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Our purpose is people

Overcoming Uncertainty:



Your Guide to Facilitating a Safe Return
to Work, and a Better Future for All

INTRODUCTION

What will the world of tomorrow look like?



The truth is that none of us knows. But it all depends on how we seize the opportunity now in front of us. The past few months have been nothing short of challenging—and have also prompted many of us to re-examine parts of our personal and professional lives that we previously had taken for granted.

There's never been a more important time to do better.

Positive signs are beginning to emerge from the chaos. In a recent survey conducted by [McKinsey & Company](#), more than half of all executives surveyed say economic conditions in their own countries will be better six months from now.

But, even as normal business operations resume, difficult questions will continue to arise for company leaders—and they will come from both current employees and the people wanting to work for them in the future:

What type of company culture are we coming back to? Am I feeling looked-after and valued here? What do we stand for before, during, and after a crisis?

Now is the time for business executives and HR leaders to reassess and begin building the foundations today for their companies to stand on tomorrow.



To reopen well, there is one important rule of thumb to follow.

Reopening won't be easy, and there is arguably no single right or wrong way to go about it. A general rule of thumb for leaders to follow is to understand and support your people in more meaningful ways.

Even before the coronavirus hit, we already knew of the benefits of [investing in the employee experience](#) for performance and profit levels in business. The stress and anxiety that subsequently hit after March 2020 only further solidified the fact that companies that commit to looking after their people are more likely to keep their talent and be seen as [top-tier employers](#) in the future.

If you keep the well-being of your workers in mind, even when you're forced to make tough decisions, you will end up on the right side of history.

Laurie Ruettimann, [The Way Forward: A Look At Post-Crisis Work Life](#), June 2020.

YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The role for HR in this future is critical. In fact, **68% of HR professionals** reported that their leaders have relied more on HR for success since the pandemic began [Society for Human Resources Management ([SHRM](#))]. And as HR is brought into more decision-making processes around returning to work, here are four key values to help shape some of those answers:

EMPATHY:

Have we understood and supported our people in a meaningful way?

TRANSPARENCY:

Is our decision-making process transparent and have we considered all people?

CONNECTEDNESS:

Does this help, not hinder, the well-being and mental health of our employees?

RESILIENCE:

Are we doing all we can to ensure continuity of our people operations, even in the event of a second wave?



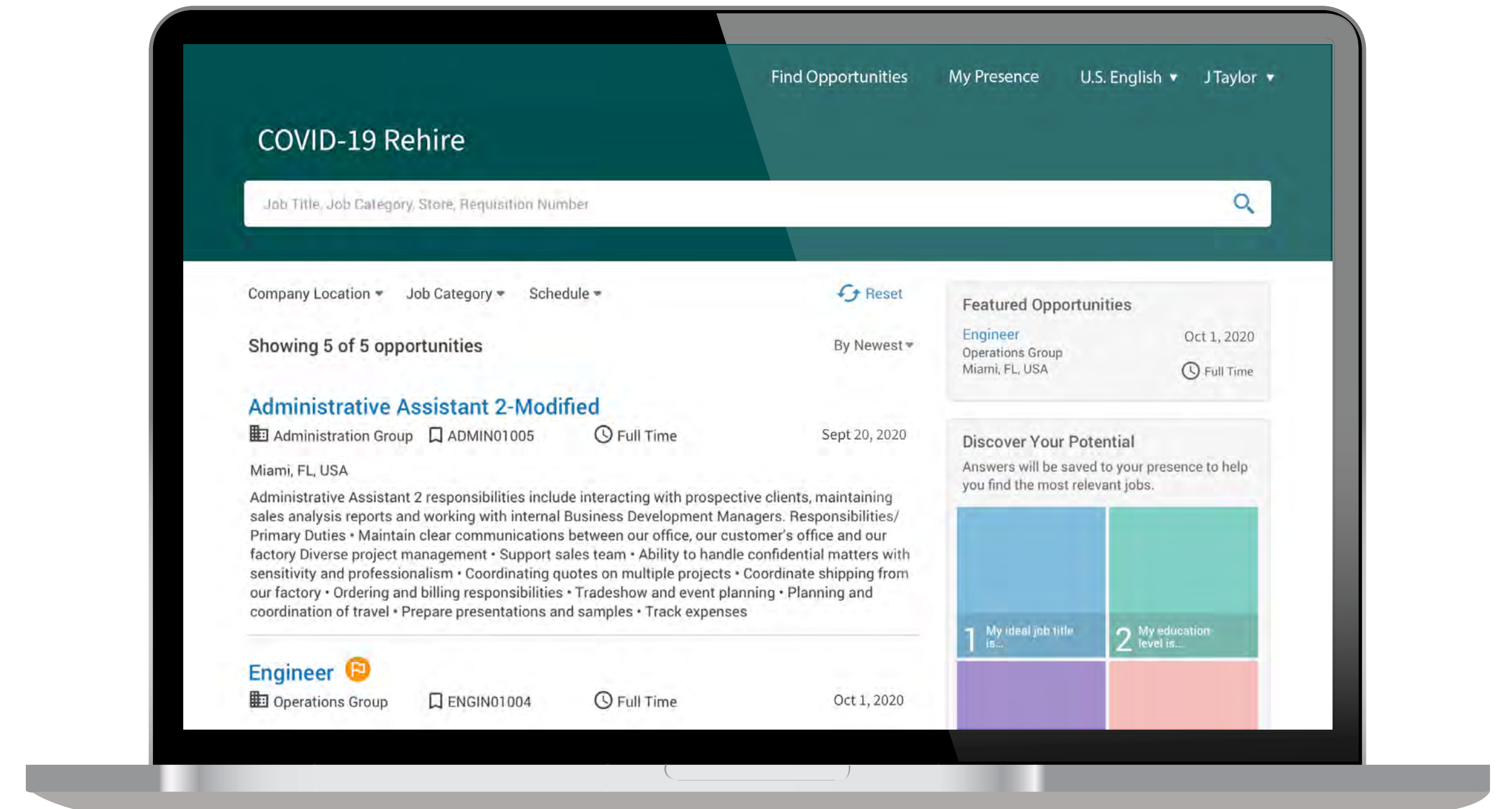
INDUSTRIES AT A GLANCE

How reopening could look different for your business

Granular problems usually call for granular solutions.

"We Need a Rational Approach to Reopening," Patrick Viguerie and Alex Viguerie in HBR, May 2020.

There are so many variables and choices to consider when it comes to reopening—including geography, nature of work, employee cohorts, family circumstances, prior health dispositions, and more. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, so companies must accept from early on that reopening may be a long, self-adjusting process. Since there are many options, we can look to other states or regions of the world who are already opening up and learn from them.



UKG Pro CAN HELP

UKG Pro™ Recruiting is designed to simplify recruiting and offer a more relationship-driven experience for candidates and HR alike. As businesses resume more activity, they can create internal job boards specifically to house jobs lost due to COVID-19 and alert returning team members to apply. Whether they return to the same job or a different role, UKG Pro Onboarding retains the employee's ID and information, so you can provide a more personalized welcome experience that's virtual.

