

NewtonX

MAY 2021

Fortune Analytics + NewtonX Current

What CFO's really think
about the future of work.

Key research takeaways

We surveyed 75 US CFOs from a wide variety of industries, in organizations of all sizes from April 27th to May 5th 2021.

Remote and hybrid work has made team management harder, but personal work management easier

- Currently, 77% of CFOs are working fully-remotely or have a hybrid (1-4 days in-person) arrangement. Most with hybrid arrangements have a flexible schedule of days worked in-person.
- Most CFOs found team-building, managing employee motivation, building a common culture, supervising employees, and training to be challenging while working fully-remotely or with a hybrid arrangement.
 - The best aspects of working fully-remotely or with a hybrid arrangement are saving money on work-related expenses and improved personal autonomy, work/life balance, and personal productivity.

The future of work won't be like the pre-Covid past

- Almost 40% of CFOs expect a return to fully in-person work for prof. employees. Very few expect to go fully-remote and completely ditch the office.
 - 57% expect this return to happen within 3 months, and another 40% expect it to take 4 to 12 months
 - However, only 25% of CFOs actually prefer fully in-person work arrangements.
- Post-Covid, 70% of CFOs want greater flexibility of days worked in-person. Half want more flexible start/finish work-times.
- CFOs are closely split about requiring proof of vaccination before entering the workplace: 46% strongly agree, 40% strongly disagree, and very few are in the middle.
- Most CFOs expect the same amount of business travel post-pandemic as pre-pandemic: from zero to 2 days/month
- Most CFOs didn't think remote-work significantly reduced their personal productivity or that of their average employees. Work during the pandemic also didn't significantly change their work hours.

The prospects for business recovery are very good

- Almost half of CFOs have hit or exceeded pre-Covid revenue or profit numbers
- 80% of CFOs expect their post-Covid office-space requirements to be within 20% of their pre-Covid requirements

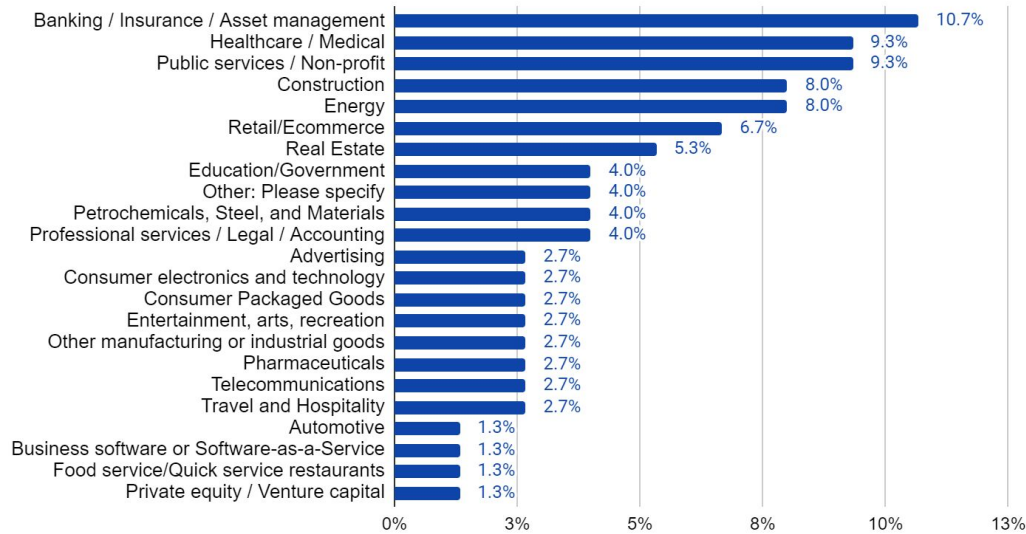
Key insights from the data

- Slide 12: "For many CFOs working fully-remote or hybrid, their most difficult challenge is team-building. Many CFOs also found creating a common culture and managing employee engagement to be more challenging when remotely working."
- Slide 13: "Many CFOs found that hybrid and fully-remote work arrangements reduced their personal work-related expenses, like commuting and apparel. They also found that it is easier to maintain personal autonomy, work/life balance, and personal focus when working remotely."
- Slide 19: "Almost 40% of CFOs expect a return to fully in-person work arrangements for professional employees once Covid-19 is no longer a health threat. However, only 25% of CFOs prefer fully in-person work arrangements. Many CFOs expect full in-person work, but prefer a hybrid arrangement with 1-4 days in-person."
- Slide 22: "Airlines and business hotels can breathe a sigh of relief: post-pandemic, most CFOs expect to do as much business travel as they did pre-pandemic: 0 to 2 days a month."
- Slide 24: "Post-pandemic, 70% of CFOs want greater flexibility in days worked in-person and half want more flexibility in work start/finish times. Almost half want to organize in-person work periods by team, department, or project, which would maximize the team-building and collaboration benefits of being there in-person at the workplace."
- Slide 28: "Vaccination passports are a divisive issue. CFOs are closely split on whether all employees, except those with a medical exemptions, should have proof of vaccination before entering the workplace. 48% said they should, but 41% disagreed, with few CFOs in the middle."
- Slide 33: "Downtown won't be a ghost town forever. Half of CFOs don't expect a post-Covid change in their office-space requirements. Most that expect a change in office-space requirements think it will be within +/- 20%."

75 US CFOs surveyed from April 27 to May 5 came from a wide variety of industries and organizations of all sizes

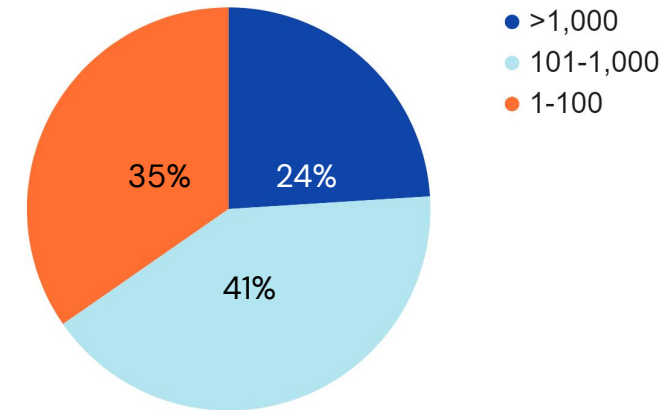
CFOs came from a broad range of industries

Industry breakdown



CFOs came from organizations of all sizes

Size (no. of employees) breakdown



- 6 top industries represented 52% of all responses
- “Other” included biotech, agricultural technology, and logistics
- Full question: *What best describes your industry?*

- Full question: *What best describes your company?*

All 75 were full-time US CFOs

All the 75 respondents are:

- Working in the USA
- Currently work full-time (30 or more hours per week)
- Selected “CFO” as their job-title
- Have roles in their company that primarily involve desk work

Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, professionals at nearly all surveyed organizations worked fully in-person

Before pandemic, nearly all organizations worked fully in-person

Pre-Covid 19 work arrangement

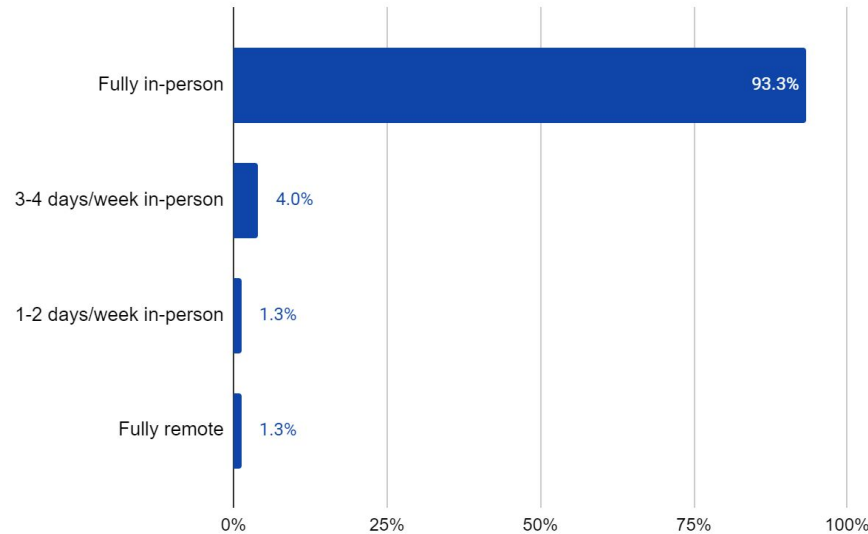


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *What was your company's work arrangement prior to the Covid 19 crisis for most professional employees?*

The few organizations that had hybrid in-person/remote work had flexible days in-person

Pre-Covid 19 hybrid work schedule

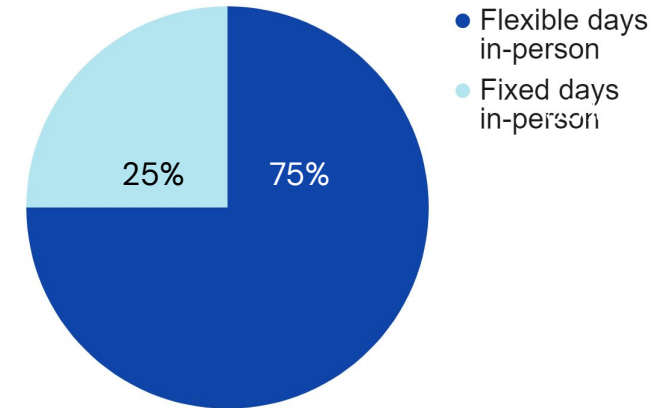


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *What best describes your company's in-person work schedule, prior to the Covid 19 crisis? (Asked only of respondents who selected 1-4 days/week in-person as their pre-Covid work arrangement)*

Currently, most organizations have hybrid or fully-remote arrangements for professional employees, and many have flexible days in-person

Currently, most organizations are fully-remote or in a hybrid arrangement

Current work arrangement

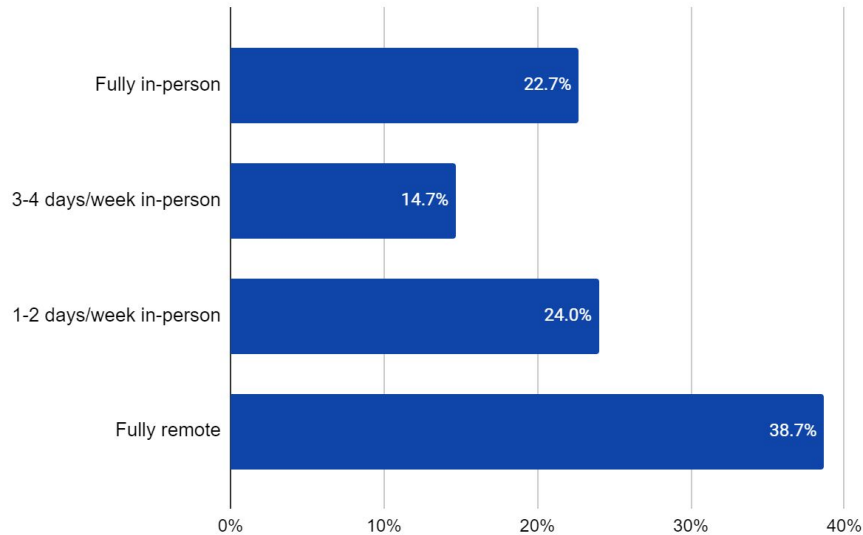


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Most organizations with hybrid in-person/remote currently have flexible days in-person

