



State Workforce of the Future: Perspectives on Remote Work

March 23rd, 2021

NASCA
National Association of
State Chief Administrators

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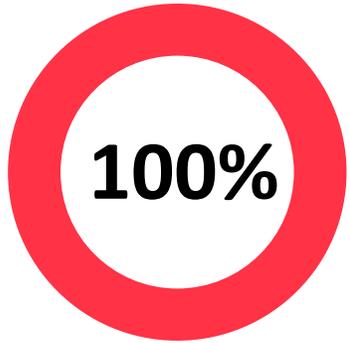
Background & Methodology

State governments had to pivot quickly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders, including Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), navigated the dual challenges of keeping state workers safe while continuing to deliver essential services to residents and businesses.

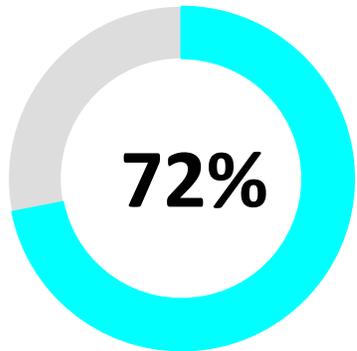
In November 2020, Accenture and NASCA surveyed CAOs in 32 states. We sought to understand how they are handling remote work and whether they are prioritizing continued innovation in human capital management.

We learned that flexible work styles offer advantages to government and workers – and these arrangements are likely to endure beyond the end of the pandemic.

Government Goes Remote



of CAOS reported having a telework/remote work policy in place before COVID 19



Of CAOs said they adjusted their existing telework/remote work policies to allow for increased flexibility and empathy

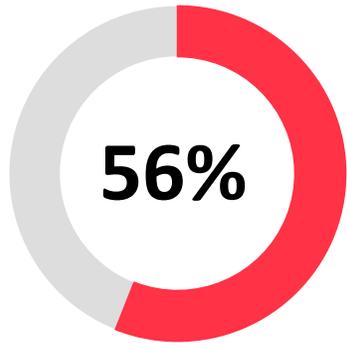
What Changed in 2020?

CAOs told us their states made these updates and investments:

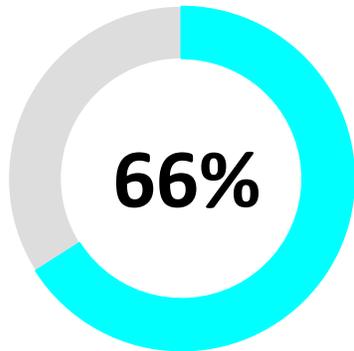
- ✓ Expand/formalize telework policy
- ✓ Flexibility around time work was done
- ✓ New technology to enable remote work
- ✓ State equipment allowed at home
- ✓ Hoteling for office
- ✓ Union arrangements, classification changes
- ✓ Training for managers
- ✓ Move toward project-based measures of accomplishment

