

PRODUCTIVITY OF REMOTE WORK IN UTAH

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2021 we conducted a human capital survey investigating key talent issues in Utah. We examined employee productivity related to remote work arrangements. Specifically, we asked survey participants to indicate “the percent to which your overall work productivity increases or decreases when working remotely.” Utah employees report an approximately 21% overall productivity increase when working remotely. Further digging into this empirical finding reveals five key insights:

- **KEY INSIGHT 1:** *Employees report an average 21% increase in productivity related to remote work, suggesting that remote work arrangements may offer significant benefits to Utah companies.*
- **KEY INSIGHT 2:** *Women report a higher productivity increase (almost 30% increase) and gender non-binary individuals report a much higher productivity increase (more than 60%) compared to men (almost 17% increase).*
- **KEY INSIGHT 3:** *Those who work the most weekly hours (60+) also report the highest productivity increases from remote work (26% increase).*
- **KEY INSIGHT 4:** *Those in middle income ranges report higher productivity increases than those in the lower or higher income ranges.*
- **KEY INSIGHT 5:** *Older employees generally report higher productivity increases from remote work than younger employees.*

SURVEY OVERVIEW

In April 2021 we distributed a survey to more than 40,000 individuals who have previously participated in one of the Silicon Slopes events over the last 3-5 years. The purpose of the survey was to develop insights related to human capital development and management in Utah. After data cleaning we had a total of 1,779 usable responses for an approximate response rate of ~4%, which is a standard response rate for this type of electronic survey. For detailed information on the demographics of the people who completed the survey please see the demographics summary report [HERE](#).

UNDERSTANDING PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES RELATED TO REMOTE WORK

While remote work has been increasing in recent years, the forced shock of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 sent many of Utah employees into remote work scenarios. We wanted to understand the extent to which this shift to remote work increased or decreased employee productivity. Accordingly, we directly asked employees in our survey to indicate the percent to which their work productivity increased or decreased when working remotely.

Employees report an average productivity increase of 21% when working remotely

The overall average response for this survey question is 21%, meaning that employees report a 21% increase in productivity when working remotely. While this survey only allows us to interpret employees' own perspectives on their productivity, we still find a reported 21% increase to be substantial, especially in the context of the potential cost savings companies experience when shifting employees away from physical office locations. Remote work allows employers to decrease their physical footprints and associated infrastructure expenses while simultaneously experiencing productivity increases from employees.

KEY INSIGHT 1:

EMPLOYEES REPORT AN AVERAGE 21% INCREASE IN PRODUCTIVITY RELATED TO REMOTE WORK, SUGGESTING THAT REMOTE WORK ARRANGEMENTS MAY OFFER SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS TO UTAH COMPANIES

Women and Gender non-binary employees report higher productivity increase from remote work

While some survey participants identified as gender non-binary or preferred not to indicate their gender on the survey, the vast majority identified as either male or female. The table below shows the percentage of value individuals derive from non-monetary aspects of work based on their response to our gender identification question:

Partial Question	Male	Female	Gender non-binary	Prefer not to answer
Percentage change in productivity working remote	17	30	62	28

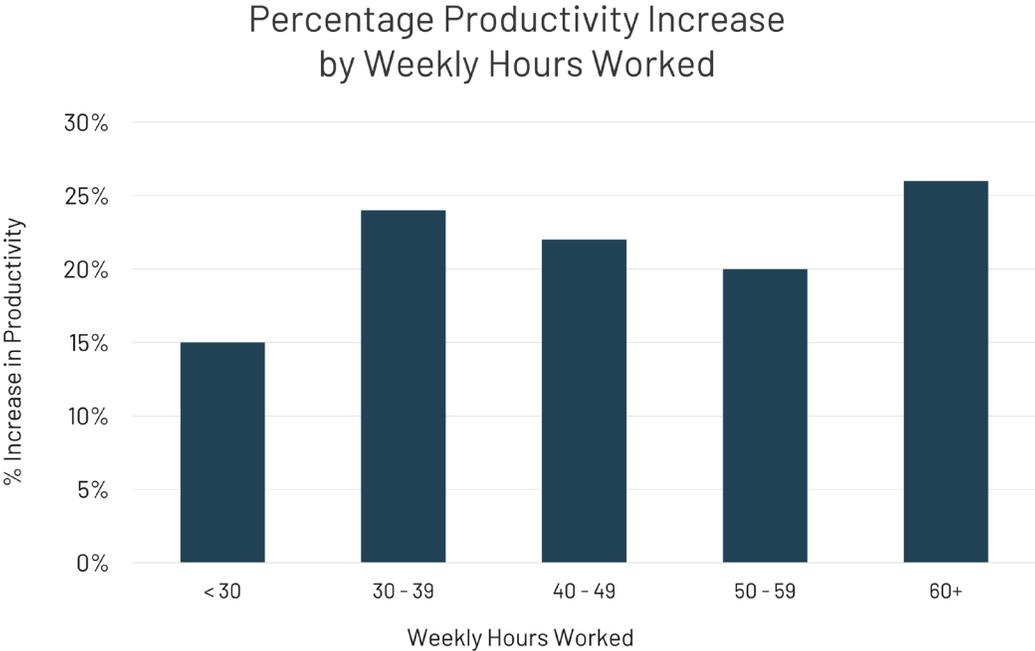
It is important to note the higher percentages reported by women compared to men. Something about the remote work experience seems to have a much higher benefit for womens’ productivity than men.

