

GLOBAL DAD SURVEY 2020

**Considerations
and opportunities
for employers**



**SUIT TIE
STROLLER**

CONSIDERATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

For employers

COVID-19 has caused an unprecedented disruption to how business is conducted and continues to cause emerging challenges for employers across the globe. Virtually overnight, workplaces had to implement new ways of working, and in many cases new technologies, just to remain open.

While many businesses were unable to pivot quickly enough to survive, those that were able now face a new challenge of trying to provide stability in an inherently unpredictable environment. Everyone knows things have changed, but what is less agreed is what has changed and for how long it is going to last. Demonstrating care, humanity and a willingness to re-design a new future with *all* employees is going to be what differentiates leaders through this period. Maintaining strong employee engagement won't only be key to competing during these difficult times; how organisations respond will be brand defining for decades to come.

This survey uncovered many insights from dads about their desires and anxieties for returning to work after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. These have been positioned over the following pages as considerations and opportunities for employers to consider for successfully managing and engaging their workforce in co-designing a post-COVID world.



Understanding your people

- Ensure you take the opportunity to hear from your people on how they found the experience during COVID-19 and understand what they currently value. Identify where returning to pre-COVID-19 “normal” will be seen as taking something valuable away.
- Recognise employees may have concerns expressing the challenges of balancing work and family life with management in fear it may negatively impact them. This is exacerbated in periods of job insecurity. Be aware they many may downplay or even “opt-out” of these conversations fearing they will not be heard or that they will be putting a target on their back.
- Create safe spaces and forums for employees to connect with other parents to share experiences, changing expectations, challenges and ideas to help support new approaches.
- Expect a rise in requests for permanent formal and informal flexible working arrangements, including from dads. Denying men ongoing forms of flexible working arrangements may result in resentment as many feel they have been more productive during COVID-19. This may also be perceived as "offsetting" other perceived losses in hours, pay or bonuses that will likely continue for the coming year.
- Consider how flexible work is communicated in management meetings and with all employees. Consider how new ways of working can be utilised to re-engage your workforce and achieve the required levels of productivity and talent retention to navigate through a global recession and economically challenging times.
- Consider how flexible work is modelled by leadership. The best gender equality policies may be rendered useless if they are not modelled by leadership and embedded into workplace culture.



Navigating the 'new norm'

- See this period as an opportunity to create a workplace and workforce more suited to the future of work and the challenges ahead. While there is no best practice guide for managing the post COVID-19 lockdown period, there is much to learn from listening to your people and taking inspiration from organisations who, pre-COVID-19, were leading progress in areas such as normalising flexible work.
- Educate your organisation on what flexible work and empowering people actually means. For those that are negative about flexible work, understand why. Ensure the benefits of flexible work are always articulated in broad and inclusive terms. A conversation about enabling greater wellbeing through more personal choice and flexibility will resonate more than one purely about caring for children or ageing parents.
- Take action by first assessing the enablers and detractors to productivity for your flexible workforce. Understand what decisions you can make to enable increased productivity, such as:
 - Implementing appropriate training and mentoring for your staff / managers e.g. managing high performing remote teams
 - Interrogating the tools, technology and processes you currently use and updating where required to enable more collaborative remote working
 - Conducting OH&S assessments of home workspaces and supplying (or funding) suitable office equipment for home offices
 - Assessing whether previous workplace practices have become redundant with changed ways of working (e.g. numerous team meetings) and changing any that are ineffective or inefficient for a flexible workforce
 - Designing new, fit-for-purpose ways to maintain engagement and connection with employees working flexibly



- Considering whether you can provide alternatives for slow home internet speeds of employees working from home, e.g. offering corporate internet plans
- Seeking advice for helping employees navigate taxation laws for managing expenses relating to flexible working (e.g. working from home)
- If your organisation has or will significantly remodel how you operated prior to COVID-19, make sure you:
 - Review and re-set relevant policies to meet your future needs (including potential future lockdowns). Some policies may have legal ramifications to address, e.g. implementing social distancing and public health measures or including Occupational Health and Safety assessments of at home work spaces. Others may focus on the flow on effects, such as updating employee wellbeing policies to include more extensive support for the mental health of employees, or adjusting training policies to expand available online learning. Ensure changes are communicated effectively to management and employees alike.
 - Consider any new bias or inequality across your organisation that may need to be monitored within new work arrangements. There are always intended and unintended consequences.
 - Review organisational / employee performance frameworks and measures (KPIs) as well as reward and recognition frameworks to ensure they adequately meet your new ways of working.
 - Review workforce capability and skill requirements e.g. capability for managing a remote team. Assess for gaps and identify relevant training needs. Update recruitment requirements and job descriptions where relevant.
- Be bold in piloting, learning and embedding / new ways of working. Now is the time to try!



ABOUT SUIT TIE STROLLER

When Blake became a father he quickly realised how inherently biased society is against dads playing an active caring role. This led him to found Suit Tie Stroller, a social initiative empowering working dads to be actively involved parents and advocating for policies that better support modern families and workplaces.

THE AUTHORS



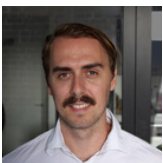
Blake Woodward is the founder of Suit Tie Stroller and a father of two. He has over 12 years experience working as a management consultant for Big 4 consultancy firms, advising governments and corporates on organisational change, workforce planning, people strategy, organisational culture and employee engagement.



Roseanna Leddy is a business executive who has a background leading corporate strategy, sales teams and diversity and inclusion work. Today she spends most of her time working with male CEOs to step up beside women to create a gender equal world.



Sumathi Murthy is a mum to two boys, a collaboration consultant and photographer. She is passionate about supporting dads as she believes by doing this we help mums, families and our communities.



Paul Liddell is a father of two who designs his way through the day creating apps and visual design. He is the design guy for all things Suit Tie Stroller. Paul has enjoyed two periods of parental leave and is passionate about promoting the benefits of his experience to new dads.

CONTACT US

If you would like to get in touch with Suit Tie Stroller, please email us at suittiestroller@gmail.com or visit the website at www.suittiestroller.com



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