Psychology and the Post-Pandemic Workplace

Contents

Introduction

COVID–19 has changed how we think about work, and likely will affect people's relationship to work far into the future. Psychology is at the center of this transformation, as organizations seek to create safe, flexible work environments that will empower workers to perform at their optimum.

As part of this workplace evolution, psychologists are helping organizations retool for hybrid work environments, and developing evidence-based strategies for recruiting, engaging, and retaining a globalized workforce.

At the same time, the field of psychology is undergoing profound changes. Once peripheral, telepsychology has become a cornerstone of therapeutic practice as the demand for service increases and individuals strive for more meaningful, balanced work lives. The pivot to online teaching will impact psychology education for years to come, and psychology research is front and center, as scientists investigate the long-reaching effects of the pandemic.

Workplace innovations spurred by the global pandemic have only just begun. Over the coming months and years, what we have experienced and learned will impact the workforce in ways we do not yet understand. What is clear, however, is that psychology has a critical role to play in shaping this future. Our work is just beginning. ▪

Stay Informed!

What new, multi-cultural leadership skills are required in the post-COVID world? How can psychologists inform and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion? Do you know what questions are top-of-mind for researchers coming out of the pandemic?

APA assembled leading experts in research-teaching, practice, and I-O applications for a robust conversation about our nation's transition to a post-pandemic world and how psychology can inform what that looks like. Watch the video of the recent APA Town Hall Webinar, "Transitioning to a Post-Pandemic World: How Can Psychological Science Assist Others and Us as Psychologists?"

Free for APA members!

Keeping Remote Work Afloat

By Charlotte Huff

For many who found themselves working from home during 2020, the past year has proven to be a mixed bag. One third of employees and half of employers reported higher productivity due to remote work, according to a late 2020 survey. But its concurrent isolation, loneliness, and work-life issues took a big toll.

In short, 2020 upended the workings of many office jobs. Today, employers and employees alike are trying to figure out how to capture the productivity benefits while jettisoning some of the mental health risks. Once viral vulnerabilities recede, how do organizations sort out which employees should return, and how often, to their physical workplace?

"What I hear a lot of corporate managers thinking about very heavily right now is, `What is the purpose of the office?'" said Timothy Golden, PhD, a professor of management at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's Lally School of Management in Troy, NY. "'What is the purpose of having employees come in every day?' It's an assumption we've had for ages that now has been shattered, right?"

Whether the office should stay remote is not a one-size-fits-all answer for either employers or employees, psychologists say. Importantly, psychologists can work with clients to think through their own working life needs as they transition to the next phase, said Colleen Cummings, PhD, a clinical psychologist who practices in Rockville, Maryland.

If clients are provided the option to choose their work site, she said, "I would encourage them to reflect on the past year. I think it is a very personal decision based on the individual."

Guarding against burnout

In settings where a large chunk of employees continues to work remotely, psychologists can guide employers on setting better boundaries, said Tammy Allen, PhD, who directs the Industrial-Organizational Program at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Supervisors should be reminded to let employees know that it's OK to take mini home breaks, given that they miss out on the spontaneous downtime of breakroom gatherings, Allen said.

Managers also should avoid calling after hours, Allen said. "Let people actually take a vacation, without expecting them to still be checking their email."

Creating better work-life buffers is essential for those continuing to tele-commute, Cummings said. Setting aside a designated work area is vital at a min-imum, if a separate room for a home office is not feasible. Another strategy is to develop an end-of-the-day ritual that at least partly replicates that work-home transition of the daily commute. That might involve wrapping up each day with a 10-minute walk before starting dinner, or relaxing on the sofa with a cup of tea, she said.

Structuring work

Psychologists already are working with corporate managers to figure out what new mix of work arrangements is best for their workforce, as well as how hybrid jobs should be designed, Golden said.

For instance, if an employee's job is highly dependent on interactions with others, they might spend part or all of their time onsite, so as not to miss more subtle clues involving voice quality and facial expressions. But other job tasks, such as computer coding or financial analysis, might benefit from sustained blocks of concentration, which might be more efficiently done from home, he said.
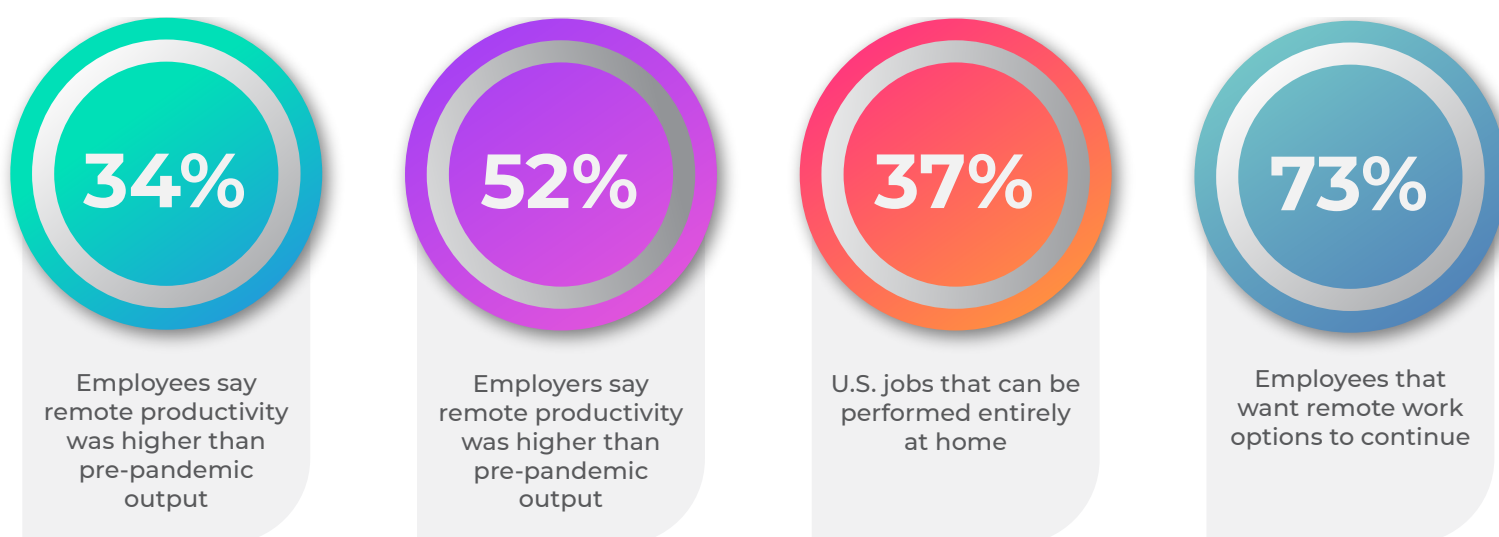
The job tasks an employee performs should be considered in the decision about where to conduct work, as they can influence job performance, said Golden, pointing to a 2019 article he co-authored, published in the *Journal of Business and Psychology*.

In that study, telecommuting had a ben-eficial or neutral effect on performance; what was key was the type of tasks involved. For instance, a telecommuter's work benefitted from doing com-plex tasks.

But the decision about where to work on specific tasks should still be left up to employee preference, Golden said. The idea is "to inform and educate employ-ees, to have them think about this," he said. "And to help them decide and allo-cate where their time is best served."

Recreating social synergy

Another conundrum is how to foster the sort of connections and hallway con-

34%
Employees say remote productivity was higher than pre-pandemic output

52%
Employers say remote productivity was higher than pre-pandemic output

37%
U.S. jobs that can be performed entirely at home

73%
Employees that want remote work options to continue

Sources: PWC, National Bureau of Economic Research, Microsoft Corp.

versations that percolate in the office, said Charles Calderwood, PhD, who directs the Work Stress and Recovery Lab at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. Those informal interactions not only knit a workforce closer but can lead to new insights, he said.

Pandemic life has illustrated that running from video call to video call remains a poor substitute, Calderwood said. "There's not much chance for small talk. A lot of really good ideas come out of that small talk that people have more casually."

For that reason, Calderwood believes that the "death of the office space is a little overrated." Rather, he predicts that a lot of employers will move to a hybrid model, with many workers onsite at least part of each week.

Even so, supervisors should strive to better connect with their still telecommuting employees, including more informal check-ins by phone or email, Calderwood said. "A lot of people probably do feel more unappreciated than usual," he said, "because they are not getting some of those day-to-day reminders of what they like about their work and why they enjoy it."

Incorporating pandemic lessons
A return to the office needn't precisely mirror pre-pandemic working, Cummings said. Ask people to think through what they liked about their telecommuting lives, she suggested. If someone had

been walking or running over their lunch break, that habit could be transported back to the office cubicle.

If the workforce becomes a mix of telecommuting and onsite employees, managers also should be sensitized to the potential pitfalls in how they evaluate employees' performance, Golden said. "Many people have a natural inclination to maybe give more attention to somebody who is in front of them rather than to somebody who might be online," he said.

Another study that Golden was involved with, published in 2020, looked at career success markers between telecommuters and non-telecommuters among 405 employees. It found that the rate of promotions didn't differ, but telecommuters experienced lower salary growth.

But those findings predated the pandemic's reshuffling of work, Golden noted. His study also found that telecommuters were more likely to receive promotions if they worked for an organization where the practice was more common. Perhaps, managerial perceptions might shift as remote work becomes more ingrained, he said.

"Now it has become acceptable to work from home to a much, much greater degree than it ever was before," he said. "So those norms in the workplace have been changing and are continuing to change." ∎

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Psychology Drives
NEW OFFICE DESIGNS

By Selby Frame

In the scramble to figure out how to return to workplaces, several ideas seem to be taking root. The future, most agree, will include more hybrid work environments, with staff rotations that mix remote and in-office work. Physical offices will need to be reconfigured for greater safety, flexibility, and types of usage.

Say farewell to massive, open-plan workspaces. Those designing offices now describe thoughtfully contained, well-ventilated configurations, such as pods or living-room type lounges. There will be increased space between workstations, more hands-free technology, and emphasis on creating outdoor spaces such as green roofs, patios, atriums — or even just windows that open.

But what about the mental well-being of people working in these new spaces? If more than a year of working in isolation at home has taught us anything, it is that we are profoundly emotionally affected by our physical surroundings.

"Psychology and well-being are the true drivers in people returning to the office," says Casey Lindberg, PhD, senior design researcher at HKS, an international design firm headquartered in Dallas. "If you're designing for well-being, adding plastic dividers is probably not going to be the solution," says Lindberg.

"One of the things that often happens when we look at design, or at how people interact in a space, is that we tend not to focus on the holistic picture of a person," says Lindsay T. Graham, PhD, a personality psychologist and research specialist at the Center for the Built Environment (CBE) at the University of California, Berkeley.