A Proposition that Benefits Everyone

More Remote Work. Less Real Estate



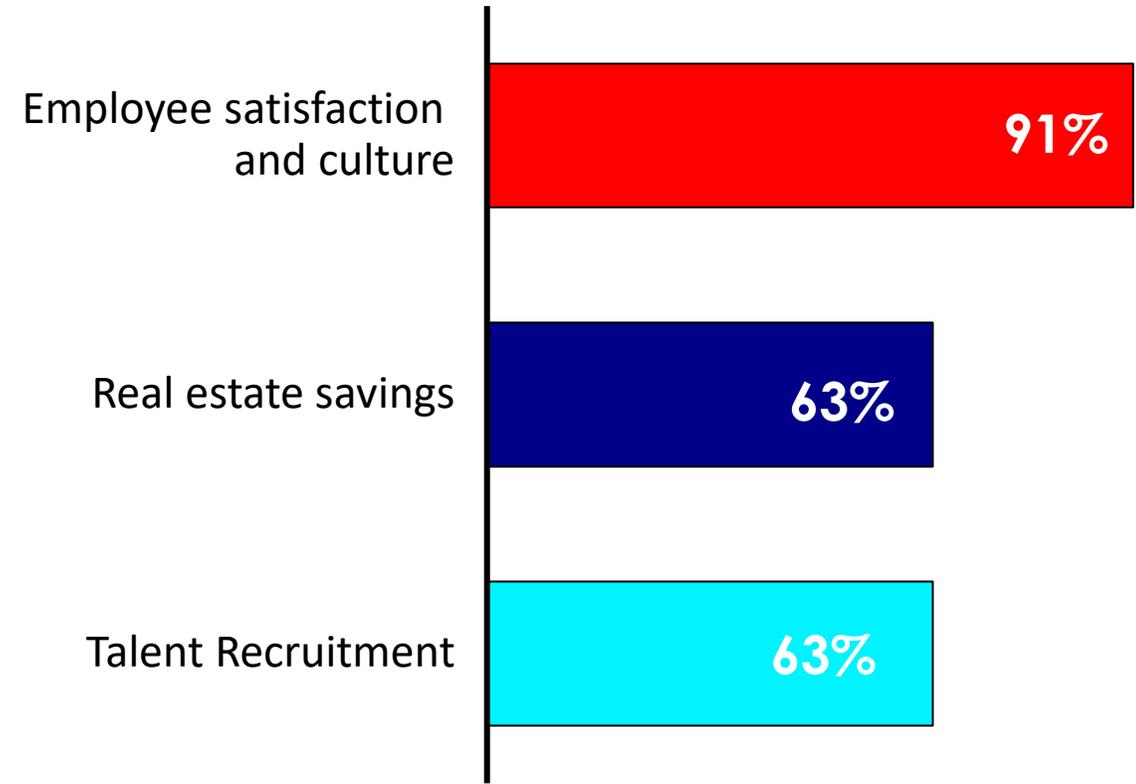
56% of CAOs expect to keep at least a quarter of their workforce remote



66% of CAOs plan to reduce their real estate footprint as the size of the remote workforce increases

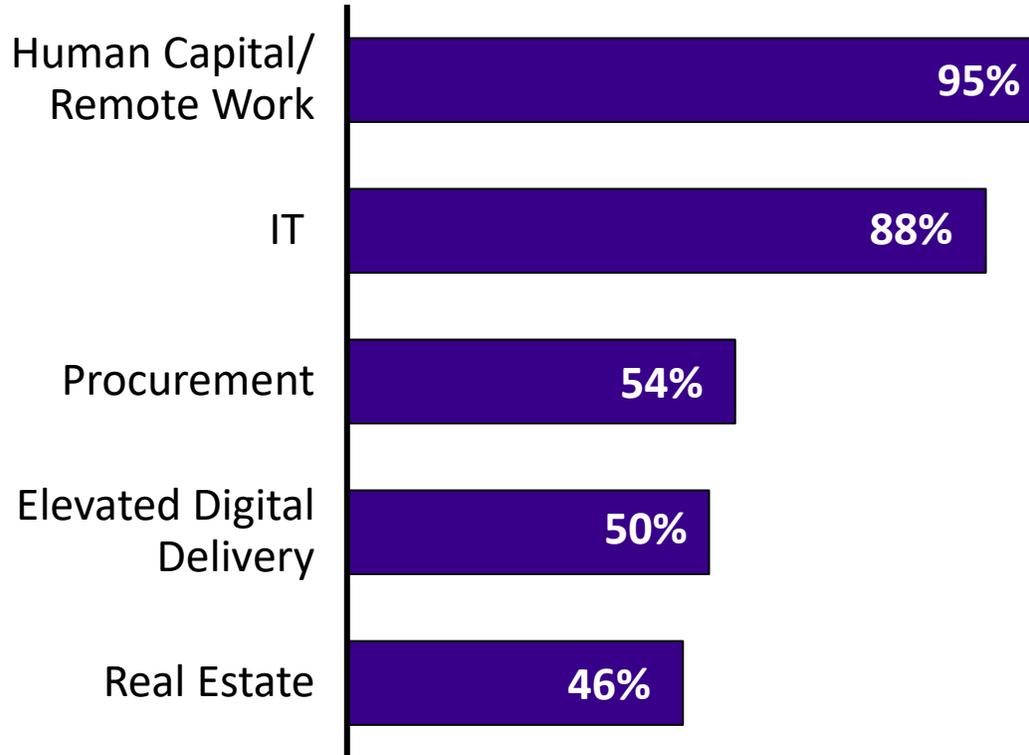
Higher Satisfaction. Lower Costs

CAOs cite these as top advantages of a remote workforce:

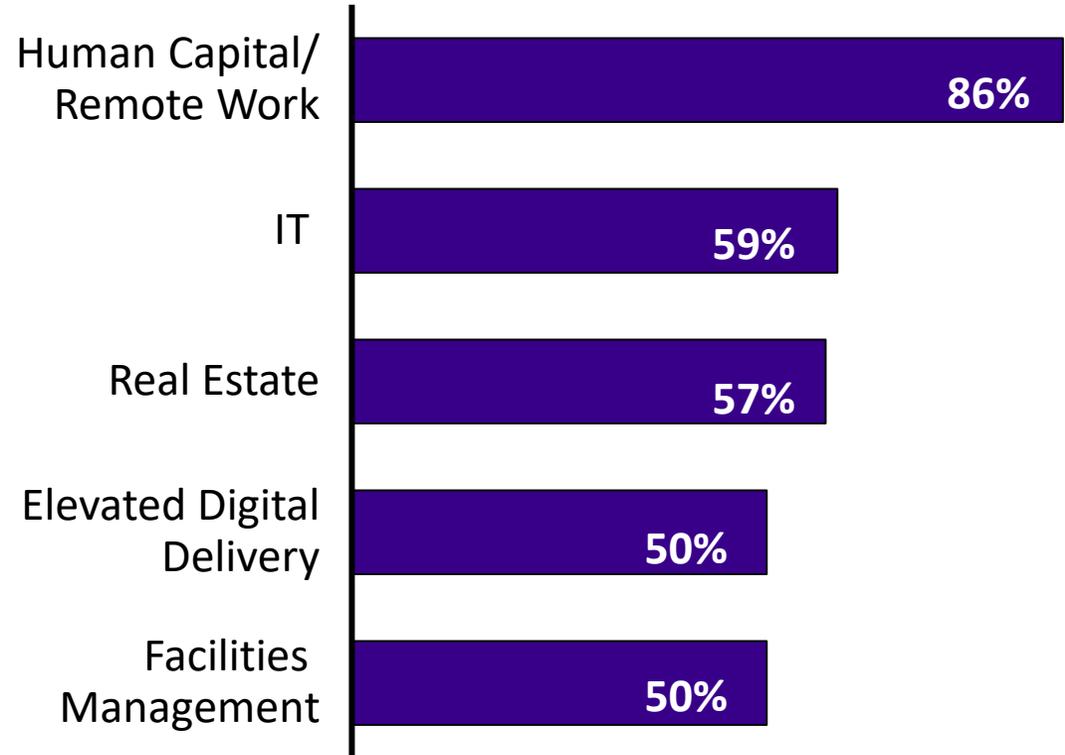


Workforce: Focus of Innovation

CAOs point out that human capital remains a major focus of innovation.



