

2022 TALENT TRENDS

What Moms Want from Work

Prospective employees tell us what they're
demanding of their future workplace

A trends piece by Werklabs, the research division of The Mom Project;
insights from 2020-2021 studies used to predict what will attract great
talent in 2022.



Welcome

It's never been easy to attract and retain great talent. Now more than ever, this resonates with organizations and hiring managers across industries and geographies. The Great Resignation, aka the Great Realization, in 2022, is now in full swing. Many did not anticipate this current labor shortage after 9.5 million Americans lost their jobs in 2020.

Nonetheless, in 2020 Werklabs predicted this trend would occur. The greatest predictor of the future comes from studying the past. By analyzing survey data collected from moms through the pandemic, Werklabs was able to pick up on the weak signals on the radar screen that predicted a departure from work in subsequent years. In an end-of-year 2020 survey fielded by Werklabs, 88% of moms reported that working amidst COVID-19 clarified what they want in a future employer.

How does this matter in today's talent and job market landscape?

It was not just moms who gained clarity during this time, despite bearing the greatest burden. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the fault lines of disingenuous leadership and unsustainable work cultures. However, most moms could not afford to simply step away or take temporary leaves of absence, with many being either the sole or primary household providers. These women also bore the brunt of new childcare and virtual schooling responsibilities resulting in little to no capacity to invest in a job search. Moms were staying put and biding their time.

Until now.

Amid the Great Resignation, we see two main factors converge: (1) clarity with what is desired in an employer and (2) renewed time and energy to invest in finding the right career.

With that in mind, Werklabs presents its first Talent Trends report: *What Moms Want From Work*, where key drivers are defined for attracting moms to new opportunities.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2021. "COVID-19 ends longest employment recovery and expansion in CES history, causing unprecedented job losses in 2020." Monthly Labor Review, June. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2021/article/covid-19-ends-longest-employment-expansion-in-ces-history.htm>; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2021. "Supplemental data measuring the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the labor market." Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, December. <https://www.bls.gov/cps/effects-of-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic.htm>.



Attracting Talent in 2022

In a work landscape now riddled with a changing pandemic landscape, it is worth considering moms—their needs, desires, and actions—as leading indicators of what prospective employees are demanding in their workplaces.

Four key drivers emerge in determining moms' interest in pursuing new employment talent more broadly.

FLEXIBILITY

While the definition shifts, this will always will be a primary driver for attracting moms

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Attracts motivated moms who realize time spent now is an investment in their future

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Will continue to be a major consideration for moms in the years to come

BENEFITS & COMPENSATION

An ante based on perceived fairness and equity to attract moms



Flexibility

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At the end of 2020, 90% of moms surveyed by Werklabs report that (1) the shift to remote work has been positive and (2) that they are now more determined to work from home at least some of the time in the future. After working remotely for nearly two full years, many desire to maintain this level of flexibility.

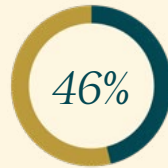
This remains the case. So much so that project-based work has become an appealing option to many moms (and caregivers more broadly) to maintain or regain flexibility in their work lives. Beyond the need to find permanent employment, Werklabs found in a survey of nearly 1,000 contingent workers at the end of 2021 the ability to work remotely or from a location of their choice is the number one motivating factor driving professionals to contingent work.

However, moms indicate that it's not just the ability to work remotely. Flexibility is not simply remote work. It's far more. Key drivers of flexibility in order importance are:

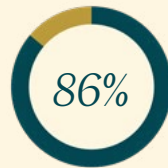
1. Manager support for unique flexibility needs
2. The ability to choose where you work
3. Organizational support for unique flexibility needs
4. A widespread acceptance to work the hours needed to get the job done, without there being set hours
5. Working flexible hours throughout the day



When remote work is offered, there's a strong desire by moms to see organizations actually investing in their remote employee experience, especially when an organization is not fully remote. There is a fear among moms that staying remote while other colleagues return to the office will set them back in their career due to being less visible in the organization.



