

**Workforce Report**  
Q2 2021



**flextal**<sup>™</sup>

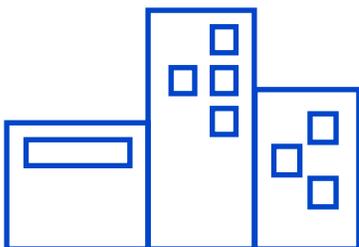
**Entrepreneur**<sup>®</sup>

## SUMMARY

The workforce of today is vastly different from that of only one year ago. As the new normal heads toward the world faster than anyone expected, the changes that have transpired in this past year are front and center. Now, both working professionals and organizations are scratching their heads, wondering where they should go next.

Due to our accelerated workforce evolution, there is urgency to make decisions quickly and take a stance on the future: flexibility or 9-5? Remote work or return to in-office? And although neither side can unanimously agree on where the future of work is headed, it's clear that the workforce itself now holds the power, challenging a decades-old tradition of employers running the show.

In 2020, workers across the world experienced autonomy and independence, many for the first time ever in their career. This permanently changed the relationship between workers and employers, handing the power back to the workforce-and now, organizations will need to bend to the wants of current and prospective talent.



Although this is an exciting change, tensions are high. We've seen the headlines highlighting the dissatisfaction workers feel in their current roles, as well as terms like "The Great Resignation" to describe these trends. The urge for change is becoming impossible to ignore in the business landscape.

Forty-seven [percent of workers](#) say they would leave their job if they were not offered a hybrid option by their employer, and [one in four workers](#) say they plan to quit their job after the pandemic. With so many workers becoming disgruntled within their current roles, employers will need to think fast, and quickly, to retain talent that is fed up with outdated, traditional workplace models.

However, amidst all the change, the future of work is looking bright for both parties; the changes in the past year have sparked incredibly important conversations surrounding worker wellbeing, and improving the utilization of talent. And no matter which side you're on, it's becoming evident that the workforce is hurtling toward a transformation where workers will be in control more than ever before.

# RETURN TO THE NEW NORMAL

By now, [nearly half](#) of our country's population is fully vaccinated against COVID-19. With the number only increasing, we're all getting a taste of what our lives used to look like. And as states begin to reopen, [most business leaders](#) are expecting employees to come into work.

But does it match what their employees want?



**38%**  
OF RESPONDENTS WOULD CONSIDER RELOCATING IF PRESENTED WITH A FULLY REMOTE OPPORTUNITY.



**40%**  
OF WORKERS WOULD CONSIDER QUITTING IF THEIR EMPLOYER DID NOT CONTINUE BEING FLEXIBLE AROUND REMOTE WORK.



**43%**  
OF RESPONDENTS HAVE HAD WORK-FROM-HOME POLICIES ADJUSTED BY EMPLOYERS, WHILE 23% ARE NOT RECEIVING ADJUSTED POLICIES GOING FORWARD.

According to a FlexTal™ survey, not really. 38 percent of respondents said they would consider relocating if presented with a fully remote work opportunity. For many, remote work is life changing, allowing people to choose where they live, instead of work dictating where they settle.

Luckily for these respondents, 43 percent have seen work-from-home policies adjusted by their employers. However, nearly a quarter (23 percent) are not receiving adjusted policies going forward.

A lot of the FlexTal™ data mirrors that of other studies, as [40 percent of workers](#) say they would consider quitting their job if their employer did not continue being flexible around remote work. As employers and employees wrestle with work structure moving forward, we also have to consider how COVID-19 has driven the freelance economy.

# RETURN TO THE NEW NORMAL

Mass layoffs sent people looking for work and laid-off employees started piecing together freelance careers one gig at a time. Forced to look for work anywhere, workers discovered the flexible lifestyle, empowering them to build the work-life blend they desire.

The economy has been growing so quickly that [67 percent of workers](#) went freelance within the last three years and only six percent are freelancing until they find a full-time opportunity. Currently, Gen Z and millennials are leading the freelance revolution, with [47 percent](#) of the combined generations opting for the self-employed life during COVID-19.

