

## ***Methodology and Participation for 2020 Diary Study of Microsoft Employees Experiences in Remote Meetings During COVID-19***

2020-10-FOW-SIM1

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This report explains the project data collection methodology and participation demographics for a diary study of Microsoft employees coping with all-remote meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic from April through August 2020.

**CCS CONCEPTS** • Human-centered computing ~ Collaborative and social computing ~ Empirical studies in collaborative and social computing

**Additional Keywords and Phrases:** Video-mediated collaboration, meetings, COVID-19, diary study

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This report records the methodology of a study of meetings of knowledge workers in a global technology company, run from mid-April to mid-August 2020. This report covers logistics, data collection, and participation demographics.

### 1.1 *Research purpose*

As enterprises rolled out mandatory working from home measures in March 2020, it was clear that there was to be a sudden and unprecedented shift to all-remote working (i.e., conducted online, where no team members are physically co-present), and in particular all-remote meetings. This presented an unprecedented opportunity for the longitudinal capture of experiences of the exclusive use of all-remote meetings. The impact all of these changes to meetings may manifest not just in behavioral patterns during meetings and work output, but also in awareness of others, and feelings of connection and group cohesion, changes in the kind of work felt to be effective, the cognitive effort required, and the ability to control work-life balance. It is also an opportunity to understand how such technologies are tied to new configurations of remote workspaces and artefacts, changes in work practices and strategies, and new routines and schedules that must accommodate domestic life. All of these were likely to change over time as people adjusted to their new situations. Understanding how meeting technologies are used in this broader context is crucial to future design and development.

### 1.2 *Research questions*

**RQ1:** What are the **benefits, challenges, and opportunities** of exclusively non-hybrid online meetings, conducted from home, in a global crisis?

- RQ1 'Input' factors
  - physical and social location
  - timing, scheduling, availability
  - type of meetings
  - tasks in meetings
  - non-meeting tools
  - interaction and social presence
  - social category expression and representation (e.g. Culture, gender)
  - work meaning, purpose, and objectives
  - career, job, role/s at work
  - the crisis
- RQ1 'Output' factors
  - effectiveness (Achieving desired outcomes)?
  - engagement (Participation at a desired level)?
  - exertion (Cognitive and physical effort)?
  - work relationships (Connection between people at various scales)?
  - work/life balance (Managing fulfillment in work and personal life)?
  - communication practices (The granular methods used to interact)?
  - attitudes towards work (Positions on the purpose and value of work)?
  - roles and identities (The expression of self)?

**RQ2:** How do the above **evolve over time**?

- What evolves **during the crisis**?
- What happens when employees **return to the office**?

**RQ3:** What **development is required** to support more effective, engaging, inclusive, and sustainable online meetings?

- What differs between normal vs global crisis situations?
- What differs between office vs home?
- What technical developments required?
- What business social developments are required?
- What is required for exclusively non-hybrid online meetings?
- What can be used from the above to improve hybrid meetings?

**1.3 Research issues matrix**

RQ1's 'input' factors and 'output' factors form a matrix to be explored.

	<b>Effectiveness</b> (Achieving desired outcomes)	<b>Engagement</b> (Participation at a desired level)	<b>Exertion</b> (Cognitive and physical effort)	<b>Work relationships</b> (Connection between people at various scales)	<b>Work/life balance</b> (Managing fulfillment in work and personal life)	<b>Attitude</b> towards work (Positions on the purpose and value of work)?	<b>Role and identity</b> (The expression of self)?	<b>Communication practices</b> (The granular methods used to interact)?
<b>Physical and social location</b>								
<b>Timing, scheduling, availability</b>								
<b>Type of meeting</b>								
<b>Tasks in meetings</b>								
<b>Non-meeting tools</b>								
<b>Interaction and social presence</b>								
<b>Social category expression and representation</b>								
<b>Meaning, purpose, and objectives</b>								
<b>Career, job, role/s at work</b>								
<b>Crisis situation</b>								

#### **1.4 Diary method**

Since change is a critical component of the RQs, a longitudinal diary study was chosen for data collection. Diary studies in HCI research [3] have been particularly effective in capturing the longitudinal experiences of information workers [1,2,4].

#### **1.5 Recruitment and ethics**

This study went through IRB and data privacy processes from mid-March and was approved in mid-April 2020 (RCT ID 3195; IRB Review ID 612).

Data collection occurred between mid-April and mid-August 2020. Participants were recruited in rolling self-selected recruitment from mid-April to mid-June via an opt-in bulk advertisement that was sent to 10,000 randomly selected employees of the company as well as multiple internal mailing lists with large memberships.

