ENDEAVOR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

WORK INTENSITY PULSE SURVEY

In Support of Work Like a Dog Day

August 2026

METHODOLOGY

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This survey was conducted online between June 28 and July 31, 2026, in recognition of Work Like a Dog Day. A total of 400 respondents participated.

The survey audience was sourced from EndeavorB2B's professional communities across its portfolio of brands, representing key B2B markets including technology, dental, manufacturing, digital infrastructure, buildings & construction, commercial vehicle, and more. Respondents represent a cross-section of professionals spanning individual contributors to C-suite executives and business owners.

All responses were collected anonymously and are reported in aggregate.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

LONG HOURS ARE THE NORM

34% of professionals work more than 50 hours a week, while 56% frequently or more often work outside standard business hours.

STAFFING GAPS ARE BEING QUIETLY ABSORBED

Understaffing, absorbed roles, and unreplaced headcount are the hidden engine behind overwork, not ambition or corporate pressure.

AI IS ADDING WORK, NOT REMOVING IT

AI has raised the ceiling of what's expected without lowering the floor. More output is required, and someone has to check the AI's work.

WORKLOAD, NOT JUST CULTURE, DRIVES INTENSITY

53% say their role genuinely requires extra hours, while 47% say their workload leaves them no choice and 36% point to limited staffing.

THE WORKDAY DOESN'T END AT 5

9 out of 10 of workers log on outside standard business hours. For 1 in 4, nights and weekends are almost always part of the deal.

WORK INTENSITY IS BOTH PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL

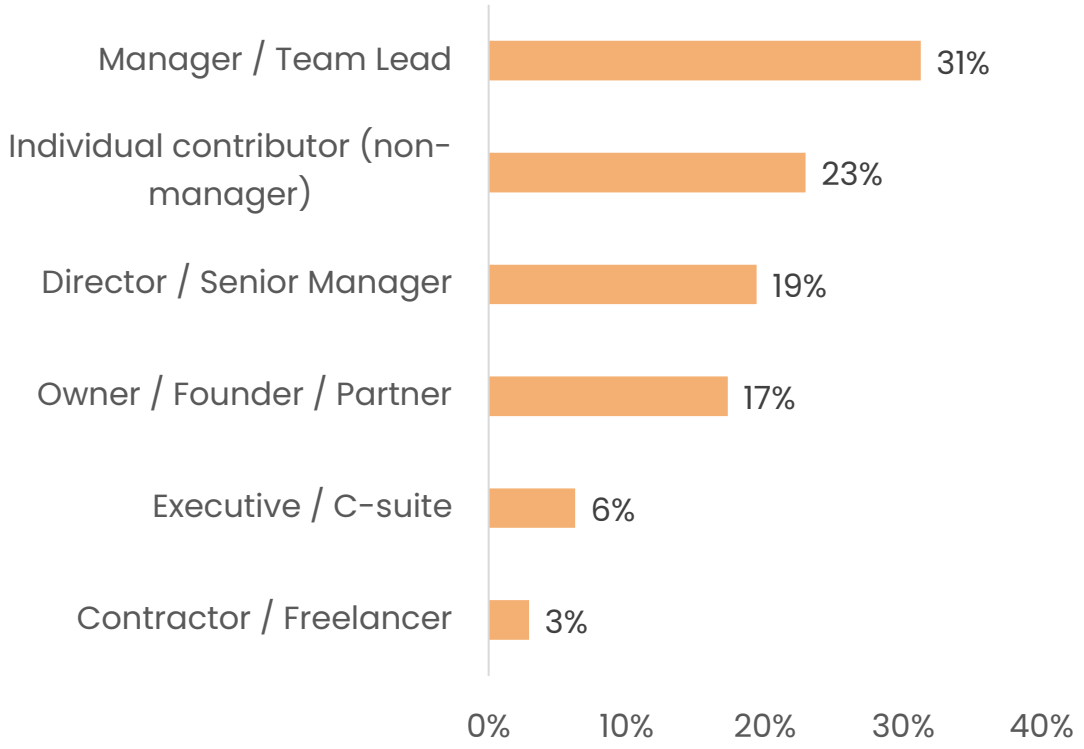
Respondents describe working longer hours not only because of workload and staffing pressures, but because of pride, ambition, financial needs, commitment and genuinely enjoying what they do.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

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RESPONDENT ROLE

Which best describes your current role?



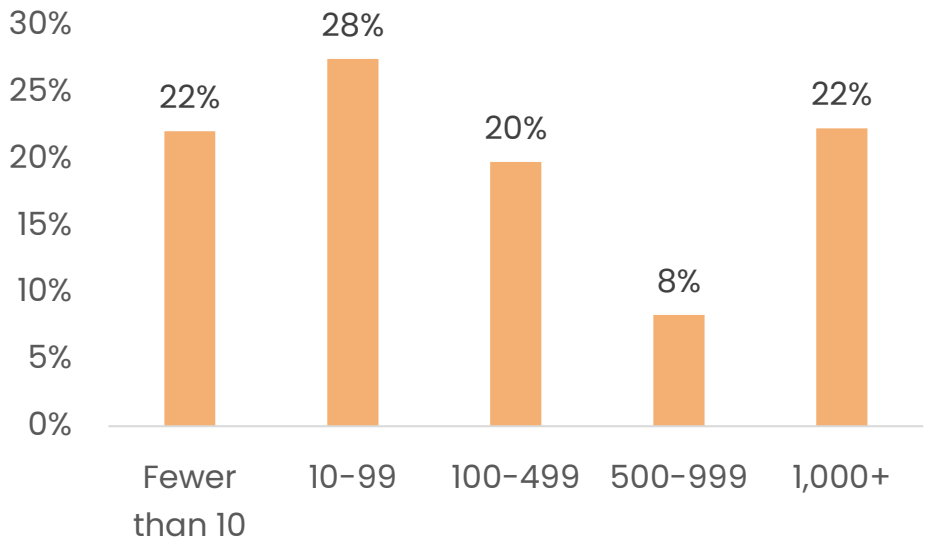
Managers Make Up Half of Respondents

The respondent mix skews heavily toward those with responsibility for others. In total, more than 73% of respondents hold management-level or above roles or run their own businesses - a profile that helps explain many of this survey's findings.

