



WORK

RELATIONSHIP

INDEX





# Introduction

The future of work is personal. To improve the world's relationship with work, leaders' attention needs to be focused on delivering tailored and personalized experiences to today's workers.



The modern workforce is made up of billions of people, each of whom has a specialized and unique relationship with work. But work is not really working right now. While leaders and employees' expectations for work have continued to change, work itself has not. Over the past year, the world's workspaces, company culture, tools, and leadership styles have not yet evolved to keep pace with workers' newfound needs.

This year's HP Work Relationship Index (WRI) uncovers that to improve the world's relationship with work, our attention should be on the worker - a worker who wants to be treated as an individual, rather than simply as part of a collective workforce.

**Put simply:** To improve society's relationship with work, the future of work needs a fundamental shift.

As businesses rethink work, leaders and knowledge workers are placing an ever-increasing emphasis on choice, customization, and autonomy. In fact, when asked what workers ideally needed to feel happy and productive at work, 95% of knowledge workers gave a unique and distinct response.

So, while many corporations still take a one-size-fits-all approach, the 2024 HP WRI reveals that workers are operating from a more personalized mentality. When asked about their relationship with work, at least two-thirds of knowledge workers and leaders are actively seeking a personalized experience at work. In fact, knowledge workers place such a high value on the potential of a personalized work experience that 87% globally would be willing to forgo a portion of their salary to get it.

These experiences include working in a way that best suits their needs, personalizing their workspaces, having access to different technologies that best suit their working style, and having the liberty to define and shape what a flexible working environment looks like to them.

Making this future possible for workers everywhere will ultimately come down to leadership - leaders who are strong in their human skills and eager to capitalize on emerging technology, such as AI, with workers' needs in mind.

---

The 2024 HP Work Relationship Index: HP commissioned an online survey managed by Edelman Data & Intelligence (DXI) that fielded between May 10 - June 21, 2024, in 12 countries: the US, France, India, UK, Germany, Spain, Australia, Japan, Mexico, Brazil, Canada and Indonesia. HP surveyed 15,600 respondents in total - 12,000 knowledge workers (1,000 in each country); 2,400 IT decision makers (200 in each country); and 1,200 business leaders (100 in each country). Depending on their role, some respondents qualified as both an IT decision maker and business leader.

# Executive Summary

01	<h2>The world's relationship with work remains unhealthy</h2>	02	<h2>Personalization is vital to shaping people's work experience</h2>						
<p>2024 HP WRI findings uncover that only 28% of knowledge workers say they have a healthy relationship with work, up just one-point since 2023.</p> <p>The inaugural HP Work Relationship Index found that people around the world have an unhealthy relationship with work. Year two tracks year-over-year changes in this relationship, diving deeper into the drivers of relationships with work in 2024, possible solutions and the actions needed to improve.</p>		<p>Personalization has emerged as a new universal need for today's knowledge workers.</p> <p>What personalization means greatly varies from person to person. Out of the 12,000 knowledge workers surveyed, ~11,500 gave unique responses about what they need to feel happy and productive at work – spanning collaboration, work environment, management practices, working hours and more.</p>							
03	<h2>AI is already transforming the world's relationship with work</h2>	04	<h2>Leaders are lacking confidence in human skills and hard skills</h2>						
<p>AI usage has exploded and emerged as a key resource to drive better relationships with work. As AI usage at work has taken off, it's helping unlock a personalized work experience.</p> <p>The Work Relationship Index score for knowledge workers and business leaders who use AI is +11- and +10-points higher than that of their non-AI user counterparts, respectively, and most of them already recognize that AI will make it easier to advance their careers.</p>		<p>Workers rely on leaders to help shape a healthy relationship with work. But research reveals that less than half of business leaders feel consistently confident in their human skills (mindfulness, self-awareness, communication, creative-thinking, resilience, empathy, emotional intelligence) and hard skills (technical, computer, marketing, presentation, writing) skills.</p> <p>Business leaders need to seize this opportunity and gain greater confidence in their human skills to build trust with knowledge workers and help improve their relationship with work.</p>							
05	<h2>Empathy is a must-have for workers - and they don't get enough of it</h2>	06	<h2>The six core drivers continue to define the overall relationship with work</h2>						
<p>Knowledge workers are increasingly upfront about their need for communication, empathy and appreciation at work.</p> <p>Leadership's ability to show empathy at work directly impacts employees' well-being, professional growth and retention. However, while roughly 90% of business leaders acknowledge the positive impact of empathy, just 28% of knowledge workers say they consistently see senior leadership demonstrate empathy.</p>		<p>Each of the six drivers identified in 2023 still apply in 2024. They continue to foster action and can help employees build a better relationship with work. These drivers are:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>  <b>Fulfillment:</b> Purpose, meaning and empowerment at work         </td> <td>  <b>People-centricity:</b> Decision-making with people at the heart         </td> </tr> <tr> <td>  <b>Skills:</b> Confidence-building by tapping into the enthusiasm employees have for learning new skills         </td> <td>  <b>Leadership:</b> Empathy and emotional connection from those in charge         </td> </tr> <tr> <td>  <b>Workspace:</b> Flexibility and trust in where employees work, enabled by seamless transitions         </td> <td>  <b>Tools:</b> The right technology to drive employee engagement         </td> </tr> </table>		 <b>Fulfillment:</b> Purpose, meaning and empowerment at work	 <b>People-centricity:</b> Decision-making with people at the heart	 <b>Skills:</b> Confidence-building by tapping into the enthusiasm employees have for learning new skills	 <b>Leadership:</b> Empathy and emotional connection from those in charge	 <b>Workspace:</b> Flexibility and trust in where employees work, enabled by seamless transitions	 <b>Tools:</b> The right technology to drive employee engagement
 <b>Fulfillment:</b> Purpose, meaning and empowerment at work	 <b>People-centricity:</b> Decision-making with people at the heart								
 <b>Skills:</b> Confidence-building by tapping into the enthusiasm employees have for learning new skills	 <b>Leadership:</b> Empathy and emotional connection from those in charge								
 <b>Workspace:</b> Flexibility and trust in where employees work, enabled by seamless transitions	 <b>Tools:</b> The right technology to drive employee engagement								
2	 Work Relationship Index 2024								