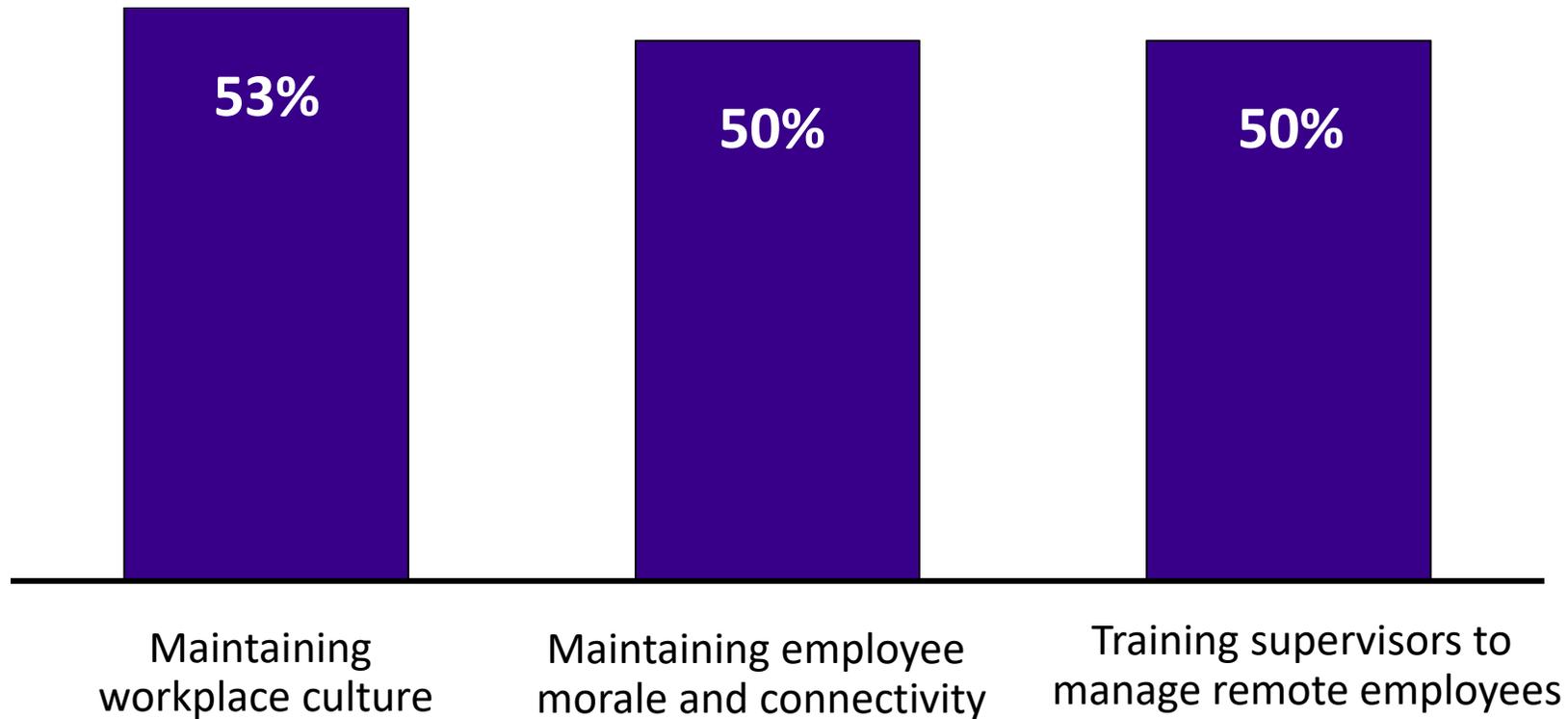
Top focus of innovation over the **PAST** six months.



Top focus of innovation over the **NEXT** six months.

More Change to Come, Culture as a Focus

CAOs anticipate significant changes in their organization's culture



To what extent do you expect the culture at your organization to change as a result of COVID-19? (select all)

