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Defending IT Talent

How Everywhere Work impacts IT
— and what you can do about it.

Part of Ivanti's Everywhere Work series

Few are paying attention to the pressures Everywhere Work places on IT, though the signs are all around us.

More than half of IT professionals say the shift to hybrid and remote working has caused significant negative impacts on their work lives: lost workplace connections, mental health challenges and higher workloads. Despite this, few (16%) want to work in the office full time again.

The problem is not remote work per se, but the lack of resources, tools and support for employees, especially the tech talent that makes remote work possible.

$1 billion

Organizations will spend nearly $1 billion on "Future of Work" activities in 2023 — a nearly 20% increase over 2022, according to IDC.

Ivanti surveyed 1,800 IT professionals and C-level executives across the globe to understand the phenomenon:

What do IT professionals say about the quality of their work lives?

What impacts do flexible and hybrid work arrangements have on workload?

How can organizations support and retain high-value IT talent?

Methodology

Ivanti surveyed 8,400 executive leaders, IT professionals and office workers in Q1-2023 to understand the attitudes, expectations and challenges facing organizations and their employees in an Everywhere Work environment. Insights collected here are based on responses from a subset of that study: IT professionals and executive leaders. Our goal: to map out the steps organizations must take to activate the "future of work" vision.

Inside:

01	Battling burnout

02	Keeping workload under control

03	Attracting and retaining IT talent

04	Take action

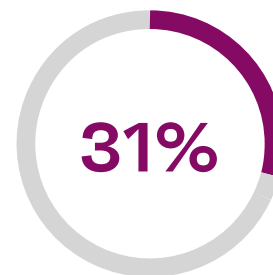**ivanti**

Battling burnout

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Problem Today

Tech talent is on the front lines of strategic reinvention — from empowering new modes of working to fighting fast-evolving cybersecurity threats. Yet burnout and disaffection run rampant.

Did you know?

For Millennials and Gen Z talent, the rate is 10 points higher than for their older counterparts.

Share of IT professionals who "quiet quit" in the last year

UK **35%**

Germany **60%**

France **33%**

US **24%**

Japan **10%**

Australia **21%**
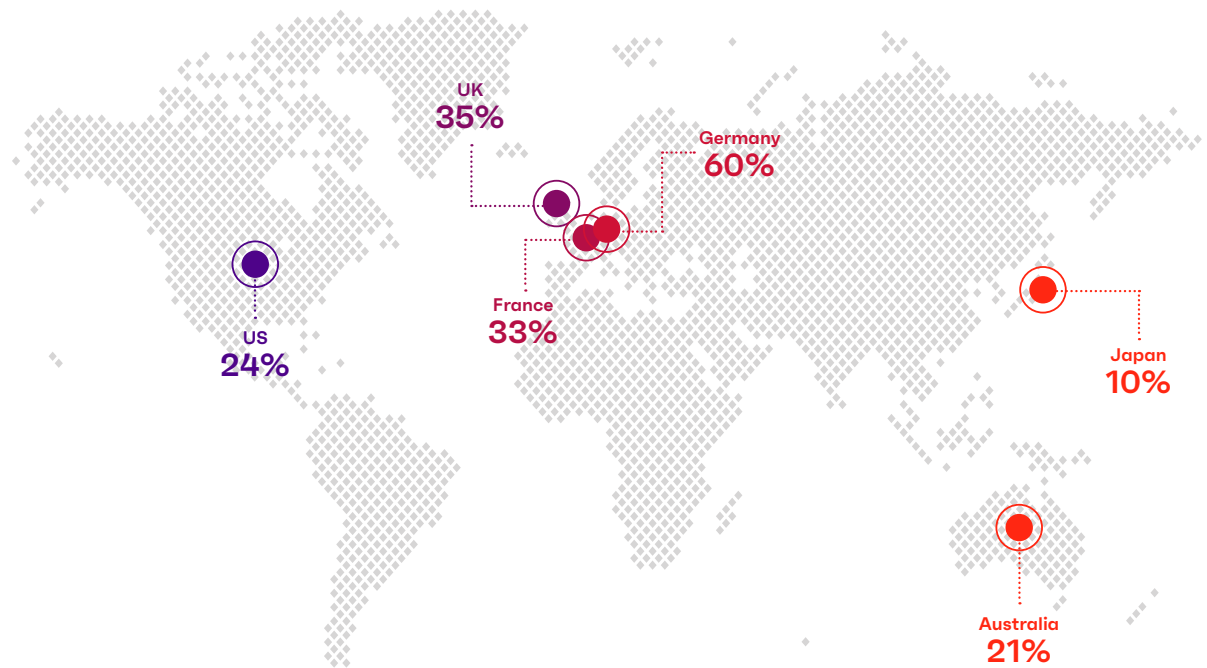
31% of IT professionals say a colleague quit due to burnout

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What drives IT talent to "quiet quit"?

