

Agency Iceberg **PR Salary & Culture Guide 2023**



A message from Anna O'Dea, Founder of Agency Iceberg.

Welcome to the **2023 PR & Culture Salary Survey Guide!**

We surveyed 100+ Australian (agency and in-house) based Public Relations talents over a six week period, to find out current salaries, workplace perks and overall attitudes within the PR industry.

Two critical factors have played a key role in the lack of employee hiring for the initial period (January-April) of this year; the increase in federal property interest rates and global layoffs that have impacted the Australian Market. In Silicon Valley alone, we watched big names like Google, Amazon, Yahoo, Meta and Zoom layoff a combined 84,714 people just in the month of January alone, which exceeded the total number of layoffs for the full year of 2022.

Which brings me to the question, should you really be hiring staff right now?

- If your business has positive cash flow to accommodate a new hire - YES
- If your team/business has a critical skill gap or knowledge that needs to be filled - YES
- A new hire for the agency could create positive revenue for the business - YES

The job market has picked up in May and June & we are seeing movement again, both in employers hiring and talent choosing to explore new job opportunities.

EOFY is just around the corner, are you prepared for your mid-year pay rise interview?



Anna x

About Agency Iceberg

Agency Iceberg is a boutique recruitment company that prides itself on helping people find jobs and workplaces they love. We recruit exclusively for marketing, communications, PR, digital, experiential and advertising roles, from senior leadership and C-suite positions to entry level opportunities.

Launched in 2014, we recruit for some of Australia's biggest full-service advertising, marketing, media, digital and creative agencies, as well as a variety of in-house organisations across Melbourne and Sydney.

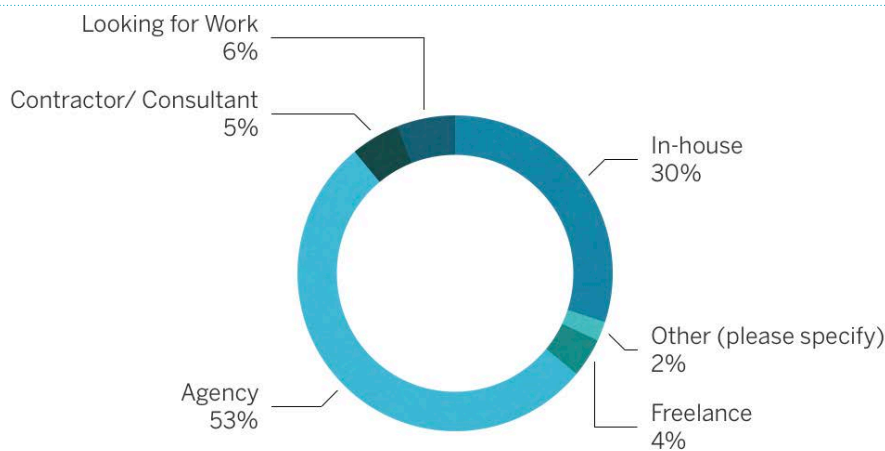
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Demographic Information

The survey results reflect the responses from 100 PR professionals in the Australian workforce. They range from junior level through to senior management and encompass a wide range of skill sets.

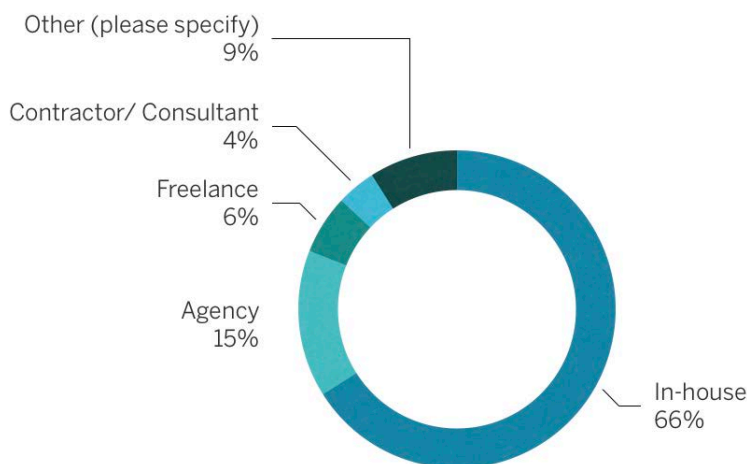
Current workplace situation



Other answers included were:

- Mix of in house and freelance contracts
- Government

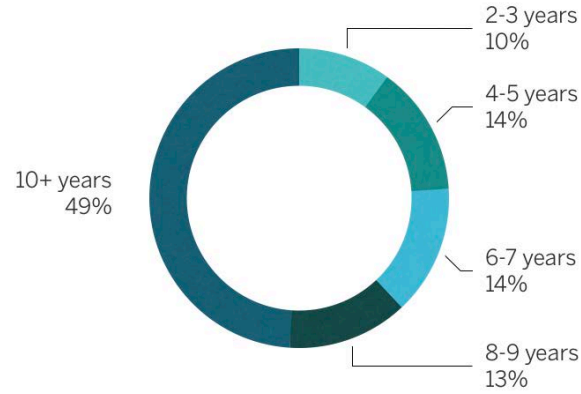
Where would you like to go in the next 12-24 months?



