Reflektive

2020
Performance Management Benchmark Report
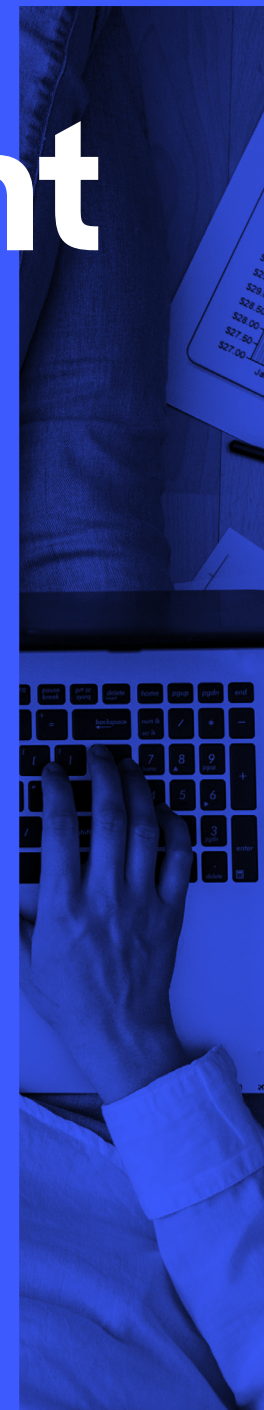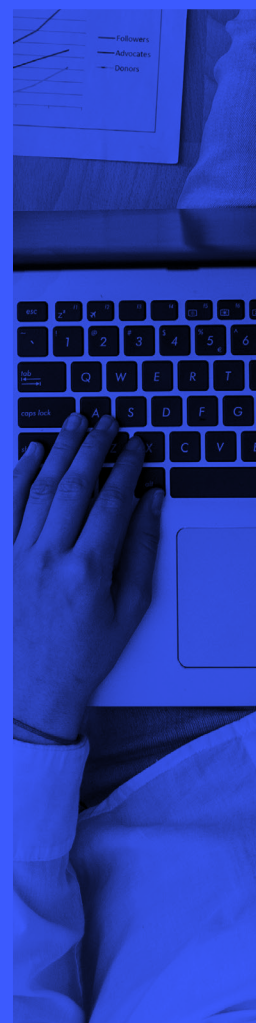
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Introduction

2020 has revealed the crucial role that HR teams play in guiding the success of their organization. Per The Economist, "a chief people officer can make or break a company". From workforce planning to boosting morale to driving productivity while employees are remote, a CHRO and her team play a huge role in managing a company's most valuable asset -- their people.

Given the significant changes that 2020 has had on businesses and HR teams around the world, Reflektive launched this in-depth report to follow-up on our 2018 Performance Management Benchmark Report.

Specifically, we wanted to gather insights on how performance programs have changed since 2018, and how business leaders, HR teams, and employees feel about "the new normal".
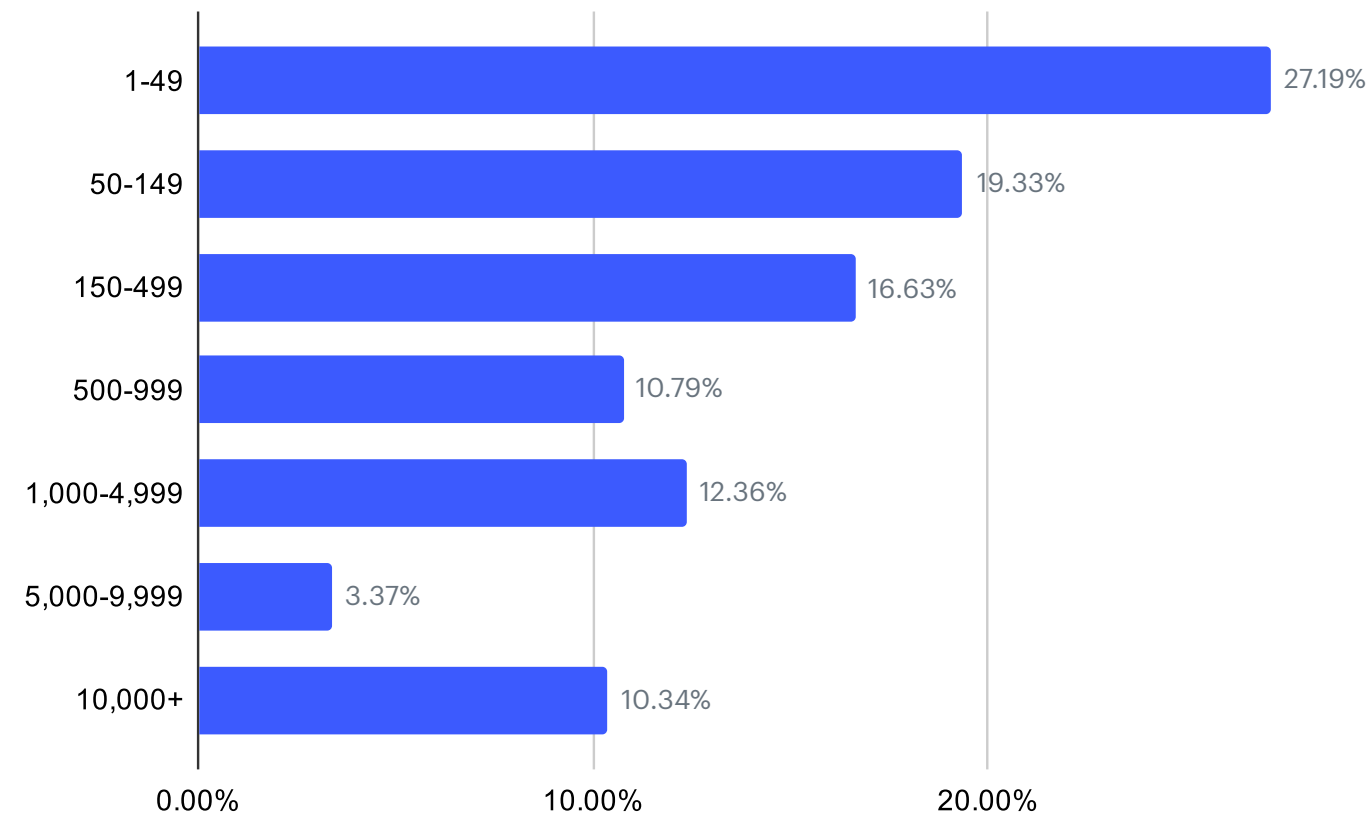
We surveyed 445 HR professionals and business leaders, and 622 employees, to gather their sentiment on the state of work and performance management in 2020.

