

Survey of Time and Information Challenges 2024

The survey of how working professionals and business owners view the challenges of managing the daily flow of business communication, the impact on their schedules and ability to focus on and complete their work.

We set out to discover the challenges working professionals, small business owners and executives experience regarding the flow of information and management of their time.

Rob Hatch Coaching and Consulting and Owner Media Group surveyed 180 individuals between September 10, 2024, and September 28, 2024. This included employees from large and small companies and those who own businesses.

Survey of Time and Information Challenges 2024

Highlights

Only **18.4%** of employees have systems in place to manage their inboxes.

31.6% of employees indicated they are **likely missing important messages** in their inboxes.

44.7% of employees indicated they feel **negatively about their inbox at the end of the day.**

Only **20.8%** of employees indicated they have enough time each week **to complete their projects.**

60.5% of employees spend more than **25% a day reacting** to instant messaging notifications from apps like Slack or Teams.

Nearly **one-quarter of employees** spend more than **50% a day reacting** to instant messaging notifications from apps like Slack or Teams.

42.1% of employees indicated feeling **negatively about their next day at work.**

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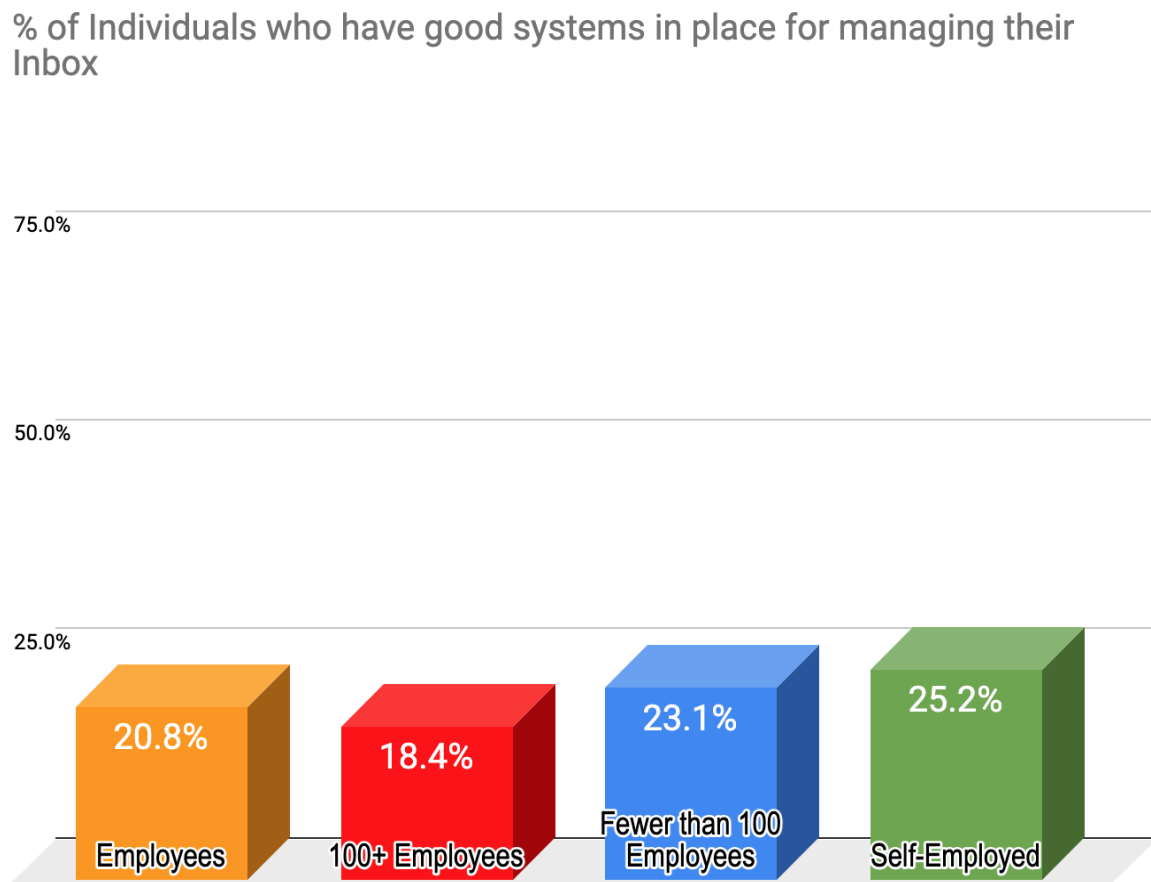