Current hybrid work schedule

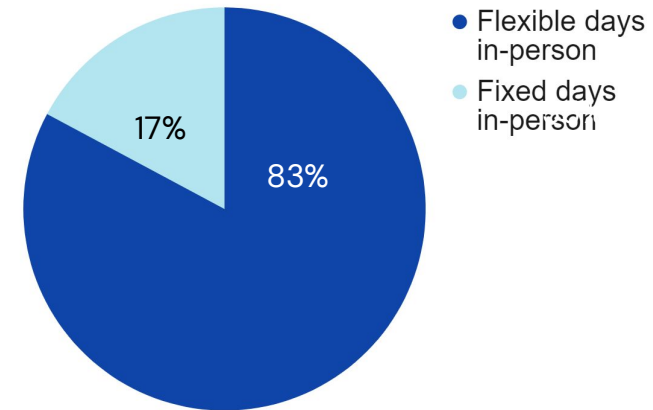


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *What is your company's current working arrangement for most professional employees?*

- Full question: *What best describes the current in-person work schedule? (Asked only of respondents who selected 1-4 days/week in-person as their current work arrangement)*

The Covid-19 crisis caused most organizations to shift to fully-remote or hybrid 1-4 days/week in-person for most professional employees

Before pandemic, nearly all organizations worked fully in-person

Pre-Covid 19 work arrangement

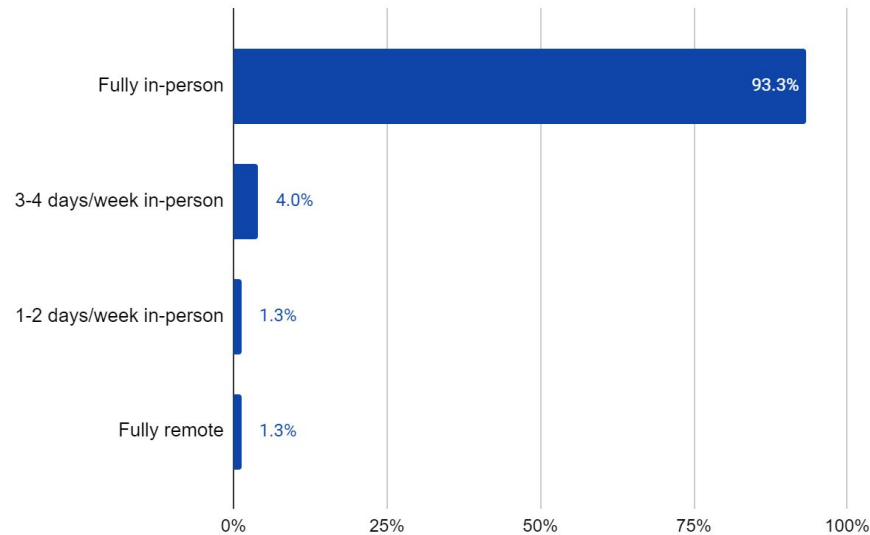


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Most organizations shifted to fully-remote or hybrid

Current hybrid work arrangement

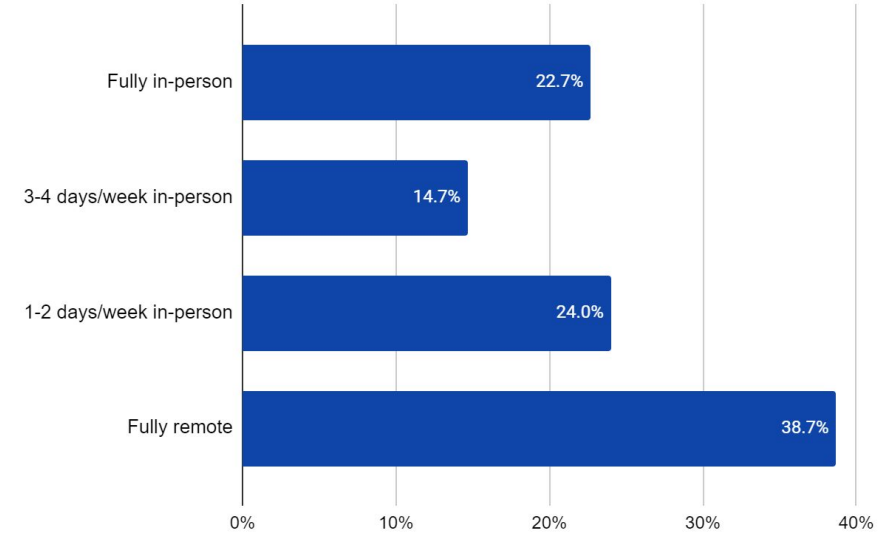


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- Full question: *What was your company's work arrangement prior to the Covid 19 crisis for most professional employees?*

- Full question: *What is your company's current working arrangement for most professional employees?*

Organizations across a variety of industries and organization sizes shifted to fully-remote or hybrid arrangements for most professional employees

Current work arrangements for the largest industries

Current work arrangement by Industry

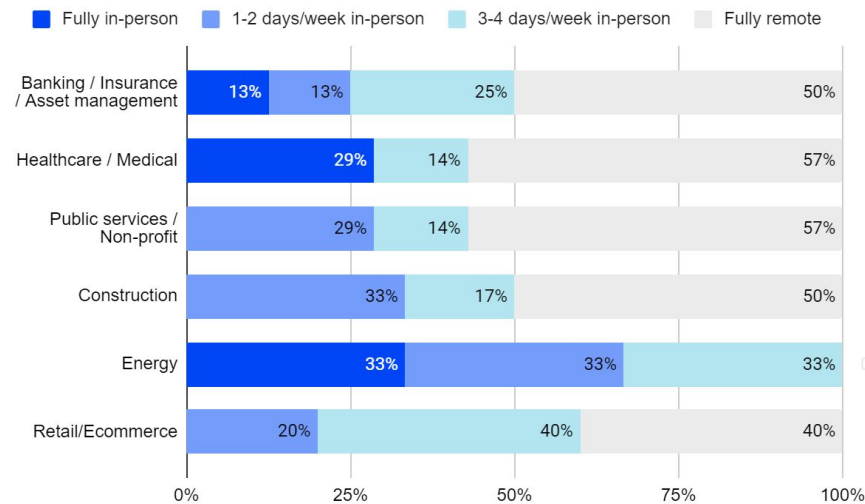


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Current work arrangements by organization size

Current work arrangement by No. of employees

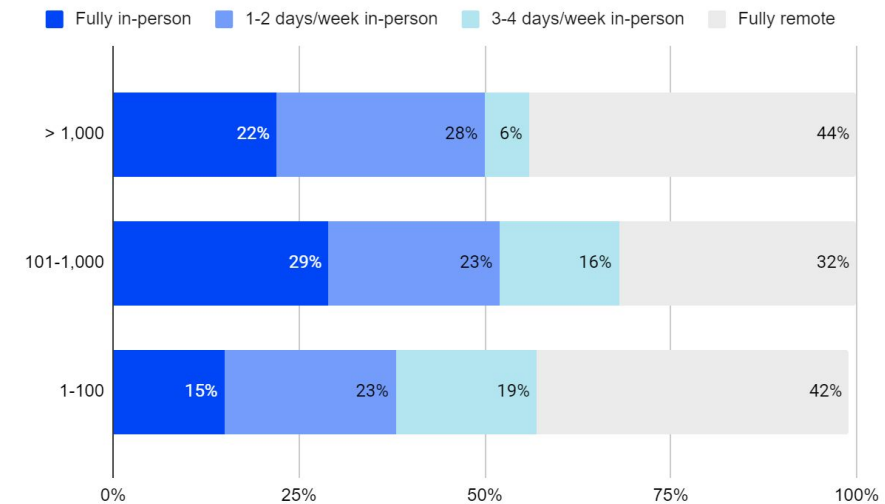


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

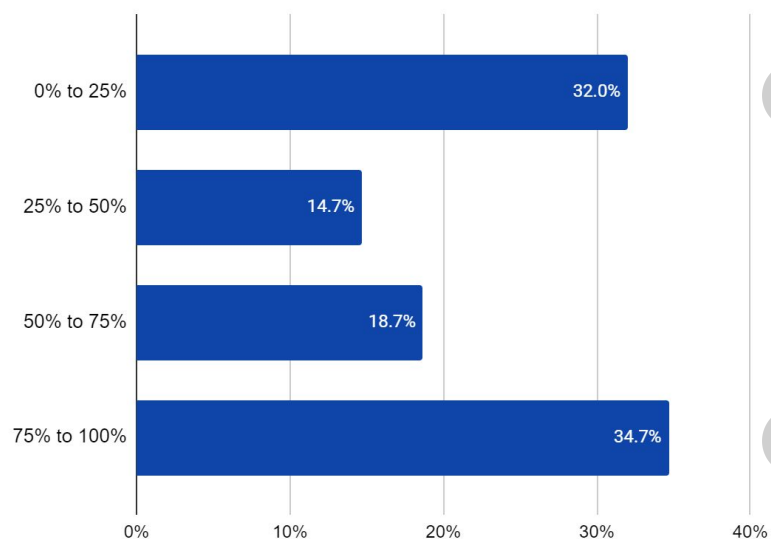
- Full question: *What is your company's current working arrangement for most professional employees?*

- Full question: *What is your company's current working arrangement for most professional employees?*

For employees in general (not professionals), remote work is still not the norm

Many companies have most employees working remotely, while many others have very few

% of emp. working partially/completely remote



Many industries are split, with some organizations working mostly remotely and some with few employees working remotely

← Almost half of these were in Energy, Petrochemicals, Healthcare / Medical, Public Services

← Almost half of these were were in Banking, Healthcare / Medical, and Public Services

- Full question: *Roughly how many of your company's employees are currently working partially or completely remotely?*

Work-expenses, autonomy, and work-life balance are better with hybrid and fully remote-work, but networking and employee management are harder

