

# State of Engagement 2022



The employee experience is constantly evolving, driven in part by external factors that impact all industries, as well as changes within individual sectors. In order to understand the true state of **employee engagement** within your organisation, it's essential to benchmark different aspects of the employee experience against companies with a similar demographic.

Each year we analyse changes in overall engagement, as well as individual driver scores to help identify focus areas for organisations across different sectors in the year ahead.

This year, there are a number of areas that are relevant to the majority of organisations, which include adapting to new work models in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, retaining talent using employee sentiment analysis, and reducing burnout through ongoing conversations.

# Methodology

The [Workday Peakon Employee Voice](#) database consists of nearly 225 million employee survey responses and over 41 million employee comments from across 160 countries.

Our “State of Engagement” report is based on an analysis of de-identified global employee survey data submitted by nearly 2.5 million employees across 1,500 companies throughout 2021. Our analysis compares the mean scores for overall engagement and [individual engagement drivers](#) between Q1 and Q4 2021, from nearly 9 million survey responses.



Benchmarks are based on rolling 12-month windows. Q1 averages are based on data from March 2020 to March 2021, and Q4 2021 from December 2020 to December 2021.

Workday Peakon Employee Voice uses a [0–10 scale](#) for question responses, and as a general guideline, any change of greater than 0.1 is considered meaningful as part of this analysis.

There are 17 industries included in our “State of Engagement” report, as defined by the Global Industry Classification Standard (GICS). Only industries with a sufficient sample size of employee survey data were included in the current analysis.

Industry rankings were determined by comparing the mean score for overall engagement, which is measured by the question, “How likely is it that you would recommend [your organisation] as a place to work?” Engagement driver rankings within each sector were calculated by comparing the mean score of each driver across all sectors. All data analysed as part of this report has been de-identified to protect the identity of individual employees and their organisations.

# Industry Rankings



Industry	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Q4 Engagement Score	Score Change
Software & Services	1	2	1 ↗	8.04	0.09
Technology	2	2	0	8.03	0.08
Commercial & Professional Services	3	5	2 ↗	7.92	0.02
Professional Services	4	7	3 ↗	7.91	0.03
Finance	5	9	4 ↗	7.87	0.05
Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology & Life Sciences	6	1	-5 ↘	7.83	-0.23
Consumer	7	6	-1 ↘	7.79	-0.1
Healthcare	8	4	-4 ↘	7.78	-0.16
Education	9	9	0	7.77	-0.05
Non-profit	10	7	-3 ↘	7.76	-0.12
Capital Goods	11	14	3 ↗	7.73	0.17
Media	12	13	1 ↗	7.70	-0.06
Retailing	13	12	-1 ↘	7.69	-0.1
Manufacturing	14	15	1 ↗	7.67	0.14
Energy & Utilities	15	16	1 ↗	7.52	0.01
Transport	16	11	-4 ↘	7.52	-0.29
Government	17	17	0	7.33	-0.1

The average change in engagement scores across all sectors in 2021 was a decline of 0.03, which falls outside of the 0.1 threshold for meaningful change. However, looking at changes across different industries and engagement drivers reveals a more complicated story.

Throughout 2021, the software & services and technology sectors continued to solidify their positions at the top of our engagement table, ranking first and second, respectively, for overall employee engagement. Joining them at the top of the table, finance and professional services were able to improve their rankings by maintaining overall engagement scores at a time when many other industries were negatively impacted by the pandemic.

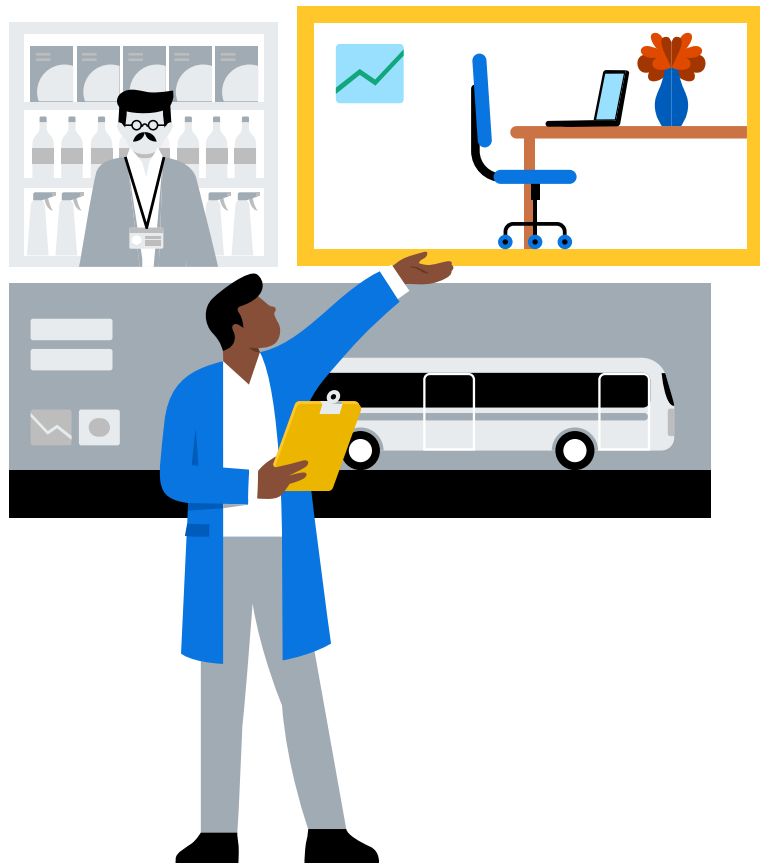
Industries that experienced a decline in overall engagement include healthcare, pharmaceuticals, non-profit and transport. These are many of the same sectors that were impacted more directly by the pandemic, with many frontline workers unable to take advantage of hybrid work opportunities. As a result, it's likely that engagement in these sectors was also impacted by the various health and wellbeing implications of working through a pandemic.