# The world's relationship with work remains unhealthy

Just 28% of knowledge workers say they have a healthy relationship with work – an increase of one point since 2023.

Across the globe, HP research found that workers' relationships with work range from a low of 9% in Japan to a high of 46% in India. US and Indonesian knowledge workers saw the largest increase in their relationship with work, each increasing +6-points, while Brazil (-8-points), India (-4-points) and Mexico (-3-points) all experienced drops in the last year.

With little evidence of significant improvement, there's increased urgency among business leaders to find solutions: 74% of them agree we have reached a critical moment to redefine the world's relationships with work – a +7-point increase from 2023.

HP Work Relationship Index  
(% of knowledge workers who have a healthy relationship with work)

2023 Knowledge workers			2024 Knowledge workers			Greatest changes in	
27		Global	28		Global	US	+6
50		India	46		India	Indonesia	+6
38		Indonesia	44		Indonesia	Australia	+5
37		Brazil	34		United States	Spain	+5
34		Mexico	31		Mexico	Japan	+4
28		United States	29		Brazil	Mexico	-3
25		United Kingdom	27		Australia	India	-4
23		Canada	26		United Kingdom	Brazil	-8
22		Australia	25		Spain		
21		France	23		Canada		
21		Germany	22		Germany		
20		Spain	21		France		
5		Japan	9		Japan		

# Tracking the six drivers of a healthy relationship with work

Scores across all drivers identified in 2023 stayed relatively stable, which shouldn't come as much of a surprise. Put simply, not much has changed in the past 12 months when it comes to building a better experience for workers.

The drivers with the strongest impact on the world's relationship with work in 2024 are Leadership, Fulfillment and Skills, with Fulfillment seeing the biggest jump in score (+2-points) from 2023.

Further, we found that countries with increases in their WRI score felt the strongest improvements in Leadership and Fulfillment while countries with a decrease in their WRI score experienced declines most notably across Tools, Skills and Workspace.