The prevalence of overwork, absorbed responsibilities, and inability to disconnect is not surprising from a group for whom the work is personal, the accountability is direct, and the option to simply clock out rarely exists.

COMPANY SIZE

How many employees work at your company?

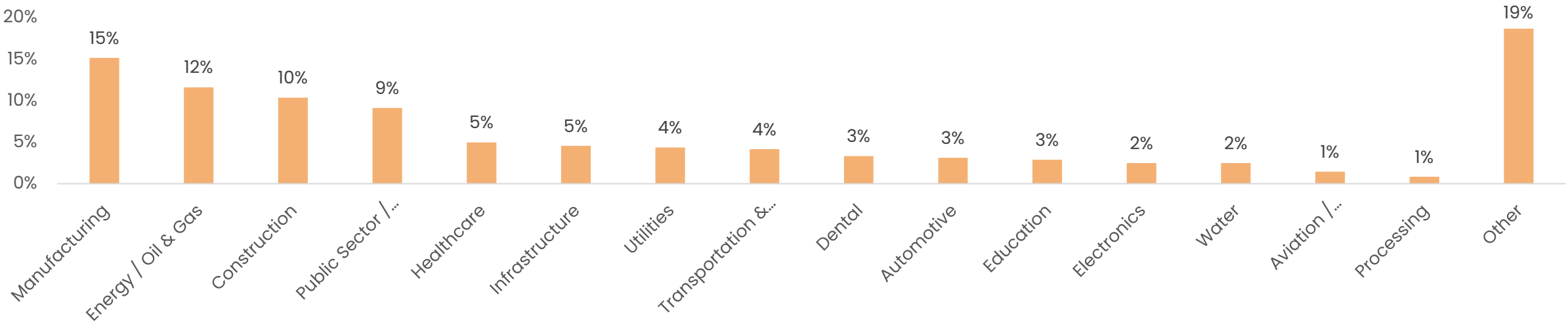


Work Intensity Spans Company Sizes

Respondents are spread remarkably evenly across company sizes, with no single tier dominating. The even distribution matters for how this data should be read: the pressures of understaffing, long hours, and rising expectations show up consistently across the board, suggesting these are workforce-wide conditions rather than symptoms of a particular organizational size or structure.

INDUSTRY BREAKDOWN

What's your company's main industry?



A Broad Cross-Industry View

Manufacturing leads the industry breakdown at 15%, followed closely by Energy and Oil & Gas at 12% and Construction at 10%, together accounting for more than a third of all respondents. Public Sector and Government represents 9%, while Healthcare and Infrastructure each come in at 5%. The "Other" category is the second largest at 19%, and the write-ins tell their own story: architecture emerges as a dominant unlisted industry with more than a dozen respondents identifying it, alongside a significant cluster in telecommunications, consulting, and defense.

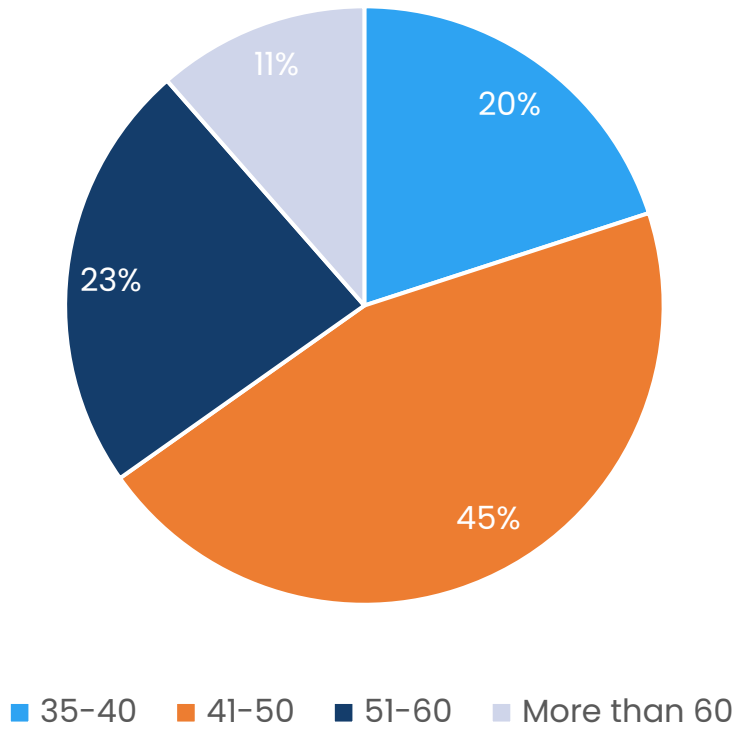
Taken as a whole, this is a respondent base rooted in physical, technical, and infrastructure-driven work, industries known for demanding schedules, project-driven deadlines, and roles where the consequences of falling behind are tangible. That context adds weight to the survey's broader findings on hours, workload, and the pressure to always be available.

WORKLOAD & HOURS

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WEEKLY HOURS WORKED

On average, how many hours do you work per week?



