

# HR Matters

## Namibia Newsletter

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A quarterly newsletter published by PwC Namibia providing informed commentary on current developments in the People & Organisation arena.

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# 5 priorities for CHROs on the way to recovery

The future of work in 2021 remains uncertain, but recent PwC polling reveals five critical takeaways to help CHROs navigate 2021.

## *Five Priorities for HR Leaders on the Way to Recovery*

The future of the workplace remains uncertain, with business leaders facing unique hurdles heading into 2021. To help set the course, recent PwC reports reveal five key takeaways for Chief Human Resource Officers (CHROs) as businesses refine their recovery strategies and transition plans.

With [polling data](#) from thousands of U.S.-based employees and executives throughout 2020, the above graphic uncovers critical priorities to help HR leaders navigate 2021—from fostering workplace safety and well-being to implementing technology that promotes engagement.



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PRIORITY 1

# Workplace safety

Employees may perform better with the right measures to help enhance workplace safety.

Survey question



Which of the following measures would you need your employer to take in order to feel comfortable going back to work?

Change workplace safety measures

47%

Require customers to follow safety and hygiene practices

45%

Provide response and shut-down protocols if COVID-19 cases rise

44%

Provide mandatory testing prior to return

42%

Use contact tracing for real-time notification if someone I work with tests positive

35%



Source: PwC Workforce Pulse Survey, June 11, 2020, Base: 347

## ***Priority 1: Physical Safety, Comfort, Health & Performance***

Employee anxiety is running high, with polls revealing that employees are concerned about getting sick—and the risk discourages them from returning to the workplace.

- 51% of employees fear getting sick from returning to the workplace
- 50% would like workplace safety measures established, to feel comfortable returning
- 45% would like safety and hygiene requirements implemented for customers
- 35% would like contact tracing to be used, with real-time notifications if a co-worker is diagnosed with COVID-19

By implementing measures to keep employees healthy, employees may feel more confident as companies transition back into the workplace.



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## Priority 2: Supporting Mental Health & Wellness

Studies show that employees perform better when they have workplace flexibility—and they can thrive when leaders support their well-being. The importance of mental health and wellness at work has increased under the weight of the pandemic.

Polling found that:

- 36% of employees would like to see more humility, compassion, and empathic behaviors from their leadership
- 33% would like to see corporate investment in wellbeing programs, which would make them more confident in their ability to do their job
- 72% would like to work remotely to some extent after the pandemic
- 84% of CHROs intend to increase support for wellbeing and mental health

Investing in mental health can pay dividends, with the World Health Organization reporting that for every dollar spent on mental health treatment, \$4 is gained in productivity.

PRIORITY 2

# Support employee mental health & wellness

Workers feel more confident when leaders support their well-being.

Survey question



Which of the following could your company provide that would make you feel more confident in your ability to do your job?



Source: PwC Workforce Pulse Survey, June 11, 2020. Base: 1,022



Source: PwC US Remote Work Survey, June 25, 2020. Base: 1,200 US office workers.

Remote Work Beyond the Pandemic



**72%**

of office workers would like to work remotely for at least two days a week, even after COVID-19 is no longer a concern.

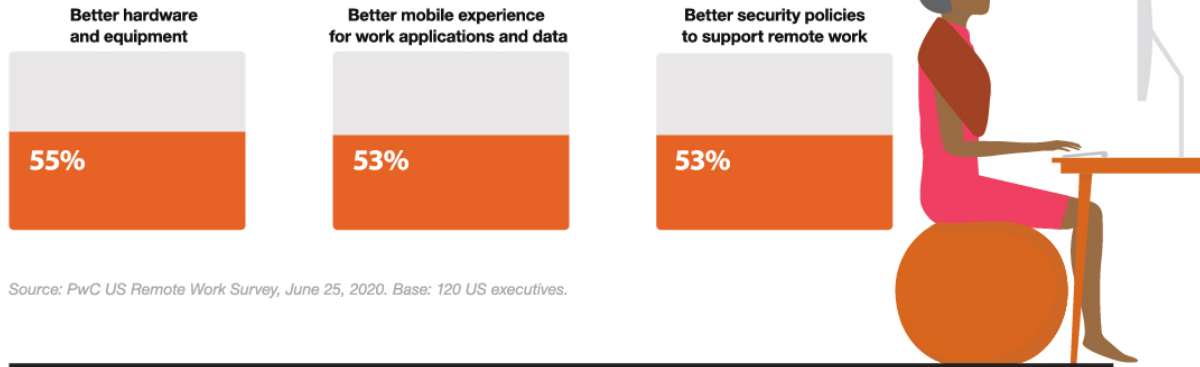
# Enable remote work with the right tools & training

As employees adapt to remote work, they need tools and resources to be productive, collaborate, and create.