Other answers included were:

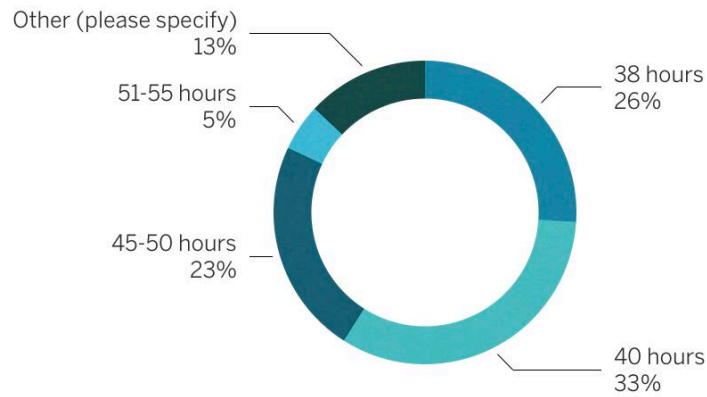
- Maintain an in house role for 4 days a week with the option to have consultancy work on the side
- Taking a year off (travelling) then will come back to in-house
- In-house, consultant, freelance

Years of industry experience



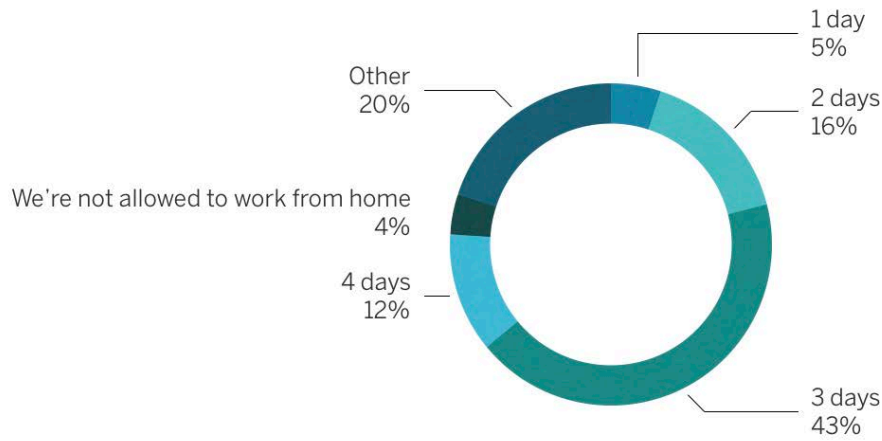
How many hours a week do you work?

Key takeaways



- Other answers were 15 hours, 22 hours, 25 hours, 30 hours, and 40-45 hours. Based on those numbers, a minority of respondents work part-time.
- Two options that no one selected were 55-60 hours and 60+ hours.
- The most popular response was 40 hours **(33%)** and the least popular response was 51-55 hours **(5%)**.
- A quarter of respondents **(26%)** work the standard 38 hours.

How many days are you in the office?



Key takeaways

- Other answers included were: 5 days in the office, fully remote, home based office unless with clients or at events, ad hoc, when it's necessary, and 5 days out of choice, 2 is compulsory.
- Of those who are allowed to work from home, 3 days was the most popular answer (**43%**) and 1 day was the least popular (**5%**).
- Only **4%** of respondents are not allowed to work from home, meaning the majority of those surveyed are allowed to work from home to some capacity. Will we continue to see a WHF trend or will employees be forced to come into the office in the future?

Industries

Sectors worked in

Lifestyle	35%	Fashion	16%	Other:	
Finance	22%	Drink	11%	Arts	2%
Retail	21%	Luxury	9%	Events	2%
FMCG	25%	Property (commercial/residential)	11%	Entertainment	2%
Health	19%	Education	13%	Social Media	1%
Tech	28%	eCommerce	9%	Television	1%
Tourism	22%	Fitness/sport	17%	Employment	1%
Not-for-profit	16%	Automotive	9%	Professional Services	1%
Hospitality	14%	Construction	6%		
Food	16%	Pharma	5%		
Government	20%	Agriculture	2%		
Beauty	18%	Transport	12%		

Salary Guide

Salary Guide Average Salary for a PR role (Package)

*Note: titles were provided by respondents.

Account Coordinator

\$60,000 - \$65,000+

Account Executive

\$70,000+

Marketing and Communications Coordinator

\$75,000+

PR and Communications Manager

\$80,000+

Account Manager

\$80,000+

Social Account Manager

\$80,000 - \$90,000+

Executive Assistant to Director

\$75,000 - \$85,000

Senior Account Manager

\$90,000+

PR Manager

\$90,000+

Senior PR Manager

\$90,000+

PR and Communications Manager

\$90,000+ (MID LEVEL)

Media and Communications Manager

\$90,000+ (MID LEVEL)

PR & Communications Consultant

\$90,000 - \$100,000+ (MID LEVEL)

PR Specialist

\$90,000 - \$110,000+ (MID LEVEL)

Communications Manager

\$90,000 - \$110,000+ (MID LEVEL)

Public Affairs Officer

\$90,000 - \$110,000+ (MID LEVEL)

Communications Advisor

\$90,000 - \$110,000+ (MID LEVEL)

Associate Director Communications

\$95,000+

Communications Specialist

\$95,000 - \$100,000+

PR & Partnerships

\$95,000 - \$115,000+ (MID LEVEL)

Senior Marketing Associate

\$97,000 - \$100,000+

Senior Talent Manager

\$100,000+

Media Relations Specialist

\$110,000 - \$120,000+ (Corporate)