Top 5 reasons for quiet quitting this year

1. I didn't feel motivated at work.

2. I was frustrated by the silos and politics in my workplace.

3. I was burnt out because of an increasing workload.

4. My mental health was suffering.

5. I didn't feel engaged by my employer.

IT professionals are more likely to cite...

Tools/systems I use at work are too complex
- 10%
- 23%

And less likely to complain about...

Don't feel motivated at work
- 46%
- 28%

Feel taken advantage of
- 38%
- 22%

■ Office Workers   ■ IT Workers

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Why It Matters

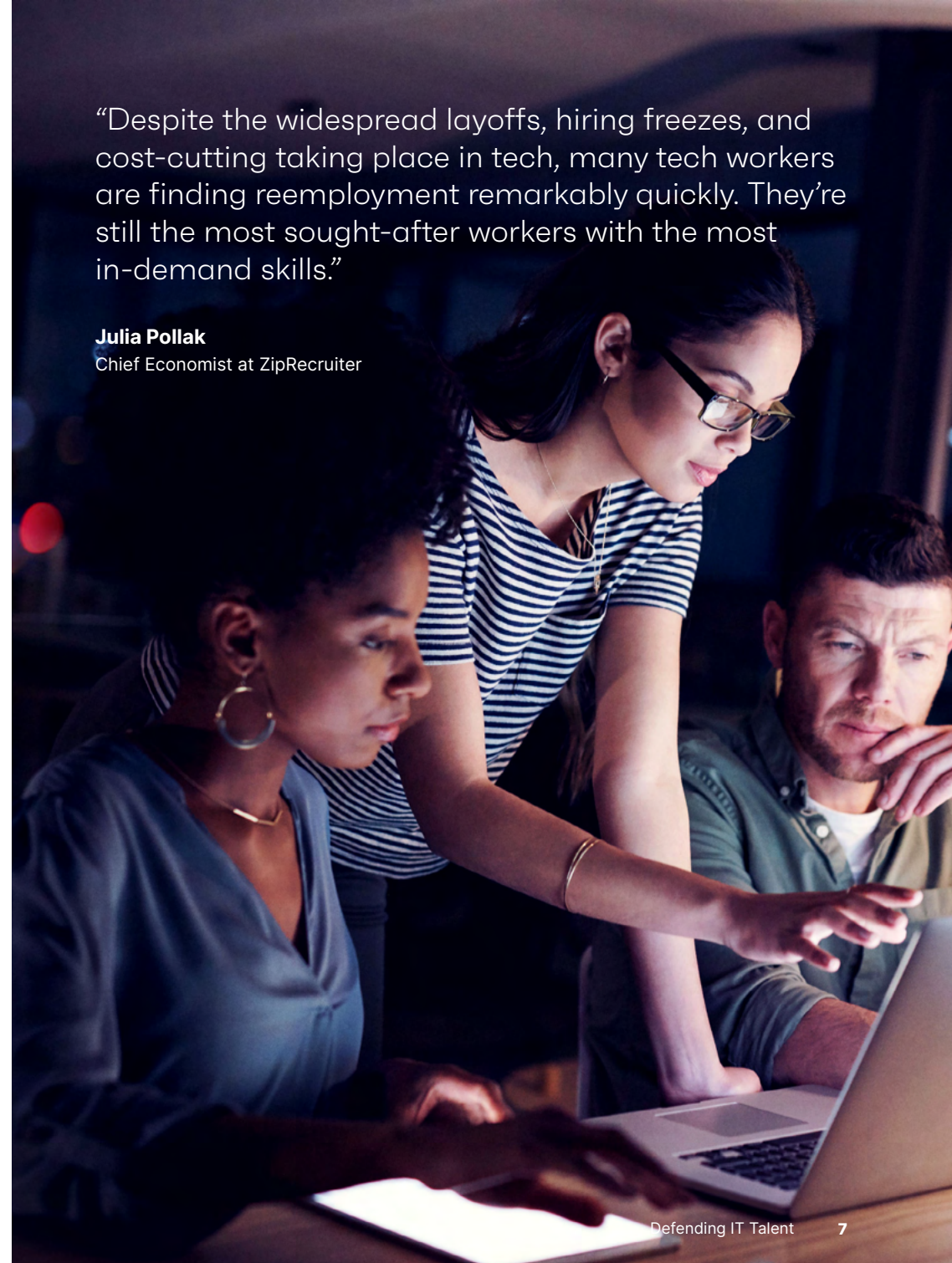# Tech professionals remain among the toughest to recruit, hire and retain.