Other industries that made meaningful improvements to their overall engagement score were capital goods and manufacturing. Despite making progress in 2021, both industries remain in the bottom half of the table due to relatively low mean scores overall.

Top 3	
Rank Change	Industry
4 ↗	Finance
3 ↗	Professional Services
3 ↗	Capital Goods

Bottom 3	
Rank Change	Industry
-5 ↘	Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology & Life Sciences
-4 ↘	Healthcare
-4 ↘	Transport

# Engagement Driver Analysis



When looking at how different industries performed throughout 2021, it's important to understand how certain engagement drivers changed across all sectors. This helps provide context for the mean score and ranking changes within each sector.

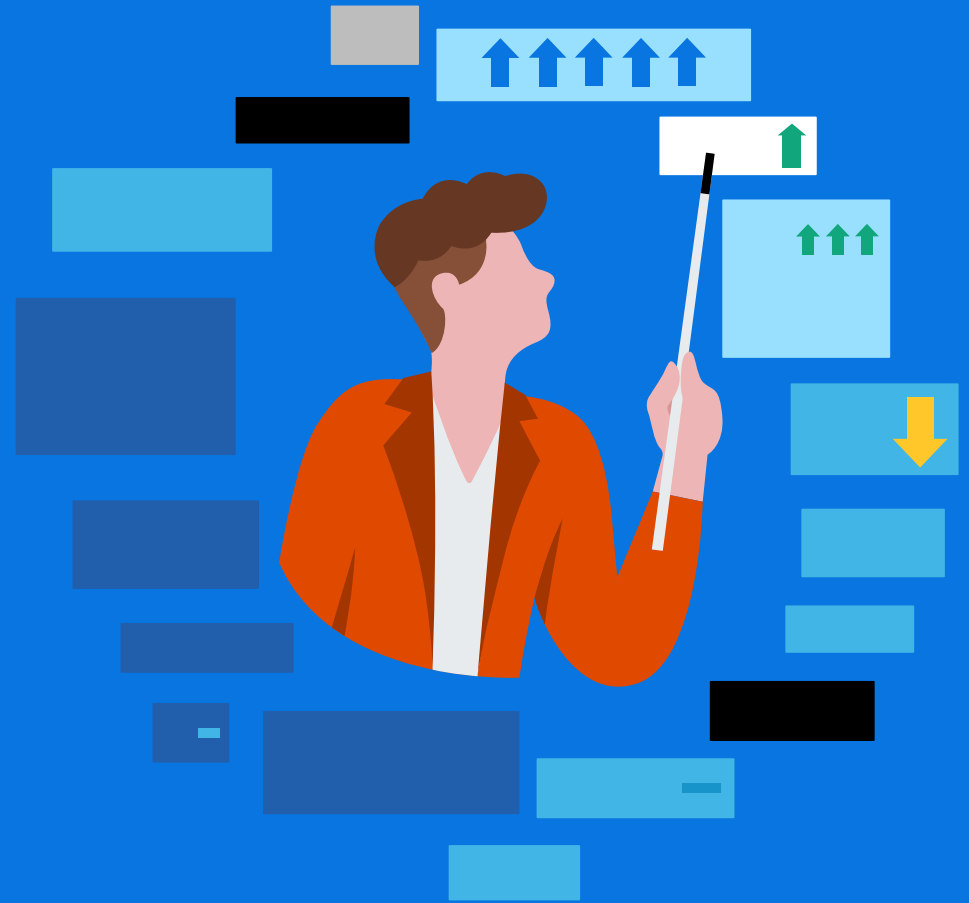
One driver impacted by the pandemic more significantly than others was environment, which concerns whether employees believe their physical environment has a positive effect on their work and how it's done. The shift to hybrid work, new office environments and better protections for frontline workers are all contributing factors.