**Fulfillment:** Purpose, meaning and empowerment at work



**Leadership:** Empathy and emotional connection from those in charge



**People-centricity:** Decision-making with people at the heart



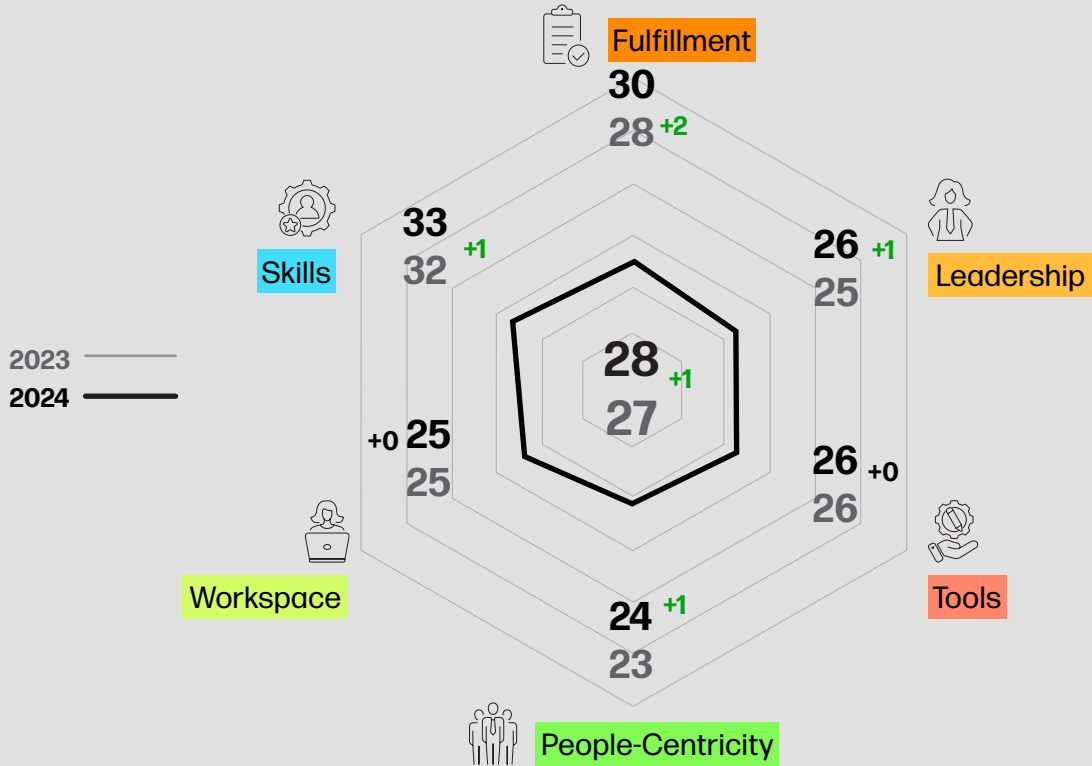
**Skills:** Confidence-building by tapping into the enthusiasm employees have for learning new skills



**Tools:** The right technology to drive employee engagement



**Workspace:** Flexibility and trust in where employees work, enabled by seamless transitions



1 The number in the center is the core Work Relationship Index score, capturing the percentage of people who have a healthy relationship with work today out of 100.

2 The highlighted scores outside the circle represent the current performance of each of the drivers, out of 100, where performance score indicates the percentage of people who consistently experience the driver at their company.

# Personalized work experiences are paramount for the future of work

Knowledge workers crave flexible ways to work and an environment that suits their working style. To set employees up for greater success (and, therefore, their companies), business leaders should harness the power of personalized work experiences.

By allowing people to work in a way that best suits their needs, personalizes their workspaces, gives access to different technologies that best suit their working style, and allows them to define and shape what a flexible working environment looks like, business leaders can shape the ideal circumstances for their employees. More than two-thirds of knowledge workers say that having a tailored or customized approach to work would improve their relationship with work (69%) and even incentivize them to stay with their companies longer (68%).

