

**CEO** FOR  
ONE  
**MONTH**



# #CtheFuture 3.0

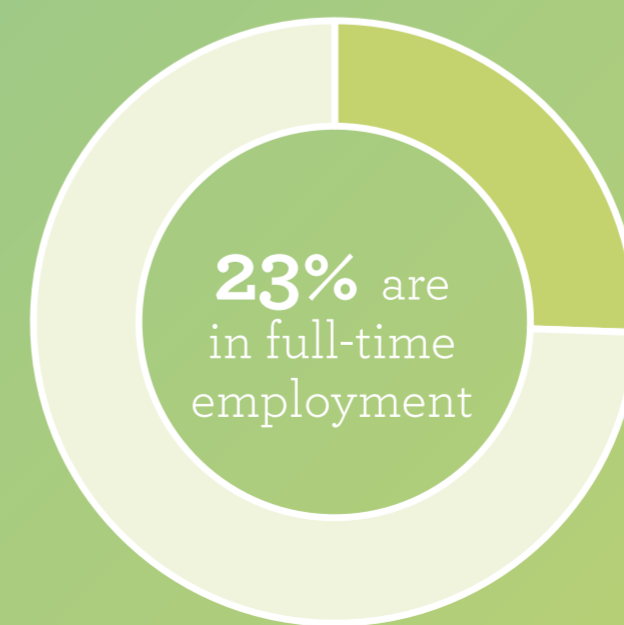
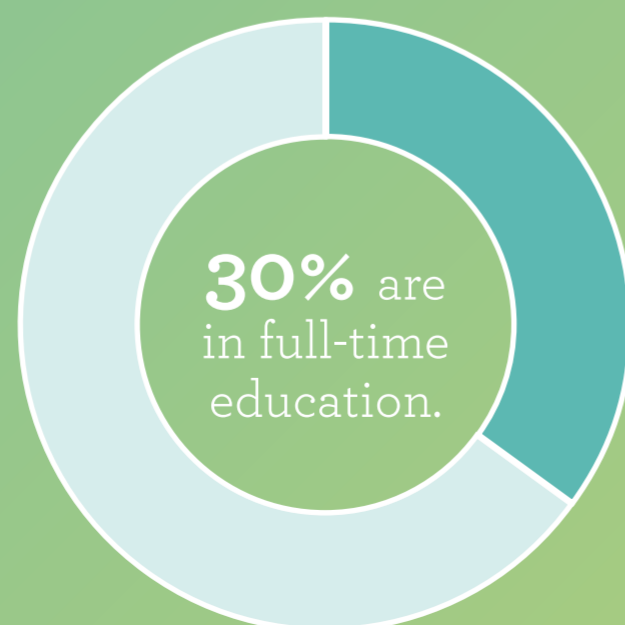
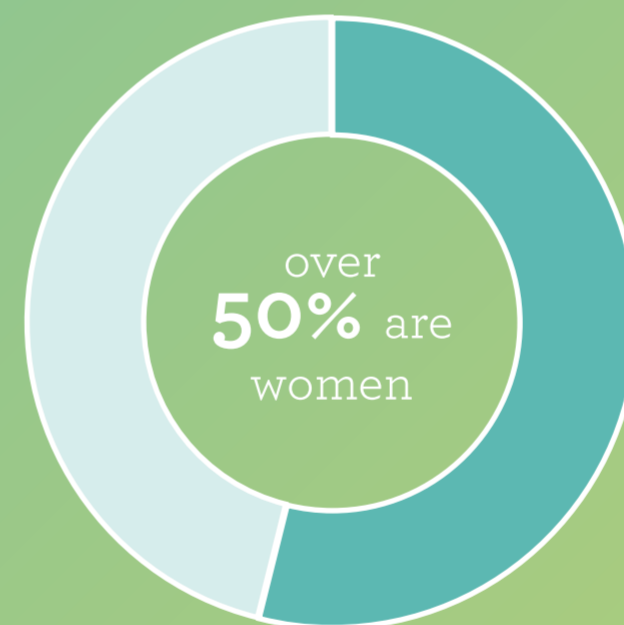
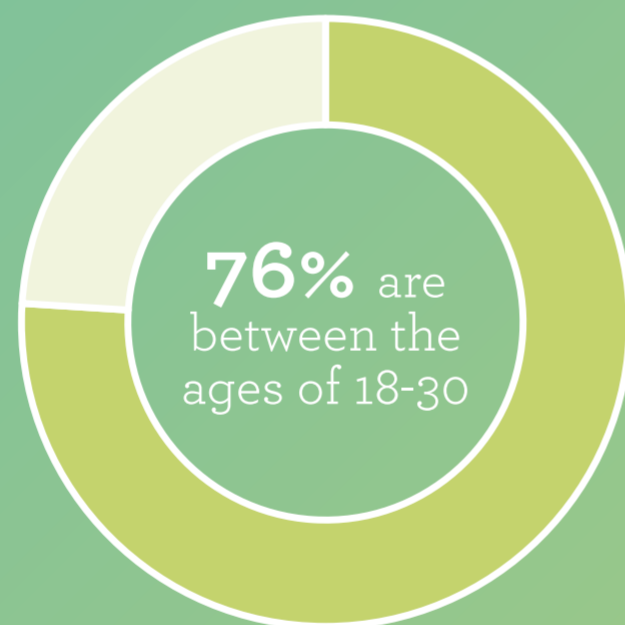
Young leaders looking to the future work