In addition to these insights, we've also included observations and recommendations from leading HR practitioners and experts. Keep reading for insights on 2020 performance trends, employee needs, and sentiment on the future.
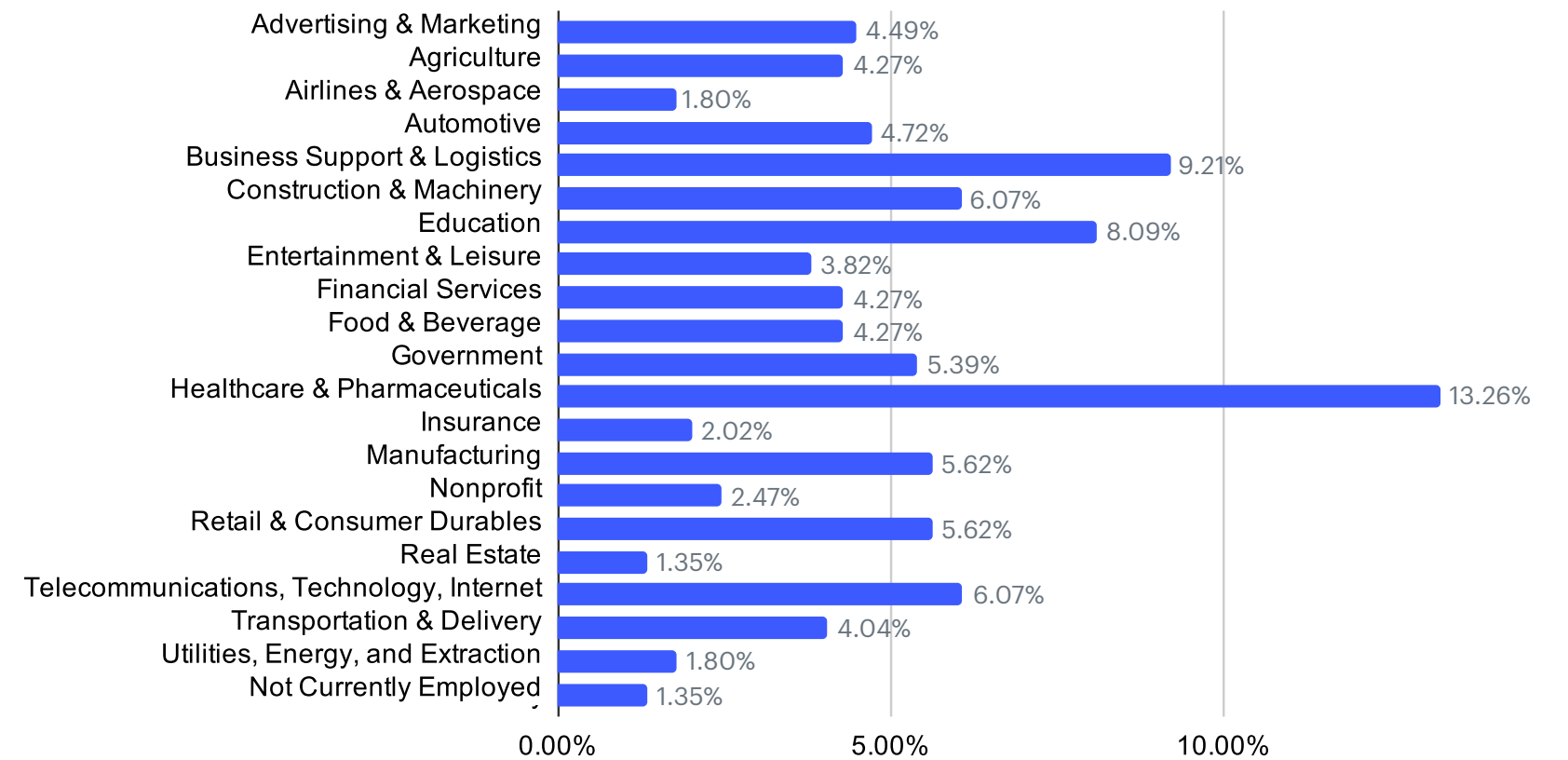
HR & Business Leaders Survey

Company Size Breakdown

Company Size	Percentage
1-49	27.19%
50-149	19.33%
150-499	16.63%
500-999	10.79%
1,000-4,999	12.36%
5,000-9,999	3.37%
10,000+	10.34%

Industry Breakdown

Industry	Percentage
Advertising & Marketing	4.49%
Agriculture	4.27%
Airlines & Aerospace	1.80%
Automotive	4.72%
Business Support & Logistics	9.21%
Construction & Machinery	6.07%
Education	8.09%
Entertainment & Leisure	3.82%
Financial Services	4.27%
Food & Beverage	4.27%
Government	5.39%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	13.26%
Insurance	2.02%
Manufacturing	5.62%
Nonprofit	2.47%
Retail & Consumer Durables	5.62%
Real Estate	1.35%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet	6.07%
Transportation & Delivery	4.04%
Utilities, Energy, and Extraction	1.80%
Not Currently Employed	1.35%

Employee Survey

Company Size Breakdown

Company Size	Percentage
1-49	13.79%
50-149	10.96%
150-499	17.44%
500-999	10.63%
1,000-4,999	17.44%
5,000-9,999	9.80%
10,000+	19.93%

Industry Breakdown

Industry	Percentage
Advertising & Marketing	2.99%
Agriculture	1.50%
Airlines & Aerospace	2.33%
Automotive	1.66%
Business Support & Logistics	2.33%
Construction & Machinery	4.15%
Education	14.78%
Entertainment & Leisure	3.82%
Financial Services	8.31%
Food & Beverage	3.49%
Government	7.97%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	17.11%
Insurance	3.99%
Manufacturing	5.15%
Nonprofit	3.99%
Retail & Consumer Durables	4.32%
Real Estate	0.83%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet	7.31%
Transportation & Delivery	2.49%
Utilities, Energy, and Extraction	1%
Not Currently Employed	0.50%

More industry data is available in the Appendix.

Report Summary

Execs and employees alike desire continuous coaching, express optimism for the future

While our surveys did uncover some discrepancies in sentiment between execs and employees, they did align on two key areas: a stronger need for continuous coaching, and optimism on the state of work six months from now.

Since 2018, there has been a 170% increase in the percentage of leaders & HR professionals who expect managers to offer feedback to their direct reports daily or more frequently. Similarly, there has been an 89% increase in the percentage of employees who want formal performance conversations monthly or more frequently.

Business leaders, HR professionals, and employees also align on their future expectations. Employees anticipate that it will be "business as usual", and they'll have learned new skills and be proud of their accomplishments during this time. HR teams and executives anticipate more effort needed to engage and retain talent in the future.

FROM THE EXPERTS

"Many companies are now making thoughtful decisions on workforce planning and investing in a culture that seeks to attract, retain, and develop great talent for the long-term. These investments will enable them to grow their businesses at scale when the conditions are right, and focus on human capital as they enter this new phase of growth."