The average mean score for environment across all sectors increased by 0.18 between Q1 and Q4 2021. Due to the nature of the global pandemic, many organisations had to rapidly adopt some form of flexible working or introduce additional measures to safeguard the health of employees. And while some sectors did better than others, there was a general upward trend in environment scores across the dataset.

Another global change that we observed in the data was an overall decline in workload scores, which measures whether employees feel the amount of work they're responsible for is reasonable or a cause of stress. The average mean score across all sectors fell by 0.08 throughout 2021, which signals that employees found their workload less manageable as the year progressed. The prolonged nature of the pandemic, and challenging circumstances faced by many – particularly on the frontline – appear to be taking a toll on employee well-being. Similarly, employees working from home are often [working longer hours](#) as a result of the pandemic, with many struggling to balance personal and professional obligations.

# Industry Breakdown

For each of the 17 industries in our “State of Engagement” report, we’ve ranked the engagement drivers from high to low based on their position compared to other industries at the end of 2021.



# Capital Goods



Capital goods, which includes companies in aerospace and defence, construction, and engineering, made meaningful improvements across a number of engagement drivers, including autonomy, environment, organisational fit, peer relationships, workload and reward.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
<b>Workload</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9 ↗</b>	<b>0.12</b>
Meaningful work	8	8	0	0.07
Accomplishment	10	11	1 ↗	0.03
Growth	11	12	1 ↗	0.04
Reward	11	14	3 ↗	0.11
Goal setting	12	11	-1 ↘	0.06
Organisational fit	12	15	3 ↗	0.25
Peer relationships	12	13	1 ↗	0.16
Strategy	12	14	2 ↗	0.06
Autonomy	13	14	1 ↗	0.12
Management support	13	13	0	0.09
Recognition	13	14	1 ↗	0.08
Environment	14	15	1 ↗	0.21
Freedom of opinions	14	15	1 ↗	0.08

Despite these improvements, overall rankings for the majority of engagement drivers remain low compared to other industries – with the exception of workload and meaningful work. Workload climbed 9 places to seventh, thanks to a score increase of 0.12 compared to an average decrease of 0.08 across all sectors.

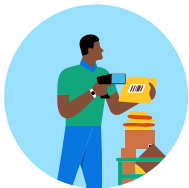
Looking ahead, organisations in the capital goods sector have an opportunity to continue building on their positive gains throughout 2021. Surveying employees regularly not only helps target the right areas of the employee experience, but it also measures the effectiveness of new initiatives to ensure they are having the desired effect.



# Commercial and Professional Services



Within the commercial and professional services sector, which includes organisations providing commercial printing, environmental and facilities services, and office services and supplies, there were a number of drivers that improved over the course of 2021, including environment, autonomy, recognition and reward. Environment and autonomy increases are most likely due to an increase in flexible work as a result of active employee listening approaches during the pandemic.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Autonomy	3	5	2 ↗	0.15
Reward	3	3	0	0.1
Growth	3	4	1 ↗	0.09
Organisational fit	3	6	3 ↗	0.08
<b>Workload</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4 ↗</b>	<b>-0.06</b>
Environment	4	4	0	0.18
Recognition	4	4	0	0.11
Freedom of opinions	4	4	0	0.08
Strategy	5	8	3 ↗	0.06
Management support	6	5	-1 ↘	0.05
Peer relationships	6	6	0	0
Accomplishment	8	8	0	0.06
<b>Meaningful work</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2 ↗</b>	<b>0.04</b>
<b>Goal setting</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1 ↗</b>	<b>0.07</b>

Workload rankings increased from seventh to third across all sectors, despite a drop in the mean score. Compared to the average decline of 0.08 across all sectors, commercial and professional services organisations were able to mitigate the impact of increased workloads, which may also be a result of an increased focus on recognition and reward.

Two areas of focus for organisations in the commercial and professional services sector for 2022 are meaningful work and goal setting. Meaningful work relates to employees using their strengths on a regular basis to provide positive outcomes for customers, while goal setting requires a clear understanding of what employees are expected to achieve and how that helps support their team.

