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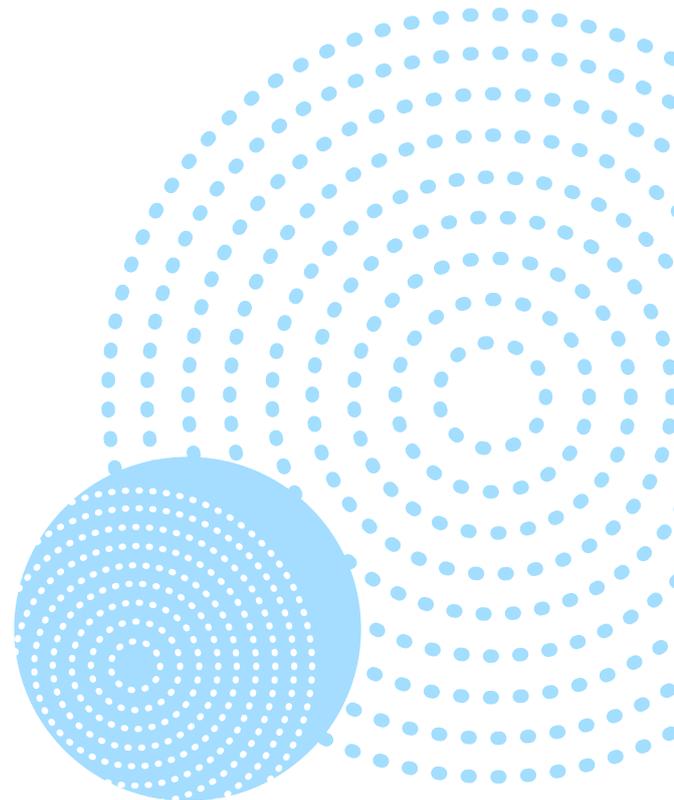
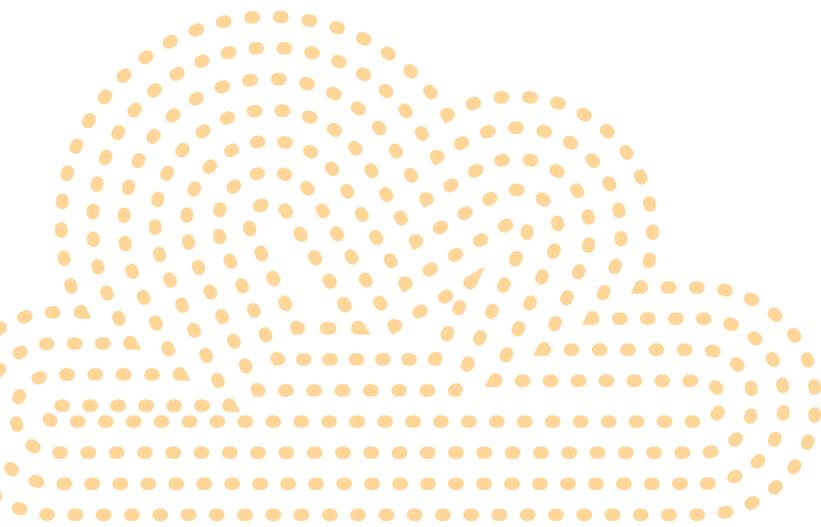


Building people & organisational resilience



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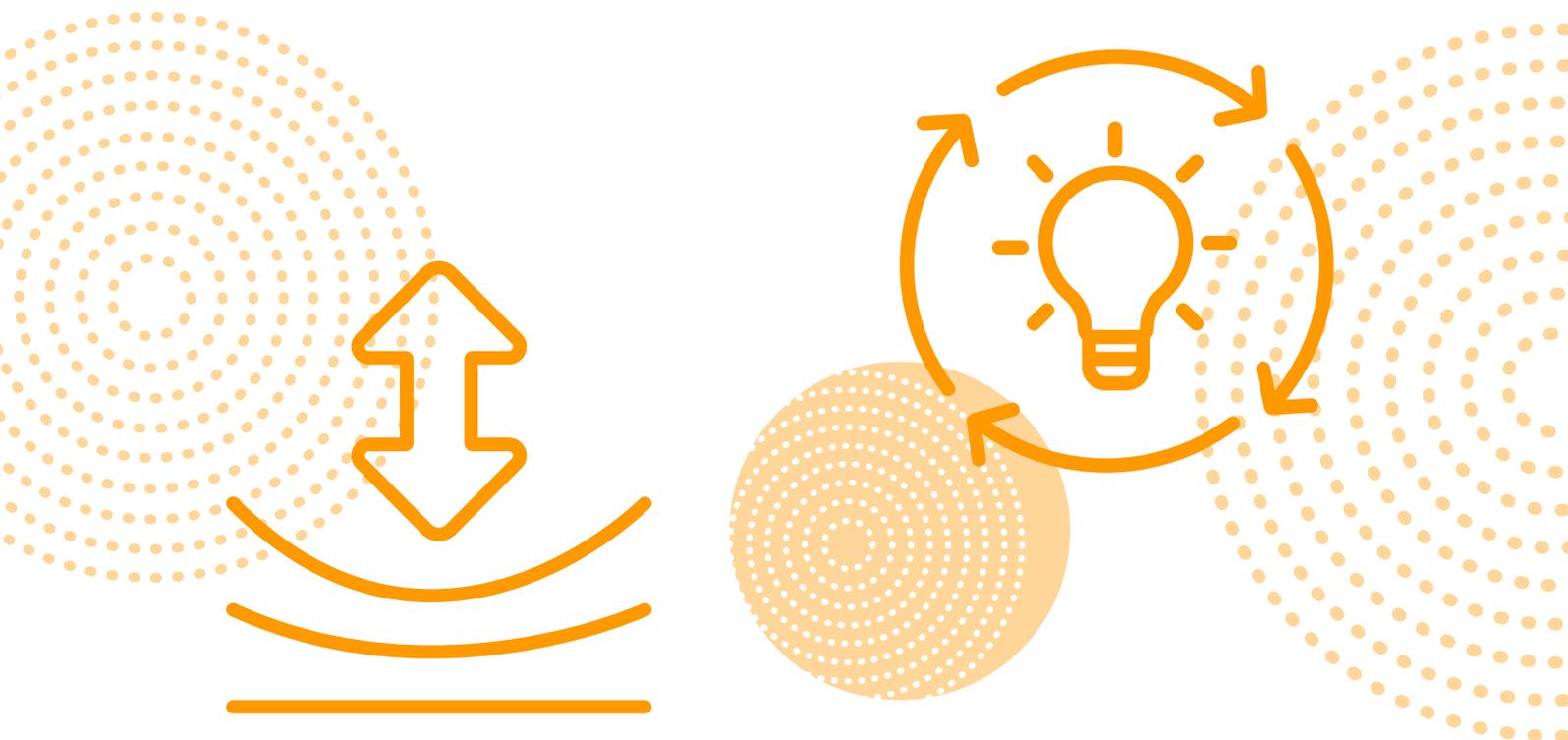
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This report will chart why resilience is increasingly important to many businesses, looking at links with wellbeing and HR transformation. It will explore how important resilience is to business performance, what solutions exist where resilience is suffering, and how HR can take the lead.