Scott Darby

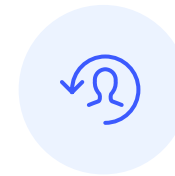*Operating VP at TPG* (a Reflektive investment partner)

Key Takeaways

Employee Needs

Employees desire more coaching and recognition from managers

Retention

While larger companies are more concerned about retention, they're less likely to have the right performance programs to *drive* retention

Lack of Alignment

Leaders and employees are misaligned on productivity expectations and feedback processes

Technology

Business and HR leaders anticipate investing more in technology in the next six months

3

Performance Programs

Renewed Interest in Employee Productivity and Data

Employee productivity is a major driver of performance programs in 2020. Since 2018, more HR leaders are invested in measuring the health of their performance management processes. Specifically, there is a much larger emphasis on measuring health via employee productivity.
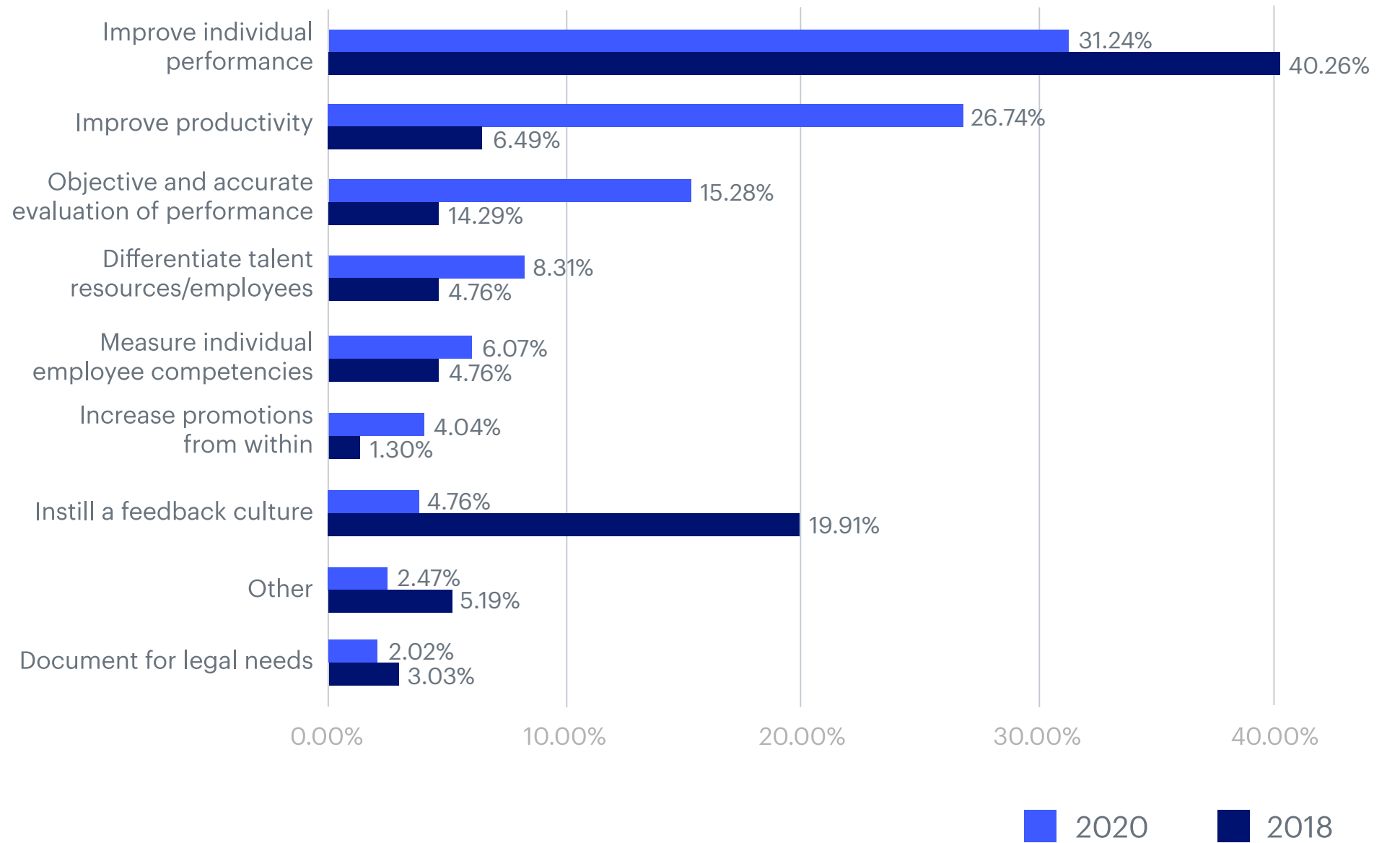
How do you measure the health of your performance management process? (check all that apply)
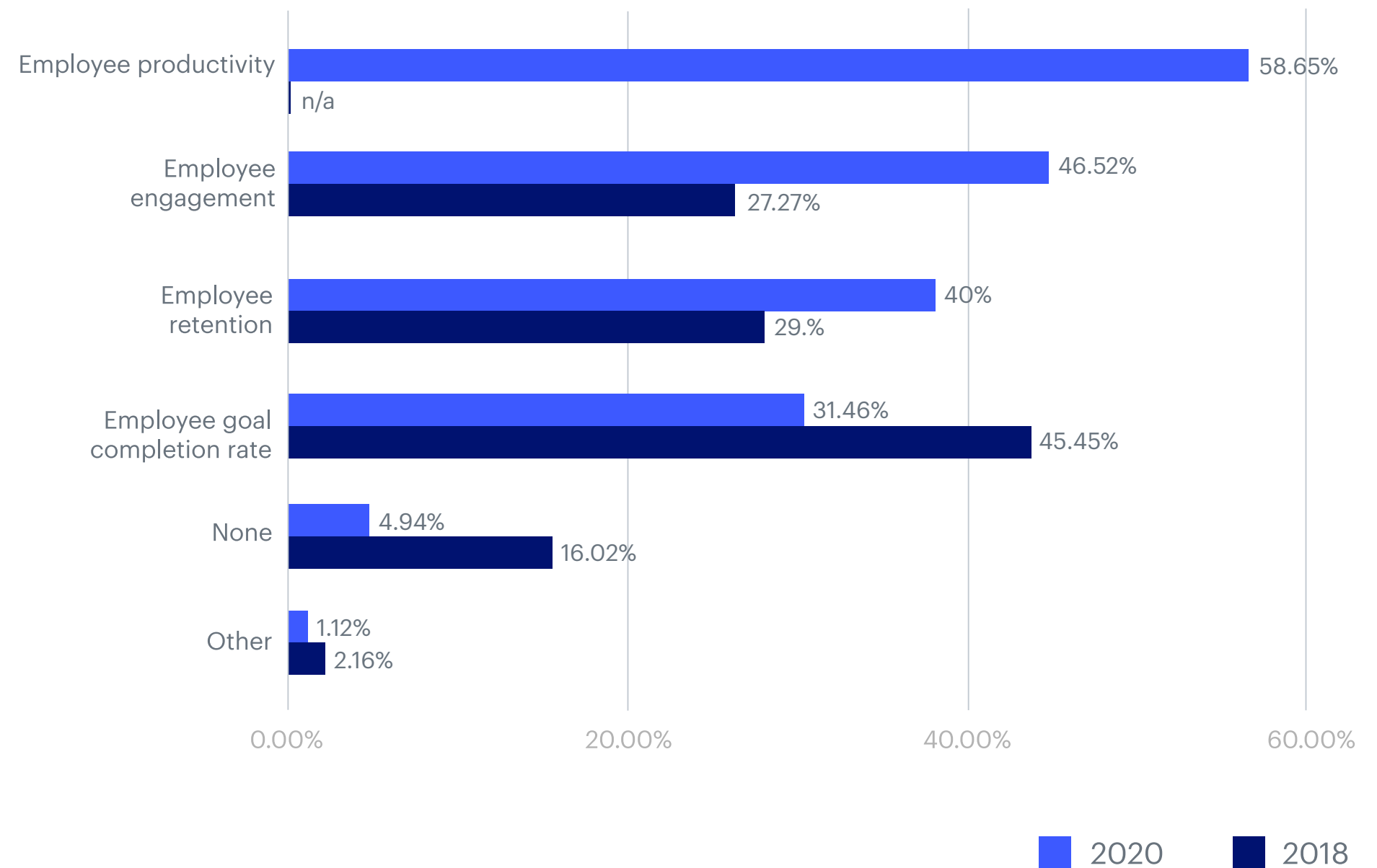
The most important purpose of performance management continues to be individual performance, however, improving productivity is now the #2 purpose.
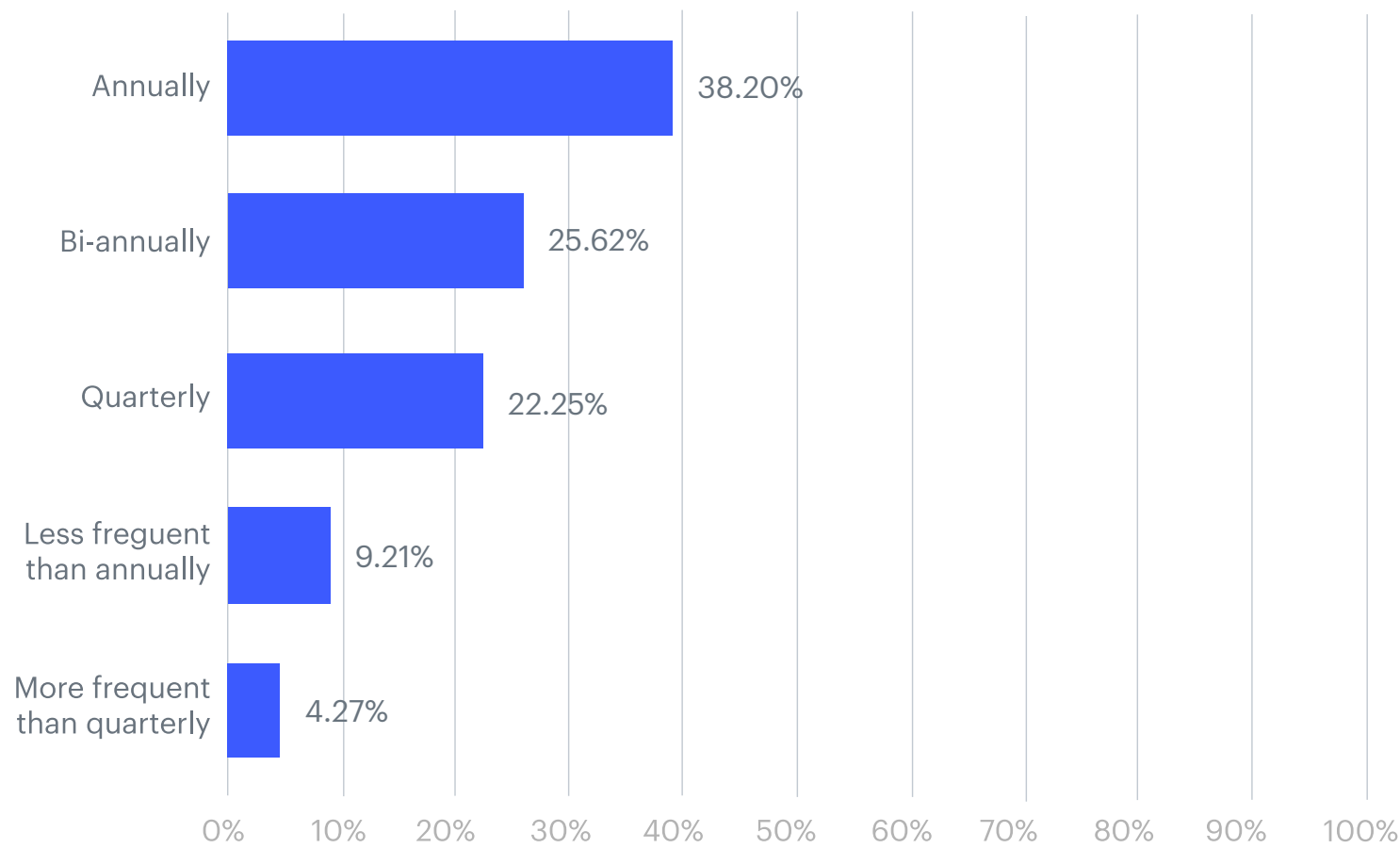
What does your company consider the most important purpose of performance management?

