

New survey reveals that nearly half of American workers are considering leaving their current place of employment

The 2022 Workplace Belonging Survey finds employed job seekers lack a sense of belonging at work and are more likely to feel lonely and excluded in their current role

WASHINGTON, DC, Jan. 24, 2022 - New research shows that almost half of employed Americans are thinking about leaving their current jobs. Those who are considering making a switch are less likely to feel a sense of belonging in their current workplace, which is most often associated with being treated fairly and respectfully – though belonging encompasses many more emotions.

The 2022 Workplace Belonging Survey, commissioned by Ipsos on behalf [Dr. Rumeet Billan](#), researcher, speaker, and expert on psychological capital, finds that nearly all employed Americans (88%) agree that a sense of belonging at work boosts productivity. It also explores the gaps in what workers believe would lead to a sense of belonging and what they are currently experiencing at their jobs.

Belonging is good for business

“We have recently undergone life-altering challenges as a population, exposing the need for workplace cultures to be transformed,” said Dr. Billan. “More than 19 million American workers have quit their jobs since April 2021, disrupting businesses everywhere. Companies cannot afford to continue going through this type of employee turnover. It is important that we take the time to learn why this is happening and our recent findings suggest that workers place a high value on the very human and relational aspects of work.”

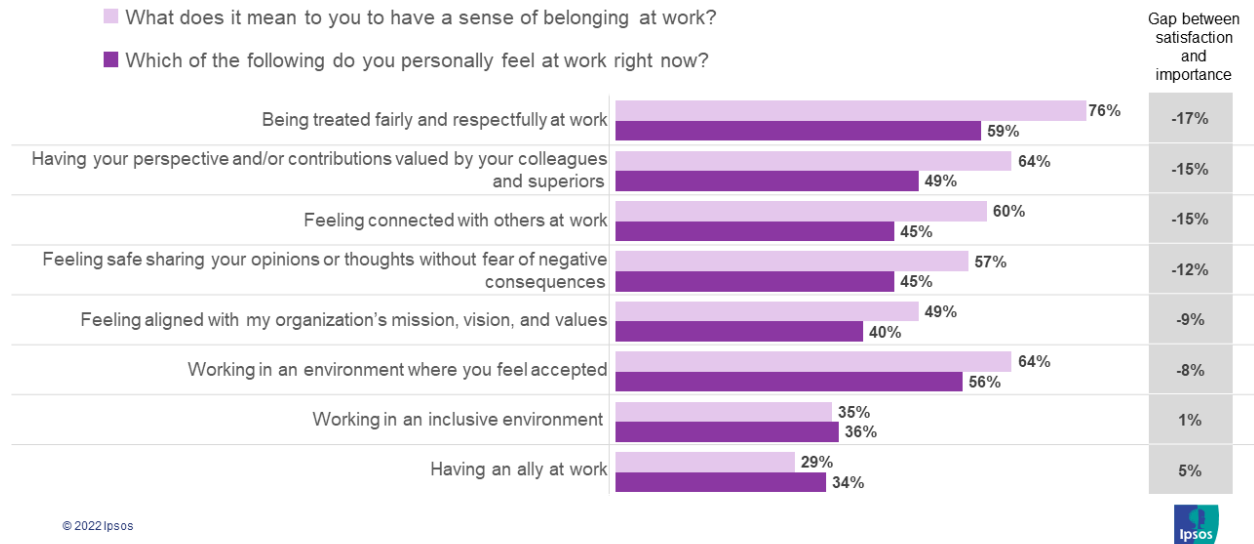
Employed Americans agree that belonging leads to higher productivity at work. If workers feel like they belong, companies can reap substantial benefits – lower turnover, healthier corporate culture, a more productive workforce, engaged employees, and more.

- Nearly all (88%) strongly or somewhat agree that a sense of belonging leads to higher productivity at work, including a majority (54%) that strongly agree.
- Three quarters (76%) say having a sense of belonging at work means being treated fairly and respectfully.
- Two in three say a sense of belonging at work means having their perspective and/or contributions valued by their colleagues and superiors (64%) and working in an environment where they feel accepted (64%).
- The largest disparity between what workers think belonging means and what they currently feel at work is “being treated fairly and respectfully at work” (17 percentage point difference), followed by “having their perspective and/or contributions valued by their

colleagues and superiors” and “feeling connected with others at work” (15 percentage point difference for both).