Senior PR Strategist

\$110,000 - \$120,000+

Publicist

\$110,000 - \$120,000+

Communications Strategist

\$110,000 - \$120,000+

Brand Communications Manager

\$120,000+

PR Services Director

\$120,000+

Account Director

\$120,000+

Senior Business Director

\$120,000 - \$130,000+

Director

\$120,000 - \$130,000+

Senior Publicist

\$120,000 - \$130,000+

Business Director and Melbourne Lead

\$120,000 - \$130,000+

Executive Manager, Marketing and Communications

\$120,000 - \$140,000+

PR and Social Media Director

\$130,000+

Senior Communications Advisor

\$130,000+

International Marketing Specialist

\$130,000 - \$140,000+

Senior Account Director

\$140,000+

Senior Marketing Communications Manager

\$150,000+

Principal Media Advisor

\$160,000+

Group Account Director

\$160,000 - \$180,000+

Creative Director

\$160,000 - \$180,000+ (Independent Agency)

Event Lead / Head of Production

\$180,000+

Head of PR

\$185,000+

Head Of Consumer PR

\$185,000+

Head of Communications

\$185,000+

Head of Corporate

\$185,000+

General Manager

\$220,000 - \$250,000+

Co-Founder PR Agency

\$220,000 - \$250,000+

Owner/ MD - PR & Communications

\$220,000 - \$250,000+

Managing Director

\$220,000 - \$280,000+

Freelance Contractor (Account Manager)

\$450-\$550+ PER DAY

Freelance Marketing Manager, Marketing Specialist

\$600-\$800+ PER DAY

Senior publicist/Freelance Publicist

\$650 -\$700+ PER DAY

Freelance PR Account Director

\$650 -\$700+ PER DAY

Freelance Journalist/ Publicist

\$650 -\$700+ PER DAY

Senior Publicist/ Freelance Publicist

\$650 -\$700+ PER DAY

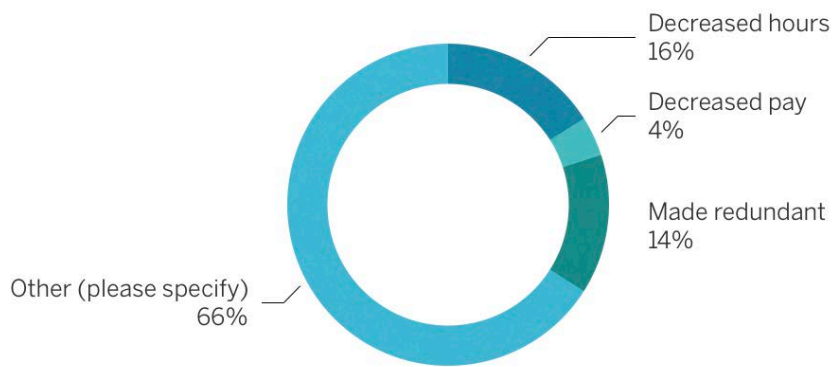
Respondents were also asked what salary they felt they should receive in their current role

Key Takeaways

- The majority of respondents felt they were underpaid by an average of \$15,000-\$20,000.
- Inflation has gone through the roof in the last 12 months, however, salaries haven't increased at the same rate as CPI.

Effects of COVID-19 since 2020

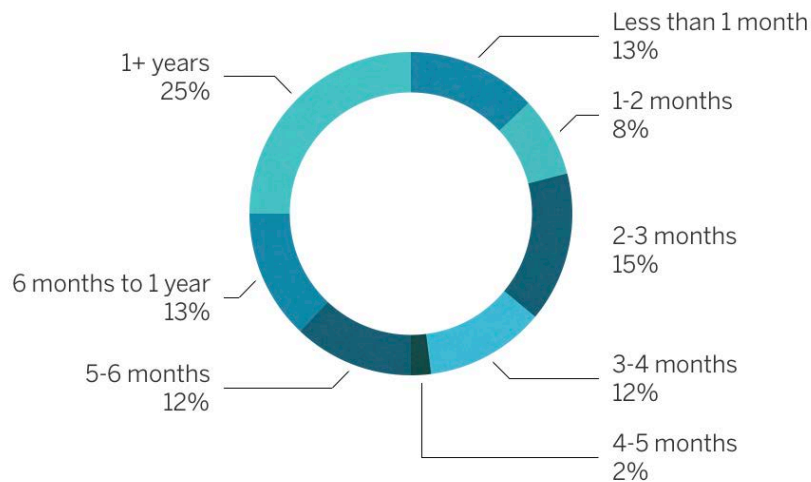
Has COVID impacted your salary (since 2020), the hours you work or your employment status? And do you feel this question is still relevant to the PR job market in 2023?



Key takeaways

- The majority of other answers (**66%**) were that COVID has not impacted the respondents salary, hours, and employment status and that COVID is no longer relevant to the PR job market.
- Decreased hours was the biggest COVID impact on employment (**16%**), while decreased pay had the smallest impact (**4%**).

If COVID affected your salary or hours, how long did this last?

