

Top trends in talent

Market Burst.

1. Key takeaways from a second transformative year
2. Executive focus on employee mental health in 2022
3. Retaining your workforce during the Great Re-Evaluation
4. The skills evolution
5. A spotlight on the gray-collar worker

Key takeaways from a second transformative year

As we step into the early stages of 2022, let's reflect on 2021. What did we learn? What did we change? The simple answer to both: a lot. Naturally, the next question is how will this impact the coming year?

The BBC has narrowed down the six biggest lessons from 2021's world of work. Hot button topics – including work/life balance, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and mental health resources – are touched on, highlighting how today's working population is affected.

When assessing how to achieve optimum work/life balance, many workers have found that remote work gives them more flexibility in working while also prioritizing home and family needs. For others, the line between the two has blurred. This population has found it challenging to press the "off" button, resulting in more hours worked and less separation of office and home.

So how do we turn these lessons into strengths for 2022? One key component is to ensure open lines of communication. Leaders must be transparent with their teams about company performance, strategy, and direction while being open to colleague feedback and encouraging engagement. Engaged colleagues, collaboration, and support will make for a productive future of work.

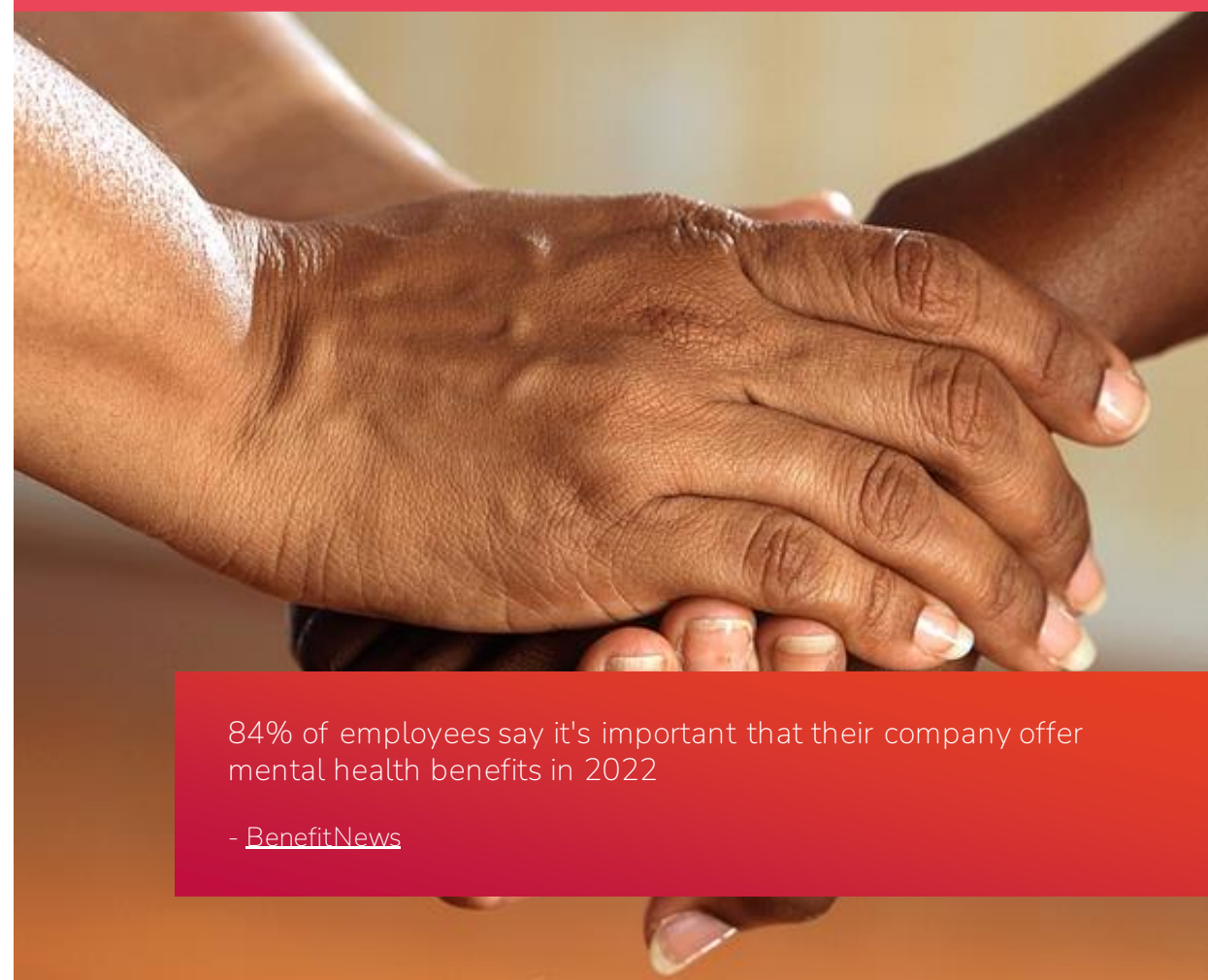
Executive focus on employee mental health in 2022