What the Survey Found

Inbox Management

Overall, respondents indicated that they need help managing the flow of information within the environment of their email inbox and, to a greater degree, the influx of communication via messaging applications such as Slack and Teams.

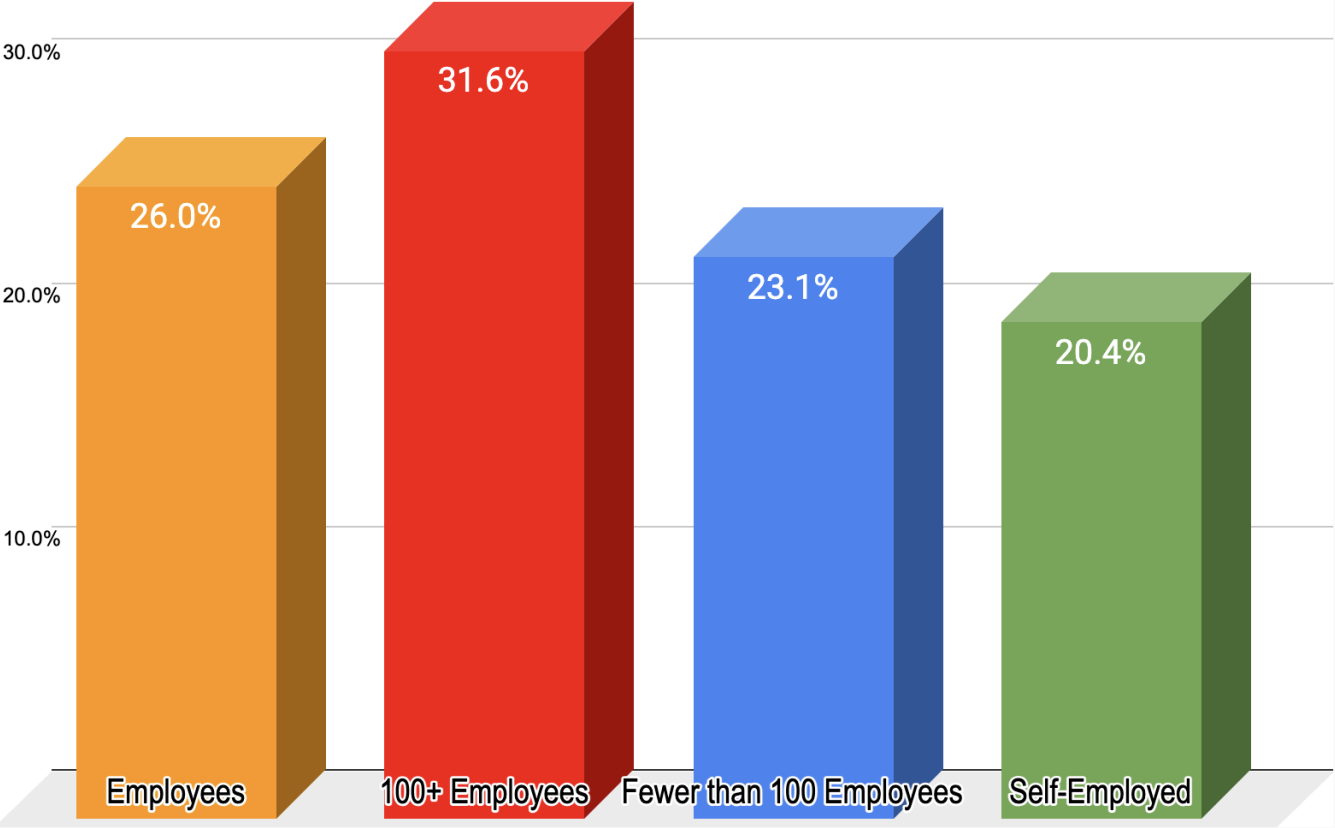
Among the findings, **only 23.3% of respondents indicated they have sound systems to manage their inboxes.** This number decreased to **just 18.4% of those working in companies with 100 or more employees who indicated they have sound systems to manage their inboxes.**



Pointing to the impact of the lack of systems in place for managing their inbox, **22.8% of respondents indicated** that their inbox is so disorganized that they are likely *missing important information*.