Work-expenses, personal authority, work/life balance, and focus are better with partial/fully remote-work

Networking, managing engagement, common culture, and supervising others are harder with partial/fully remote-work

What's better/easier with current work arrangements, when those work arrangements are partial/fully remote-work

What's worse/harder with current work arrangements, when those work arrangements are partial/fully remote-work

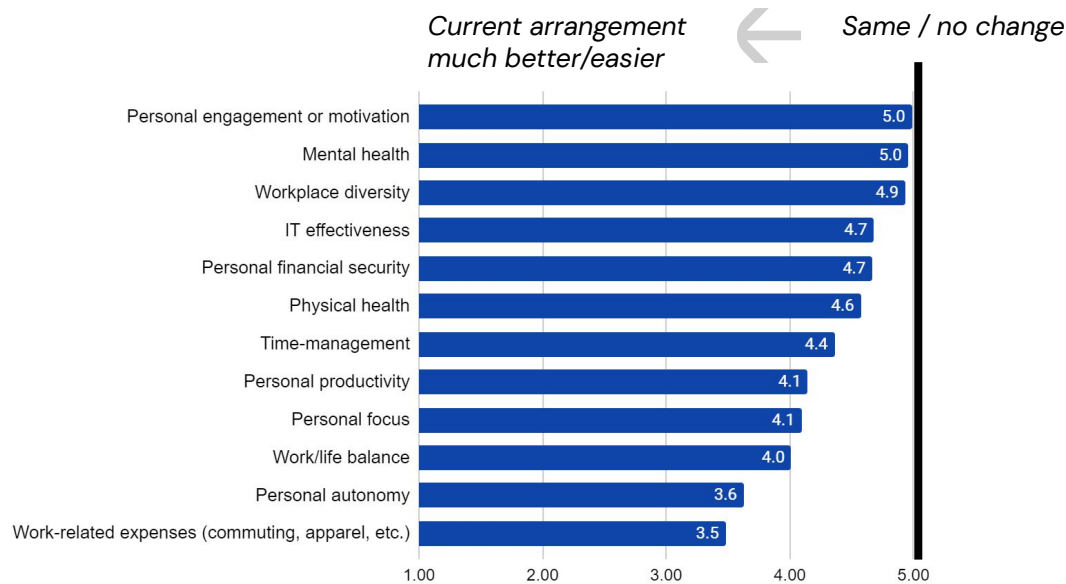


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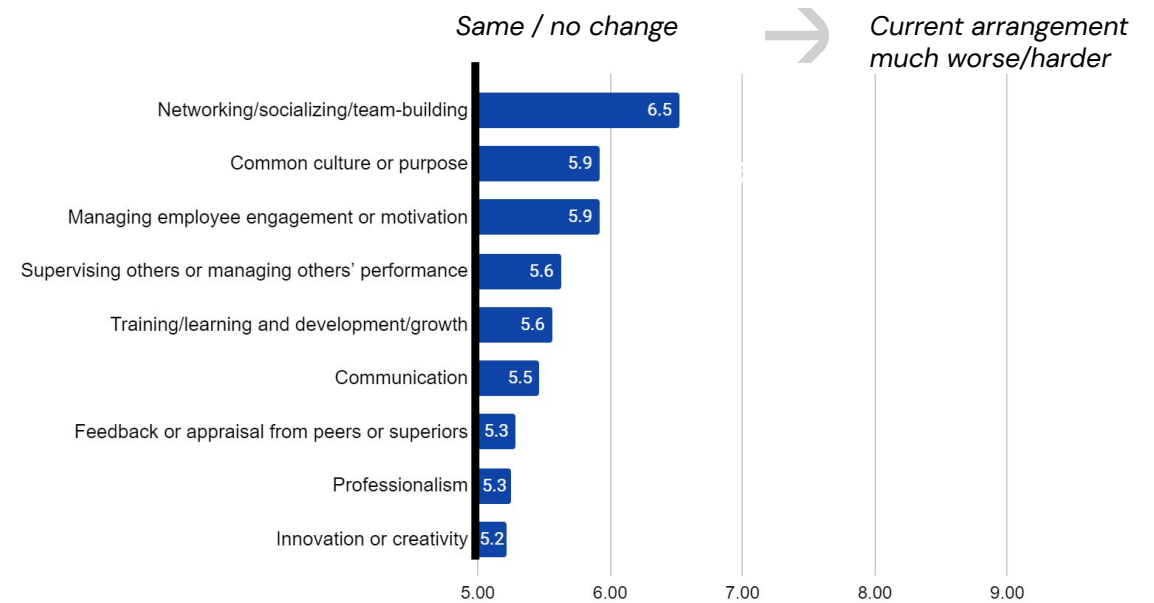


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- Full question: *Please compare your current work arrangement with your work arrangement prior to the Covid 19 crisis. (1-9 scale, with 5 being "same/no-change", 1 being "Current arrangement is much better/easier" and 9 being "Current arrangement is much worse/harder")*

Work–expenses, autonomy, and work–life balance are better with hybrid and fully remote–work, but networking and employee management are harder

"For many CFOs working fully–remote or hybrid, their most difficult challenge is team–building. Many CFOs also found creating a common culture and managing employee engagement to be more challenging when remotely working."

— *Patiwat Panurach*
VP Strategic Insights and Analytics, NewtonX

Work—expenses, autonomy, and work—life balance are better with hybrid and fully remote—work, but networking and employee management are harder

"Many CFOs found that hybrid and fully—remote work arrangements reduced their personal work—related expenses, like commuting and apparel. They also found it easier to maintain personal autonomy, work/life balance, and personal focus when working remotely."

— *Patiwat Panurach*
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Post-pandemic, most CFOs expect hybrid work arrangements with flexible days in-person

Post-pandemic, 57% of CFOs expect a hybrid arrangement (1-4 days/week in-person) for most professional employees

Expected post-pandemic work arrangement

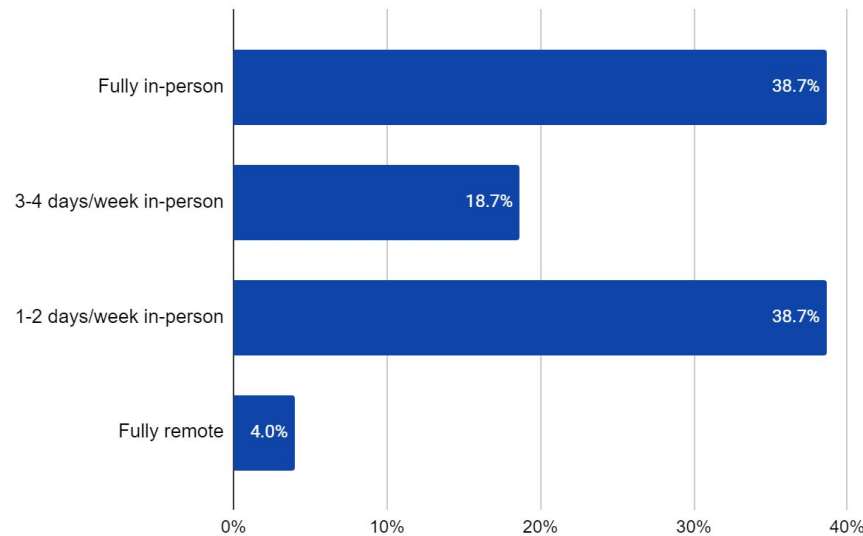


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Most CFOs who expect a hybrid in-person arrangement expect to have flexible days in-person

Expected hybrid work schedule

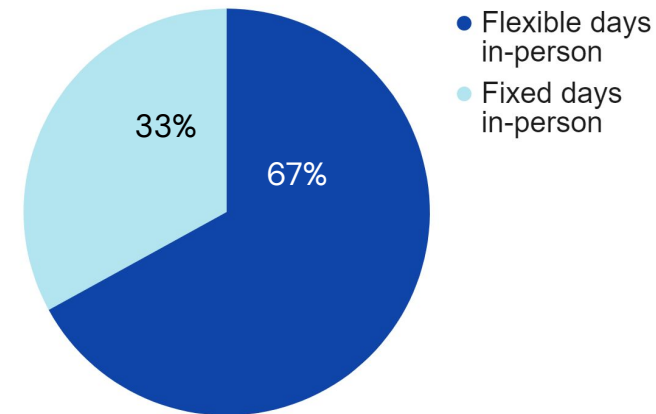


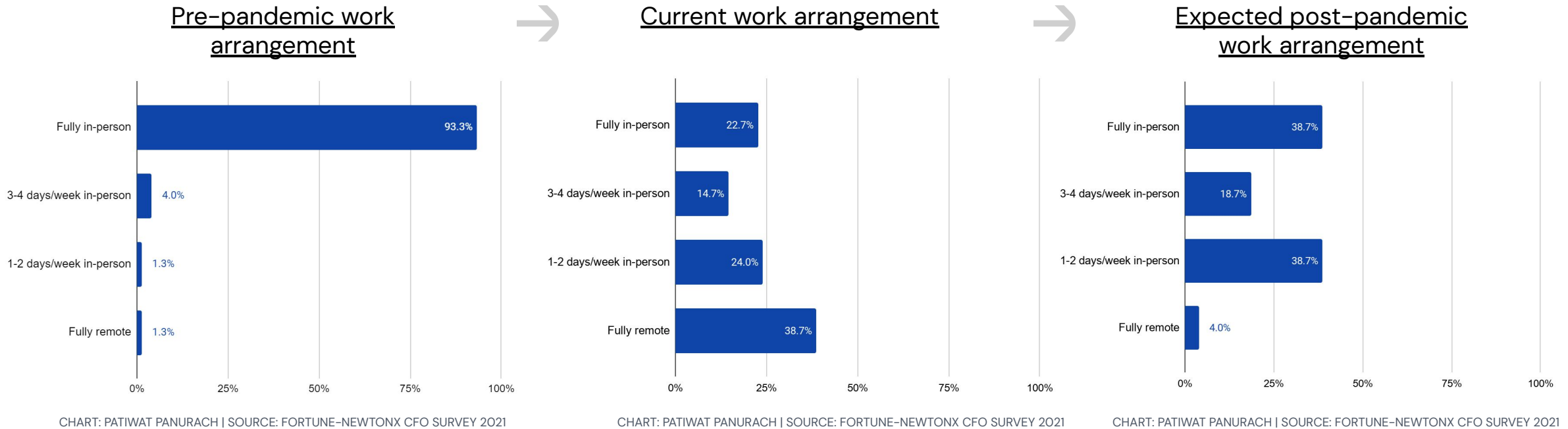
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- Full question: *What post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement do you expect your company to change to for professional employees. Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*

- Full question: *What best describes your expected in-person work schedule? (Asked only of respondents who selected 1-4 days/week in-person as their expected post-Covid work arrangement)*

Pre-Covid, nearly everybody worked fully in-person. Post-Covid, less than 40% of CFOs expect a return to fully in-person work for pro employees.