"Not only are you in that workspace to perform a task, but that space has the ability to influence your thoughts, feelings, how you perceive others, how others perceive you, and how well you perform your work," she says.

Designing for well-being
Early scientific research on what makes healthy offices focused primarily on contributors to physical well-being, with an eye toward preventing health problems that arose from sick building syndrome, a phenomenon in which people in modern high-rise buildings developed negative health conditions related to toxic elements such as outgassing of building materials, poor indoor air, and black mold.

Roughly two decades ago, the Federal Energy Management Program stepped in to help establish LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), internationally agreed-upon standards for building healthier buildings with reduced environmental footprints and impacts on human health. More recently, a WELL Building Standard® has been established that helps measure, certify, and monitor "features of the built environment that impact human health and well-being."

Graham's group at CBE has been pivotal in gathering data that give context to those standards. For over two decades they have administered the CBE Occupant Survey, an online tool that lets office occupants rate their experiences with their indoor environments, including ease of interaction, amount of light, cleanliness, sound privacy, and other contributors to well-being, productivity, and social connection.

Thus far, their cumulative data has shown workers reporting the greatest satisfaction with their building's cleanliness and maintenance, lighting, and office layout — while rating acoustical quality and temperature as the greatest obstacles to getting work done.

Graham thinks that may change dramatically as workplaces reopen.

"The two things that have become super important this year are cleanliness and how well we can interact and engage with one another," she says. "I'm very curious to see if all those findings get flipped on their head."

> **An incredible design opportunity exists to reshape the workspace more profoundly from a psychological perspective.**
>
> Lindsay Graham, PhD

The choices individuals make within their workplaces are just as significant contributors to well-being as the spaces they inhabit, says Lindberg.

"What we learned before COVID, and in visioning forward, is that you need to design to protect different experiences so that you have a mental threshold or space between things," he says. "Different places for relaxation and eating, or meeting and collaboration time, or even for different communication styles. At home that may be a physical barrier like a door that protects your office, or a ritualistic morning walk."

"Now that we're constantly accessible and sometimes getting burnt out, we really need to learn how to protect those thresholds," says Lindberg.

Personality-driven design
One of the most fascinating psychological contributions to workspace design is the study of how personality influences experiences of space. Studies show that people who are introverted, for instance, are more sensitive to sound, which can have a profound impact on both their productivity and mental health.

"It's not that they're a complainer or more demanding," says Graham. "It's that they genuinely perceive themselves to be more sensitive. So, employers might know that and say, 'Hey here's how we can help you or here are the tools you can use to make your experience better.'"

Alternately, those who are high in extroversion find stimulation and conversation often boost productivity. Research also shows that many of their personality traits give them advantages at work, which traditional workspaces have tended to support.

When employers factor in differences in personality types and needs as they reimagine workplaces, the whole paradigm can change, she says, and psychologists have a large role to play.

"There is a huge need for psychologists to be involved in these conversations because it's the psychologist who understands the inner working of personalities," says Graham adding: "Oftentimes, it is hard to gain insight into your own behaviors and how a space is impacting you. Sometimes it just takes one person to help you connect those dots."

To truly design for post-COVID occupancy, she suggests organizations give employees tools to assess how their personality characteristics may affect their experiences at work — something she stresses can be a private self-assessment, not necessarily shared with the employer.

"The Big 5 Personality Test is probably where I would start," she says, "and then help people identify perceptions of their space and what their needs are. What are you trying to accomplish? How do you feel in your environment? If you're an extrovert, what might you do to isolate yourself from others when you have a big project due? Organizations can help employees develop individualized work-environment plans."

Toward a workplace ecosystem
Psychologically relevant design is a cornerstone of HKS Design's approach to revisioning workplaces for their clients. They term their methodology as "workplace ecosystem" design, where the office is seen as just one point in a larger framework of working life. Offices, they say, should be "an interdependent ecosystem of considerations and offerings" that extend office walls to include new technologies, policies, culture, and innovative ways of working.

But what might that look like? According to Lindberg, workplaces might encompass office, home, coffee shops, and nature — an interconnected set of settings that support productivity depending on a person's work style and the tasks they need to complete on a day-to-day basis.

"In the world of the design, it's connecting the intent of design to its human outcome," he says. "You might envision it like team spaces, groups of four or eight desks in one area, but acoustically protected; focus rooms where you can pop in if you need to; a collection of different types of sites.

"If done smartly, a workplace ecosystem's square footage, wherever that is, will have more value than it did pre-pandemic," he says. "That is because the office doesn't need to be all things to all employees. It can concentrate on what it needs to do well and become a space where people want to come."

While the pandemic prompted us to hit pause on work as we knew it, it offered, or even demanded, that we reconsider the role of workspaces in our physical and mental well-being. For those psychologists working in design research and human health outcomes, it has meant having a wider, interdisciplinary platform for making workplaces more fulsomely healthy for humans.

"One interesting question as a psychologist is whether our desire to go back to normal and away from this trauma is strong enough to take us away from the possibilities for evolution this has afforded us," says Graham. "Are we going to reimagine what an environment can be, or is our trauma going to override that and force us back to what we're comfortable with?

"I think an incredible design opportunity exists to reshape the workspace more profoundly from a psychological perspective," she says.

"Design can't just be about building a container that doesn't do harm," adds Lindberg. "We need a holistic revisioning of working, where workplaces are only one part of the equation, and where the spaces we're creating are part of the larger community and allow you to live and work at your potential." •

Algorithmic
Hiring and Bias

By Charlie Schmidt

If you've submitted a job application in recent years, chances are high that the first encounter in the process wasn't with a person, but with a form of artificial intelligence. According to one study, more than half of hiring managers now use predictive algorithms.

Machine-based hiring programs are used to screen and assess applicants on the basis of digital information, such as key words on resumes, performance during online games, or social media profiles. Some video-based hiring systems scrutinize facial expressions and speech patterns for clues to an applicant's temperament. Others include algorithmically scored skills assessments and questionnaires to predict job performance.

These technologies are fast and efficient and are intended to identify the most qualified candidates in a pool of applicants that can easily number in the thousands. But machine-based hiring comes with significant risks: If a hiring system's algorithms reflect the unconscious biases of its programmers, or if the technology fails to grasp nuances that human hiring personnel might bring to the table, then qualified candidates might be ruled out due to race, sex, religion, or other legally protected characteristics.

Historically, machine-learning has been the purview of computer scientists, but psychologists increasingly are involved in multidisciplinary efforts to help companies identify bias and improve these automated job-candidate screening mechanisms — and to offset some of the negative reactions to the technology from applicants and the public.

"You're really looking for hiring tools that score people according to whether they have relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the job," says Fred Oswald, PhD, a professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences at Rice University, who studies algorithmic hiring. These technologies, Oswald says, "should rest on the same three-legged stool of reliability, validity, and fairness that mattered in hiring long before big data came along."

Ann Marie Ryan, PhD, a professor of organizational psychology at Michigan State University, echoes that view. "It's when people don't know what the algorithm is scoring that they start to worry," she says. "These technologies fulfill a need for faster, cheaper hiring methods that can reach a lot of people. But we need to ensure they've been properly vetted."

Like other artificial intelligence systems, hiring algorithms "learn" from experience. Programmers start by training datasets that link high job performance and an ability to meet the needs of a given company with specific employee characteristics — which are also referred to as variables or predictors. The algorithm's machine-learning software then seeks those same variables in an applicant's digital information, becoming more proficient at selecting qualified candidates over time.

But what if the top performers in a training dataset all happen to be a specific demographic group? Researchers have long been concerned that a majority of algorithms for training machine-based learning systems rely heavily on databases of English spoken by white American males, a factor that could bias hiring systems against equally qualified applicants of different genders, race, or ethnic backgrounds.

Research indicates that hiring programs based on natural language-recognition models have clear gender bias, and speech-recognition models demonstrate large racial differences. A recent study at Stanford University, for instance, found that automated speech-recognition tools misinterpreted words spoken by African Americans almost twice as often as they did words spoken by Caucasians. This raises significant concern about potential bias against African American job applicants who might be screened with these tools.

I-O psychologists are engaged in developing more equitable algorithmic hiring practices from several vantage points, according to Nancy Tippins, PhD, an I-O psychologist in Greenville, SC, who is a consultant in the field.

Some work with the vendors who make and sell these technologies, while others work internally by advising companies doing the hiring. Workplace-based psychologists can audit an algorithm's test measures to see if they reflect relevant job competencies, and to determine whether a company's hiring practices meet the legal, Federal standards for employee selection procedures.

All forms of hiring bias are not the same, notes Betsy Shoenfelt, PhD, a professor of I-O psychology at Western Kentucky University. One area of discrimination that raises the biggest concern is disparate treatment, or intentional discrimination, against people with legally protected characteristics, such as sex, or race. An employer who intentionally discriminates might, for instance, hire women instead of men, even though both sexes are equally qualified for the job at hand.

The other type of discrimination is disparate impact, which is unintentional discrimination against a protected class. An employer in this case might, for instance, base hiring on physical reaction times, and thereby discriminate against older people or those with disabilities. Disparate impact is not necessarily illegal, assuming an employer applies it for job-related reasons; however, being familiar with the relevant nuances and how the law applies to them, an I-O psychologist can help to make sure that algorithmic test measures resulting in disparate impacts are legally defensible.