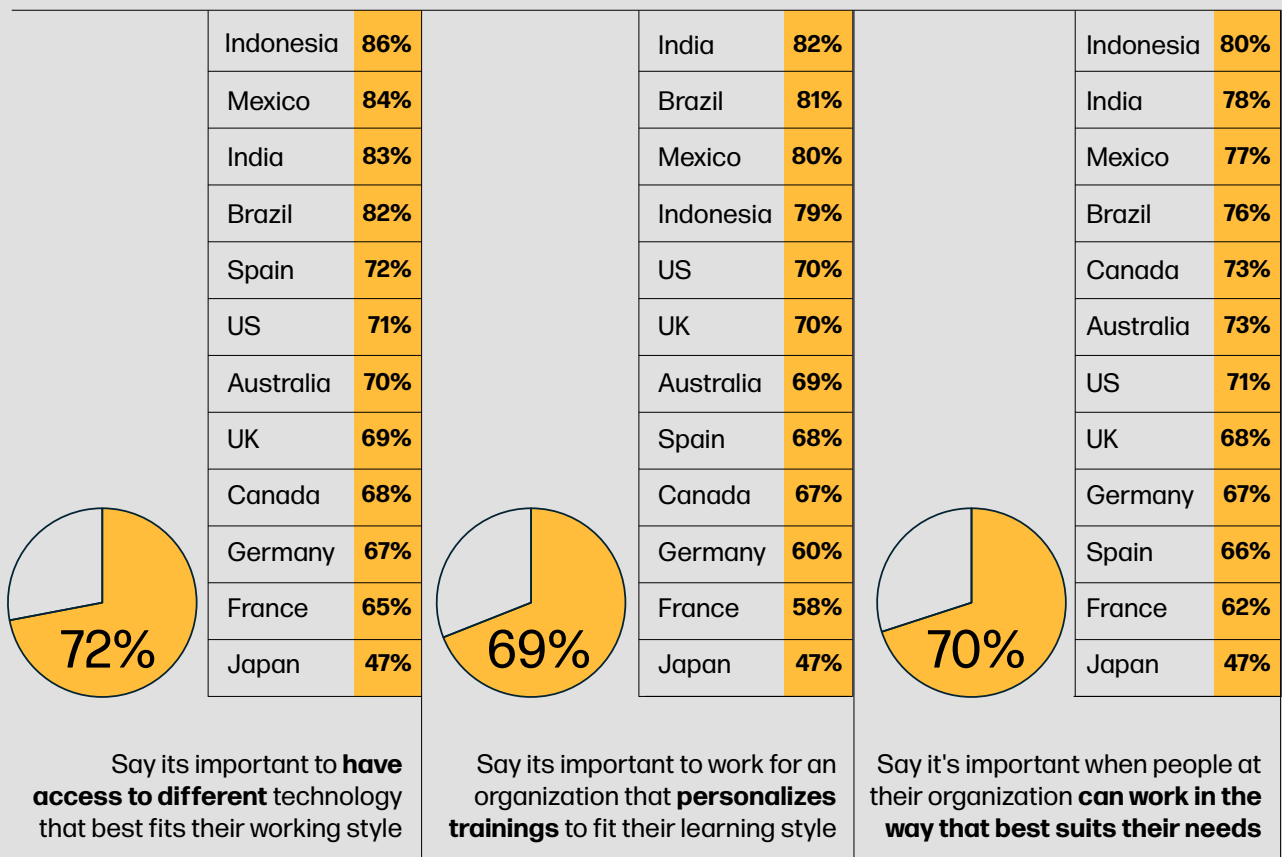
In fact, workers place such a high value on the potential of a personalized, tailored work experience that 87% would be willing to give up a portion of their salary to get it – on average forgoing **14%** of their salary. For Gen Z workers specifically, that figure rises as high as **19%**.

<p>Knowledge workers want the ability to work not just where they want, but also when and how they want</p>	Of their salary, workers would be willing to forgo...	
	<p><b>16%</b></p> <p>+3 YOY to work <b>WHERE</b> they want (e.g., in the office, in their home, or somewhere else)</p>	<p><b>16%</b></p> <p>+3 YOY to work <b>WHEN</b> they want (flexible hours that can shift based on their life needs)</p>
	<p>↓</p> <p>For a salary of \$75,000, this means knowledge workers are willing to give up</p> <p><b>\$12,000</b></p>	<p>↓</p> <p>For a salary of \$75,000, this means knowledge workers are willing to give up</p> <p><b>\$12,000</b></p>
	<p><b>15%</b></p> <p>to work <b>HOW</b> they want (e.g., on small teams, on certain clients)</p>	<p><b>14%</b></p> <p>to have more <b>TAILORED OR CUSTOMIZED</b> options that suit their working preferences</p>
	<p>↓</p> <p>For a salary of \$75,000, this means knowledge workers are willing to give up</p> <p><b>\$11,250</b></p>	<p>↓</p> <p>For a salary of \$75,000, this means knowledge workers are willing to give up</p> <p><b>\$10,500</b></p>