Much of the report's findings are based on a joint Jigsaw Cloud and HR Grapevine survey which asked HR practitioners about their experience of resilience.

You can find details of the survey throughout and further information in the appendices.



Introduction

The importance of resilience

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic the business landscape has changed drastically - with almost all organisations and workers having to navigate an array of difficulties, including higher unemployment, changing working structures, and much more uncertainty.

As a result, business and HR leaders must find a way for their organisation to both survive and thrive, and showcase that they're resilient. But how do you achieve this and who will drive the change?

What is resilience?

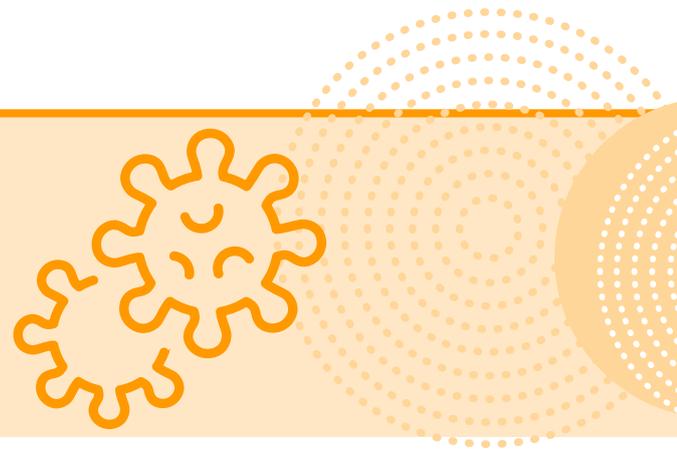
Before businesses can transform themselves to become more resilient, they must understand the concept. One definition is "thriving before, during, and after adversity" - which pinpoints a skillset that would seem to be very useful during this period of prolonged disruption.¹

It will be no surprise that interest in resilience is growing during this uncertain time. For many business executives, resilience will form part of the toolkit and working structures which help them navigate a continuously changing business outlook. In PwC's 23rd Annual Global CEO survey, leaders noted the topic as a key concern.²

Many organisations are already acting. For example, over 600 organisations, including Tesco and HSBC, have signed up to a network interested in building resilience to future economic shocks.³

Yet, there is still some nervousness around resilience. Despite experience of adversity, Deloitte's 2021 Global resilience report found that less than a quarter of C-Suite executives felt ready to lead during another period of disruption - a seeming resilience shortfall.⁴

1. Deloitte, Resilience Reimagined, The Resilient Business
 2. PwC, 23rd Annual Global CEO Survey
 3. VoxEU, Resilience in a time of crisis: The importance of financial and non-financial resources
 4. Deloitte, 2021 Global Resilience Report



“To be able to navigate external and internal changes, businesses need to be resilient and adaptable.”

Liz Williams, Managing Director, Jigsaw Cloud

Has the impact of the pandemic resulted in your organisation deciding to make changes?



Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021



This report will explore the impact of the pandemic on current and future organisational, leadership and individual resilience, as well as charting how resilience interplays with plans to transform as well as where the subject places on the HR and leadership agenda. It will also look at the links between wellbeing and resilience, and who in the business should look after these elements. As one of the primary findings of the survey of over 200 HR professionals was that almost nine in 10 respondents believe resilience to be critically important, it is a topic worth assessing in depth.



How important is resilience in your organisation?

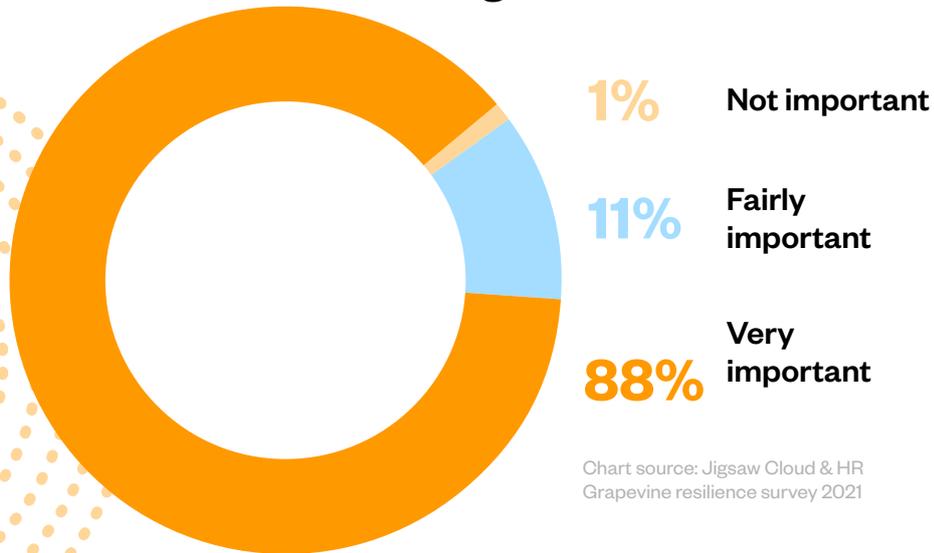


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021



Jason Fowler, VP, HR Director UK & Head of HR Northern, Western and Southern Europe at Fujitsu Global on resilience:

“Resilience has come to the fore [during this period]. When done well by organisations that understand that there is nuance and complexity to be navigated, this is a positive trend with a focus on helping individuals and managers spot behavioural patterns that might indicate a need for adjustment or support. From there, organisations can develop methods and techniques to better enable people to manage their balance of circumstances and their own wellbeing.”

Impact of Covid

The survey results show that the majority of respondents believe the pandemic has inarguably changed professional life. 77% think that the biggest impact the virus has had on the world of employment is on working arrangements whilst almost four in ten think it has led to technological change. Over three-quarters think it has changed wellbeing.

Multinational professional services provider Ernst & Young (EY) state that these pandemic-sparked changes have made resilience an important part of how businesses are led, both now and in the future.⁶

In fact, many businesses are attempting to showcase resilience by adapting. The survey found that 91% of businesses that respondents worked in made changes as a result of the pandemic. As PwC research finds, it will be displays of resilience such as this – changing and adapting - that will be needed in order to come through future periods of disruption effectively.⁷

43%
High impact

12%
Low impact

What impact has Covid-19 had on your organisation?

45%
Medium impact

Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021



In fact, despite disruption, Liz Williams, Managing Director at Jigsaw Cloud believes that the past year has had some positive impact on resilience – with many workers finding more connections with their colleagues. One study, from the Becker Friedman Institute for Economics at the University of Chicago, found that in some instances, productivity had also improved. Williams explained: “Covid forced all businesses to change and adapt to the situation incredibly quickly. This is where resilience can play an important part in keeping workers upbeat.”

“Covid forced all businesses to change and adapt to the situation incredibly quickly. This is where resilience can play an important part in keeping workers upbeat.”
Liz Williams, Managing Director, Jigsaw Cloud

6. EY, The lessons for resilient leaders now, next and beyond Covid-19

7. PwC, The tech sector in 2020: a resilient performance- but what's next?

Where in your business has the impact of Covid been felt most?

