

People Risk Canada

Resetting priorities to manage risks for workforce and business resilience.

About the survey

People risks are the business risks related to your workforce and generated by how you attract, manage, equip, motivate and retain this most critical asset.

What

Captures attitudes towards the greatest people risks facing organizations, including challenges mitigating these risks.

Who

107 respondents
53 HR professionals
54 risk professionals

Respondents represented both a wide range of industries and cross-section of employer sizes.

When


Fielded March 2022.

Key findings


We grouped 25 key threats into five pillars of people risks. HR and risk managers assessed the three year likelihood and severity of these risks for their organization.




Methodology
Survey respondents were asked to assess the likelihood of the risk occurring in their organization in the next 3 years on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 representing a risk that is not very likely and 5 a risk that is very likely to occur.
They also assessed severity of its impact on the business if it were to occur on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 representing no impact and 5 a catastrophic impact.

**Turning risk into a competitive advantage**

Organizations can achieve a competitive advantage through resilience and agility during turbulent times by actively mitigating these risks.

**The time is now**

In the face of emerging risk, now is the time to strengthen risk management foundations by being more deliberate, comprehensive and innovative in anticipating emerging and longstanding risks.

**Working together**

Critical to this is building on the trust established between risk and human resource functions so they work together to manage people risks.

Top 10 Risks by Risk Rating Score (RRS) Global vs Region


	Global	Canada	United States
1	Cybersecurity and data privacy	Cybersecurity and data privacy	Cybersecurity and data privacy
2	Administration and fiduciary	Talent attraction, retention and engagement	Administration and fiduciary
3	Catastrophic personal life events	Mental health	Talent attraction, retention and engagement
4	Pandemics and other communicable health conditions	Legal, compliance and financial practices	Catastrophic personal life events
5	Changing nature of work	Increasing cost of health, risk protection and well-being benefits	Changing nature of work
6	Increasing cost of health, risk protection and well-being benefits	Changing nature of work	Benefit, policy and reward decision making and accountability
7	Benefit, policy and reward decision making and accountability	Impacts of automation and AI	Employee health and well-being
8	Environment	Benefit, policy and reward decision making and accountability	Legal, compliance and financial practices
9	Impacts of automation and AI	Administration and fiduciary	Pandemics and other communicable health conditions
10	Talent attraction, retention and engagement	Conduct and culture	Increasing cost of health, risk protection and well-being benefits

	HR	Risk
1	Cybersecurity and data privacy	Cybersecurity and data privacy
2	Mental health	Talent attraction, retention and engagement
3	Changing nature of work	Mental health
4	Talent attraction, retention and engagement	Skills obsolescence
5	Impacts of automation and AI	Legal, compliance and financial practices
6	Legal, compliance and financial practices	Increasing cost of health, risk protection and well-being benefits
7	Catastrophic personal life events	Succession and key person risk
8	Increasing cost of health, risk protection and well-being benefits	Benefit, policy and reward decision making and accountability
9	Conduct and culture	HR technology obsolescence
10	Pandemics and other communicable health conditions	Administration and fiduciary

Risk categories ● Health & safety ● Governance & financial ● Accelerated digitization ● Talent practices ● Environmental & social

Risks are ranked by risk rating score; the product of the likelihood and the severity ratings.

Five pillars shaping people risks

**Health and Safety**

Health and safety risks are a threat to organizations, and have a high potential to disrupt business.

56%

are currently addressing workforce exhaustion.

Implication:

Invest in benefits and other programs that manage health risks and meet high-priority employee needs. This will increase people and business resilience.

Mental health issues risk being a blind spot for many organizations


What you see above the surface:

- Sickness absence
- Disability claims
- Direct medical claims

Problems lurking below:

- Domestic violence
- Potential for suicide
- Potential for workplace violence
- Potential for misconduct
- Safety mistakes
- Potential for catastrophic errors
- Indirect medical/disability claims
- People not feeling valued
- Inability to find/afford therapy
- Alcohol/substance abuse
- Stigma/shame
- Fear of failure
- Inability to keep up with tech change
- Lack of trust in leaders
- Inability to cope with pain
- Lack of self-care
- Social isolation
- Poor morale and employee engagement
- Colleague irritability or inability to cope at work

Governance and Financial



The management of compensation, employee benefit and retirement plans is becoming increasingly complex and difficult.

62%

have clear roles and responsibilities for benefit, policy and reward decision making and accountability.

Implication:

Advance best practice governance for all types of rewards. This will avoid costly errors and reputational damage.

Benefit plan objectives
Governance process/structure

Design | Vendor management | Administration | Communication | Financing | Risk management

Strategic
Tactical

Accelerated Digitization



Skills obsolescence, where businesses struggle to develop, acquire or retain the skills for digital transformation, is now a top people risk.

