

# 2022 and 2023 Edition: What's on Employees' Workplace Wish List?

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There are some constants when it comes to what employees are looking for. A fair wage and being treated respectfully, for example, will never go out of style. But the rest of the worker wish list has always been a bit more flexible.

In the dot-com era, for example, break rooms with ping-pong or foosball tables were coveted. Decades before that, a good pension plan was a must. Today, though, we're in a post-pandemic world, one that has caused a lot of reflection about what's important for employees. At the same time, the workforce is evolving, with Generation Z entering the workforce, a group that now makes up [32% of the planet's population](#) and thinks quite differently than millennials or Baby Boomers.

So what is the workforce of 2022 and 2023 prioritizing? Some of the answers are fairly obvious, given the past two years, but others are a bit more surprising.

Salary, of course, is always important. Fairness and equity, [says the Harvard Business Review](#), will be "the defining issues" for organizations moving forward. And a [Gallup](#)

[survey](#) of over 13,000 U.S. employees about what was most important to them, saw “a significant increase in income or benefits” top the list. Since 2015, this item has risen in priority for workers from No. 4 on the list with 41% of employees citing it as “very important,” to No. 1 with 64% of employees naming it as a critical factor in taking a new job.

Flexibility, as you might suspect, is a given now also. If a company was able to support remote work during the pandemic, workers want to at least have the option to continue working from home part of the time. And a growing number want to have [more control over the hours they work](#) each day, becoming more goal-focused than timeclock obsessed.

And, given what we’ve all been through in the last two years, there’s also an emphasis on strong benefit packages that both cover mental health issues and don’t penalize workers who stay home when they are sick. Workers want a work culture that emphasizes self-care and wellness (And, tying back to the flexibility expectation, they want to know it’s ok to take a day off to recharge once in a while).

In fact, in the [Gallup survey](#), 61% said they put a high value on improving their work-life balance and personal well-being, compare to just 53% in 2015.

Here are a few other things employees are hoping to find in their workplace:

## **Greater Job Security**

While many of today’s workers are leaving their job and looking for a new one, they want the place they land at to provide some peace of mind for them about their long-term future. After two years of uncertainty about everything from our health to our personal finances, employees want workplaces that are a stabilizing force and a constant for them.

In the Gallup poll, a little over half (53%) of the workers said they were looking for jobs that have a greater degree of security than they currently have.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

After the events following the killing of George Floyd and the rise of the Black Lives Matter and the #MeToo movements, more workers are looking for a workplace that [actively supports equity](#), rather than just giving platitudes to the issues. Recruiters, says Gallup, should be prepared to discuss the changes and commitments companies are taking or planning to take.

## **Training**

Automation is coming to many workplaces—and the pandemic has sped up that transition. So, workers want to be prepared for the future and they're looking to their companies to ensure that. McKinsey, in a 2021 study, found automation (and other factors) had the potential to accelerate annual productivity growth by about one percentage point in the period through 2024. That's more than double the pre-pandemic rate. And in the U.S., it could mean a per capita increase of about \$17,000.

But the trick to that is being ready to take those new jobs. And some companies are already taking the lead. Unilever, for example, is committing to spend \$2.8 billion per year to [upskill its entire global workforce](#) by 2025.

Fortunately, workers often just need to pick up a few new skills to switch disciplines entirely, according to a World Economic Forum study. And in a pinch, the average worker [could be reskilled](#) for an entirely different role in just six months.