Well-known tech companies including Meta, Twitter, Amazon, DoorDash and Stripe (among many others) have undertaken well-publicized layoffs in 2023, yet employment in tech jobs is still growing — even in the face of Big Tech's retrenchment. Companies in financial services and healthcare, among many other sectors, are taking advantage of the reshuffling and hiring aggressively for tech roles.

Given that tech talent is in such demand, it's startling to see the high levels of burnout and disengagement. (Doesn't it stand to reason that if IT talent is so hard to recruit and retain, employers would take steps to keep them engaged at work?)

> Organizations can't drive forward the next wave of workplace disruption and innovation if their tech talent isn't fully engaged — whether due to burnout, or because they have one foot out the door.

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"Despite the widespread layoffs, hiring freezes, and cost-cutting taking place in tech, many tech workers are finding reemployment remarkably quickly. They're still the most sought-after workers with the most in-demand skills."

Julia Pollak
Chief Economist at ZipRecruiter

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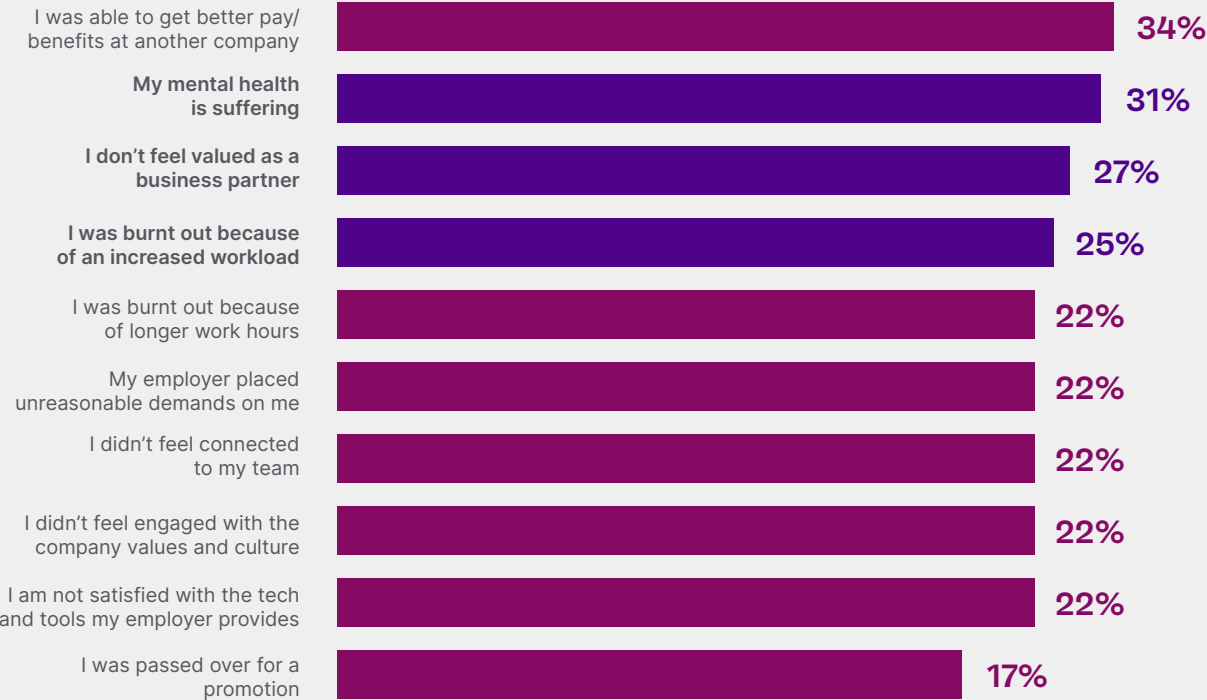
Ivanti's research shows that among those considering quitting their jobs, 31% report their mental health is suffering, 27% don't feel valued and 25% say they're burned out by higher workloads.

What drives turnover for IT?

Compensation is the top driver for quitting a job, but workload and social/emotional concerns are close behind.