While the numbers of gender non-binary responses is very small, we also note the substantially higher productivity increase reported by these individuals. Others have reported on the [benefits of remote work arrangements for those in the LGBTQ+ community](#), and it is possible that a reduction in workplace stress for these employees through remote work has led to a much larger productivity increase.

KEY INSIGHT 2:
WOMEN REPORT A HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY INCREASE (ALMOST 30% INCREASE) AND GENDER NON-BINARY INDIVIDUALS REPORT A MUCH HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY INCREASE (MORE THAN 60%) COMPARED TO MEN (ALMOST 17% INCREASE)

Productivity increase is highest for those who work the most

In general, the percentage productivity increase seems higher for those who work the most each week. This is illustrated in the figure below:

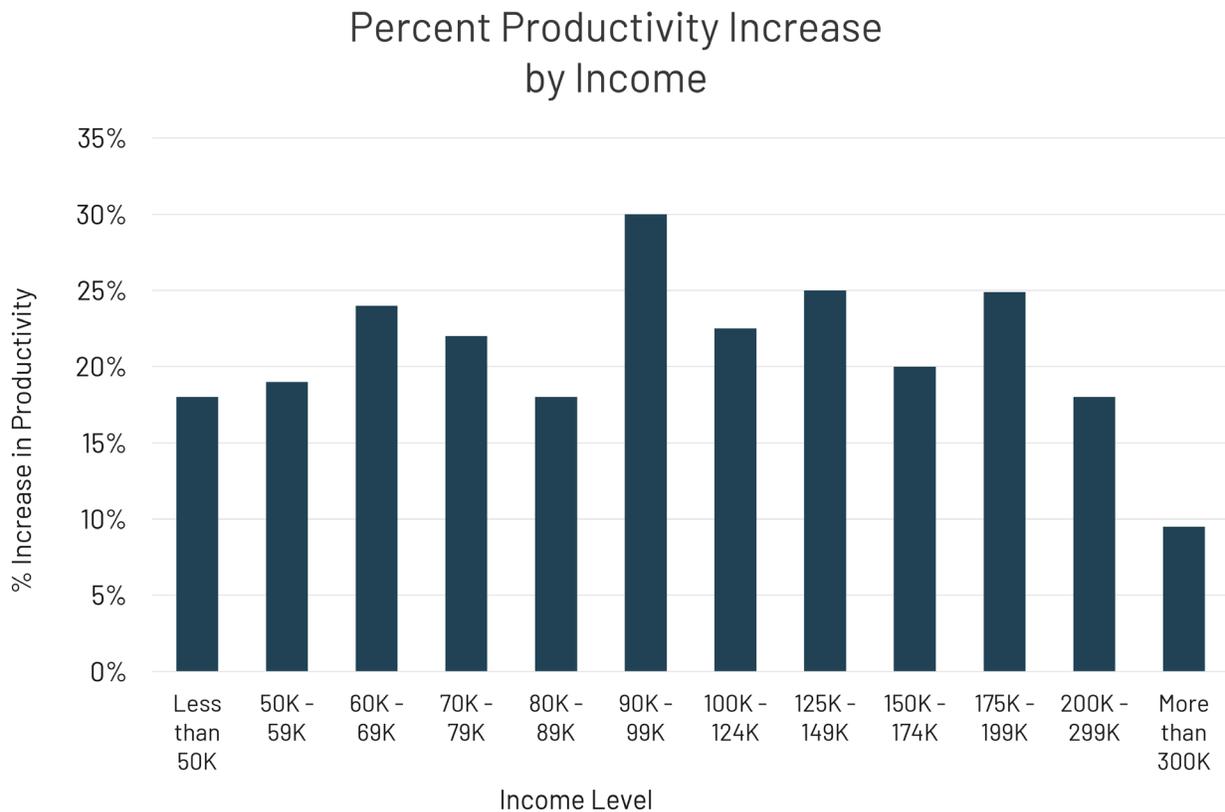


KEY INSIGHT 3:

THOSE WHO WORK THE MOST WEEKLY HOURS (60+) ALSO REPORT THE HIGHEST PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES FROM REMOTE WORK (26% INCREASE)

Productivity increase is highest for those in the middle of the income spectrum

We note an interesting inverted U shaped relationship between productivity increases and income level, such that those in the middle income levels report the highest productivity increases associated with remote work. Interestingly, those in the highest income level also report the smallest productivity increase from remote work. It is possible that these are executives who find their coordinating and leadership work much more challenging with a dispersed workforce. The trend is shown in the figure below:

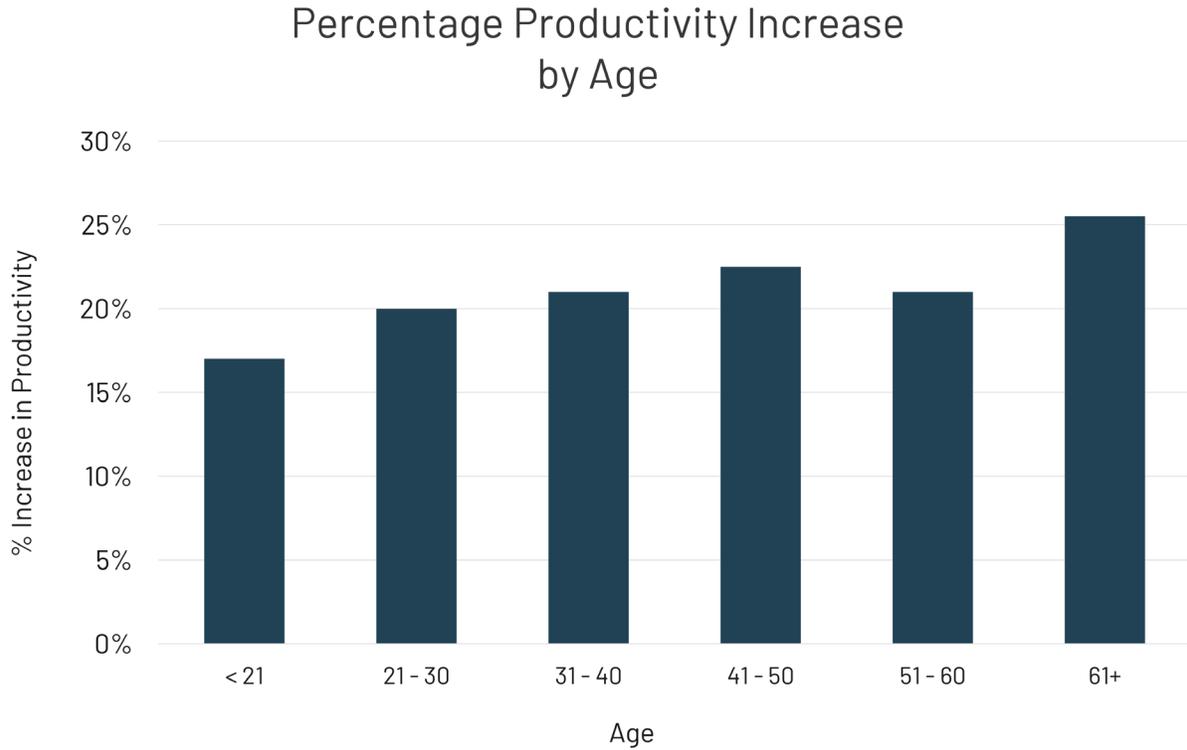


KEY INSIGHT 4:

THOSE IN MIDDLE INCOME RANGES REPORT HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES THAN THOSE IN THE LOWER OR HIGHER INCOME RANGES

Productivity increase generally gets larger with age

It appears that the productivity increase from remote work generally increases with employee age:



This finding is somewhat surprising given popular press trends suggesting that the younger generations are more tech savvy and have stronger preferences for workplace flexibility, but it is also possible that the nature of work performed by older and more experienced employees is more fitting for remote work than that performed by younger employees.

KEY INSIGHT 5:

OLDER EMPLOYEES GENERALLY REPORT HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY INCREASES FROM REMOTE WORK THAN YOUNGER EMPLOYEES