Improve individual performance: 31.24% (2020), 40.26% (2018)
Improve productivity: 26.74% (2020), 6.49% (2018)
Objective and accurate evaluation of performance: 15.28% (2020), 14.29% (2018)
Differentiate talent resources/employees: 8.31% (2020), 4.76% (2018)
Measure individual employee competencies: 6.07% (2020), 4.76% (2018)
Increase promotions from within: 4.04% (2020), 1.30% (2018)
Instill a feedback culture: 4.76% (2020), 19.91% (2018)
Other: 2.47% (2020), 5.19% (2018)
Document for legal needs: 2.02% (2020), 3.03% (2018)

2020   2018

How frequently does your company run a review or check-in?

Category	Value
Annually	38.20%
Bi-annually	25.62%
Quarterly	22.25%
Less frequent than annually	9.21%
More frequent than quarterly	4.27%

What type of performance rating do you use?

Category	Value
Descriptive (i.e average)	45.84%
I do not use ratings	10.56%
9-box	8.54%
Pass/fail	6.97%
Other	.90%

The formal processes of performance management have not changed significantly over the last 2 years. Nearly half of reviews are run annually or less frequently, and half are run quarterly or semi-annually.
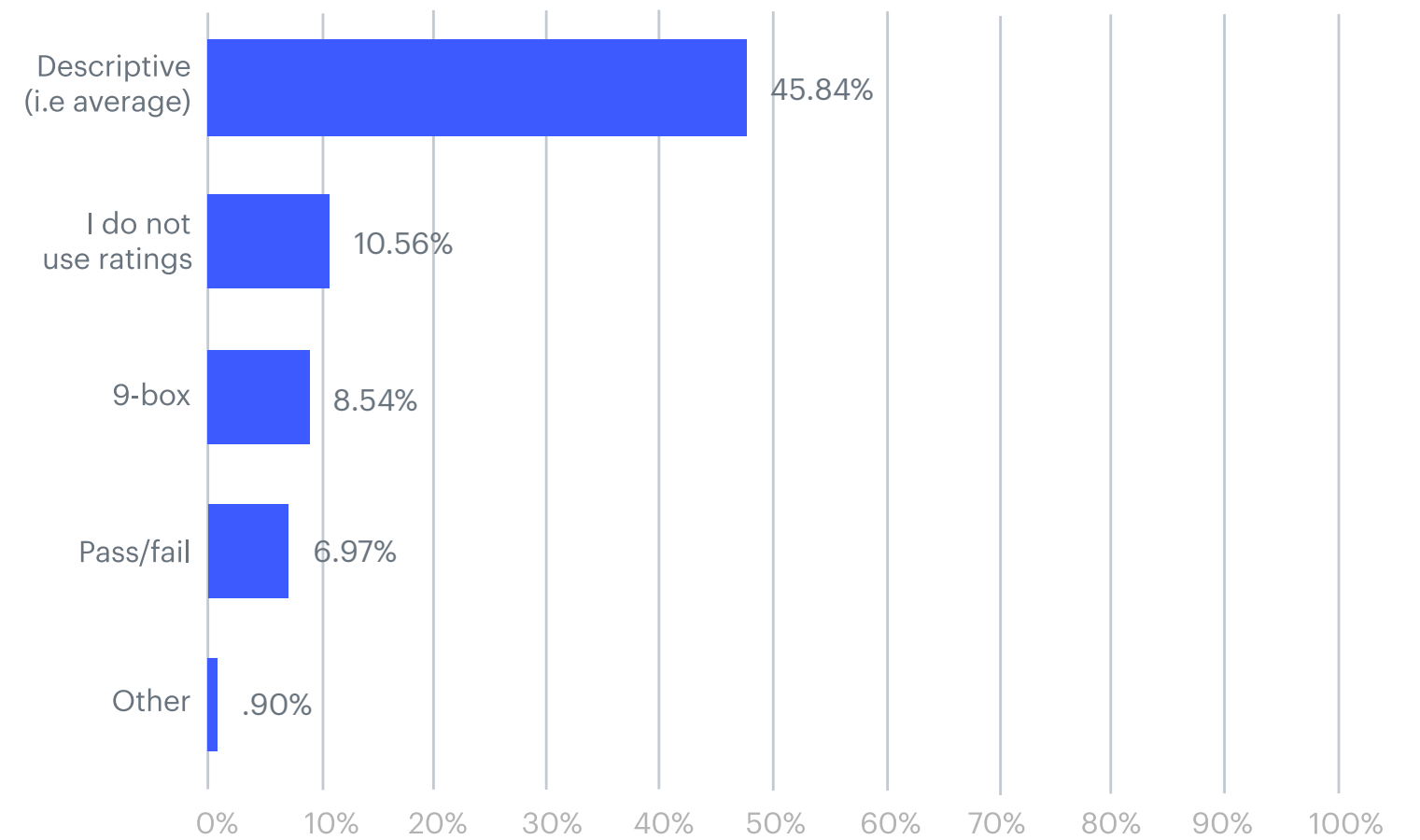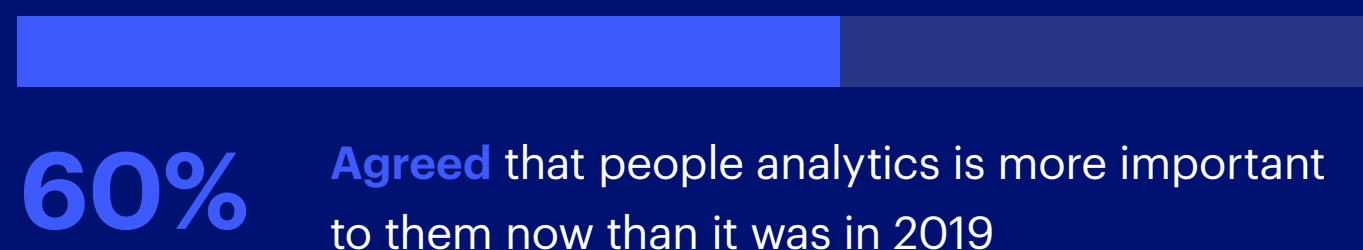
The usage of ratings remains largely unchanged with nearly half the organizations using descriptive ratings such as "meets expectations".

The Importance of People Data

HR Professionals and Business Leaders

60% **Agreed** that people analytics is more important to them now than it was in 2019

72% **Believe** they have a good understanding of why people leave

But only **50%** **Use** people analytics to predict employee performance and turnover
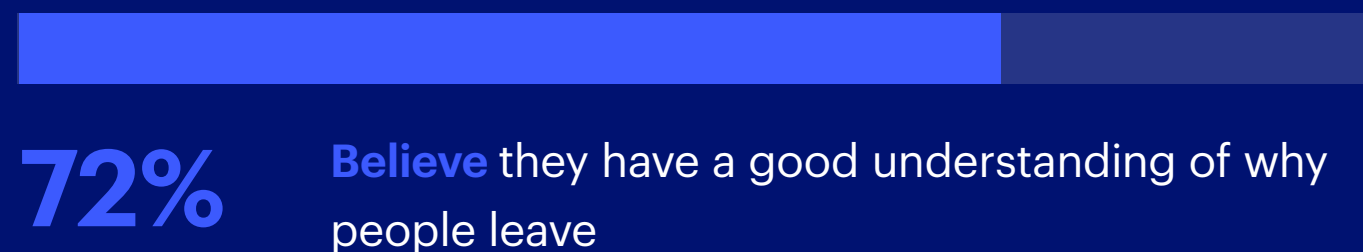
"We're continuing to look at more sophisticated ways to tie individual performance to team and company performance. We're analyzing what makes individual contributors successful and managers impactful at Dropbox, and this requires synthesizing and analyzing many sources of data, including employee survey scores and performance data. By figuring out what makes people successful, we can encourage these behaviors starting at the recruiting stage and continue to pepper our learnings throughout the programs and processes that touch the employee lifecycle."