Post-pandemic, less than 40% of CFOs expect a fully in-person work arrangement for professional employees



- Full question: *What was your company's work arrangement for most professional employees, prior to the Covid 19 crisis?*

- Full question: *What is your company's current working arrangement for most professional employees?*

- Full question: *What post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement do you expect your company to change to for professional employees. Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*

Most CFOs expect to shift to a hybrid or fully-in person work arrangement within 3 months

Post-pandemic, 57% of CFOs expect a hybrid arrangement (1-4 days/week in-person) for most professional employees

Expected post-pandemic work arrangement

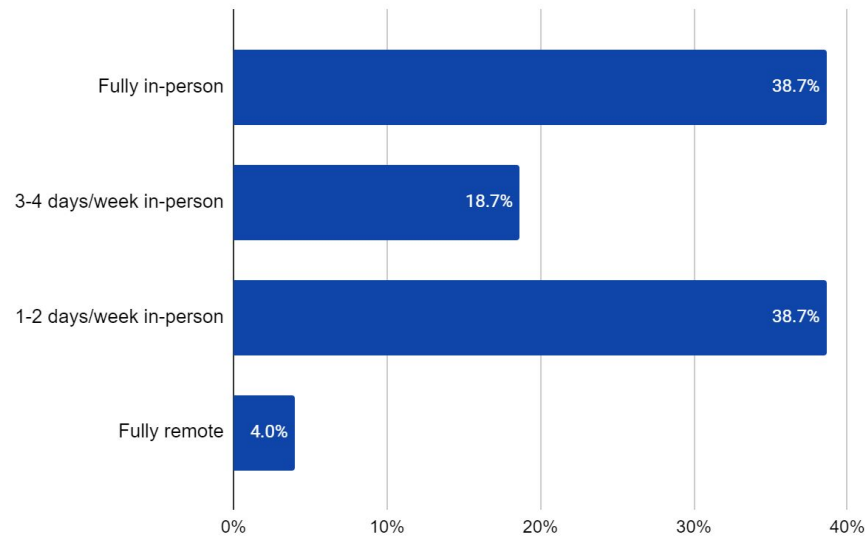


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- Full question: *What post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement do you expect your company to change to for professional employees. Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*

56% of CFOs expect to transition to their expected post-pandemic work arrangement within 3 months

Timeframe for expected post-pandemic work arrangement

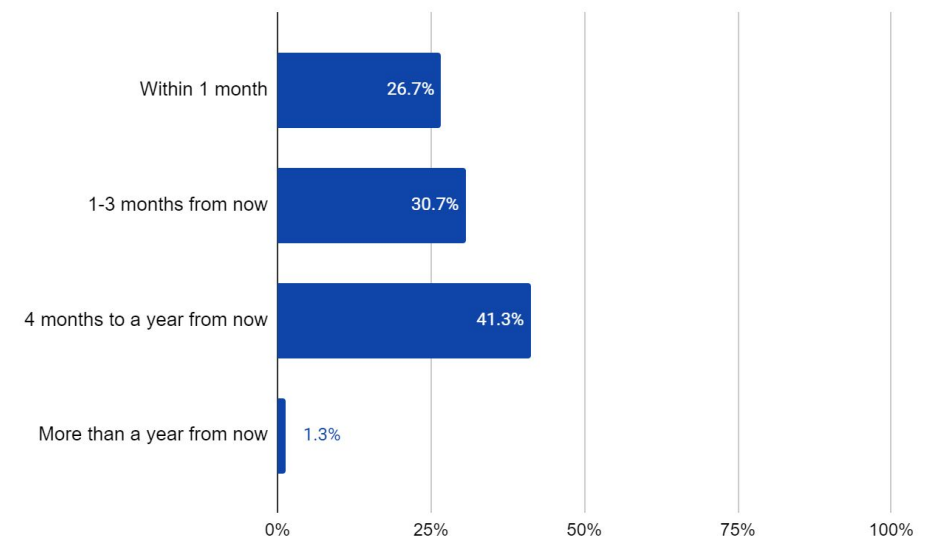


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *When do you expect to change to your expected post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement.*
- Note: survey fielded Apr 27 to May 5, 2021

Post-pandemic, most CFOs prefer a hybrid work arrangement with flexible days in-person. Barely any prefer fully-remote work.

Post-pandemic, 57% of CFOs prefer a hybrid arrangement (1-4 days/week in-person) for most professional employees

Preferred post-pandemic work arrangement

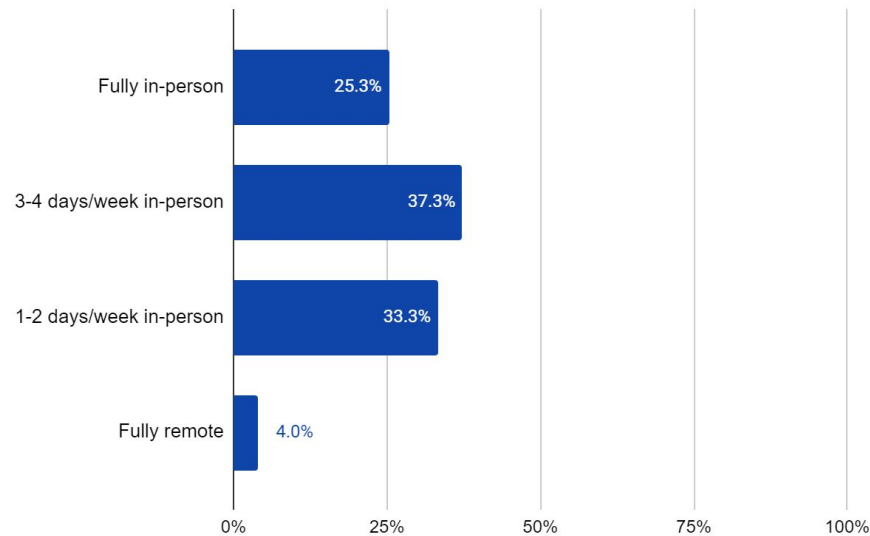


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Most CFOs who prefer a hybrid arrangement prefer flexible days in-person

Preferred hybrid work schedule

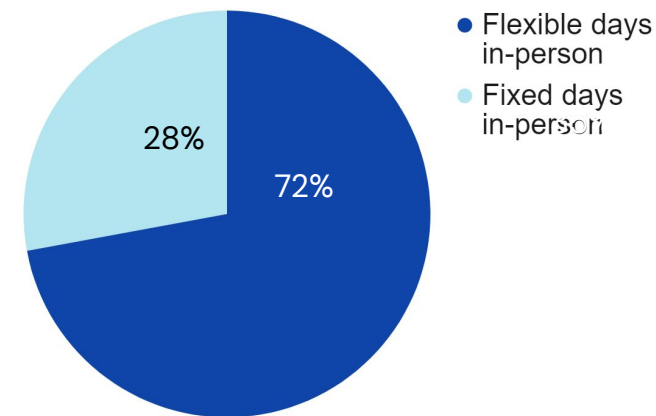


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- Full question: *What post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement would you prefer your company change to. Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*

- Full question: *What best describes your preferred in-person work schedule? (Asked only of respondents who selected 1-4 days/week in-person as their preferred post-Covid work arrangement)*

Post-pandemic, 39% of CFOs expect to return to fully in-person work arrangements for pro. employees, but only 25% prefer fully in-person work

Post-pandemic, 57% of CFOs expect a hybrid arrangement (1-4 days/week in-person) for most professional employees

Expected post-pandemic work arrangement

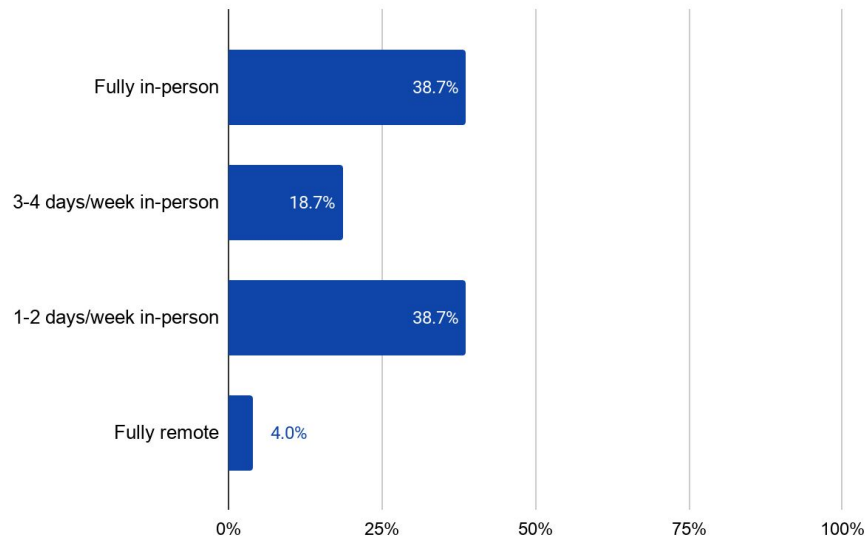


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Most CFOs who prefer a hybrid arrangement prefer flexible days in-person

Preferred post-pandemic work arrangement

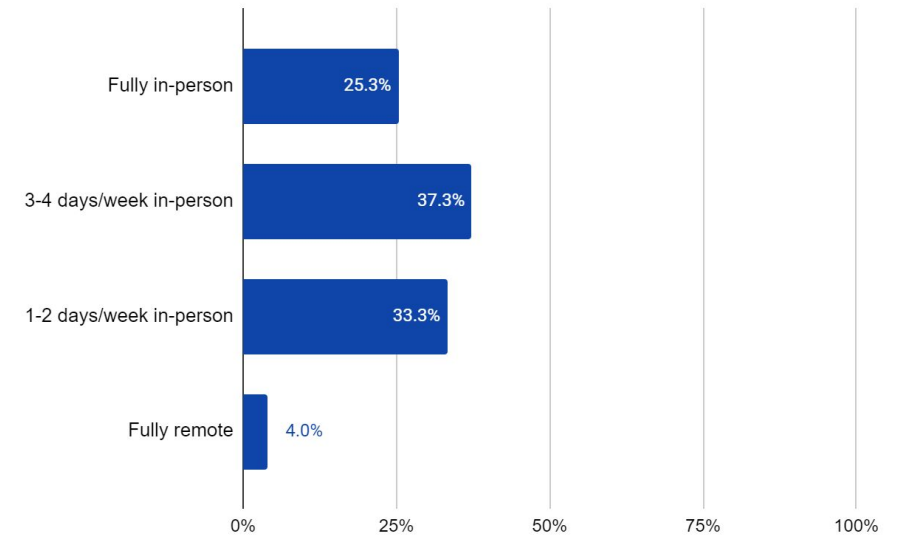


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- Full question: *What post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement do you expect your company to change to for professional employees. Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*

- Full question: *What best describes your preferred in-person work schedule? (Asked only of respondents who selected 1-4 days/week in-person as their preferred post-Covid work arrangement)*

Post-pandemic, 39% of CFOs *expect* to return to fully in-person work arrangements for pro. employees, but only 25% *prefer* fully in-person work

"Almost 40% of CFOs expect a return to fully in-person work arrangements for professional employees once Covid-19 is no longer a health threat. However, only 25% of CFOs prefer fully in-person work arrangements. Many CFOs *expect* full in-person work, but *prefer* a hybrid arrangement with 1-4 days in-person."