A/ HIGH RISK

- The nature of work calls upon significant exposure to the public
- Example Industries: transport, aviation, retail, hospitality, sports, mass entertainment
- Key Considerations:
 - Rapidly changing policies and guidelines on local or regional levels
 - Frequent and comprehensive safety training for employees
 - Fluctuations in customer demand and business activity

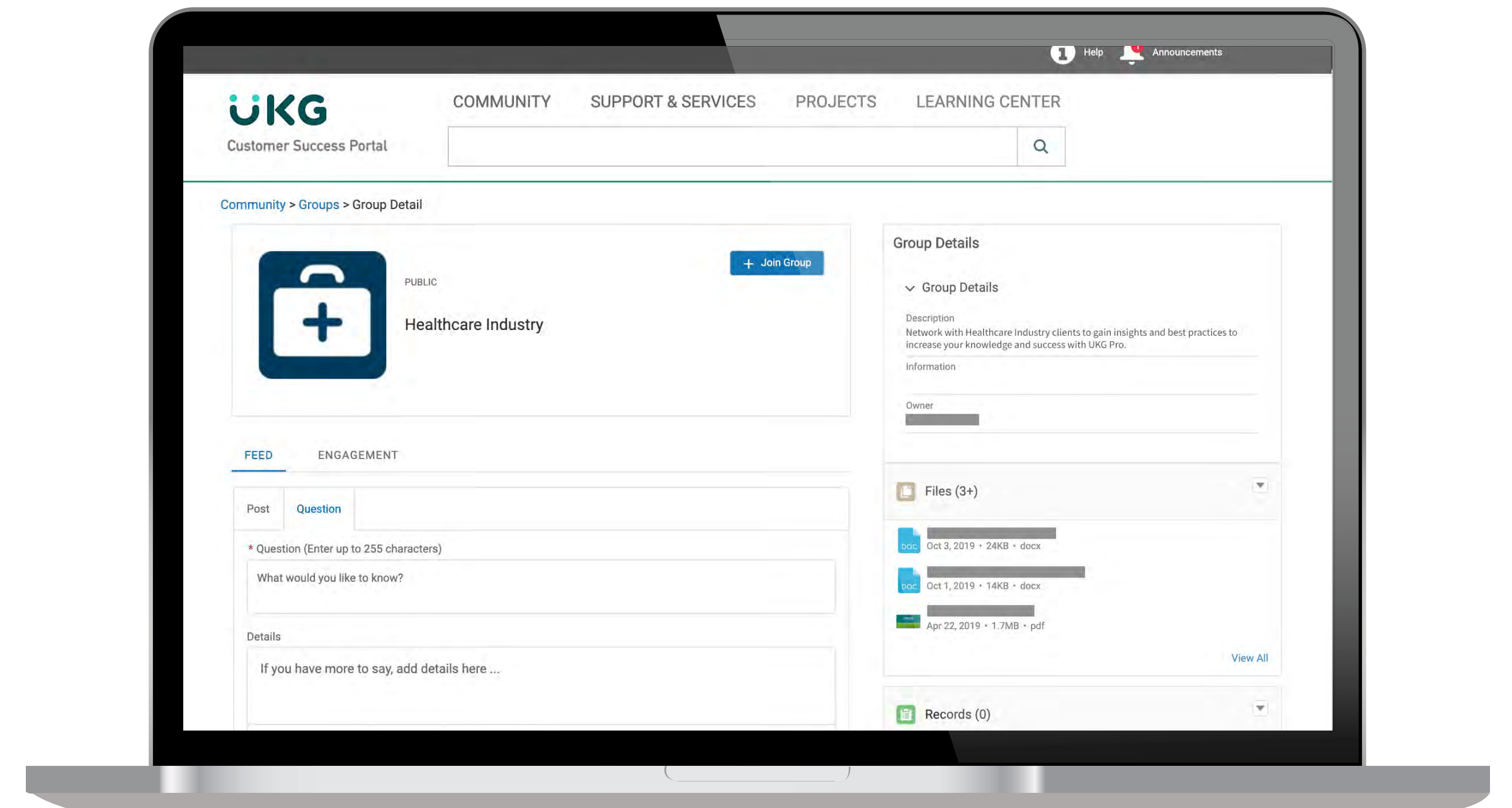
B/ MEDIUM RISK

- Work takes place in large, confined spaces with groups of people
- Example Industries: education, healthcare, health and fitness, entertainment, manufacturing
- Key Considerations:
 - Staggered entry and exit of team members, requiring strict timetabling
 - Smarter scheduling decisions to limit exposure and simplify contact tracing
 - Constant communication with staff members and also the customer or student base

C/ LOW RISK

- Employees can enter professional working spaces, mandatorily or non-mandatorily
- Example Industries: professional services (finance, insurance, legal), technology, administration, construction
- Key Considerations:
 - Productivity and engagement amidst ongoing remote work for nonessential employees
 - Transparency around company decisions to reopen or to delay reopening
 - Alignment on performance expectations, particularly taking into account personal or homelife situations

[Reopening Safely: Sample Practices From Essential Businesses](#), McKinsey & Company, May 2020.



The [UKG Ultimate Community](#) connects UKG Pro users with other HR leaders in their industries. By connecting with approximately 10,000 other human capital management (HCM) professionals sharing challenges and best practices, customers can find ways to creatively problem solve for the issues they may face today and tomorrow. We are also leveraging workforce data from approximately 30,000 U.S. businesses and their 3.2 million employees to make a weekly [Workforce Activity Report](#) available—providing leaders with invaluable insight into the ongoing health of the national economy, as well as that of specific industries.

YOUR GUIDE TO A SAFE RETURN TO WORK

Step 1: Prepare

Steps to take before your employees can return to the office

RESILIENCE: Establish a robust remote-work infrastructure.

Analysts estimate that **nearly half the workforce (48%)** will continue to work remotely at least some of the time after the pandemic ([Gartner](#)), in order to minimize any risk of reinfection. If this remains the trend, many organizations will need to take a closer look at their data-collection systems and workflows internally—including how they collect employee data, whether it be around personal information, location, productivity, or tracking sentiment. A centralized and unified platform can also enhance security by eliminating disparate data sets and make it easier for HR teams to collaborate from various locations.

In a survey of more than 1,000 customers using UKG Pro, **82%** said the HCM platform was critical to enabling virtual work at their organizations. In addition, **66%** said they relied on Pro's reporting to manage their COVID-19 responses.

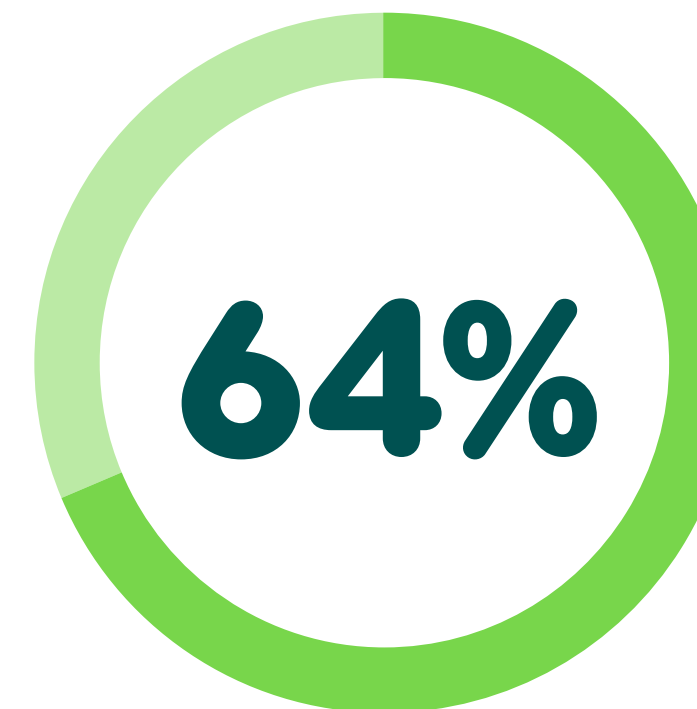
[UKG Pro Customer COVID-19 Survey Results](#), May 2020.