For **respondents in organizations with 100 or more employees**, **31.6%** indicated they are likely **missing important information** or their **inboxes are complete chaos**.

% of Individuals who report that their inbox systems are so poor that they are likely missing important messages or are in complete chaos.



Impact on Wellbeing

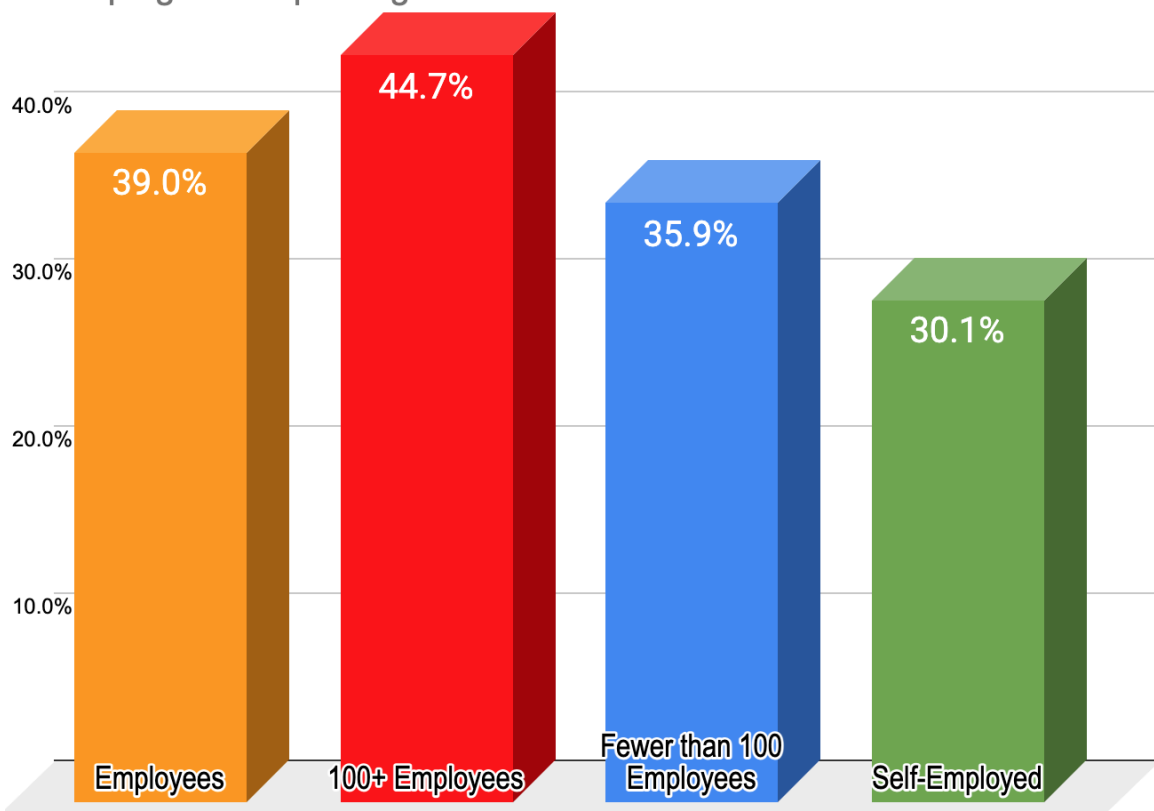
In an era where employees' mental health has become a focus of organizations, we sought to understand the impact of inbox management on emotional well-being.