> **Automated speech-recognition tools misinterpreted words spoken by African Americans almost twice as often as they did words spoken by Caucasians.**

These are early days in algorithmic hiring, and specific standards and requirements are still being developed. One source for generally accepted practice in the field of personnel selection psychology is APA's Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures, which was updated by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology in 2018 to address aspects of machine-based hiring.
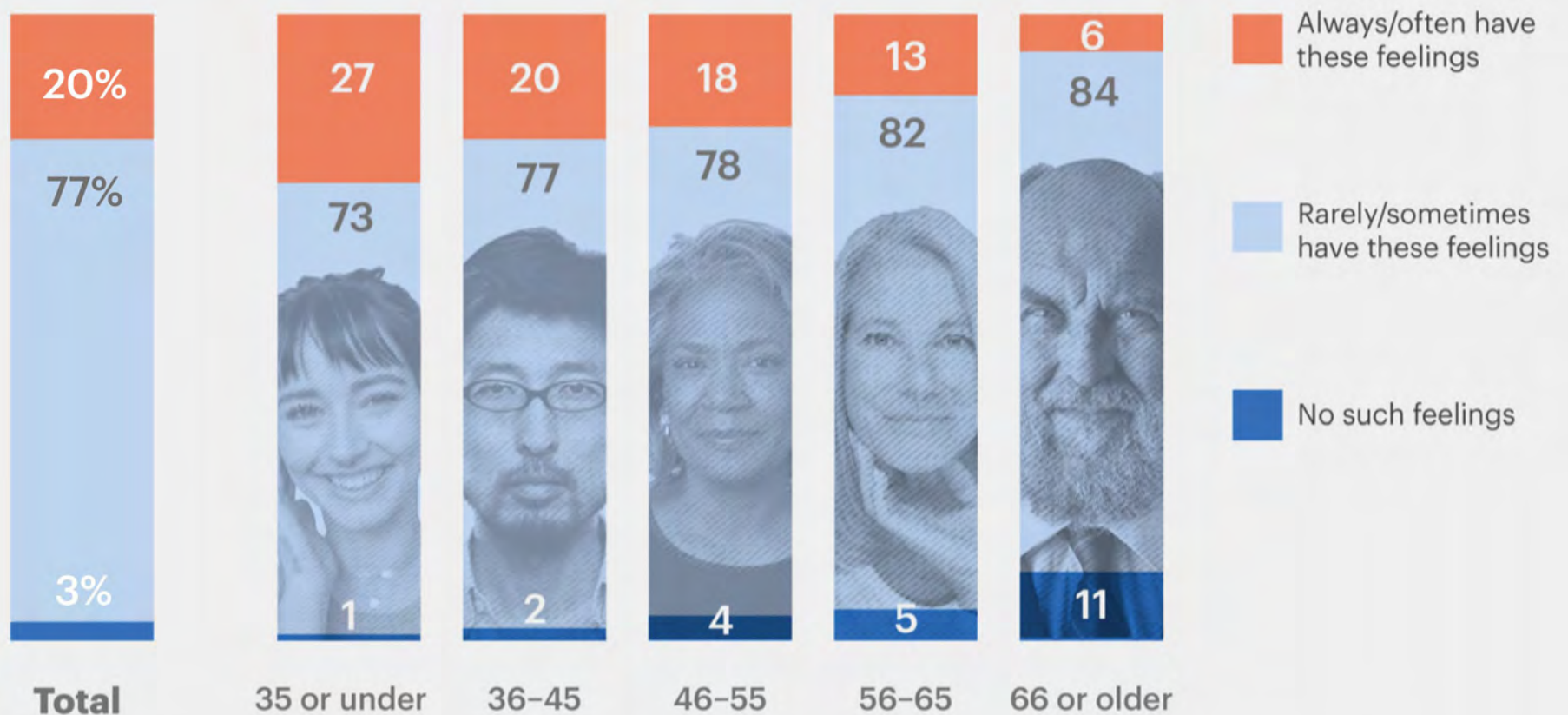
But as a discipline, psychology still has some catching up to do when it comes to assessing the reliability, validity, and possible adverse impacts from algorithmic hiring, asserted Tippins and co-authors in a newly published paper.

They argue that I-O psychologists must offer scientifically based evidence for developers and hiring managers to use when evaluating which applicants "will have a higher likelihood of good job performance" … and to address "associated ethical concerns around what information is being represented to employers and told to job candidates."

"There's been explosion in these sorts of algorithmic hiring selection procedures," Tippins says. "And as psychologists, we are ethically bound to help employers establish valid test measures and ensure they're consistently utilized." •

Mental health professionals

across the board are tired, burnt out, and in need of care themselves.

	Legend
Always/often have these feelings	(orange)
Rarely/sometimes have these feelings	(light blue)
No such feelings	(dark blue)

Total	35 or under	36–45	46–55	56–65	66 or older
20%	27	20	18	13	6
77%	73	77	78	82	84
3%	1	2	4	5	11

But some are bearing the brunt of the pandemic more than others.

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WORKPLACE
Diversity
How Psychologists Can Help Move Companies Toward a More Equitable Future

A Conversation with APA's Chief Diversity Officer, Maysa Akbar, PhD

By Katherine Lee

What does workplace diversity mean, and how can it be misconstrued?

One of the ways diversity is misconstrued in the workplace is when it's applied as a "check-the-box" category. A company might say, "Oh, we have plenty of women; we checked the diversity box." But we need to understand diversity from a holistic perspective, to recognize that it's the whole of the sum rather than just one particular piece.

Diversity means the presence and participation of people who come from different life experiences and have diverse social, personal, and intersectional identities. Intersectionality identifies advantages and disadvantages that are felt by people due to this combination of factors, so it is important to consider that diversity is multifaceted. It can encompass race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, disability, age, and even political perspective.

What factors play into the successful recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce?

Diversity works best when psychological safety has been established. For workplaces, that means not only having representation, but also being willing to listen to divergent thought processes. If people don't feel safe voicing their opinions without fear of negative consequences to themselves, their status, or career, then it's actually a greater disservice to the organization and the individual. That's when it turns into tokenism. It becomes, "Sure, I'm going to allow you and your diversity into my space, but I'm not going to allow you to speak and will be dismissive."

These are among the regular microaggressions that can make BIPOC (black, indigenous, people of color) employees dread coming into work. If this continues, eventually they will move

on from the organization. We know that lack of inclusion and psychological safety results in low levels of recruitment and retention, decreased staff engagement and performance, and poor business and financial outcomes.

Psychology has to be part of the conversation. People are not just an HR issue. Psychologists can help corporations, companies, and workplaces correctly tackle organizational transformation anchored in equity, inclusivity, and belongingness.

What are the ways that psychologists can spearhead change in the workplace?
As psychologists, we can evaluate diversity from many different areas. For instance, I'm a clinical psychologist, so I come from a perspective of individual aspects of human behavior. Industrial-organizational psychologists examine systemic approaches

to how companies can effectuate change. Then there are scientists who support workplaces with scientific approaches for implementing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) efforts. We spearhead change from many different perspectives and are a critical part of this organizational change theory.

Psychologists are trained to assess and identify the origin of the challenges and opportunities, whether done on an individual, organizational, community, or societal level. We can conduct equity audits that lead to a more accurate identification of the organizational culture to generate a targeted roadmap that will reach the goal of being a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment.

When you have good intentions that don't turn into impact, they just become meaningless ideas. That's my 2021 goal: how to turn intentionality into

How to Make Diversity a Part of Workplace DNA

Create safe spaces for BIPOC staff. Set up facilitated conversations where BIPOC members of the workforce are able to share their experiences and give them the time and space to process their pain and trauma.

Allyship engagement and training. If the company is truly committed to changing, it's not just the responsibility of the BIPOC workforce to create change; it's the responsibility of the workplace to commit to allyship and teach the workforce why allies need to be active participants in this process. Training should be understood as only being a piece of the puzzle, not the entire puzzle. It needs to be individualized to the company culture and processed through organizational change in order to make the training effective, and to successfully instill the principles of, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

Shore up the support structure for BIPOC talent. It's important that companies and workplaces evaluate their infrastructure, including: whether policy manuals are inclusive; if HR protocols are equitable; if pipelines of leadership embrace EDI; and what the procedures are for attracting diverse talent. If those things haven't been considered, then it will not only be very difficult to attract that talent but also to keep them.

Create a EDI strategy that will begin a journey of change. Psychologists can help people understand that instilling diversity is not accomplished through a one-time statement or training session. It's an ongoing process.

impact? With insight comes responsibility. Psychologists are the stewards of that responsibility and we are the drivers of that impact.

What are the benefits of workplace diversity for a company or organization?
Research suggests unequivocally that having a diverse workforce increases productivity, problem-solving, agility, innovation, and financial growth. The more diverse the workforce, the better you see performance in these areas. It's an essential element. [A recent international study by the Boston Consulting Group of 1,700 companies of varying industries and sizes found that increasing the diversity of leadership teams was associated with increased innovation and revenue.]

As society and consumers are becoming much more diverse, so must workplaces. In the last few years, companies that found themselves in public relations issues for cultural appropriation or insensitivity are likely those that didn't have diverse voices around the table when a product was going to market. When you don't have diversity, you can be blindsided. Simply, you don't know what you don't know.

What is the role of academia – particularly psychology teaching and research – in pushing forward diversity discussions and policy changes at higher education institutions and beyond?
EDI efforts and initiatives are really taking off in higher education as a whole, because leaders there recognize the importance of embedding EDI in the education and training of students and postdocs, to foster the full inclusion and safe engagement of all. Psychology learning institutions are playing an espe-

cially important role in preparing the discipline for the future, because as psychologists, we have an ethical responsibility to acknowledge, evaluate, and reconstruct existing systems, structures, policies, and practices that lead to inequitable outcomes for vulnerable or historically marginalized communities.

Also, APA is actively engaged in partnerships with psychology learning institutions on EDI initiatives, including expanding education pathways for underrepresented doctoral students; providing funding for graduate students conducting diversity-focused research; and offering resources and support for LGBTQ-plus students navigating graduate training.

What are some of your short-term and long-term goals in your role as chief diversity officer at APA? What do you hope to see in the world at large?
We are working to make sure that every aspect of APA will be anchored in EDI, whether we're talking about science, advocacy, education, or practice — any of the areas covered by our association. Long term, we are looking at the many different ways our field can continue to contribute to workplace equity.

On a broader level, I'm very hopeful about this generation. I'm the mom of a teen and a young adult, and the way that they are engaged in advocacy and their awareness is amazing. Young people today are relentless in their pursuit of making the world a better place and they're not afraid to register to vote, mobilize others to engage in activism, and to speak their truth. I'm inspired by our young people and am in awe of their tenacity and grit. There is a changing world that is coming and I'm just ecstatic to be around to see that change. ●

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  University of California at Berkeley

- **Rosemary Luckin, PhD**
  UCL Knowledge Lab

- **Tsedal Neeley, PhD**
  Harvard Business School

- **Frank Pasquale, JD**
  Brooklyn Law School

Organizational behavior guru Tsedal Neeley, PhD, always knew workplaces would become virtualized. She just didn't realize how quickly.

"What COVID-19 and the remote work revolution has done is to accelerate digital advancements and our shared norms that incorporate virtuality," says Neeley, the Naylor Fitzhugh Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School. "Now, we need to catch up in terms of competence, systems, structures, and processes."

Neeley, an award-winning scholar and expert on virtual and global work, will be a keynote speaker at APA's Technology, Mind & Society (TMS) Virtual Conference, being held November 3-5, 2021. This premier interdisciplinary venue covers emerging research and innovation on the dynamics of human-technology interaction.

"People want to know definitively, 'What will my collaborations look like? What will my schedule look like? How will I lead or be led? How do I measure performance?' None of these things are going to be pulled out of the air. They are all evidence-based practices that have been around for a very long time. The difference today is that we all have to learn them at scale."