As a gift for participation, all participants were offered a £20 (or local equivalent) gift voucher and also entry into a sweepstakes to win mugs and teapots depending on the proportion of diary completion.

#### **1.6 Three sets of data**

**Onboarding survey:** After providing consent, participants were asked to complete an onboarding survey comprising demographic data and baseline data on meetings.

**Diary:** Participants were asked to complete a guided diary in which each entry consisted of (a) a guided free-text response with rotating prompts (detailed shortly), and (b) a set of 5-point Likert items with the same prompts for every entry. The topics for the guided diaries were decided prior to the study and all participants had the opportunity to fill in the same topics and number of entries. Due to the rolling recruitment (see below) participants started at different points in their mandatory WFH experience. The differences in start and end points was considered valuable, given that a rich set of experiences would be collected with much overlap between participants. Further, it was hoped that the experiences of participants with different starting points (e.g. starting in April with still limited WFH experience vs starting in June with several months WFH experience) might provide a useful filter during analysis.

**Weekly polls:** Participants were also invited to complete optional weekly polls on specific topics, also with qualitative and quantitative questions. The weekly polls asked focused questions reactive to the ongoing mandatory WFH situation, with questions based on early findings or exogenous issues. Due to the rolling recruitment's different start and end points, while all employees filled out the same guided diaries, not all participants had the opportunity to answer every poll. Having a slightly different subset of participants responding to the different poll questions was considered a reasonable trade-off for being able to capture extra data. Further, since a participant key codes linked diary and weekly poll responses, this data could be filtered by participant diary entry times if need be.

## **2 ONBOARDING**

### **2.1 Onboarding Questions**

#### **Onboarding for Online Meeting Journal Study**

**1. What region are you in?**

- APAC - Australia and New Zealand
- APAC - China
- APAC - India
- APAC - South East Asia
- EMEA - Africa
- EMEA - Europe (except UK)
- EMEA - Middle East
- EMEA - UK
- North America - Puget Sound
- North America - All except Puget Sound
- South America - LATAM
- South America - Brazil
- Other

**2. What organisation are you in?**

This is your top-level organisation. Note that CELA, HR, and employees at level 68 or higher unfortunately may not participate.

- AI+R
- BD
- C&AI
- CFO
- CSEO
- CTO
- E+D
- Gaming
- GSMO
- M&CBM
- WCB
- Other

**3. What is your job title?**

Please provide the job title that is on your contact card

**4. Which of these best describes your current remote work situation?**

This is a question about your normal base of work, exclusive of periodic work travel unless you are travelling every week or two weeks for work, in which case use the last four categories.

- I normally work in an office but I am currently working from home/remotely exclusively due to COVID-19
- I am back working in an office after a period of working from home/remotely exclusively due to COVID-19
- I normally work from home/remotely exclusively full time
- I normally work from home/remotely around 80% of the time
- I normally work from home/remotely around 60% of the time
- I normally work from home/remotely around 40% of the time
- I normally work from home/remotely around 20% of the time

**5. Are you currently working and living in the city, state, or country where you would normally work and live, or somewhere different?**

For example, did you return to a city, state, or country where you have a residence or family to 'wait out' the prolonged work from home period, intending to return to the country where you normally work and live when life returns to normal?

- Yes, I'm where I would normally work and live
- No, I'm somewhere different

**6. How different is the time zone where you are now from the time zone where you normally work and live?**

For example, have you moved from the US West Coast to the US East Coast?

- No, it's the same time zone
- 0.5 - 2 hours different
- 2-4 hours different
- 4-6 hours different
- 6-8 hours different
- More than 8 hours different

**7. What is your gender?**

- Woman
- Man
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

**8. What is your age range**

- 18-24
- 25-34

- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 or older
- Prefer not to say

**9. How many meetings do you have in a typical work week?**

Answer this for meetings within the last month, i.e. during the current pandemic.

- 0 - My job doesn't need to attend meetings.
- 1 to 3
- 4 to 10
- 11 to 20
- 21 to 30
- 31 to 40
- 41 to 50
- 50+

**10. How many people are you meeting with and how often?**

Answer this for meetings within the last month, i.e. during the current pandemic. Include both scheduled and ad hoc meetings.

	Multiple times a day	About once a day	Multiple times a week	About once a week	Multiple times a month	Once a month or less
1 person						
2 to 4 people						
5 to 10 people						
11 to 20 people						
20+ people						

**11. How long do your meetings last on average?**

Answer this for meetings within the last month, i.e. during the current pandemic.