Overall, **33.9% of respondents indicated feeling negatively about their inbox**, noting that it *“keeps them up at night”* in many cases.

For employees, **39% of respondents indicated feeling negatively about their inbox**.

This impact increased to **44.7% of respondents in companies with 100 or more employees who feel negatively about their inbox**.

% of Individuals who report feeling negatively about their inbox including it "keeping them up at night."



With email being a significant source of communication in most professional workplace settings, the fact that less than a quarter of working professionals in all settings reported having sound systems in place to manage their inboxes indicates potential gaps not only in organizational skills but perhaps more broadly, individual and organizational communication practices.

While email has been used as a tool for both internal *and* external communication, much of the internal communication load in companies has been assumed by messaging apps.

This result elevates concerns for larger companies, for whom **31.6% of respondents indicated likely “missing important information”** and that the more significant proportion of the information at risk of being missed could be external and client-focused.

Time Management and Availability

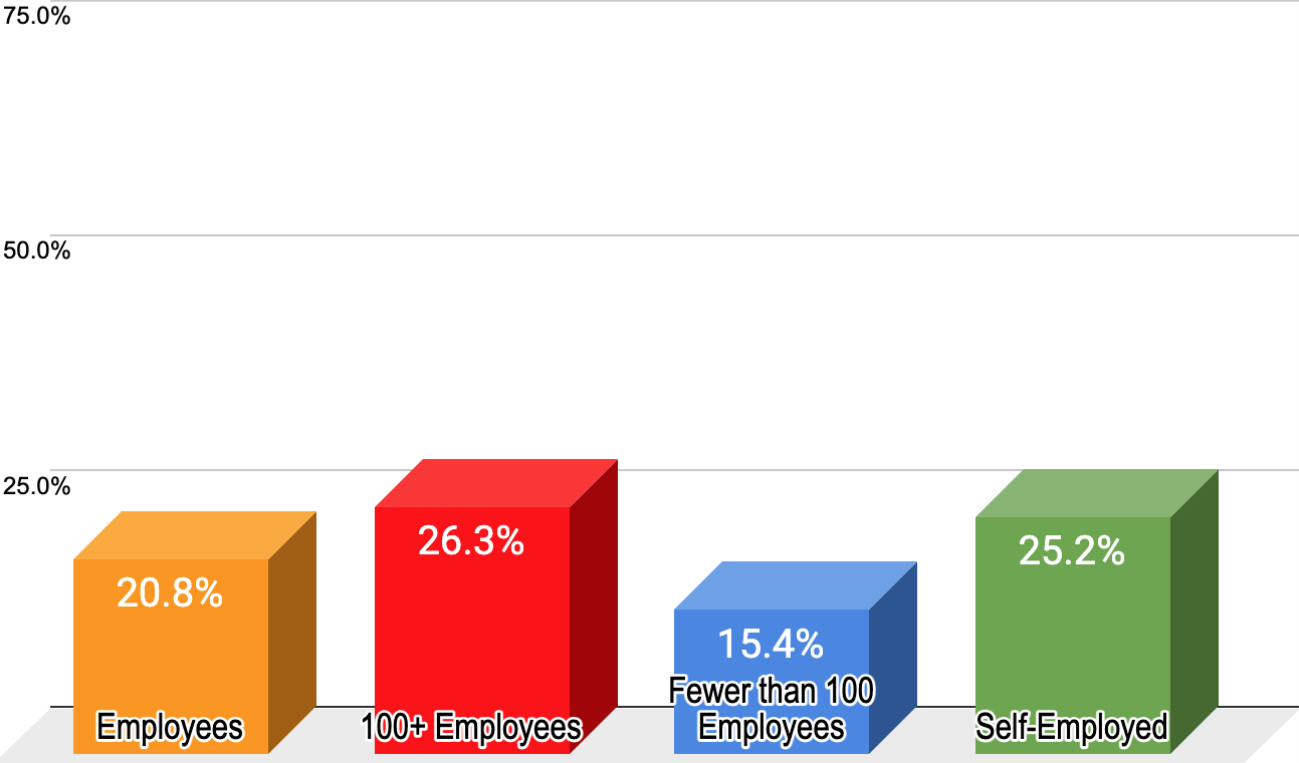
Respondents to the survey indicated challenges, specifically regarding the time they had available to complete their work.