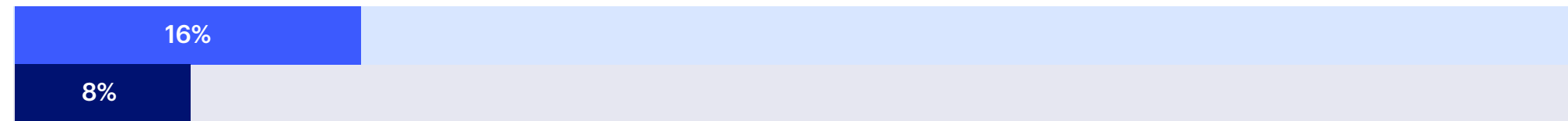**Taylor Orr**
Talent Management Program Manager at Dropbox

Employees Seek More Coaching From Managers

Workers desire more frequent guidance, as well as recognition for their work achievements.
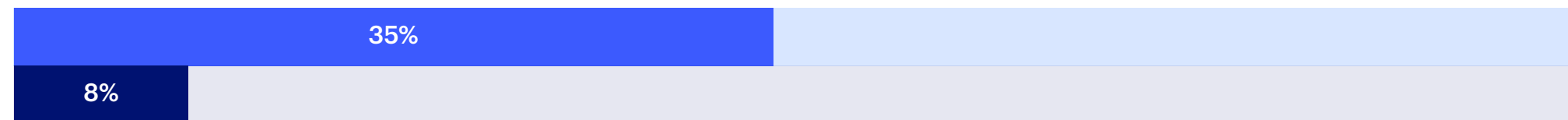
36%

19%
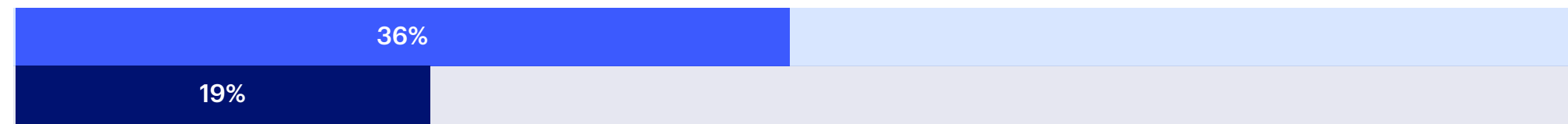
89% **Increase** in the percentage of employees that want formal feedback conversations monthly or more frequently

16%

8%

100% **Increase** in the percentage of employees that desire feedback from performance reviews

35%

8%

3.2X **Increase** in the percentage of employees that desire recognition

■ 2020   ■ 2018

Workers Have Difficulty Requesting Feedback and Initiating Conversations

Despite the significant interest in coaching, more than a quarter of employees don't know how to request feedback at their company. This contrasts with perceptions that many HR leaders hold, as the majority of these respondents believe that their employees are clear on feedback request practices.

In a similar vein, almost 30% of respondents don't feel empowered to initiate feedback conversations. However, only 14% of HR professionals and business leaders said that employees aren't empowered to initiate feedback conversations at their company.
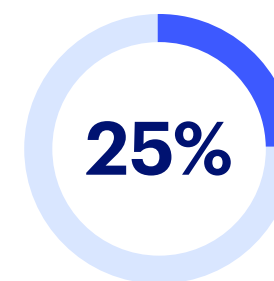
25% of employees don't know how to request feedback
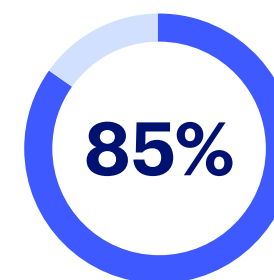
85% of business leaders believe that employees are clear on feedback request processes

FROM THE EXPERTS

"When tools aren't used regularly, employees may forget what's at their fingertips! On a quarterly basis, communicate the process for requesting feedback. Additionally, when managers regularly ask for feedback, employees will start mirroring this behavior as well."

Rachel Ernst

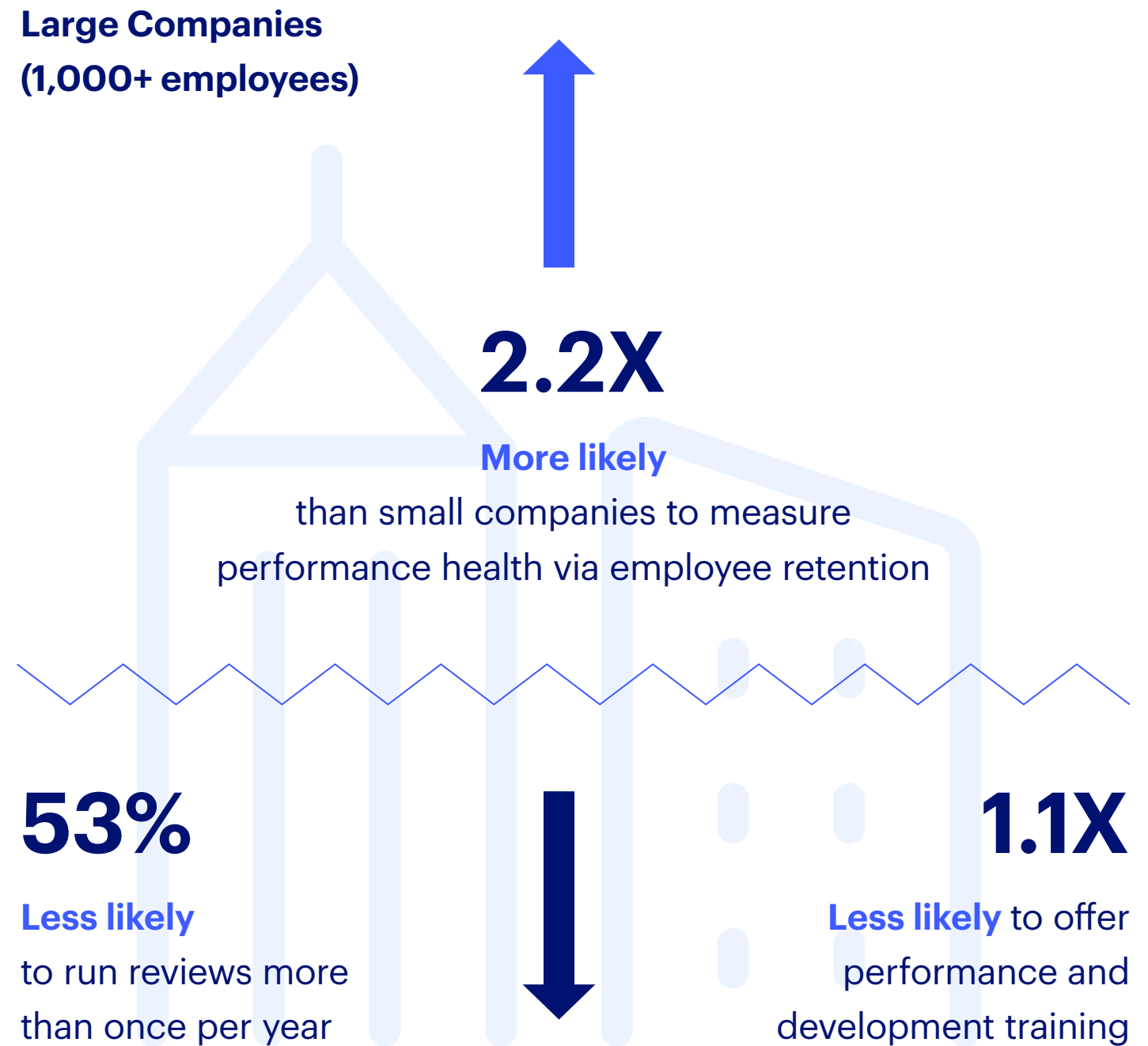*Chief Human Resources Officer at Reflektive*