Neeley

The TMS Virtual Conference will also feature keynote addresses on subjects including Artificial Intelligence (AI), model-building and social learning, and machine learning.

Learn more about TMS and register.

Unexpected Benefits of Psychology Research during COVID–19

The pandemic and subsequent lock-downs caused widespread disruptions in scientific research. On average, institutions reported that 67 percent of their STEM research was delayed or discontinued, according to a study conducted by the research organization NORC at the University of Chicago. To keep from falling behind or losing data collection midstream, many scientists had to adapt their research methodology and measures to remote models, or switch projects to data analysis or meta reviews.

Several research psychologists at different career stages shared some of the ways they innovated during the pandemic in an APA member webinar on "Adapting your research methods in response to COVID-19." Among them, was Kimberly Balsam, PhD, a psychology professor and chair of her department at Palo Alto University, who runs a lab on the Research on Intersectional Sexual and Gender Identity Experiences (RISE Lab).

For safety reasons, her research group needed to switch from in-person qualitative data collection to online research during the pandemic, a transition that yielded unseen benefits, she says. "We experimented with doing video-based and text-based focus groups," says Balsam. "It actually ended up being more accessible and inclusive to people with a range of different identities and experiences when you open it up this way."

The new approaches required a bit of trial-and-error, she noted, including setting up systems to monitor the flow of conversation to know when individuals had finished speaking. In addition to a range of technical issues, Balsam cited privacy concerns: "A lot of people live with other people ... they may not necessarily have the privacy to be participating in a focus group."

Once they got the proper technology and protocols in place, however, Balsam said they soon realized that online interviewing actually extended the range of what they could do: "This has been an unexpectedly productive way to gather qualitative data which reduces the social performance demands, commuting demands, and time demands on participants and actually leads to fruitful interviews," she said.

"Because we started studying gender and sexual minority people in Fall 2019, and had asked permission to recontact them,

we have been able to survey them twice during COVID and are now able to see changes over time. This has really made me value longitudinal panel research with marginalized populations … and its potential to illuminate the impact of societal events.

"As for what will remain after COVID, I think my lab meetings will continue to be online; it reduces the commute for students who are on practicum or internship. I also will continue to conduct qualitative focus groups and interviews online and leave room for late-breaking events that may warrant additional questions added to a study, knowing that I may need to do a last-minute IRB application to make these changes."

Mary Fernandes is a clinical neuropsychology PhD candidate at Georgia State University who was in the process of beginning her data collection for her dissertation when the pandemic hit.

Originally, her plan was to conduct in-person neuropsychological assessments on individuals with Cushing's disease. She'd started recruiting and scheduling participants but about a week into it, everything shut down. Weeks turned to months. She started to think of alternatives. "Could I answer the same questions I found important, but actually get more context around it and maybe even give back to my participants in a way that I might not have thought of before?" asked Fernandes.

She devised a plan B, which was to perform computerized testing on individuals with Cushing's disease. She was surprised with how quickly the university approved her modified study. "It was record speed turnaround time. We got it back within a month," she said. "There's definitely been a lot of speedy adaptations being made by universities to try and adapt to what's going on."

Remote Data-Collection Research Tips

Evaluate research goals. Can it be adapted for online or social distancing? If so, how does that change the scientific questions that you're trying to answer with this study? Is there a way to leverage current events to enhance the project, either to enhance recruitment or enhance what you're trying to do with the project?

Adapt measures. Think critically and flexibly about inclusion of measures and consider, when appropriate, adapting or adding measures that capture experiences of current events when conducting psychological research. This allows researchers to collect empirical information about what's going on for participants, and also helps participants feel validated.

Recruit participants wisely. Be a technical troubleshooter. Know how to open a PDF online consent form and sign it. Also, participants have consistently been gracious and thankful for follow-ups. But don't send more than one follow-up every one or two weeks.

Consider compensation. Think hard about the purpose of your research. Are you asking people questions just to get something else on your CV? How are you going to give back to these [participants] you're sampling from?

Advertise carefully. Be mindful on social media, your lab's web page or any other places that you have a web presence, because people are just a click away and they're going to be looking you up and trying to figure out, "Who are these people?"

Delineate time parameters. Positionality is going to inform every stage of your research. We were interpreting the data from April 2020 through the eyes of people in May or June, which was a quite different situation than April was, says Balsam.

Consider alternatives to data collection. There are a number of free and open databases that are available so make sure you're looking out for those or even just [doing a web search] to see if there are repositories that you can access that are free. You might also consider contacting researchers in your specific field.

Form collaborations. It's a great opportunity right now to collaborate with other people since we're all interacting online.

Be culturally relevant. Make sure that whatever you do, you interpret in the social context in which you collected the data.

Stay connected. Connect with other researchers in your subfield to share research experiences and suggestions in real time. Twitter and professional Listservs or Google groups are excellent ways to learn how others are adapting their research against the backdrop of social and public health crises.

Fernandes's modified plan did include in-person neuropsychological assessments when finally deemed safe to do so. "This will give us some idea or some perspective for how the online measures that we've been administering maps onto some already validated and well established in-person tests," she said.

For post-docs moving forward with post-pandemic research, Fernandes said: "I envision my work, and that of many researchers and neuropsychologists, taking on some hybrid of in-person and telehealth/digital approaches moving forward. The increased access, retention, and cost savings that digital neuropsychology offered me was tremendous. And at the same time, there's an assumed baseline of comfort or digital literacy that comes with using technology alone.

"To maintain some of the benefits of digital neuropsychology and also be sensitive to the groups of people who might be marginalized by a digital-only approach (e.g., those without broadband, sufficient technology knowledge, etc.), I plan to utilize digital and in-person services flexibly, depending on the patient/participant and the goal of the research." •

COVID–19 Impact on Graduate STEM Programs

The abrupt switch to fully online learning caused many disruptions on college and university campuses around the globe, such as adjusting to remote work/learning, hiring freezes, financial struggles, closing labs, and the resultant faculty/student stress and burnout.

In January 2021, the research organization NORC, at the University of Chicago, published data collected from graduate deans at 208 leading institutions awarding graduate degrees in STEM fields to measure the impact of COVID-19 on their programs, and to evaluate what the future may look like.

94% Anticipate increasing classes offered in a **hybrid format**

54% Anticipate **expanding graduate programs** offered solely online

67% Expect to make **budget cuts** to their graduate school or programs

55% Anticipate **fewer academic jobs** for PhD students

Psychology Faculty Feel the Post-Pandemic Freeze

Non-tenure-track teaching faculty saw largest decrease in psychology faculty size in the wake of the pandemic

In the wake of COVID-19, psychology faculty size has shrunk during the 2020–21 academic year in most types of institutions — especially for non-tenure-track teaching faculty, according to a recently published Faculty in Higher Education Survey published by the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR).
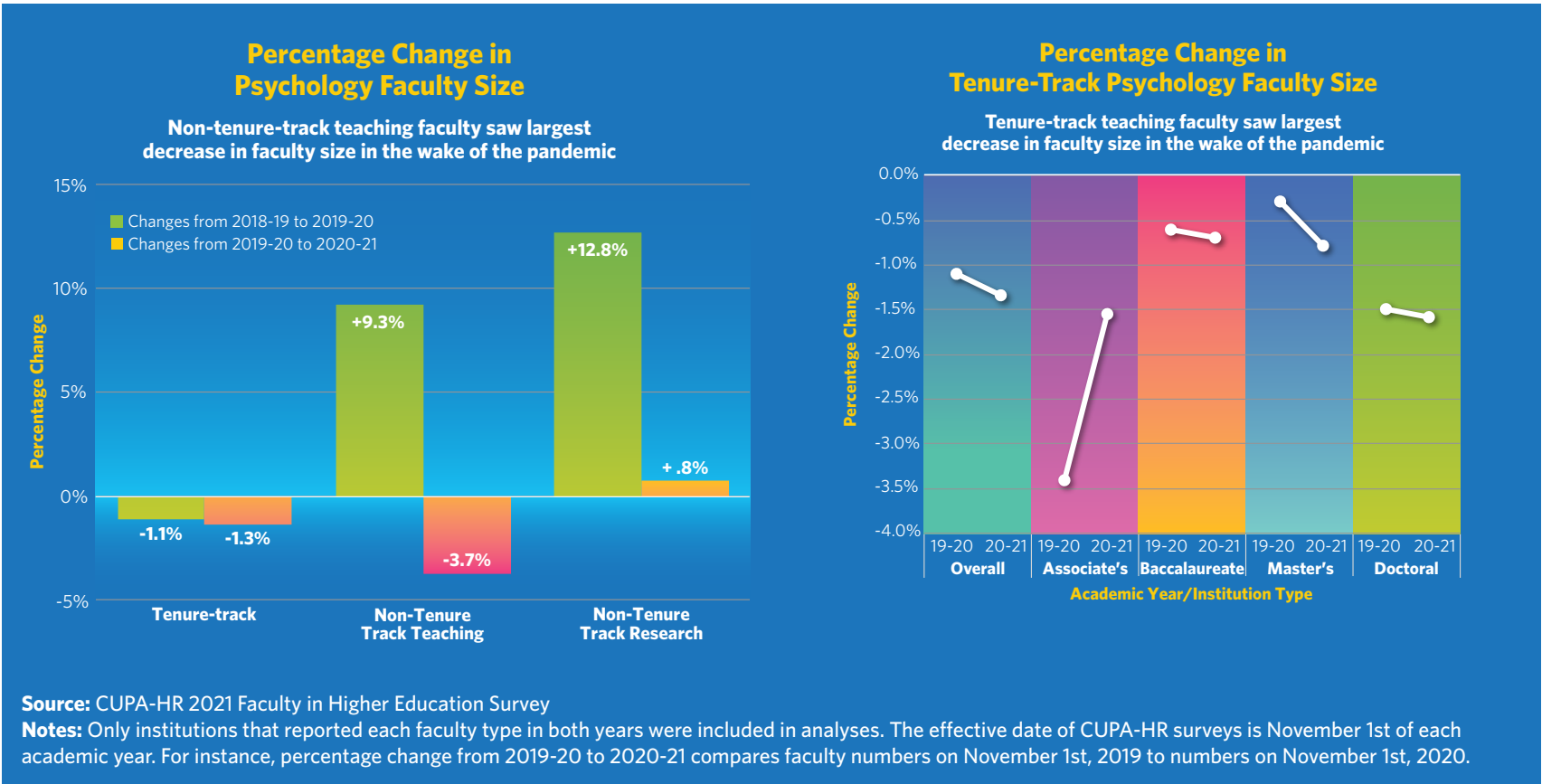
Prior to the pandemic (2019–20 academic year), there was an increase in non-tenure-track faculty across all types of institutions — 12.8% for non-tenure-track teaching faculty and 9.3% for non-tenure-track research faculty. In the 2020–21 academic year, however, non-tenure-track teaching faculty saw a reduction of 3.7% in workforce, whereas non-tenure-track research faculty only increased by 0.8%.

