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## 2 Big Ways COVID-19 Has Changed Work Forever

Seemingly overnight, COVID-19 changed the way we live, work, and interact in the world. Unlike a hurricane that passes through a geographic region for a day or so, a pandemic is global, enduring, and pervasively-disruptive. As such, COVID-19 leaves in its wake significant workplace changes, some of which are likely permanent. (*For more information: [6 Ways COVID-19 Will Change the Workplace Forever](#);*)

Here's a closer look at a couple of the notable ways the pandemic has changed the workplace, workers, and work itself forever.

- **Work from home**

According to [a Cornell University study](#), work from home (WFH) will not only continue but will likely accelerate. A [recent Gartner poll](#) shows that “48% of employees will work from home, at least part of the part of the time.” Before COVID-19 hit, that number was around 30%.

For many workers, that's welcome news. The majority of people who began WFH as result of the pandemic say that, although the initial adjustment was rough, they want to work remotely permanently.

From an organizational standpoint, WFH positively impacts the bottom line in several ways. For example, with fewer employees working on-site, companies save on real estate and operating costs. On top of that, as a cost-savings measure, the Gartner poll shows that one-third of organizations are replacing full-time employees with [contingent and contract workers](#) who can stay connected digitally from nearly anywhere, as a cost-savings measure.”

- **Separation of skills and roles**

Before the pandemic, employers categorized the most *critical roles* within the organization as those that have the greatest impact on the organization's ability to *meet strategic goals*. Now, however, leaders have broadened the “critical” category to include:

- employees in critical *strategic roles*,
- employees in critical *workflow roles*, and
- employees with critical *skills*.



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As Emily Rose McRae, director in the Gartner HR practice, explains, “Separating critical skills from critical roles shifts the focus to coaching employees to develop skills that potentially open multiple avenues for them, rather than focusing on preparing for a specific next role.”

What skills will employees need to navigate the shift from roles to skills? Experts say these skills top the list: self-direction, digital capabilities, empathy, communication management, adaptability, and motivational skills. (*For more information:* [6 Skills Employees Will Need in the Post-pandemic Workplace.](#))

## **Managing Change & Transitions**

It’s clear that COVID-19 has transformed our lives in many ways. At its core, it serves as an important reminder of just how resilient, adaptable, and resourceful we can be when facing major transitions — whether professionally or personally. (*For more information:* [Why Resilience Is Imperative in a Post-Pandemic World.](#))