# Personalization is not a one-size-fits-all solution

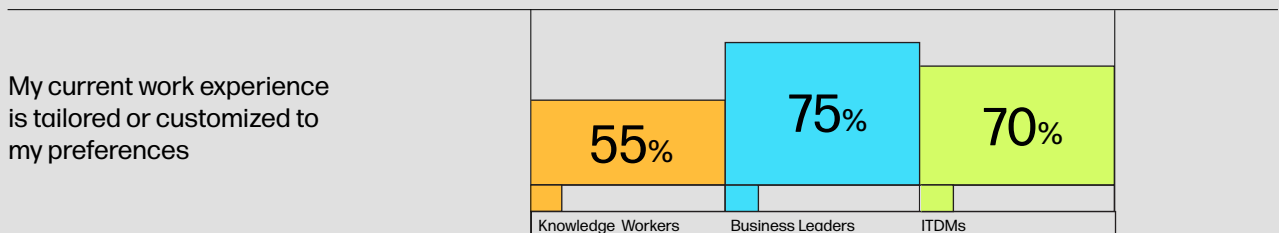
This year's WRI research reveals a major universal need from knowledge workers: personalized work experiences. Knowledge workers want personalization implemented across all aspects of their work. Their personal life is now their leaders' business, and they say it's important that leadership acknowledges factors like caretaking responsibilities, medical/accessibility needs and personal stressors along with work-specific preferences.

Growing markets are more likely to desire personalization across technology, training, and general day-to-day



While a large majority of business leaders and IT decision makers (ITDMs) say their current work experiences are tailored to them, only about half of knowledge workers can say the same.

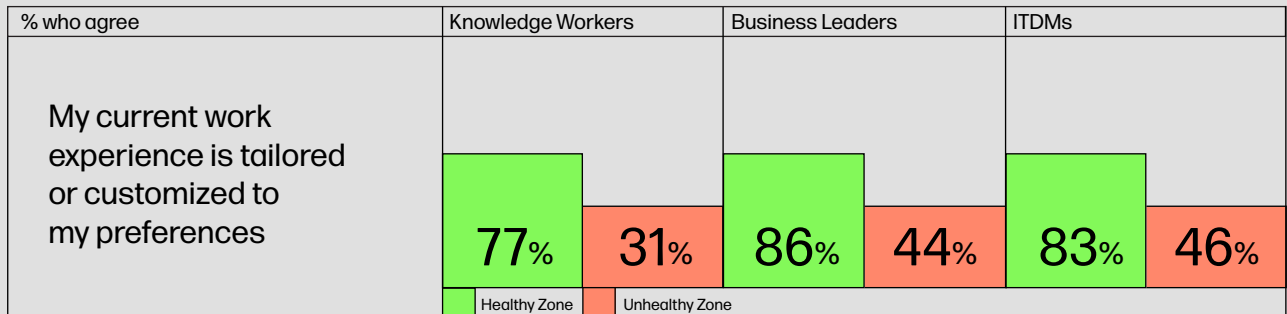
% who agree:



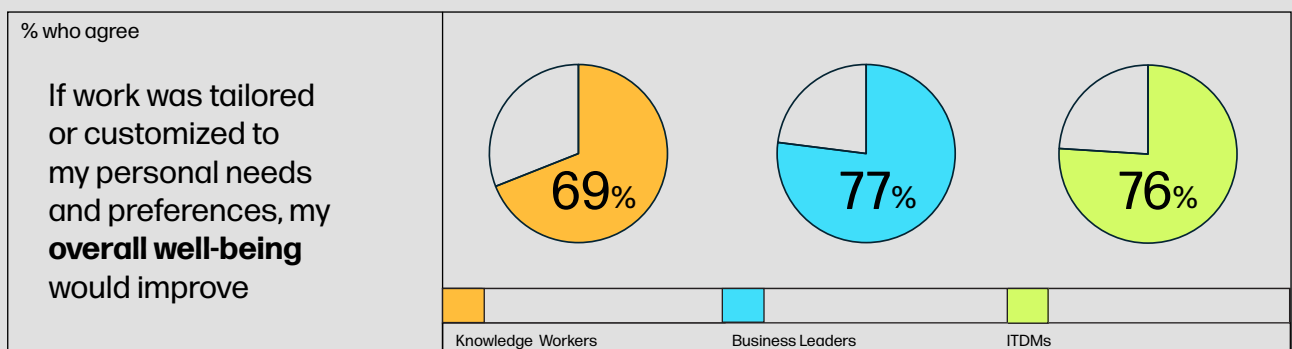
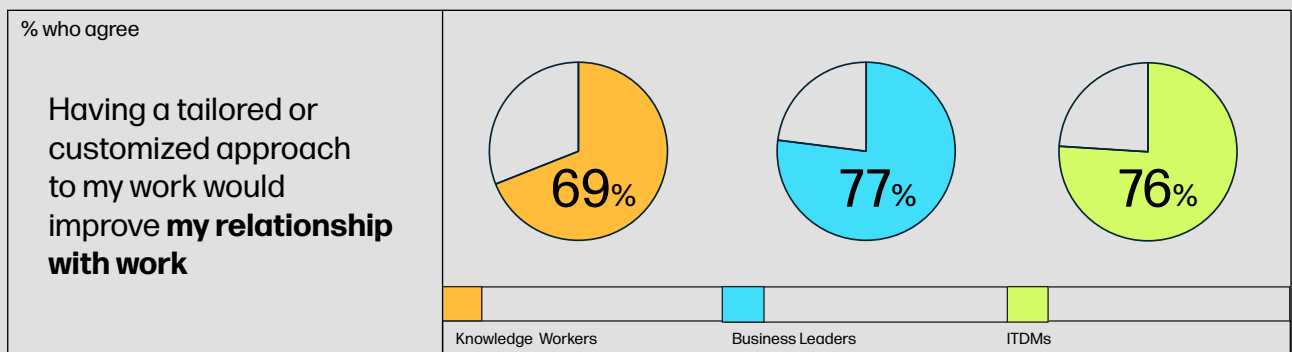