# Let's meet our future leaders

How the next generation of talent sees our current leadership and the future of work is vital to understanding how we, as organisations, can adapt and evolve. It helps us make accurate predictions about the future and address the challenges developing effective, diverse teams. The global health pandemic marked a new era in the world of work, as peoples' working patterns shifted, encouraged by remarkable developments in digital transformation. We are now in the new normal.

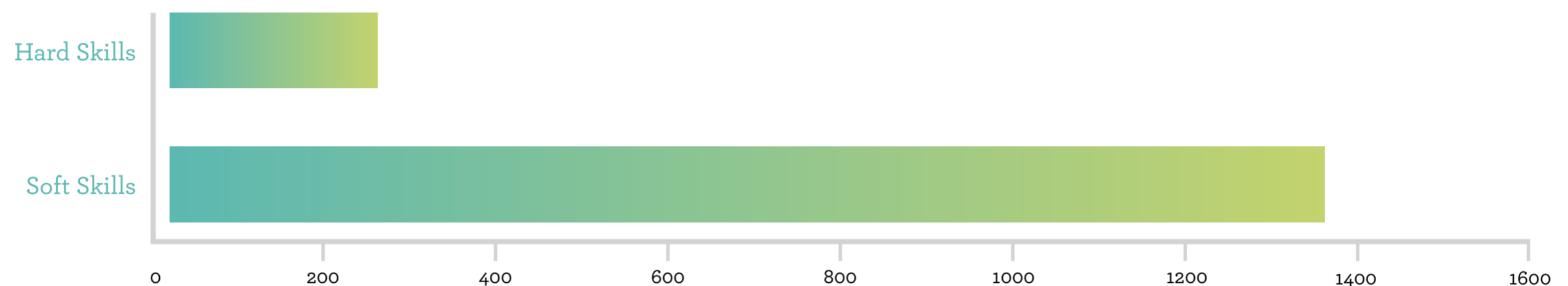
Here at The Adecco Group we carried out a survey to explore the thoughts and feelings of our future leaders. #CtheFuture 3.0 is a survey of candidates who participated in the Adecco Group's CEO for One Month 2022 initiative. We asked these promising leaders what they think about the future of work and new ways of working. This included questions about flexible working practices, access to labour markets, and their concerns about the future of work. So, who are our future leaders? Here is what they look like this year:

**Our 1,685 respondents come from 50+ different countries. The top 5 were: India, Italy, Peru, Brazil, and UAE.**



# Soft skills continue to grow in importance

In our first survey 3 years ago, 69% of respondents said they believed soft skills were more important for future CEOs than hard skills. In 2021, that figure was 79%. A year later, over 82% of our young leaders see soft skills as being the most important ones to develop for the future.

