WorkPossible

WHAT IF WORKDAYS WERE DREAM DAYS?

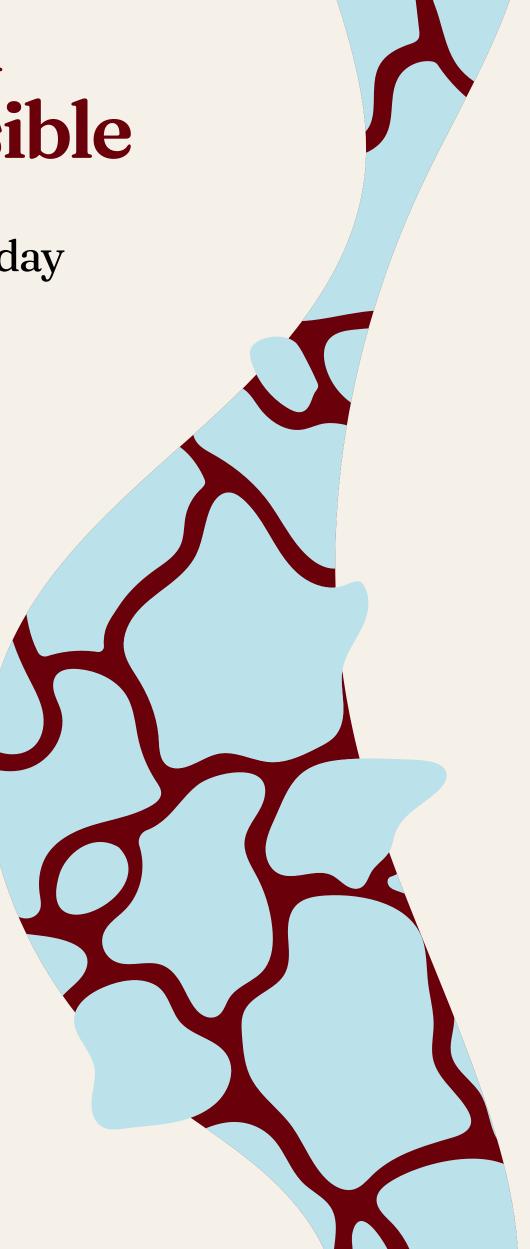






Making dream workdays possible

If you imagine your dream day at work, how would it look?



Our dream days at work are unique to us. Some want space to think, others find energy in numbers. Some prioritize balance, others get their energy from making a big impact. Some people want all of the above. What do you want? Introducing WorkPossible, our new global employee experience research project in partnership with CultureCon.

We've been on a mission to understand the ingredients of a dream day at work globally and the things that enable us to do our best work. There's so much to learn from the motivations we share, and those we don't.

Positive psychology has long told us that positive emotions in the workplace are contagious and boost our job performance. What if we tapped into that energy? What if we looked from a different perspective, not starting from where people are now, but from the best place they could possibly imagine?

What if we've been asking the wrong questions all along...

EX = business performance is already proven, so now we need to know more. We've explored which employee experiences are working hard, contributing towards a positive work experience and high-performance culture. And it's no surprise there's a very strong correlation between high-quality employee experiences and positive perceptions of our organization and culture.

78% of people who describe their organization as high-performing also describe their employee experiences as high-quality. This stuff matters.

We all deserve to do our best work. We all deserve great employee experiences. And organizations need to design them. Because it's making the difference.

Dream big.

Because this is WorkPossible.

Hattie Roche

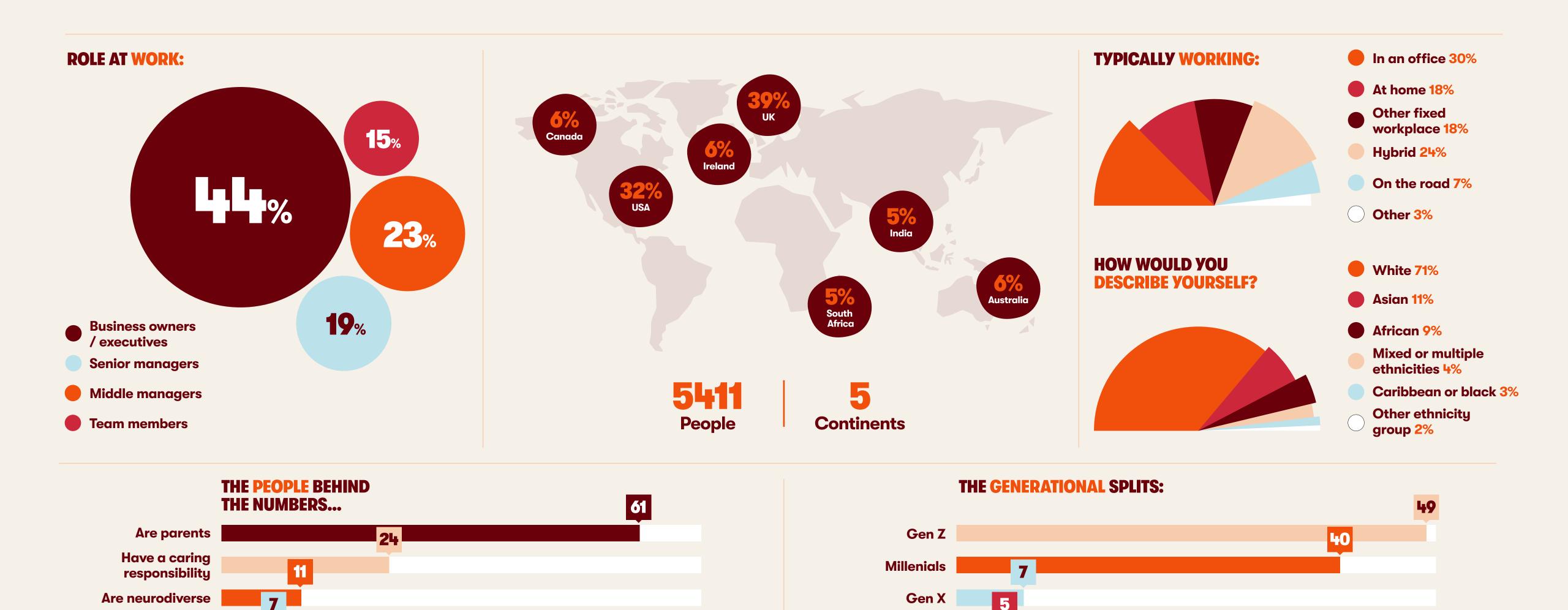
Founder & Strategy Chief Fauna

Who shared their dreams?