Thanks to UKG Pro, we are able to complete virtually the tasks that we used to do in the office: monitoring and paying employee benefits and our benefits vendors, using workflows to communicate compensation and position changes, and processing employee time.

Carol Maurice, HR Director at Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative (SMBSC)

UKG Pro CAN HELP

With [UKG Pro People Analytics](#), HR teams can quickly and securely report on employee data within one, unified location. During a crisis like COVID-19, access to faster reporting around critical areas—such as number of essential workers, employees living at home with children, and effects and scale of furloughing across the business—is critical to making the right data-driven decisions for your people and your business. Pro's reporting capabilities also continue to help customers in managing the implications of emergency legislation and applying for economic relief as needed.



According to one study, **64%** of North American manufacturers say they are likely to bring plants back to the United States, which would lead to new job creation but also a need for rapid upskilling and onboarding.

Bisnow study, "Push For Supply Chain Resilience, Reshoring Likely To Boost Industrial CRE," cited in [The Road to Recovery for the Manufacturing Industry](#), Infographic, 2020.



29% of organizations surveyed will "probably" or "definitely" allow workers to work from home full time through the rest of 2020.

SHRM, [Returning to the Workplace Survey](#), May 2020.

CONNECTEDNESS: Provide dynamic learning content and additional resources to prepare the workforce for re-entry.

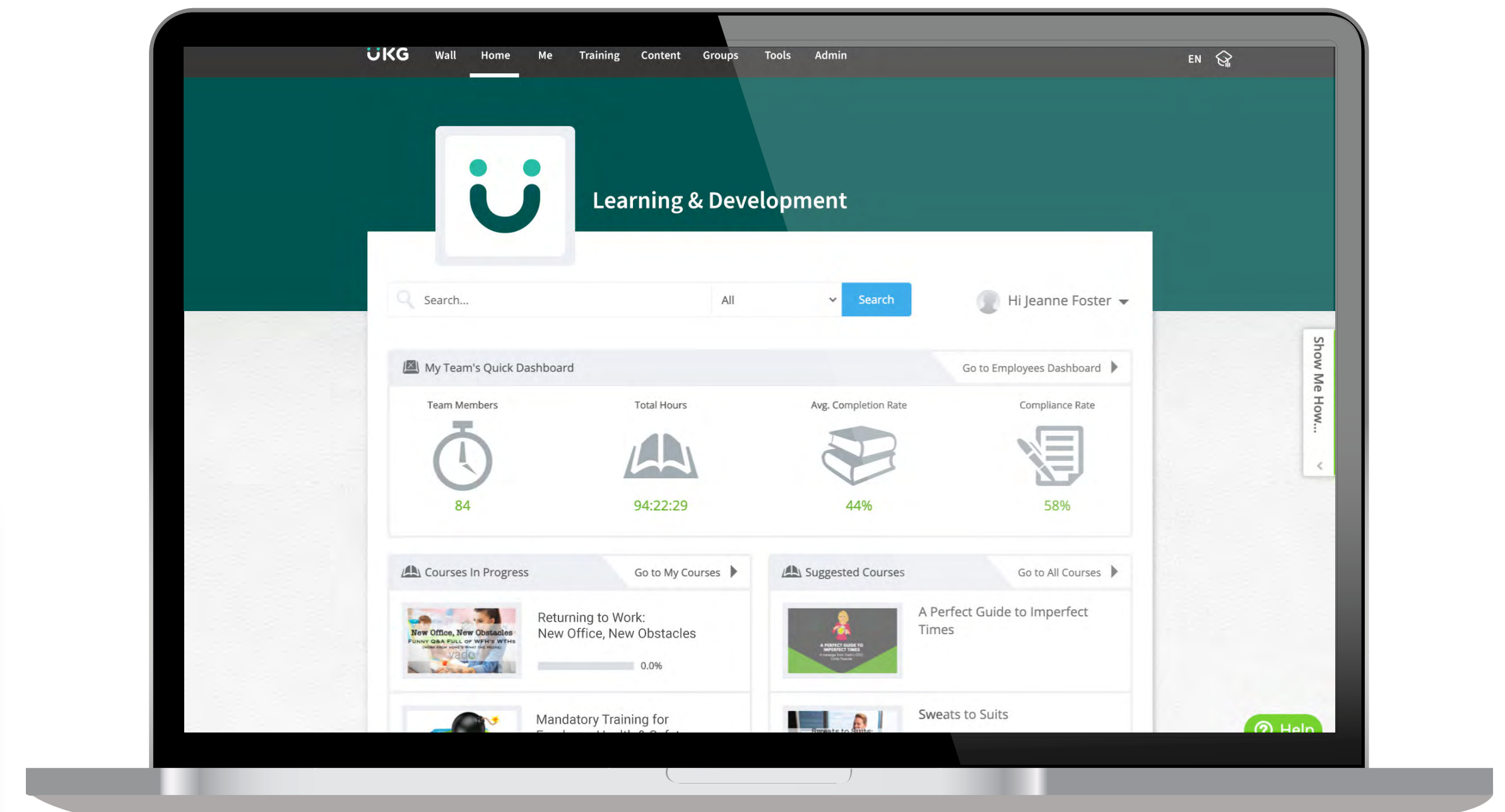
To ensure a safe, fair, and responsible re-entry, companies should consider providing on-demand training resources for employees to complete on their own time, before they return back to work. Topics could range from safe hand-washing practices, cleaning and disinfection practices, social distancing in lunchrooms, or even how to conduct temperature screenings.

HR will need to take actionable steps to ensure the safety of employees and customers, including providing standardized learning to quickly enable store associates to be upskilled on employee- and customer-related safety and social-distancing requirements in the new normal.

EY People Advisory Services Partner
Betty Spetter, quoted in [SHRM](#).



UKG Pro Learning's online learning and knowledge management system is flexible enough to support the most complex organizational structures in navigating toward a safe reopening. Administrators can browse, purchase, and upload from a library of over 3,000 professionally created courses available on the Course Marketplace, and even upload from popular platforms such as YouTube or TED conferences. Especially at a time when teams are not physically together, Pro Learning provides an engaging experience at home or on mobile, with added opportunities for social learning and team recognition.



EMPATHY: Simply ask employees how they feel about coming back to work.

