

2021



World Happiness Report



## **“Work + Wellbeing Today: A deeper look at the 2021 World Happiness Report” with Dr. Jan-Emmanuel de Neve**

---

How did our work happiness and well-being evolve during the pandemic? What actually drives wellbeing at work and which dimensions become more important to workers in times of crisis? How can these insights help us design workplaces that enable employees to thrive?

Join us for a first-ever deep dive of the 2021 World Happiness Report, as we explore the report's chapter dedicated to work and wellbeing. Leading this session is Dr. Jan-Emmanuel de Neve, chapter author and editor of the United Nations World Happiness Report and director of the Wellbeing Research Centre at Oxford.



World Happiness Report

# Work + Wellbeing Today

A deeper look at the  
2021 World Happiness Report

Jan-Emmanuel De Neve, University of Oxford



## Employee wellbeing is a ~~nice~~ need to have.

1. Causal impact on productivity
2. Necessary to attract and retain talent
3. Direct measure for ESG social impact accounting

# 87%

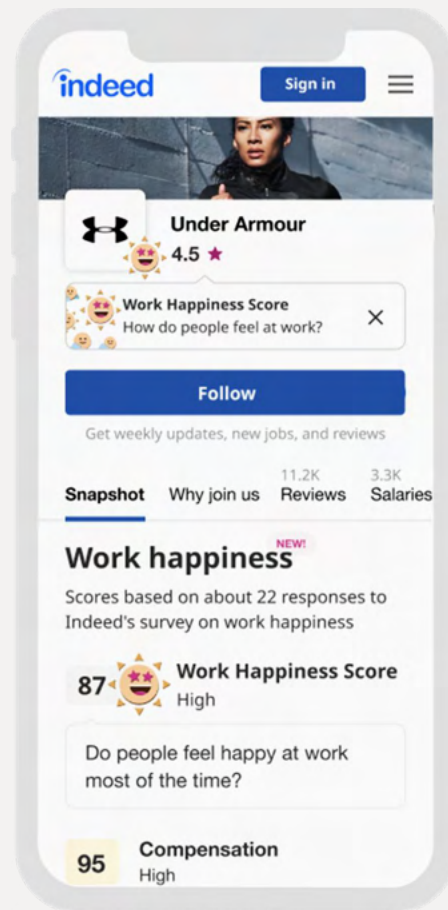
Of company leaders report prioritizing worker happiness can give their company a competitive advantage.

Yet only 35% have made it a strategic priority.

# Indeed's Work Happiness Score

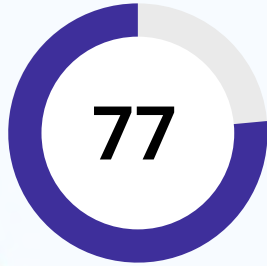
New data set helps companies understand how people feel – and why

With over 4.5 million happiness surveys already taken, and counting, this new data set aims to be the largest study of work wellbeing, ever.