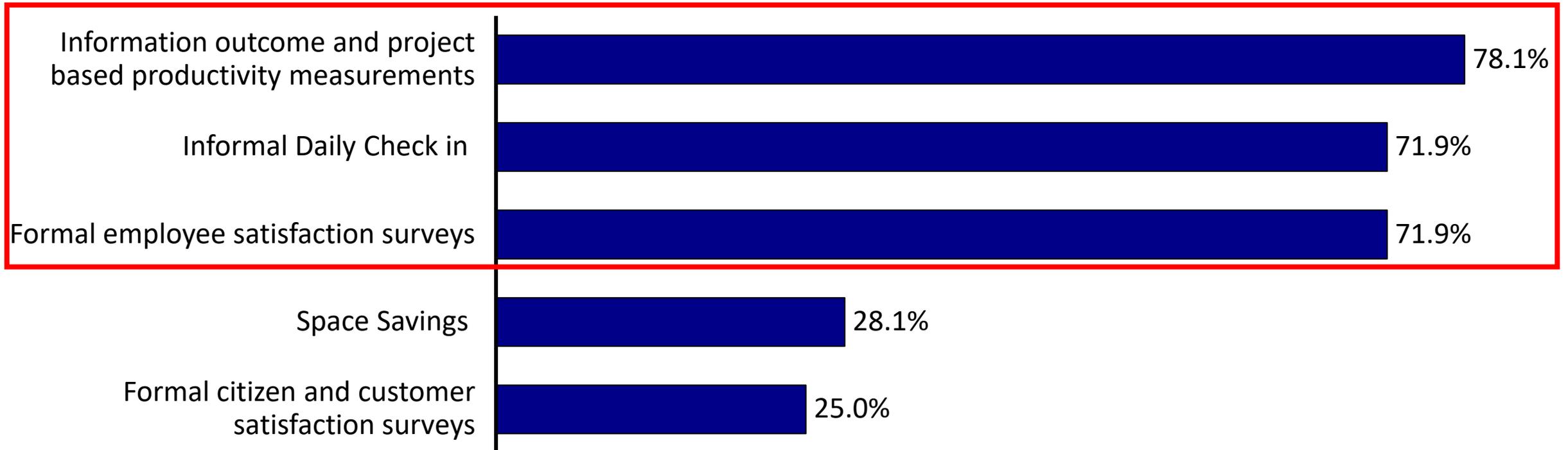
What Works: Flexibility, Technology

As state workers went remote during the pandemic, CAOs observed a variety of best practice. Two of the top practices: affording workers flexibility and giving them the right technology.

“ We created a live dashboard that shows who is teleworking full time, part time or not at all. We measure gas savings and commute reduction. We developed new telework policies for the state. We developed a host of telework tools – everything from self-ergonomic analysis to tips on supervising, tips on Zoom and cybersecurity risks. We allowed staff to check out equipment using a CRM system so we could log which equipment went home and will need to be returned.”

Managing Performance Remotely

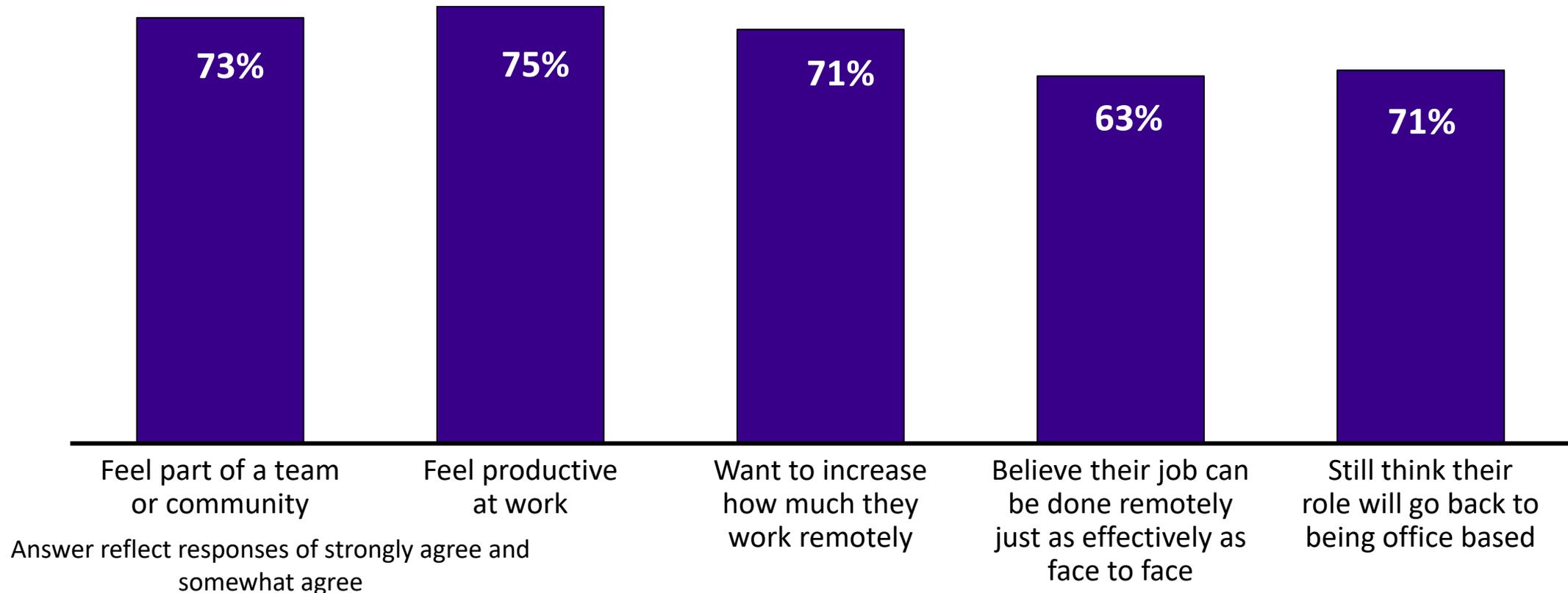
The survey revealed that most CAOs are using three methods to manage the performance of remote workers.