Live with a disability

chronic condition

Live with a



Baby boomers

Dream with us

WHAT'S INSIDE?

PART 1

The dream framework
A deep dive into the six
core EX dreams

PART 2

The employee experiences enabling our best work and those that aren't

PART 3

The leader experience What do leaders dream of?

PART 4

What's next? And how do we start putting this into practice?

OUTCOME ORIENTATED METHODOLOGY

We want to understand how our dream days, and the experiences that enable our best work, correlate to tangible outcomes.

Throughout WorkPossible you'll see we've correlated the insight based on how people respond to these statements:



- 1. My organization supports and thinks about me as a unique person
- 2. On most days, I have a good experience at work
- 3. My organization is considerate of my wellbeing at work
- 4. I would describe my organization and culture as high-performing
- 5. Most of the time I feel I belong

Making dream workdays possible

We dream about a human experience. If we ever needed proof that the future of work is human, this is it.

We've been blown away by the global consistency of themes across our diverse demographics. People told us how and where they want to work, what they want to achieve, and what pushes them to achieve more. Wherever we are in the world, our experience at work impacts our performance. That's being human. Existing research tells us there's a correlation between positivity and productivity. So, let's use our dreams to see how we can raise performance across both.

There are six core dreams.

We've used them to dig deeper into how they shape our perceptions of culture, how likely we are to feel like we belong, how much we consider our organizations to be high-performing, and which employee experiences turn them from dreams to reality.

THE DREAM FRAMEWORK



The foundations to enable our best work

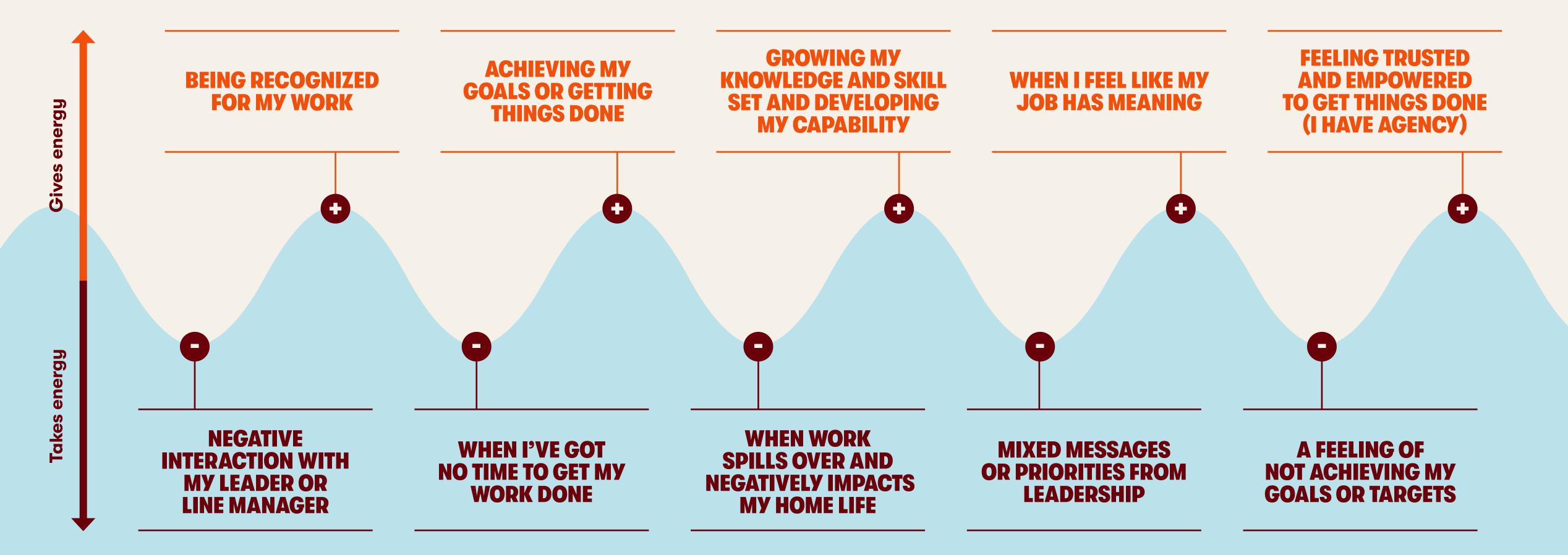
Our dream days are supported by what most impacts our energy

We see two significant additions to what people find energizing when they describe their organization as high-performing.

25%

say feeling safe and confident to be myself

25% say problem solving





Balanced headspace

Headspace is a holistic and harmonious balance. It values rest, avoids burnout, and finds the sweet spot that enables our best work. We're humans, not machines.

Achieving the right work-life balance is the only dream day ingredient mentioned by every single demographic. It's universally desired across generations, genders, and levels of seniority.

It's complicated out there. There's a globally shifting work experience and expectation of experience. From technological revolution, flex work, to increased focus on mental health and wellbeing, there's a lot going on. So much of it is overdue. And, in the context of such rapid and relentless transformation, we're feeling a sense of pullback.