**Q:** Why did you switch jobs in the last year? (Select all that apply.)

I was able to get better pay/ benefits at another company	**34%**
My mental health is suffering	**31%**
I don't feel valued as a business partner	**27%**
I was burnt out because of an increased workload	**25%**
I was burnt out because of longer work hours	**22%**
My employer placed unreasonable demands on me	**22%**
I didn't feel connected to my team	**22%**
I didn't feel engaged with the company values and culture	**22%**
I am not satisfied with the tech and tools my employer provides	**22%**
I was passed over for a promotion	**17%**

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Keeping workload under control
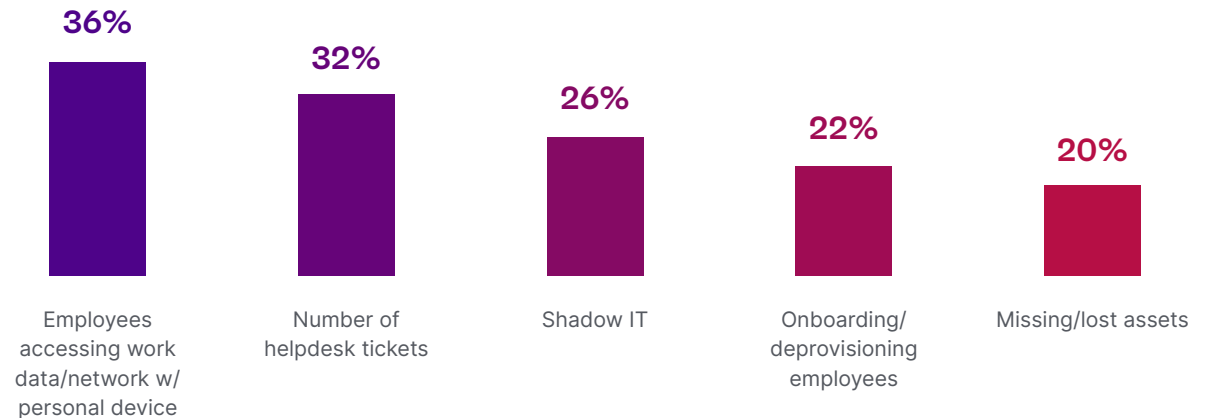
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⚠ Problem Today

As hybrid and remote working grows, so too does IT's workload...yet most organizations aren't prioritizing solutions that can help.
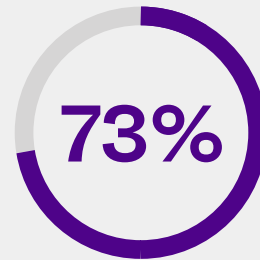
73% of IT and security professionals report increased workloads due to hybrid/virtual work adoption — extra burdens like handling more helpdesk requests from home-based employees and managing shadow IT.

But just 8% of organizations are prioritizing automation for repetitive tasks in 2023.

IT professionals report upticks in these areas due to remote working

36% Employees accessing work data/network w/ personal device

32% Number of helpdesk tickets

26% Shadow IT

22% Onboarding/ deprovisioning employees

20% Missing/lost assets

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"Most companies have shifted to some version of hybrid or remote working over the last few years. What we're seeing now is a knock-on effect on IT departments: additional security risks from a proliferation of devices and remote working, significantly higher workloads, and — not surprisingly, given all this — higher stress for IT talent. It is vital for IT teams to have the tools and solutions they need for the business to be able to allow safe and productive hybrid or remote working. Business leaders are then able to realize the benefit of increasing workloads and improving productivity without experiencing the side effect of burnout and disengagement."

Bob Grazioli,
Chief Information Officer at Ivanti

IT priorities for 2023

Investments in automation and AI – solutions that could reduce the workload for IT – rank last on the priority list.

47%	**Cybersecurity**
42%	**IT infrastructure**
30%	**Cloud**
27%	**Simplification of the IT landscape**
25%	**IT cost optimization**
23%	**Digital customer experience**
22%	**Remote work/collaboration**
21%	**Digital employee experience**
14%	**Recruiting / retaining IT talent**
11%	**AI/ML tools**
8%	**Automating repetitive tasks**

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Why It Matters

Jobs in IT have become more complex, overwhelming and stressful; automation and AI can ease the burden.

There are countless applications for automation in an IT environment – and these can significantly reduce workloads for IT teams:
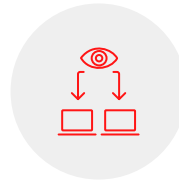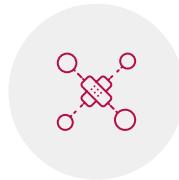
Get a 360-degree, real-time view of devices, users, applications and services.

Access up-to-the-minute security configurations using sensor-based architecture.

Unleash an army of automation bots to proactively detect, diagnose and auto-remediate configuration drift, performance and security issues.

Control your patch management program in one centralized location.

Get instant insights into your software landscape and application spend for on-premises, cloud and edge environments.

The end result?