— *Patiwat Panurach*
VP Strategic Insights and Analytics, NewtonX

Post-pandemic, most CFOs prefer transitioning to a hybrid work arrangement within 3 months

Post-pandemic, 57% of CFOs prefer a hybrid arrangement (1-4 days/week in-person) for most professional employees

Preferred post-pandemic work arrangement

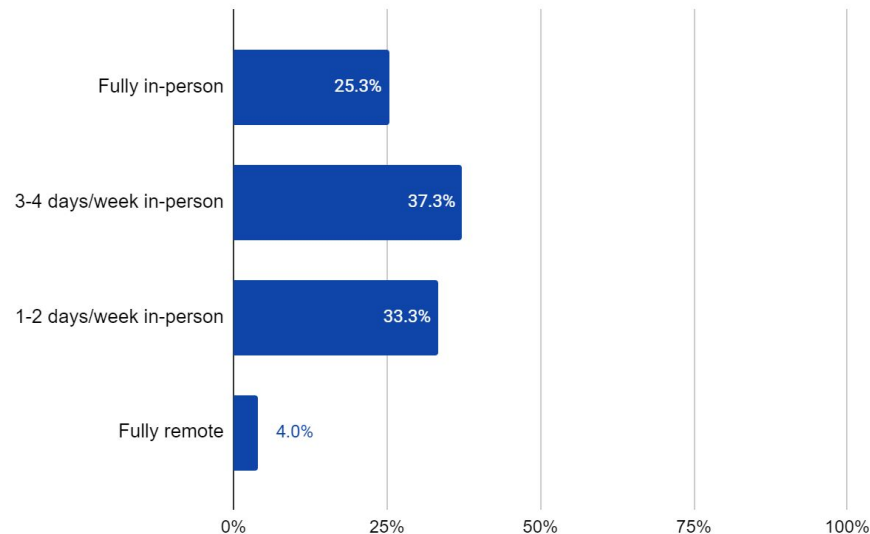


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- Full question: *What post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement do you expect your company to change to for professional employees. Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*

66% of CFOs prefer transition to their preferred post-pandemic work arrangement within 3 months

Timeframe for preferred post-pandemic work arrangement

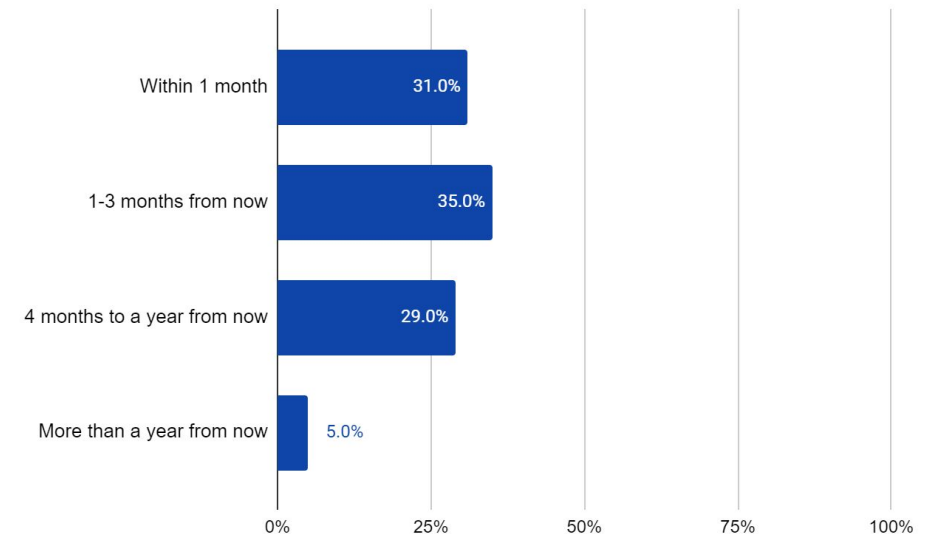


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *When would you prefer to change to your preferred post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement.*
- Note: survey fielded Apr 27 to May 5, 2021

Post-Covid, most CFOs expect and prefer to do as much business travel as they did pre-Covid: 0-2 days a month

Post-Covid, over 60% of CFOs expect and prefer as much business travel as they did pre-Covid: 0-2 days/ month

Pre-pandemic business travel

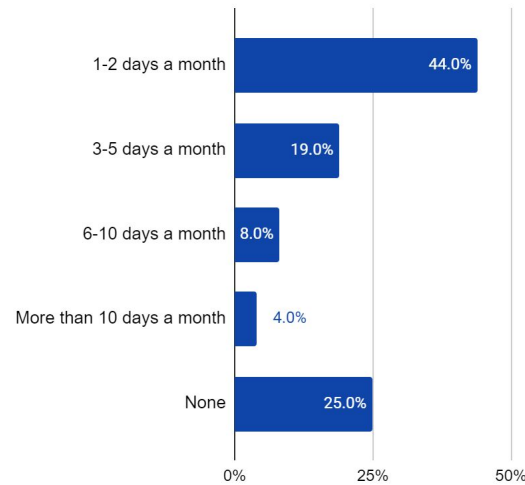


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Expected post-pandemic business travel

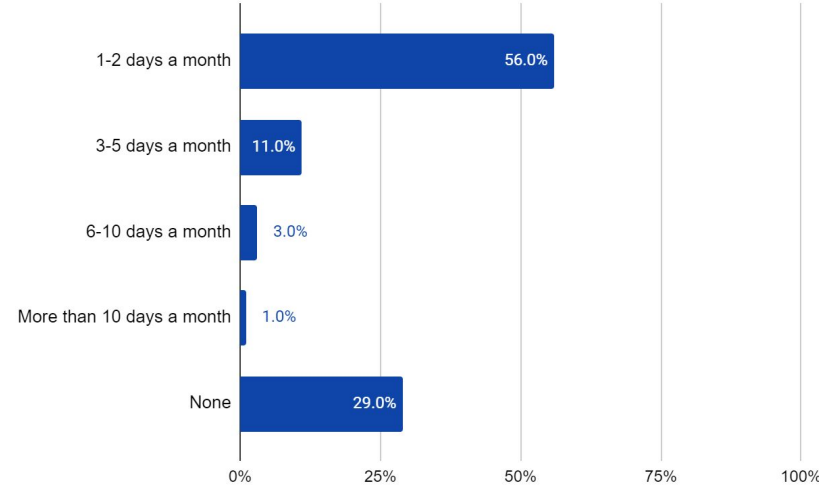


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Preferred post-pandemic business travel

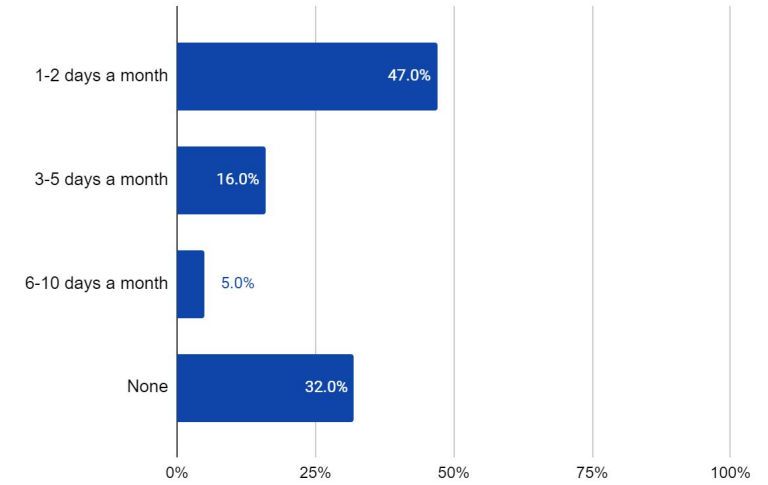


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *How much business travel did you do in a typical month, prior to the Covid 19 crisis?*
- Full question: *How much business travel do you expect to do in a typical month post-Covid 19 crisis? Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*
- Full question: *How much business travel would you prefer to do in a typical month post-Covid 19 crisis? Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*

Post-Covid, most CFOs expect and prefer to do as much business travel as they did pre-Covid: 1-5 days a month

"Airlines and business hotels can breathe a sigh of relief: post-pandemic, most CFOs expect to do as much business travel as they did pre-pandemic: 0-2 days a month."

— *Patiwat Panurach*
VP Strategic Insights and Analytics, NewtonX

Post-pandemic, 70% of CFOs want greater flexibility in days worked in-person and half want more flexibility in work start/finish times...

Most CFOs want greater flexibility in their days worked in-person, greater flexibility in work start/finish times. Many also want their in-person work to be organized by team, department, or project.

Preferred post-Covid work arrangements



CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *How would you like to see your post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement changed? Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat. (Select all that apply)*

Post-pandemic, 70% of CFOs want greater flexibility in days worked in-person and half want more flexibility in work start/finish times...

"Post-pandemic, 70% of CFOs want greater flexibility in days worked in-person and half want more flexibility in work start/finish times. Almost half want to organize in-person work periods by team, department, or project, which would maximize the team-building and collaboration benefits of being there in-person at the workplace."

