

TRENDS REPORT 2021

After the roller coaster of doom that was 2020, it's only natural that every organization and individual is reaching for some semblance of order and predictability.

While we can't thwart the fact that change is the only constant (we meet again, [Heraclitus](#)), we can supply you with some helpful trends and stats to look out for in 2021.

We are planning to lean into this data (can you tell, we 🧡 *research*) to inform our work. And we invite you to reach out if you could use follow-up and support, or if we can answer any questions.

With that, we present: important trends for 2021.

PITFALLS

We're pointing out the banana peels so you don't slip.

1) NOT PRIORITIZING DE&I.

Without making real, lasting change and investments in diversity, equity and inclusion, companies will lose their competitive edge. A less diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce not only negatively affects a company's bottom line, it will affect retention and the ability to find quality employees. According to a study by [The Manifest](#), 70% of job seekers said that they want to work for a company that demonstrates a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

2) DIGITIZING WITHOUT TRAINING.

Covid-19 accelerated the digital transformation of the workplace. Separate studies by [McKinsey](#) and [KPMG](#) found that at least 80% of leaders accelerated the implementation of technology due to Covid-19. IBM found that 2/3 of companies were able to overcome the major hurdles to do this. However, with larger skills gaps, *more training is necessary for employees to support the speed of change.*

3) NOT INVESTING IN EMPLOYEE HEALTH/WEELLBEING.

[Dan Schawbel](#) of Workplace Intelligence reminds us that "between our public health crisis and the economic recession, employees feel that their companies need to be part of the solution. Workers are prioritizing safety, security, and health when evaluating employers. When job seekers were evaluated they chose safety of the work environment over opportunities for professional growth and even the quality of potential coworkers."

4) NOT CREATING SOLUTIONS FOR WOMEN.

Over [one million](#) women have had to drop out of the workforce due to the pandemic, augmenting the extreme challenges most often on their shoulders, including full-time work, childcare, inequity, and household duties. That's part of the reason why [61% of women](#) are planning a post-Covid career change.

SOFT SKILLS

Hard fact: Soft skills are key to success in 2021.

Here at GoldJam Creative, we're leaving "soft" for things like pillows and puppies, and start calling these what they really are: [power skills](#).

SRI International and the Carnegie Mellon Foundation [found](#) that 75% of long-term job success depends upon soft skills mastery, and only 25% on technical skills. That's right — soft skills are make or break.

This Bright Horizons [study](#) validates that 78% of workers believe the pandemic has increased the need for companies to support their educational needs. **"The secret ingredients of sustainable collaboration — such as effective communication and social awareness are rare,"** says Francesca Gino in her Harvard Business Review [cover story](#).

We're gonna give you the inside scoop on what you need to be one of the rare gems because, as one [LinkedIn Study](#) showed, 94% of employees say they would stay at a company longer if it simply invested in helping them learn.

DRUMROLL PLEASE! [Here](#) are the top ranked power skills for 2021:

2020's TOP SOFT SKILLS

1. Creativity
2. Persuasion
3. Collaboration
4. Adaptability
5. Emotional Intelligence

Source: *LinkedIn, January 2020*

2021's TOP POWER SKILLS

1. Emotional Intelligence
2. Communication
3. Adaptability
4. Creativity
5. Collaboration
6. Leadership
7. Time-Management

SOFT SKILLS, cont.

Not feeling totally convinced?

