

COVID-19 Remote Work Survey — Preliminary Time 1 Results

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Between April 6 and April 30, 2020, over 1000 employed individuals completed our survey about working remotely during COVID-19. Here we summarize some preliminary results based on 1074 serious responders.

Survey respondents ranged in age between 18 and 73 years. The majority of respondents were White/Caucasian (83%), female (65%), and married (59%). Forty percent of those surveyed had children under the age of 18 living at home. Respondents worked in a wide range of industries with larger percentages from higher education (16%), professional and business consulting (15%), health and medical services (12%), government (9%), and financial industries (8%).

Given the limited amount of time for employees and organizations to prepare for working from home due to shelter-in-place orders and the closing of public and private schools, we were interested in the extent to which various preconditions (e.g., percent of tasks that can be completed at home, percent of equipment available) and individual-level (telework experience), supervisor-level (trust and support), and organizational-level resources influenced perceptions of telework preparedness and stress. As expected, preconditions were strongly related to perceptions of telework preparedness and stress. In addition, employee experience with working from home, supervisor support for flexible arrangements, an organizational business continuity plan, as well as a formal telework policy were all significantly related to greater perceived preparedness and lesser perceived stress.

When asked to rate several common challenges associated with remote work during COVID-19 and strategies for overcoming such challenges on a 5-point scale (0 = no extent, 4 = great extent), respondents reported missing face-to-face interaction as the most challenging, and having good quality resources as the most important strategy. Average ratings for the remaining challenges and strategies that were rated appear below (ordered greatest to least).

Avg Rating	Challenges	Avg Rating	Strategies
2.43	Missing face-to-face interaction	3.23	Good quality resources (equipment, internet, etc.)
1.93	Interruptions or distractions in the home environment	2.97	Maintaining regular communications with my colleagues and supervisor
1.87	Keeping children entertained/cared for	2.81	Making myself available to my supervisor and colleagues
1.58	Helping children with their schoolwork	2.63	Structuring my work environment
1.38	Difficulties coordinating with others	2.61	Adopting a work-oriented mindset and routine
1.20	Technical difficulties due to technology limitations	2.52	Setting goals and prioritizing tasks
1.17	Access to good quality equipment/resources	2.43	Planning my tasks
1.07	Difficulty managing or supervising others	2.21	Communicating with people in my home about my availability
1.04	Concerns about personal health & safety	2.15	Getting more accomplished than what was likely expected
0.96	Challenges with transitioning work to be online	2.00	Trading off tending to children’s needs with my partner
0.84	Insufficient time to prepare for remote work	1.35	Securing childcare help
0.70	Concerns about information security		
0.64	Lack of control over my work		
0.58	Little remote work knowledge or experience		
0.50	Resistance to change job procedures		
0.41	Resentment from those who cannot remote work		