We've misdiagnosed that pullback as a new apathy. Sometimes it's broad brushed as generational. But we need to listen harder. People are dreaming of making an impact and of doing great work, but they need the time and headspace to do it. We need to simplify the employee experience. We need to clear up the noise and complexity. We need to take responsibility for enabling people's best work. Organizations are great at adding more, but if we're adding, are we also prioritizing what we can stop?



of people that say that having a good work-life balance is a core ingredient for their dream day

of people list 'I have enough time to do great work'

50 100

The more junior you are, the more you value work-life balance,

52% of senior leaders vs **65%** of team members

"We are so busy and the work gets piled on beyond being reasonable. There's an expectation to get it done when all the impacts and consequences are not fully explored. Haste creates waste"



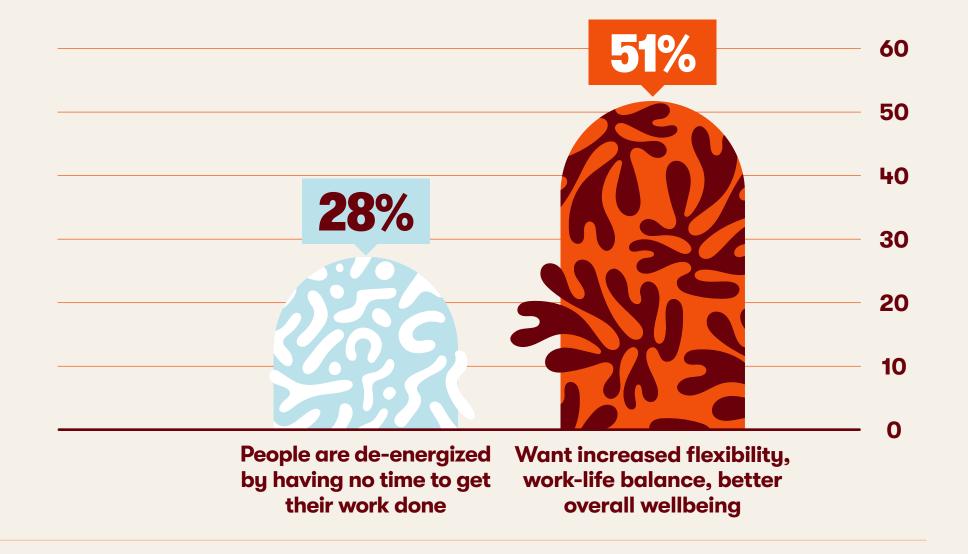
Headspace isn't a lack of action. It's the lack of ability to take it.

"I want to maintain a healthy work-life balance without sacrificing my career growth"

We've hit a juncture. Expectations of a better holistic balance are rising, alongside an increased speed of business transformation. This is our moment to understand that if we want to move quickly, we need to prioritize.

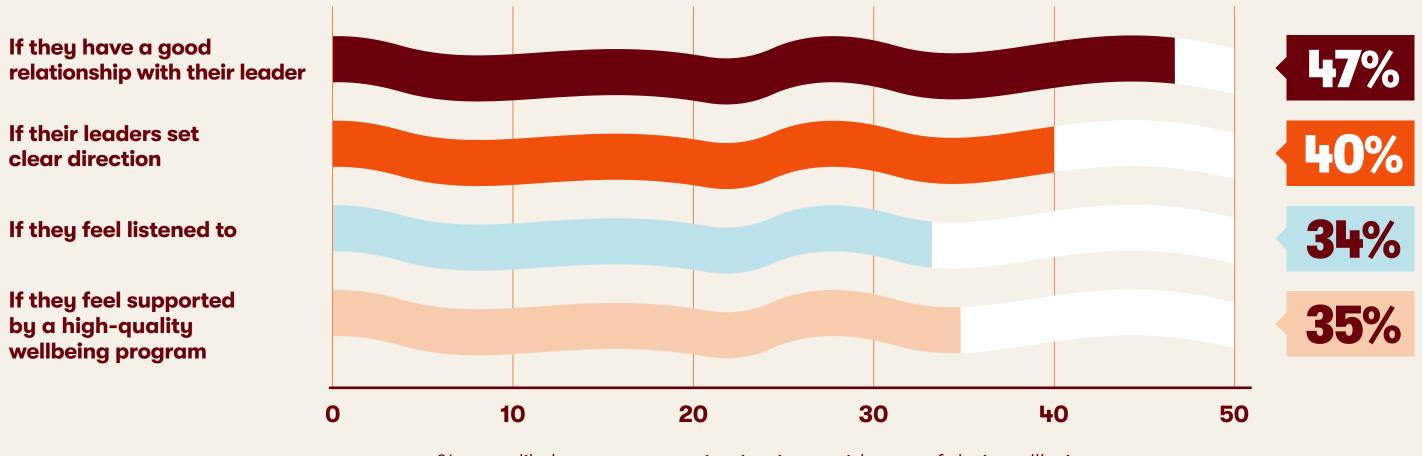
And maybe, just maybe, what we should be prioritizing is headspace. And in turn, the greater enablement of our best work.

When we asked if people could **change one thing** that would **better enable** them to do
their **best work**, **51**% want increased flexibility,
work-life balance, and better overall wellbeing. **28**% said having no time to get their work done
was in the top three energy detractors.



GIVE US SPACE

What makes people more likely to say their organizations are considerate of their wellbeing?





Recognized value

We need to know that we matter. That our work doesn't go unnoticed. We want to celebrate our strengths and skills, and be thanked for the impact we make.

of people said being recognized and valued for the work they do was a core ingredient of their dream day. MORE than half.

Nearly

said it was a top energizer at work. And yet is it the stuff of dreams?

said that their experience of recognition at work was high-quality.

THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO RECOGNITION **THAN BIG PROGRAMS:**

Humans are hard-wired to need recognition – when we feel recognized our brain's reward center is activated, releasing dopamine and oxytocin. Meaning we're more likely to repeat actions that earned recognition and replicate our best work. Now that's the dream state.

And it matters. If people feel recognition is a high-quality employee experience, they are 40% more likely to describe their organization and culture as high-performing. And **34%** more likely to say their organization supports and thinks about them as a unique person.

RESPECTED VALUED

"Feeling trusted, respected, and valued for my unique and individual contributions."

"Most important is that my ideas and opinions are listened to"

"I want to know I'm valued for my skills, experience, education."

"When I come up with solutions that make work process easier, I would love to be applauded and not my line manager taking credit for it"

INTELLECTUALLY AFFRLUIAILU

"I feel like my ideas and suggestions are valued and appreciated."



Uniquely human

We want to belong in our uniqueness. We want to build communities, social and professional, knowing we can be better, together.