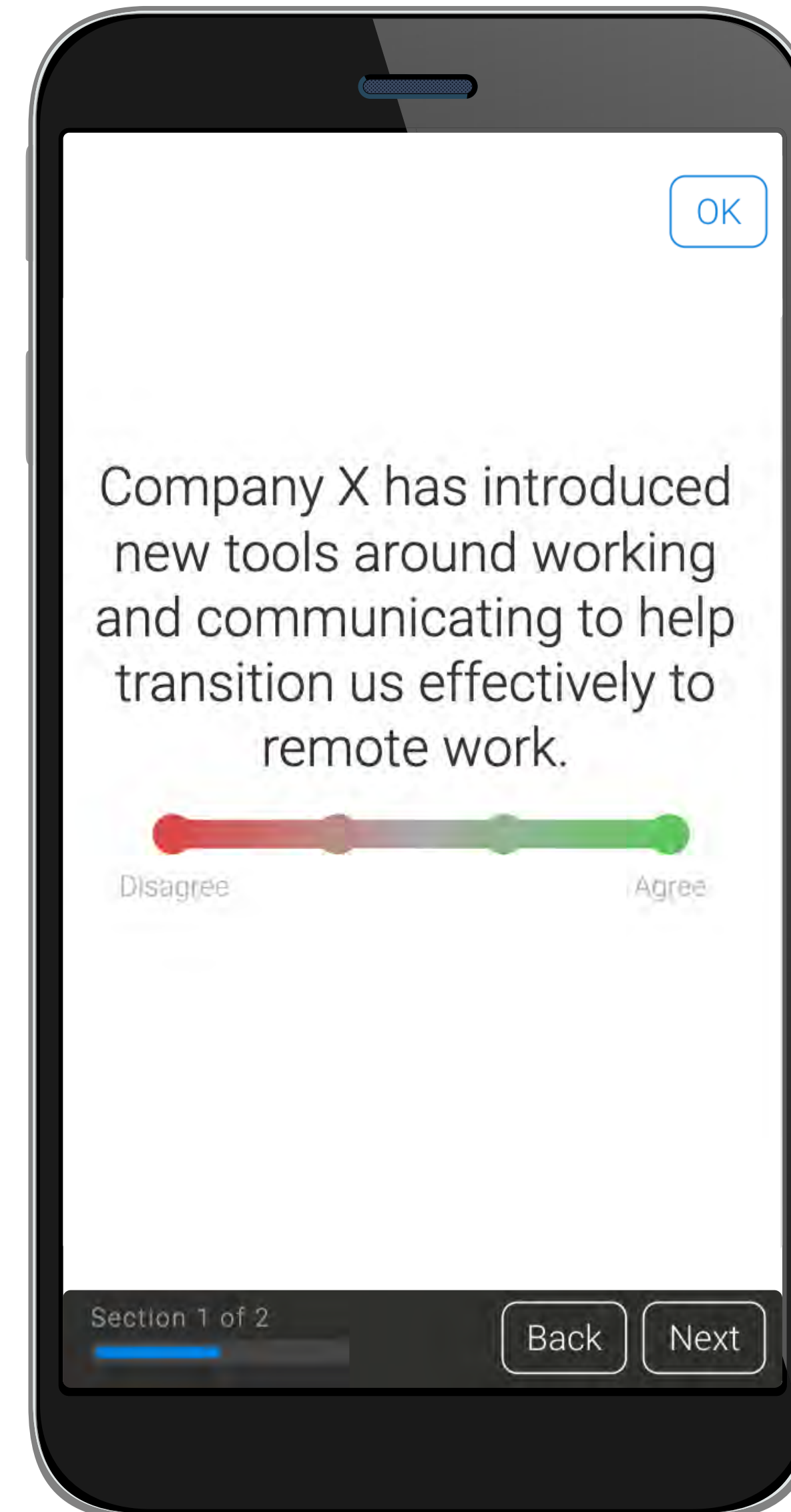
With many businesses opting for a staggered or phased approach to reopening, it may make sense to encourage workers at highest risk of complications from COVID-19 (based on age or health conditions) to remain remote—however, teams must act sensibly around such sensitive topics. To avoid discrimination, leaders should provide a channel for employees to state how they feel about returning to the workplace and allow them to choose whether to share their reasons, and anonymously.

We were also able to use employee feedback to optimize the tools and connectivity that our employees needed to be successful from home. UKG Pro Employee Voice gave us the configurability and speed to be nimble and flexible for our employees—all with HR working remotely.

Jack Klott, VP of Total Rewards, Independent Bank

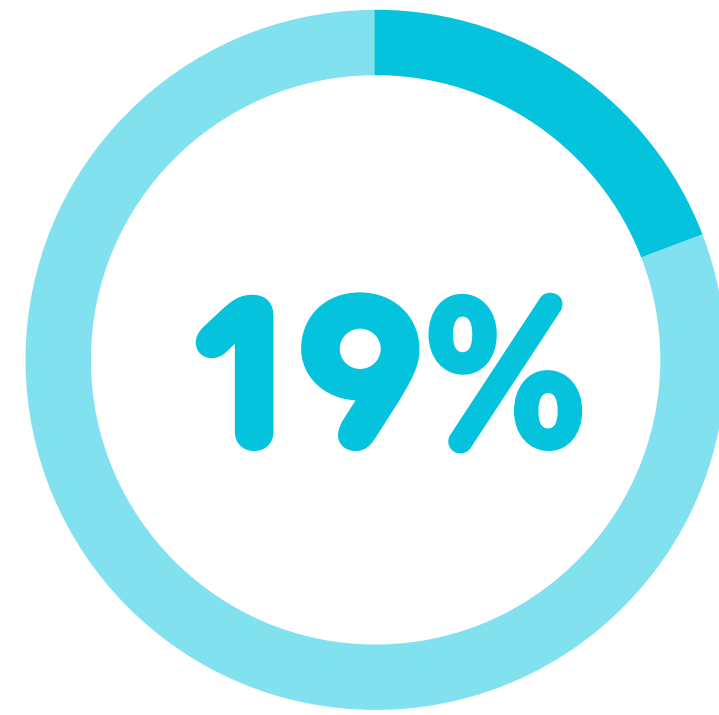


UKG Pro Employee Voice provides a modern, intuitive approach to collecting and measuring employee feedback, enhanced by advanced artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing capabilities. The **At-Risk Crisis Pulse Survey** template designed by our in-house industrial-organizational (I-O) psychologist helps managers and leaders identify ways to better support employees through crisis situations. Then, when businesses are ready, they can also deploy the **Return-to-Office (RTO) Readiness Pulse Survey** template to gauge employees' readiness to return to physical work environments and practical safety concerns, and reveal emotions and attitudes toward the transition.



TRANSPARENCY: Help clarify and demystify the benefits-selection process.