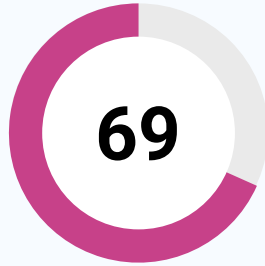


# Scores vary significantly between companies

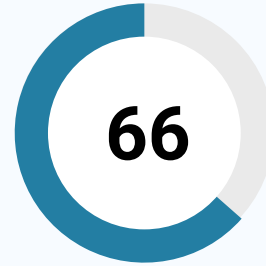
Work Happiness Scores



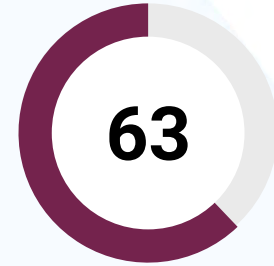
In-N-Out Burger



Starbucks

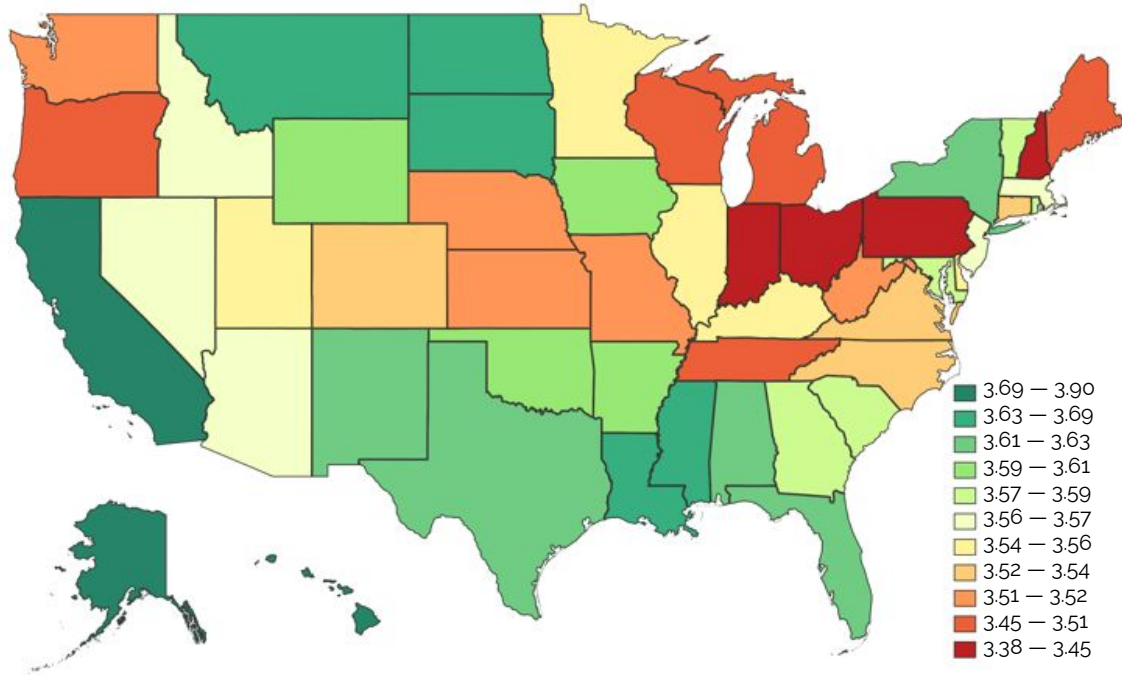


Subway



McDonald's

# Work happiness across America





 **Happiness**

 **Purpose**

 **Belonging**

 **Trust**

 **Appreciation**

 **Learning**

 **Compensation**

 **Satisfaction**

 **Stress**

 **Inclusion**

 **Management**

 **Support**

 **Flexibility**

 **Achievement**

Enter the company name

**I feel happy at work most of the time.**

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

**My work has the time and location flexibility I need.**

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

**I am paid fairly for my work.**

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

**There are people at work who give me support and encouragement.**

## What we *think* drives wellbeing (stated importance)



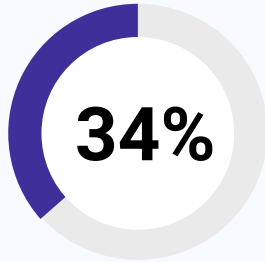
## What *actually* drives wellbeing (revealed importance)



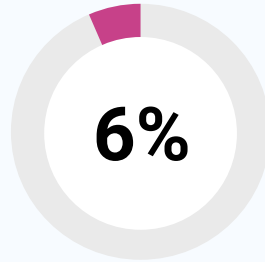
Social capital

**Note:** Stated importance: Stated importance analysis via a Max Diff analysis. Revealed importance: Coefficients plotted from seven regression models with monthly samples restricted from December 2019 to June 2020. In all cases, workplace happiness serves as the dependent variable, on a 0 to 100 scale, and drivers as the key independent variables of interest (all z-scored). Fixed effects included for the date of survey completion, company, occupation, response collector link, and state. Sample includes employees reviewing companies they currently work for. 95% confidence intervals displayed.  
**Source:** Indeed.com & Indeed Work Happiness in America Report, a commissioned study (n=5011) conducted by Forrester Consulting, 2020