Baby boomers, however, are often overlooked when discussing the Gen Z and millennial-driven freelance economy, but they're showing

significant contributions. In 2018, [a survey found 49 percent](#) of self-employed individuals are boomers. Now, baby boomers are taking that self-employed mentality and applying it to the freelance economy.

What this generation is finding is that the flexible lifestyle freelancing offers allows them to enjoy retirement while keeping engaged with projects and earning supplemental income. They also offer [a higher-level and broader skill](#) set many millennial and Gen Z workers have not yet acquired.

Between Gen Z and millennials choosing the independent route and baby boomers who are utilizing their in-demand skills, the traditional company model is at risk of losing full-time employees to the flexible freelance lifestyle.

If business leaders want to attract and retain talent in 2021 and beyond, they have to listen to their employees.

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THE TRADITIONAL COMPANY MODEL IS AT RISK OF LOSING FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES TO THE FLEXIBLE FREELANCE LIFESTYLE.

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# UNDER-UTILIZATION OF TALENT

FlexTal™ survey respondents on leaving their current role for a freelance career.

We are currently witnessing The Great Resignation.

Workers are leaving their jobs at levels (2.7 percent) [we haven't seen in 20 years](#). As the unemployment rate is rising and remote workers have a clearer picture of what they want in a job, it's a buyer's market. This means employers need to step it up.

In our survey, 40 percent of respondents have either currently considering or have recently considered leaving their present job. The data directly points to another pandemic: an underutilization one.

Currently, [34 percent of Americans](#) feel their skills are underutilized at their job and 47 percent wish their company would attempt to understand their skillset better. The FlexTal™ survey reinforces that, with 45 percent of workers saying they feel underutilized in their current role. A little more than a quarter (27 percent) feel they are being utilized, while seven percent of respondents were unsure.

**40%**  
WOULD LEAVE



**12%**  
WOULD NOT



**17%**  
UNSURE



As the freelancing economy grows, more people are beginning to look at it as a viable option, weighing the pros and cons of the self-employed life versus their current full-time situation.

40 percent of FlexTal™ survey respondents said they would consider leaving their current role to pursue a freelance career. Compare that to the 12 percent who said no and the 17 percent who were unsure. People are itching to build their own working style and seek out projects that challenge them.

# UNDER-UTILIZATION OF TALENT

However, there are barriers preventing these workers from making a jump. When asked what kept them from becoming a freelancer, FlexTal's survey responses were scattered between competition (six percent), new technologies (eight percent), lack of projects (seven percent), poor client quality (seven percent) and unstable income (11 percent).



## Barriers to transitioning to a freelance career:

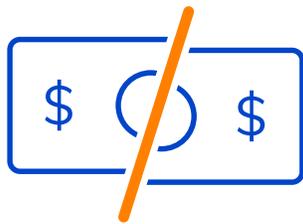
Competition, new technology, lack of projects, poor client quality and unstable income.

This freelance boom means self employment is becoming easier. Within the past decade, deep-talent platforms have popped up to optimize the process. Tech startups like FlexTal™ are making it easy for talent to acquire opportunities and clients to acquire high-quality talent. As these platforms grow, barriers will only decrease.

With the job economy recovering and beginning to thrive, workers are going to follow opportunities that best utilize their skills. And right now, those opportunities are heavily available within the freelance market.

# DEEP TALENT PLATFORMS ARE INCREASING THE TENOR OF THE INDEPENDENT WORKER

Since freelancing was created, there was a thought that it was a completely “freeing” career, although this idea was largely untrue. Freelancing came with independence, but also entailed billing clients, plus the stress of constantly seeking out new projects, sometimes more often than doing any actual projects. The never-ending hustle of this way of working often led many former freelancers to return to the dreaded 9-5 role simply for a reliable job.



