

December 9, 2020

1 in 3 employees expect telework to become standard practice; demand for convenient office commute drops sharply.

1/3 of companies to downsize offices and enhance training in post-Covid era

On December 9, specialist professional recruitment firm Robert Walters Japan announced the results of a survey answered by 300 companies and 4,062 company employees working in Japan (mainly in Tokyo and Kansai).

1 in 3 employees want full-time or 50% telework to become standard practice

When 4,062 employees were asked what work style changes they made during Covid-19 that they would like to commit to long term, the most common response was “enhanced use of technology, apps & tools” (41%). This was followed by full-time telework (36%), half telework (34%) and flexible hours (23%). Some company employees have increased their focus on wellbeing by taking regular breaks and setting realistic deadlines (19%), as well as communicating more frequently with their managers and colleagues through calls (17%).

Importance of workplace relationships reaffirmed; demand for convenient office commute drops drastically

Many employees responded that “having colleagues and a culture that inspire employees to do their best” (43%) is what they value most in an employer. It is likely that the experience of working from home during Covid-19 served as a reminder of the importance of relationships with managers and colleagues when creating new, innovative ideas and improving competitiveness. Demand for flexible work arrangements, such as telework and sliding hours (34%), has increased rapidly. Meanwhile, “a convenient commute,” which has always been an important factor when changing jobs, was selected by only 6% of employees. “Job security” and “excellent compensation and benefits” (both 32%) are also important factors that employees value in an employer. The results also suggest that more professionals are focusing on stability in their lives due to concerns about the uncertain future of the economy and business environment.

Post-pandemic measures: 1/3 of companies begin to downsize their offices and enhance training

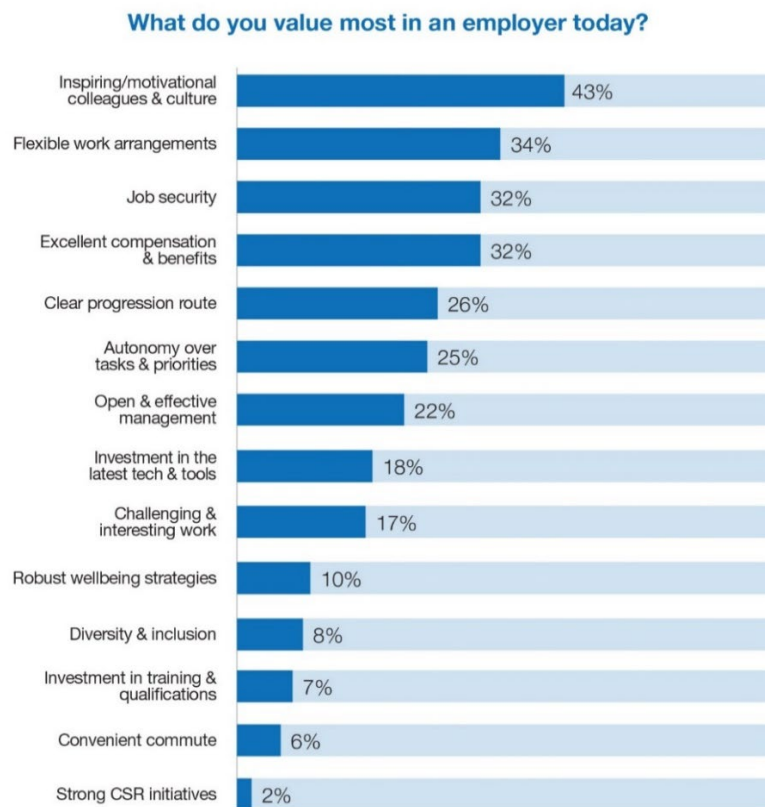
When we asked 300 companies in Japan what new initiatives they will continue or consider taking in response to Covid-19, about 1 in 3 companies responded “training and upskilling”

(35%), “headcount /hiring freezes” (34%), and “reduced/reconfigured office spaces” (32%). In response to changing workplace expectations and priorities among professionals, not only did many companies temporarily freeze hiring due to economic uncertainty but they also began to downsize or renovate their offices and provide better training to increase employee productivity.