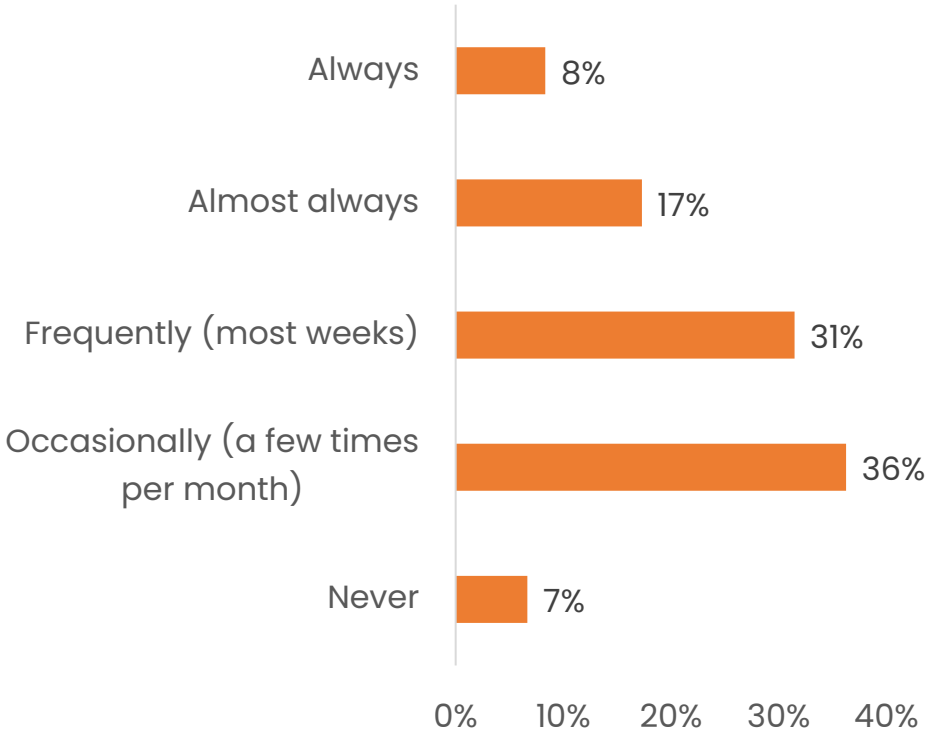
79% Work More Than 40 Hours

The traditional 40-hour workweek appears to be the exception rather than the rule. While one in five respondents reported working a standard 35–40-hour week, 79% work more than 40 hours, including 34% who regularly exceed 50 hours per week. Notably, no respondents reported working fewer than 35 hours, underscoring that this audience is consistently engaged in full-time, often extended, work schedules.

These numbers suggest that overwork has quietly become the default expectation for the majority of today's workforce, raising real questions about sustainability, boundaries, and what "full-time" actually means in 2026.

AFTER-HOURS WORK

How often do you work outside of standard business hours (nights or weekends)?



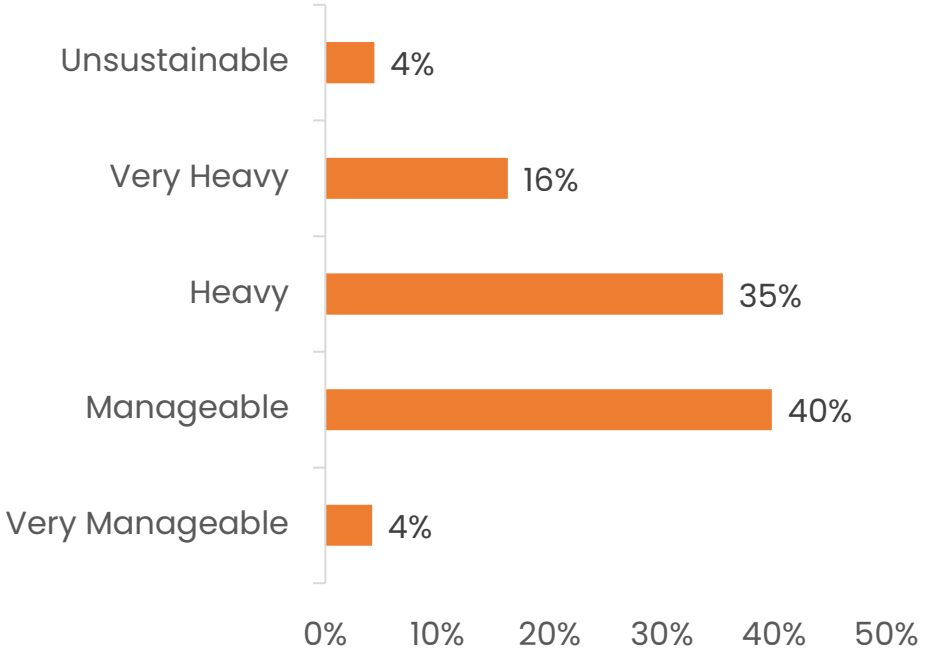
Work Doesn't Stop at 5:00 PM

For many professionals, the workday doesn't end when business hours do. While 36% report working nights or weekends only occasionally, 56% say they work outside standard business hours at least most weeks, including 25% who do so almost always or always. Just 7% say they never work beyond the traditional workday.

The findings suggest that after-hours work has become a routine part of professional life rather than an exception. Whether responding to heavier workloads, supporting global teams, meeting tight deadlines, or simply staying caught up, today's professionals are increasingly blurring the boundaries between work and personal time. Combined with the long workweeks reported earlier, the data points to a workforce that is not only working more hours but also spreading those hours across evenings and weekends.

PERCEIVED WORKLOAD

Which best describes your current workload?