Only 22.8% of respondents reported having enough time to complete their work.

Of those working inside companies, **just 20.8% of employees indicated having enough time to complete their work.**

Employees in larger companies fared better than those in smaller ones, perhaps indicating that fewer resources place greater pressure across the organization in smaller organizations (those with less than 100 employees).

% of individuals who indicate that they have enough time to complete their work.



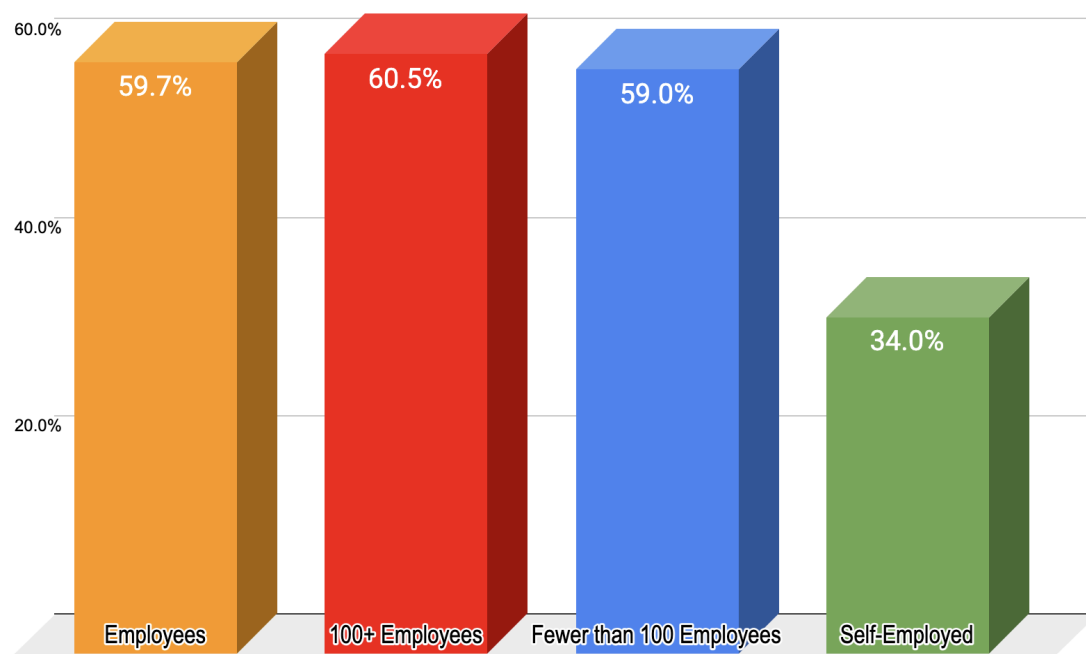
The Impact of Instant Message Applications

Instant messaging platforms such as Slack and Microsoft Teams provide easy access to and for employee communication. Our survey sought to understand the impact of these applications on an individual's time and productivity.

Overall, **45.6% of respondents reported spending greater than 25% of their day reacting to messages** even to ensure the message is *not* meant for them.

60.5% of individuals working in an organization with 100 or more employees spend more than 25% of their day managing messages from apps like Slack or Teams. Again, this time is spent checking messages they're alerted to but ***may not be intended for them.***