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VP Strategic Insights and Analytics, NewtonX

...however, barely any CFOs are willing to tolerate a reduction in compensation for those preferred work arrangements

Most CFOs want greater flexibility in their days worked in-person and greater flexibility in work start/finish times

Preferred post-Covid work arrangements

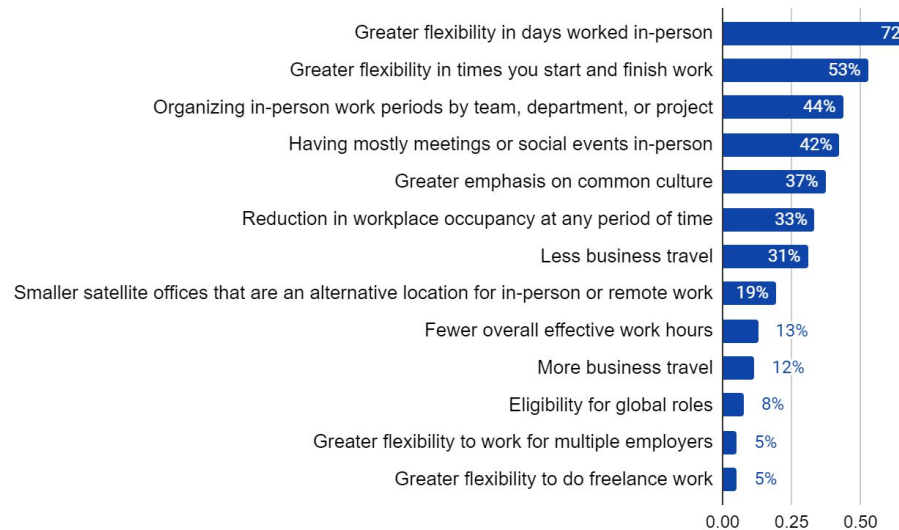


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But barely any would accept any reduction in compensation to make that happen

Accepted change in compensation to get preferred post-Covid work arrangements

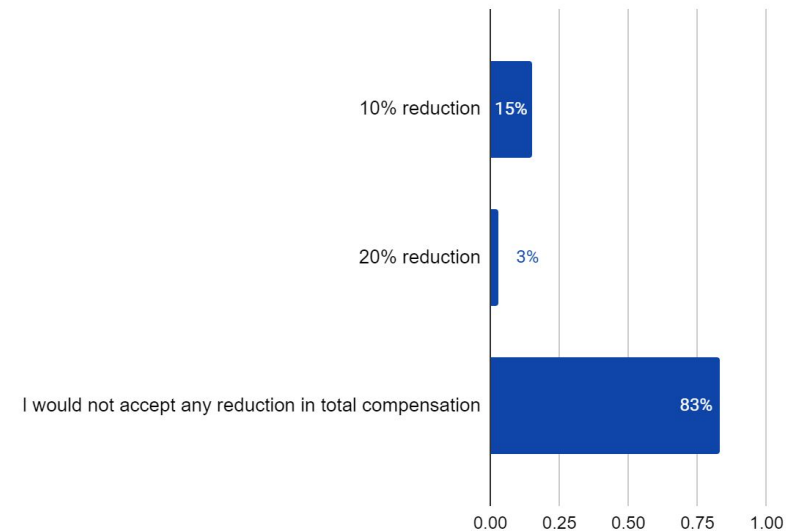


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *How would you like to see your post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement changed? Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat. (Select all that apply)*

- Full question: *What change in total compensation would you be willing to accept in return for your preferred post-Covid 19 crisis work arrangement*

CFOs are split on whether they look forward to their pre-Covid work arrangements

CFOs split about whether they look forward to returning to pre-Covid work arrangements (almost all fully in-person)

Preferred post-Covid work arrangements

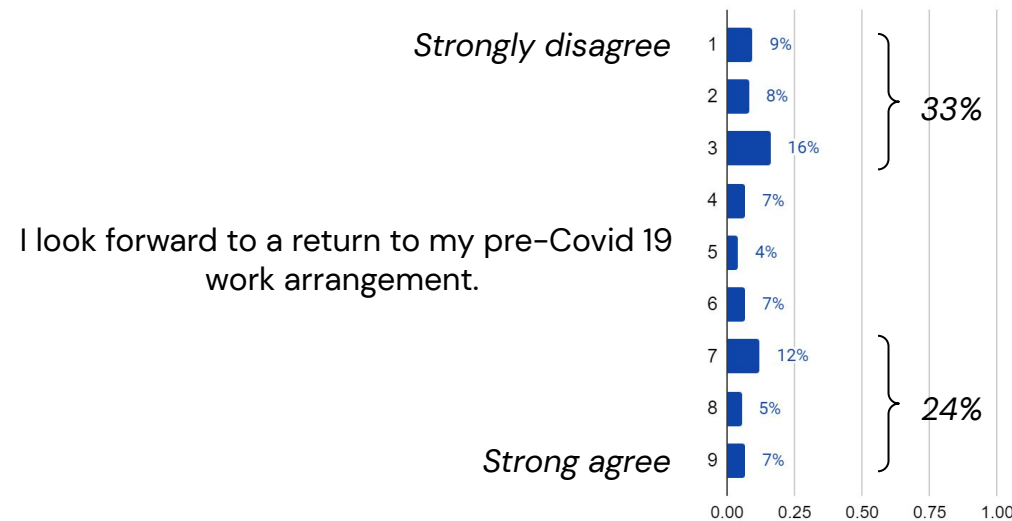


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *I look forward to a return to my pre-Covid 19 work arrangement. Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat. (1-9 scale, with 1 being "I strongly disagree with this statement" and 9 being "I strongly agree with this statement")*

CFOs are closely split on whether to require vaccination proof before entering the workplace

CFOs are closely split, with few taking the middle-ground, about whether to require proof of vaccination before entering the workplace

Preferred post-Covid work arrangements

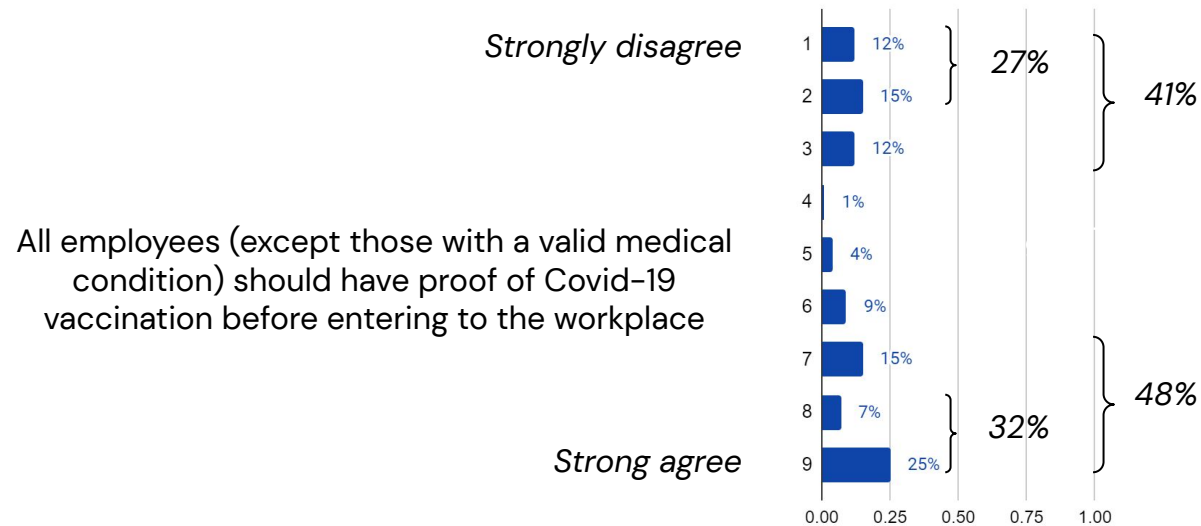


CHART: PATIWAT PANURACH | SOURCE: FORTUNE-NEWTONX CFO SURVEY 2021

- Full question: *All employees (except those with a valid medical condition) should have proof of Covid-19 vaccination before entering to the workplace (1-9 scale, with 1 being "I strongly disagree with this statement" and 9 being "I strongly agree with this statement")*

CFOs are closely split on whether to require vaccination proof before entering the workplace

"Vaccination passports are a divisive issue. CFOs are closely split on whether all employees, except those with a medical exemptions, should have proof of vaccination before entering the workplace. 48% said they should, but 41% disagreed, with few CFOs in the middle."

— *Patiwat Panurach*
VP Strategic Insights and Analytics, NewtonX

Most CFOs didn't see significant changes in average employee productivity or their own personal productivity

Most CFOs don't see remote work changing average employee productivity by more than +/- 10%

Impact of remote work on average emp. productivity

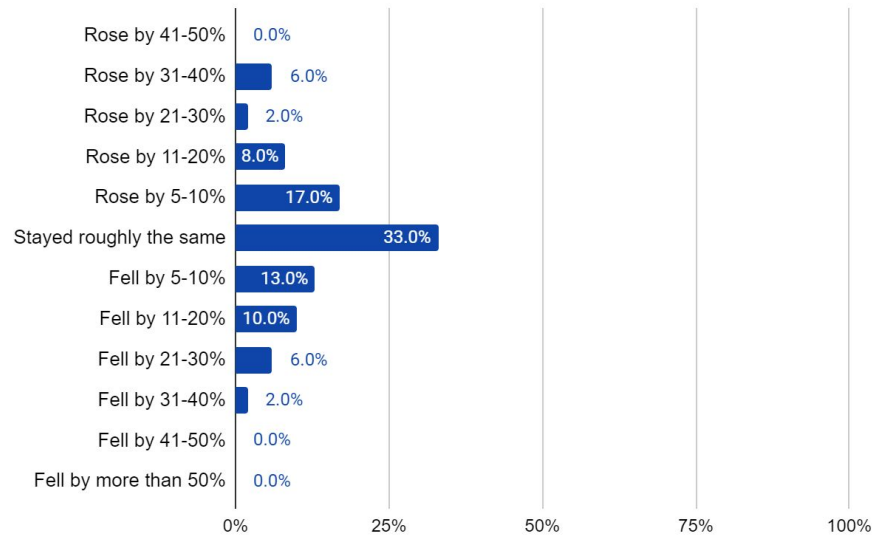


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- Full question: *What net impact has remote work had on the average employee productivity*

Most CFOs personal productivity didn't change more than +/- 10% from remote work, although some saw a 11-20% increase