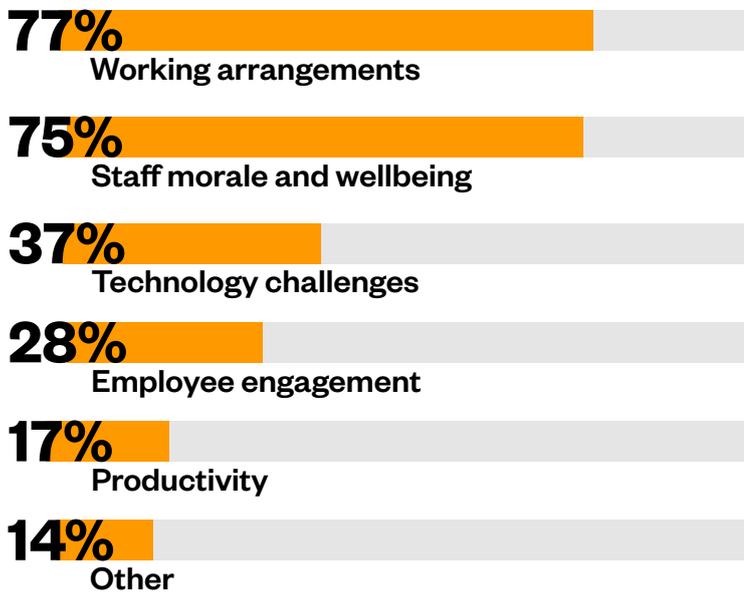


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021



Case study: Almarose Hotels

One firm who had to be resilient in the face of pandemic-necessitated changes was Almarose Hotels. Operating in the hospitality and leisure industry – which at points last year saw occupancy levels plummet, with fears for revenue generation in the long term⁸ – Bobby Davis, Chief People Officer (CPO), Almarose Hotels explained how she transformed Almarose Hotels’ operations and people strategy to navigate changes.

The CPO described what this now looks like regarding staff working patterns: “We are looking to support a number of hotel workers who now work two jobs. They will continue to work for us on reduced hours which will see us employing more people on part-time contracts allowing both them and us versatility in planning the working week.”

With staff able to work in more than one area, moving between bar, restaurant work, or front of house work, the hotel group has managed to achieve flexibility. It’s resilience in action.

What is the nature of the change?

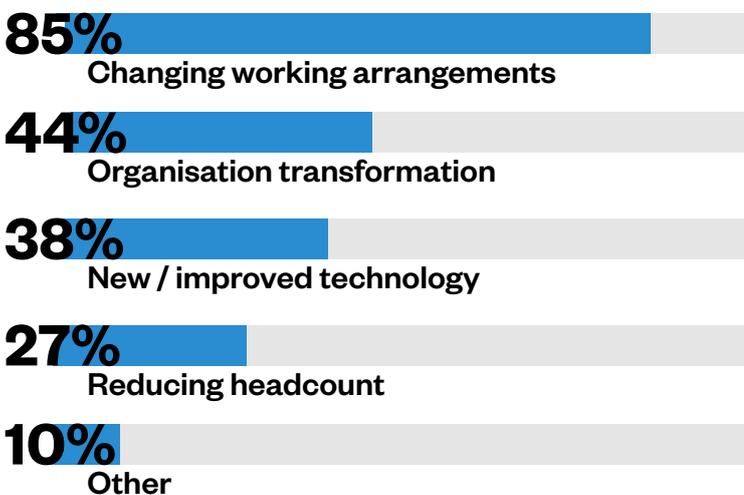


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

8. Grant Thornton, Rooms available: how COVID-19 has impacted the hotel industry

Wellbeing

Since the start of the pandemic, wellbeing in the workplace has, perhaps, never been more centre stage – with physical and mental health receiving special attention. Yet, worryingly, survey results found that the state of organisational wellbeing is very low.



Feedback to a question on how strong wellbeing was at a respondent's business averaged below 3.5 out of 10 (here, 10 is the best score). Furthermore, only 35% of companies have a robust wellbeing strategy in place. This is despite over half of respondents claiming to know how to improve wellbeing within their business.

Jigsaw Cloud's Managing Director believes that wellbeing could be low because of lack of communication. She said: "It is very hard to gauge wellbeing and so we would encourage employees to have an open dialogue with companies, maybe even conduct a survey. It is imperative to listen and understand, to find out what the general mood is."

Another reason wellbeing could generally be so low is that many organisations don't make links between wellbeing and performance – and thus it is a lower priority on the business agenda.

This is noted in survey results. The majority of survey respondents do not believe that poor wellbeing impedes performance with only 30% believing that poor wellbeing inhibits good business outcomes.

However, amongst countless other reports, 2020 Gallup research found that better wellbeing leads to better productivity and engagement. In addition, The Resilience Institute says there is a clear link between resilience and wellbeing. They believe that the more resilient an employee is during a prolonged challenging period, the more positive and happier they will be at work with follow on advantages for productivity and engagement.⁹



How would you generally rate the wellbeing of the people in your organisation?

Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

“It is very hard to gauge wellbeing and so we would encourage employees to have an open dialogue with companies, maybe even conduct a survey. It is imperative to listen and understand, to find out what the general mood is.”

Liz Williams, Managing Director, Jigsaw Cloud



9. Gallup, The Wellbeing-Engagement Paradox of 2020

Being more resilient in wellbeing practice

Positively, the survey found that over nine in 10 said they do understand the practical steps needed to improve wellbeing. If this optimism is coupled with practical steps, and wellbeing has a clear place on the business agenda, then there is a way forward to improving in this area.

Liz Williams explains that one step is to be more open around wellbeing issues and ensure it's owned within every area of the business - not just HR. She added that staff should be able to speak to "line managers, team leaders and even unions if workers are part of one."

Jigsaw Cloud also hold the opinion that it is important to provide "employee assistance programmes (EAP) and counselling services, and also utilise collaborative and communication tools like Teams during the pandemic." This goes some way to giving the workforce the tools needed to be resilient, and well, in the face of evolving challenges.

Ben Rainforth Gott, Head of People Operations at Clarion Housing Group ensuring wellbeing:

"We had to do a massive assessment within the space of 24 hours when COVID hit around how to practically deploy around 1,400 people to home working, what moving to a remote basis would look like and how we could ensure the wellbeing of staff – so that took a lot of innovation and in-depth change management.

"However, the biggest change was that we saw the opportunity in the pandemic to actually rebalance, readdress and review how the business was running. We actually used it as a chance to innovate and we created the time to do that. So, I put the company under a formal review and did a full restructure. It's resilience in action."

Do you know how to improve the wellbeing of your people?

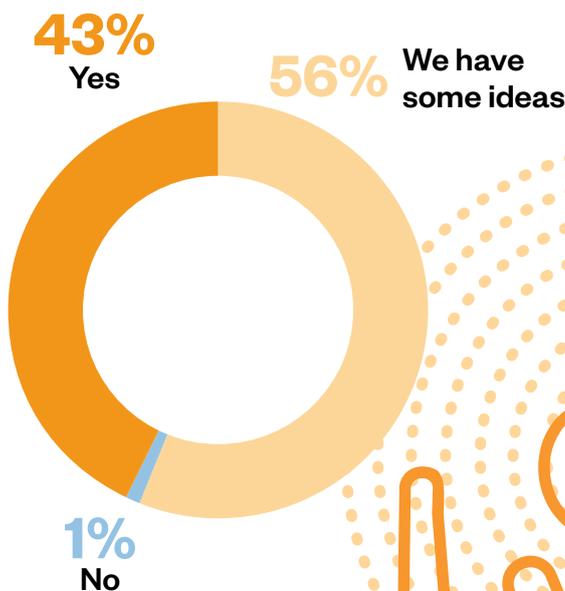


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

Do you understand the practical steps you need to take to improve wellbeing?