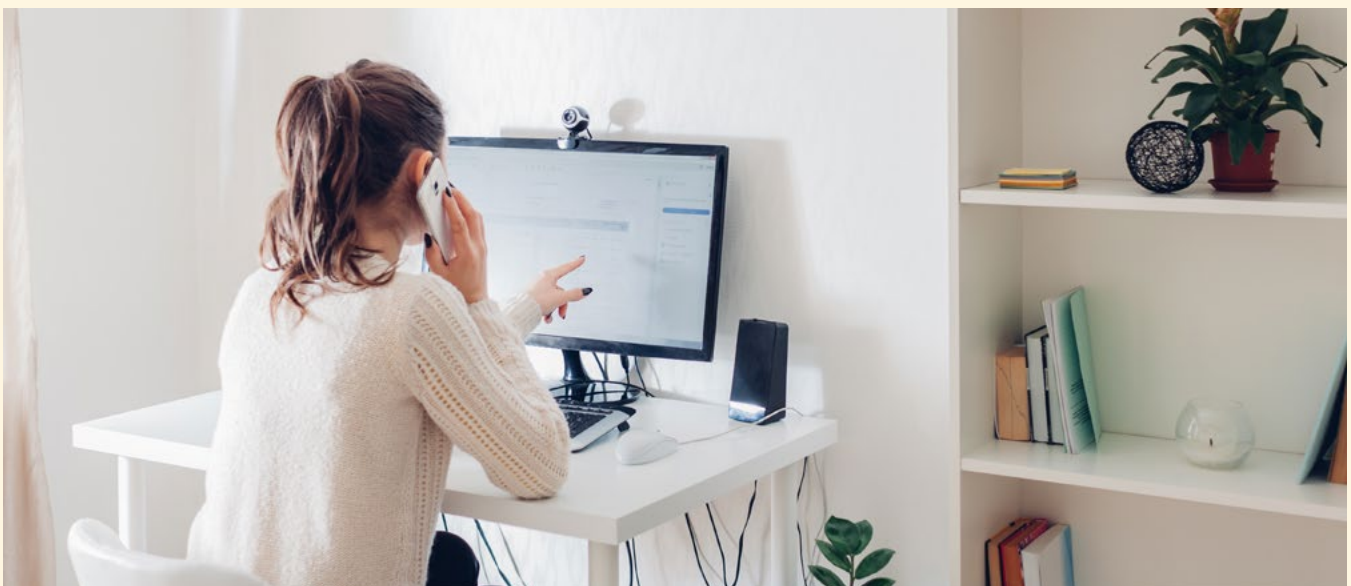
46% of moms strongly agree that having a remote worker employee experience program is an important benefit for them.



86% at least somewhat agree about the importance of this perk.

“I definitely want to go somewhere where I have flexibility because of the trust that I’m going to get my job done.”

-Interviewed participant



Career Development

Attracts motivated moms who realize time spent now is an investment in their future

An organization's focus on developing, retaining, and investing in its employees is also a significant consideration factor, which comes as no surprise. Werklabs Moms of Color Report found that 61% of moms feel they've had to pause career development efforts due to the pandemic. Black and Latinx moms feel this the most, rating the impact of COVID-19 on their ability to advance their careers as 15% more negative than White moms.

“I have no energy to pursue roles and opportunities that I might have otherwise considered.”

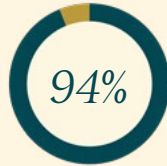
-Interviewed participant

During the pandemic, new childcare and virtual learning responsibilities left moms with little energy or time to invest in supplemental career development opportunities. Early morning and late evening meetings, for many, were no longer an option to meet new demands, with moms most frequently reporting that they were responsible for 91-100% of household and childcare responsibilities in the fall of 2020.



What does support for career development look like for moms now in 2022?

It begins with a company culture focused on career and employee development. When considering a prospective company:



94% of professionals surveyed by Werklabs indicate that having a company culture focused on growth and development is an important consideration factor for them.

Career development offerings to attract and retain talent in order of surveyed importance include:

1. Programs to support internal career moves
2. Annual Learning and Development allowances
3. Career planning and growth programs

“I like to feel like I’m learning from my leadership. Challenge me, but don’t micromanage.”

-Interviewed participant

Career development for this workforce segment should not be overlooked when attracting highly qualified contingent talent. Some 71% of contingent workers surveyed by Werklabs agree that career development efforts foment feelings of support in project-based roles.

More specifically, organizations providing networking opportunities, having conversations on career goals, and communicating open internal job opportunities are clear efforts that can be taken to attract and empower contingent talent.

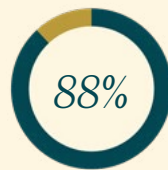


Diversity & Inclusion

Will continue to be a major consideration factor for moms in the future

Talent also expressed the importance of finding an organization with an authentic culture focused on diversity and inclusion.

This culture is felt as early as viewing a company's website, all the way through final-round interviews. Talent looks at the demographic makeup of the leadership team as one of many indicators of an organization's commitment to DEI. In organizations where the CEO is a mom, DEI efforts are felt to be more of a priority, according to Werklabs research.



88% of moms surveyed rate having a company culture focused on diversity and inclusion as extremely important.

“Diversity is extremely important to me. A workplace needs to have a collective open-mind.”

-Interviewed participant

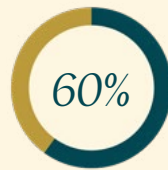
How else is DEI felt and assessed by prospective talent?