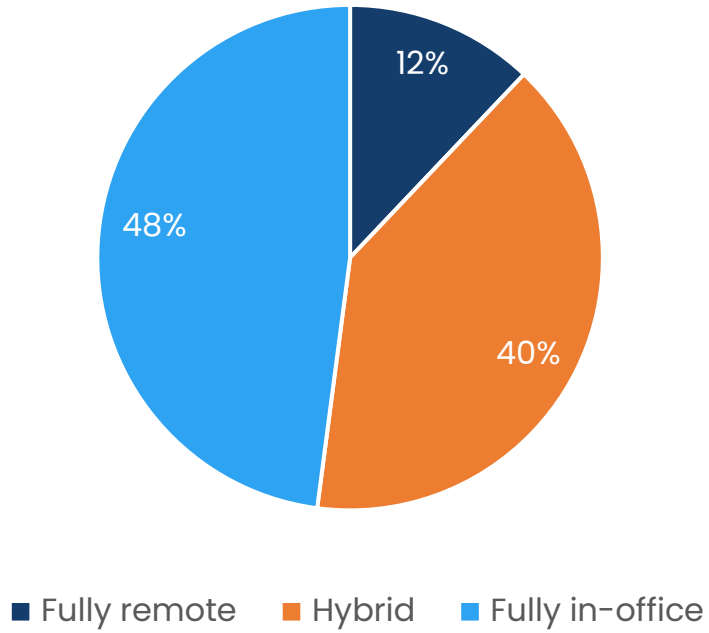
More Than Half Describe Their Workload as Heavy

While 44% of respondents say their workload is manageable, a slight majority (56%) characterize it as heavy, very heavy, or unsustainable. Within that group, one in five (20%) report workloads that are either very heavy or unsustainable, suggesting that many professionals are operating with little room for additional responsibilities or unexpected demands.

The results point to a workforce that is balancing increasing demands with limited capacity. Although many professionals are keeping pace, the prevalence of heavy workloads helps explain why long hours and after-hours work have become so common. As organizations continue to navigate economic uncertainty, evolving business priorities, and rapid technological change, managing workload, not just increasing productivity, will remain a critical challenge.

WORK ARRANGEMENT

Which best describes your current work arrangement?



Workplace Flexibility Has Found a Middle Ground

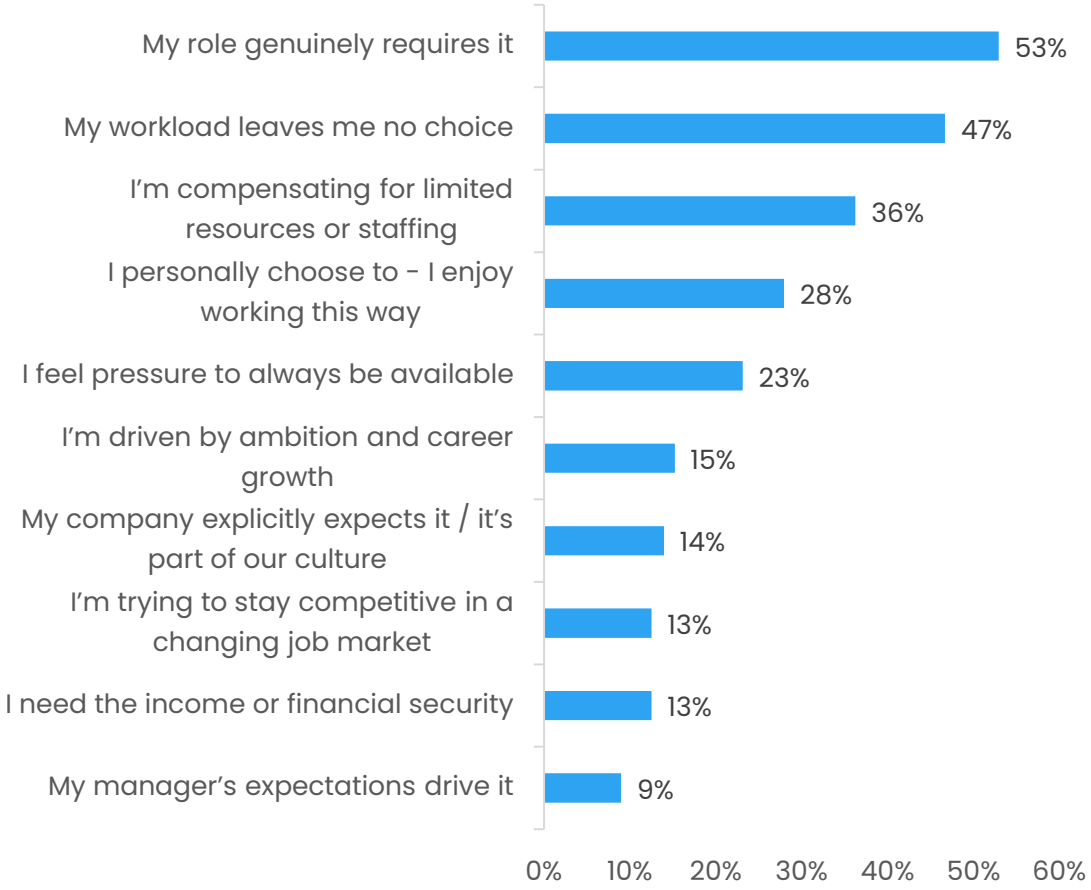
Despite years of remote work expansion, fully in-office arrangements now represent the largest share of the workforce at 48%, suggesting a meaningful return-to-office shift has taken hold. Hybrid work remains a strong second at 40%, reflecting how many organizations have landed on a middle-ground model that balances flexibility with presence. Fully remote workers, once a pandemic-era majority, now make up just 12% of respondents. As workload and after-hours data in this survey already show, the question going forward isn't just where people are working; it's how much, and whether the arrangement is making that better or worse.