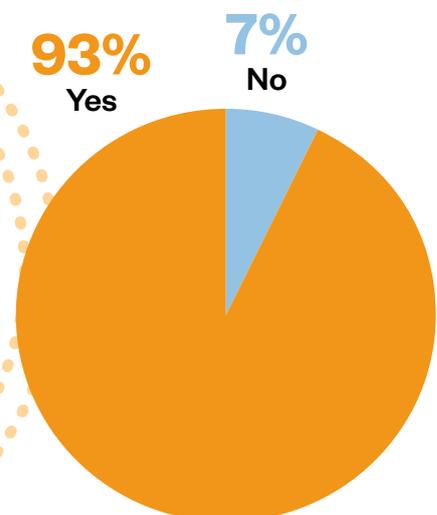


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

Transformation

Transformation is now top of the agenda for many businesses. In fact, the survey found that 69% of companies are planning some type of business transformation – either to their operations, objectives or organisational design – in the next 12 months, as a result of the pandemic. In fact, some believe that transformation in itself is a “resilient business strategy.”¹⁰ A strategy that seeks to enable the business to change in order to deliver new value.

Transformation can also be helped along by resilient practices. According to Christine Diamente, Managing Director of Business Transformation at BSR, being able to anticipate change, quickly test strategy and allocate resources effectively are all resilient aspects of organisational life that can boost transformation.¹¹ It reinforces the notion that resilience is a functional tool which can improve delivery of important HR agenda items.

Is your organisation planning to transform – either operations, business objectives or organisational design – in the next 12 months?

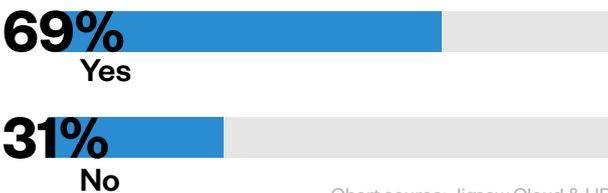


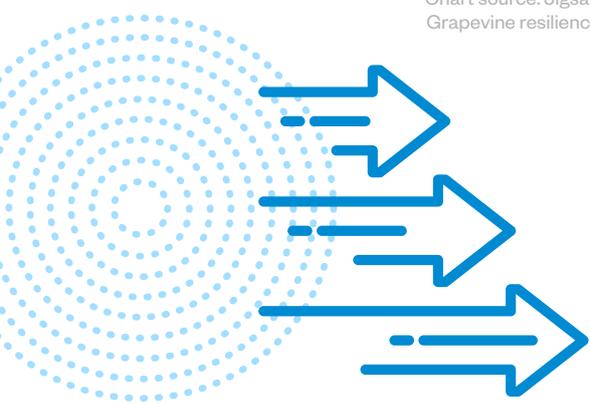
Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021



Obstacles to transformation

However, there are obstacles to transformation – with the biggest two being leadership and culture. Over half (55%) of respondents to the survey cited their culture as a problem with leadership mindset, the second biggest barrier to transformation at 52%. Another four in 10 respondents (42%) noted leadership capability as a further issue.

Technology can also be an issue for transformation, with four in 10 (42%) respondents citing this as a current blocker. However, technology is clearly an area where HR could quickly boost its ability to transform with follow on business benefits. In fact, it is Jigsaw Cloud’s view that: “Technologies help improve processes and efficiency by reducing errors by manual inputs, which can result in risk and costs.” Jigsaw Cloud’s Williams also added technology should not be seen as an obstacle but something that can boost business and HR strategy.



10. KPMG, The importance of workforce transformation in a COVID-19 world
 11. BSR, Transforming Business for Resilience

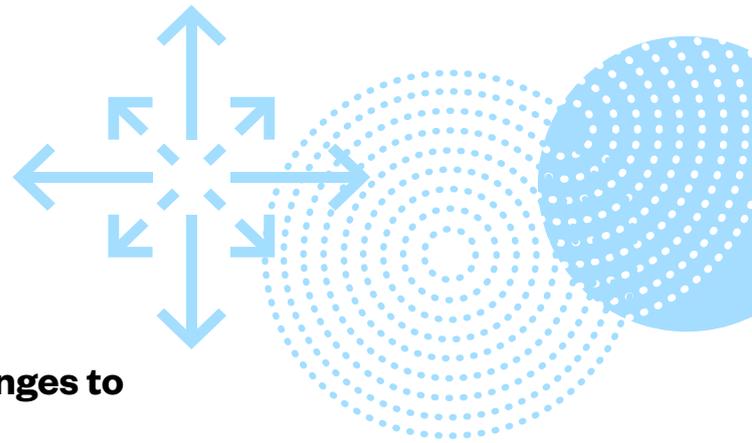
Successful transformation

Jigsaw Cloud's Managing Director explained that for companies to become resilient enough to go through successful change it is clear that HR should value transformation as an agenda-topping item. As Williams said: "Transformation is now high on the agenda as a result of changing working arrangements and the pandemic's effect on revenue and business practice shows the need to change to adapt to these challenges."

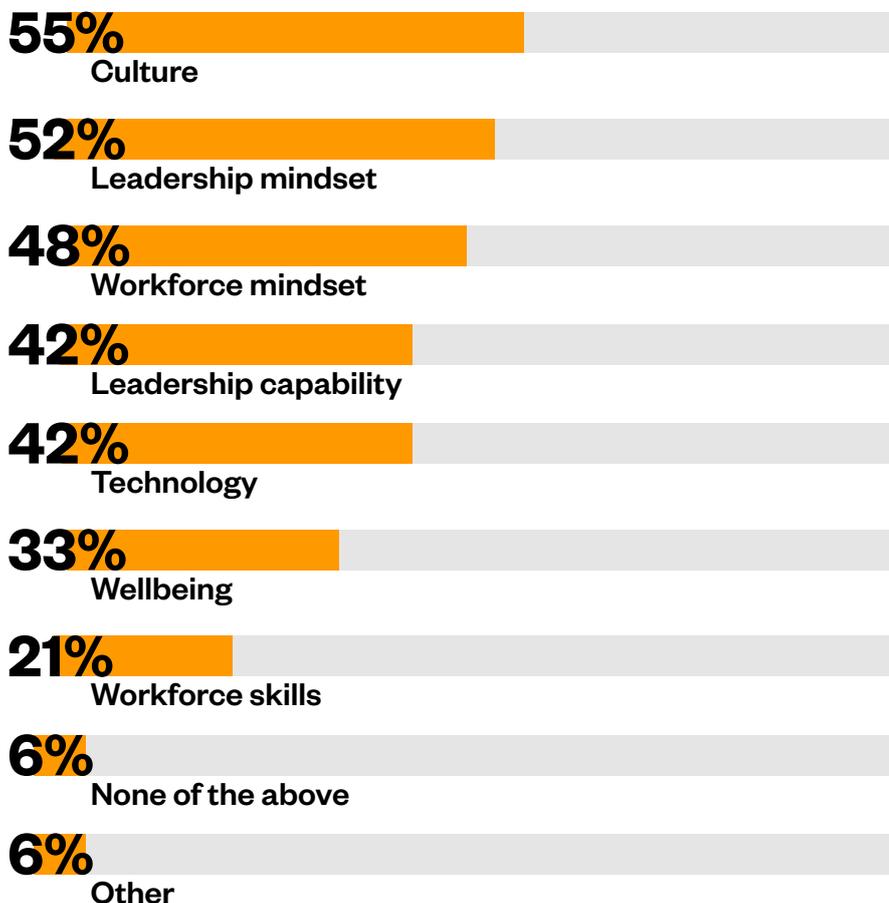
Williams also added that for HR to "drive transformation, the department needs to run efficient policies and processes to manage redundancies, changes to terms and conditions whilst also providing concise communication and plans."