Determining whether an organization possesses:

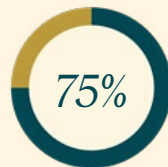
1. A focus on accessibility for employees and customers
2. Programs dedicated to increasing representation of diverse groups
3. Goal setting and transparency around diversity metrics



Consciously or unconsciously, moms are looking for and attracted to organizations that actively safeguard against bias. Unfortunately, ageism is still a common practice across workplaces today, and women are more impacted than men. In particular, moms returning to the workforce or making career pivots beyond the age of 40 talk about the struggles they encounter with ageism. This is frequently felt during job searches. When developing a DEI plan to attract and retain talent, organizations should be mindful to address ageism.



60% of professionals over the age of 40 surveyed report experiencing ageism in their professional lives.



Of those surveyed who have experienced ageism in their professional lives, 75% felt it during their job search.

Of survey participants choosing to disclose their gender, 62% of women and 52% of men indicate having experienced ageism.



What about contingent workers?

Contracts offered by an organization that demonstrate an organizational commitment to DEI are more appealing to professionals of color. In fact, 24% of those surveyed said they would place higher consideration on a company that actively supports DEI efforts.



Benefits & Compensation

An ante based on perceived fairness and equity to attract moms

Benefits are critical to attracting talent. However, many benefits seem to be viewed as threshold requirements when considering an organization. Benefits and compensation are a binary yes/no; either yes, they meet the needs of my family and me or, no, they do not. If “yes,” the organization will be a part of mom’s consideration set when ranking organizations. If “no,” regardless of other perks and offerings, moms will not consider the role.

Regarding competitive parental leave policies, healthcare coverage and PTO (paid time off) are all desired. Interestingly, in 1:1 interviews with professional moms, Werklabs found that many expressed a strong understanding of the risks associated with unlimited PTO, mainly that employees are less likely to take actual time off.

Most frequently, talent reported needing an 11-20% increase in compensation to consider leaving their current role. However, one in ten respondents reported they need no increase or are okay making a lateral career move, highlighting the importance of other workplace offerings like flexibility. For some women (42%), flexibility outranks salary altogether.





These three offerings rank nearly 2x more important than perks like free food and beverages.

Hold the perks

At the very least, understand that perks do not compensate for more critical workplace offerings like:

1. Robust and affordable healthcare coverage
2. 401K matching
3. Comprehensive mental health and wellbeing programs



Given nearly 47% of the workforce today is made up of non-employee labor, companies need to consider this part of their workforce when it comes to benefits. Allow them to participate in wellbeing programs. Be creative when it comes to other ways of delivering value.

For instance, Intel employees can earn a \$4,000 bonus if they refer a woman, underrepresented minority, or veteran who is ultimately hired. The same goes for contingent labor. If there are initiatives that you believe will positively impact working parents (i.e., job sharing, flexible workdays, sick leave policy changes, or daycare stipends), extend those to contingent workers.



Where do you begin when thinking about attracting talent today?

1 Invest in employees' productivity, career development, wellbeing, and inclusion.

Employees are one of the biggest advocates and resources for attracting talent. Gain an understanding of current employee experiences and areas for improvement that exist within the organization. Engage in 1:1 conversations with employees and administer comprehensive surveys to gather this information in more detail. When you have it, roll out programs that specifically address what you've learned, so your talent feels like an active part of the solution.

If you regularly provide performance feedback to your talent, consider adjusting it to account for the past two years. According to a recent report by McKinsey, "less than a third of companies have adjusted their performance review criteria to account for the challenges created by the pandemic, and only about half have updated employees on their plans for performance reviews or their productivity expectations during COVID-19." Things have changed, and companies must be flexible in accounting for this change.



2 Ensure hiring practices are inclusive and consistent across the organization.

Prospective employees should be able to understand your culture across all touchpoints of the recruitment process. This starts before a person even begins the interview process. Invest in your brand and communicate it actively to all talent. Continue that communication throughout the interview process. Make sure you set specific parameters for touching base to keep prospective talent engaged and interested.

Inclusive hiring practices strengthen how an organization is perceived, which in turn attracts talent to them. Make sure you have inclusive job descriptions (Zillow Group attracted 10-11% more applicants who identify as women than average by using certain words in their job postings), have an accessible careers page on your website, and look for additional avenues for finding diverse candidates.

3 Consider offering employees remote and hybrid options when possible.

The ability to attract highly qualified, diverse talent increases when employers are able to tap into new markets through offering remote work. If you aren't offering this type of flexibility, there are many companies that are not only offering it, they are actively recruiting talent to work in remote roles. Your talent is your biggest competitive advantage. If you aren't finding ways to attract and retain them, your competition most certainly will be.





Want to learn more?

Interested in learning more about how Werklabs can support your organization in its efforts to attract, engage, and retain great talent?

Learn more about us at [Werklabs.com](https://www.werklabs.com) or reach out to Abby Haynes, Senior Manager of Werklabs directly.

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