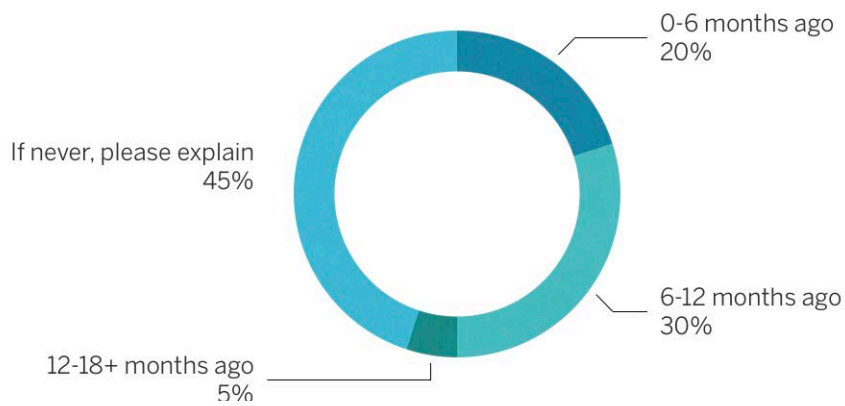


Key takeaways

- The most common answer was COVID affected respondent's salary for 1+ years (**25%**) and the least common was 4-5 months (**2%**).
- 3-4 months, 5-6 months, and 6 months to 1 year were all tied at **12%**.

Salary Reviews

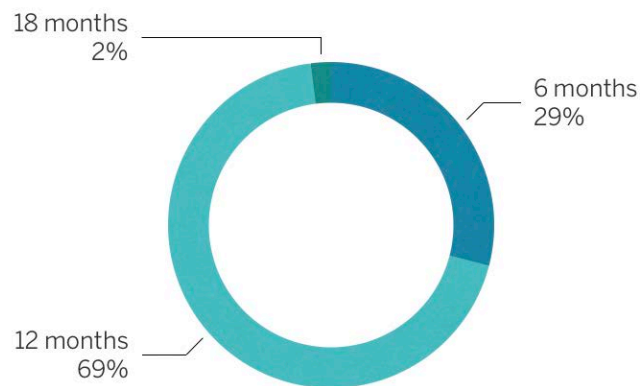
In my current role, my last salary review was



Key takeaways

- **45%** of respondents said that they've never had a salary review at their current work due to still being on probation, owning the company, freelancing, and having a set contract.
- **20%** of respondents had a salary review 0-6 months ago, **30%** had a salary review 6-12 months ago, and **5%** had a review 12-18+ months ago.

I believe salary reviews should be a mandatory requirement for PR companies to implement every

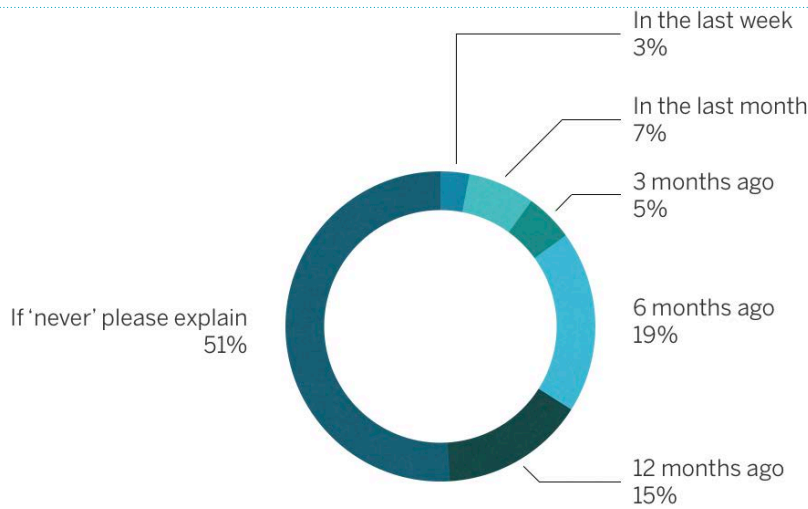


Key takeaways

- **69%** of respondents believed that salary reviews should be mandatory every 12 months, however, only **30%** of respondents said they had a salary review 6-12 months ago and **5%** said they had one 12-18+ months ago.

Salary Satisfaction and Pay Raises

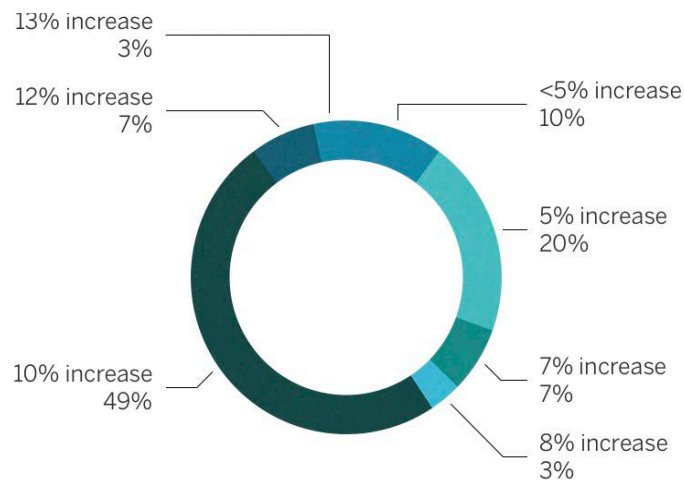
The last time I asked my Manager for a pay raise was...



Key Takeaways

- **15%** had not asked their manager for a pay raise in the past 12 months and **51%** had never asked for a pay raise.
- Some of the reasons why respondents haven't asked for a pay raise is because they already receive a pay increase on a yearly basis, they asked in the past and it was declined, they were promoted, and they own their business.