OUR HUMAN CONTEXT

61% are parents

24% have a caring responsibility 7%
live with a disability

11/o live with a chronic condition **5%** are neurodiverse

Our lives are beautiful, messy and full of unexpected twists and turns.

That's being human. It's a totally unique experience for all of us. We all live with our own personal, human contexts. And we want to be able to show up as ourselves at work. We want our organizations to support us in our uniqueness and across all life's circumstances. For nearly 1/3 of people, that dream isn't a reality.

MY ORGANIZATION SUPPORTS AND THINKS ABOUT ME AS A UNIQUE PERSON



71 TRUE

%

29 FALSE

WE'RE COMMUNITY BUILDERS

51%

of people said that enjoying being around the people they work with is part of having a dream day.

Our relationships can play a defining factor in our workplace happiness and we can't ignore the business benefits of authentic relationships. Meaningful connections allow us to be ourselves, promoting increased trust and the likelihood of collaboration and psychological safety. We need to feel like we're in this together through the good times and the tough.

BUT ARE WE DESIGNING EXPERIENCES THAT WORK FOR OUR WHOLE COMMUNITY?

If the future of work is human, the experiences we have need to be human too. **42%** said their dream ingredient to feel they belong and can be themselves. That **42%** rises to **55%** for neurodivergent people.

Embracing neurodiversity shouldn't be part of someone's dream day, it should be part of their everyday.

IF YOU ARE NEURODIVERSE THEN YOU ARE LESS LIKELY TO AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

My organization supports and thinks about me as a unique person

On most days
I have a good
experience
at work

My organization is considerate of my wellbeing at work







Progress made possible

Growth is always possible and always progress. We want to develop our skill sets and ourselves, shaping our careers and our futures.

The speed of technological change is only getting faster. We've all read the research telling us that our roles will be unrecognizable or obsolete in a few years from now. The need for continuous learning and radical adaptability has never been greater. Luckily, humans crave possibility.



We innately tie our capability, knowledge, and skills to our value. When we develop ourselves or learn something new, it stimulates us. Literally creating more neural pathways, enhancing our neuroplasticity, and releasing dopamine. So, there's no surprise that growth and development are part of the dream day for more than 1/3 of people.

Growth frees us from feeling stuck; we can shape our careers and our future. Now let's stop calling that career a ladder. It's not always there to climb. Growth is so much more nuanced than the one-directional trajectory we grew up expecting. Organizations that lean into fulfilling these dreams will benefit from the endless possibilities of their people's potential.

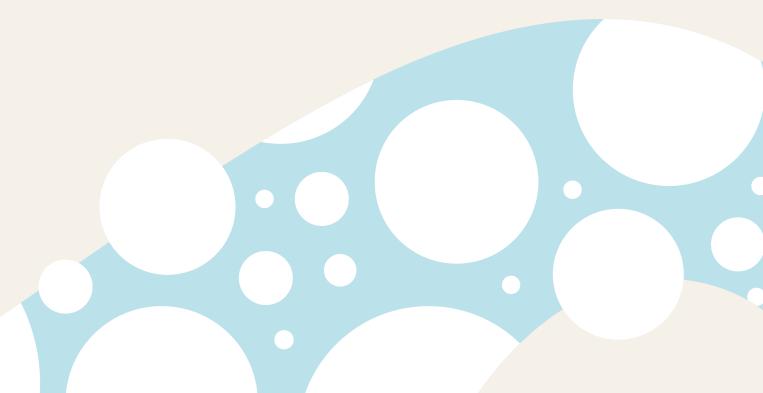
More senior leaders than team members prioritize growth in their dream days:

45% senior leaders

32% team members

OUR DREAMS OF GROWTH AREN'T ALWAYS TRANSLATING TO REALITY

31% senior leaders and 43% of team members say their current learning and development programs are actively preventing them doing their best work. But when those programs do enable our best work, we're 20% more likely to describe the organization and culture as high-performing.





Trusted empowerment

Empowerment is founded on the trust we dream of feeling at work. It's confident, good decisions made possible. It's autonomy enabled.

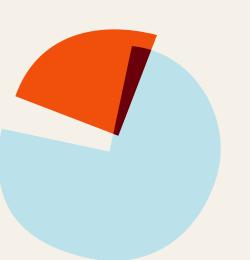
More than



people say being empowered is in the top three things that energize them at work. The demand for empowerment is growing.

Around 25%

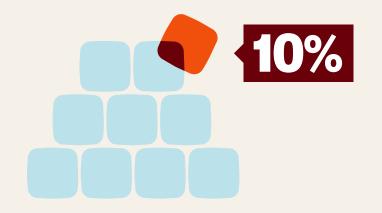
of all WorkPossible comments mentioned autonomy, flexibility to manage their own time, and decision-making power.



The power dynamic in the workforce is shifting as we're becoming more aware of employee rights, a long-overdue awareness of wellbeing, the rise of remote work, and rapid transformation. All of this has sparked the need for more self-direction and quick decision-making at all levels of an organization.

Organizations are responding.
We're seeing increasingly flatter
hierarchies and more collaborative
structures. So, there's no surprises
here, the more agency and
empowerment we have over our day,
the higher the likelihood that we're
having a good experience at work.

MICROMANAGEMENT IS STILL OUT

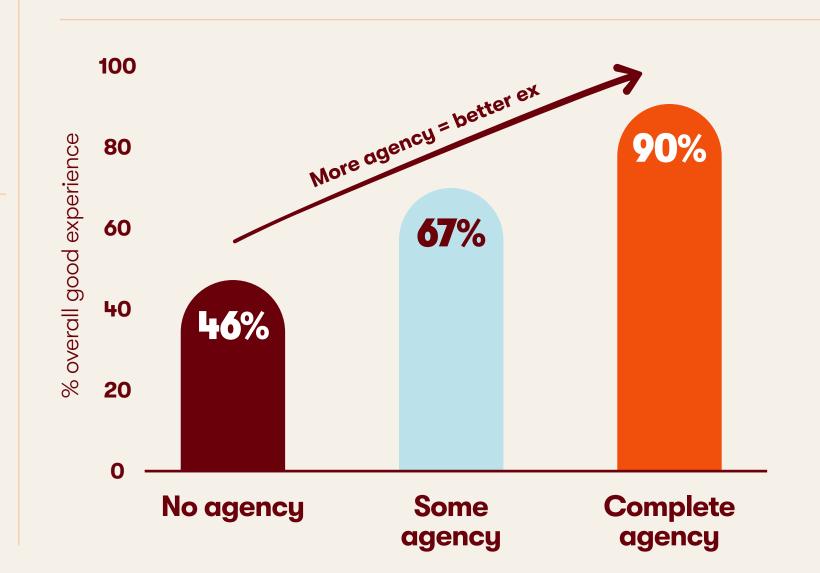


of all comments on leadership talked about valuing freedom and autonomy over micromanagement.