Across all types of institutions, tenure-track psychology faculty size has decreased more in the 2020–21 academic year (1.3%) than its decrease before the pandemic (1.1% in the 2019–20 academic year). Most types of institutions saw consistent decreases in tenure-track psychology faculty other than associate's institutions, which experienced a smaller decrease in tenure-track psychology faculty in the 2020–21 academic year (1.5%) than the previous year (3.4%).

These trends were echoed in varying degrees across many disciplines; the CUPA-HR report showed an overall decrease in faculty size for all faculty types in the 2020–21 academic year.

The 2021 CUPA-HR Faculty in Higher Education Survey collected data from approximately 800 higher education institutions on more than 260,000 full-time faculty (tenure track and non-tenure track), as well as academic department heads/chairs and adjunct (pay-per-course) faculty. ▪

Percentage Change in Psychology Faculty Size

Non-tenure-track teaching faculty saw largest decrease in faculty size in the wake of the pandemic

- Changes from 2018-19 to 2019-20
- Changes from 2019-20 to 2020-21

Tenure-track: -1.1%, -1.3%
Non-Tenure Track Teaching: +9.3%, -3.7%
Non-Tenure Track Research: +12.8%, +.8%

Percentage Change in Tenure-Track Psychology Faculty Size

Tenure-track teaching faculty saw largest decrease in faculty size in the wake of the pandemic

Academic Year/Institution Type: Overall, Associate's, Baccalaureate, Master's, Doctoral (19-20, 20-21)

Source: CUPA-HR 2021 Faculty in Higher Education Survey
Notes: Only institutions that reported each faculty type in both years were included in analyses. The effective date of CUPA-HR surveys is November 1st of each academic year. For instance, percentage change from 2019-20 to 2020-21 compares faculty numbers on November 1st, 2019 to numbers on November 1st, 2020.

Advice from the Frontlines of Recruiting

It can be an uphill battle for newly minted psychologists to secure work. Despite a growing unmet need for psychologists nationwide, landing that first job is sometimes tricky.

Daniel Neuer knows this landscape better than most. While studying for an MA in industrial-organizational psychology at Seattle Pacific University, he was hired as a recruiting coordinator for Amazon. His role is to lead job candidates through the recruiting pipeline — from initial inquiry to actual onboarding.

Neuer was recruited to recruiting by a recruiter. During a recent APA member webinar, he offered some personal advice to new psychology graduates looking to enter the field of recruiting. He also shared on-the-ground strategies for all job hunters about acing job interviews, building a great work narrative, honing job skills, and more.

Be a problem-solver

In my world as a recruiting coordinator, effective problem-solving skills is the name of the game. I didn't feel fully prepared through my education to solve real-world problems, but the last two years have forced me to either solve my problems now or just fold: I entered graduate school full-time right before the pandemic hit, worked full-time, got laid off, then got a new job at Amazon full-time while balancing a part-time research position.

How I solved my problems was by practicing time management, getting comfortable dealing with ambiguity, being able to make a decision without having all the information available, and committing to action in all the work areas of my life.

I couldn't have done any of this on my own. I had support from my partner and from my peers in both my professional and personal life. I asked for their feedback on how I was doing and feeling, and their support has been extremely critical to solving problems.

Your network is your net worth

Networking is going to be the most effective tool at your disposal in job hunting. LinkedIn is a great tool to find people who are in positions you want. See if you can get a warm introduction from a mutual connection and then engage the person of interest with authenticity and curiosity about how they achieved the position they're in. And if they are willing to introduce you to other people, that might open up so many opportunities that aren't open to the public yet.

Second, I would consider joining your local chapter of the Association for Talent Development. Also, joining Society of Human Resource Management, and Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychologists (SIOP). All of these communities have incredible networking, informational, and developmental resources for your career.

And in your current role, seek and volunteer for opportunities that are HR- or staffing-related. Ask to write drafts or support projects related to recruiting individuals. If you aren't sure where recruiting is being done, start with your organization's HR team.

Understand the pipeline

Recruiting is definitely a rather linear pathway for someone just starting out. It's a matter of getting experience under your belt, finding that opportunity, and remaining committed and developing tenure. Oftentimes, there are agencies, usually staffing agencies, who are trying to get more recruiters in and are willing to hire people who might not have any recruiting experience.

Recruiting coordinator is your guaranteed entry level spot, then you would go up to a recruiter, then higher to a senior recruiter or a technical recruiter, where you're sourcing people for very specific types of roles. Executive recruiting is something that's in a specific vein, or you can go down the managerial path. You'll definitely be tapping into that psychology background of managing people and managing recruiting processes with other people and stakeholders, which ultimately could take you to being a manager, director, VP, and so on from there.

Know your body of work

For face-to-face interviews in general, I'd like to give some advice that also works in a virtual setting, which is the huge importance of body language. It's going to be really important as we transition back between virtual to in-person interviews. How you carry yourself; looking the person in the eye; making sure you are pausing; not talking too much; really being able to embrace silence when needed; and being comfortable to ask to repeat a question. These all are so important in job interviews. We understand that you're nervous. It's an interview. It's not supposed to be easy.

In terms of delivering on an interview, I always suggest that people to look at what's called the PARs method of answering questions: problem, action, and results. Be able to compact experiences in your current life: in your work and volunteer life, and student life if you're early in your career. Package your experiences to create a narrative that shows the results that you're able to contribute. Start learning how to create your own stories.

Be kind to yourself

To those who are earlier in your career I just want to say, please don't despair, and please treat yourself with care. This past year has been so difficult for everyone: the job market became extremely volatile, and we had the worst unemployment rates we've seen in a long time. Looking for another job or trying to break into an industry, especially for the first time, is exhausting.

Don't burn yourself out. Be strategic and intentional with how you apply for jobs. Rather than applying for as many recruiting roles as you can, put more effort into building relationships with recruiters, learning who hiring managers are, and establishing yourself as someone who's different. Be authentic, be yourself, and I believe that you will land somewhere that makes you happy. ∎

Health Practices Must Enable the Hyper-Convenience Mode of Living!

As lives get even busier and more mobile, people want smarter ways of maximising their time. To stay relevant, health practices must fit seamlessly into people's on-the-move lives and facilitate service, ensures safety, and drives efficiency for the patient.

During the pandemic, many health practices and clinics used the downtime to evolve and keep up with changing patient expectations for speed and safety. Moving from a paper-dependent practice to electronic health records with self-service online tools was a big success for many practices. Their digital transformation enabled practitioners to exchange information with one another remotely and in real time, making sure everyone working with a patient has a complete and accurate file.

Co-founded by psychologist Damien Adler, Power Diary has a goal to empower practice owners and their teams with business-ready, all-in-one software that makes running a health practice simpler. With tools to manage schedules, appointment reminders, client databases, waiting lists, invoicing, online bookings, SMS chat, and Telehealth you can store all the information your practice needs securely online.

Affordable and easy-to-use, it's perfect for solo-practitioners and multi-location clinics. Power Diary's automation tools will make running a health practice easier, and help you provide a fuss-free experience for the patient. Isn't that what we practitioners strive to do?

powerdiary

Simplify, Automate, and Grow Your Business

Power Diary's online business management tools has everything you need to streamline your practice's operations – calendar management, SMS messaging, invoicing, Telehealth and more. Start now with a free trial. No credit card needed.

★★★★★ Loved and trusted by health professionals worldwide

powerdiary.com

Forge Ahead with APA Leadership Essentials

Creative, energized leadership is essential in forging a positive path forward in the post-pandemic workplace and APA can help. Here are some convenient APA resources to help psychologists hone their leadership skills — and some psychologically based leadership trainings to help organizations and whole communities thrive.

Center for Creative Leadership

APA is partnering with the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) to bring research-based, experiential leadership training to leaders of all ranks and communities. Their July 20, 2021 training, "Leading Through the Lens of Polarity Thinking," introduces a mapping tool designed to help an individual think through ideas within various polarities so that they can effectively manage individuals, teams, or organizational challenges. The program is led by top leadership experts and will be repeated later in the year.

Upcoming 2021 APA-CCL sessions include:

- Feedback That Works, Sept. 16, 2021, 1-2 pm, ET
- Direction, Alignment, Commitment, Oct. 21, 1-2 pm, ET
- Leading Through the Lens of Polarity Thinking, Nov. 9, 1-2 pm, ET

Register for CCL workshops now; space is limited.

Emerging Leadership Academy

APA sponsors an Emerging Leadership Academy designed to give psychologists at every career stage the skills needed to successfully transition into a leadership role. The 11-series, interactive webinars — which are approved for continuing-education credit — are based on psychological science that examines leadership principles and helps individuals determine how to personalize them to their own leadership style. This year's academy focuses on "Leadership During Challenging Times: Disruption, Transition, and Innovation."

Webinars are available for purchase on-demand at APA Emerging Leadership Academy. Students and APA members receive a tuition discount.

Boards and Committees

Discover how you can hone your leadership skills by serving on one of APA's 30 boards and committees, or through APA's 54 Divisions. Read more. ●

The Post-Pandemic Pivot:
Retooling Therapeutic Practice

People will need mental health support more than ever, and there are many pathways for clinical and counseling psychologists to meet the need and expand their practices in the process.

By Charlotte Huff

Coping with a remote work life. Navigating the grieving process. Reengaging with the wider world after months of living in near isolation. Addressing the critical mental health needs of older adults.

As Americans emerge from more than year of pandemic, its emotional ripple effects are still being studied and understood. According to APA's Stress in America™ poll, 31% of adults reported worsening mental health since the pandemic began, and nearly half of mothers with children studying remotely at home reported deteriorating mental health. Three-quarters of essential workers said they could have used more emotional support than they received since the pandemic began.

While COVID-19 vastly increased demand for mental health services, the transitional phase to post-lockdown life is also providing opportunities for counseling and clinical psychologists to expand their expertise and client mix to meet new emotional demands and new work-life paradigms.

Research scientists will be studying the impacts of COVID-19 on workers and workplaces for years to come, and will be critical in developing evidence-based roadmaps for moving forward.

Psychologists have been trained in a broad range of skills that can be applied outside of traditional settings, including a grounding in human nature, communications, and evidence-based practice, among other areas, said Daniel Wendler, PsyD, a postdoctoral fellow in Austin, Texas who founded the organization Marketing for Therapists.