"[HR] needs to run efficient policies and processes.... whilst also providing concise communication and plans."

Liz Williams, Managing Director, Jigsaw Cloud



What would you consider the main challenges to transformation in your organisation?



"Transformation is now high on the agenda as a result of changing working arrangements and the pandemic's effect on revenue and business practice shows the need to change to adapt to these challenges."

Liz Williams, Managing Director, Jigsaw Cloud



Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

Resilience

Although there has been greater focus on resilience since the pandemic, ingraining resilience into an organisation is easier said than done. Firstly, an issue that the survey raised was knowing where responsibility for driving resilience at a business lies. Results suggest that, currently, no clear answer exists.



Most respondents say it should be management who own resilience, with almost seven in 10 respondents suggesting this. However, large numbers of respondents also thought the executive should take control, with most (63%) of respondents thinking this. HR also figured highly with almost six in 10 respondents believing it should be owned by the people function.

With this much uncertainty surrounding the subject of ownership, it makes implementing strategic responses to skills and business needs in this area difficult. Yet this mixed response is not surprising, especially as this subject should be thought about by everyone across the organisation, explained Williams.

She said: “Companies need to take a whole organisation view and consult with HR, managers and employees to identify what the levels of resilience are [in their organisation] and how they need to be improved.”

Who is responsible for driving resilience in your organisation?

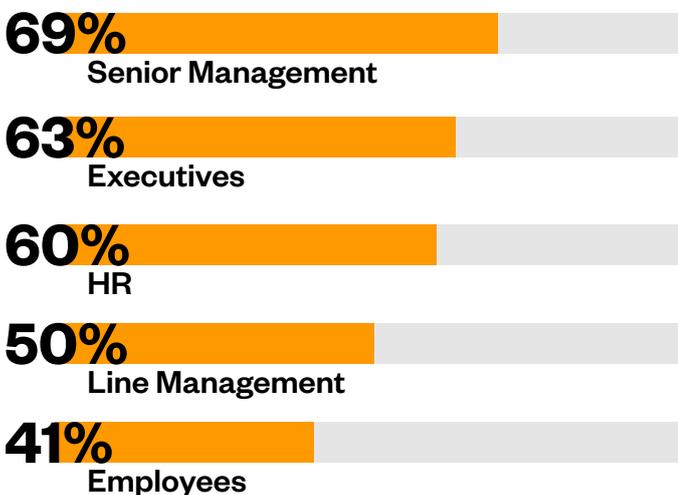


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021
19. Deloitte, Increasing organisational resilience in the face of Covid-19

Does the executive leadership at your organisation understand the importance of resilience?

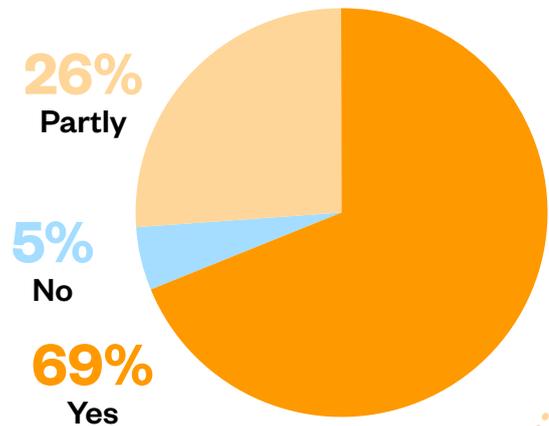


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021



“Companies need to take a whole organisation view and consult with HR, managers and employees to identify what the levels of resilience are [in their organisation] and how they need to be improved.”

Liz Williams, Managing Director, Jigsaw Cloud

Does the HR function at your organisation understand the importance of resilience?

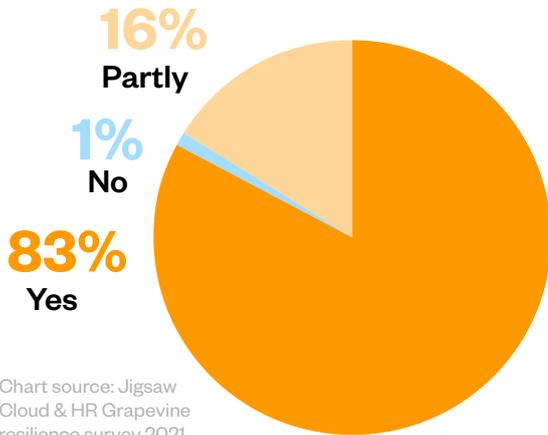


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021



Resilience is important

Even with the ownership issues outlined above there is widespread understanding that resilience is an important topic. Leaders do seem to understand the importance of resilience; 69% of respondents noted that this is understood by their organisation's leadership, whilst only 26% said there was partial understanding of resilience by leaders at their firm. HR, too, seems to grasp the importance of this topic – with 83% of responses suggesting the people function gets it.

Joint ownership with other stakeholders 88% Yes 7% No 5%

Should the HR function take responsibility for business resilience?

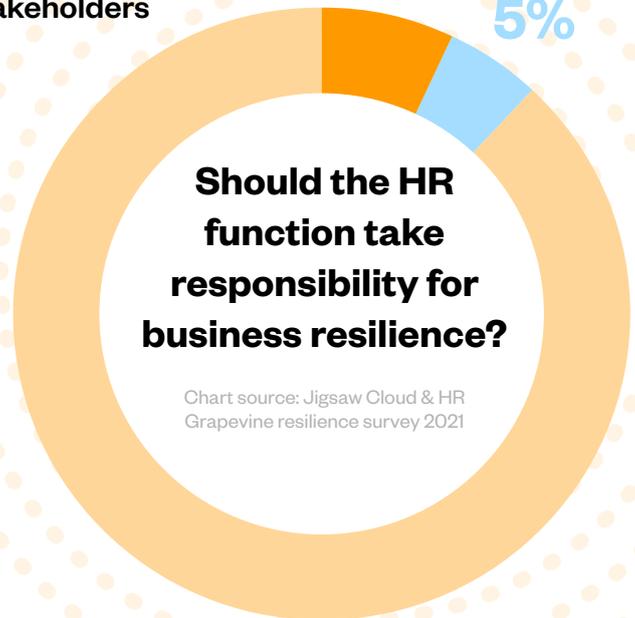


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

How would you improve resilience in your organisation?