Shift repetitive tasks to machines, shorten IT response times, uncover inefficiencies and give IT professionals more time to focus on meaningful work that requires critical thinking.

By deploying automation, organizations can reduce IT workloads — one of the biggest drivers of turnover among IT professionals.

Types of workflow automation for IT

Backoffice IT workflow automation

Automate dozens of IT workflows that take place behind the scenes – from updating a patch status to classifying support tickets and taking a real-time inventory of IT assets.

User-facing IT workflow automation

Empower employees to use self-service apps (including chatbots) to do things like open support tickets, or locate a knowledge base article to diagnose/fix their own tech problem.

Proactive detection and remediation

Deploy automated bots that can sense, predict and remediate issues. For example, use a bot to pinpoint a machine running abnormally slowly, diagnose the root cause and fix the issue — all without any human intervention from either IT or the end user.

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Attracting and retaining IT talent

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Problem Today

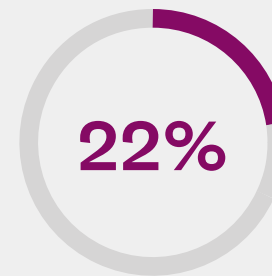# Across industries, organizations are still struggling to retain IT talent.

1 in 4

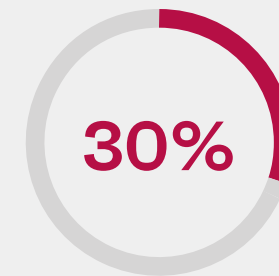**IT professionals are considering quitting their current job in the next 6 months**

IT professionals are 1.4x more likely to "quiet quit" than other knowledge workers...

Q: Have you participated in "quiet quitting" in the last year?

22%

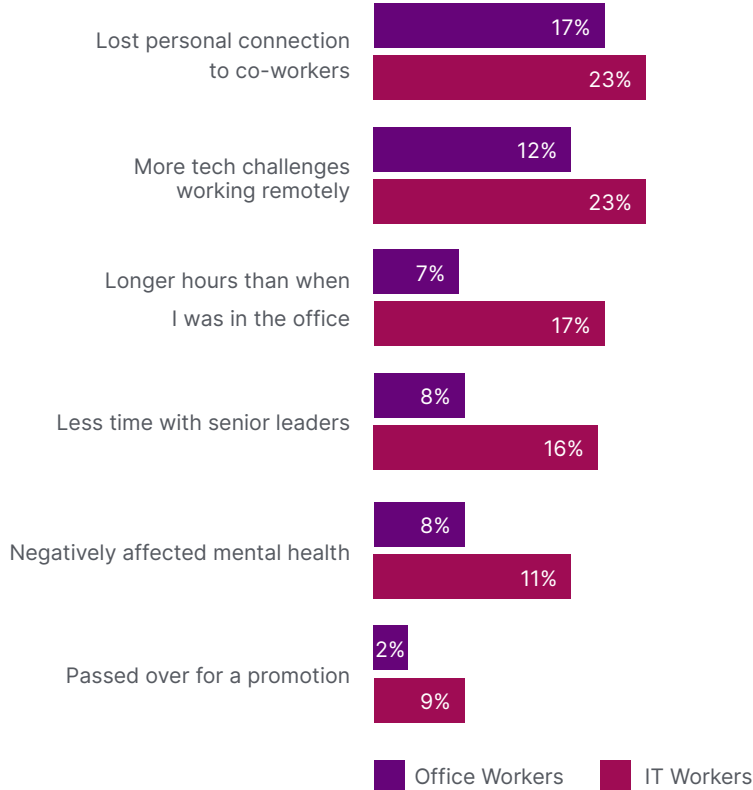**All office workers**

30%

IT professionals

...and a significant number are preparing to all-out quit.

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IT experiences more negative effects from hybrid/ remote working compared to other office workers.

Q: What negative effects of remote or hybrid working have you experienced? (Select all that apply.)

Effect	Office Workers	IT Workers
Lost personal connection to co-workers	17%	23%
More tech challenges working remotely	12%	23%
Longer hours than when I was in the office	7%	17%
Less time with senior leaders	8%	16%
Negatively affected mental health	8%	11%
Passed over for a promotion	2%	9%

■ Office Workers   ■ IT Workers

Despite this, few (16%) want to work in the office full time again.