MOTIVATION & ATTRIBUTION

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REASONS FOR WORKING LONG HOURS

What are your top 3 reasons for working longer or extra hours? (Select up to 3)



Job Demands Drive Longer Hours

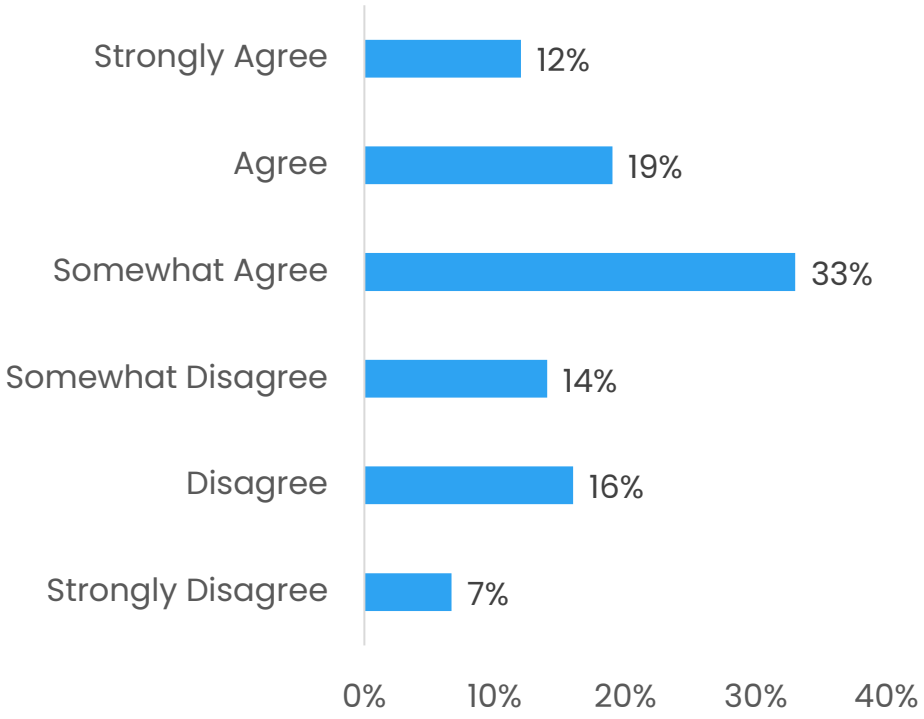
The top two reasons workers cite for logging extra hours are structural ones: 53% say their role genuinely requires it, and 47% say their workload simply leaves them no choice. A notable 36% point to limited resources or understaffing as a contributing factor, suggesting that organizational gaps are quietly being absorbed by individual workers.

But the data also reveals a more personal dimension: 28% say they personally enjoy working this way, and 23% feel pressure to always be available. Notably, direct managerial or cultural pressure ranks relatively low, with only 9% citing manager expectations and 14% pointing to company culture. The picture that emerges is one where overwork is less often explicitly demanded and more often baked into the structure of the role itself or internalized by the worker.

PRESSURE TO PERFORM THROUGH HOURS

How much do you agree with the following statement:

"I feel expected to work long hours to be seen as committed or successful."



Long Hours Seen as Proof of Commitment

For many professionals, putting in extra hours is about more than getting the work done—it's about demonstrating commitment. Nearly 64% of respondents somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree that they feel expected to work long hours to be seen as committed or successful. By comparison, just 37% expressed some level of disagreement with the statement.

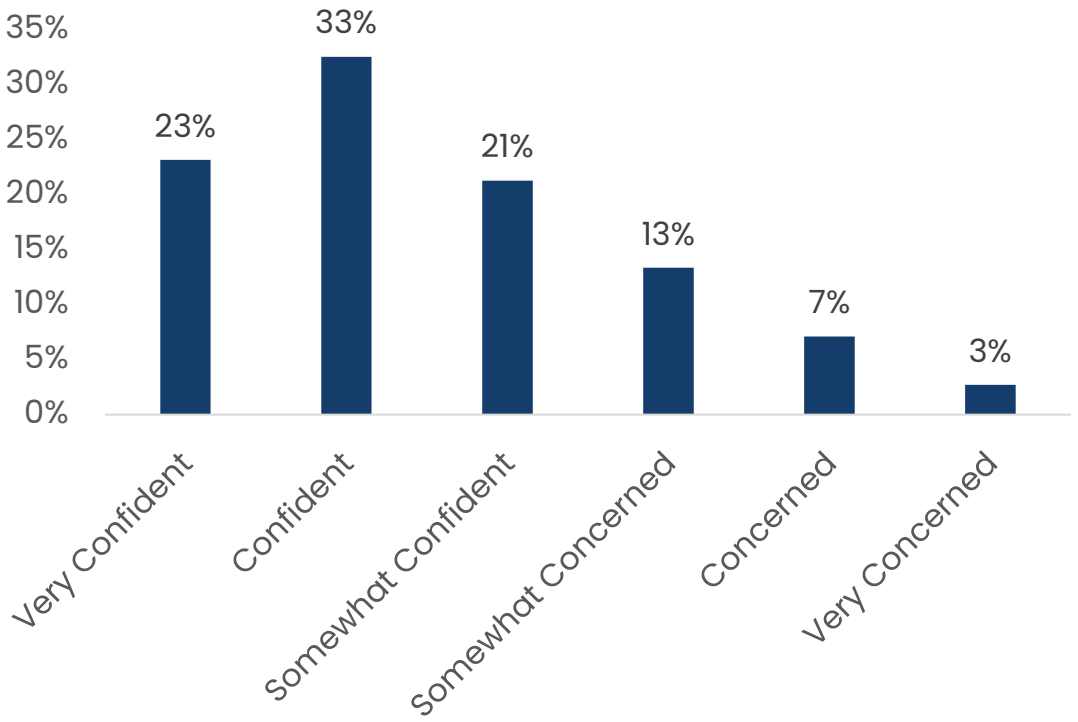
The findings suggest that, even if organizations don't explicitly require long hours, many employees perceive an unspoken expectation that visibility and dedication are measured by time spent working. This perception can reinforce behaviors like working evenings, weekends, or staying connected after hours—not necessarily because it's required, but because employees believe it's tied to career success and professional reputation.