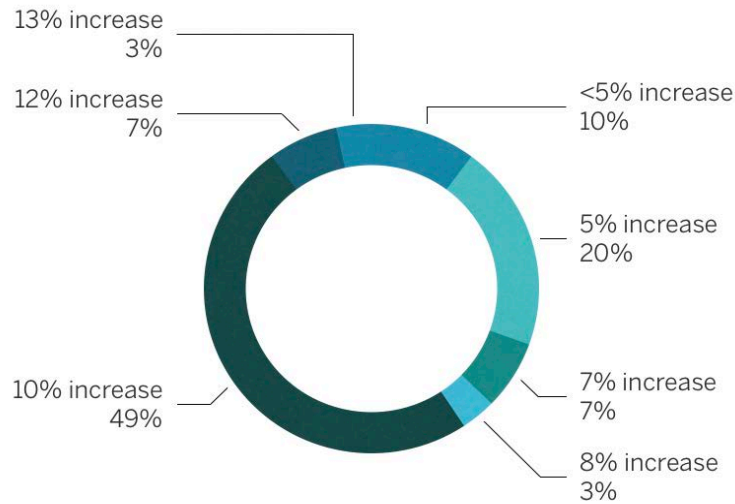
If you requested a pay raise, what % increase did you ask for?



Key Takeaways

- Nearly half of the respondents requested a 10% pay increase (**49%**), while 8% and 13% were the least popular (**3%**).
- Given the fact that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was at 7% annually in March, 2023, should employees receive at least a pay raise in line with CPI?

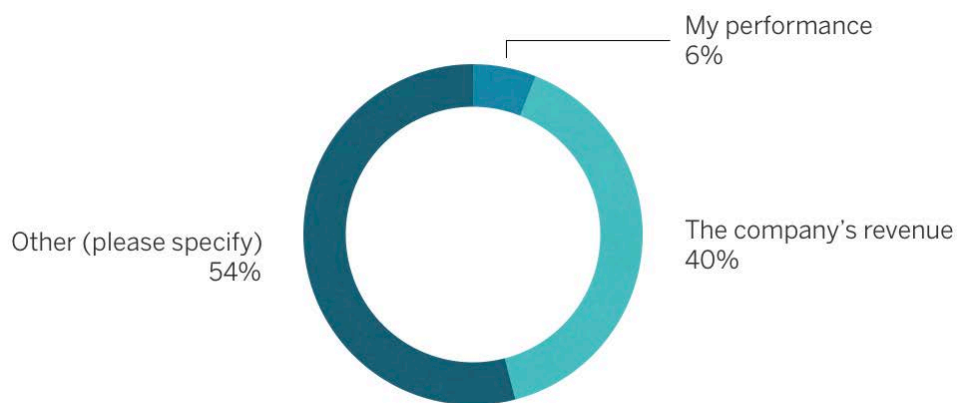
If a pay raise was requested, what percent did you receive?



Key Takeaways

- Nearly half of the respondents requested a 10% pay increase (**49%**), while 8% and 13% were the least popular (**3%**).
- Given the fact that Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 7% annually in March 2023, employers should factor in CPI when granting a pay raise. **20%** of respondents received a 5% increase, which is below the annual CPI.

If it was refused, was it related to COVID, the company's revenue or your performance?



Key Takeaways

- **40%** of respondents were refused a pay raise due to the company's revenue and **6%** were refused due to their performance.
- Other answers included employer was unable to match, the employee hadn't been at the company for 12 months, performance reviews were in the works when the employee requested one, and their company has a very set pay scale.

Workplace Salary Culture

I feel that everyone performing the same role should receive the same salary..



Reasons respondents provided

Yes:

“Isn’t this what equality is? A role with a designated workload/output with the same salary regardless of gender, age, experience, sexuality etc.?”

“There should be no difference in one person doing a role. If someone is more superior they should be promoted, conversely, if someone isn’t, they should be demoted..”

“The industry needs to be regulated to some degree and ensure all workers who are responsible for and contribute the same level of work, are paid equally.”

“If you have the same title, you should receive the same salary. If seniority or hierarchy is called into question, titles should be clearly differentiated to avoid any confusion.”

No:

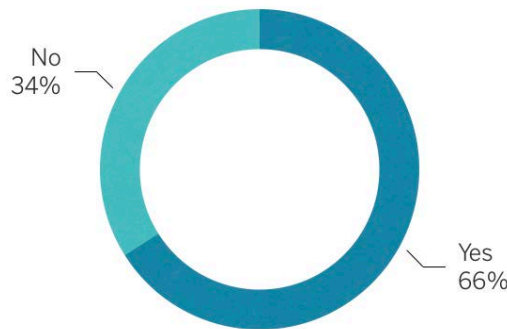
“There are reasons outside of a persons job description that impact their value. E.g. I get paid less than others that have the same title as they are former journalists. For clients and prospective clients, this adds credibility to our agency so their value is greater despite performing the same role.”

“Salary should be commensurate with experience and performance.”

“Some people might just be starting in that job title, while others might be well experienced at it.”

“People come in on different salaries, levels, experience - you can have the same title as someone next to you and deliver a totally different level/quality of work.”

I believe that staff salaries should be openly discussed and available to view online in the workplace...



Reasons respondents provided

Yes:

“If a workplace is willing to pay it, they should be able to say it. It evens the playing field and helps employees advocate for themselves.”

“Transparency, and to remove gender pay gap.”

“Particularly for people who have stayed in a role for a long time, it’s an important way to be able to benchmark what you are earning and ensuring your pay is remaining competitive without having to shop around for another job.”

“It holds employers accountable - too many agencies hire new people and inflate their salaries due to talent shortage but won’t pay their loyal employees the same wage.”

“Salary transparency is key to ensuring employees aren’t being taken advantage of, particularly in private industries.”

No:

“Could create tension amongst staff. Some things need to remain confidential. Discussing others’ financial arrangements is no-one’s business but their own.”