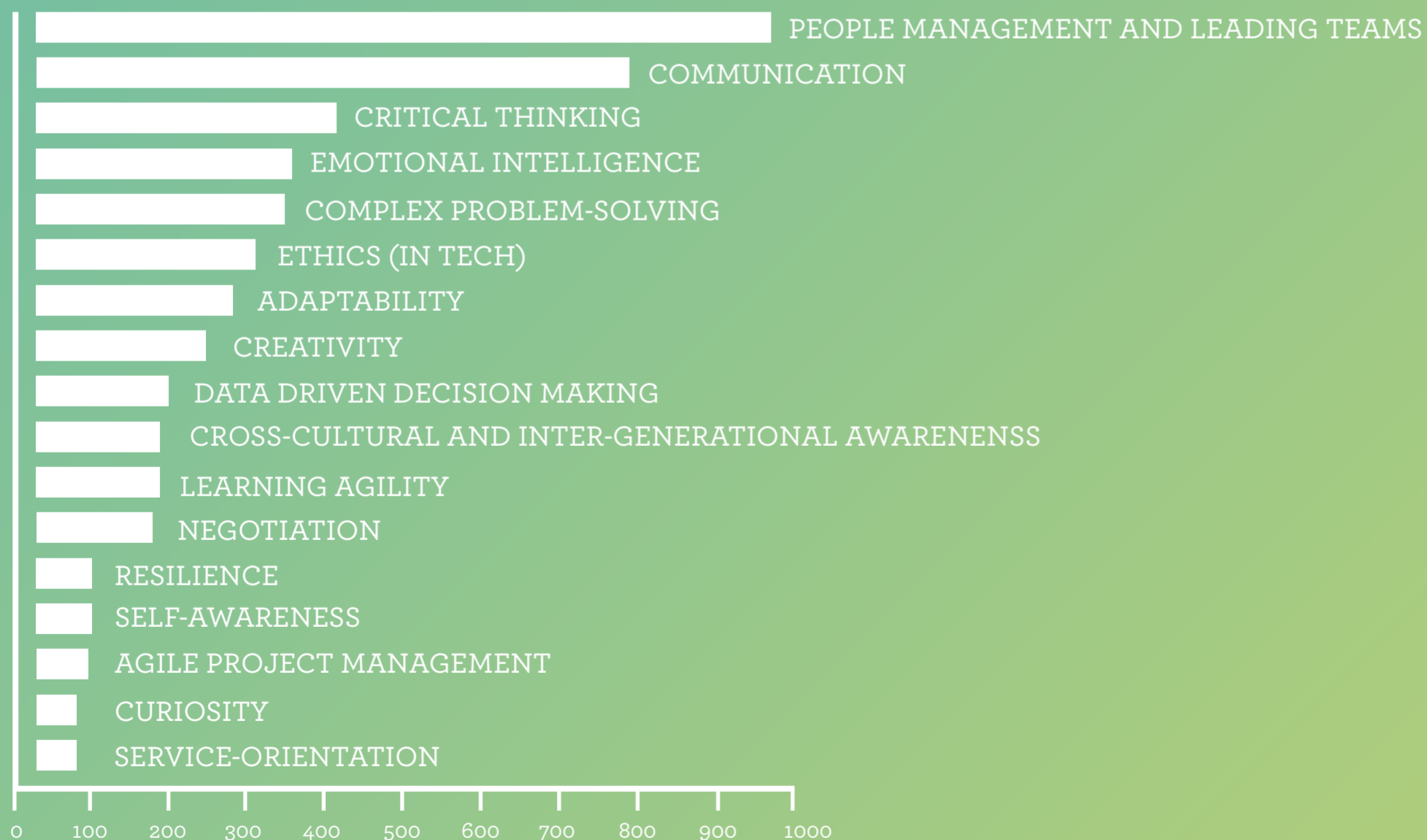


This pattern highlights the growing demand for, and valuation of having leaders who can empathise and make meaningful connections with their employees. As our young leaders plot their career pathways, this is certainly something to be taken into consideration when pursuing professional development opportunities.

# Rediscovering the need for decision-makers

Which of these soft skills do our candidates value as most important for future leaders to have? The results were strikingly similar to last year, bar a few noticeable changes. ‘People Management & Leading Teams’ was marked as the most important soft skill at #1, as it has been for the last two years. ‘Communication’ remains in #2 again.

However, last year, our respondents valued ‘Emotional Intelligence’ as the 3rd most important soft skill. This year, ‘Critical Thinking’ surged as the #3 most important soft skill our young leaders value. So, what’s changed?



During the global health pandemic, there was a renewed focus on soft skills such as emotional intelligence. The mental health repercussions of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns certainly made people value leaders who could empathize with the difficult situations people found themselves in. In the past year, as we emerge into a changed yet more recognizable working landscape, more traditional soft skills such as critical thinking are perhaps becoming more valued as people re-enter more familiar working patterns in the office.

# Traditional higher education losing momentum

In last year's survey, whilst 49% of our young leaders did not think future CEOs would need university degrees, 54% still did. However, this year it seems that the balance has tipped. 54% of this year's respondents said they *did not* think a university degree would be necessary for future CEOs.