Fairness and respect are critical to employee belonging

Employees cite fairness and respect as the top driver of belonging in the workplace, presenting the greatest opportunity for businesses and employers to create belonging in their organizations.



Inclusion, connection, alignment: opportunities to drive belonging at work

“Belonging is not a program or initiative, it is an experience related to social connectedness, feeling included, and being accepted,” said Dr. Billan. “It’s not just about inviting everyone to the proverbial table. What happens when they get there? Now, more than ever, companies and employers must take a more human-centered approach to how they support, communicate, and engage with their employees. Well-intentioned quick fixes can come across as transactional or virtue signaling when this is not complemented with the effort to strengthen relational ties.”

- Only 36% of employed Americans feel they work in an inclusive environment.
- Less than half of employed Americans feel connected with others at work (45%).
- Less than half of American workers (40%) feel aligned with their organization’s mission, vision, and values. This is also true for Millennials, who represent 35% of the total U.S. labor force and are currently the largest working generation. Just over one in three (35%) feel aligned with their organization’s mission, vision, and values.

Belonging is a fundamental human motivation, and we are hardwired towards it. Employees are experiencing stress and burnout. They are seeking a renewed sense of purpose in their work and want connection with their colleagues and superiors. Failing to recognize and invest in creating experiences of belonging and failing to meet the demands of a changing workforce will continue to push workers out instead of pulling them in.

Lonely at work

The 2022 Workplace Belonging Study reveals that one in four women feel lonely at work.

The survey asked respondents what they wished their peers and colleagues knew about stressors that were impacting their day-to-day life at work. One survey respondent said, “It’s hard being the only woman and person of color in my position.”

Another respondent shared, “how hard it is to be a younger female in a predominantly older male community.”

Feeling lonely at work is not only problematic for employees, it also poses a great business challenge for companies and employers as well. When employees feel lonely at work, they are more likely to withdraw, take more sick days, and the data suggests that they are more likely to leave.

Psychological safety in the workplace is a concern. Less than half (45%) of employed Americans feel safe sharing their opinions or thoughts without fear of negative consequences. The survey also shows that less than half (47%) of women feel their perspective and/or contributions are valued by their colleagues and superiors.

“Psychological safety is critical to creating a culture that fosters trust, belonging, and resilience,” said Dr. Billan. “Without it, organizations can’t thrive and will continue to face retention issues.”

When it comes to creating experiences of belonging, an immediate change is needed to support women in the workplace.

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About Dr. Rumeet Billan

Dr. Rumeet Billan is an award-winning, internationally recognized entrepreneur, researcher, speaker, and expert on psychological capital. Her mission is to transform workplace cultures through research, training, and experiences that enable trust, foster belonging, and build resilience. Dr. Billan completed her PhD at the University of Toronto, and has designed and facilitated programs, courses, and training sessions across industries and sectors. She led the groundbreaking research study on [Tall Poppy Syndrome](#) which reveals the impact of the silent systemic syndrome on women in the workplace, and co-led the Canadian Happiness at Work Study.

Dr. Billan has been named Canada’s Top 100 Health Leaders in 2021, Canada’s Top 10 Power Women, and was twice named one of Canada’s Top 100 Most Powerful Women by the Women’s Executive Network. She is a regular guest on top radio and television morning shows, and has been featured in *Forbes*, *The Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, and more. She recently authored her

first award-winning and bestselling book [Who Do I Want To Become?](#) designed for anyone, of any age, who has been stumped by the question of what they're going to be when they grow up.

Through her work, Dr. Billan provides a platform that encourages others to envision what could be possible. Since 2004, she has contributed to social impact initiatives that improve access to and the quality of education in North America, South America, and Africa. Recently, Dr. Billan made a donation of more than 280,000 brand-new books from various publishers and authors to be distributed to children and youth in need. She continues to support causes and lead initiatives that promote human welfare.

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About the Study

The 2022 Workplace Belonging Survey was conducted January 7 – January 11, 2022 by Ipsos using our KnowledgePanel®. This survey is based on a nationally representative probability sample of 1,054 U.S. employed adults and oversamples in each of the following Designated Market Area (DMA): New York City (n=333), Chicago (n=283), Los Angeles (n=295), and Washington D.C (n=286). There were 2,098 total respondents. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, for results based on the entire sample of employed adults.

More information about the study is available on [Ipsos' website](#).

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