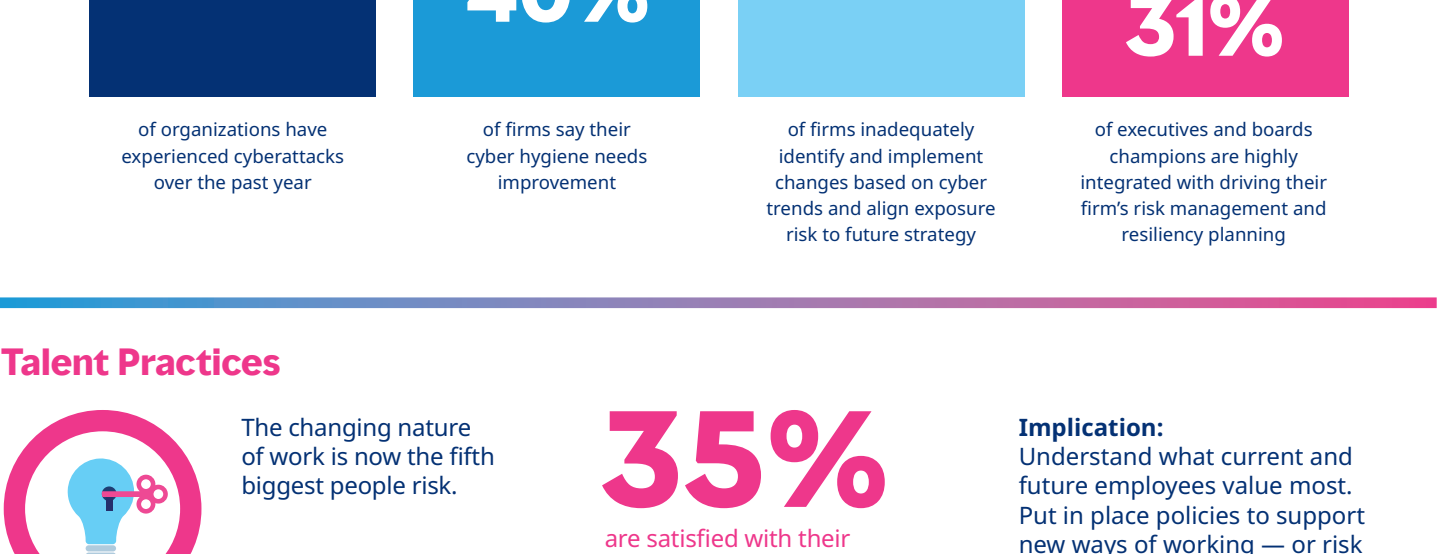
32%

view lack of skilled resources to understand and address risk a challenge in managing accelerated digitization.

Implication:

Design and deliver benefits for people with future-ready skills, perhaps in roles that do not yet exist.

People risks are behind most cybersecurity incidents globally
Fostering a cyber-vigilant culture across the workforce and promoting an aggressive cyber posture not just internally but also with customers and partners can means of competitive differentiation.



Talent Practices



The changing nature of work is now the fifth biggest people risk.