“Personal income is exactly that, personal. I have never worked in a place where people openly discuss their salary”

“It would create too many staff morale issues, for example if someone felt they should be earning the same or more than a peer.”

“Would cause to many issues with a younger more entitled generation.”

“Causes unnecessary politics between colleagues and doesn’t create positive team morale.”

I would change jobs right now if the money offer was 10-20% more.



Key takeaways

- More than half the respondents (**52%**) would change jobs for a 10-20% pay increase.
- The cost of living has gone through the roof and if inflations continues to rise at the rate it is, will we see more people looking to change jobs?

I would move overseas if the money offer was 10-20% more.

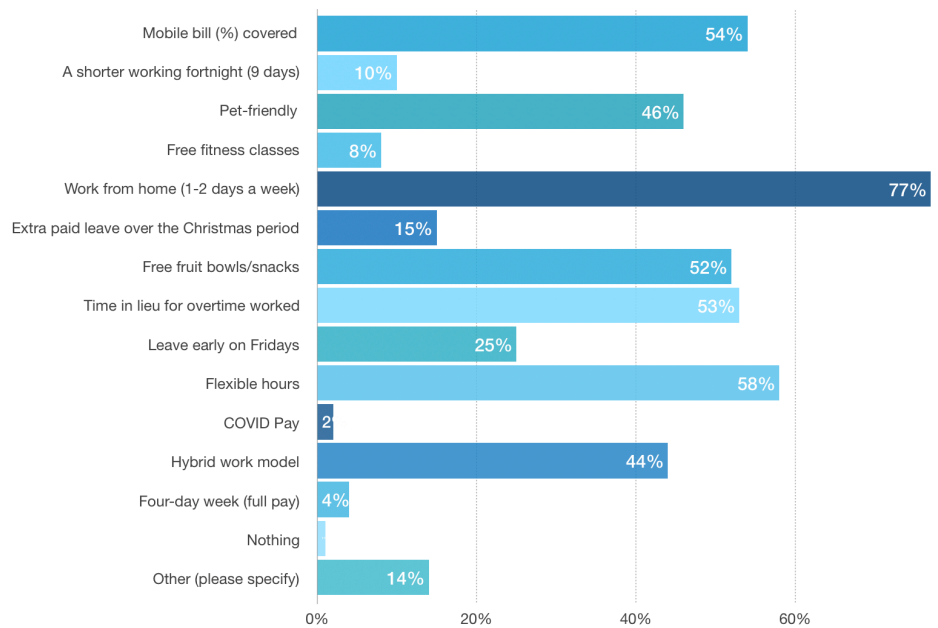


Key takeaways

- **77%** of the respondents would not move overseas for a better job opportunity.
- Although COVID restrictions are long gone, it appears that COVID is still impacting the choice we make and the decisions like moving abroad.
- COVID is still present in society, however, as the years go by will we start seeing more Australians moving abroad for better job opportunities?

Workplace Culture

What perks already exist in your workplace?



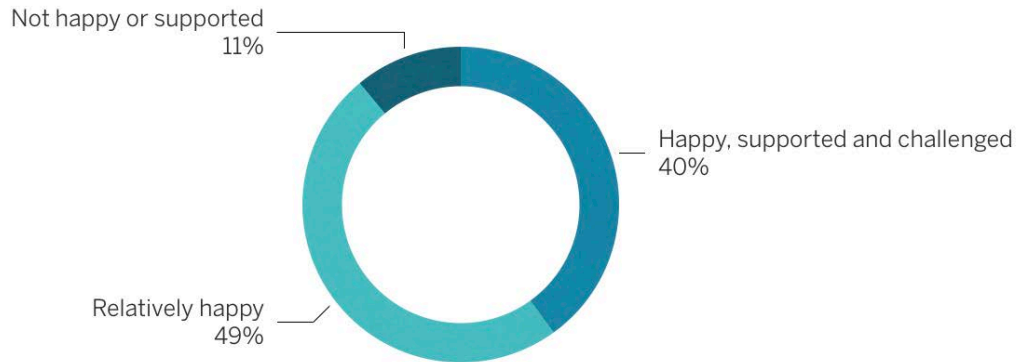
Respondents replied with other perks their work provided. These included, birthday leave, extra days off, Internet bills paid for when WFH, health & wellbeing allowance, training allowance, and volunteer leave.

Given the fact that the pandemic has rapidly changed the workplace landscape, we're seeing more perks and flexibility in the workplace and in return, more employees are expecting employment perks when looking for new opportunities.

Key takeaways

- **77%** respondents said they're able to work from home 1-2 days.
- **58%** have flexible work hours.
- Surprisingly only **4%** are able to work a four-day week with full pay and **1%** have no office perks.
- Based on the results, the majority of respondents have some sort of perks at the workplace.

In my current role, I feel mostly



Key takeaways

- **49%** of those surveyed felt happy, supported, and challenged at work, while **11%** said they were not happy or supported.
- What can employers do to keep staff happy? More flexibility, perks, or salary reviews? Should there be more of a focus by employers on staff wellbeing and burn out?

If you don't feel happy or supported, why?

Some of the responses of those unhappy in their workplace:

“Been here a few years and have had no progression.”

“Bad leaders, no recognition of worth and broken trust on promises.”

“Extremely stressful workload, non-supportive account manager.”

“I feel stagnant in my role, with repetitive work.”

“Because everyone in my agency has too high a workload so there is collective burnout and high levels of stress.”