ECONOMY, INDUSTRY & CAREER

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JOB SECURITY CONFIDENCE

How confident are you that your current job is secure given today's business and economic environment?



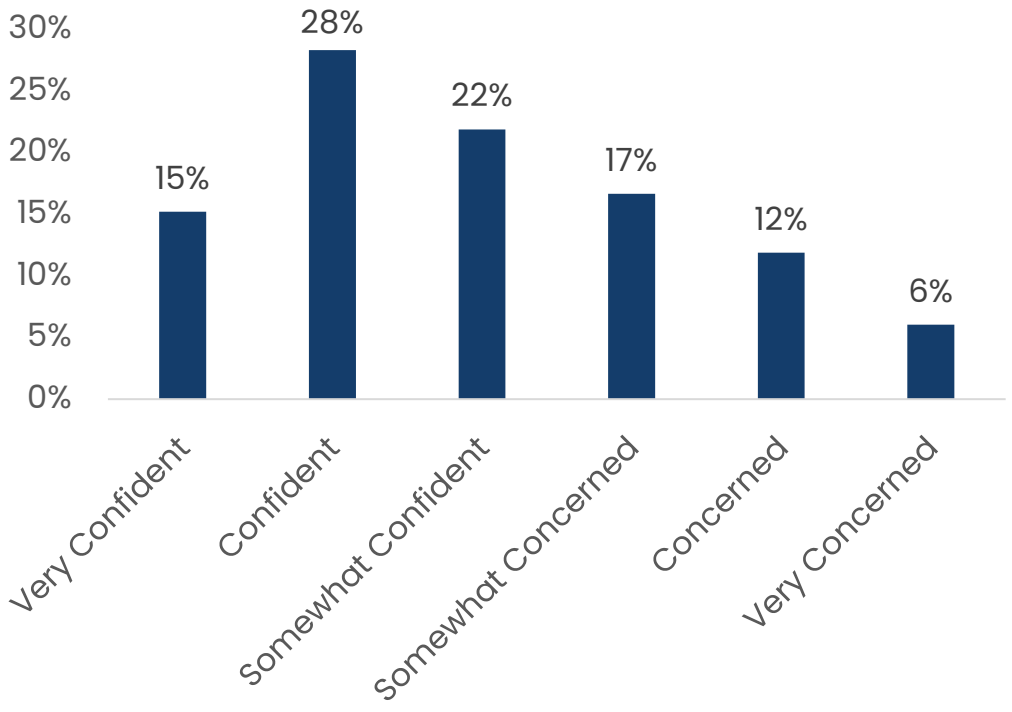
Most Workers Feel Secure In Their Jobs

Most professionals remain optimistic about their job security. Seventy-seven percent of respondents say they are very confident, confident, or somewhat confident that their current job is secure. Only 23% express some level of concern, with just 10% indicating they are concerned or very concerned.

The findings suggest that while professionals may be working longer hours and managing heavier workloads, most do not believe their positions are immediately at risk. This confidence may reflect resilient organizations, confidence in their own value, or continued demand for skilled talent. At the same time, the fact that nearly one in four workers harbor some concern highlights that economic uncertainty continues to influence how employees think about their careers.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT CONFIDENCE

Given changes in your industry, how confident are you in your ability to advance in your career?



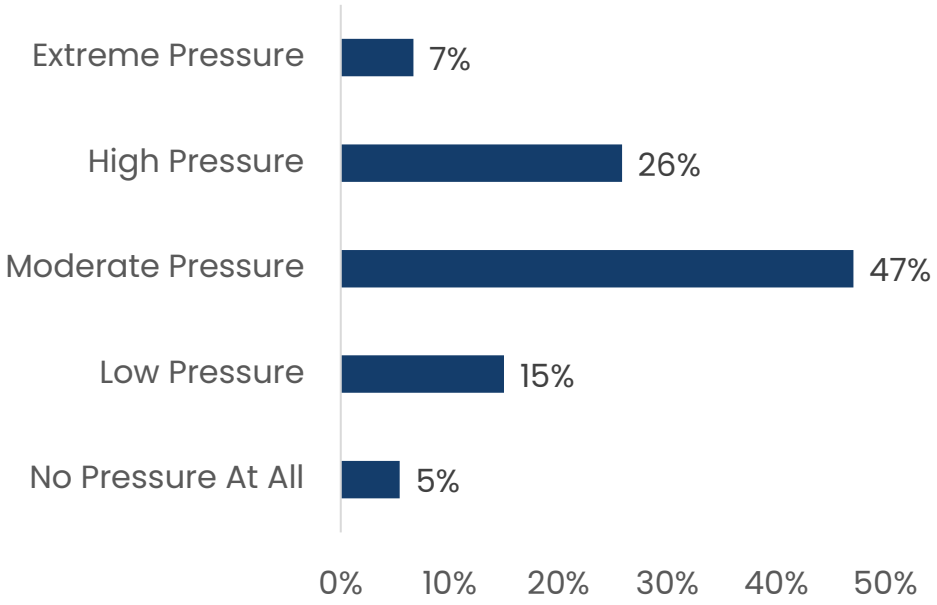
Holding On Feels Easier Than Moving Up

While most respondents feel secure in their current jobs, they are notably less confident about their long-term career growth. Just 43% say they are very confident or confident in their ability to advance given changes in their industry, while 35% express some level of concern. An additional 22% are only somewhat confident, suggesting many professionals are uncertain about what the future holds.