As psychologists contemplate their next steps, said Wendler, they should reflect on those skill sets "then expand upon that thought process and say, `What are the needs that are out there? Where are the places that I can fit in and I can make a difference?'"

Even prior to the pandemic, adaptability was a sought after trait in psychologists and figured as the most commonly cited skills need in job ads, according to a jobs report by APA's Center for Workforce Studies (CWS).

"Being adaptable in the face of change; being flexible; being able to learn new things; psychologists who can harness those skills will have an advantage going forward," said Karen Stamm, PhD, who directs the center.

That flexibility, she said, will serve them well beyond the immediate aftermath of the pandemic because they are skills that rely on human interactions and thus cannot be completely outsourced to artificial intelligence. Additionally, psychologists who can quickly learn new technological tools will hold an advantage, such as those who have adjusted to the abrupt shift to video therapy or online teaching and advising, Stamm said.

By September of 2020, 96% of clinical and counseling psychologists were treating at least some patients remotely and two-thirds were providing remote therapy only, according to APA's Telehealth Practitioner Survey. "That might have been a change that was coming along more gradually," Stamm said. "But the pandemic accelerated it so that we had no other choice."

Expanding your expertise

The changing world of work gives psychologists a fresh perspective on where their skills are needed, Stamm said. For instance, counseling psychologists can expand their practices to include some vocational counseling, helping individuals to figure out their work life and career future amid a rapidly shifting economy.

"With high rates of unemployment and with some jobs that have gone away and are probably not coming back," Stamm said, "I'm convinced that some of these changes are going to stick. How do you help people navigate an ever-changing workplace?"

Depending upon their interests, psychologists can pursue continuing education or additional training, pick up a part-time job working with vulnerable populations, or create a side business which stems from a long-held passion.
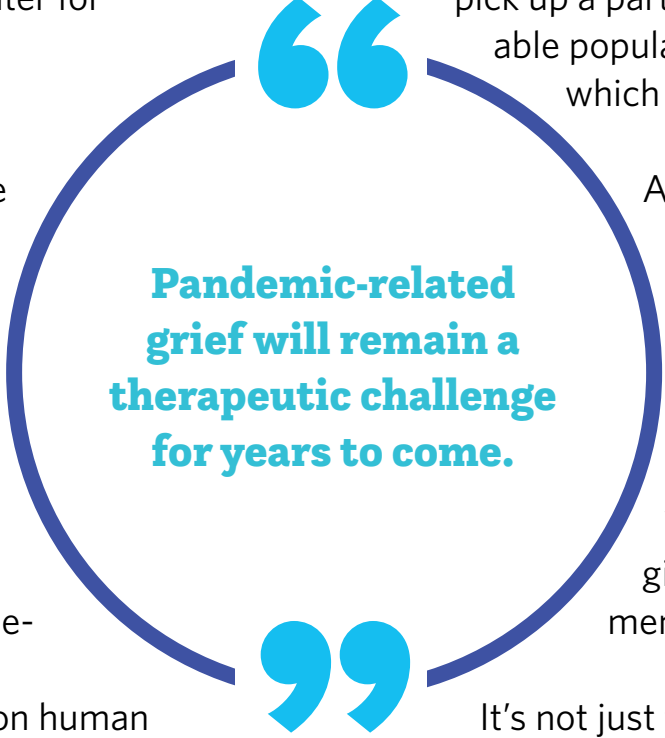
A psychologist who enjoys working with older adults, for instance, may contract with long-term care facilities, which frequently are searching for skilled therapists, said Eleanor Feldman Barbera, PhD, a New York City counseling psychologist who specializes in aging and mental health issues.

It's not just the patients who may need more support, but also the clinicians and family members who have been barred from visiting, she said. "There are people who haven't been able to see their loved ones on a regular basis for this whole time," she said. "I would say there are a lot of people hurting out there."

Venturing into new markets needn't come at the expense of traditional practice. Psychologists with a private practice can still work part-time at an assisted living facility while maintaining a regular schedule, Barbera said. To acquire expertise, she suggested taking continuing education courses in working with older adults or a course about working in a broader clinical team. As part of her own training, Barbera took a course in thanatology, learning about issues related to dying.

Helping with grief relief

With more than 525,000 COVID–19 related deaths in the U.S. at present count, issues around loss and grieving are widespread and often have untold permeations. One analysis found that a single COVID–19 death could leave behind nine bereaved

> **Pandemic-related grief will remain a therapeutic challenge for years to come.**

family members, which is well above 5 million impacted Americans.

Pandemic-related grief will remain a therapeutic challenge for years to come, with a vital need for more psychologists with specialized knowledge, said Robert Neimeyer, PhD, who directs the Portland Institute for Loss and Transition (PILT). His institute offers a certification in grief therapy, while the Association for Death Education and Counseling offers certification in thanatology.

Along with working with grieving patients in private practice, psychologists can contract with hospitals or other healthcare entities, Neimeyer said.

"This is an enormous kind of death toll," he said. "It's not surprising that under these heavily complicated circumstances that people are going to struggle. There is no shortage of opportunity to practice skills related to grief work."

Creating a side income

The key to establishing a side income is to reflect on where you can apply your innate skills to a pressing need in the post-pandemic world, said Wendler, who presented detailed suggestions for doing so during an APA webinar, "Generating a Side Income as a Psychologist." For instance, he said, "I think one of the major areas of opportunities I see is going to be related to the loneliness that a lot of people have experienced over this year of pandemic living."

Psychologists who facilitate groups can look for ways to bridge that gulf by developing more structured opportunities to gather, such as a twist on speed dating events but with the focus on making

friends, Wendler said. Or they can create an online course focused on how someone reconstructs their social life post-pandemic.

Another timely area for clinical and counseling psychologists is to use their skills to assist employers that decide to move permanently to a more remote workforce. Those leaders will have to cope with related corporate culture issues, including how to retain strong leadership and interpersonal connections when employees rarely gather in the same room, Wendler said.

Psychologists can start small in developing new services while they continue with their practice, Wendler said. He suggests beginning by doing consulting work in a particular area, providing some content gratis, such as writing guest articles for blogs or publications, creating a website, perhaps uploading some informational videos. Step by step, psychologists can demonstrate expertise for when they later market to potential clients, he said.

In the process, psychologists will figure out if they have an entrepreneurial bent, and whether they have tapped into a marketable concept, Wendler said. "The one thing that is nice about the side business is that you can choose to scale it to the level that you want."

On the flip side, Wendler also cautioned that psychologists should "be conservative with your credentials. What I mean by that is that your psychology credentials qualify you to be an expert in certain areas, but not in other areas. You don't want to … claim expertise in an area that doesn't actually have to do with psychology." ●

Nourish to Flourish:
How to Beat Burnout

Burnout is an occupational hazard for psychologists for many reasons, but the meteoric demand for mental health services during the pandemic put burnout issues on the front burner for many providers.

Many psychologists felt the squeeze to bump up hours and caseloads; adjust to telehealth options; and deal with clients who were coping with profound stresses and losses. Clinicians had the added anxiety of working in environments where they were more likely to be exposed to the virus, and the added strain of providing support to medical co-workers.

The academic scientific workforce had the double burden of switching to teaching and advising online, and revamping or discontinuing animal-based or in-person human research. One survey of faculty at higher education institutions showed that more than half considered retiring or changing fields as a result of COVID–19 related burnout.

Are you in danger of burnout? Take a scan of symptoms and coping strategies, from "Battling Burnout in the COVID-19 Era," a CME webinar co-sponsored by APA in 2020.

Symptoms of Burnout	Strategies for Resilience
COGNITION • Mistakes in routine tasks. • Less adherence to work communications. • Reduced productivity. • Inability to concentrate.	• Increase supervision, consultation and collegial support. • If working in a team, develop flexible schedules. • Diversify caseloads to work with different client profiles. • Do documentation tasks from home.
EMOTIONAL • Compassion fatigue. • Increased interpersonal conflict and irritability. • Feelings of anxiety, sadness or depression. • Worrying about not doing enough for clients. • Feelings of isolation and hopelessness. • Taking on patients' emotional distress.	• Focus on what's in your control. • Resist comparing yourself to others. • Take brief relaxation breaks. • Avoid thinking you are the only person who can do things, and ask for help. • Create a work village by establishing partnerships or teams.
BEHAVIORAL • Overworking. • Withdrawing from loved ones. • Increased substance use. • Chronic absenteeism. • Desire to quit position or change specialty. • Losing interest in activities you used to enjoy.	• Identify what self-care activities work for you and schedule intentional time for them. • Take mental health breaks with phone apps such as Provider Resilience, Calm, Headspace, and Breathe2Relax. • Schedule regular time off. Avoid making big life changes.
PHYSICAL • Back pain and muscle tension. Headaches. • Changes in appetite or digestion. • Losing sleep over patients.	• Normalize regular stretch breaks. • Don't eat in front of your computer. • Time-outs for basic bodily care and refreshment. • Make soothing environmental modifications, such as soft lighting, aromatherapy, relaxing sounds.

THE FUTURE OF
Telepsychology

By Katherine Lee

Almost overnight, COVID-19 forced the mental healthcare community to connect with clients online, and psychologists were among those who quickly rolled up their sleeves to revamp practice.

An astounding 96% of psychologists reported that they treated patients remotely during the pandemic, according to APA's "COVID-19 Telehealth Practitioner Survey."

But don't expect to hang up your Zoom hat anytime soon. Another study showed that psychologists are projecting that almost 35% of their practice will occur via telepsychology after it is safe to return to in-person work.

"I think we'll see some decline in the use of telehealth service delivery," says Carly McCord, PhD, director of telebehavioral care and clinical assistant professor at Texas A&M University. "But I don't think we'll go back to pre-pandemic levels. Most care providers will probably do a hybrid practice."

So, what can providers expect in a hybrid treatment environment? Experts predict continuing regulatory and reimbursement challenges associated with telepsychology, even as providers get more comfortable with the technological aspects.

Visit APA's Practice Resources page for timely updates on advocacy, reimbursement and licensing/regulatory issues affecting psychology practice during this public health emergency, and stay up-to-date on remote practice with APA's comprehensive resources and CE courses on telemental health.

The platform dive

The scale-up was a lot less painful for those already offering remote services, notes Nicole Owings-Fonner, MA, director of operations and innovation at APA's Office of Health Care Innovation.

"Those who were new to telepsychology had to figure out how to find and use a platform that is HIPAA-compliant and secure and put in place policies and procedures for using those platforms and those methods with their patients," she says, adding: "And they had to feel savvy and comfortable enough with the technology to be able to explain to a patient how to use it."

