

# COVID-19 CONSUMER RESEARCH WAVE 119 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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SEPTEMBER 23 - 25, 2022

**Stagwell** and **The Harris Poll** have partnered to conduct research to monitor the pulse of the American Consumer.

The executive summaries on the pages that follow provide insight into current consumer attitudes and behavior and can be used to help navigate the changing industry landscape. We hope this information proves useful to you and your team as you address these changes in real time and strategize for your next moves.

As always, we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have.

Positively,

**Ryan Linder + The Stagwell Family**

Global Chief Marketing Officer, EVP



# WAVE 119

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## WAVE 119 INTRODUCTION

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The following research was conducted between **September 23 - 25, 2022** by The Harris Poll. Fielded among a nationally representative sample of **1,992** U.S. adults, the newest research demonstrates how consumers' perceptions are rapidly shifting as new developments emerge.

Section:

# 01

Topic:

## AMERICA'S TEENS HAVE IDEAS ON SUICIDE PREVENTION: CVS HEALTH-HARRIS POLL NATIONAL HEALTH PROJECT

Introduction:

New data from the [CVS Health - Harris Poll National Health Project](#) reveals that teens have a unique perspective on the suicide crisis affecting their generation that is different and more nuanced than the more prominent U.S. adult population. And their insights are critical to helping understand the catalysts and crisis points, which could help prevention.

- **Social isolation:** More than any other age group, two-thirds (66%) of American teens (13-17) point to the **loss of social relationships during the pandemic** as a significant contributor to rising teen suicide rates among their generation (v. gen pop 18+: 58%).
- **Strife in their social and home life environments:** Teens are also more likely to report increased relationship problems (59%) and family financial struggles (58%) (v. gen pop 18+: 46%, 47%, respectively)

- **Bottling up:** While nearly (75%) of teens say they have people in their social circle they could talk to about their mental health, a third (34%) say they don't talk to anyone about their mental health.
- **Failure to communicate:** Close to half of teens (44%) report that no one has ever reached out to them to discuss suicide and suicide prevention, and nearly 6 in 10 (59%) teens say they have never talked about suicide and suicide prevention with their parents.
- **Friends in need:** Over half (54%) of teens report knowing people in their social circle who are struggling with mental health (v. gen pop (18+): 49%), yet close to half of teens (44%) also say that no one has ever reached out to them to discuss suicide and suicide prevention.
- **A generation interrupted:** Harris's research with The CDC on [teenage mental health during the pandemic](#) shows the profound, structural dislocations in their lives from identity to education, economics, and more.
- **But teens are breaking the stigma in seeking mental health:** Our long-standing [APA/Harris Poll Stress in America Report](#) reveals that teens are the generational cohort most likely to say they are in therapy and see it differently than older Americans — as a proactive means of health and wellness.

Implication:

"We want to be laser-focused on intervening with this age group and customizing the kinds of interventions that are going to be effective in changing this trajectory," says Flora Vivaldo, head of clinical strategic initiatives at Aetna Behavioral Health, such as proactive outreach of support and resources along with [youth-nominated support teams](#).

Section:

# 02

Topic:

## HYBRID WORK IS HAPPY WORK

Introduction:

Does Gene in accounting get on your nerves more than usual? It might have to do with where you work. New Harris Poll data finds that hybrid workers are the most tolerant of their coworkers:

- While (58%) of full-time office and (57%) of fully remote workers say **their coworkers are annoying**, less than half of hybrid workers think so (47%). Similarly, (58%) of full-time office and (56%) of fully remote workers think their **coworkers are lazy**, yet only (45%) of hybrid workers say the same.
- **Similarly, both full-time office and remote employees were more likely to report having coworkers that are incompetent (53%, 50%) and bad at their job (53%, 49%) compared to their hybrid peers (46%, 39%, respectively).**
- While half of American workers (51%) say they have coworkers who are hard to work with, more than two-thirds say they **genuinely like most or all their coworkers (67%)**.
- **American workers split into thirds on where they prefer to work:** A third (34%) want to work from home permanently (-2%-pts Jan' 22); another third (33%) in the office permanently (+2%-pts), and the last third (33%) want to split time between the office and home (unchanged from Jan).
- **Women and BIPOC workers favor remote work:** Employed women (38%) and BIPOC women (48%) want to work remotely, as do Black employees (42%).
- Gen X prefers remote work (41%), Gen Z the office (44%), and Millennials hybrid (39%). (See our Bloomberg story on [Summer Interns in empty U.S. offices](#)).

Implication:

Look, we like to complain about our office mates. More than half of all American employees say they have annoying (55%), lazy (55%), and even weird and awkward (54%) colleagues. But hybrid working seems to bring more perspective or at least a change of pace which allows us to focus less on what bothers us and more on what to get done.

Section:

# 03

Topic:

## PURPOSE LEADS TO RETENTION: KUMANU-HARRIS POLL; GOOGLE CLOUD-HARRIS POLL

Introduction:

In a tight labor market, purpose in company values, principles, and ethics affects retaining talent and customer bases, according to multiple new Harris surveys.

- A Kumanu Harris Poll [featured in Forbes](#) reports that American employees are two times more likely to stay at a purpose-driven organization and four times more likely to be more engaged at work.
- Similarly, our [PURPOSE Under Pressure](#) report finds that (86%) of employees said **having "meaning" in their work is more important than ever before** – and (84%) even say they would only work at Purpose-driven companies and brands.
- Purpose retains customers as well: In partnership with Google Cloud, [featured in Forbes](#), we found that (82%) of shoppers want a brand's value to align with their own and that three-quarters of shoppers (75%) have parted with brands over value conflicts.

Implication:

In our America This Week podcast, Libby and I have voiced a strong belief that HR is an untapped source of innovation in the twenty-first-century corporation. Think about it: What if human resources were elevated to the c-suite, becoming both a listener and catalyst of talent and, in turn, a connector of personal esteem and identity at work with the stated purpose and values of an organization? All these studies say the same thing: HR is needed now more than ever, not as a tactic but as a central strategy to a company's plan for growth.

Section:

# 04

Topic:

## UPSKILLING IS ESCAPING:

Introduction:

While most (72%) of American workers are satisfied with their job, it doesn't mean that people aren't actively looking to invest in themselves to move to bigger and brighter positions. But new Harris data shows that learning more skills and knowledge is often the first step among many would-be-job switchers.

- Two-thirds of employees (65%) say the main reason they are **learning new skills** and doing **professional development** is to **advance their careers or switch positions**; especially so among Millennials (74%), Black (71%), and Hispanics: (71%) professionals.
- At the same time, six in ten (60%) employees say they are **exploring new opportunities** (Black: 76%, Millennials: 72%, Hispanic: 65%),
- And (45%) say they actively seek **a new job** (Hispanic: 58%, Black: 53%, Millennials: 55%, Gen Z: 53%).
- **The quiet quit continues**: Close to half of employees (45%) agree they have **stopped going above and beyond** at their companies (Millennials: 55%, Gen Z: 53%).
- **Wages are falling behind expenses**: Over two-thirds (69%) report their salary **isn't keeping up with inflation**, and they could **readily seek a job with higher pay** (62%).

Implication:

What's driving the learn and leap trend? Risk management, for one: Four in ten Americans (42%) are anxious about losing their jobs (+4pts from last week). Meanwhile, in our data, employers have been **criticized for not keeping promises** to workers on training and development. As a result, American corporations need to hit the 're-set' button when investing in their workers and designing more customized pathways for talent to develop and thrive without leaving the hive.



# Questions?

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**KNOWLEDGE IS POWER**

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