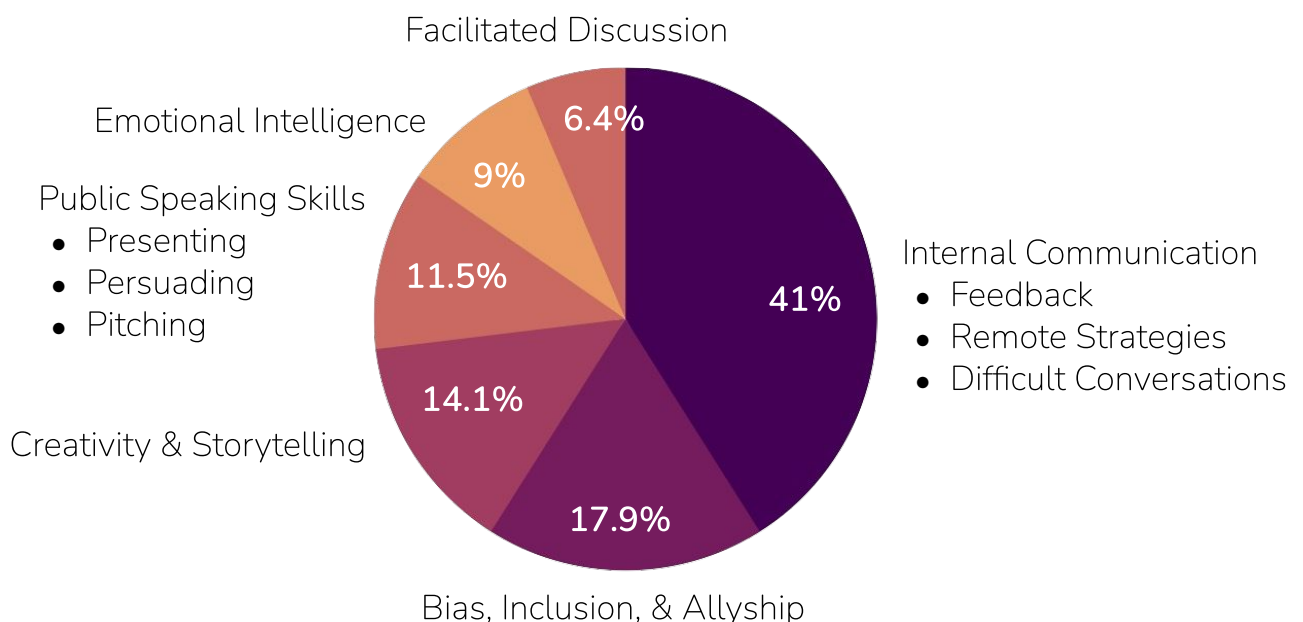
Let's check out what Susan Collins, Dir. of Talent Acquisition and Employer Branding at Talbots has [shared](#): 97% of employers surveyed (yes, almost ALL the employers) said that soft skills were *equally as important* or *more important* than hard skills. But, within the first 18 months of a new job, 46% of new employees will fail. Why? You guessed it! Because they fall short on soft skills! In fact, a whopping **89%** will fail because of a lack of soft skills.

And this blew our mind:

MIT Management led [this incredible study](#) about a soft skills assessment done in a factory, where these skill sets are rarely considered essential. Here's the quick hit: "When comparing the final program costs against increased revenue, [researchers] found that in-factory soft skills training returned roughly 250% on investment within eight months of its conclusion."

Curious about our own soft skill trends?

See below for a breakdown by topic of the workshops we facilitated in 2020.



WORKPLACE MODELS

Predictions of what workplaces will look like in 2021.

Tired of commuting from your bedroom to your living room and putting your coffee in a travel tumbler just so your toddler won't spill it? Well, don't we get it! While remote work is here to stay, we have to look at the ever growing popularity of the hybrid model (predicted by [Graceada Partners](#) to take off in 2021), and that many are finishing up their RTW plans. Here are the trends.

1) RELOCATION IS HAPPENING.

83% of employees are in favor of relocating as part of remote working and 20% have already done so either temporarily or permanently.

2) HYBRID IS HIP.

When workers were surveyed about their ideal situation, over 72% said they wanted a hybrid remote-office model.

3) SECONDARY MARKETS ARE ON THE RISE.

To a growing pool of workers not tied to an office space, or those looking for more affordable options, mid-size cities will be increasingly attractive.

4) WEWORK (*GASP*) COULD BE BACK.

People love having options. Shared office spaces facilitate that desire, and allow for firms to ride the wave of uncertainty one month at a time.

5) MICROLEARNING IS IN.

With workplace format in flux AND so many employees having to take on new and different tasks, the need to upskill and re-skill has never been greater. Gartner [reports](#) that only 16% of new hires possess the skills needed for their current jobs and the jobs of the future. However, with time being limited, [microlearning](#) has become a popular solution.

THANKS, ALL

It's only up from here.

If you liked this report, let's connect! Please email molly@goldjamcreative.com or give us a ring at 347-903-5679 (in case you didn't see our digits across the other pages!). We can tell you more, assess your needs, and design a program for you.

And if you didn't like it...we would love to hear that, too. We are always looking for ways to grow and improve.

Last but not least: *Stay in touch!* [Sign up](#) for our bi-weekly newsletter to get topical tips and tricks plopped right into your inbox. You can also follow along on our [Forbes Column](#).