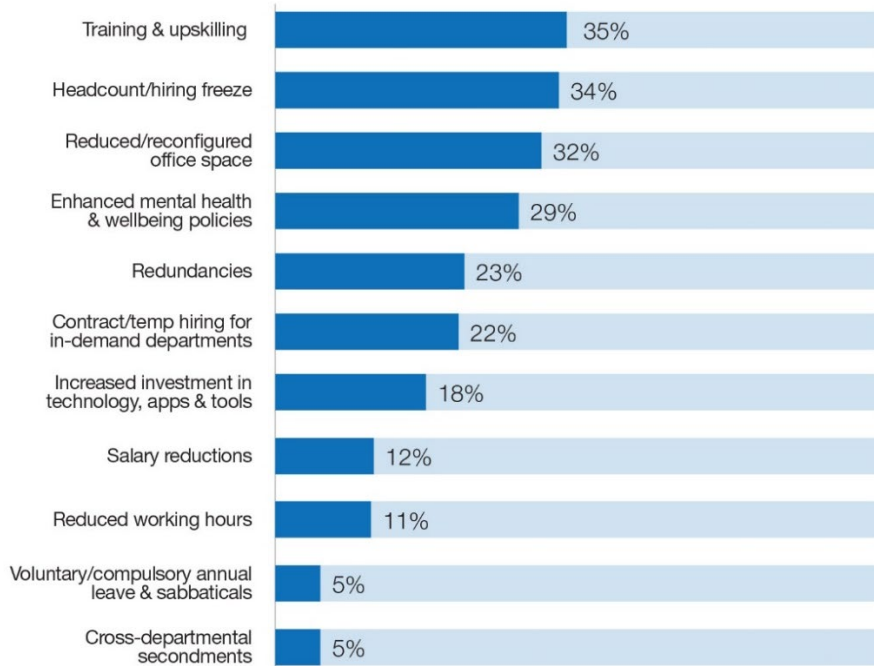
Top reasons for not changing workplace perks and benefits: industry alignment, lack of budget, and management's status quo mentality

Responses from 300 companies also showed that employees’ expectations of workplace benefits have changed after the pandemic. Of the 72% of companies that believe their employees’ expectations of workplace perks have changed, more than half (53%) are either in the process of improving their benefits or are considering doing so as soon as possible. The top reasons given by other companies for not making improvements were “already offering industry standard or above” (41%), "lack of budget" (23%), and “senior leadership preferring traditional benefits” (22%).

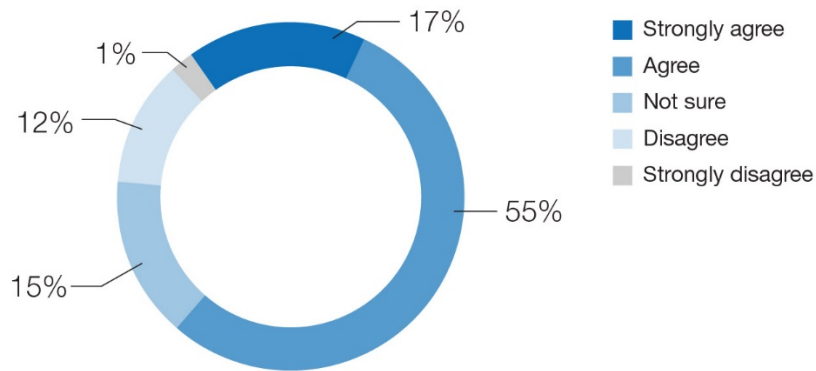
(Survey period: October 13 to November 12, 2020, Target: Domestic and foreign-affiliated companies in Japan n=300; Company employees registered with Robert Walters Japan and living in Japan n=4,062)



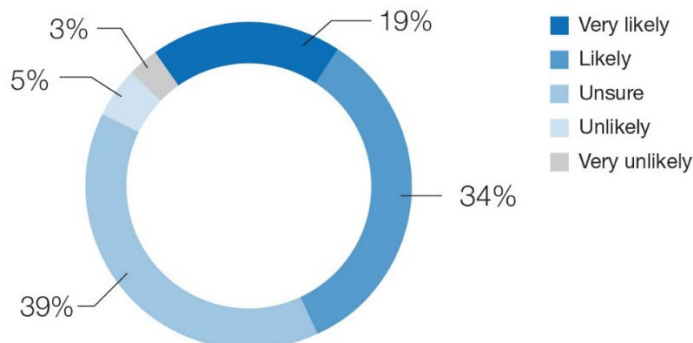
What measures have you taken in response to Covid-19?



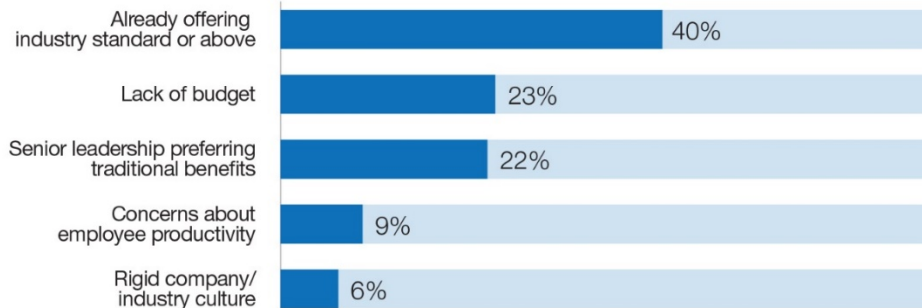
Do you feel your employees' expectations of workplace perks have changed in the past year?



How likely are you to change your benefits in response to employees' expectations?



What would prevent you from changing your workplace perks and benefits?



About Robert Walters Japan:

Established in London, United Kingdom, in 1985, Robert Walters is a specialist recruitment consultancy with operations in 31 countries around the world. Robert Walters Japan established its Tokyo office in 2000 and Osaka office in 2007. For 20 years, we've been a driving force in the Japanese bilingual recruitment market, providing high quality candidates for our clients and access to the best jobs. Our consultants are experts in their respective industries and work in teams to provide recruitment consultation services across a wide range of industries and job categories.

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