

# COVID and Corporate Culture

## Without question, the COVID-19

pandemic has put a strain on all aspects of corporate life — especially for those focused on building and maintaining connections and engagement across their workforce. The initial abrupt move to remote work and potential use of remote or hybrid arrangements going forward present unusual challenges in terms of corporate culture. Employers must not only keep their employees in touch with one another, but they also must align them with the broader sense of company purpose and vision.

In fact, [a West Monroe poll](#) finds that this issue is on the minds of many executives: When asked about challenges related to hybrid work plans, 60 percent cite building and maintaining company culture. [Employee Benefit Adviser](#) also reports on the need for employers to foster engagement among their teams during the pandemic. While most people have embraced remote work, Gallup finds that only 15 percent of them feel engaged with their role.

According to [Emplify](#), when employees lose touch with their company's overall mission and purpose, there can be real consequences in terms of retention. Among workers surveyed, 45 percent say they feel disconnected from their organization's mission since they have transitioned to remote work. A concerning 65 percent note that they are "currently open to new career opportunities," and 32 percent are actively seeking a new job.

[A Gallagher survey](#) of organizations across the world finds that 95 percent say they have learned from their experience throughout the pandemic — and made changes for this year as a result. Specific to communication, it cites a "growing digital divide" created by limitations around in-person interactions, making digital channels the primary way to connect with employees. While 73 percent of employers feel

it is possible to engage workers with these messages, just 55 percent believe digital is effective at fostering collaboration.

[Employee Benefit Adviser](#) also reports that companies intend to make changes this year in terms of how they operate and communicate with their workforce. Forty-three percent plan to revisit their values and behaviors, and 40 percent will initiate new ways of working. For instance, fewer employers plan to use social media to connect with their workers (41 percent, a decrease from 47 percent last year).

More than ever, [Bloomberg](#) notes that it is critical for companies to "help meet employees' baseline psychological needs" in this challenging time. If workers do not feel a sense of belonging, purpose, and stability, then they may feel stressed, disengage, have lower energy levels, or lack creativity. [BenefitsPRO](#) also covers a recent Glint report examining how company managers have adapted to leading their teams remotely over the past year. It reveals that those who are "people centric" when it comes to their team members more strongly influence organizational success. One key area where employers and managers can have a positive impact on employees is fostering a sense of belonging, as in helping them feel like part of the team.

According to [Gartner, Inc.](#), onboarding new employees is one area that has been especially difficult for human resources leaders during the pandemic. In today's remote environment, it is even more challenging than in a traditional setting to connect these new employees to organizational culture. Gartner research also finds that when employees feel connected to company culture, their performance improves up to 22 percent.

In terms of how companies can plan for the future, [a Novarica blog post](#) reiterates that the role of company culture is key to embracing increasingly virtual operating models. Adaptability is necessary to help people continue to work together effectively, as

tomorrow's workplace is likely to include more agile, hybrid work arrangements.

Build the long-term success of your remote leaders and teams with the [Remote PROductivity Toolkit](#). Contact [talentsolutions@limraloma.com](mailto:talentsolutions@limraloma.com) to learn more.