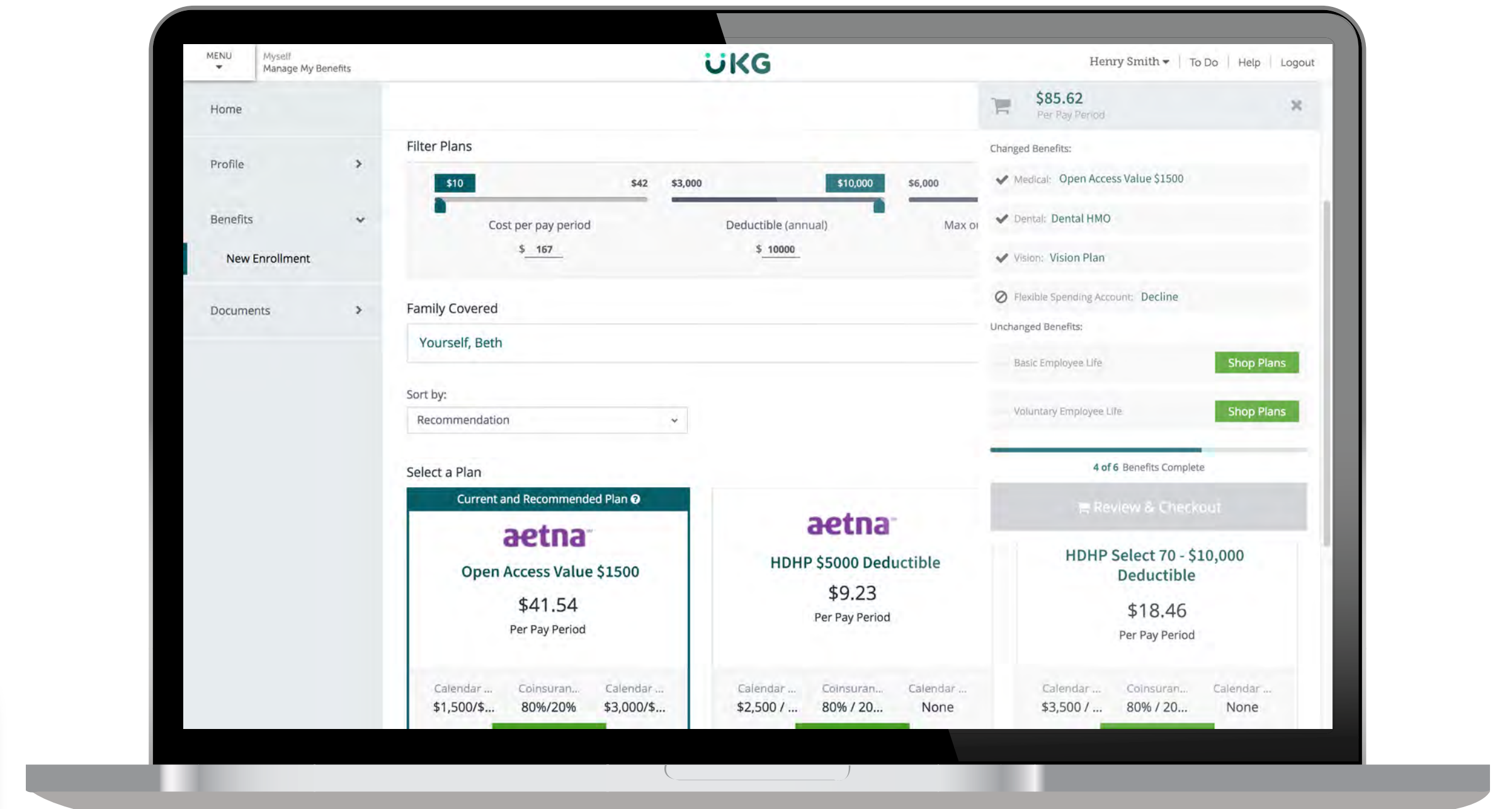
According to a recent study, only **19% of employees** reported having a high level of understanding of their benefits. This could be partly due to the overwhelming amount of detail or fine print often included in benefits policy materials, as well as a lack of adequate support given to employees at the very early stages of selecting their plan provider. The flow-on effects of this confusion could potentially cause employees to hesitate to seek professional assistance when they are feeling unwell or to continue to come into work—the cost of which could be felt by their employers as well as their teammates.



International Foundation of Employee Benefits Plans, [Benefits Communication Survey Results](#).



[UKG Pro Benefits Administration](#) demystifies the options and rules surrounding benefits and provides a modern and intuitive experience designed to identify the most suitable plan for employees. Give teams the information they need to make smarter benefits choices for themselves and their families, with convenient decision-support tools and personalized plan recommendations that factor in individual preferences. Administrators can also leverage communication tools to clarify critical benefits-related communications, such as enrollment deadlines, and make sure all employees have had a fair chance to review their plans.



Step 2: Respond

Create a safe working environment to minimize risk of infection

RESILIENCE: Keep close track of employee health and safety.

As soon as the process of reopening begins, your business continuity plan should also include clear procedures to follow if and when an employee shows signs of symptoms. Contact tracing is a highly cost-effective strategy for preventing the further spread of infectious diseases and keeping others safe. Having an outbreak at the organizational level also could mean the difference between having to shut down your entire business operations overnight or simply locating—within a matter of seconds—the right group of people to self-isolate.

EMPATHY: Remain flexible and stagger entry into the workplace.

Even as states loosen up restrictions to businesses, a full return to the workplace at 100% capacity still seems unlikely in the immediate future—especially when keeping workers at highest risk for health complications safe. Managers and HR may need to “think outside the box” when it comes to scheduling decisions, and consider adopting new strategies such as scheduling groups of employees to work together consistently so as to limit exposure across teams or departments.



For organizations with a set return-to-worksite date, 39% will implement a phased return strategy, for example, with critical teams returning first.

SHRM, [Returning to the Workplace Survey](#), May 2020.



[UKG Pro Workforce Management](#) offers a Contact Tracing App to help curb the spread of communicable illnesses at work. By automatically identifying potential contacts of an infected employee through recent employee-punch data, you can view a simple report for any employee who is showing symptoms—along with a list of other employees who have worked overlapping shifts with the symptomatic employee in a certain time period—and take steps to keep customers and your team members safe. Similar reporting is also available for customers using [UKG Pro Time and Scheduling](#).



[UKG Pro Forecasting](#) leverages the advanced AI capabilities of AIMEE to analyze special events and historical data, and automatically create best-fit schedules for any industry. Managers can also take advantage of the Scheduling Group Feature to automatically assign shifts to groups of employees, rather than individually, and save valuable time, as well as temporarily disable self-service capabilities, such as swapping shifts, to help protect employee safety.



TRANSPARENCY: Communicate consistently to establish trust between employers and employees.

Amidst change and uncertainty, rumors or hypotheses can easily spread just as quickly as a virus. Companies should aim to be as transparent as possible in providing employees with frequent and accurate communications about reopening—including regularly pushed communications, emails, and messaging in urgent cases. Frequent updates regarding reopening dates or phased approaches,

workplace cleaning, and hygiene policies will only help employees feel more confident about returning—and build greater trust between themselves and their employer.

More than one-third of UKG Pro’s customers surveyed said they were using Pro for communicating with employees throughout their response to COVID-19.