46% YES

54% NO

Whilst there is certainly still a demand for traditional education pathways, there is an increasing trend towards people valuing experience, rather than degrees as a key component to good leadership.

# The job market remains strong for new talent

Despite the global health pandemic, our young leaders of the future still found the opportunity to access a new or first job. Last year, more than 50% of the applicable respondents were still able to access new or first job opportunities during the pandemic. This year, nearly two thirds of the applicable respondents said they were able to seek new opportunities at the end of this pandemic.

YES

NO

Does not apply

It suggests perhaps that many organisations have been able to become more agile and flexible during the pandemic and remain buoyant enough to continue to attract new talent despite the economic hardships of the past 3 years.

# Flexible working hours are here to stay

As we have emerged from the difficulties caused by the pandemic lockdowns, we have entered the new normal. Many organisations were shifting towards more flexible working models even before the pandemic and have changing expectations of how, and where employees should work. We asked our respondents how desirable the following ways of working were.

This year, 85% of our young leaders said that flexible working hours were desirable/very desirable, whereas only 30% said traditional 9-5 hours were. 52% said that fixed-term long contracts were important, and around 30% preferred multiple changing short-term contracts.

These results are similar to last year's respondents and map out the expected ways of working that future talent want to ensure they can thrive. It seems that there is still a desire for fixed-term contracts, but those that allow employees the flexibility to choose their hours within these.

## How desirable are the following ways of working?

Share of respondents who said that the way of working was desirable or very desirable, in percent:



# Learning to lead remotely

The teams of the future will blend remote working alongside on-site campuses. It is simultaneously an exciting opportunity for organisations to hire with more diversity and inclusion, and a challenge for leaders navigating the complexities of teams expanding across regions.

**67% YES**

**33% NO**

**Last year, 60% of our respondents said current managers and CEOs are suited to managing remote teams. This year, that figure has increased to 67%. It suggests that leaders have understood and embraced the challenges of leading the teams of the future, and are developing the skillsets to do so.**



# Priorities for the future of work



This year we posed the important question to our young leaders: ‘What are your biggest concerns about the future of work?’

Perhaps unsurprisingly, following a difficult 3 years during the global health pandemic for people, ‘Mental Health’ came out overwhelmingly on top, with over 20% of respondents suggesting this was highly important.

The 2nd and 3rd most important issues identified by our respondents at 13% were ‘Access to the world of work’, and ‘Pay equality’.

# In Summary -

One of the most important takeaways of this survey is that our young leaders have continued to place to value on human-centric notions, as was the pattern developing last year. The importance of soft skills has continued to be emphasised as a vital component of modern leaders, and increasingly the future generations see experience over higher education as more critical.

The apprehension our young leaders have about the future of work offer readers a great blueprint as to the concerns of the next generation of talent, and what organisations can do to ensure they are focusing on the right issues to ensure they have the right infrastructure to retain this talent.

As we've emerged from the global health pandemic, an acknowledgement that things will never be quite the same has helped reinforce the importance of more flexible, and occasionally remote, teams. Our conclusion to our survey last year remains true, and highlights both the exciting opportunities and enduring challenges for the future of work;

**Despite, or perhaps as a result of, the vast technological changes and digitisation sweeping over our society, the human connection remains crucial for the success of an organisation.**

# Methodology



**Number of respondents 1,685**

**Respondents:** Applicants for the 2022 CEO for One Month programme were asked to participate in this research. What is CEO for One Month? It's a programme run by the Adecco Group in more than 40 countries. The first step is for candidates to apply to become CEO for One Month in their country of residence, before making it to a shortlist of top 10 performers. Of the final 10 candidates, one will be chosen to become Global CEO for One Month and work alongside Denis Machuel.

# About the Adecco Group



**Great  
Place  
To  
Work®**

The Adecco Group is the world's leading HR solutions partner. We provide more than 700,000 people with permanent and flexible employment every day. With more than 34,000 employees in 60 countries, we transform the world of work one job at a time. Our colleagues serve more than 100,000 organisations with the talent, HR services and cutting-edge technology they need to succeed in an ever-changing global economy.

As a Fortune Global 500 company, we lead by example, creating shared value that meets social needs while driving business innovation. Our culture of inclusivity, fairness and teamwork empowers individuals and organisations, fuels economies, and builds better societies. In 2021 we were voted onto the world's *Great Places Work* list.

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# About CEO for One Month



For further information on CEO for One Month:



For more information on the CEO for One Month 2022 programme or the #CtheFuture research please contact [media@adecgroup.com](mailto:media@adecgroup.com).

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