# Consumer



Scores for the consumer sector remained relatively unchanged throughout 2021. While there was a positive increase for the environment driver, the average increase of 0.18 across all sectors meant that the overall ranking of ninth remained unchanged from Q1 to Q4.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Goal setting	3	4	1 ↗	0.02
<b>Workload</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2 ↗</b>	<b>-0.09</b>
Environment	9	9	0	0.11
Freedom of opinions	9	9	0	0.06
Peer relationships	9	12	3 ↗	0.06
Recognition	9	8	-1 ↘	0.04
Meaningful work	9	8	-1 ↘	0.02
Organisational fit	10	12	2 ↗	0.08
Management support	10	11	1 ↗	0.07
Autonomy	10	12	2 ↗	0.06
Growth	10	9	-1 ↘	0
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-3 ↘</b>	<b>-0.06</b>
Reward	11	11	0	-0.01
Accomplishment	12	10	-2 ↘	-0.04

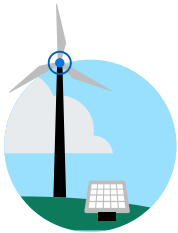
The change in rankings throughout 2021 points to lower levels of satisfaction with strategy and workload, highlighting the need for organisations to support those on the front line and provide a clear overall strategy for what the future of work will look like.

A higher proportion of frontline workers also presents unique challenges for the consumer sector, especially due to the relatively low rankings for key indicators of employee attrition, including growth and reward. An increased focus on employee retention and overall strategy is likely to remain a key focus area for the consumer sector throughout 2022.

# Energy and Utilities



The energy and utilities industry has faced a number of challenges due to the pandemic. Supply chain disruptions and restriction of movement has reduced demand for transport fuel and electricity, impacting the way many companies operate.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Environment	12	11	-1 ↓	0.05
Freedom of opinions	13	14	1 ↑	0.05
Autonomy	14	15	1 ↑	0.14
Growth	15	16	1 ↑	0.14
Recognition	15	15	0	0.05
Accomplishment	15	16	1 ↑	0.01
Strategy	15	16	1 ↑	-0.05
Peer relationships	16	14	-2 ↓	0.04
Management support	16	15	-1 ↓	0.01
Goal setting	16	16	0	0
Meaningful work	16	14	-2 ↓	0
Workload	16	15	-1 ↓	-0.01
Organisational fit	16	13	-3 ↓	-0.08
<b>Reward</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>-1 ↓</b>	<b>-0.05</b>

Going into 2021, the energy and utilities industry ranked at the bottom of the table across the majority of engagement drivers, and has seen little improvement over the course of the year. Across all drivers within energy and utilities, reward had the lowest mean score (6.49), compared to an average of 7.6. This was also lower than the average of 6.8 across all sectors.

Reward, which is determined by how employee inputs (effort, knowledge, skills, loyalty) are matched by outcomes (pay, bonuses, benefits, recognition), as well as the ability to have constructive conversations about pay, is one of the top priorities for energy and utilities in 2022.

# Finance



Finance was one of the best-performing industries in 2021, with increased rankings for all but 1 of the 14 engagement drivers in Workday Peakon Employee Voice.



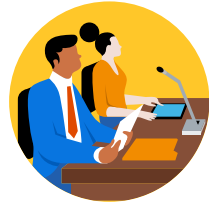
Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
<b>Goal setting</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5 ↗</b>	<b>0.11</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3 ↗</b>	<b>0.35</b>
Recognition	3	8	5 ↗	0.21
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3 ↗</b>	<b>0.12</b>
Management support	4	10	6 ↗	0.18
Growth	5	8	3 ↗	0.17
Meaningful work	5	6	1 ↗	0.11
Organisational fit	5	9	4 ↗	0.1
Peer relationships	5	10	5 ↗	0.09
<b>Accomplishment</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6 ↗</b>	<b>0.16</b>
Reward	6	6	0	0.11
Freedom of opinions	7	9	2 ↗	0.21
Autonomy	7	10	3 ↗	0.19
<b>Workload</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2 ↗</b>	<b>0.03</b>

Two notable improvements were goal setting and strategy, which ranked first and third, respectively, across all sectors at the end of 2021. This points to organisations in the finance industry providing clear direction to employees at both an individual level (goal setting) and in terms of overall strategy when planning for what the future of work will look like.

The finance sector also had the largest score and rankings increase for accomplishment, while most other industries remained relatively unchanged or experienced a decrease in raw score.

One area that will remain a focus for finance organisations in 2022 is workload, which was the lowest-ranked driver at the end of 2021. Workload remains a challenge for the majority of industries, with an average decrease of 0.08 across all other sectors.