As organizations prepare employees for work in the new year, they will need to think twice before returning to the pre-pandemic status quo. In this candidate-driven marketplace, workers' mental health and wellbeing will be a top priority for companies looking to retain and attract talent. In the Adecco Group's Resetting Normal 2.0 survey of 15,000 workers across 25 countries, 74% said they would like their employer to increase their focus on mental health.

Flexibility to work remotely and hybrid working models have proven to be a cost-effective and viable option for many firms, but at the same time, this new way of working creates new challenges.

For example, burnout has been a significant concern for almost 4 in 10 workers. Additionally, 56% of managers find it hard to identify when their staff struggles with mental wellbeing. To retain workers and prioritize wellbeing, employers need to offer online therapy, more autonomy, and flexible workloads.

Executives must also take more active roles in normalizing the conversation about employees' mental health. This can be done through dedicated efforts to destigmatize mental health. Organizations must provide psychological safety for both onsite and remote employees to remain competitive in the marketplace.



84% of employees say it's important that their company offer mental health benefits in 2022

- [BenefitNews](#)

Retaining your workforce during the Great Re-Evaluation

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, last November the worker voluntary quit rate of Americans hit a record high of 4.5 million workers, which is 3% of the total US workforce. This trend is projected to continue, and business leaders must do better as workers are exhausted, newly empowered, and ready for a change.

People are looking for more – higher wages, improved work-life balance, and extensive benefits. Best in class organizational leaders are focusing efforts on retaining talent in this disruptive socioeconomic and political climate. For example, Apple's CEO Tim Cook provided all employees with a \$1,000 bonus toward their home office setup. Companies like Hootsuite, Mailchimp, and LinkedIn have all opted to close down for a week to lessen employee stress and burnout, which has elevated in the last year.

The Great Re-Evaluation has forced employers to assess key areas such as pay for work, flexible hours, and how organizational culture shapes worker experience. At the same time, employees are rethinking what is important in their working lives such as more of a focus on mental health and flexibility in how work is accomplished.



Only 65% of people plan to stay with their employer in 2022

- Fast Company



January 2022

The skills evolution

As future of work rapidly evolves and more technology such as AI and automation come into play, the human workforce will be challenged to keep up. A recent study by [McKinsey Global Institute](#) revealed that while the demand for manual skills will decrease, the demand for social, higher cognitive, and technological skills will skyrocket.

Through further academic research and McKinsey's experience in adult training, four broad foundational skill categories were identified: cognitive, digital, interpersonal, and self-leadership.

Across each category, 13 skills subgroups were identified, making a grand total of [56 foundational skills](#) deemed instrumental to an individual's professional success.

In today's redesigned world of work, it becomes essential to equip workers with the right skills. As we have seen in 2021, upskilling and reskilling are a top priority as roles evolve and change. Simply put, what skills does your workforce need and how can you invest in your people to get them there?