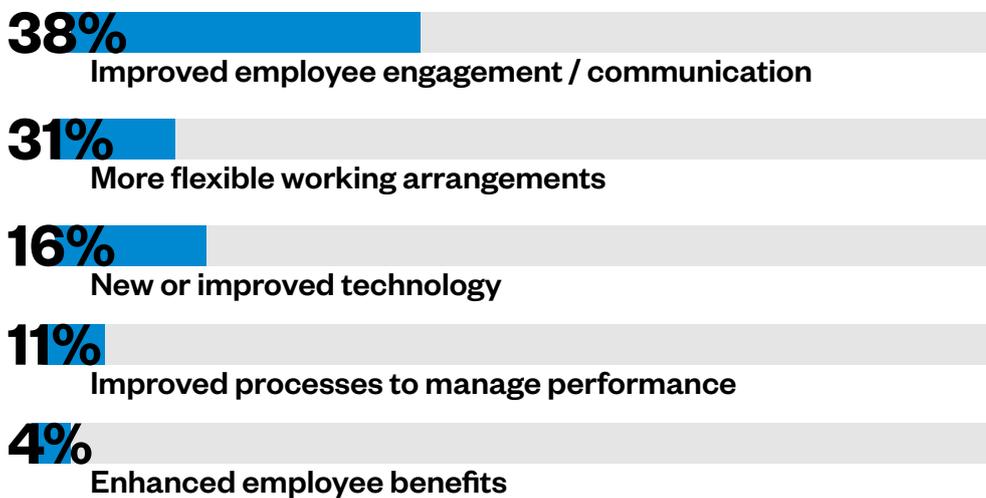
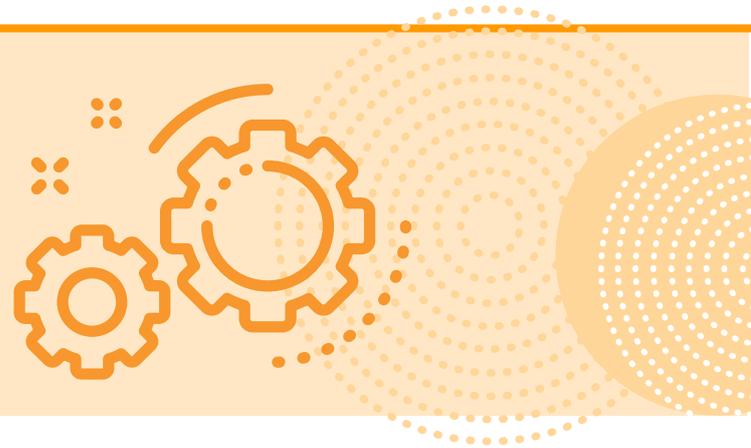


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

Technology

With increasing focus on resilience – and how it can help with core HR areas, such as wellbeing, transformation and performance – many businesses will be looking to improve resilience. One way is to introduce the right technology. With many more workers set to engage in hybrid working structures or perma-remote work in the future – organisations will need to develop new tech stacks with organisational, functional, and individual resilience in mind.



The survey findings corroborate this tech-reliant way forward. 43% of respondents strongly believe that introducing technology would help in the face of an uncertain future, with another 49% saying tech has some part to play. It's not just about implementing any technology, though. Technology that improves resilience in an organisation must work to boost employee engagement and communication as well.

In fact, Jigsaw Cloud believes that technology can help HR and businesses strengthen their purpose, and help to highlight trends and identify risks. They can even help with the day-to-day, as Williams explained: “Technologies help improve processes and efficiency by reducing errors by manual inputs, which can result in risk and costs.”

Does the current technology in place enable your organisation to be resilient in the face of uncertainty?

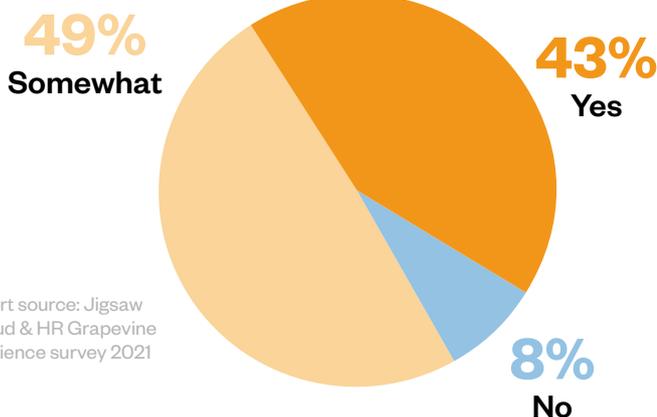


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

Jason Fowler, VP, HR Director UK & Head of HR Northern, Western and Southern Europe at Fujitsu Global, on the relationship between technology and resilience:

“Technology and the Digital Experience (DX) has become the primary element of the Employee Experience (EX) and, consequently, it can be a major factor in how effective working practices and cultures are. In turn, this identifies whether they contribute to wellbeing and resilience.

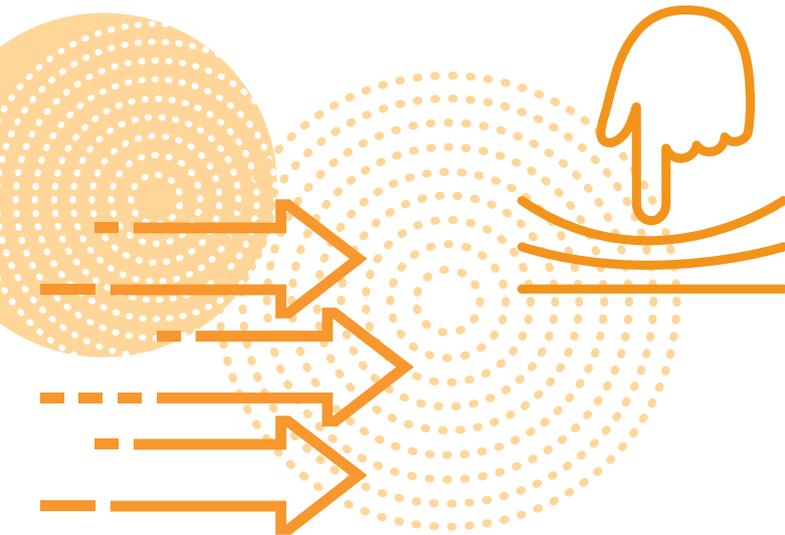
“But it will be important to think carefully about how we use technology positively and integrate it into better ways of working. Ultimately, we will need a much better approach than simply being technology led and exacerbating the recent experiences of being ‘always on’, which is quite likely to diminish wellbeing and resilience.”



Measuring resilience

Tech will also have an important role in helping to pinpoint where the business may be struggling. Williams understands that as resilience is something that is often not tangible – the outcome of many processes and inputs – it can be difficult to measure. To help with this, Williams advised that the function can use technology.