Impact of remote work on CFO personal productivity

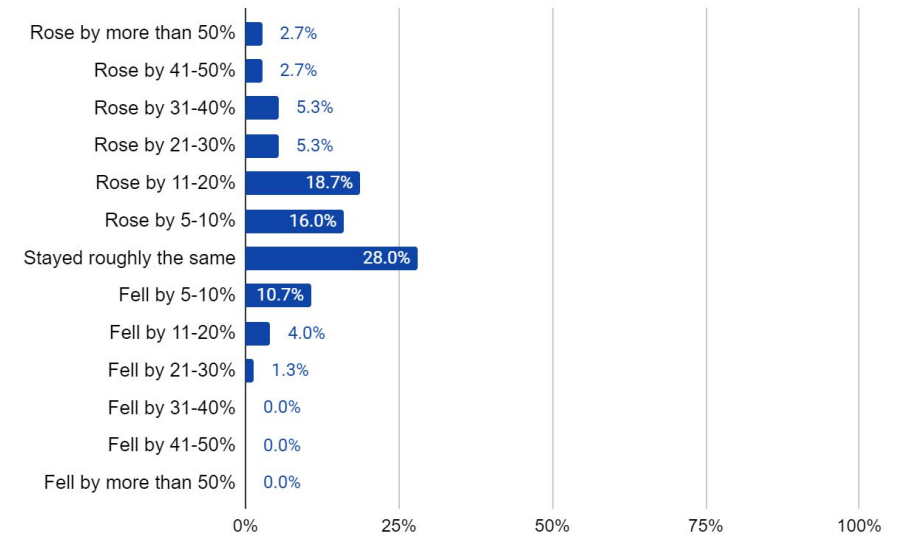


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- Full question: *What impact has remote work had on your average productivity*

Most CFOs haven't changed their workday start and finish times compared to pre-Covid

Pre-Covid, most CFOs started work from 7:30–9:00 am and finished 5:00–7:00 pm

A small portion start their workday slightly at 7:00 am, but most still finish 5:00–7:00 pm

Pre-Covid workday start and finish times

Current workday start and finish times

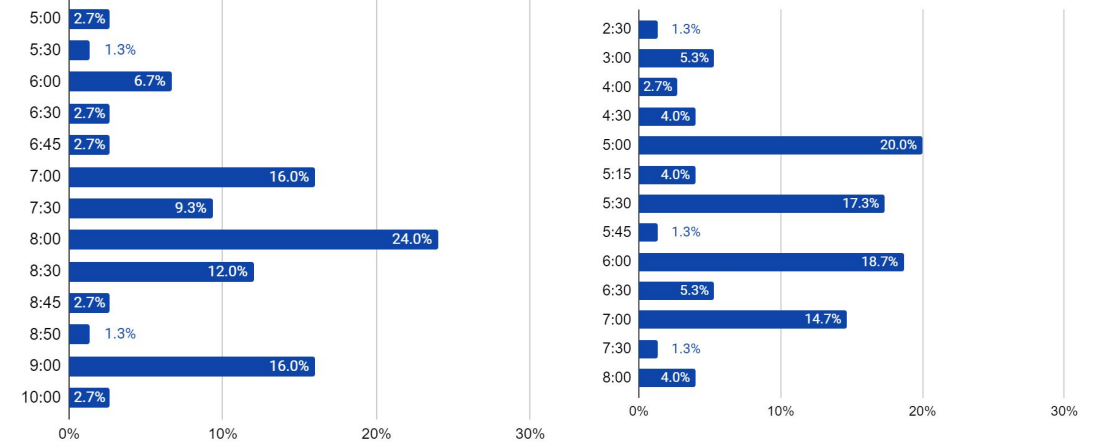
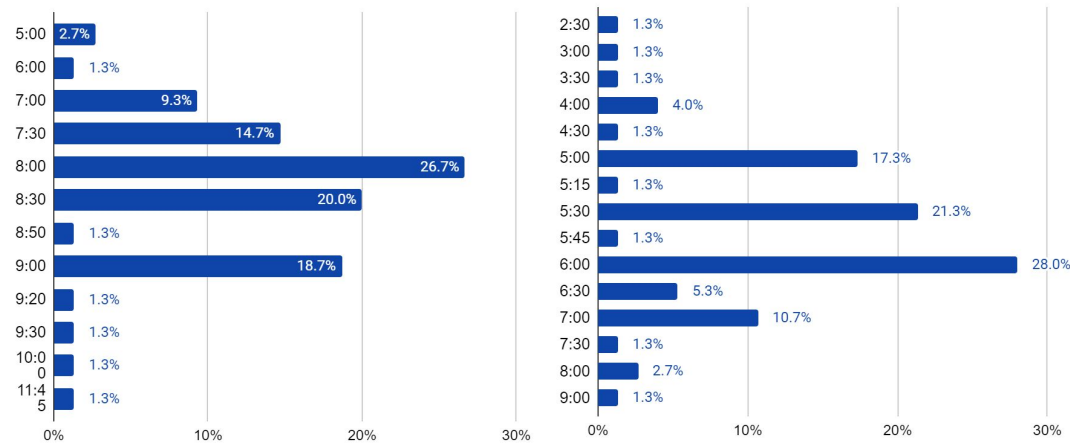


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- Full questions: *What time did you typically start work prior to the Covid 19 crisis*
- *What time did you typically finish work prior to the Covid 19 crisis*

- Full questions: *What time do you currently start work*
- *What time do you currently finish work*

Half of CFOs have already seen revenue, profit, and headcount hit pre-Covid levels, while another 20% expect recovery by EOY 2021

Revenue, profit, and headcount for half of CFOs have already hit pre-Covid levels, and most others expect full recovery by EOY 2021

When quarterly revenue expected to hit pre-Covid levels

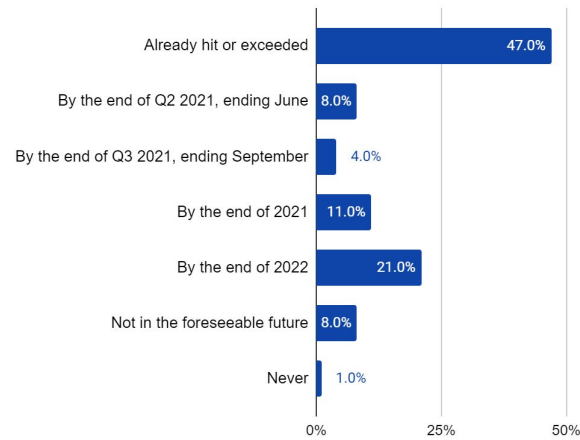


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When quarterly profits expected to hit pre-Covid levels

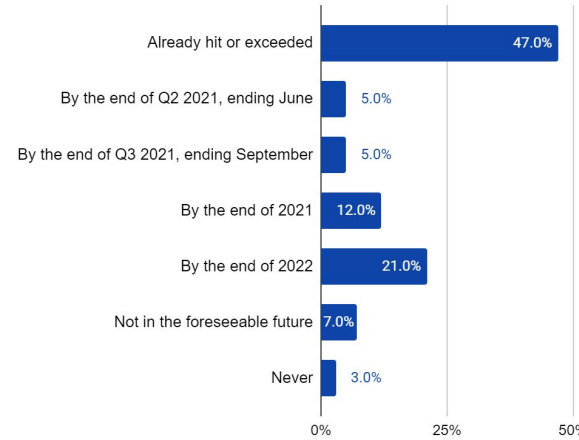


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When quarterly FTE headcount expected to hit pre-Covid levels

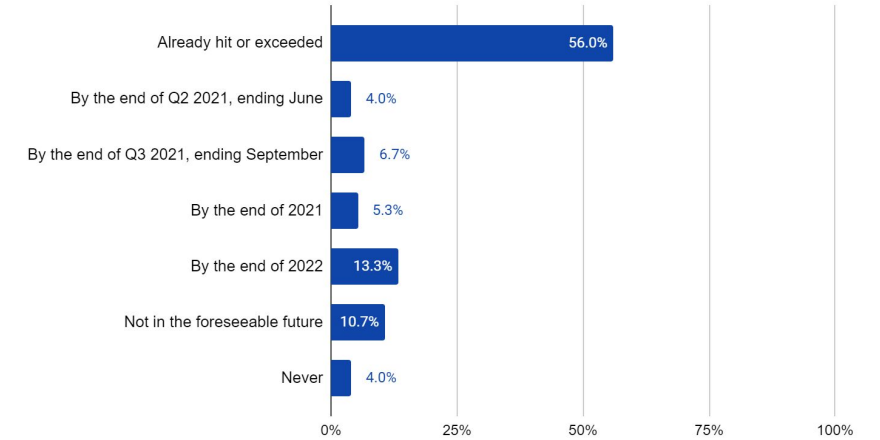


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- Full questions: *When do you expect your company's quarterly year-on-year revenue to hit pre-Covid 19 levels*

- Full questions: *When do you expect your company's quarterly year-on-year profits to hit pre-Covid 19 levels*

- Full questions: *When do you expect your company's quarterly year-on-year full-time employee headcount to hit pre-Covid 19 levels*

Half of CFOs don't expect a post-Covid change in their office-space requirements. Most that do expect a change think it will be within +/- 20%.

80% of CFOs don't think their office space requirements post-Covid will be more or less than 20% of their pre-Covid requirements

Post-Covid office space requirements vs. pre-Covid

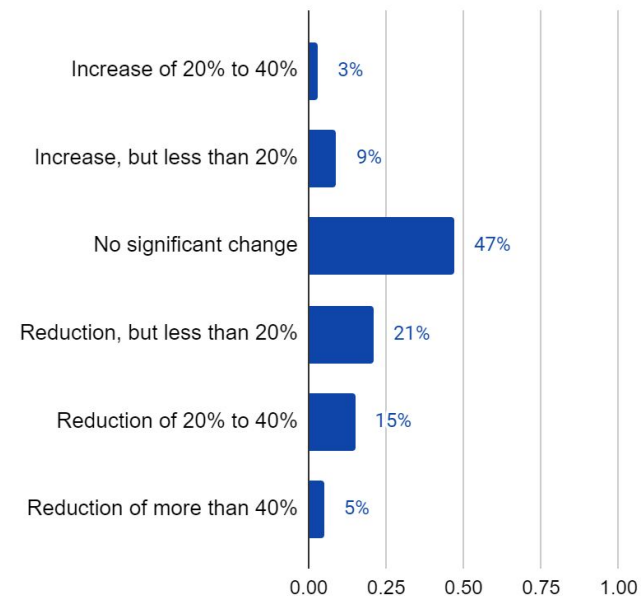


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- Full question: *How much office space do you expect your company will need post-Covid 19 crisis, compared to pre-Covid 19 crisis. Assume that Covid-19 was successfully eradicated and that COVID is no longer a health threat.*

Half of CFOs don't expect a post-Covid change in their office-space requirements. Most that do expect a change think it will be within +/- 20%.

"Downtown won't be a ghost town forever. Half of CFOs don't expect a post-Covid change in their office-space requirements. Most that do expect a change in office-space requirements think it will be within +/- 20%."