# Healthy relationships with work depend on personalization

Knowledge workers who currently experience work personalization are more than 2x more likely to have a healthy relationship with work.



Workers, leaders and ITDMs say a tailored work experience would benefit both their well-being and overall work relationship. As a result, more than two-thirds (68%) of knowledge workers globally say they are currently seeking a personalized work environment. Research found that nearly 7-in-10 workers say they would experience benefits from personalized work.

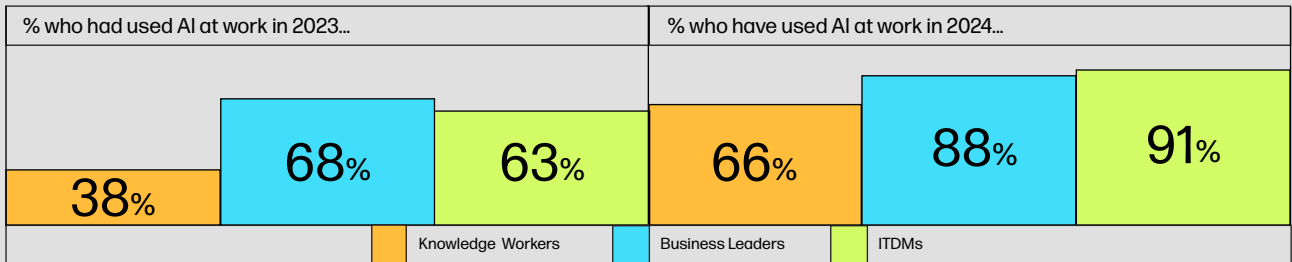




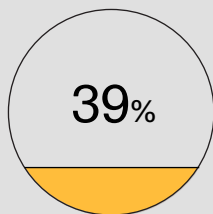
# AI may offer a path to improved work relationships

In 2023, AI users were excited about the benefits of AI. In 2024, they are experiencing them.

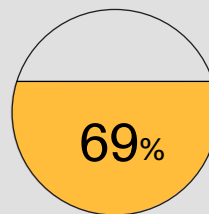
AI usage has exploded in the past 12 months. At work specifically, AI usage increased by +28-points for both knowledge workers and ITDMs, with business leaders seeing a smaller, but still significant, jump of +20 points.



Despite all the fervor around AI improving operational speed and efficiency, this year's survey uncovered a promising new application for the technology - building a tailored work experience. The perspective of AI has shifted towards that of being a job enabler. 69% of knowledge workers who use AI agree they can personalize the use of AI to make them more productive. Even for knowledge workers who don't use AI, 39% say it should help create a more tailored/customized work experience.