State of Work in 2020

4

Opportunities for Mid-Sized and Enterprise Companies

Companies with over 1,000 employees are more concerned about retention versus their smaller peers -- however, large organizations are less likely to have the right performance programs to drive retention.

Large Companies (1,000+ employees)

2.2X

More likely

than small companies to measure performance health via employee retention

53%

Less likely to run reviews more than once per year

1.1X

Less likely to offer performance and development training

REFLEKTIVE TIP

Driving Adoption of Performance Programs

For every new or enhanced performance program that your organization launches, develop a comprehensive launch strategy. Consider including video clips from leaders about why the program is shifting and how it will benefit each employee; education sessions; an online resource center; and pop-up banners to stay top-of-mind for employees.

Employees Desire More Support and Communication During this Uncertain Time

Employees cite a lack of organizational transparency:

Only 19% **Agree** that their organization is transparent about upward mobility opportunities

Only 21% **Agree** that their organization is transparent about salary freezes

Only 21% **Agree** that their organization is transparent about potential pay cuts

How employees want to be supported during this time:

The most helpful **benefits**:

37% Better work-from-home set-up

36% Better medical coverage

32% 401(k) matching

To stay **engaged** while working from home:

47% Consistent communication from leadership

37% Consistent communication from colleagues

28% Virtual all-hands meetings

To make them feel better about their **job security**:

52% Recognize me for my hard work and successes

37% Provide regular feedback

30% Check in on my stress levels

REFLEKTIVE TIP

Boosting Employee Well-Being

During this uncertain time, we recommend that companies focus on employee mental wellness. This may include offering a mental wellness stipend, increased mental health benefits, and mental health resources (e.g., Headspace and Calm). Companies can also educate managers on mental wellness, so they are better equipped to have conversations with employees on the subject.

Executives Respond to the Current Situation, Exhibit Optimism About the Future

Business leaders and HR professionals are taking action to address employee needs and boost morale. Leaders are adjusting how they spend their time, with 39% of respondents spending the most time on company communications. Additionally, 60% of respondents have adjusted their review cycle due to the current situation. Reflektive has observed many companies shortening the timeframe for their reviews, and simplifying the process (e.g., limiting peer feedback for 360 reviews to 1 or 2 people).

By making the process faster and less complex, companies can show empathy for the challenges that employees are facing. Additionally, many leaders are taking action to boost employee morale, such as having more frequent check-ins and standup meetings.

Despite the challenging business environment, executives remain optimistic about the state of work six months from now. They anticipate more investment in technology (35% of respondents) and more efforts to boost engagement and retain employees (29% of respondents).

The most common actions taken to boost employee morale
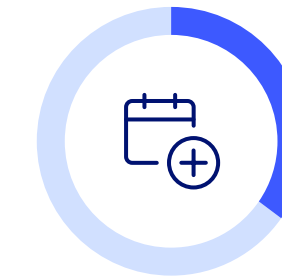
33%
Introducing more frequent check-ins and standups
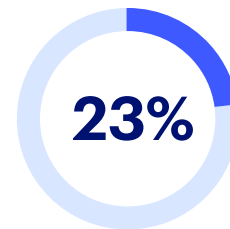
24%
Creating social communities
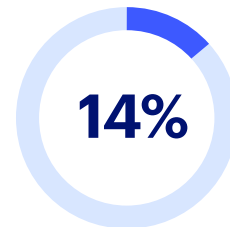
24%
Encouraging more peer recognition

Divergent Employee Sentiment on Productivity

Employees differ from business leaders and HR professionals on productivity expectations. However, workers share similar sentiment with executives in their optimism about the future.
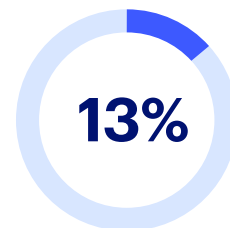
Positive Employee Sentiment

23%

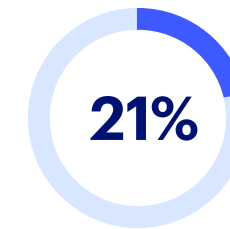reported that they were **more motivated** to work hard

14%

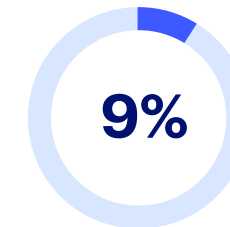reported that the quality of work is **higher**

13%

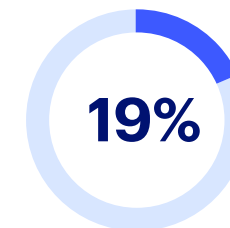reported that it is **easier** to stay aligned with their manager

Negative Employee Sentiment

21%

reported that they were **less motivated** to work hard

9%

reported that the quality of work is **lower**

19%

reported that it is **harder** to stay aligned with their manager

FROM THE EXPERTS

"The differences in employee productivity really speak to the need for frequent employee sentiment surveys during this time. Specifically, employee survey comments can help HR and leadership teams better understand what they can do to boost morale and productivity. It also speaks to how each employee experiences events differently, and highlights the importance of ongoing high quality conversations with managers and employees."

Rachel Ernst

*Chief Human Resources Officer at Reflektive*

Discrepancies Between Executive and Employee Sentiment

39% of employees, and 60% of executives, believe that productivity expectations have changed at their company. Employees also feel that they're expected to work longer hours, but few execs and HR professionals agree with this sentiment.