When former freelancers were asked on FlexTal’s survey why they left their freelance role, the top two reasons were an unstable income and lack of available projects- two common reasons that are currently being tackled in the market today. Demand, however, means the life of a freelancer has drastically increased, thanks to deep-talent platforms, such as FlexTal™. These platforms remove most of the work freelancers normally have to do to secure work by matching them to work or projects that best fit their skills.

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**DURING THE RECENT HEALTH CRISIS, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT ORGANIZATIONS NEED TO BE AGILE AND ADAPTABLE TO SURVIVE; AND THE KEY TO THIS AGILITY IS FLEXIBLE, CONTRACTED TALENT.**

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- DANNY BECKETT JR.  
FOUNDER & CEO OF FLEXTAL

# DEEP TALENT PLATFORMS ARE INCREASING THE TENOR OF THE INDEPENDENT WORKER

The shift away from traditional talent models that occurred due to major layoffs exhibited the importance of assisting existing and newly independent professionals in finding dependable work. Through matching freelancers with work that comes through the platform, they no longer need to feel as if they're running their own freelance business. Often, the billing, matching, and mediating is all taken care of for them, making the relationship between organizations and freelancers a much more smooth experience.

**Favorite aspects of freelancing;** flexibility, being your own boss and doing work you love.



In FlexTal's survey, 25 percent of freelance respondents stated their favorite aspect of freelancing was flexibility, while 18 percent said it was being their own boss, and 15 percent said doing work they love is their favorite. With deep talent platforms, freelancers can finally enjoy the independence and additional "freeing" and fulfilling aspects without the hassles it typically brings.

Deep-talent platforms are helping the freelance movement grow by allowing the freelancer to not only relinquish most business tasks, but also only do the work they love and utilize their favorite skills- something corporate jobs or independent freelancing can't offer.

# SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF THE WORKFORCE

While much of the fate of the future of work lies within the hands (and power) of the workforce, the decisions that employers make in response to these shifts will be just as formative. In a talent market globalized by transformation and the pandemic, talent everywhere is becoming more selective about where they work. To fully take advantage of this globalized talent pool, employers need to not only adapt to flexibility and remote work, but additionally embrace listening to what workers want, rather than just guessing.

Workers want flexibility, but there is no one-size-fits-all plan for how to work flexibly, and this offering will look different across each role and person. To make flexibility more accessible and attractive to current and prospective talent, embracing employee feedback is at the core of creating a workplace environment that will work for everyone and building a culture based on mutual respect.

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**IN THE NEW WORLD OF WORK, CERTAIN SKILLS LIKE THE ABILITY TO COLLABORATE REMOTELY AND WORK SELF-SUFFICIENTLY HAVE GONE FROM NICE-TO-HAVES TO NECESSITIES.**

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- NIRIT PELED-MUNTZ  
CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER, HIBOB

# SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF THE WORKFORCE

Employers will need to learn how to work with a variety of needs according to each employee, especially when it comes to working parents and caregivers, which make up approximately [41 percent of workers](#) between the ages of 20 and 54.

Out of the FlexTal™ survey respondents who are actively parents and caregivers, 30 percent say they need flexibility in their role to succeed. This significant amount of workers relying on flexibility will force employers to place flexible options even higher on their priority list.



The pressure to perform in crisis, for both workers and leaders, has been incredible over the past year. For many professionals, remote working made them more productive than when in the office, with [77 percent of workers](#) showing an increase in productivity as a result of working remotely at least a few times per month. For employers who are worried about regulating productivity in the future, it's clear that remote work is the answer.

Already, the world has witnessed the consequences of companies who refuse to adapt to remote and flexible work: when the leadership teams of some of the largest companies in the world announced their plans to return full-time to the office for quality control and management purposes, staff publicly demanded that remote work be considered, or else they would leave the company in search of a better workplace environment.

## About FlexTal™

FlexTal™ is the #1 flexible talent matching platform leading the future of work. Every day, we match organizations small and large with elite independent contractors for flexible hourly and project-based engagements.

Learn more about how FlexTal™ is helping organizations harness the power of flexible talent and strengthen their workforce by visiting us at:

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