, which benefits everyone.





Get in touch to find out more and start your upskilling journey today.



Hani Ashkar
Middle East Senior Partner
hani.ashkar@pwc.com



Randa Bahsoun
Partner, Government & Public
Sector and New world. New skills.
Leader, PwC Middle East
r.bahsoun@pwc.com



Donia Aqel
Senior Manager Government &
Public Sector and New world.
New skills. Middle East Driver
donia.aqel@pwc.com

New world. New skills. is PwC's global programme to help millions of people around the world improve their understanding, skills and knowledge for the digital world. We are working with other organisations across the world, building on our work with clients and on upskilling our 276,000 people.

Survey methodology

In February 2021, PwC Middle East commissioned a survey of 2,500 members of the general public. Respondents included workers, business owners, contract workers, students, unemployed people looking for work, and those on furlough or who were temporarily laid off working in the GCC. The survey polled workers in 4 countries: KSA, UAE, Kuwait and Qatar.