“They can use the intranet, staff survey tools and data reporting on absence to assist with the measuring of resilience,” she said. Luckily, HR might already have access to this technology as it is HR systems that are usually best placed to do this. It means the function can not only improve resilience at their business but take clear ownership too.



Productivity and resilience

Williams also believes that technology will help increase productivity – something all businesses should be keen to do. This productivity boost might be underwritten by better data collection, better use of employee databases, and technology-facilitated interactions.

And getting these benefits might be easier than many in HR think – as well as offering a strategic boost, too. In fact, Williams holds the opinion that technology can also lead to the transparency of business goals and objectives “which in turn create positive outcomes for employees”.

How would you improve resilience in your organisation?

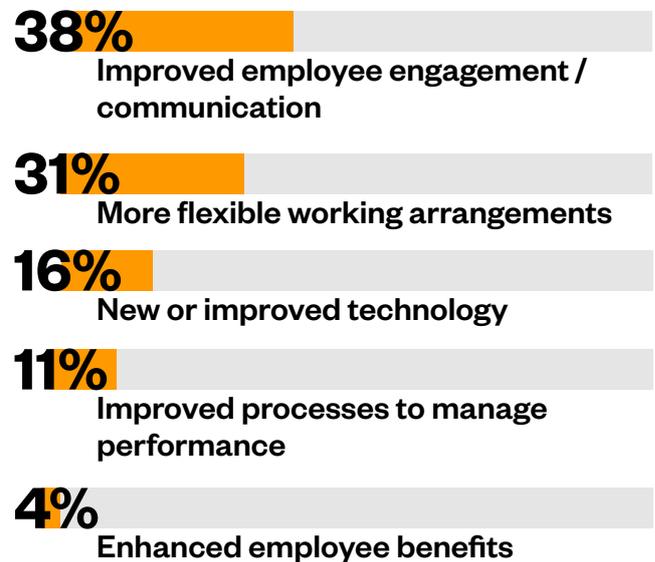


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

Case study: Ella's Kitchen and resilience

Catherine Allen, Head of Keeping People Happy at Ella's Kitchen, holds the opinion that resilience should be owned by everyone.

She explained: “I believe that we all own resilience because resilience to me is finding strategies and ways of coping with all the things that life throws at us but I think within organisations, the leadership team and probably the people team have a real role to play in facilitating this for people. I think it's an individual thing, but I think everybody needs a bit of help.”

To help boost resilience, Allen believes that technology has an important role to play in enabling human judgement.

Conclusion

The pandemic has turbocharged change. Many now understand that disruption will be a state of play for the future. To navigate this, a resilience-first mindset will be needed.

To implement resilience effectively, HR must have the tools and deep understanding to become intimate with the subject. HR should understand what the point of becoming resilient is, what that looks like, what can help boost resilience, and which areas of business and HR practice it speaks to. There must also be clear ownership of the topic, even if that ownership is shared.

The organisational cost, if resilience is not properly owned or considered, is stark. As the report found that transformation is a key business agenda point – and transformation will be crucial for success in an uncertain future – a shortfall in resilience could hit this area.

Leadership understanding of the subject could also prove to be a pain point. As leaders were widely believed to have significant ownership of the resilience agenda point – they need to get up to speed on not only understanding the importance of resilience, which responses show they appear to do, but knowing how to implement resilient business and people strategies.

A better understanding of the links between wellbeing and resilience will have to be part of this strategic response. Despite previous studies showing a clear link between resilience and wellbeing, many survey respondents did not believe that there is a link between better wellbeing and performance. Yet, many HR practitioners understand that if wellbeing is boosted then many core business metrics are more resilient also.

Focussing on creating clear links between resilience, wellbeing and business performance could be one way forward. To do this, data and technology will have a clear role to play. If HR can prove the links between better resilience, better wellbeing and other HR responsibilities – as well as understanding where the workforce and business are more or less resilient – it can take a leading role in preparing the organisation, and its people, for this unpredictable future.

It is by using the right technology that HR can help its business become more resilience against future disruption. Technology could also solve the ‘resilience ownership issue’. If HR can give the right data and the direction on resilience – by measuring using the right digital tools – it can lead others, line managers and business leaders, in implementing a response.

It is our view that by using the right technology, HR can help explain the importance of resilience within its business, lead in this important area and boost its own role as a result.

The resilience lifecycle

Technology supports a business in filling resilience gaps

Change & disruption are the 'new normal'

Technology helps business understand where it is and is not resilient

Resilience helps to successfully navigate change

Understanding how resilience boosts performance across key metrics (wellbeing, strategy, engagement)

Resilience requires ownership across the business with leadership from HR

Appendices

Survey demographics

HR Grapevine and Jigsaw Cloud surveyed over 200 business professionals, all drawn from HR Grapevine’s readership. Throughout the report, mention of “the survey” refers to data collection, analyses, and grouping of these responses.

Below, a map shows the operational area of the organisations that respondents came from.