"Being given the freedom to make decisions and take ownership of my work"

"When I'm trusted to manage my own time and priorities without micromanagement"

"Having the autonomy to explore creative solutions to problems without constant oversight"



want more empowerment

We asked people if they want more empowerment, agency and ownership in their workday. 61% of them said yes.



Full agency

No agency

Empowerment is even more important

to leaders who are 20% more likely to

prioritize it as a dream day ingredient.

47% senior leaders

27% team members

Empowered outcomes

Empowerment shapes our experience more positively – or negatively – than anything else. We compared people with very high and very low agency and empowerment levels, through the lens of our five outcomes.

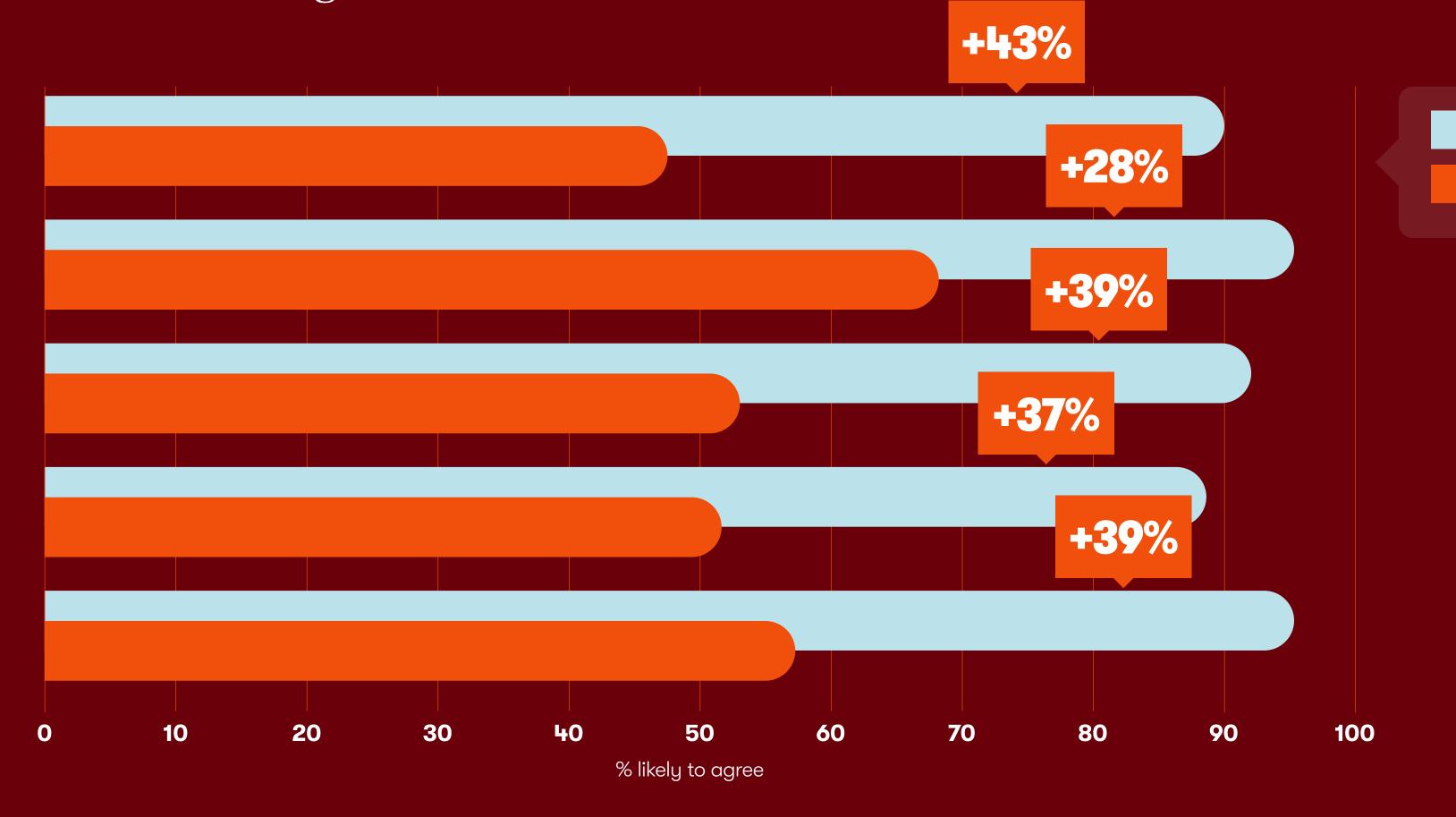
My organization supports and thinks about me as a unique person

On most days, I have a good experience at work

My organization is considerate of my wellbeing at work

I would describe my organization and culture as high-performing

Most of the time, I feel I belong





Meaningful contribution

You know that feeling where you're really achieving something? You're ticking things off and in a flow state, you're having a meaningful impact on a big picture purpose. You're contributing.

We don't always correlate 'making an impact' and 'meaningful work'. But they're inextricably linked in the overall picture of the contribution we make, and want to make, at work. People want to do their best work. People want to achieve their goals and priorities. And they want to put the work in because it matters.