# Government



At the end of 2021, government organisations had the lowest overall engagement score (7.33) and ranked in last place for 9 of 14 engagement drivers.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
<b>Autonomy</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8 ↗</b>	<b>0.34</b>
Reward	13	15	2 ↗	0.08
Management support	14	16	2 ↗	0.16
Environment	15	17	2 ↗	0.25
Freedom of opinions	16	17	1 ↗	0.06
Meaningful work	17	17	0	0.16
Peer relationships	17	17	0	0.13
Goal setting	17	17	0	0.05
Recognition	17	17	0	0.04
Accomplishment	17	17	0	0.03
Organisational fit	17	15	-2 ↘	-0.05
Growth	17	17	0	-0.09
Strategy	17	17	0	-0.1
<b>Workload</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-0.1</b>

One standout area was autonomy, which increased by 0.34 compared to an average of 0.07 across all sectors. Autonomy scores are associated with work schedule flexibility, having the option to work from home, and freedom to decide how work is carried out.

Similarly, environment scores increased by 0.25 compared to an average of 0.18 across all sectors, which is based on whether or not employees believe their physical environment has a positive effect on how their work gets done.

There are several areas that government organisations can focus on in 2022 to improve the overall employee experience, with workload being one of the main priorities. The mean score for workload at the end of 2021 was 6.93 compared to an overall average of 7.3. In order to close the gap between 17th and 16th place, workload scores would need to increase by 0.34.

# Healthcare



Considering the nature of the pandemic, which placed a huge strain on healthcare workers around the world, it's not surprising to see that the majority of engagement drivers saw a drop in rankings during 2021 – with strategy and workload seeing the biggest decline.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
<b>Meaningful work</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-0.04</b>
Accomplishment	3	2	-1 ↓	-0.09
Goal setting	6	2	-4 ↓	-0.04
Growth	7	4	-3 ↓	-0.06
Environment	9	10	1 ↑	0.18
Peer relationships	9	9	0	0
<b>Reward</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-4 ↓</b>	<b>-0.03</b>
Organisational fit	9	7	-2 ↓	-0.04
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-7 ↓</b>	<b>-0.21</b>
Autonomy	11	9	-2 ↓	-0.03
Recognition	11	8	-3 ↓	-0.04
Freedom of opinions	11	8	-3 ↓	-0.06
Management support	11	8	-3 ↓	-0.08
<b>Workload</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>-7 ↓</b>	<b>-0.25</b>

One thing is clear within the healthcare sector: employees derive a huge sense of meaning from their work, highlighted by the fact that meaningful work is ranked first across all industries with a mean score in Q4 of 8.33. Accomplishment also ranks highly, which measures the degree to which employees feel they are accomplishing things on a day-to-day basis.

The only driver score to increase during 2021 was environment, which may be due to better protections for workers, who are often exposed to physical health risks as part of their job.

At the beginning of 2021, the healthcare sector ranked fairly well for a number of drivers, but it appears the ongoing challenges of a global pandemic are starting to take their toll on health professionals. The goal for many healthcare organisations is to define and communicate a clear strategy for employees, while also ensuring that their workload doesn't lead to burnout.

# Higher Education



Organisations within the higher education sector made meaningful progress on a number of key engagement drivers during 2021, most notably environment and reward.

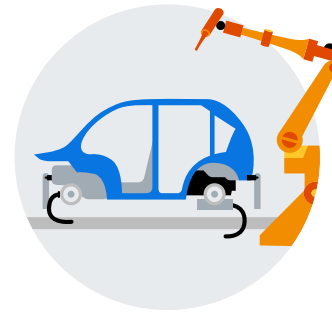


Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Goal setting	2	5	3 ↗	0.04
Meaningful work	2	3	1 ↗	0.01
Management support	3	3	0	0.06
Peer relationships	3	4	1 ↗	0.05
Accomplishment	3	3	0	0.04
<b>Reward</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6 ↗</b>	<b>0.2</b>
Recognition	5	5	0	0.11
Growth	5	7	2 ↗	0.1
Freedom of opinions	6	7	1 ↗	0.16
<b>Environment</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5 ↗</b>	<b>0.35</b>
Organisational fit	7	5	-2 ↘	-0.03
Strategy	8	10	2 ↗	0.06
Autonomy	8	8	0	0
Workload	12	12	0	-0.03

The reward driver jumped 6 places thanks to a mean score improvement of 0.2, which represents the largest increase for reward across all industries. Environment scores also improved, increasing by 0.35 throughout 2021, which resulted in a rankings increase of 5 places. Other notable improvements include growth, recognition and freedom of opinions.

With all but 1 engagement driver in the top 10, the priority for higher education in 2022 should be aimed squarely at workload. A slip in rankings for organisational fit may also indicate that organisations can do more to create a sense of belonging among employees.

# Manufacturing



Manufacturing, another industry impacted more directly by the global pandemic, was able to make meaningful improvements to a number of engagement drivers, but still ranks relatively low compared to most other sectors.

Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Meaningful work	11	11	0	0.01
<b>Organisational fit</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2 ↗</b>	<b>0.04</b>
<b>Peer relationships</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1 ↗</b>	<b>0.07</b>
<b>Reward</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1 ↗</b>	<b>0.07</b>
Growth	14	15	1 ↗	0.09
Recognition	14	16	2 ↗	0.08
Strategy	14	15	1 ↗	0.02
Workload	14	14	0	0.02
Accomplishment	14	13	-1 ↘	-0.03
Management support	15	16	1 ↗	0.09
Freedom of opinions	15	16	1 ↗	0.05
Goal setting	15	15	0	0.03
Autonomy	16	16	0	0.11
Environment	17	16	-1 ↘	0.18

Organisational fit, peer relationships and reward all experienced a positive rankings change as a result of meaningful mean score changes throughout 2021. Scores for environment and autonomy also improved, but rankings remained fairly static due to changes in other sectors.

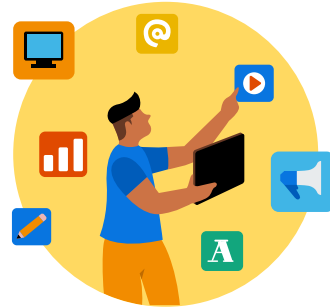
Compared to other industries such as technology and finance, manufacturing organisations often have a higher proportion of frontline workers, which may be a contributing factor for the relatively low rankings at the end of 2021.

In order to identify which aspects of the employee experience need to be improved in 2022, it's essential for manufacturing organisations to gather feedback from non-office-based employees and adapt their people strategies in a way that ensures an equitable experience for all.



# Media

The media sector made a number of meaningful improvements to the employee experience throughout 2021. In particular, there were meaningful score increases for freedom of opinions, reward, management support, autonomy and recognition.



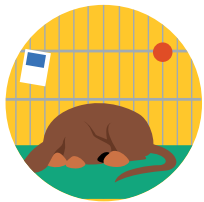
Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Freedom of opinions	3	6	3 ↗	0.19
Peer relationships	3	8	5 ↗	0.09
<b>Management support</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4 ↗</b>	<b>0.12</b>
Environment	6	3	-3 ↘	0.14
Autonomy	6	7	1 ↗	0.11
Organisational fit	7	10	3 ↗	0.09
<b>Reward</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5 ↗</b>	<b>0.15</b>
<b>Recognition</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3 ↗</b>	<b>0.11</b>
Growth	9	9	0	0.06
Accomplishment	10	13	3 ↗	0.08
Goal setting	11	11	0	0.07
Strategy	13	13	0	-0.01
Workload	14	11	-3 ↘	-0.05
Meaningful work	15	16	1 ↗	0.06

While the majority of engagement drivers had higher mean scores and rankings in Q4 2021, there are still a handful of drivers ranking near the bottom of the table across all sectors. These include meaningful work, workload, strategy and goal setting.

Building on the progress made in 2021, media organisations can look at ways to create more clarity around overall strategy and what is expected from employees day to day. This in turn can help employees prioritise their work, reducing workload pressures and creating a greater sense of accomplishment – which can all contribute to higher engagement levels.

# Non-profit

The non-profit sector ranked in the top 10 for all but 1 engagement driver at the end of 2021, making significant gains for the environment driver. Rankings for workload and peer relationships also improved, due to a decline in scores across other sectors.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Meaningful work	3	4	1 ↗	0.04
Strategy	4	3	-1 ↘	-0.04
Autonomy	5	3	-2 ↘	0.03
Organisational fit	6	4	-2 ↘	-0.01
Accomplishment	7	5	-2 ↘	0.04
Recognition	7	7	0	0.04
Reward	7	7	0	0.02
Workload	7	10	3 ↗	-0.05
<b>Environment</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6 ↗</b>	<b>0.38</b>
Peer relationships	8	11	3 ↗	0.05
Management support	8	6	-2 ↘	0.04
Freedom of opinions	9	9	0	0.06
Goal setting	9	8	-1 ↘	0.03
<b>Growth</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.01</b>

Similar to those working in healthcare, non-profit employees score highly when it comes to meaningful work. While this commitment may help to offset lower scores in other areas of the employee experience, the non-profit sector has done well to keep driver scores relatively stable compared to other industries dealing with the consequences of a global pandemic.

A clear area of focus for the non-profit sector is growth, which is one of the key indicators of employee turnover. No matter how meaningful the work, without a clear path for progression and the opportunity to develop new skills, retaining top talent may prove challenging.

# Pharmaceuticals



The pharmaceutical industry experienced some of the most noticeable declines in both scores and rankings during 2021. At the beginning of the year, it ranked in the top 5 for 12 of 14 engagement drivers, but the majority has since dropped 5 or more places.

Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Accomplishment	3	1	-2 ↓	-0.11
Meaningful work	4	2	-2 ↓	-0.1
Goal setting	6	1	-5 ↓	-0.08
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-6 ↓</b>	<b>-0.24</b>
Freedom of opinions	8	3	-5 ↓	-0.1
<b>Growth</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-7 ↓</b>	<b>-0.16</b>
Recognition	9	3	-6 ↓	-0.05
Peer relationships	9	3	-6 ↓	-0.06
Management support	9	4	-5 ↓	-0.07
Reward	10	7	-3 ↓	-0.02
<b>Workload</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-8 ↓</b>	<b>-0.32</b>
Environment	11	6	-5 ↓	0.05
Organisational fit	11	3	-8 ↓	-0.17
Autonomy	12	4	-8 ↓	-0.2

Strategy and workload experienced the biggest declines in mean score of all the sectors, dropping 0.24 and 0.32, respectively. These are common challenges for many of the industries more directly impacted by the pandemic.

Based on the relative positions of accomplishment and meaningful work across sectors, it appears that employees in the pharmaceutical industry are able to use their strengths on a day-to-day basis and understand how that leads to positive outcomes for customers.

There are numerous aspects of the employee experience that can be improved in 2022, from workload and strategy, to autonomy and organisational fit. The first step for organisations in the pharmaceutical industry is to identify the cause of declining driver scores, and communicate a clear plan of action for improving the employee experience throughout the rest of the year.

# Professional Services



Professional services – a subsection of commercial and professional services that includes human resources and employment services, as well as research and consulting services – made a number of improvements to the employee experience throughout 2021.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Organisational fit	3	7	4 ↗	0.09
<b>Environment</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1 ↗</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Autonomy</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1 ↗</b>	<b>0.14</b>
Growth	4	6	2 ↗	0.1
Freedom of opinions	4	5	1 ↗	0.1
Reward	4	3	-1 ↘	0.09
Workload	4	8	4 ↗	-0.06
Recognition	5	6	1 ↗	0.12
Strategy	5	9	4 ↗	0.07
Management support	6	6	0	0.06
Peer relationships	6	7	1 ↗	0.01
Accomplishment	8	9	1 ↗	0.07
<b>Meaningful work</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1 ↗</b>	<b>0.03</b>
<b>Goal setting</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2 ↗</b>	<b>0.08</b>

Score increases for environment and autonomy are most likely due the introduction of remote and flexible working models in response to the global pandemic. While some industries have more options than others when it comes to flexible work, these changes highlight that organisations in the professional services sector are embracing new ways of working.

Goal setting and accomplishment are two interlinked areas of the employee experience that can be improved in 2022. Organisations can improve by helping employees define clear goals in the short term so they feel like they are making daily progress.

# Retail

Retail is another industry that has faced challenges due to the global pandemic, as highlighted by the relatively low rankings across the majority of engagement drivers.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Goal setting	8	6	-2 ↓	0.05
<b>Workload</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>-3 ↓</b>	<b>-0.18</b>
Management support	11	14	3 ↑	0.15
Strategy	11	12	1 ↑	-0.06
Freedom of opinions	12	12	0	0
Recognition	12	12	0	-0.02
Peer relationships	13	15	2 ↑	0.14
Organisational fit	13	14	1 ↑	0.1
Environment	13	13	0	0.07
Growth	13	14	1 ↑	0.01
Meaningful work	14	15	1 ↑	0.07
Autonomy	15	13	-2 ↓	-0.02
<b>Reward</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-3 ↓</b>	<b>-0.14</b>
Accomplishment	16	15	-1 ↓	-0.05

The most notable increases in score between Q1 and Q4 2021 were for management support and peer relationships, which appear to highlight the close working relationships and sense of camaraderie between employees in the retail space.

While there are numerous aspects of the employee experience that can be improved, the most pressing relates to reward, which dropped to 15th place across all sectors. This has been an ongoing conversation in recent years, exacerbated by the global pandemic, and more recently, the rising prices of gas and electricity coupled with inflationary pressures.

# Software and Services



Software and services was one of the top-performing sectors in 2021, ranking first for 12 of 14 engagement drivers at the end of the year. There were meaningful improvements for environment, recognition, growth, reward, organisational fit and freedom of opinions.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Environment	1	1	0	0.28
Recognition	1	1	0	0.15
Growth	1	2	1 ↗	0.15
Reward	1	1	0	0.14
Organisational fit	1	1	0	0.13
Freedom of opinions	1	1	0	0.13
Accomplishment	1	5	4 ↗	0.1
Management support	1	1	0	0.1
Peer relationships	1	1	0	0.1
Strategy	1	4	3 ↗	0.1
Autonomy	1	1	0	0.09
Workload	1	3	2 ↗	0.03
<b>Goal setting</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7 ↗</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>Meaningful work</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4 ↗</b>	<b>0.09</b>

A huge contributing factor to this performance is the majority of software and services organisations that have been championing remote and flexible working policies for a number of years already – making them perfectly positioned to adapt in the face of a global pandemic.