A spotlight on the gray-collar worker

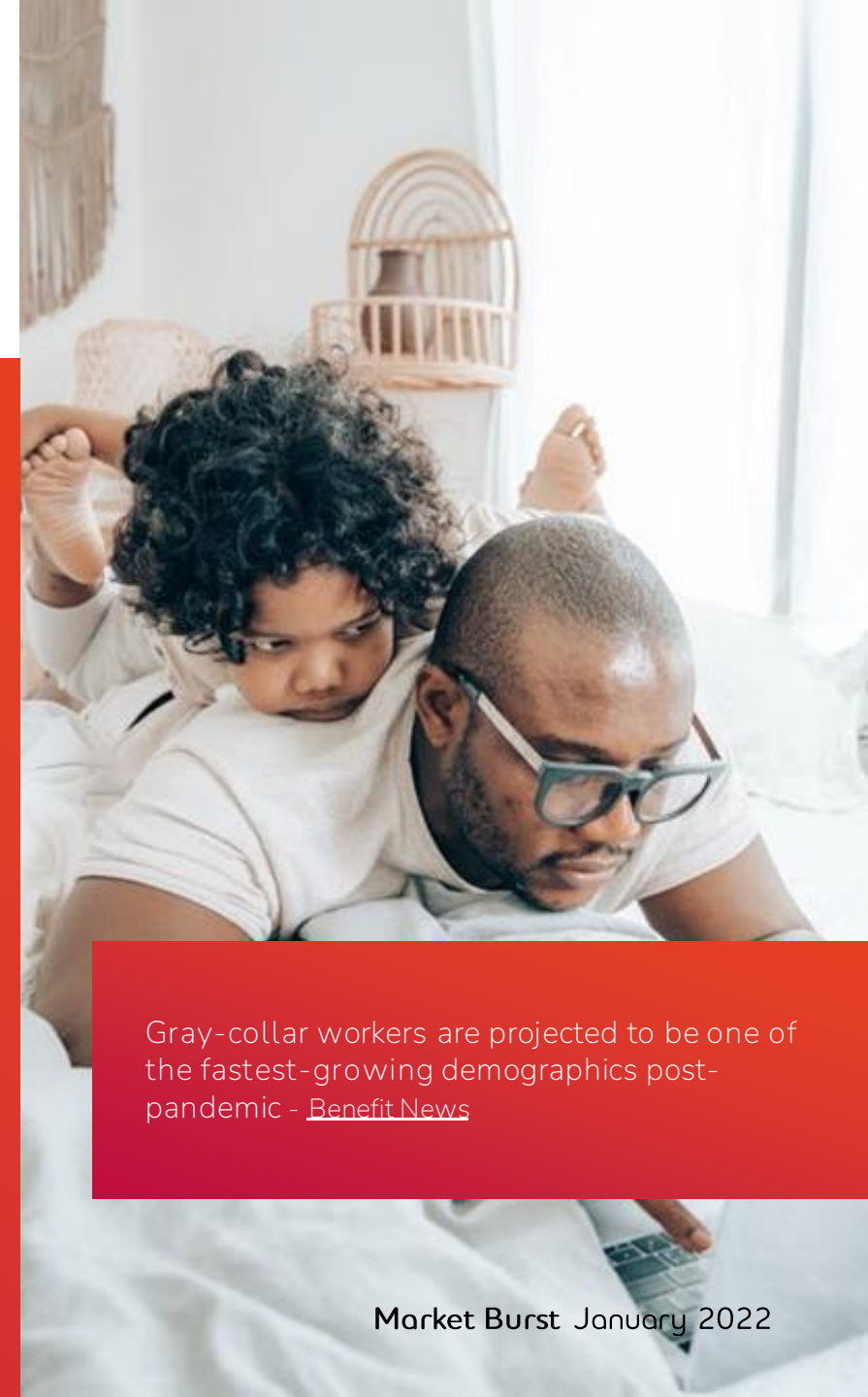
We have heard about blue and white-collar workers, but what about gray?

Gray-collar workers, a term coined in 2004, includes healthcare workers, public service professionals, government workers, and teachers. This subset of the workforce is where physical and technical skills come together. As the COVID pandemic has progressed, automation has become increasingly popular, funneling gray-collar workers under the “essential worker” umbrella due to their intersection of skills.

Gray-collar workers are often not equipped with four-year degrees; however, they do possess high specialized skills and carry a valuable set of capabilities. These qualities make this group of workers a critical part of the labour force. UKG Vice President, Cecile Alper-Leroux, says that changing the narrative around “[more education is better](#)” notion is crucial to accommodating this rising subset of workers.

How can we re-evaluate our talent attraction strategies to draw in these crucial prospects?

Reframe the candidate selection process by looking at an individual’s potential versus their experience and revisit educational requirements. This reduces [the gray-collar blind spot](#) and enable employers to invest in their people



Gray-collar workers are projected to be one of the fastest-growing demographics post-pandemic - [BenefitNews](#)