Our sense of meaning is tied to the way we see ourselves and the value we're able to bring. And when we understand the impact we're having, that feeling is heightened by knowing that what we do is positively contributing to something bigger than ourselves.



people say their most energizing factor at work is when their job has meaning

SO, MEANING MATTERS

And it matters more and more to our emerging workforce. Meaning is the most energizing factor at work for under 27s:

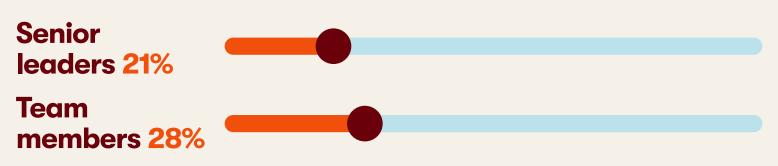
- 1. WHEN I FEEL LIKE MY JOB HAS MEANING
- 2. BEING RECOGNIZED FOR MY WORK
- 3. GROWING MY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL SET

WE ALL WANT TO MAKE AN IMPACT

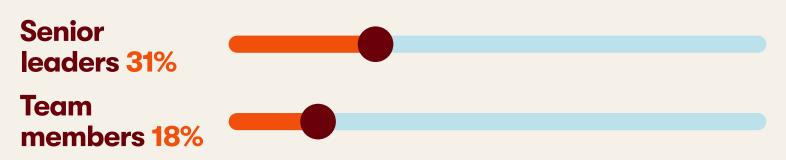
Achieving our goals and getting things done are equally energizing (27%) as they are de-energizing when we don't have enough time to get our work done (28%). This isn't new, it's human and it's psychologically healthy.

So, the next time we all get caught up in the next TikTok trend like 'lazy girl jobs', let's question how we should be shaping our experiences and environments to empower our younger generation, rather than finding creative ways to say 'people just don't work as hard anymore'.

Less senior leaders rank meaningful work in their top energizers than team members.



The more senior we are, the more frustrated we are at not hitting our goals.





of free commentary highlighted the importance of meaning, impact and purpose-driven work in enabling our best work

"Working on projects that have a positive impact on people's lives"

"When I see how my work contributes to the bigger picture and organizational goals" Making a meaningful impact or contribution doesn't always have to mean saving the planet. Sentiment was evenly split between wider societal purpose and a need to know that we're contributing to a meaningful organizational picture or mission.

ARE OUR EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCES ENABLING OUR BEST WORK?



LET'S GET GRANULAR ABOUT EXACTLY WHAT IS ENABLING OUR BEST WORK...

We looked at recognizable moments that a large, global and diverse audience could relate to and easily share their experiences of. We've explored 'moments' across the classic big employee lifecycle touchpoints and the things we experience every day in our relationships and interactions.



We looked through two major lens:

- Do these experiences enable you - or not - to do your best work?
- Do you consider these experiences high-quality?



Our employee experiences are having a big impact on our perception of culture and performance



760/0

of people who describe their employee experiences as high-quality, also describe their culture and organization as high-performing

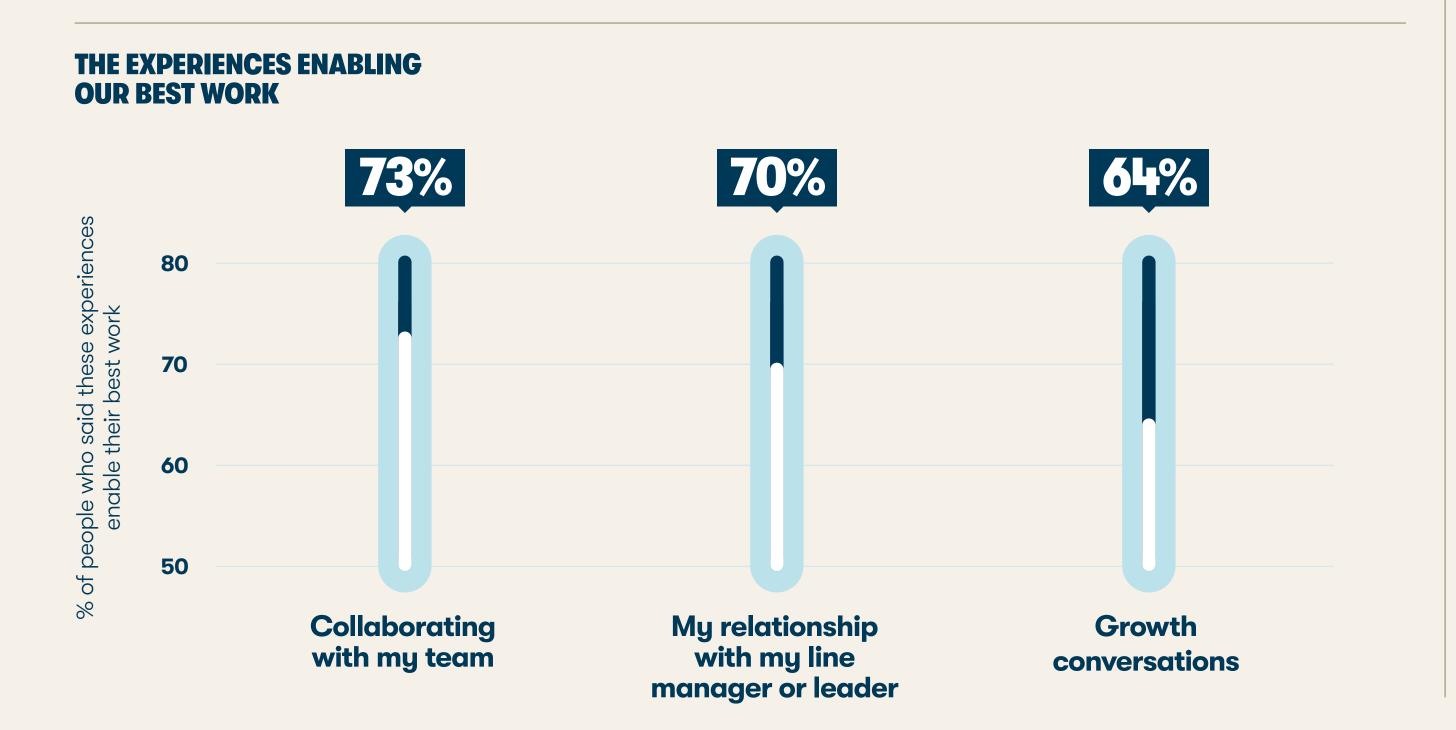
64%

of people who describe their current employee experiences as **low-quality**, have an overall **poor experience at work**.