Providers also struggled with patients' internet access or connectivity, tech literacy, and privacy, according to the APA telehealth study.

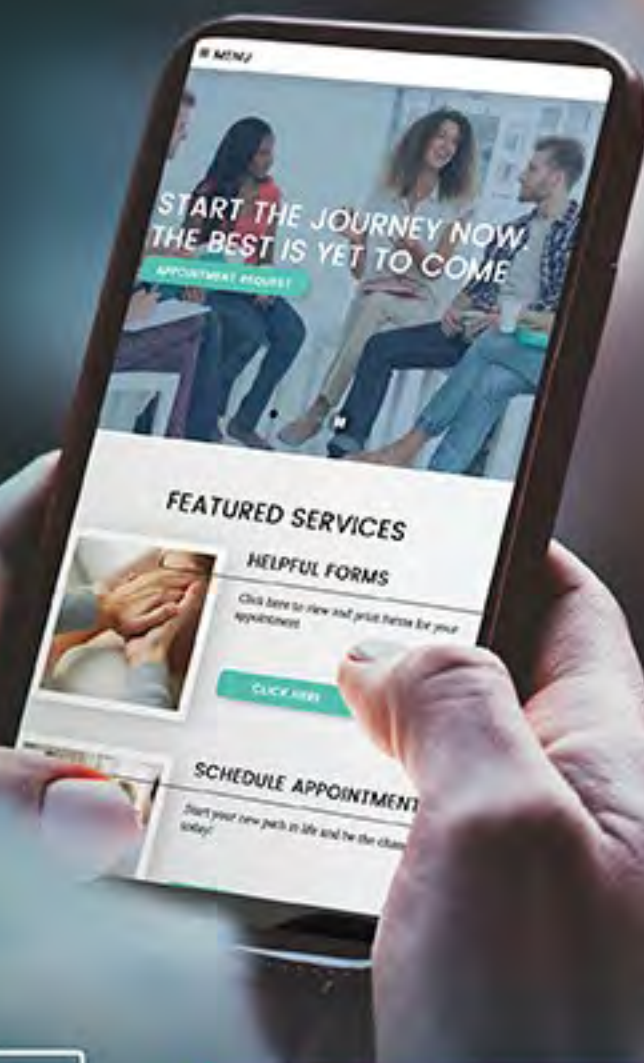Some mental health professionals took advantage of a temporary waiver of HIPAA requirements that allowed them to provide services via popular applications for video chats, including Apple FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, and Facebook Messenger without fear of penalty for using a non-HIPAA compliant platform. But those convenience still come with specific responsibilities, says Owings-Fonner.

"Unfortunately, it isn't quite as easy as choosing a HIPAA-compliant platform and then forgetting about what else you need to do," she says. "The burden falls on providers to make sure we are using the platform in a HIPAA-compliant way."

"Telehealth can make connecting with patients as easy as clicking a few buttons on your smartphone. It may be tempting to reach out to patients via text or email to follow up on a visit. But doing so, and potentially sharing private health information (PHI) in an unsecured manner, is a HIPAA violation," she said during a recent APA CE course on "Telehealth, Interstate Practice & Technology."

APA does not endorse any particular video platform, notes Owings-Fonner, but it does recommend that members consider using one that is HIPAA compliant (such as Zoom for Healthcare, Updox; GoToMeeting; or Doxy.me), since waivers are not always going to be in place and it's in the patient's best interest to do so.

Licensing and reimbursement issues
Psychologists also got some help when states issued emergency temporary licensing waivers during COVID-19. Moving forward, providers should be extra watchful about licensing issues, notes Owings-Fonner.

"If you're seeing a client who's in another state, you need to know what the current regulations are in that state," she says. (To find out what's happening in your state and your patient's state, read APA's Telehealth guidance by state during COVID.)

Providers who want to continue to administer care across state lines should familiarize themselves with PSYPACT, a multi-state licensing compact that requires a state to adopt legislation to

join so that psychologists in a PSYPACT state can provide services (either telehealth or temporary, in-person services) to patients in other PSYPACT states.

"Momentum has really grown. Twenty-four states are currently participating," says Owings-Fonner. (Read an APA article about FAQs on practicing telehealth in another state.)

As for reimbursement, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services made an exception during the pandemic allowing reimbursement for telemedicine visits at the same rate as in-person visits. But traditionally, many third-party payors, whether it be Medicare or private insurance, pay providers for telehealth services at a lower rate than in-person services.

"Psychologists who were providing telehealth to Medicare beneficiaries before COVID would know that the rate is different," says Owings-Fonner, "but those who weren't are probably going to be surprised if things go back to pre-COVID telehealth policies because there's a good chance that their payment is going to drop."

APA is continuing to advocate that telemedicine services be reimbursed at the same rate as in-person services beyond the pandemic. Additionally, APA's legislative arm joined with other provider organizations to urge lawmakers to postpone a variety of scheduled Medicare payment reductions and to boost funding to support the nation's health care infrastructure as a whole, as we come to terms with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hopping the training train

The fast pivot to online services occurred before many psychologists had standardized training in the use of video platforms and telepsychology methodology, notes McCord, who recently authored a study providing a consolidated model for telepsychology practice. "It wasn't feasible to set up requirements and training in the middle of the public health crisis," she says.

Nonetheless, many professional psychology training programs and clinics swiftly switched to telepsychology with tele-supervision, and the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) announced that telepsychology could be counted the same toward training hours as in-person care.

"In the long term, there should be more telepsychology training programs for students and working psychologists," like the one at her institution, Texas A&M University, or the Telebehavioral Health Institute, which is endorsed by the APA, adds McCord.

"Telehealth training, just like telehealth service delivery, is only as good as the person or organization sitting on the other side, so folks should continue to be cautious about seeking out quality in training and service," she says. •

For those planning to continue online practice, Owings-Fonner advises the following:

- *Make sure you're HIPAA-compliant.*
- *Follow current regulatory policies.*
- *Consider whether reimbursement is sustainable for you financially.*
- *Think about your own self-care as you balance work-life priorities.*

Finding Meaning in Work

By Charlie Schmidt

Increased remote work was precipitated by the pandemic, but it is also emblematic of ongoing transformations in the labor force that have been accelerating for years. Workers are becoming increasingly untethered from the job sites that once gave them a sense of place and community.

At least a third of the U.S. labor force work was involved in the gig economy before COVID-19 according to one business report, and that figure is predicted to rise to 50 percent by 2027. Offices are now shuttered all over the country, with an estimated 42% of full-time workers doing their jobs from home.

These demographic shifts spotlight a topic of long-standing interest to psychologists — namely, how people derive meaning from work.

Research shows that people who find their work meaningful are more motivated, engaged, satisfied, and likely to achieve high job performance than those who do not. But without a work site to go to, and jobs increasingly at the literal center of home life, many people are examining the centrality of work in their lives.

"People are getting a clearer signal about the work they do and how they feel about it," says Amy Wrzesniewksi, a professor of organizational psychology at Yale University. Without a stable sense of place where people enact their work roles and occupational identities, the pressure on work itself as basis for meaning is growing.

In other words, Wrzesniewksi says, if steady employment can't be counted on, then people tend to focus more on what they do at work and whether it aligns with why they work in the first place.

Wrzesniewksi has found that gig workers in particular struggle from an acute sense of precariousness and "lack of membership" that makes finding meaning in their jobs elusive — especially if they came to gig work not out of a search for meaning, but because they had no other choice. "There's great freedom but it comes without security," she says.

To compensate for the lack of an organizational holding environment, or a psychological space that feels comfortable
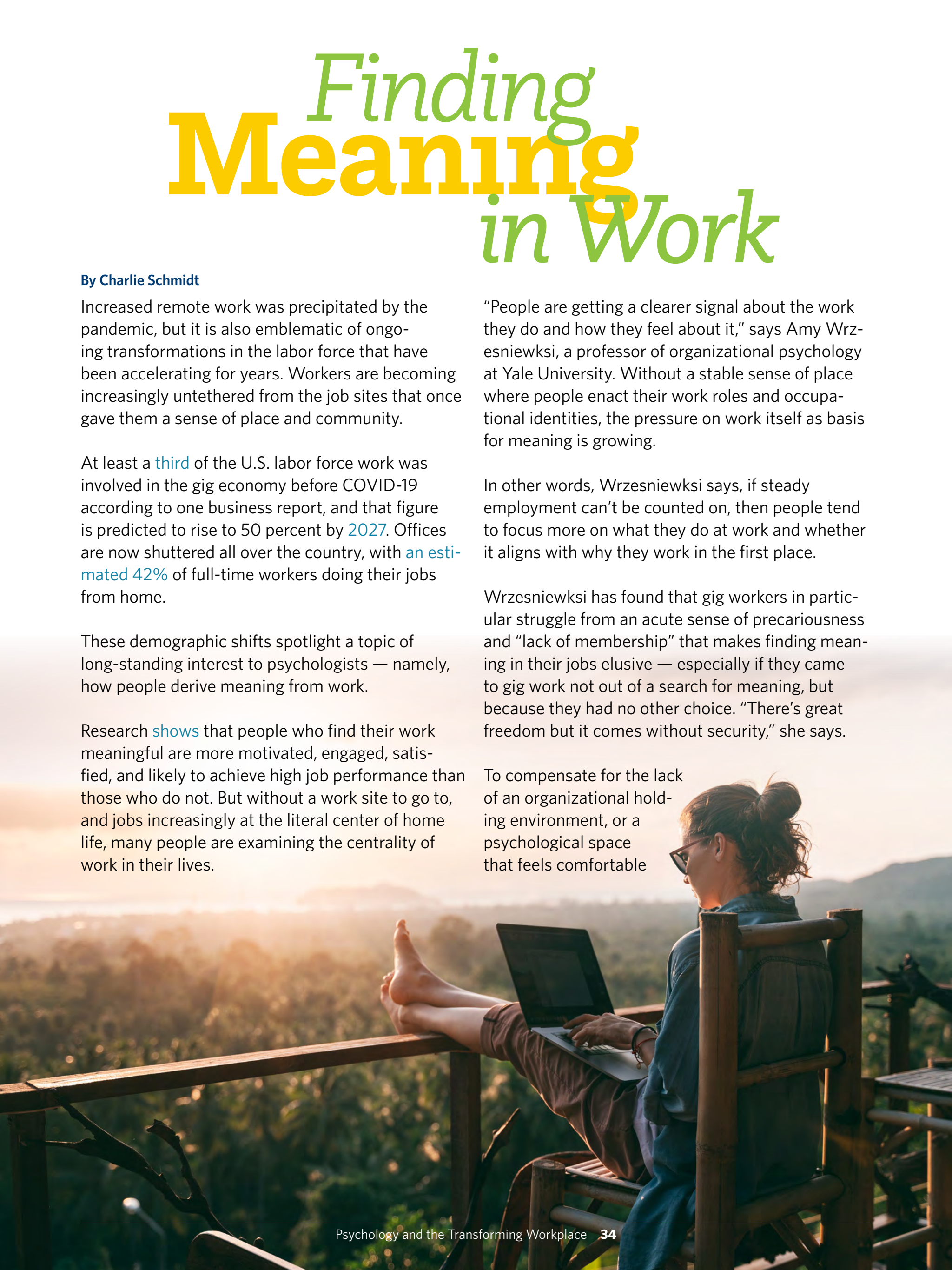
and secure, gig workers cultivate and reaffirm ties to collectives, routines, people, and a broader purpose, Wrzesniewksi's research shows.

