

# LONELINESS AND THE Workplace

## 2020 U.S. REPORT: When employers and employees work together to combat loneliness, everyone wins.

Combatting loneliness at work should be a priority for employees and employers. If we can begin to connect with people more productively at work, we'll be more productive *doing* our work.

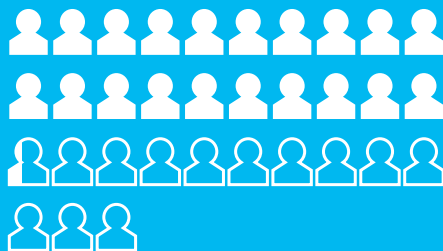
### UCLA LONELINESS SCALE



The evaluation of loneliness below was measured by a score of 43 or higher on the UCLA Loneliness Scale, a 20-item questionnaire developed to assess subjective feelings of loneliness, as well as social isolation. The UCLA Loneliness Scale is a frequently referenced and acknowledged academic measure used to gauge loneliness.

The study's questions assess respondents' subjective feelings of loneliness, social isolation, health, work performance and other factors, and all data reflects these self-reported feelings.

### THERE ARE 330 MILLION AMERICANS,<sup>1</sup> YET WE'RE LONELY AND GETTING LONELIER



**61%** of  
those surveyed  
are lonely

Loneliness in Americans is up 7-percentage points from 54% in 2018 to 61% in 2019. Why?

- Not enough social support
- Too few meaningful social interactions
- Poor physical and mental health
- Not enough balance in our lives



**90,000  
HOURS  
AT WORK  
LIFETIME<sup>2</sup>**

### LONELINESS AT WORK



#### WORK SATISFACTION

Americans who feel as though they work less than they want (49.6) are almost three points lonelier on the UCLA Loneliness Scale than those who work more than they want (46.9) and more than six points lonelier than those who feel they work as much as they want (43.5).



#### COLLEAGUES MATTER

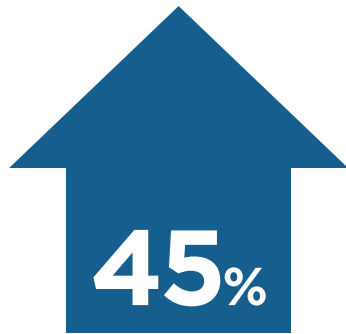
People who report that they don't have good relationships with their coworkers (53.7) are 10 points lonelier than those who do (43.7).



#### WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Americans who feel they don't have a good work-life balance (50.8) are almost seven points lonelier than those who say they do (44.0).

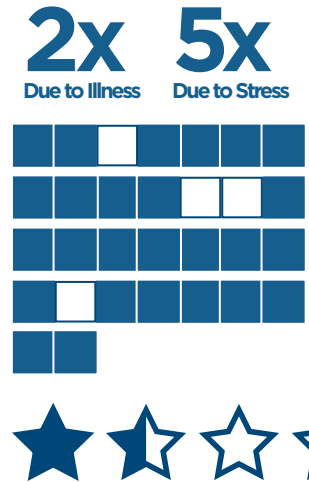
LONELINESS ISN'T GOOD FOR BUSINESS



**LOWER PRODUCTIVITY**

Less than half (45%) of lonely workers claim higher productivity than their peers most or all of the time.

**MISSED DAYS AT WORK**



**HIGHER RISK OF TURNOVER**



In an average month, lonely workers report that they think about quitting their job more than twice as often as non-lonely workers.

**LOWER QUALITY OF WORK**

12% of lonely workers believe their work is lower quality than it should be.

COMBATting LONELINESS AT WORK



**WORKPLACE CULTURE**

When people feel they do not need to hide their true selves at work, they are more than nine points less lonely (42.0 vs. 51.2). Employees are almost seven points less lonely with employers that promote good work-life balance (44.0 vs. 50.8) and four points less lonely when they can “leave work at work” (44.0 vs. 48.1).



**TECHNOLOGY**

When employees feel that technology helps them make meaningful connections with coworkers, they are more than four points less lonely (43.9 vs. 48.0). When technology is not perceived as a replacement for in-person interactions, employees are two points less lonely.



**FRIENDS**

Employees who say they have colleagues they like eating lunch with are less lonely (43.5 vs. 50.2). People who feel that they have a “best friend” or good friend at work are almost six points less lonely than those who do not (43.2 vs. 48.8). Socializing outside work can reduce loneliness by nearly five points.

For more information, please visit [Cigna.com/CombattingLoneliness](https://Cigna.com/CombattingLoneliness).

Approximately 10,441 adults ages 18 and over from the continental U.S., Alaska and Hawaii were surveyed online by Ipsos Polling, in English. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of ±1.1 percentage points for all respondents surveyed.

<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau. (n.d.). U.S. and World Population Clock. Retrieved January 7, 2020 from <https://www.census.gov/popclock/>.

<sup>2</sup> Pepperscorn, S. (2019, July 26). Why You Should Stop Trying to Be Happy at Work. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved January 7, 2020 from <https://hbr.org/2019/07/why-you-should-stop-trying-to-be-happy-at-work>.

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