“So much change and a shortage of staff means the team is hugely overstretched.”

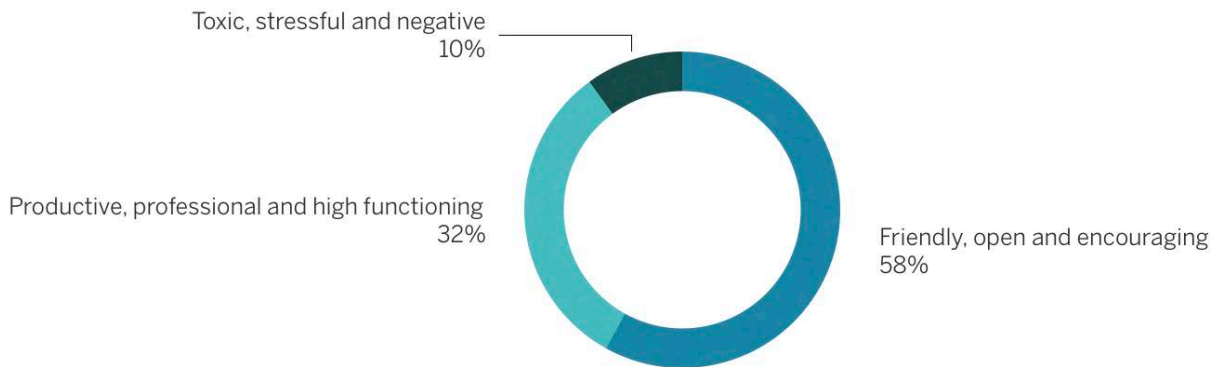
In your current workplace, is there enough mental health support available?



Key takeaways

- **76%** of respondents said they felt that there was enough mental health support at their workplace, that's AMAZING!
- When asked what support they would like to see added, responses included more mental health workshops and subsidised psychology services, access to mental health days, free therapy sessions, and more check-ins.

I would describe my workplace's culture as

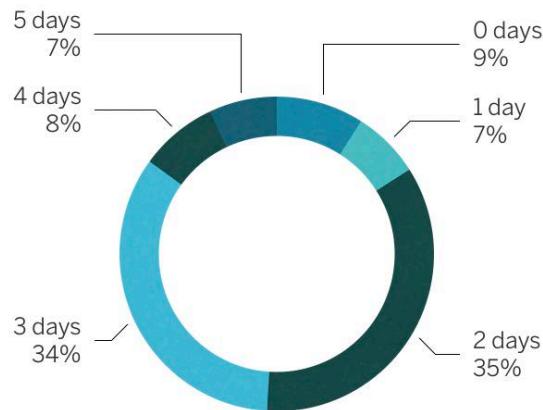


Key takeaways

- **58%** of respondents said their workplace's culture is friendly, open and encouraging, **32%** said their workplace was productive, professional and high functioning, while **10%** said their workplace was toxic, stressful and negative.
- **90%** of respondents work in a positive, friendly, and productive environment.
- Based on the respondents answers, if you find yourself in a toxic, stressful, and negative workplace, know that it's a minority of workplaces that have such a poor culture.

Workplace Culture

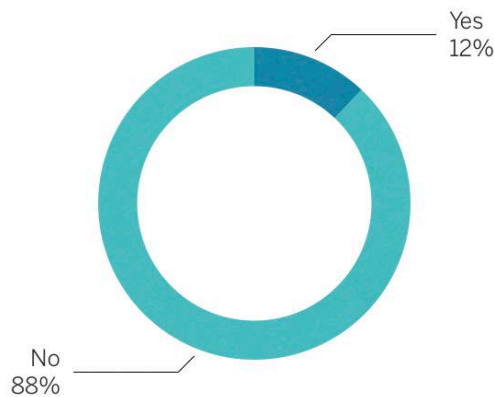
How many days of the week do you want to spend in the office?



Key takeaways

- 3 days was the most popular answer (**35%**) followed by 2 days (**34%**).
- The least popular answers were 5 days and 1 day (**7%**).
- Based on the responses, employees would be happy to come into the office 2-3 days, while coming into the office 1 day or 5 days isn't what the majority of employees want.

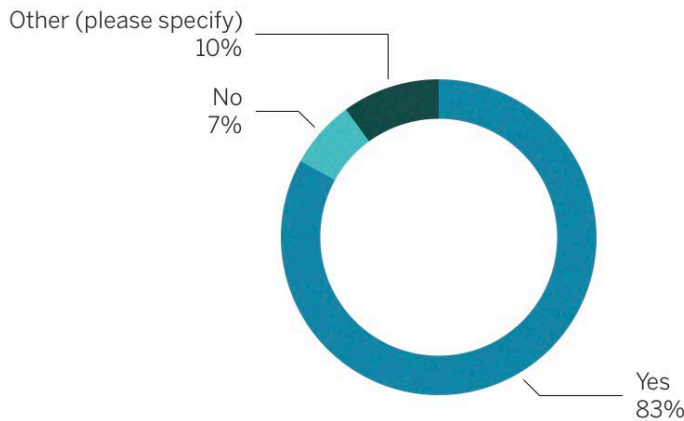
Would you sacrifice pay to WFH?



Key takeaways

- **88%** of respondents wouldn't sacrifice pay to WFH, meaning although WFH is important to many employees, pay is more important.
- Only a small number of respondents (**12%**) are happy to sacrifice pay in order to WFH.