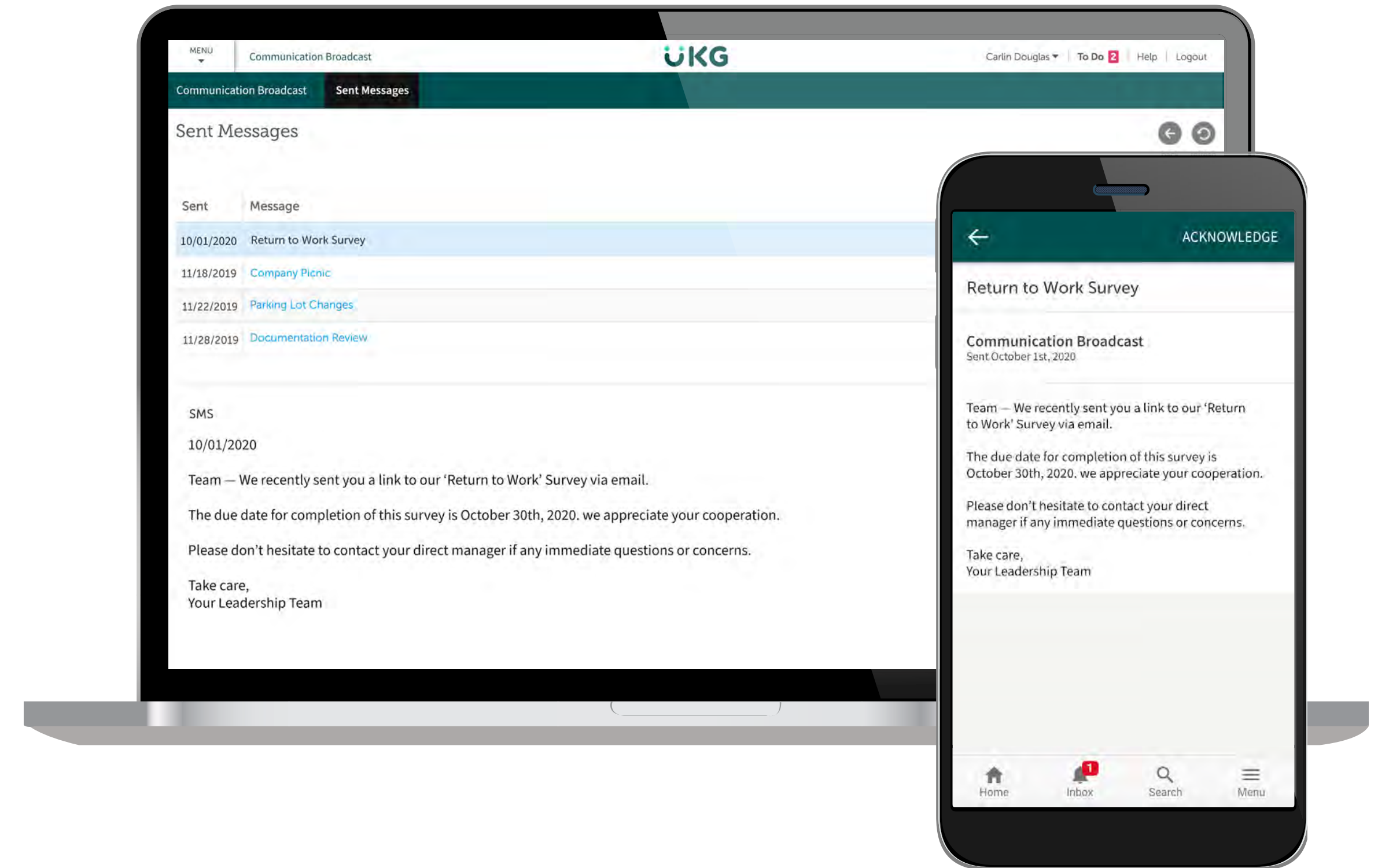
[UKG Pro Customer COVID-19 Survey Results](#), May 2020.



UKG Pro’s Communication Broadcast feature is the most practical tool to keep teams up to date on the latest developments, policies, and guidelines on a large scale. Leaders can select email or text notification to alert employees to a new update, depending on its urgency or on the nature of the communication, and reference a complete history of sent messages and recipients. With one, convenient hub, you can reach your workforce with speed and confidence, and prevent layered or conflicting communications from leadership.

UKG Pro’s biggest advantage for us during COVID-19 is the Communication Broadcast function. In order to keep all employees informed, we push daily tips and reminders to the UKG Pro mobile app through the Communication Broadcast tool. These communications include reminders about new safety policies, updates on how to keep home and office workspaces clean, resources for medical care, and video updates from our company president.

Jon Trevor, Head of People at Master Electronics



CONNECTEDNESS: Find ways to engage team members while social distancing.

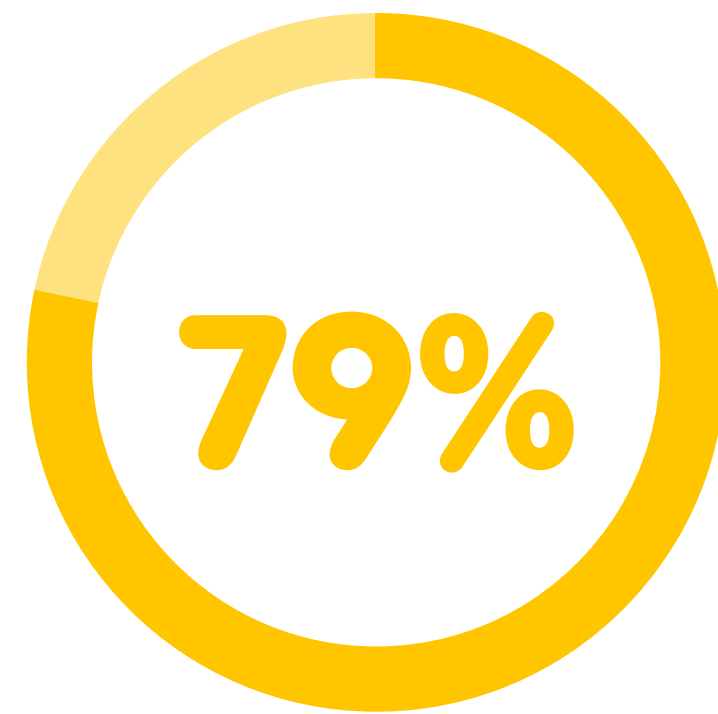
As workplaces begin to fill up again, regular practices that we may have taken for granted before—such as enjoying lunch with coworkers or tapping a team member on the shoulder at their desk to chat about a project—will need to be revisited. An important part of your HR and engagement strategy this year should be to come up with new ways to encourage virtual collaboration and recognition despite social distancing.

A majority of employers are implementing changes to make social distancing between workers more feasible.

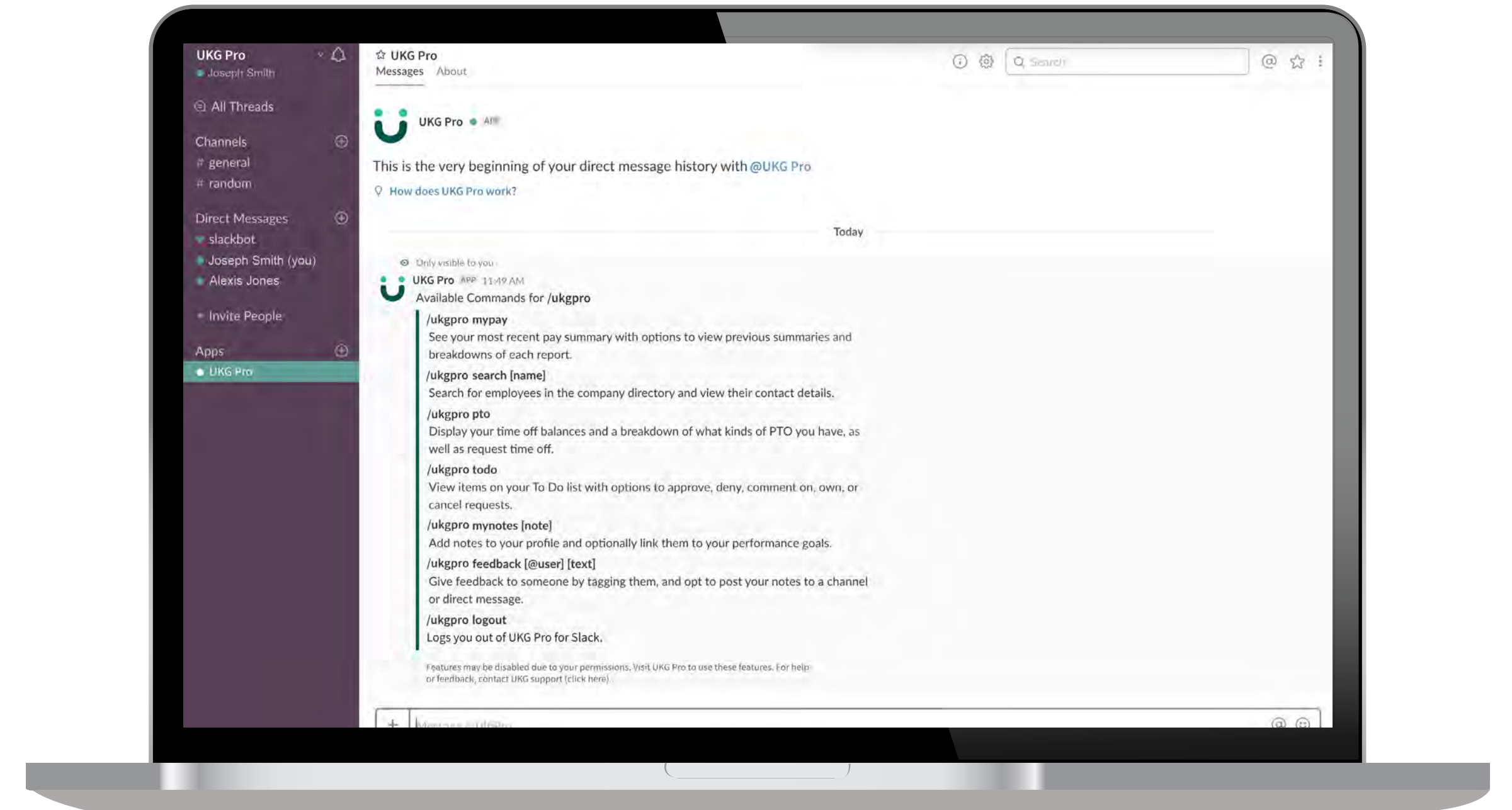
85% of employers are enforcing spaced seating in common areas