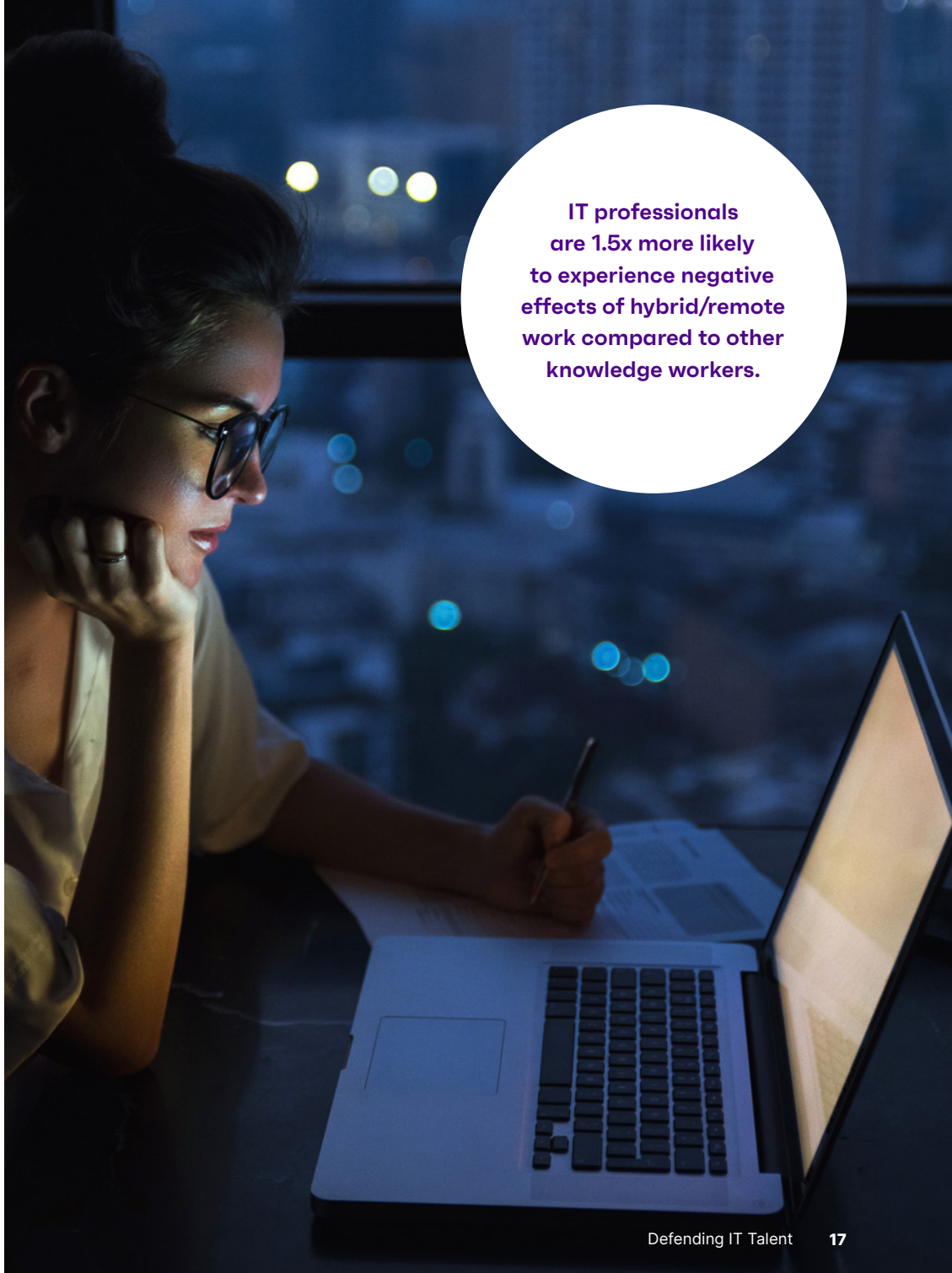# IT talent is the engine that powers Everywhere Work.

Our research shows 1 in 3 office workers are experiencing negative effects from hybrid and remote work, but among IT workers, *the rate is 50% higher* — a remarkable difference. Few IT professionals want a strict, 100% in-office work format, but clearly the accumulation of new challenges and complexities in their day-to-day jobs weighs on them.

How can organizations uplift and empower the people who make remote working...

productive?

efficient?

secure?

IT professionals are 1.5x more likely to experience negative effects of hybrid/remote work compared to other knowledge workers.

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Unintended IT consequences of hybrid/remote work

Lost connections

Especially for younger IT workers, the loss of in-person working often means fewer opportunities to connect with managers, network with coworkers and receive critical mentoring.

More tech "friction"

When employees work off-site, they add more digital interactions to their daily work lives — from remote collaboration technologies to added security interfaces. Office workers use 2.6 devices on average, a massive number of assets for IT to manage, particularly when some of these are off-site.