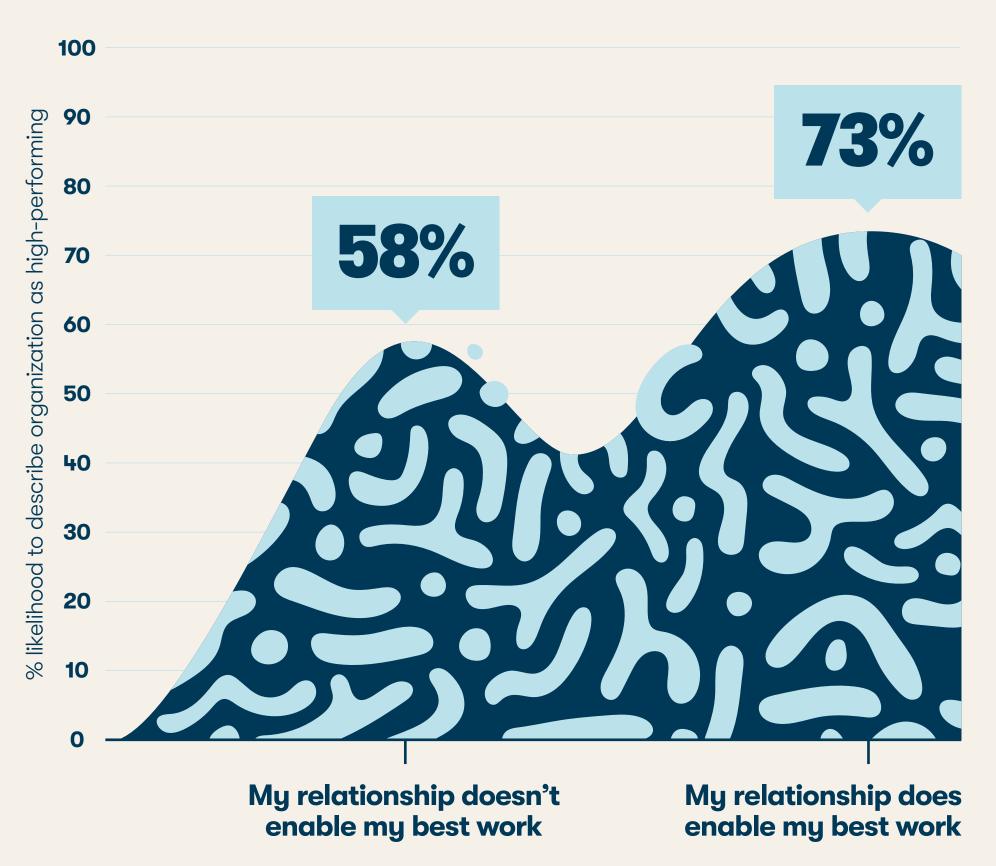
Our dream experience isn't just the big moments that matter. It's the little things in-between.

It's all in the everyday. It's collaborating with our teams, it's our relationship with our leaders, and having growth conversations. These are the everyday moments that matter.



AND THAT TRANSLATES TO PERFORMANCE...

If our relationship with our leader or line manager enables our best work, we're 15% more likely to describe our organization as high-performing.





Most people do consider their employee experiences to be high-quality

OVERALL

Yes 67% No 33%

UNDER 27

Yes 72% No 28%

TEAM MEMBERS

Yes 60% No 40%

SENIOR LEADERS

Yes 73% No 27%

NEURODIVERSE

Yes 51% No 49%

OK, that's the good news.

But 1/3 of people don't. And that number varies depending upon who you are:

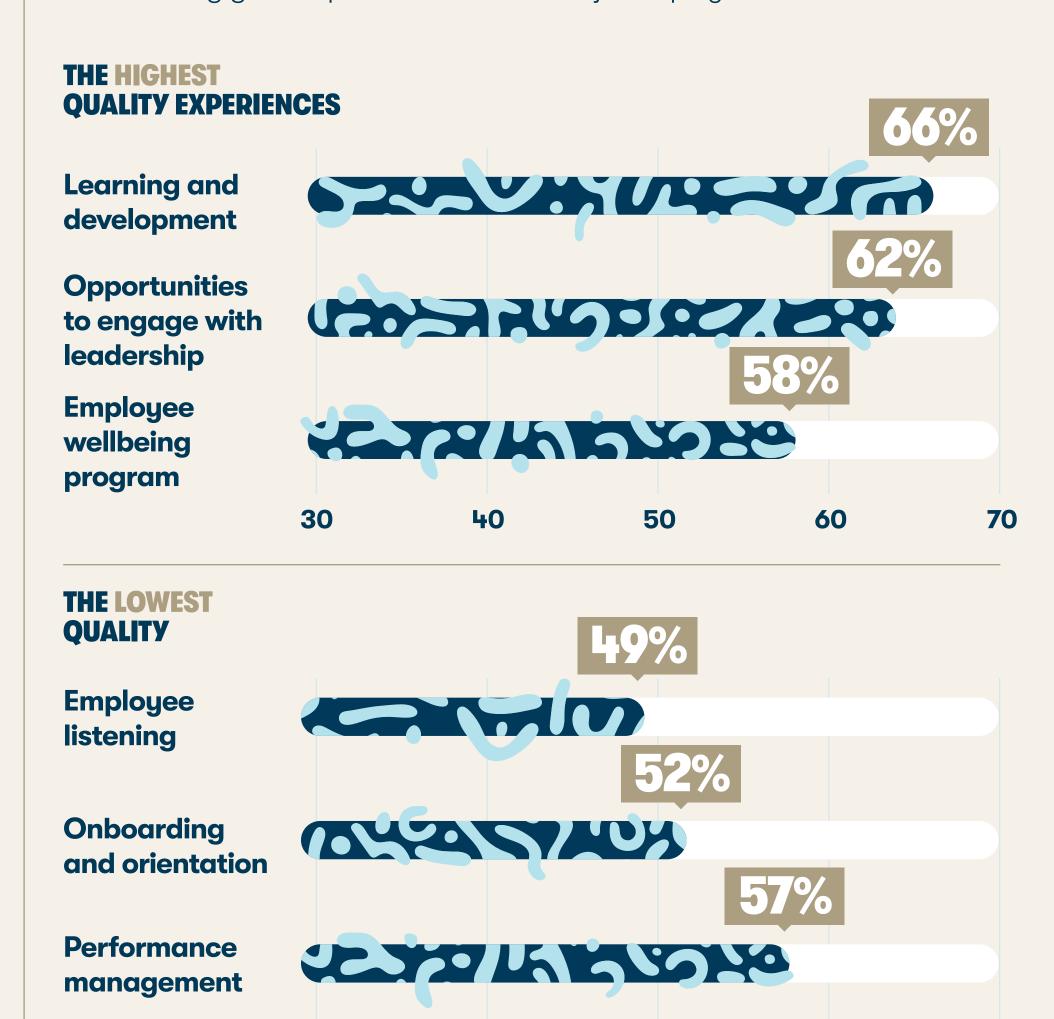
I'm more likely to say my EX are high-quality if I'm under 27