This gap between job security and career confidence is telling. Employees may believe their current roles are stable, but rapid technological change, evolving skill requirements, and shifting industry dynamics appear to be creating uncertainty about future opportunities. For employers, the findings underscore the importance of investing in career development, upskilling, and clear advancement pathways to help employees feel prepared for what's next.

PRESSURE TO UPSKILL

To what extent do you feel pressure to continuously build new skills to remain relevant in your role or industry?



Keeping Up is The New Keeping Pace

The need to continuously develop new skills has become a defining feature of today's workplace. Eighty percent of respondents report feeling moderate, high, or extreme pressure to build new skills in order to remain relevant in their role or industry. Just 20% say they experience little or no pressure.

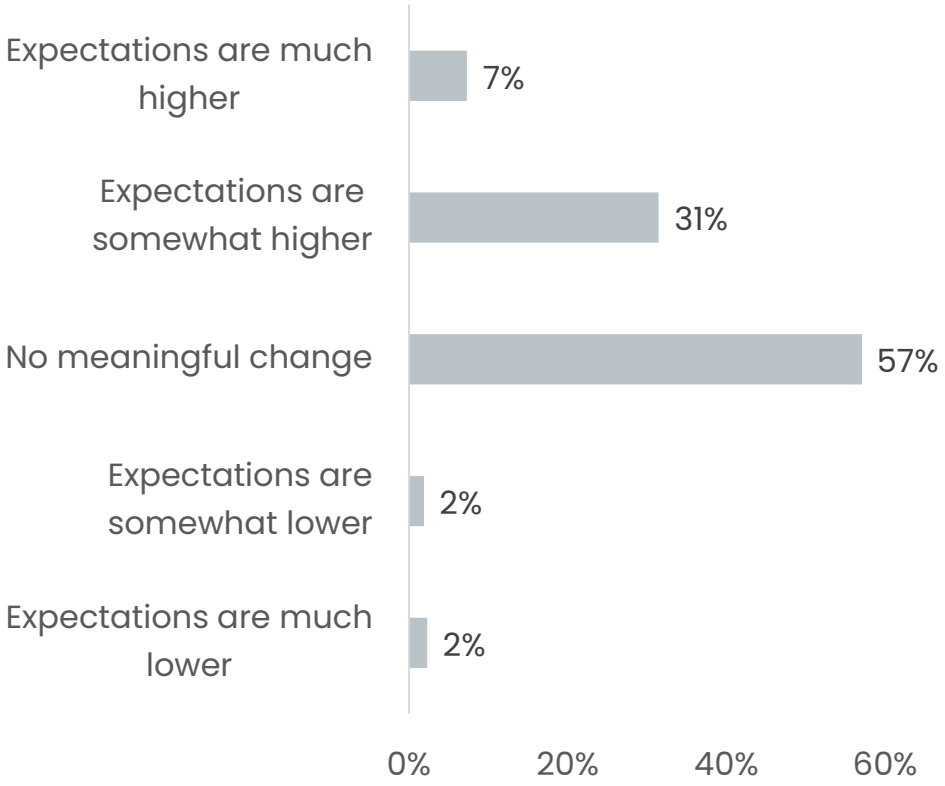
These findings highlight a workforce that recognizes learning is no longer optional. As industries evolve, technology advances, and job requirements shift, professionals increasingly view continuous skill development as essential to maintaining their value and staying competitive. This persistent pressure may also help explain why many employees report longer work hours and concerns about career advancement, keeping up often means finding time to learn on top of an already demanding workload.

IMPACT OF AI

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AI'S IMPACT ON WORK EXPECTATIONS

What impact has AI had on expectations for your work over the past year?



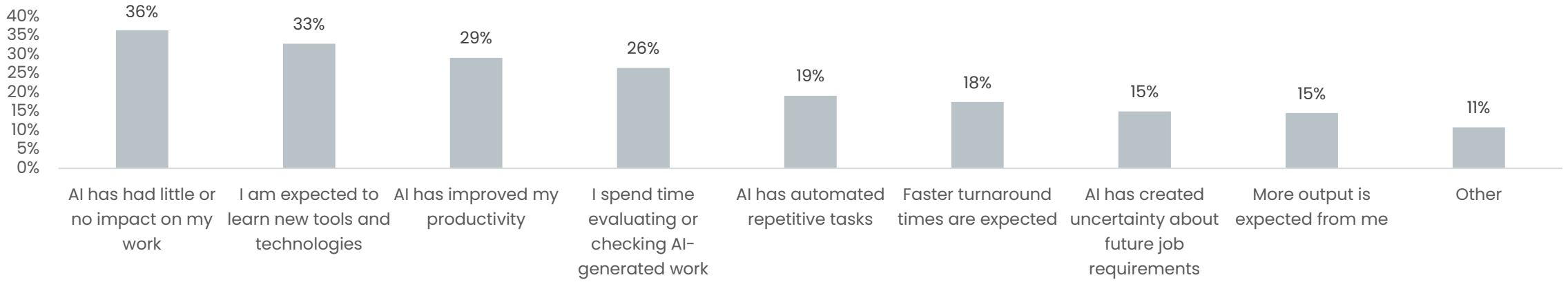
AI Isn't Letting Workers Off The Hook

While much of the conversation around AI has focused on efficiency, many professionals say its greatest impact has been on what is expected of them. Thirty-eight percent of respondents report that AI has led to somewhat or much higher expectations for their work, while just 4% say expectations have decreased. A majority (57%) report no meaningful change - for now.