79% of employers are spacing workstations to be farther apart



SHRM, [Returning to the Workplace Survey](#), May 2020



The [Slack App for UKG Pro](#) helps streamline important HR actions for employees and integrate greater functionality within a messaging platform that has proven particularly valuable throughout the crisis. By leveraging information inside Pro People Center, employees can easily find a colleague's contact details, their relevant department, and where they are located (including their local time zone), and reach out informally before walking over or setting up a meeting. The integration also provides additional capabilities to promote virtual praise, recognition, and collaboration by posting accolades to different Slack channels.

Step 3: Recover

Thinking ahead to a healthy future for all

EMPATHY: Embrace virtual for the long term and help clarify performance expectations. With an increased number of workers expected to work remotely on an ongoing basis after the crisis, leaders and managers may consider meeting with their employees one-on-one to clarify and realign performance expectations. [Gartner](#) estimates that a long-term consequence of the pandemic will be to call on leaders to develop greater emotional intelligence, in order to better navigate a balance between empathy and performance requirements in this future of work.

More than one in three organizations are more willing to consider employing fully remote workers going forward, compared to pre COVID-19.

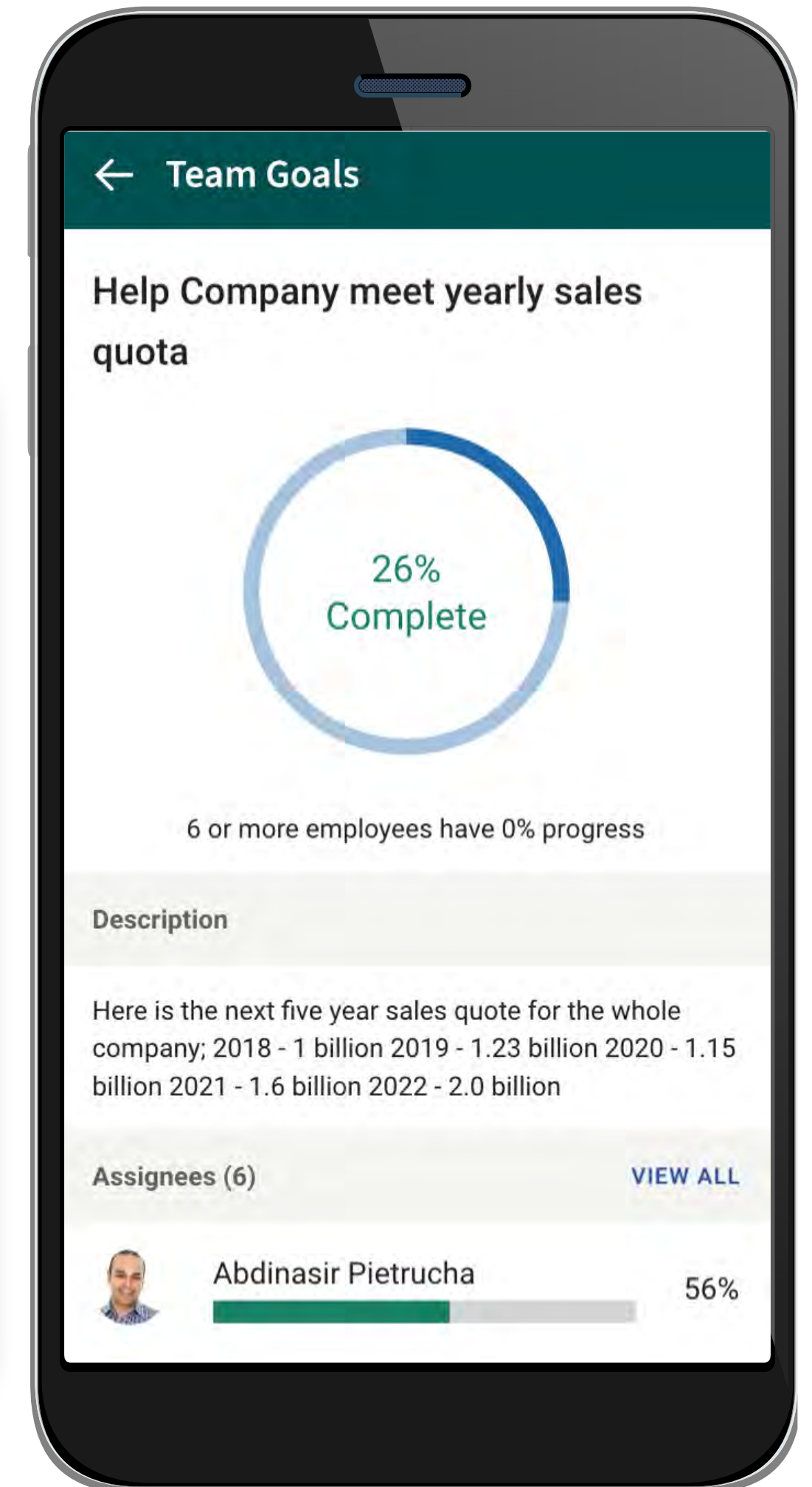
SHRM, [Returning to the Workplace Survey](#), May 2020.

Feedback needs to be continuous, clear, and frequent—especially for the growing pool of millennial and Generation Z employees who perform best when communicating and collaborating openly and often.

UKG, [Making Performance Management Work For Everyone](#), 2018.



[UKG Pro Performance Reviews](#) promotes clearer, frequent, and collaborative feedback between managers and employees to encourage a truly people-first approach to performance. Employees can easily see how their goals align to wider business objectives and work together with their managers to realign, especially if there is a change in personal circumstances or organizational strategy. [Predictive Analytics](#) are embedded within the solution to help anticipate future high performers, engagement measures, and retention risks—and even suggest proactive actions managers can take to further develop employee potential and prevent turnover within teams.



CONNECTEDNESS: Take on a more active role in employee well-being.

