



# American Worker Pulse Survey, Summer 2022

ENRC (Oil and Gas, Power and Utilities, Chemicals,  
Mining and Natural Resources)

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## For energy workers, industry changes create greater uncertainty

As renewable and sustainable energy transform the world they know, workers plan to stay where they're at?

## Energy and chemicals industry insights from the American worker survey | Summer 2022 pulse

The global energy sector is undergoing a seismic change that is arguably more geopolitically volatile, environmentally vital, and technologically transformational than at any other point in human history. The accelerated pace of digital innovation fueled by COVID-19 and the growing demand for sustainable energy is changing how energy companies collaborate, compete, and reshape corporate culture. As industry players modernize and metamorphose, workers still expect their leadership to create stellar employee experiences in the flow of work—experiences that advance learning, work-life balance, and well-being.

To better understand what makes American workers satisfied and supported in their careers, in 2022, KPMG undertook its third American worker survey. Almost **2,300** employees from a broad swath of industries, including the energy sector (oil and gas, power and utilities, chemicals, mining, and natural resources) provided their feedback on everything from corporate culture to remote work and career mobility. Below are six key insights gleaned from these conversations.





### 1. A corporate culture and employee experience that puts workers first measurably matters

The past year paints a positive picture when it details the level of professional happiness and job satisfaction enjoyed by energy workers. **Thirty-seven percent** feel more personally productive, and **76 percent** can manage their work stress (compared to just **70 percent** of all surveyed American workers). **Nine out of 10** understand how their efforts align with organizational goals and strategies. Yet, there are still areas for improvement when it comes to worker happiness as **28 percent** of those surveyed felt that their happiness at work decreased over the past year. And if shown disrespect at work, **three out of ten** said that would be strong factor for leaving their current jobs.

When it comes to company culture, **40 percent** indicate an improvement over the past year, with **greater than one-third** seeing better relationships with their coworkers. Best of all, nearly **two-thirds** of energy workers have the right amount of access to advocates and sponsors, which is **11 percentage points** higher than that of other surveyed American workers.



### 2. Workers demonstrate staying power, though tenuous

**One of every three** surveyed energy workers state that their desire to remain at their current organizations increased over the past year, compared to just **one-quarter** of all surveyed American employees. Yet, at the same time, **20 percent felt their commitment to the organization strongly or somewhat decreased** and **27 percent** felt their desire to stay at their jobs decreased. Additionally, **63 percent** had no change or felt it worsened when asked about their satisfaction with work. All this demonstrates there is still work to be done by energy leaderships to engage their current employees more effectively.



### 3. Organizational support for worker well-being must be paramount and highly personal

**Eighty-four percent** of surveyed energy workers believe organizations must create an environment conducive to open discussion and action regarding employment mental health. This is best exemplified by the fact that more than **two-thirds** of energy workers utilize the resources and programs available to them to support their well-being, compared to just **59 percent** of all American workers surveyed. With nearly **eight out of ten** desiring access to mental health professionals at no cost and almost **90 percent** indicating paid time off should be encouraged by their employers, organizations must consider worker well-being when pursuing strategic and financial goals.

**First case in point: 79 percent** of energy workers identify well-being resources as important when seeking new external career opportunities. One solution to keeping employees mentally and emotionally invested may be offering more remote work positions as **62 percent** of those surveyed would like to see more remote jobs offered by their organizations.

**Second case: Sixty-three percent** of workers indicated that the demands of their jobs increased over the past year. One solution here would be to provide employees with more flexibility to manage time as **91 percent** stressed as highly important autonomy in time utilization if they were looking for a new career opportunity.





#### 4. Learning and training are top of mind for career advancement

Energy workers express confidence that their organizations offer the level of reskilling and upskilling they seek for alternative career paths, with **61 percent** identifying opportunities for lateral and upward movement. However, nearly **one in four** did not think their organizations provided opportunities to upskill or reskill them for roles for which they may not be currently qualified. This may leave workers left with no chance to widen their career prospects, and they may choose to look elsewhere for employment as we know **45 percent** find career development very important if they were looking for a new career opportunity.

Nevertheless, for **74 percent** of those surveyed, there is practical understanding of the necessary skills required to progress their careers. And more than **three out of four** feel they can be successful in their current roles because of role-specific training.



#### 5. Communication is key as a pathway to organizational change

Surveyed energy workers feel more engaged, satisfied, and valued within their organizations. **Seventy-four percent** can share their perspectives with management (i.e., through a variety of communication vehicles such as focus groups and one-on-one performance conversations) as compared to **67 percent** of American workers surveyed. Results are shared (**71 percent**) and positive changes (**56 percent**) are put in place from this feedback, according to those surveyed. But there are still areas for improvement since **21 percent** of those surveyed do not see positive organizational change from employee feedback. This is a significant number as it can reduce productivity and create a fomenting of discontent within the workplace.



#### 6. Is it contentment, complacency, or apathy? Workers gave high marks for no change

While survey results are very positive from energy workers, it's important to note that a high percentage of workers also felt no change—versus worsened or improved—over the past year in many areas including coworker relationships (**53 percent**), happiness (**46 percent**), work quality (**57 percent**), team collaboration (**51 percent**), work-life balance (**45 percent**), and work satisfaction change (**41 percent**). While this, at first glance, seems to be a good thing, energy companies should be aware and watching that this does not turn into complacency or apathy for employees.

## Investing in sustaining your workforce

Transformative times require a resilient, more agile, and sustainable workforce that can respond to market fluctuations and changes in strategic direction. As the energy sector aggressively moves toward sustainability and renewal energy sources, employee satisfaction and performance are foundational and essential to driving success. From the survey results, there is solid evidence that energy workers feel both professionally and personally engaged, informed, and empowered by their employers.



This can be further expanded in several ways, by:

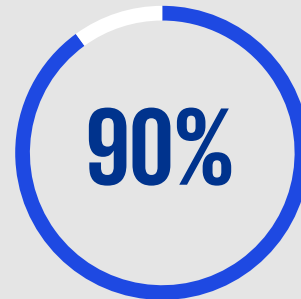
- Delivering digital learning in the flow of work (since workers see learning as a critical success factor in staying at an organization)
- Acting on all employee feedback so workers feel listened to and respected
- Offering workers added flexibility through hybrid or remote work options (**35 percent** see flexibility to work remotely as a reason to continue working at their organization)

Even with a strong commitment to the corporate mission, workers will still pursue other career opportunities if those new roles offer compensation, career advancement, or work-life considerations not offered or supported by their current employers. Energy sector organizations must continue to keep their workers “happy” and mentally healthy to sustain this positive feedback expressed by their workforce. Important to note, when seeking employment outside their current organizations (**31 percent** of surveyed energy workers plan to do so in the upcoming year with another **13 percent** neutral on the question). Of all energy workers surveyed, they see compensation (**97 percent**), health benefits (**94 percent**), and work-life balance (**91 percent**) as being most important to their next career opportunity. These may be areas to look at better look at within the organization to keep the workforce in place.



*While energy workers scored relatively high on the level of engagement and commitment to their organization—it's not without notice that large parts of energy workers noted their neutrality. Is this contentment, complacency, or apathy? Energy leaders should tap into their unique employee groups to understand this neutrality as a way to proactively retain and engage with their top talent critical to future business success.*

— Felicia Lyon,  
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**90 percent** of surveyed energy sector workers understand how their efforts contribute to achieving organizational goals and strategies.

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