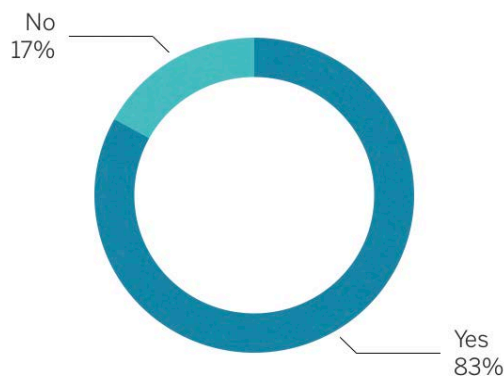
Does your company have a WFH policy in place?



Key takeaways

- The majority of respondents (**83%**) said that their company had a WFH policy in place.
- Most respondents who picked “Other (please specify)” said that their company had no official policy or they were unaware of an official policy, however, their employer was open to WFH.

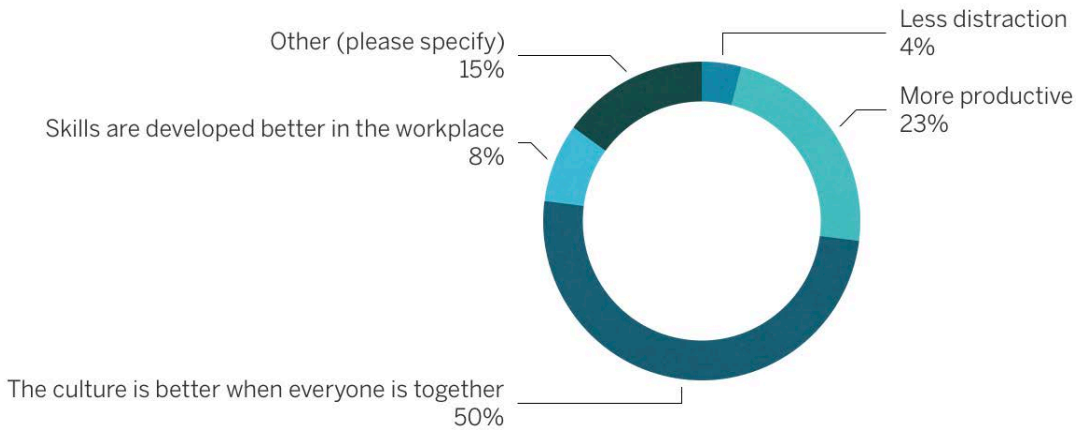
Is your work supportive of employees working from home?



Key takeaways

- **83%** respondents said that their employer was supportive of staff working from home. **17%** said their employer was not supportive.
- Will we see more employers supporting working from home or will we find that as COVID becomes a thing of the past more employers will require staff to come into the office?

If not, what reasons have they given?

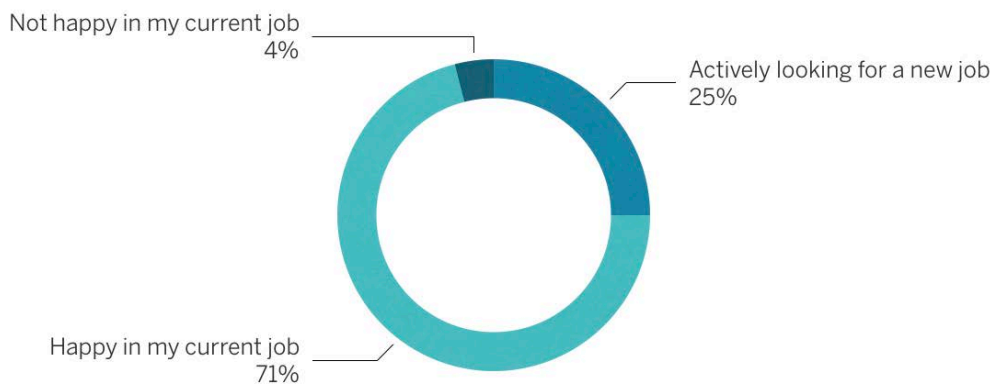


Key takeaways

- **50%** respondents said that their employer told them that the culture is better when everyone is together.
- Other responses included all the above and culture is better in the office.
- Do you agree that you develop more skills, are more productive, have less distractions when you're in the office? Or do you find that you do better WFH?

Additional Polls

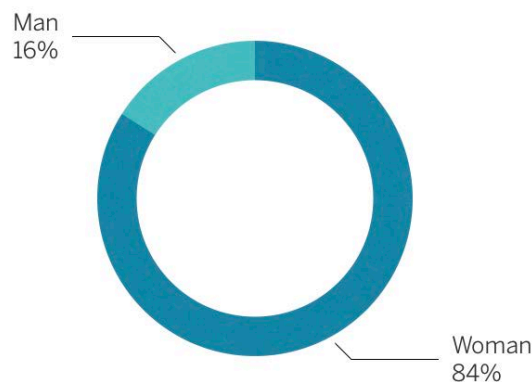
Career-wise, I am



Key takeaways

- **71%** of the respondents are happy in their current job. That's wonderful to hear! Only **4%** of respondents said they were unhappy with their current job.
- A quarter of respondents are actively looking for a new job.

I identify as a



Key takeaway

- Non-binary and other were options, however, none of the respondents chose those options.

Thank you.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2023 PR Salary Guide. Knowledge is power and we believe that having open and honest conversations about salary and culture is the key to helping our industry change for the better. If you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please get in touch.

Get in touch. Say hi.

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Agency Iceberg



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