Longer hours

With so many devices coming online across multiple locations and time zones, IT teams face tremendous pressure — in terms of workload, work complexity and even length of the workday. High workloads and an "always on call" environment drive down engagement and drive up turnover.

Given the tech talent shortage, isn't it time to pay attention to what IT professionals are telling us about their work lives?

"Even on days that I'm in the office, all my work meetings are on Zoom because some people are at home. Many of us will be sitting at our desks, within a few feet of one another, but we only speak through screens. I feel completely disconnected from my co-workers."

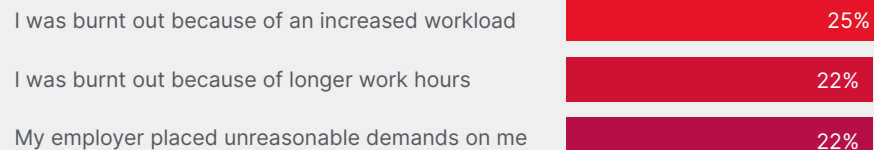**24 year-old programmer**
Seattle, USA

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Take action

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How will your organization attract and retain smart, future-minded tech talent?

1 Diagnose IT work-life pressure points

Use internal surveys and one-on-ones to take stock of IT professionals' mindsets at work. Take note of the specific pressure points brought about by hybrid and remote work options. Our research shows IT talent is 2.5x more likely to work longer hours when working remotely compared to in the office, and 1 in 4 report burnout from an increased workload. These hidden stressors drive disengagement, quiet quitting and turnover. With **employee experience research,** you can define your organization's baseline so subsequent change efforts can be measured effectively.

IT talent is 2.5x more likely to put in longer hours when working remotely compared to in the office.

Workload-related burnout is a big driver of IT turnover

|	
I was burnt out because of an increased workload	25%
I was burnt out because of longer work hours	22%
My employer placed unreasonable demands on me	22%

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2 Inventory tech-specific experiences

IT talent report higher levels of dissatisfaction with the tools they use when working offsite (nearly 1 in 4 say this). It's time to change this. Begin by tracking digital employee experience (DEX) for tech talent. For example, how many tools do IT professionals use per day, including the number of unique sign-ons? Which tools and processes improve efficiency and satisfaction; which ones hinder efficiency and lead to frustration? The insights can help pinpoint areas that need attention/investment.

22%
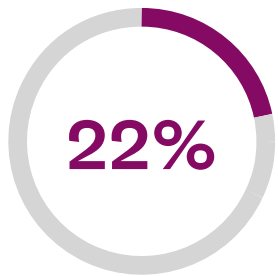
IT workers are dissatisfied with tech and tools their employer provides.

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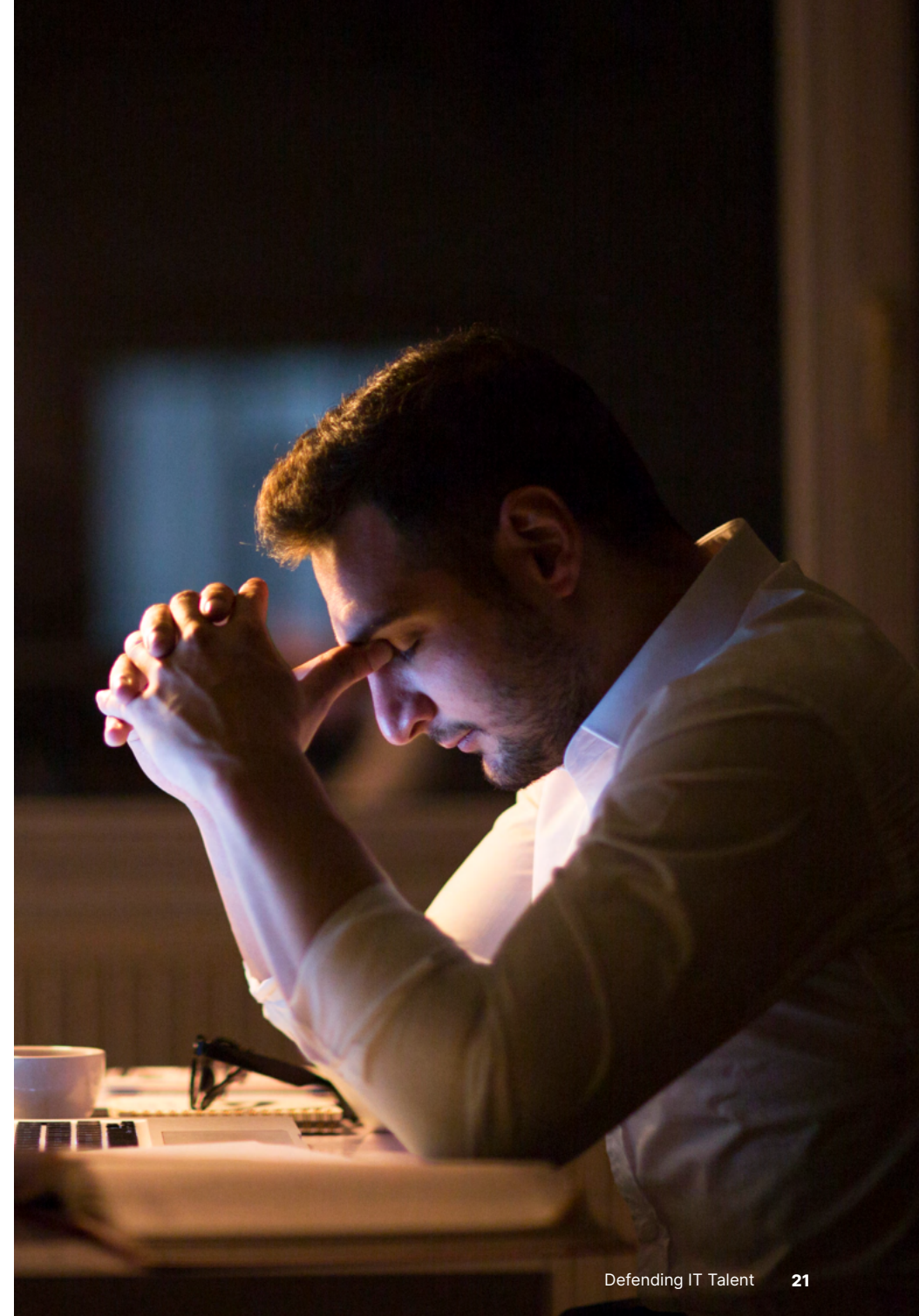
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Prioritize automation for IT workflows