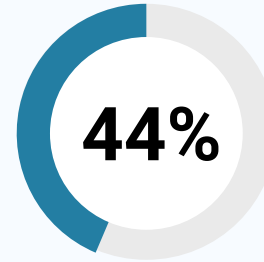
## Misconceptions from managers hold wellbeing back



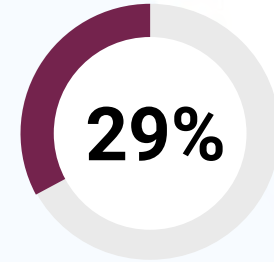
Only **34%** of managers rate belonging among the top 5 drivers of happiness at work



Only **6%** of managers rate a sense of belonging as the #1 driver of happiness at work

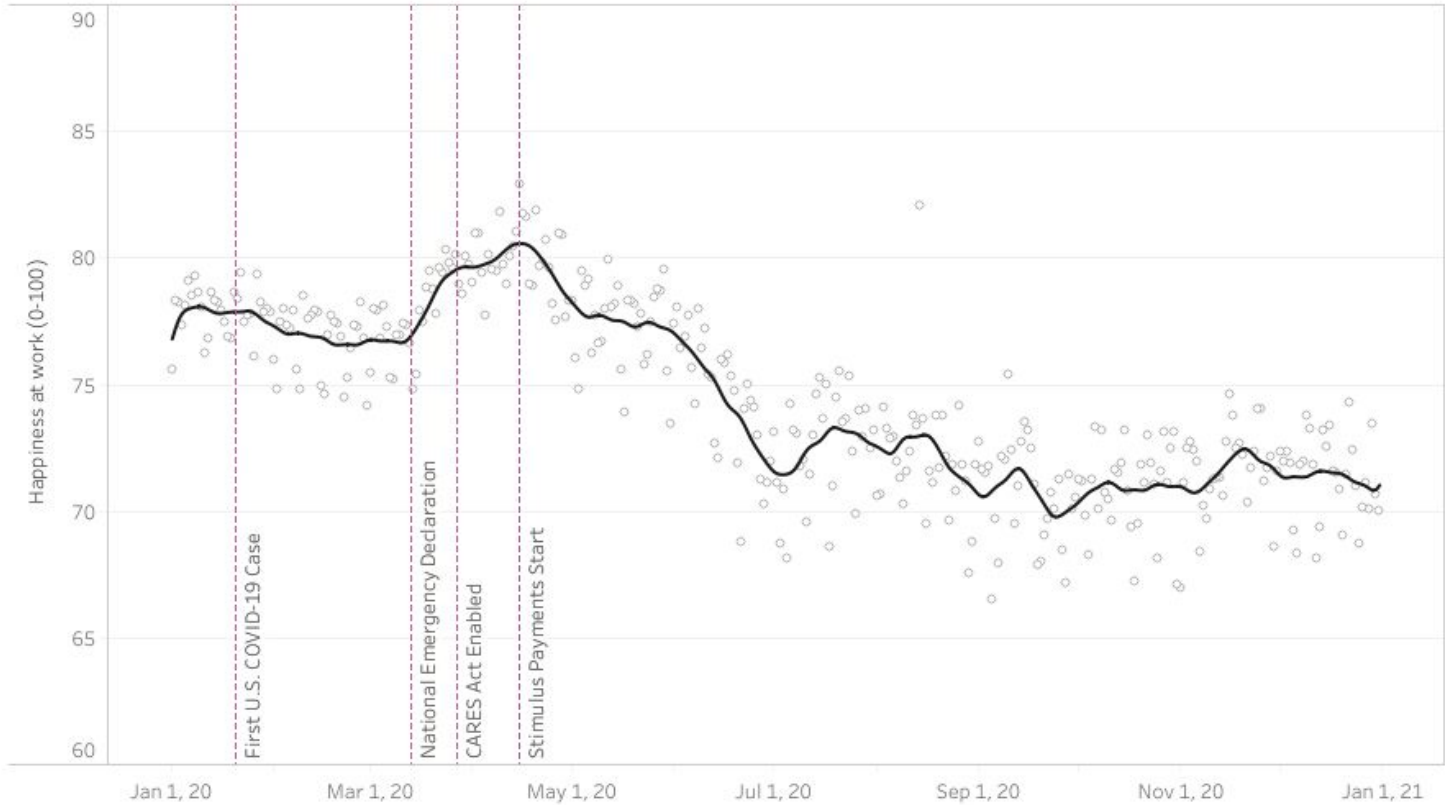


Only **44%** of managers have implemented diversity and inclusion initiatives in the past 3 years



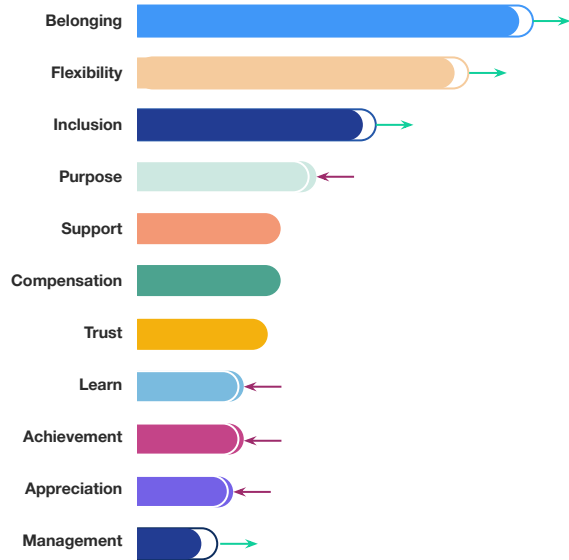
Only **29%** of managers plan to implement diversity and inclusion initiatives in the next 12 months

Figure 9: Happiness at work in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic



Note: Lowest line of best fit displayed using a bandwidth of 0.05. Currently employed workers only. See text for further details.  
Source: Indeed.com

## What *actually* drives wellbeing (pre- & post- Covid)



**Key drivers of wellbeing remain important  
— even more so during the pandemic.**

**Note:** Coefficients plotted from seven regression models with monthly samples restricted from December 2019 to June 2020. In all cases, workplace happiness serves as the dependent variable, on a 0 to 100 scale, and drivers as the key independent variables of interest (all z-scored). Fixed effects included for the date of survey completion, company, occupation, response collector link, and state. Sample includes employees reviewing companies they currently work for. 95% confidence intervals displayed.

**Source:** Indeed.com

# Flexibility and the future of work?

**Work from home on the rise**

**Some short term benefits**

**But risks undermining key drivers of wellbeing (and productivity)  
in longer run: our social and intellectual capital**

**Need for coordinated flexibility**

# Wellbeing and the future of work

**We need a better understanding of wellbeing:** while people think pay is the most important driver of happiness, it is actually social dynamics — particularly belonging

**We have powerful new data:** Indeed's Work Happiness data reveals where — and why — people are happy at work.

**Managers need to prioritize wellbeing:** too few managers have strategies or investments in wellbeing.

**We need to re-stock social capital:** the pandemic has strained the social aspects of work, which are *the most important* to overall happiness. Rather than leaving offices altogether, in the future companies should explore hybrid options.

**The pandemic changes workers' preferences:** we see an increase in the importance of belonging, flexibility and support, and a decrease in purpose, learning and achievement.

**The critical first step: Measure wellbeing to manage it.**

Look at your Work Happiness Score, and what drives it; identify areas to improve.  
*What you treasure gets measured, and what gets measured gets managed.*

## Key takeaways

**Wellbeing matters**

**Key wellbeing drivers became even more important during the pandemic**

**Measure what you treasure**



2021



# World Happiness Report



Center for Sustainable Development  
EARTH INSTITUTE | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



Learn more about how people feel at work—and why: [go.indeed.com/happiness](https://go.indeed.com/happiness)