



MEDIA ALERT

Australia's work-life balance in jeopardy: Research reveals the impact of COVID-19 on Australian work behaviours

SYDNEY, Australia – 27 August 2021 – New research released by Adobe reveals Australian employees are working longer hours, feeling more pressure to be 'always on' and are more likely to switch jobs than most global regions.

The report, titled *The Future of Time*, surveyed 5,500 enterprise workers and small-to-medium business (SMB) owners across seven global regions, asking respondents where they feel the most time pressure and how it has impacted their work and personal lives.

More than half (56%) of Australian enterprise workers and 62% of SMB leaders believe they are working longer hours than they would like. The majority (68%) of enterprise workers blame their company, its culture and administrative tasks for the longer hours, which is 6% higher than the global average (62%).

Australian businesses will urgently need to respond to employee desire for a better work-life balance, with three quarters (74%) of enterprise workers citing poor work-life balance as a key reason to switch jobs, followed by more control over work schedule (69%) and the need for better tools to be more effective (62%).

The option to work remotely is also a significant pull for Australian enterprise workers, with more than half (59%) reporting they would switch jobs for this perk, compared to a global average of 54%.

"It's very interesting to see that, when compared globally, Australians feel like they're working longer hours and are more likely to switch jobs next year than most other regions," noted **Suzanne Steele, Vice President and Managing Director at Adobe Australia and New Zealand**. "We know the pandemic has had a huge impact on Australians work behaviours but it's now becoming clear that this is putting a strain on both enterprise workers and small-to-medium business owners. With employee dissatisfaction and resignation posing a very real risk on business outputs, employers should evaluate the resources, benefits, tools and technology on offer to better engage employees and allow them to thrive."

The 9-5 work week is officially outdated

For Australian SMB leaders, the average work week is 45.1 hours, while enterprise employees will work an average of 44.3 hours per week.

These longer hours are not going unnoticed, with workers feeling the pressure and considering themselves as time poor. According to the data, over half (52%) of Australian enterprise workers and 65% of SMB leaders are feeling the pressure to be 'always on.' While 61% of enterprise workers and 63% of SMB leaders feel constantly stretched for time. This struggle for time is most evident in Australia, with only 53% of enterprise workers and 57% of SMB leaders stretched for time globally.



Longer and more pressurised hours could be major reasons behind why 57% of enterprise workers would switch jobs if they were offered an extra week of vacation or holiday time, nearly 10% higher than the global average (49%).

Gen Z are leading 'The Great Resignation'

More than half of Gen Z workers plan to pursue a new job in the next year, more than any other generation. Gen Z are also the least satisfied generation at work, with only 56% satisfied with work-life balance and 59% with their job overall.

This generational group is also feeling the pressure to be more connected. Gen Z (57%) and Millennials (54%) feel most pressured to be available 'at all times' and are also most likely to describe their job as repetitive (65% of Gen Z, 58% of Millennials) and tiring (65% for both). Today, 62% of Gen Z feels more pressured than their older colleagues to be working during 'office hours', even if they know they won't be productive.

The need for better tools and technology to retain talent

While the forces behind these trends are large and complex, what is clear from the research is that Australian workers have higher expectations for technology and tools to help them work faster and more efficiently.

Almost two thirds (62%) Australian enterprise workers reported that they would switch jobs if better tools were available to make them more efficient and effective. Interestingly, 70% of Gen Z and 66% of Millennials are leading the charge in this category.

This is especially true for low-effort and mundane tasks, such as managing files, forms, contracts, payments, and invoices, which accounts for a third of the average workweek. In the future of the workplace, where employees will continue to work remotely and across offices, the data indicates that employers must embrace user friendly technology tools, AI and automation to retain and attract talent.

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About The Future of Time Survey

In May 2021, Adobe fielded a 20-minute online survey to a representative sample of 2,100 small business leaders and 3,400 enterprise workers across the US, UK, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. For more information, visit <https://adobe.ly/FutureOfTime>

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