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15 minutes
- 30 minutes
- 45 minutes
- 60 minutes
- 60+ minutes

**12. Have you participated in parallel chats with the main meeting?**

Answer this for meetings within the last month, i.e. during the current pandemic. Parallel chats are multi-turn conversations with one or more participants that represent a significant addition to your experience of the main meeting. Don't include occasions when just one or two posts are made to chat or if the posts are just the minimum necessary to check connections or logistics.

- Yes
- No

**13. How often have you participated in parallel chats to the main meeting?**

Answer this for meetings within the last month, i.e. during the current pandemic.

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Seasonal
- Yearly
- Never

**14. How often are you involved with these different types of meetings?**

Answer this for meetings within the last month, i.e. during the current pandemic.

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Never
Information sharing (Presenting with Q&A but no					

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Never
defined outcome)					
Reviewing (Providing feedback and making decisions)					
Planning (Deciding work goals, steps, work completed or outstanding)					
Brainstorming (Generating and promoting new ideas interactively)					
Analysis (Evaluating materials to derive insights)					
Troubleshooting (Identifying problems and solutions)					
Influencing (Pitching concepts to get resources)					
Transactional (Securing a contract for					

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Never
giving or receiving resources)					
Refining (Editing or revising materials to improve them)					

**15. Rank the communicative features that you consider most to least important on online meetings with multiple participants**

Drag items to re-order them

- Seeing everyone at once
- Hearing people
- Knowing who is speaking
- Seeing people's body movements
- Seeing people's eyes and facial expressions
- Getting people's attention
- Seeing people's gestures
- Knowing who is in the room
- Seeing shared screens, presentations, or collaboration objects
- Seeing things in people's remote environments

**2.2 Onboarding demographics (N=849)**

*2.2.1 Gender*

Four gender choices were provided: Female, Male, Non-binary, and an option to Prefer not to say. No participants selected non-binary.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Man	507	59.7%
Woman	334	39.3%
Prefer not to say	8	0.9%

### 2.2.2 Age

Ages were grouped into 6 ranges spanning 9 years each, starting from 18, and including an option to Prefer not to say.

Age range	Count	%
18-24	45	5.3%
25-34	248	29.2%
35-44	259	30.5%
45-54	222	26.1%
55-64	61	7.2%
65 or older	3	0.4%
Prefer not to say	11	1.3%

### 2.2.3 Region

Participants were recruited from almost all regions in which the company operates.

Region	Count	%
North America	445	52.4%
Europe (incl UK)	170	20.0%
India	99	11.7%
China (incl Hong Kong & Taiwan)	40	4.7%
Central & South America	32	3.8%
South East Asia (excl China)	29	3.4%
Middle East & Africa	24	2.8%
Australia & New Zealand	10	1.2%

### 2.2.4 High-level role

Participants were recruited from almost all operational groups and roles. There were some groups whose participation in research is generally restricted due to their access to sensitive personal and company information. These included the human resources and legal organizations, and very senior employees from all organizations. We report only high-level roles in this technical report. Roles were merged into six high-level roles through the following process: one researcher read through each participant's full job title and intra-company organization name, qualitatively assessing their most likely high-level role. These roles were then reviewed and amended as needed by a second researcher who more experience interpreting job titles in this organization.

Role	Count	%
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Business & Sales	377	44.4%
Development	273	32.2%
Technical Operations	84	9.9%
Creative, Design, UX Research	74	8.7%
Research	30	3.5%
Administration	11	1.3%

### 2.2.5 Location

Participants were asked to provide details on their normal work location to indicate experience in working from home. In Facility refers to any official organizational location (offices, warehouses, stores etc.) We also counted some participants who had returned to work after mandatory WFH.

Normal workplace	Count	%
In Facility 100%	485	57.1%
In Facility 100% - Returned	20	2.4%
Remote 100%	62	7.3%
Remote 20%	76	9.0%
Remote 40%	56	6.6%
Remote 60%	84	9.9%
Remote 80%	66	7.8%

Participants were also asked whether they were working in a place different to their normal situation, as people were required to change cities, states, or countries due to various domestic arrangements or visa restrictions.

Abnormal location and/or timezone	Count	%
<b>Yes, I'm where I would normally work and live</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>92.6%</b>
<b>No, I'm somewhere different</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>7.4%</b>
No, it's the same time zone	48	5.7%
2-4 hours different	7	0.8%
0.5 - 2 hours different	6	0.7%
6-8 hours different	1	0.1%
More than 8 hours different	1	0.1%

### 3 DIARIES

The diaries consisted of a series of forms embedded in a secure company website. In total, 24 diary entries were requested, and participants were sent calendar events to prompt one entry approximately every three days for two months total.