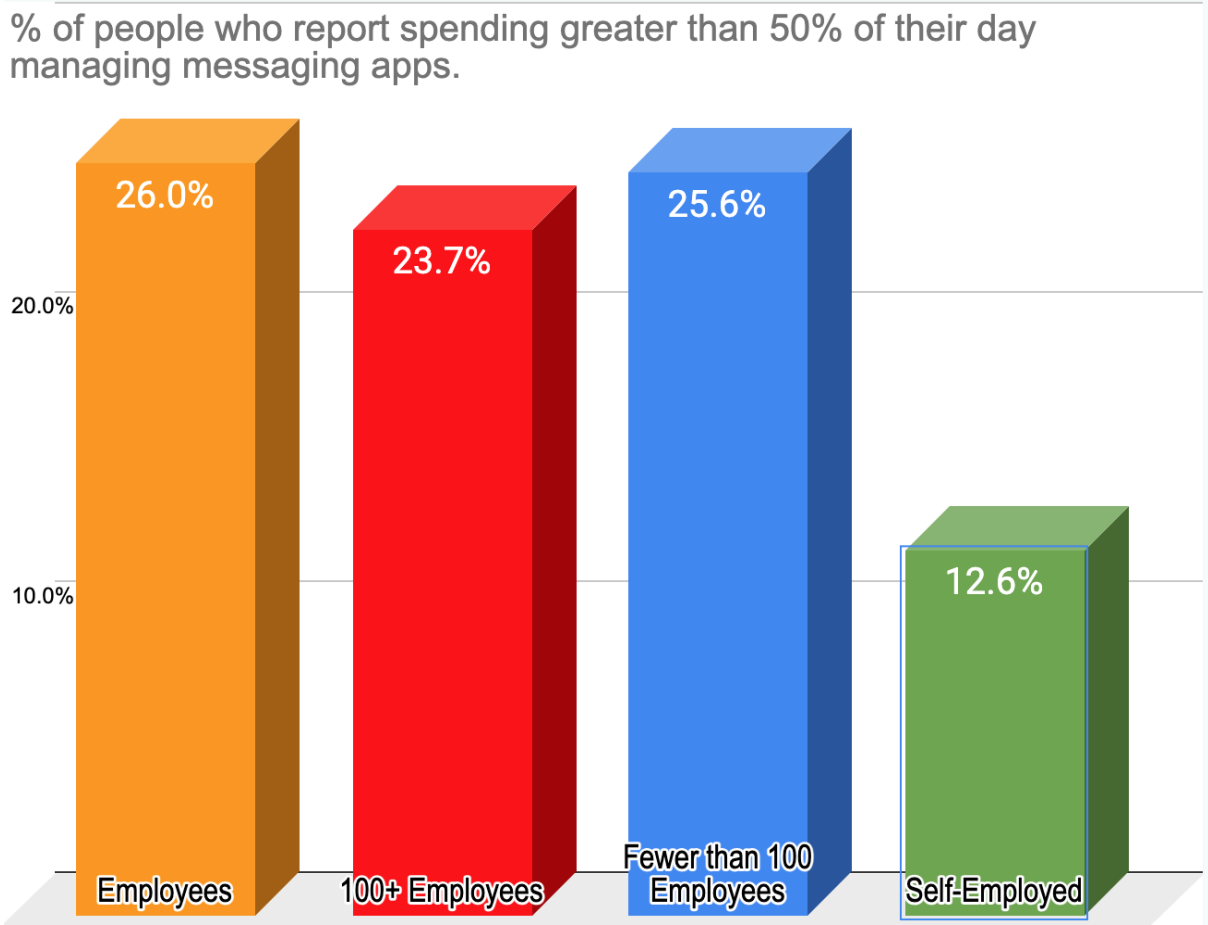
% of people who report spending greater than 25% of their day managing messaging apps.



In addition to concerns regarding the *amount* of time spent throughout a work day, the frequent checking of message notifications that are not meant for that individual employee, has the potential to negatively impact their focus and therefore their overall productivity.

When looking at the survey data further, more concerns emerge regarding the impact messaging apps have on employee time.

Nearly *one quarter* of employees (23.7%) in larger organizations spend greater than 50% of their time reacting to notifications from messaging apps like Slack and Teams.