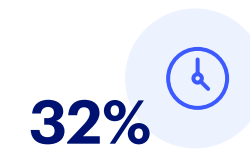**The most common ways that productivity expectations changed, according to employees:**
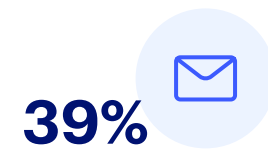
39%
Being more responsive to emails
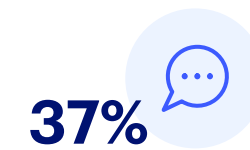
37%
Being available at any moment

32%
Working longer hours

Expectations around working hours:
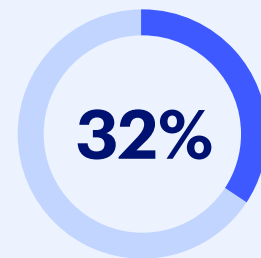
32%
of **employees** believe they're expected to work longer hours
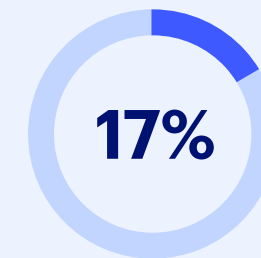
17%
of **execs and HR teams** believe that workers are expected to work longer hours

FROM THE EXPERTS

"Some employees mistakenly assume they must be "on" throughout daylight hours, since they can no longer see when people come and go from the office. This brings to light the importance of expectation setting as granular as response time to emails and instant messages. Blocking "no meeting time" also can relieve the ongoing pressure to be on and reachable at all hours. It is important we empower our workers to continue to have work and personal time to preserve their health, and get time to rest and reset."

Rachel Ernst

Chief Human Resources Officer at Reflektive

Low Employee Sentiment on Compensation, but Optimism for the Future State of Work

Given the changes in performance and productivity expectations, employees believe that their compensation should be adjusted. Specifically, 38% of employees believe that their compensation is not fair, and 90% of employees agree that performance should be tied to compensation.

Despite this and other headwinds, many employees express optimism for the future. Six months from now, employees anticipate that it will be business as usual (34% of respondents). Additionally, 26% expect to have learned new skills, and 25% believe they'll feel proud of their accomplishments.

FROM THE EXPERTS

"Given the significant impact the pandemic has had on the global economy, I would expect to see widespread salary freezes in many industries. In the US and Europe, the impact to compensation will be partly mitigated by government and central bank programs that are helping companies continue to pay wages or temporarily furlough staff.

Companies may pivot their compensation strategy to focus more heavily on equity (e.g. stock options or restricted stock units). Equity compensation will also save on much needed cash, which many companies will have less of following decreases in revenue. Finally I would expect many companies to forgo annual bonuses this year. Instead, they may offer different ways to recognize their top performers through employee awards, additional time-off, stock or other non-cash rewards."

Kaori Woodbine

Senior Total Rewards Manager at One Medical

5 Conclusion

The events of 2020 have significantly impacted performance programs, and how employees get work done. The most successful companies will be those who prioritize company-wide communications and manager-employee dialogue.

Additionally, ensuring that employees are **empowered** to initiate feedback conversations is crucial in helping them grow and develop.

Per Rachel Ernst, "The challenges of 2020 are universal. We're all experiencing unprecedented changes and disruptions in our daily lives, and how we work. In 1:1s, check-ins, and even all-hands meetings, showing empathy and truly listening to employee needs will put companies in the best position to succeed going forward. There's never been a more important time to be in HR."

6 Appendix

HR Professional & Business Leader Responses by Industry

Does your performance management program include continuous feedback or coaching?	Yes, we currently use continuous feedback	We plan to make changes in the next 12-18 months	No plans currently
Advertising & Marketing	80.00%	15.00%	5.00%
Financial Services	78.95%	21.05%	0.00%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	55.93%	27.12%	16.95%
Insurance	66.67%	11.11%	22.22%
Manufacturing	64.00%	24.00%	12.00%
Retail & Consumer Durables	64.00%	12.00%	24.00%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet & Electronics	62.96%	18.52%	18.52%

Do you feel connected to your colleagues while working remotely?	Yes	No
Advertising & Marketing	65.00%	35.00%
Financial Services	89.47%	10.53%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	81.36%	18.64%
Insurance	77.78%	22.22%
Manufacturing	76.00%	24.00%
Retail & Consumer Durables	80.00%	20.00%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet & Electronics	81.48%	18.52%

Have your company's performance expectations changed?	Yes, we're much more lenient on performance and productivity	No, business as usual
Advertising & Marketing	65.00%	35.00%
Financial Services	52.63%	47.37%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	59.32%	40.68%
Insurance	66.67%	33.33%
Manufacturing	48.00%	52.00%
Retail & Consumer Durables	60.00%	40.00%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet & Electronics	48.15%	51.85%

Employee Responses by Industry

Do you know how to request feedback at your company?	Yes	No
Advertising & Marketing	88.89%	11.11%
Financial Services	68.00%	32.00%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	71.84%	28.16%
Insurance	83.33%	16.67%
Manufacturing	67.74%	32.26%
Retail & Consumer Durables	61.54%	38.46%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet & Electronics	81.82%	18.18%

Do you feel empowered to initiate feedback conversations?	Yes	No
Advertising & Marketing	83.33%	16.67%
Financial Services	68.00%	32.00%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	66.02%	33.98%
Insurance	83.33%	16.67%
Manufacturing	77.42%	22.58%
Retail & Consumer Durables	69.23%	30.77%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet & Electronics	72.73%	27.27%

Have expectations on productivity changed at your company?	Yes	No	Unsure
Advertising & Marketing	61.11%	33.33%	5.56%
Financial Services	38.00%	46.00%	16.00%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	32.04%	52.43%	15.53%
Insurance	25.00%	58.33%	16.67%
Manufacturing	29.03%	51.61%	19.35%
Retail & Consumer Durables	50.00%	38.46%	11.54%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet & Electronics	34.09%	50.00%	15.91%

If yes, how have your company's expectations changed? (Select all that apply)	Work Longer Hours	Sign On Earlier, and Sign Off Later	Be Available at Any Moment	Be More Responsive to Emails	Spend Less Time in Teamwork and More Time on Independent Work	Relaxed Productivity Expectations Given Employee Stress Levels
Advertising & Marketing	45.45%	27.27%	72.73%	45.45%	54.55%	27.27%
Financial Services	10.53%	26.32%	31.58%	42.11%	42.11%	36.84%
Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	42.42%	27.27%	39.39%	27.27%	18.18%	30.30%
Insurance	33.33%	0.00%	16.67%	33.33%	33.33%	50.00%
Manufacturing	33.33%	22.22%	22.22%	22.22%	44.44%	22.22%
Retail & Consumer Durables	30.77%	38.46%	38.46%	46.15%	53.85%	30.77%
Telecommunications, Technology, Internet & Electronics	33.33%	26.67%	46.67%	73.33%	26.67%	26.67%