"To thrive in a gig economy, workers have to structure non-traditional work arrangements that help them feel like they are part of something," Wrzesniewksi explains. "A lot of energy goes towards having relationships with entities that make them feel safe."

Barry Schwartz, PhD, a professor at Swarthmore College, points out that during hard economic times, meaningful employment often takes second fiddle to merely getting a paycheck. Workers tend to place a higher premium on finding meaningful employment only after their basic survival needs are met.

Schwartz also observes that the search for meaningful work is consistent with deeply held values, which may or may not follow traditional vocational pathways. Someone who strongly values educating the public might derive meaning from a career in journalism, while someone else who values empowering young people might be drawn to a career in teaching. "It doesn't take Herculean effort to find meaning as a surgeon," Schwartz says. "But if you value the act of helping people in smaller ways, you could even find working in retail valuable."

For many people, finding meaning in work is also tightly connected to how they feel about the organizations where they're employed. A newly published review of over 100 studies that were conducted between 1949 and 2016 found that good relationships with supervisors and colleagues, and a sense of being treated fairly at work, were more predictive of job satisfaction than a person's occupational interests.

New working trends also are putting more pressure on organizations to find ways to keep their workers more engaged and happier, and psychologists are stepping up meet to that need. "Companies are looking to I-O research psychologists for help in figuring out what is reasonable to expect or demand and how to put boundaries around remote work so that people don't burn out," Schwartz says. "This is a major focus of research in the field right now."

One useful strategy for increasing job satisfaction is job crafting, according to Denise Rousseau, PhD, a professor of organizational behavior and public policy at Carnegie Mellon University. With this approach, organizations allow workers to customize their own daily routines by doing fewer, more, or different tasks than those described in their formal job descriptions.

Research shows that by crafting the content of their jobs, employees are better able to cope with ongoing changes. Moreover, by becoming agents of their own job sites, workers can "shape their relationships with organizations in ways that foster meaning and purpose," says Rousseau. She adds, "If I can redesign my job to be more gratifying so that it reflects more of me, then the work is more likely to meet higher-order needs."

For organizations, the benefits of a happier workforce are tangible. "It comes down to helping the boss as much as the worker," Schwartz says. "And one way to boost the bottom line is to increase worker satisfaction." ▪

Helping the Sidelined Find More Job Satisfaction

By Charlie Schmidt

A bit of sage wisdom for people pondering their work choices has long been this: "Do what you love, and then everything else will fall into place." But what about people who don't have much choice about where they work or what they do?

Opportunities in the work world have increasingly reflected rising inequalities related to issues of gender, race, age, ethnicity, educational opportunity, sexual orientation, and other factors. But the COVID-19 crisis ripped open the divide for those without access to technology or knowledge-based jobs, many of whom faced unemployment or work in service jobs where they were more likely to be exposed to the virus.

Marginalized groups, or people who "lack the social capital they need to make volitional choices about their work lives," are living with anxiety, depression, and in some cases, existential fear for their survival, says David Blustein, PhD, a professor and vocational psychologist at Boston College.

Due to the pandemic, the sense of being sidelined is becoming more mainstream: "Massive unemployment has become the defining feature of work, with millions of individuals and families now cast into a world of uncertainty and precariousness," he writes in a recent paper.

Marginalized groups are particularly vulnerable to structural changes in a labor force that increasingly favors precarious employment, and is poorly paid and insecure, says Blustein. A sense of marginalization extends even to college-educated millennials, "who are so worried about getting into the world of work that their anxiety is palpable," he says.

Building on research

The imperative to increase job mobility and satisfaction among marginalized groups is a major area of study in vocational psychology and related fields, and psychologists are unpacking new approaches for helping people who are struggling on the fringes of job opportunities.

One starting point is to help them understand how some of the internalized stress they are experiencing is entangled with broad social and economic forces that are in fact mutable and amenable to change, says Blustein.

This approach is based on critical consciousness concepts, a social-justice teaching tool that helps people identify systemic barriers and inequalities in the world and to take action against oppressive elements in their own lives.

This approach, Blustein explains, is psychologically protective, since it shows that the "struggle of marginalized communities to gain a foothold in the world of work is not necessarily due to personal deficits." He cites research showing that when poor high school students of color developed higher degrees of sociopolitical awareness, they also had greater vocational expectations, and got better paying jobs as adults.

Another key strategy for change is to help people from marginalized groups move towards "decent" work, a term that is defined by the International Labor Organization as employment that delivers a fair income, workplace security, prospects for personal development, and opportunities to participate in decisions.

Blake Allan, PhD, a professor of vocational psychology at the University of Houston, points out that while people can find precarious work satisfying, "it gets much harder to do that if you're struggling every day and living in constant stress and worry about putting food on the table."

Allan recently published a longitudinal study that indicates that people with decent work are more likely to experience job satisfaction. He says that's because decent jobs provide more opportunity to help other people and become a part of their communities, which are both drivers of meaningful work.

Building therapeutic interventions

"As counselors, we need to focus on helping our clients with flexibility, adaptability, and managing transitions through different types of jobs," he says. "The goal is that they should become proactive and expand their horizons to find work that their skill set might fit into."

People from marginalized communities might not find much meaning in a proximal "survival job" that merely delivers a paycheck. But Blustein says that psychologists can help clients to view that job as a stepping-stone toward decent work that they might enjoy more. "When working with marginalized clients, it's important to meet immediate needs, while also working on longer-term plans," he says.

"We need to scaffold our interventions, so that what people do in their proximal job informs longer-term options and helps them develop the skills they need to realize their dreams," Blustein says. •

How Did You Get That Job?

Lacey Rosenbaum, PhD, is director of curricula and research at the National Council for Behavioral Health in Washington, DC, where she develops curriculum products for their Mental Health First Aid program. This skills-based training course teaches participants how to reach out and offer initial help to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance abuse problem.

What is a typical day like in your job?

Well, one aspect of my job is managing the evaluation and research of Mental Health First Aid trainings. We will often bring together people with lived experience, mental health researchers, clinicians, to review materials to help us develop specific Mental Health First Aid guidelines for working with a specific population.

I also manage partnerships with researchers and various academic institutions to really grow the evidence base for our trainings in the United States. One of our newest programs is an evidence-based training for high school students, which is supported by Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation.

What are some of the essential skills that are part of your job?

Communication is truly at the center of my job every single day: writing, public speaking, focus-group facilitation, interpersonal communication. I recently authored our updated manual for our Youth Mental Health First Aid course, a nearly 300-page guide on how to perform mental health first aid in a trauma-informed, culturally relevant way with young people.

Another cool communication-oriented project that I've been a part of was developing curriculum videos that are a part of the Mental Health First Aid trainings. I worked with a film company to help write and review scripts and helped develop an animated film about … how adults can promote resilience in youth.

Teamwork is the other skill that I think is so important. I work with a really talented, passionate team of colleagues … who come from diverse backgrounds in public health, business, education, mental health, you name it. We also work with our policy team, communications and marketing team, business strategy team. To me, teamwork is about being a

Rosenbaum

good manager, a good employee, a good colleague, and I think at the root of that is an ability to understand and show empathy for others.

How did your training prepare you for this job or did you learn some skills on the job?
Yes, that's an excellent question. I do feel like my training and experience and my PhD program equipped me to do many of the current job duties. Program evaluation is definitely one. I developed an ability to gather and organize feedback from various stakeholder groups and to be comfortable with data and reviewing relevant literature. And in my job, I'm often trying to help translate data into practical guidance that anyone can use.

There are also just things you learn on the job. Leadership skills are something that I think I developed with experience and advancement along my career path. I've tried to take initiative, propose innovative ideas or solutions to existing problems, and take advantage of professional development opportuni-

ties that exist within my current job or in previous jobs. I also think that finding mentors within organizations where I have worked whose leadership styles I admired, was important.

What's your favorite part of your job?
Oh, that's a great question. I love working with the young people who've taken our training and hearing their stories about how they've used their Mental Health First Aid skills to help a friend or how they want to tackle stigma in their community.

We have this fantastic Youth Advisory Group that we work with. Related to that is a true career highlight for me. We had a celebration event for the young people who had been part of our pilot program. We brought them to Las Vegas, and Lady Gaga surprised them by bringing them on stage at her concerts. She stood there and vowed to see that every teen in the country would have access to this training. ∎

Watch the full interview at the APA Member Webinar.

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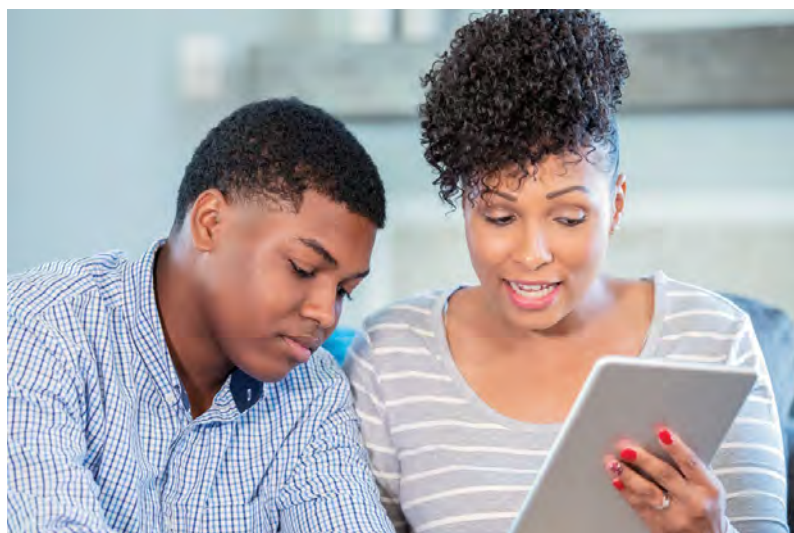
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