

Press release
24 April 2025

Workers find hybrid work is best to be productive but employers are still wary

- 86% of employers believe it is a challenge to balance employee wellbeing with an increase in productivity
- 63% of employees believe hybrid work has a positive impact on their productivity levels
- 30% of employees believe working in the office full time has a negative impact on their productivity
- 40% of employers plan to mandate in-office days to increase productivity in 2025

Sydney, 24 April 2025 – Employees believe the hybrid work arrangement has the most positive impact on enhancing their productivity but employers are not so sure, new independent research by specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#) finds.

Business leaders have taken measures to improve productivity, with 39% of them mandating in-office days (not necessarily full-time) for this reason and another 40% planning to do so in 2025.

However, most employers understand that boosting productivity through a variety of means can impact employee wellbeing. The majority (86%) of businesses say it is a challenge to provide work-life balance to employees while boosting productivity.

How workers see the impacts of different ways of working

When asked to outline the impacts on productivity of different ways of working, only 5% of employees stated it does not matter where or when they work, as they do not believe it would impact their productivity.

Workers believe working at home has the greatest positive impact on their productivity levels, whether that is for some or all of their working week. Similarly, with 53%, working from the office full time was reported as having the highest negative impact on productivity of all ways of working.

	Working from home full time	Working from the office full time	Hybrid work	Working outside of traditional hours
Positive impact	53%	45%	63%	51%
Negative impact	26%	30%	15%	25%
No impact	22%	25%	22%	24%

Independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 1,000 full-time office workers in Australia

*“Hybrid work is the sweet spot for productivity according to workers as in-office and at-home environments offer them certain benefits,” says **Nicole Gorton, Director at Robert Half**. “Employers, meanwhile, recognise that the absence of in-person work hinders the collaborative culture that leads to increased productivity. The most successful organisations will be those that find the right balance between flexibility and accountability.”*

How employers are addressing productivity levels

Employers have introduced a range of measures to improve productivity, including ways to improve workforce capacity, workflows as well as work settings.

- 50% of employers have increased training/professional development opportunities
- 49% of employers have improved communication and feedback processes
- 48% of employers have optimised workflow management

- 43% of employers have implemented automation and digital transformation initiatives
- 42% of employers have hired contract workers
- 41% of employers have enforced tougher performance metrics
- 39% of employers have mandated in-office days

When asked what they plan to implement in 2025 to improve productivity, mandating in-office days was listed as one of the measures they were most likely to explore.

- 43% of employers plan to implement automation and digital transformation initiatives
- 40% of employers plan to mandate in-office days
- 39% of employers plan to enforce tougher performance metrics
- 39% of employers plan to improve communication and feedback
- 39% of employers plan to optimise workflow management

“The key takeaway is that one size doesn't fit all,” Gorton says. “While some companies are resorting to tougher performance metrics and mandated in-office days, others are focusing on more holistic approaches like improved communication and workflow optimisation. Employers need to think about how they can adopt a flexible approach that caters to the business needs while keeping their workforce motivated and engaged.”

Meeting the productivity challenge

Despite taking steps to tackle productivity levels, an overwhelming majority (86%) of employers say it is challenging to improve productivity while ensuring their employees have work-life balance. Only 1% of employers stated they do not find it at all challenging to boost productivity while ensuring employee wellbeing.

“With Australia’s productivity levels slowing down, employers and employees are seemingly at odds around what an optimal work set-up looks like. While the majority of employees value hybrid or remote work, employers want to prioritise productivity and see in-office mandates as a way to accomplish this goal, while also continuously prioritizing employee wellbeing to avoid burnout and retain top talent. It's a tightrope walk, but it's not impossible.”

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Notes to editors

About the research

The study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted online in November 2024 by an independent research company of 500 hiring managers and 1,000 full-time office workers in finance, accounting, business support, and IT and technology. Respondents are drawn from a sample of SMEs as well as large private, publicly-listed and public sector organisations across Australia. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management, and trends in the workplace.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the global, specialised talent solutions provider that helps employers find their next great hire and jobseekers uncover their next opportunity. Robert Half offers both contract and permanent placement services, and is the parent company of Protiviti, a global consulting firm. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Melbourne South East, Perth, and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com/au.

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