The findings suggest that AI's influence on the workplace is still evolving. For many organizations, AI has yet to fundamentally change day-to-day expectations. However, among those experiencing its effects, the technology appears to be raising the bar rather than lowering it. As AI capabilities continue to mature, employers will need to balance productivity gains with realistic expectations to ensure efficiency doesn't come at the expense of employee well-being.

HOW AI IS AFFECTING WORK EXPERIENCE

In what ways has AI most affected your work experience? (Select up to 3)



AI's Biggest Impact Isn't Automation - It's The Expectation That Goes With It

AI's influence on the workplace is still uneven. More than one-third of respondents (36%) say AI has had little or no impact on their work experience, making it the most common response. At the same time, 33% say they're expected to learn new AI tools and technologies, 29% report improved productivity, and 26% spend time reviewing or validating AI-generated work.

Rather than replacing work altogether, AI appears to be changing how work gets done. For many professionals, the biggest impact isn't automation, it's the expectation to continuously learn new technologies while balancing the opportunities and responsibilities that come with AI adoption.

HOW AI IS AFFECTING WORK EXPERIENCE

In what ways has AI most affected your work experience? (write-ins)

Behind The Data, Workers Are Candid, And Often Frustrated

The open-ended responses reveal a workplace in transition. While some professionals described AI as a powerful productivity tool that helps with research, reporting, and routine tasks, many others emphasized that AI has introduced an entirely new responsibility: verifying its output. Rather than eliminating work, respondents frequently described spending additional time reviewing, correcting, or validating AI-generated content before it could be used confidently.

What We Heard

On AI Improving Productivity
"AI has helped me generate more accurate reports more quickly."
"I use AI as a junior assistant."

On Verification
"I spend far too much time correcting AI-generated work."
"Must check AI results."

On Higher Expectations
"Better data means increased work. It doesn't account for lack of personnel."
"Expectations to find and utilize AI tools to increase output."

On Uncertainty
"I feel like I'm being replaced by a computer."
"We continue to evaluate the use of AI in our business model."

WHY WORKERS REALLY WORK THIS MUCH

In your own words: Why do you really work as much as you do? (write-ins)

The Work Simply Has To Get Done

One of the strongest findings from these responses is that people aren't simply working longer because they want to, they're working longer because multiple forces are converging.

Understaffing, increasing workloads, tight deadlines, leadership responsibilities, and the desire to maintain job security all contribute to longer workdays. Many also expressed strong personal accountability, feeling responsible for customers, coworkers, or business success, even when their organizations don't explicitly require overtime. Rather than describing themselves as "workaholics," many respondents simply felt they had little choice if they wanted to meet expectations or maintain quality.

Top Themes

- **Structural overload** - Understaffing, absorbed roles, and no one else to do it
- **Leadership responsibility**- Business owners, sole operators, and leaders who can't delegate
- **Financial necessity** - Bills, mortgages, and economic uncertainty as quiet drivers
- **Genuine passion** - A significant cohort who simply love what they do
- **Client & deadline pressure** - External demands that don't bend to business hours
- **Fear & job security** - Working harder to stay visible and irreplaceable

WHY WORKERS REALLY WORK THIS MUCH

In your own words: Why do you really work as much as you do? (write-ins)

The write-ins to this question are some of the most candid in the survey. Workers described absorbed job duties never replaced after layoffs, the quiet fear of being made irrelevant by AI, the physical toll of being the only person who knows how to do the job, and the stubborn pride of people who simply don't know how to stop. A few responses were one word (*"Money." "Dedication." "Fear."*), while others ran to paragraphs. Together they form a portrait of a workforce that is stretched, self-aware, and still showing up.

What We Heard

"Job duties increased when a position was cut a couple of years ago, going from 2 people down to just me. There isn't anyone else who understands construction or physical infrastructure, so I'm on my own."

"I am worried about losing my job if I don't keep my performance extraordinary. All of the marketing managers were laid off except me. If that isn't a message, I don't know what is."

"Part of it is my personal work ethic, part of it is that just keeping life support systems going can take an entire day. If I want to work on significant projects, I have to do it on weekends."

"I know I'm looked at as someone to assist in training AI to remove and replace working people, which is very bothersome to me."

"At 72, I work because I feel like it."

"There is no one else left who can do the work I do. So many years of experience cannot be replaced by young people."

"Trying to keep the boat afloat. We keep losing experienced employees and the handful of people that know what they are doing is getting thin and overworked."

"My work ethic. I feel committed to making sure I am doing my job the best I can. But I am burnt out because of it."

SUMMARY OF INSIGHTS

The American worker isn't just busy. They're stretched, skeptical, and still showing up.

This survey of 400 workers, most of them managers, owners, and senior leaders across manufacturing, energy, construction, and beyond, paints a portrait of a workforce running well past its limits with few signs of slowing down.

Nearly 80% work more than 40 hours a week. Nine in ten log on outside of business hours. More than half describe their workload as heavy or worse. Yet when asked why, few point to a boss demanding it or a culture enforcing it. The answers are more personal and more structural: the work has to get done, there's no one else to do it, the staffing never recovered.

AI, despite its promise, has raised the ceiling of what's expected without lowering the floor of what's required. Job security feels stable, but confidence in getting ahead is shakier.

What emerges isn't a story about corporate pressure or individual ambition. It's a story about a workforce that has quietly absorbed more than it was designed to carry and keeps showing up anyway.