Invest in technology that handles repetitive tasks automatically. Apply workflow automation to both employee-facing activities (e.g., helpdesk automations) as well as back-office workflows (e.g., CMDB updates). Free up IT talent to work on projects that are more meaningful, rewarding and valuable to the organization.

4

Adopt proactive solutions

Deploy so-called "self-healing" systems that use a combination of AI, machine learning and remote monitoring to resolve workplace technology slowdowns before an employee is even aware of the problem. The end result: fewer helpdesk tickets.

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5 Give employees choices about how they work

Employee policies that rigidly define the how-when-where of work miss an important truth: your employees have a diverse range of work styles, life commitments and even work-from-home setups. Some work best fully remote, while others feel more effective fully in the office (and many situations in between). Offer IT talent the chance to define the **work style that suits their individual circumstances,** and in doing so, boost IT recruitment and retention.

Connect & build camaraderie

No matter how each individual works, bring *everyone* to a physical place (the office or otherwise) regularly to collaborate, connect and build camaraderie.

"Combatting quiet quitting is a multi-faceted challenge. A solid first step – offer your IT talent choices about the how, when and where of work. You'll likely find you have unique cohorts on the team — everyone from digital nomads, who want to work fully remotely from far-flung locations, to folks who want to be in the office full time, and those who want a balance or hybrid work arrangement. At the end of the day, your flexibility should allow for the best possible productivity and mental well-being of the team. That is – *where does each employee do their best work?*"

Jeff Abbott,
Chief Executive Officer at Ivanti

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Design work for IT employees with different needs and life stages

Entry-level employees may want the connections of **in-office work...**

...while mid-career talent may value **working from home** for more time with family.

"I want to be in the office most days; I want to learn from others while working shoulder-to-shoulder. I'm also living in an apartment with two other women and we can't all work in the living room...and believe me, we've tried."

24-year old software developer in New York, USA

"I have three primary-school kids and a 40-minute commute. I will not work for a company that requires me to be in the office more than once a week. Plus I'm much more productive in my home office — a win-win."

38-year old machine-learning engineer in London, UK

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6 Foster in-person connection for IT teams

Even though the large majority of IT professionals (84%) want to work remotely at least some of the time, there are aspects of hybrid and remote work they'd like to change. Almost 1 in 4 say they're missing out on **workplace connections** — things like in-person mentoring and development, opportunities to prove their skills to managers, and chances to network with co-workers. Face-to-face meetings, even infrequently, present an opportunity to build trust and camaraderie. It's easier to have a connection with someone on the other side of the screen if the team just spent the day having lunch and hanging out together.

84%

of IT workers want to work remotely at least some of the time.

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Explore more trends of Everywhere Work in the 2023 research report.