— *Patiwat Panurach*
VP Strategic Insights and Analytics, NewtonX

Barely any CFOs accepting crypto or expect DEI/ESG reporting to change, but C-suite collaboration on return-to-work assessments is common

Barely any CFOs are accepting or plan on accepting crypto payments

When accepting crypto payment

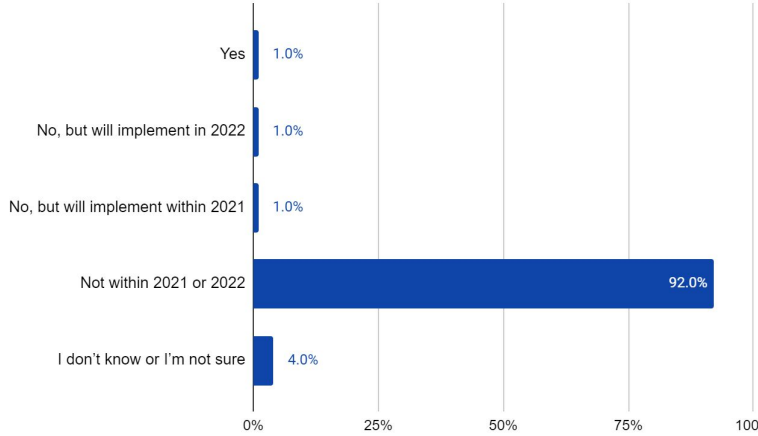


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Most CFOs don't expect DEI/ESG reporting requirements to change within 2021/2022

When DEI and ESG reporting changed

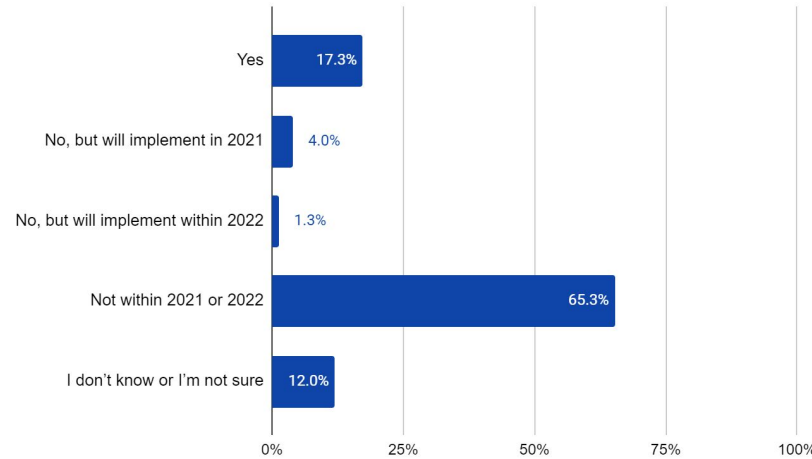


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Most CFOs collaborating with CHRO/CTO on return-to-work assessments

CHRO/CTO collaboration on return-to-work

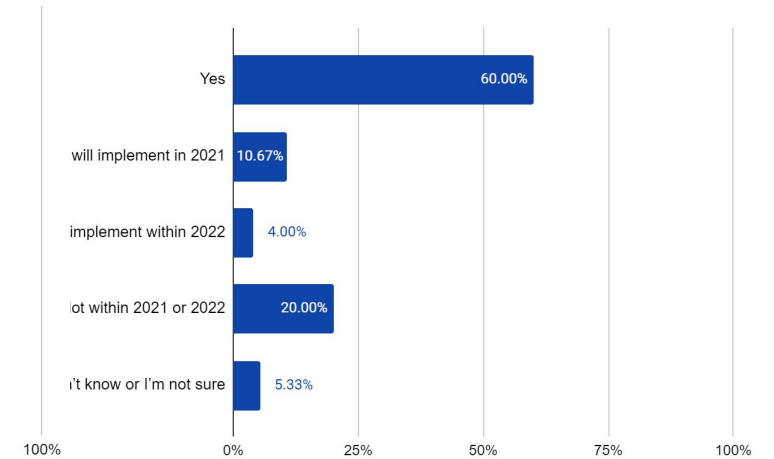


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- Full questions: *Does your company allow payment using cryptocurrency (e.g., Bitcoin)*

- Full questions: *Were your requirements for DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and ESG (environment, social, and governance) reporting to investors changed in 2020?*

- Full questions: *Are you currently collaborating with your company's CHRO or CTO in making post-Covid 19 crisis return to work assessments?*

1/3 of CFOs have been trained in advanced analytics in the past 24 months, but fewer have or expect training in AI, ML, or robotic process automation

1/3 of CFOs have received advanced analytics training in past 24 months. Advanced analytics and AI are popular training topics over the next two years.

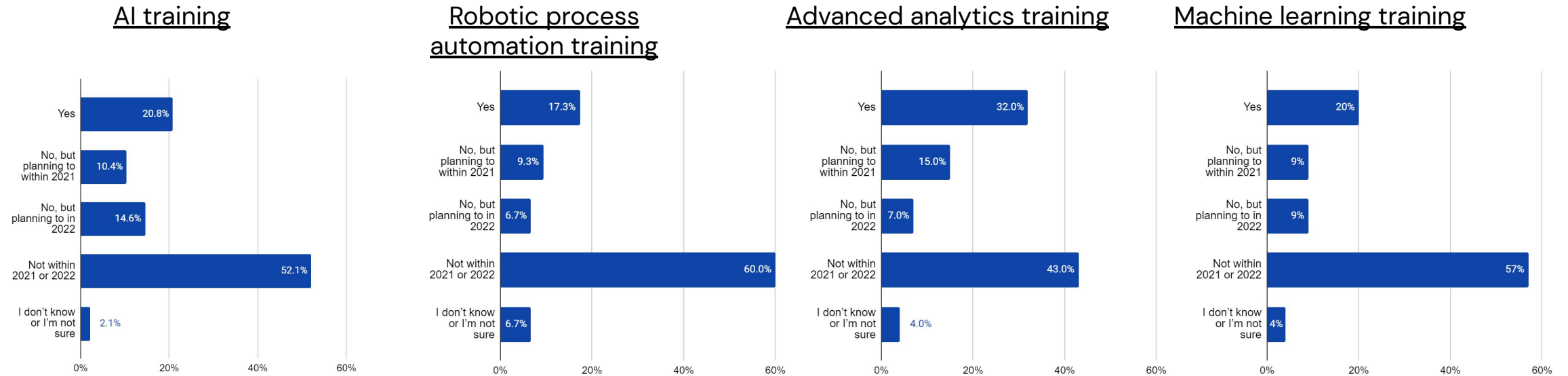


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- Full questions: *Have you received training on the following emerging technology within the past 24 months: AI (artificial intelligence), Robotic process automation, Advanced analytics, Machine learning*

Most CFOs have or plan to have real-time dashboards, have taken on more leadership responsibilities, and are challenged by scenario planning

Most organizations have real-time dashboards or plan for them by 2022

Real-time dashboard implementation

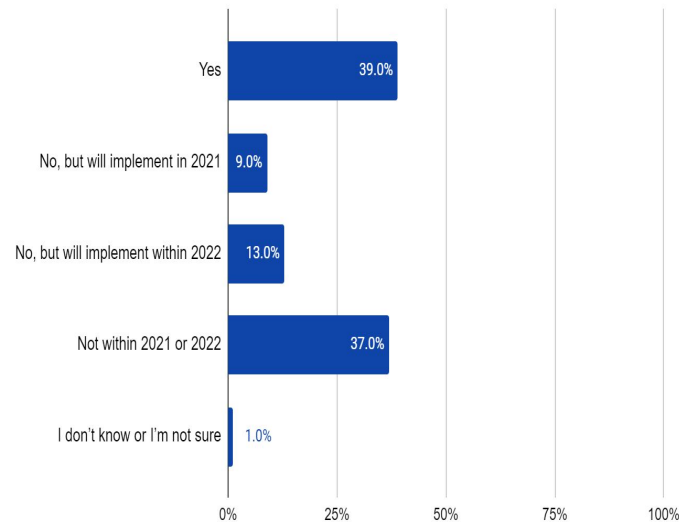


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- Full questions: *In the past 12 months, has your company implemented or expanded implementation of real-time dashboards (i.e., dashboards that update in real-time, rather than periodically)?*

2/3 of CFOs have taken on more leadership responsibilities in past 12 months

CFOs taken on additional leadership responsibilities

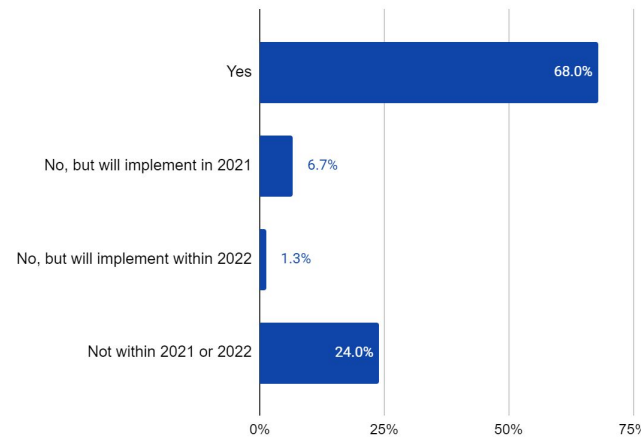


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- Full questions: *Have you taken on additional leadership responsibilities outside of your traditional role as CFO within the past 12 months*

Scenario planning was the biggest challenge CFOs faced in 2021

Biggest CFO challenge in 2021

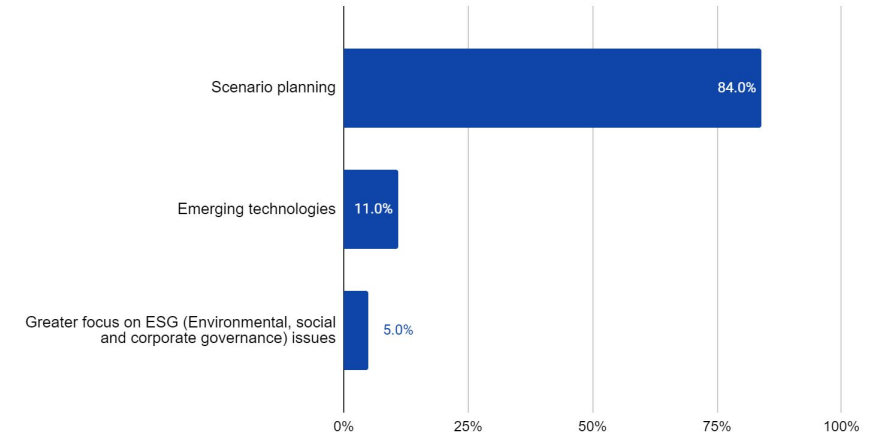


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- Full questions: *Of the following choices, what were the biggest challenges you faced in 2021? (Select one)*

Got your next question in mind?

newtonx.com/get-started

Register for our July 16th webinar
on this report [here](#).

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