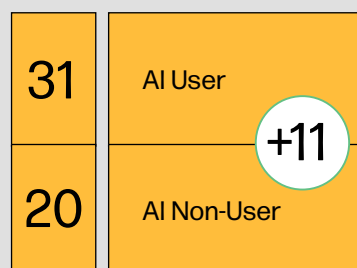
39% of knowledge workers who don't use AI say AI should help them create a more tailored / customized experience at work



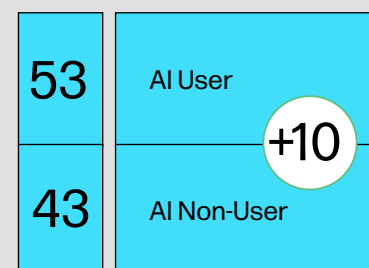
69% of knowledge workers who use AI agree they can personalize the use of AI to make them more productive

This optimistic outlook manifests in the overall Work Relationship Index score for knowledge workers and business leaders, as AI users experience a WRI score +11 and +10-points higher than that of their non-AI user counterparts, respectively.

2024 Knowledge Workers WRI Score



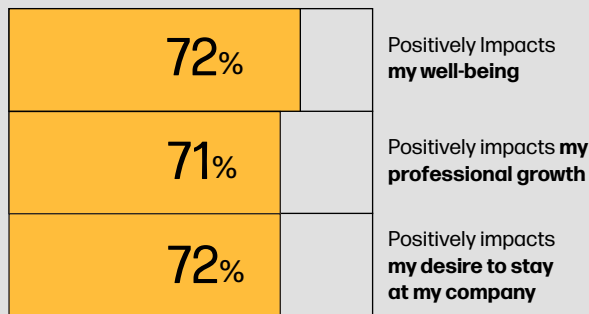
2024 Business Leaders WRI Score



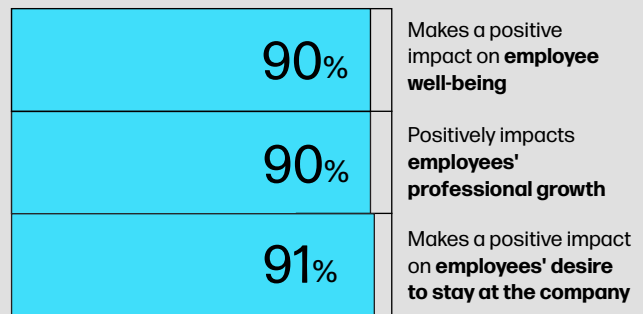
# The impact of leadership on employees' relationships with work

Trust in leadership is repeatedly mentioned as a key contributor to knowledge workers' happiness and productivity, specifically empathy from leaders. Approximately 90% of business leaders recognize how empathy can also benefit employee growth, retention and well-being.

% of knowledge workers who agree senior leadership's ability to show empathy...



% of business leaders who agree senior leadership's ability to show empathy...



However, despite the clear impact, less than half of business leaders (47%) consistently feel confident they're equipped with the right skills to be successful at work, with even fewer consistently feeling confident in their human skills\* (44%) or hard skills\*\* (42%). Organizations would be wise to take note of this influence and dedicate future development to these traits. Notably, this year's research uncovered a bright spot: female leaders. On average, female business leaders are more confident than their male counterparts in their hard and human skills by +10 and +13-points, respectively.

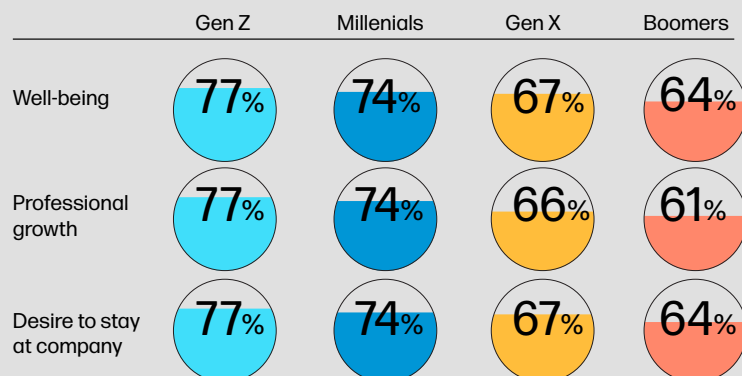
% of business leaders who say:

	Business Leaders	Men	Women
I am confident that I have the right skills to be successful at work	47% (vs. 45% in 2023)	42% (vs. 44% in 2023)	54% (vs. 46% in 2023)
I'm confident in my human skills* (e.g., mindfulness, self-awareness, communication, creative-thinking, resilience, empathy, emotional intelligence)	44% (vs. 41% in 2023)	39% (vs. 39% in 2023)	52% (vs. 42% in 2023)
I'm confident in my hard skills** (e.g., technical skills, computer skills, marketing skills, presentation skills, writing skills)	42% (vs. 42% in 2023)	38% (vs. 41% in 2023)	48% (vs. 44% in 2023)