40% of team members say their employee experiences are low-quality

Senior leaders are 13% more likely to say their experiences are high-quality in comparison to team members

Nearly half of neurodiverse people rate their employee experiences as poor-quality

These percentages for the highest-quality experiences might feel high, but picture the reverse for a moment. Imagine how many people aren't having good experiences of these major employee moments.



40

30

% relate to the number of people who described these experiences as high-quality

50

60

70

Leaders dream differently

Leaders are making an impact. A big one. For good and bad.

We've seen how the relationship we have with our leaders can define the experience we have at work, and our ability – or lack of – to do our best work. At the founding heart of that experience, is trust.

But what about their experience? How are we supporting and equipping them to do their best work?

THE LEADER DREAM DAY



I feel recognized and valued for the work I do

l'm empowered to make decisions 47%

I enjoy being around the people I work with

I feel inspired by my company's vision and how I can contribute to it 40%

PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIDN'T MAKE THE TOP FIVE, BUT LEADERS WERE

LEADER EX

13% MORE LIKELY

to list it as a dream ingredient

VISION IS MORE IMPORTANT FOR

22%

more leaders than team members



Leading our best work

As expected, what people most want from their dream leaders differs to what leaders prioritize to enable their teams to do their best work.

WHAT WE WANT LEADERS TO DO

What do team members most want from their dream leaders to enable their best work?

1. RECOGNIZE ME

Make me feel valued and recognized



2. EMPOWER ME

Trust and empower me



3. GIVE ME HEADSPACE

Let me work flexibly



WHAT LEADERS THINK

What do leaders think the most impactful things are that they do to enable their people to do their best work?

1. CLARITY

When I give my team clear vision and direction so they know what they're working towards



2. LISTEN

When I listen to my team to understand and use their insight to make better decisions



3. HUMAN LEADERSHIP

When I care and support my team as humans, and understand them as people



AND WHAT THEY NEED TO DO IT

And what equips leaders to do their best work?

1. I HAVE WHAT I NEED

When I'm given the skills, knowledge and equipped with the tools I need to lead



2. I UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

When I've got clarity on decision-making so I can be clear with my team



3. I HAVE CLEAR DIRECTION

When I understand organizational strategy



Unlock the power of dreams

The WorkPossible insight gives us a new angle to look at what we all instinctively know and feel because so many of us are experiencing it.

And, without wishing to oversimplify the incredibly complex job we have to shape the work experience for today - and tomorrow - there feels like three clear places we can start.

DREAM BIG WITH YOUR PEOPLE

Do you know what the dream day at work looks like for your people? Do you know what enables your team's best work? If you want to tap into the strengths and positive energy in your organization, start here.

3. EMPOWER THEIR BEST WORK

The more empowered we are, the better our experience at work. Empowerment can unlock the potential of our people and teams, but we need to equip our leaders to know how to do it.

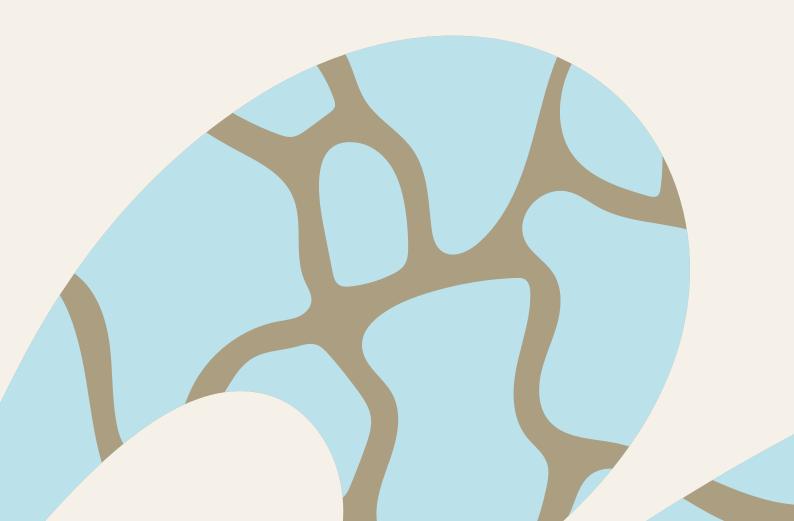
2. SIMPLIFY THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

There's so much complexity clouding our headspace and preventing our best work. Let's map out and identify where we can clear up the grey areas of our experience, starting with those laborious annual performance processes...

LET'S KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING. LET'S BELIEVE IN OUR DREAMS AND MAKE MORE OF THOSE DAYS, POSSIBLE.

We've built an inspiration session to help you start designing your people's dream day. If you'd like to find out more, we'd love to hear from you.

Let's dream big together.



POWERED BY DREAMS. CHANGED BY PEOPLE.

Fauna

Fauna is founded on our unwavering belief that work can – and should – be a positive force for good. So let's bin the playbook and start from a place of possibility. Together.

We've built an inspiration session to help you start putting this into practice.

Get in touch if you'd like to find out more.



Follow Fauna on LinkedIn to keep up with our thinking

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