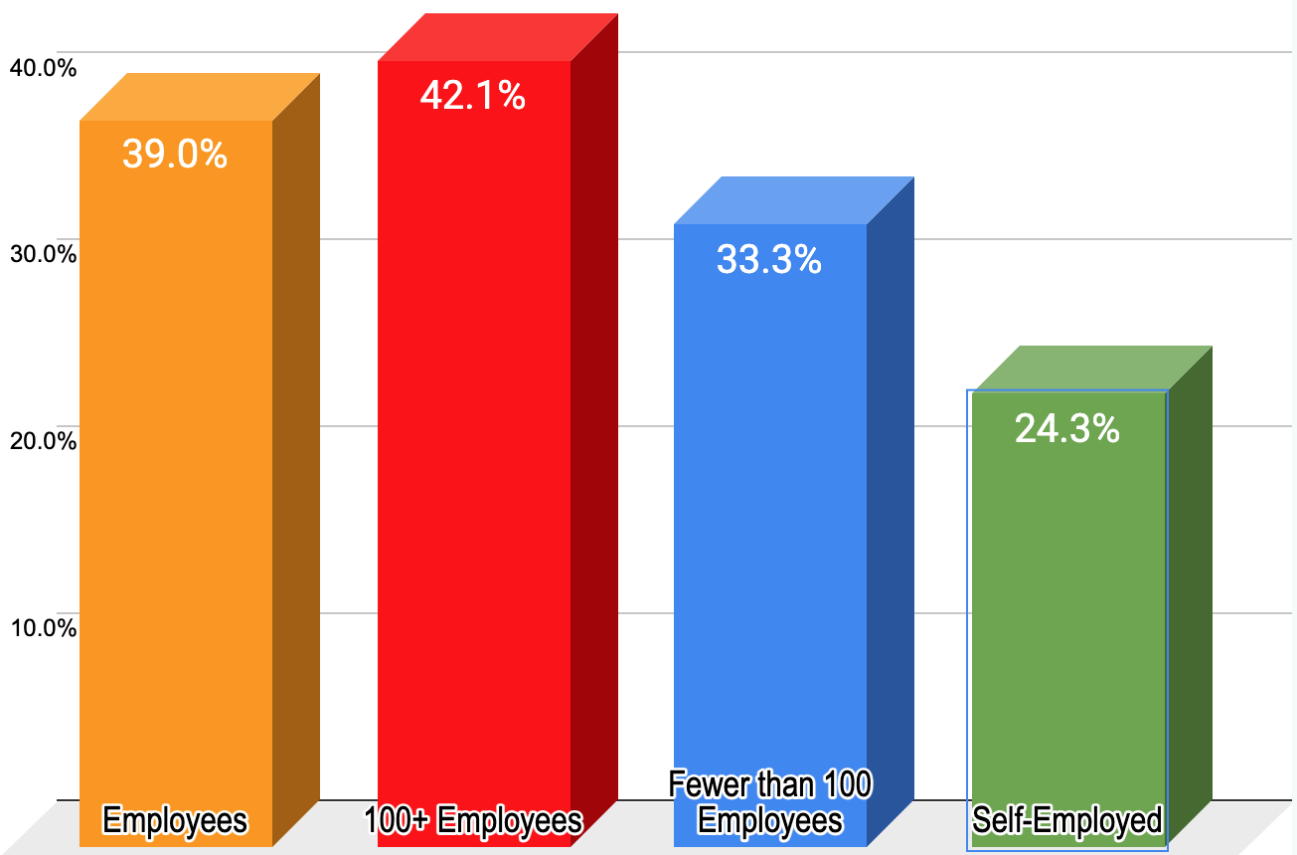


Employee Engagement

With employee engagement a central concern in organizations, our survey found that **39% of respondents working in a company felt negatively about their next day at work.**

In companies with greater than 100 employees, 42.1% of respondents indicated feeling negatively about their next day at work.

% of people who report feeling negatively about their next day at work



On their own those results should be concerning to organizations. When combined with indications that employees spend much of their time reacting to messages, miss important emails and report not having enough time for their work, it should come as no surprise they feel negatively about their next day of work.

About the survey methodology

The survey was open from September 10, 2024 to September 26, 2024. A total of 180 responses were collected online from subscribers and visitors to RobHatch.com and owner.media, as well as cooperating individuals who publicized the survey.

Respondents identified themselves as working professionals by responding to the survey and indicating either owning a business or an employee of a company.