Two of the lowest-ranked drivers at the start of the year were goal setting and meaningful work, both of which had improved rankings by the end of 2021. Improvements for goal setting appear to be an indication of the policies and practices put in place while transitioning to full-time remote work. Meaningful work, on the other hand, points to a greater sense of meaning derived from the role technology has played in facilitating other organisations to do the same.

# Technology



The technology industry, which includes communications and electronics equipment and technology hardware, was the second-highest performing sector overall in 2021.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3 ↗</b>	<b>0.1</b>
Accomplishment	1	4	3 ↗	0.09
Environment	2	2	0	0.28
Growth	2	3	1 ↗	0.15
Reward	2	2	0	0.14
Freedom of opinions	2	2	0	0.13
Recognition	2	1	-1 ↘	0.13
Organisational fit	2	1	-1 ↘	0.11
Management support	2	2	0	0.1
Peer relationships	2	2	0	0.1
Autonomy	2	2	0	0.09
Workload	2	4	2 ↗	0.03
<b>Goal setting</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5 ↗</b>	<b>0.09</b>
Meaningful work	6	6	0	0.07

Much like the software and services sector, technology was able to solidify its position at the top of the table, with meaningful score improvements for 12 of 14 engagement drivers. Notable ranking changes include strategy and accomplishment, which currently are ranked highest across all sectors, and goal setting, which is now a joint third with software and services.

Creating a connection between the day-to-day work of employees and the positive impact it has on customers is one area that technology organisations can focus on in 2022. Possible approaches include sharing customer success stories with the wider organisation, and giving employees an opportunity to connect with customers more regularly.

# Transport



Transport was one of the hardest-hit sectors as a result of the global pandemic, which is highlighted by the fact that scores and ranking decreased across all 14 engagement drivers.



Engagement Driver	2021 Q4 Rank	2021 Q1 Rank	Rank Change	Score Change
Workload	5	1	-4 ↘	-0.31
Goal setting	9	3	-6 ↘	-0.07
Meaningful work	11	5	-6 ↘	-0.14
Accomplishment	13	7	-6 ↘	-0.15
<b>Environment</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>-7 ↘</b>	<b>-0.15</b>
Organisational fit	15	10	-5 ↘	-0.2
<b>Peer relationships</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-11 ↘</b>	<b>-0.22</b>
Growth	16	11	-5 ↘	-0.19
Recognition	16	13	-3 ↘	-0.22
<b>Reward</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-9 ↘</b>	<b>-0.26</b>
Strategy	16	10	-6 ↘	-0.47
<b>Autonomy</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-7 ↘</b>	<b>-0.15</b>
Freedom of opinions	17	13	-4 ↘	-0.22
Management support	17	12	-5 ↘	-0.24

Although workload was ranked first at the start of the year and fifth by the end of 2021, this is most likely due to reduced demand for public transport, air travel, and freight shipping.

The overall decline in driver scores for transport makes it difficult to pinpoint a specific area of focus. Due to the varied nature of organisations in this sector, it's essential for companies to analyse comments and other qualitative feedback from employees – which may provide clues about the actions needed to start improving driver scores in 2022.



# Conclusion



It's clear to see that 2021 was a challenging year for a number of industries that were more directly impacted by the pandemic. In many cases, these are the same sectors with a higher proportion of frontline workers, raising difficult questions about what future work models might look like, especially compared to predominantly office-based industries.

The overall decline in workload scores is another aspect of the employee experience that organisations will need to address in 2022. While some of the immediate pressures of the global pandemic might have eased, many employees have endured prolonged periods of stress over the past few years. In order to reduce the impact of burnout and diminished mental health on overall engagement, it's essential to ask employees what support they will need in the year ahead.

Beyond the global challenges facing organisations, there are various focus areas within each industry that present an opportunity to improve the employee experience. These focus areas are only a starting point because every organisation will have its own unique strengths and priorities. It's only with an accurate and regularly updated view of the [employee voice](#) that organisations can take appropriate action to create a truly engaged workforce.

To learn more about how Workday Peakon Employee Voice can help, [contact us today.](#)



Workday | Phone: +31 (0) 20 808 1836 | [workday.be](https://www.workday.be)

---

© 2022. Workday, Inc. All rights reserved. Workday and the Workday logo are registered trademarks of Workday, Inc. All other brand and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective holders.  
20220615-q2-heartbeat-report-ENBX