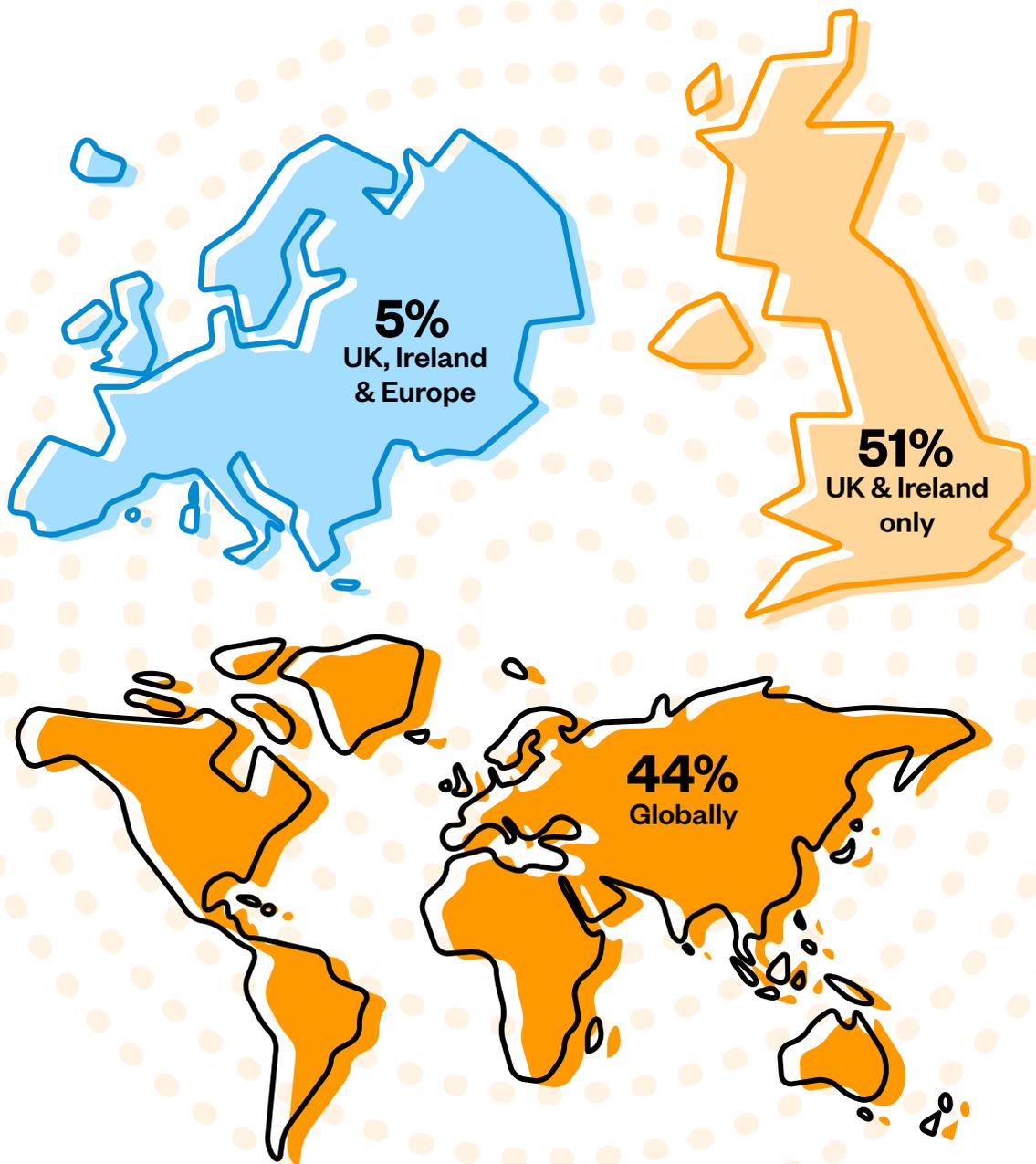


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

Company size

Respondents to the survey came from a range of different company sizes. The majority came from small and medium-sized enterprises. The next biggest category were companies with 1,001 – 5,000 employees at 20%, then firms with 250 – 500 workers. Just over a tenth came from companies who have 501 - 1,000 staff members. With only 9.7% of respondents working at businesses with over 10,000 staff.

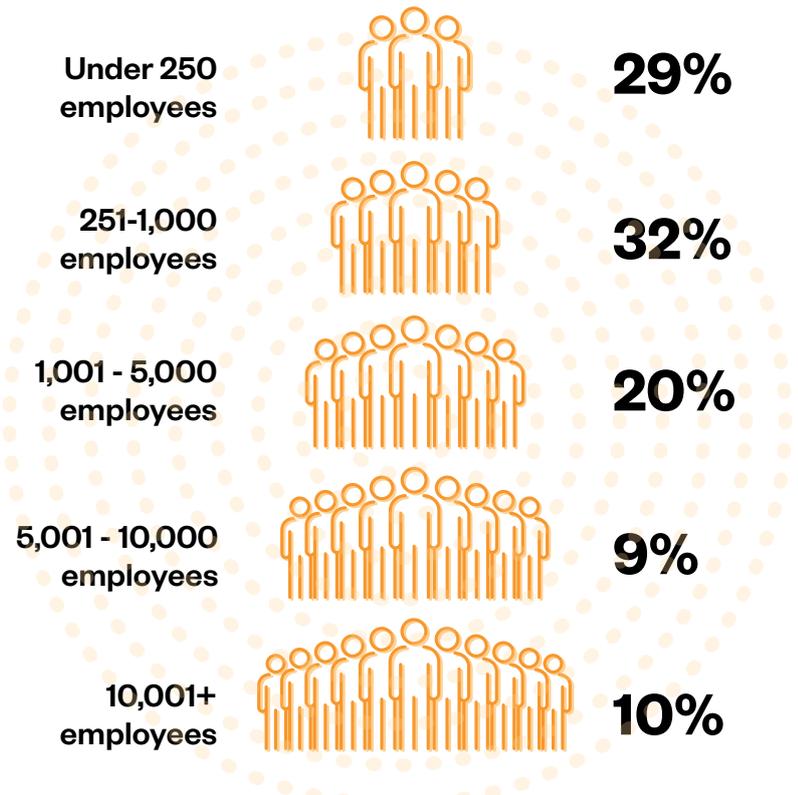


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

Industry

The largest number of survey respondents worked in the technology sector, which PwC stated as an industry with an impressive degree of resilience and has remained a key enabler to the UK economy during the spread of Covid.⁵

After technology, a large number of responses came from HR and recruitment, as well as the hospitality and tourism industry. A myriad of sectors made up smaller, similar proportions of the survey, including: engineering, banking and finance and government and defence.

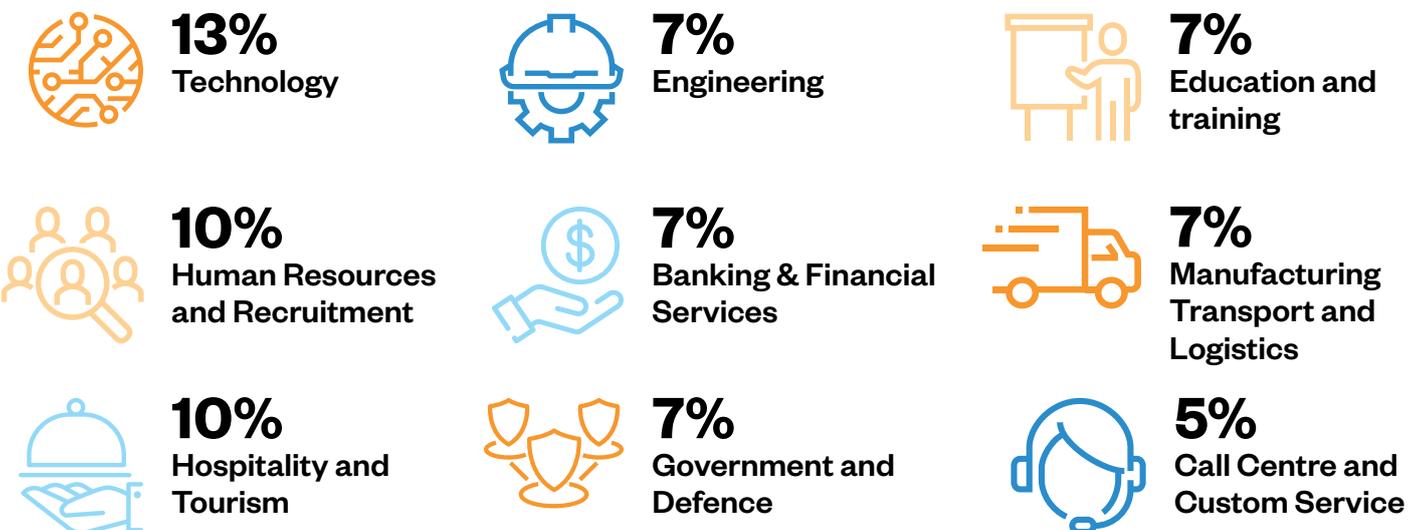


Chart source: Jigsaw Cloud & HR Grapevine resilience survey 2021

5. PwC, The tech sector in 2020: a resilient performance- but what's next?

Jigsaw Cloud  

Jigsaw Cloud has been helping small to medium-sized businesses achieve their HR goals since 2004. With an experienced team of SAP SuccessFactors consultants and HR practitioners, we understand how to combine people management, technology and process to achieve maximum business impact.

To find out more, please visit:

jigsaw-cloud.com

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