Amidst a global health crisis, there has also been a silent pandemic underlying many of our interactions during this time—a pandemic of mental health issues. As work continues to intrude on the personal, and the personal on our work lives, employers will need to step up further and provide additional resources in important areas, including benefits and personal well-being. Not only can this enhance workforce productivity, but it can help build a strong employer brand that your people will feel proud to keep working for, and advocate for others to work for, too.

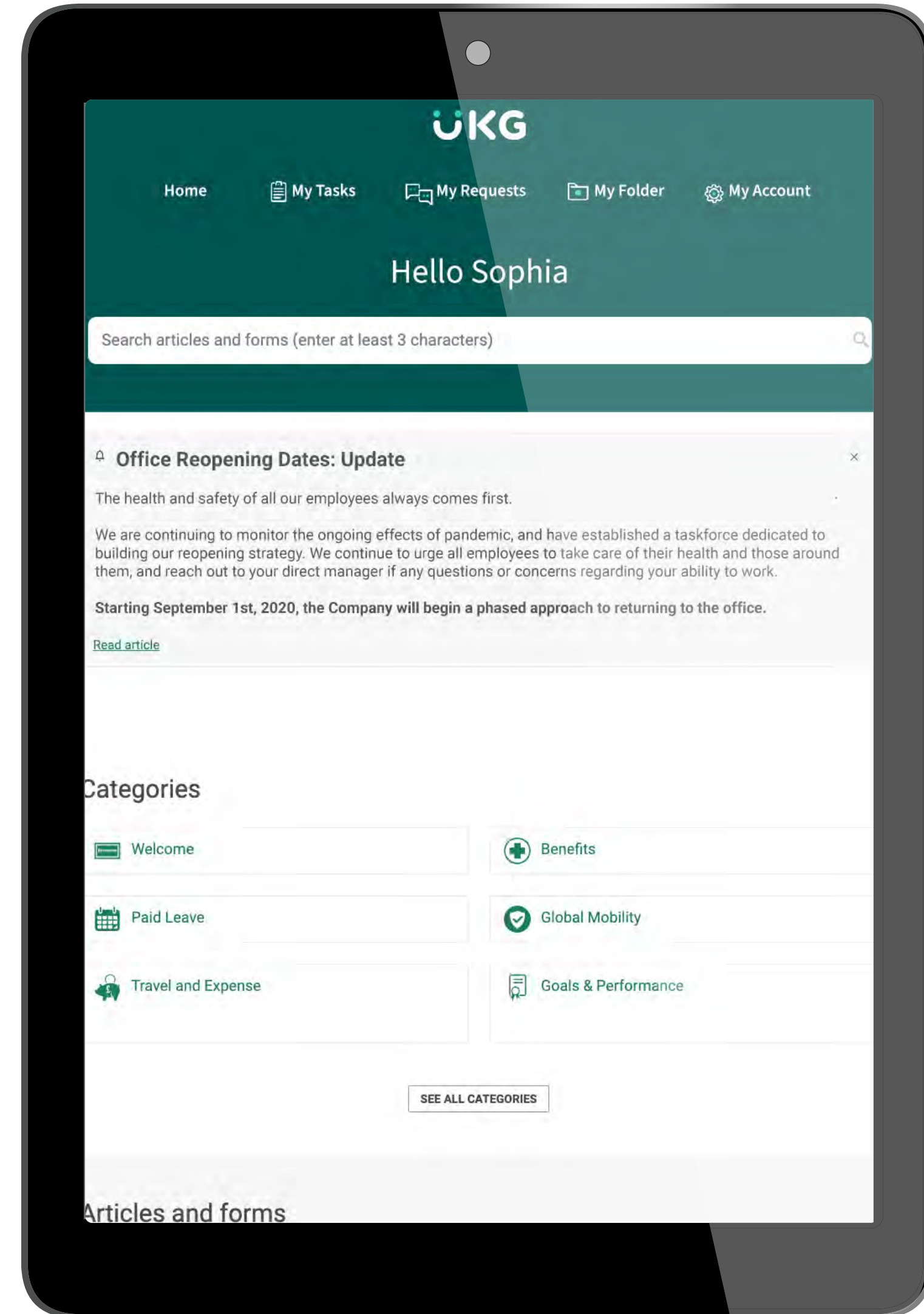


67% of UKG Pro’s customers said one of the biggest challenges for HR and payroll leaders is in helping with the emotional well-being of their employees (an increase in 5% since the start of the pandemic).

[UKG Pro Customer COVID-19 Survey Results](#), May 2020.



[UKG Pro People Assist](#) offers a personalized knowledgebase solution and gateway to helpful resources, articles, and on-demand support for your employees’ HR-related needs. The platform offers the ability to customize and leverage templated knowledgebase articles on topics such as remote-working tips, well-being, mindfulness exercises, and even what employees can do when they’re not feeling well. HR and team leaders can also leverage embedded analytics and dashboards to see which topics or articles are most popular among employees and redistribute their efforts accordingly.



TRANSPARENCY: Take on a greater social conscience and address diversity now.

The coronavirus revealed that the societal role for employers is growing, and this includes pushing for gender and racial equality in the workplace. Companies must get better at walking the talk and continue to push diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) to the top of agenda items, even when it seems inconvenient. An immediate step that leaders can take in this regard is to simply ask employees about their experiences at the company, and whether they believe that DE&I is being adequately addressed, or where the company can improve.

The novel coronavirus offers an opportunity to showcase executives who consistently led by example and doubled down on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, even when it wasn't convenient. In an age of uncertainty, investors and consumers are looking for leaders who strive to do the right thing, even when it's hard and inconvenient.

Laurie Ruettimann, [The Way Forward: A Look at Post-Crisis Work Life](#), June 2020.

RESILIENCE: Prioritize digital transformation.

The pandemic has made companies realize, maybe faster than they'd hoped for, the importance of digitizing operations across all departments. Almost overnight, entire HR teams found themselves working remotely for the most extended period of time ever in their careers. Companies that had already invested in the digital transformation of their shared services teams—including HR, legal, and finance—and were able to transition seamlessly to a virtual work environment, found themselves at a significant advantage, compared with those who still relied on physical files and manual work.

Thanks to UKG Pro, we are able to complete virtually the tasks that we used to do in the office: monitoring and paying employee benefits and our benefits vendors, using workflows to communicate compensation and position changes, and processing employee time. As we discuss whether to bring individuals from our HR team back into the office, we are relieved to know most of those working remotely believe they can continue successfully in their current environment.

Carol Maurice, HR Director at Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative (SMBC)



With [UKG Pro Employee Voice](#), leaders can choose from two survey templates designed by our in-house industrial-organizational (I-O) psychologist to uncover sentiment around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging at work. The **Equity at Work Pulse Survey** helps leaders gauge how employees feel about the level of diversity, belonging, and equity inside your organization, and decide whether a closer look is needed. The **Diversity and Inclusion Experience** is a prepopulated, comprehensive survey template enabling leaders to collect, analyze, and benchmark historical data, and closely track progress and performance compared with others in their industries.



[UKG Pro Document Manager](#) is the latest frontier for digital transformation in HR. By proactively managing all your digital employee files, the solution establishes a flexible, scalable, and centralized digital storage platform—allowing teams to access important employee-related files from anywhere, while ensuring the highest security standards to protect your people's data. HR teams can even collaborate on critical projects such as legal holds, auditing, and managing compliance with changing data laws around the world.