Workforce Perspective: Remote Work Works

In a survey of public sector workers, they reported feeling productive and part of a community. They also believe their job can be done effectively via remote work.

Now, reflecting on your work since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?



Looking Forward: Managing the Complexity

Flexible work styles can be highly beneficial to states and their workforces. But a shift to these models can also introduce friction and complexity. The workplace post COVID-19 will look different, states will have to work through:

- **Understanding potential impact on customers**
- **Shifts in expectations – for example, employees working on snow days**
- **Work location and related legal and tax ramifications**
- **Potential for workers' compensation claims for at-home injuries**
- **Impact on paid leave**
- **Equity and inclusion related to high-speed Internet access**
- **Opportunities to further refine performance management to focus more on goals and outcome vs. hours worked**

Attendance Check

A view from one member state



Bill McNamara

Comptroller

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Pandemic: an “adapt or die” moment

Status quo ante February 2020	Pandemic emergency
All 120+ employees in the office every day	3-5 people daily (of which 1 or 2 required) Planning for “reverse contingency”
Aging systems for finance and payroll Stable & secure, not built for remote work Behind the times in e-signature	Renewed urgency on systems replacement Making gains in e-signature
Small number of laptops or in-home PCs Limited VPN for secure connections	Rapid roll-out of mixed equipment to get people up and running. Upgrades now.
Experienced, skilled, dedicated workforce Strong management team Quality support in Ops, Technology, HR	Sterling response to the emergency Sense of duty and pride
Traditional work environment Highly structured time policies Clear line between work and personal time	Time flexibility was a necessity: children or elders at home, daily life more difficult We made work a source of focus and stability, not another source of stress



Massachusetts is embracing the future

- Executive branch is leading with its Workplace of the Future effort
- Independent branches and non-Executive departments are likely to align and adapt to their needs
- Includes key elements from the research: shrinking space footprint, equipping the workforce, upgrading tools and skills

Office of the Comptroller: a chance to lead

- Well-suited for remote work as a norm:
 - System-based work with established workflows
 - No “customer at the counter” function
 - Experienced workforce with low turnover
- But also presents challenges for remote work:
 - Must have “high availability” for financial partners across 100+ agencies and departments
 - Security, system integrity, risk management
 - Comptroller has systems and process training responsibilities. Not yet replicated in virtual mode.

After COVID: Future workforce, new challenges

A strawman for consideration:

- Solutions for business challenges (process management, security, communication) will be delivered. The human factor will be the greater challenge.
- Remote work and time schedule policies will be key success factors. When setting out the goals (flexibility, productivity, fairness, etc.), do not forget the goal of simplicity.
- Front-line management will be the key to success
 - The research reinforces their role:
 - Maintaining workplace culture
 - Maintaining employee morale and connectivity
 - Senior management must model the behaviors
 - Front-line management will need training and support
- Expect a multi-year journey

Questions?