## Survey question



Looking forward, which of the following are you planning to provide to your employees to help them be more productive when working remotely, if any?



Source: PwC US Remote Work Survey, June 25, 2020. Base: 120 US executives.

## ***Priority 3: Enable Remote Work with the Right Tools & Training***

As employees continue to work remotely, there's a pressing need to upgrade technology and resources required to be productive, collaborative, and create.

- 55% of HR leaders were planning to implement hardware and equipment upgrades to help employees stay productive when working remotely
- 53% were planning for improved mobile experiences for applications and data, as well as security policies to support remote work
- Upwards of 36% of employees believed their organization was already very effective at collaboration and communication

With many organizations planning to incorporate some form of remote work into their long-term strategies, technology continues to be integral to support working remotely.

## Priority 4: Maintain Organizational Culture for a Hybrid Workforce

Culture and engagement looked very different in the shifting landscape of 2020, and that will likely continue to evolve in 2021.

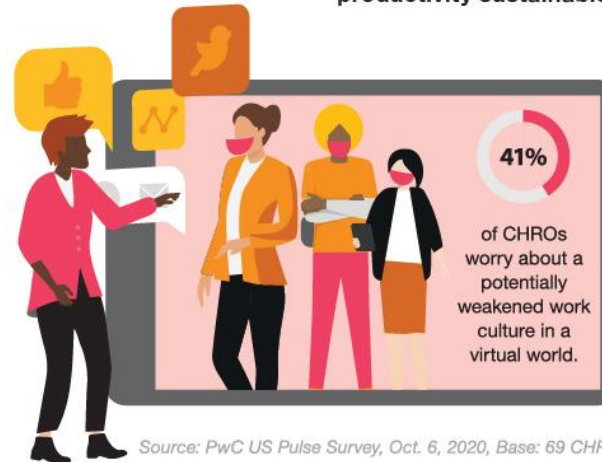
- 41% of CHROs worry about weakened work culture in the virtual world
- Nearly 50% have focused on employee productivity efforts on new virtual tools and training
- 80% are planning for new employee benefits
- 75% are planning for employee upskilling

While many remote employees report they may be more productive during the pandemic, CHROs should help confirm it's sustainable in the long-term.

PRIORITY 4

# Maintain organizational culture for a hybrid workforce

Where CHROs are focusing to make worker productivity sustainable.



Survey question



Of the changes you've made to encourage sustainable employee productivity as a result of COVID-19, which of these are you most focused on?

Focus on objectives and outcomes

49%

Employ new virtual tools and training

49%

Leaders reinforce messaging around productivity and strategy

39%

Conduct periodic studies of how team members allocate their time to tasks

38%

Adjust performance goals and incentives

36%

Source: PwC Workforce Pulse Survey, Sept. 15, 2020, Base: 69 CHROs

## Priority 5: Leveraging Data Analytics

Studies show that better employee experiences can contribute to improved revenue growth, and PwC polls indicate that:

- **42%** of CFOs are optimizing their approach to data analytics to improve revenue
- **35%** are moving their applications and/or to the cloud
- **40%** of workplace leaders are concerned about workplace safety

As executives experience concern over whether long-term remote work could impact engagement and productivity—focus has been placed on leveraging data analytics and digital assets to quantify and help inform corporate strategies.

PRIORITY 5

# Leveraging data analytics

Investing in data analytics and digital assets can help accelerate revenue growth.

Survey question



Which of the following digital transformation initiatives is your firm investing in to accelerate revenue growth over the next 12 months?

Optimizing our approach to data analytics across the business

42%

Moving our applications and/or data to the cloud

35%

Source: PwC US Pulse Survey, October 6, 2020. Base of 176 CFOs

**The challenges CHROs face in 2021 also reveal opportunities—  
from updating digital assets to improving productivity and well-being.**

## Opportunities on the Road to Recovery

Even with COVID-19 vaccines on the horizon, uncertainty about the future of our work environments is high, posing unique challenges ahead for CHROs. However, those challenges can present strategic opportunities for work improvements—from digital assets and productivity, to mental health and well-being.



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