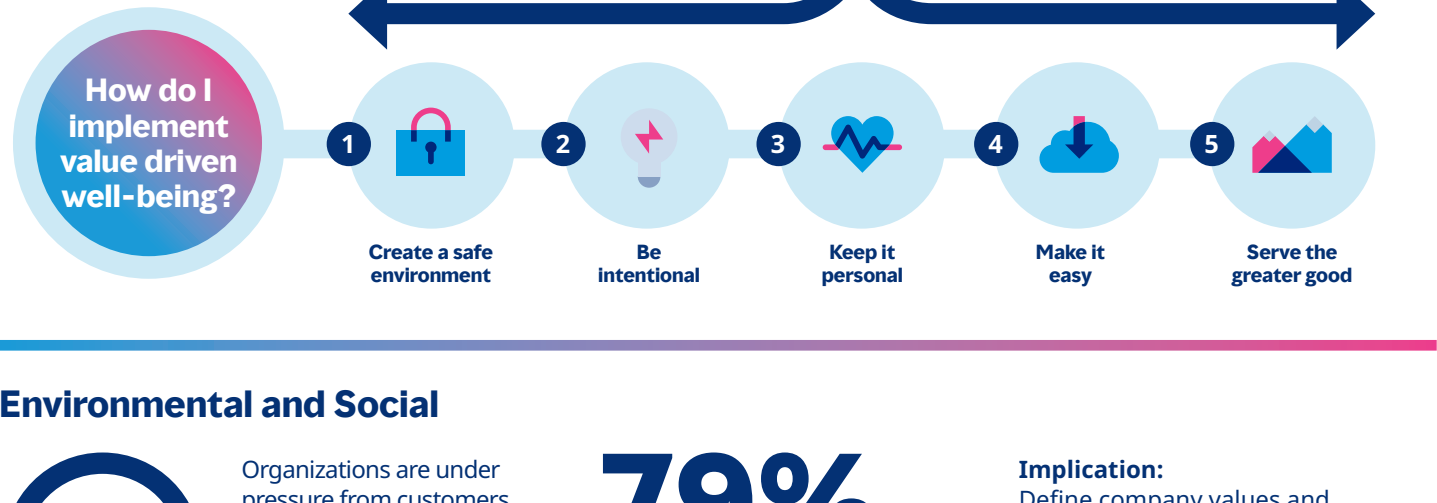
35%

are satisfied with their organization's policies and support systems to enable remote, hybrid or other flexible ways of working.


Implication:

Understand what current and future employees value most. Put in place policies to support new ways of working — or risk losing valuable skills.

People need some empathetic care in a changing world
Value-driven well-being goes beyond programmatic conditions to help cope with the changing nature of work and life.



Environmental and Social



Organizations are under pressure from customers, employees and investors to address inequalities, remove disparities and combat climate change.

79%

plan to invest in diversity, equity and inclusion over the next five years.

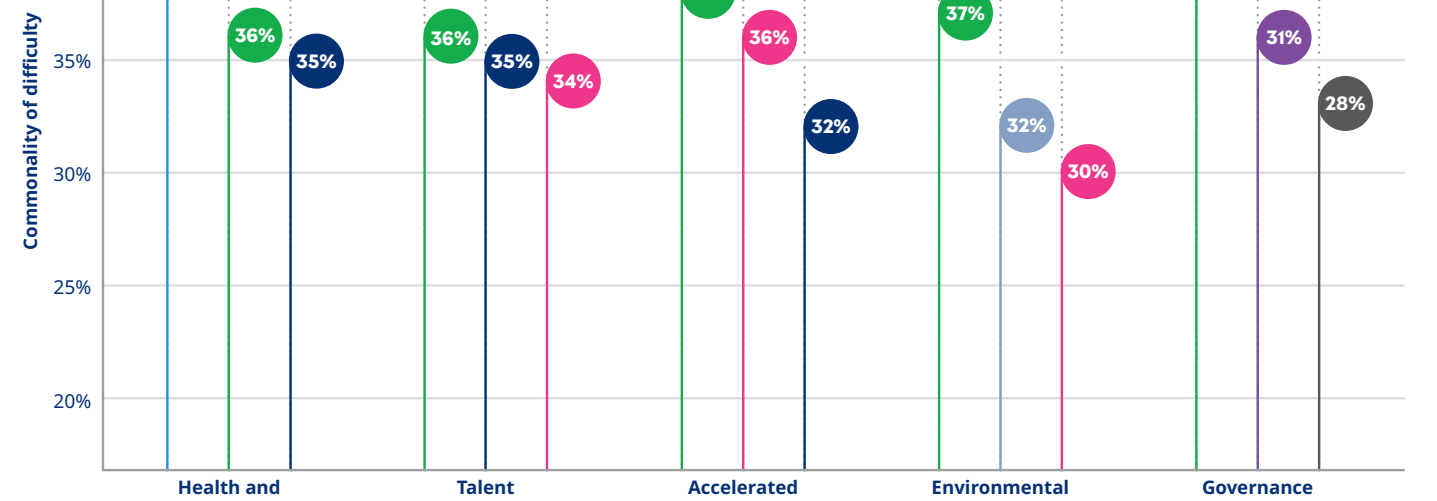
Implication:

Define company values and targets around ESG issues, and use them as a lens to assess current benefits, investments and working conditions.

Health access
Sustainability
Equity - digital - partnerships
Well-being and resilience
DEI and health equity

- Health access and coverage gaps
- Health affordability and value
- Workforce protection and safety
- Supply chain and gig economy
- Infectious disease and chronic conditions
- Mental health
- Inclusion and communities
- Maternal and child health

Key barriers to addressing people risks




Applying an enterprise risk management approach to people risks enhances agility and resilience

Enterprise risk management approach

Identify | Analyze and assess | Respond and control | Monitor and review

Key risk indicators | Key control indicators

Treat, terminate, transfer or tolerate



Having a highly effective enterprise risk management (ERM) approach in place provides assurance and confidence of outcomes to boards and leadership teams.

Ten out of the ten top risks identified by HR/risk managers globally are mitigated by employee benefit, support programs and/or how they are designed and delivered – read our report to learn where to start.