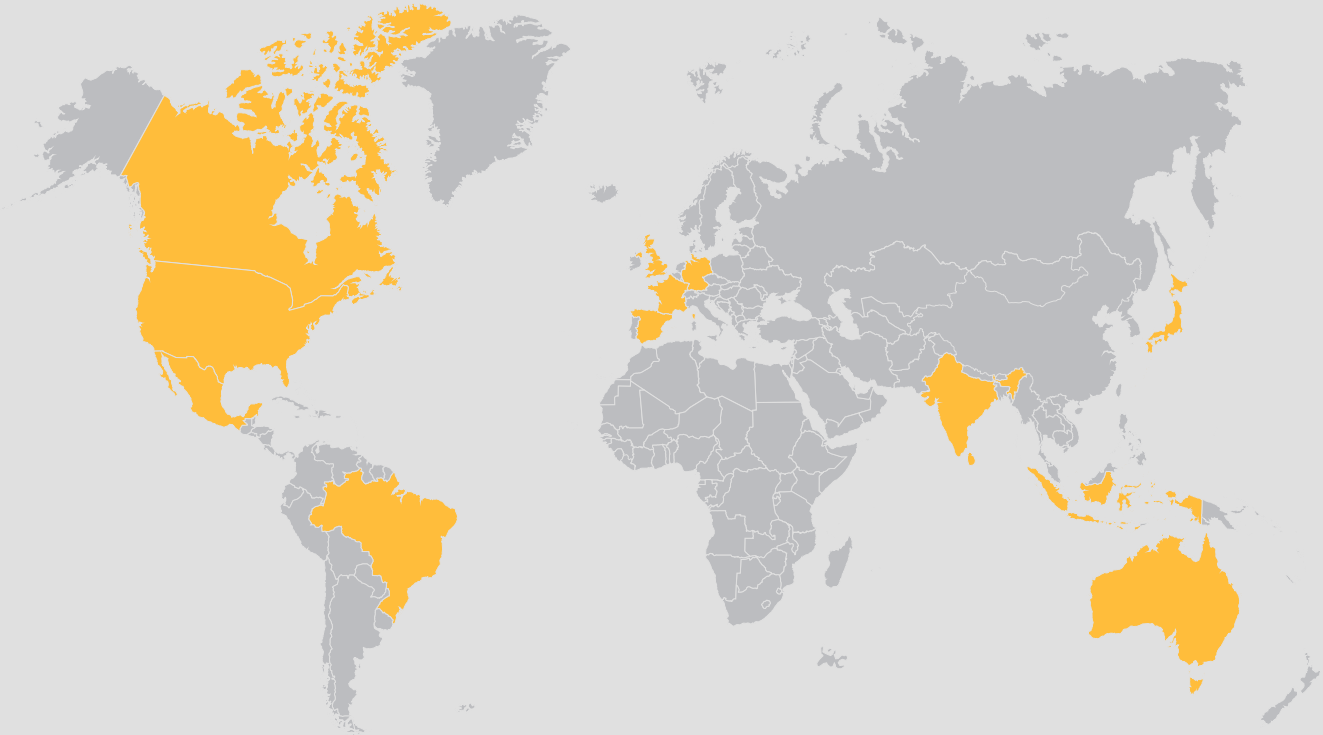
% of knowledge workers who say senior leadership's ability to show empathy positively impacts their:

A significant majority (78%) of knowledge workers also said it's important to have senior leadership who demonstrate empathy - but just 28% said they consistently see their senior leadership do so.

Senior leadership's ability to show empathy impacts everyone - most deeply for Gen Z and Millennials, but also for the majority of Gen X and Boomers.



# Methodology



**2024 HP Work Relationship Index:**

HP commissioned an online survey managed by Edelman Data & Intelligence (DXI) that fielded between May 10 – June 21, 2024, in 12 countries:

Australia	Brazil	Canada
France	Germany	India
Japan	Indonesia	Mexico
Spain	UK	US

HP surveyed 15,600 respondents in total:

- 12,000 knowledge workers (1,000 in each country)
- 2,400 IT decision makers (200 in each country)
- 1,200 business leaders (100 in each country)

Depending on their role, some respondents qualified as both an IT decision maker and business leader.