The 24 guided entries were to be filled out in three cycles of eight prompted topics. Diary entries could consist of any combination of text, audio, photos, and video. Participants were also told that they could feel free to relate other meeting related issues outside the topics and prompts. The top-level diary topics were as follows (see 3.1 for full details of sub-prompts):

1. How has your **physical workspace** influenced recent online meetings?
2. What has **interaction** been like in your recent online meetings?
3. What has **productivity** been like in your recent online meetings?
4. How have your **tools** influenced your recent online meetings?
5. What have you noticed about **multitasking** in recent online meetings?
6. What **types** of recent online meetings have been successful or challenging?
7. What have you noticed about **time** in your recent online meetings?
8. What **approaches** have people been taking to recent online meetings?

Each topic also included additional prompts which iterated slightly to nudge participants to reflect on changes since the last entry. See Section 3.1.3.

#### 3.1 *Diary topics and prompts*

##### 3.1.1 *How has your physical workspace influenced recent online meetings?*

- Comparison to collaborative spaces and how they were used
- Setup (room and desk, video and audio, Devices and peripherals).
- Challenges and opportunities
- Changes or hacks you've made
- Comparison to previous/normal workspace
- Impact of other people in your vicinity
- Impact of home life
- Suggestions for improvement

##### 3.1.2 *What has interaction been like in your recent online meetings?*

- Raising and considering differing points of view
- Sharing and assessing ideas
- Giving feedback
- Being heard and seen
- Turn-taking
- Sensing the number and presence of others
- Sensing mood and engagement
- Familiarity with people
- Relevance of geographical location

- Limited views of each other
- Sharing physical and digital things
- Coping with technical troubles
- Impact of home life
- Suggestions for improvement

3.1.3 *What has productivity been like in your recent online meetings?*

- Achieving personal or project goals
- Resolving disagreements
- Making the right decisions
- Surfacing and addressing customer needs
- Which meetings were the most productive?
- Importance of video for engagement
- Structure and meeting management
- Facilitators, agenda, notes, and follow up
- Achieving personal or project goals
- Group cohesion
- Impact of home life
- Suggestions for improvement

3.1.4 *How have your tools influenced your recent online meetings?*

- Tools and ability to collaborate
- Most used meeting application(s)
- Most and least used online meeting features
- Other essential tools
- Using additional devices
- Using physical tools
- Tools tried and rejected
- Coping with technical troubles
- Impact of home life
- Suggestions for improvement

3.1.5 *What have you noticed about multitasking in recent online meetings?*

- How and when you multitask
- Why you multitask
- Managing video and audio
- Group expectations around multitasking
- Impact of multitasking on productivity
- Impact of multitasking on conversations
- Features for multitasking
- Impact of home life

- Suggestions for improvement

3.1.6 *What types of recent online meetings have been successful or challenging?*

- Most successful and most challenging
- Topics that are easier or more difficult to discuss
- Group size, meeting length, meeting roles
- Familiarity with people and their geographical location
- Sharing physical or digital objects
- Desire to move around in your space
- New practices or tools that help
- Impact of home life
- Suggestions for improvement

3.1.7 *What have you noticed about time in your recent online meetings?*

- Number of meetings per day
- Length, spacing, and cadence of meetings
- Transitioning from one meeting to another
- Balance of ad-hoc versus scheduled
- Time for all perspectives to be shared
- Availability of people for meeting
- New group scheduling or timing changes
- Your scheduling or timing changes
- Impact of home life
- Suggestions for improvement

3.1.8 *What approaches have people been taking to recent online meetings?*

- Making online meetings more productive
- Reducing online meeting fatigue
- Staying socially connected
- Handling difficult topics [In the final entry this is phrased as "Has there been any change in how we surface customer needs, make decisions, and handle disagreements?"]
- Contrasts with in-person meetings
- Best practices
- Biggest surprise
- How people share approaches

3.2 *Cycle of diary entries*

Each cycle contained slightly different *additional* prompts about what had *changed* since the previous entry.

**Cycle 1: What's changed?**

- What were meetings like before COVID-19, and how have they changed since?

### **Cycle 2: Are you still home or back at the office?**

- If you're still working from home, have you settled into new approaches to online meetings?
- If you're back at the office, are you and others back to old approaches or has there been a change?

### **Cycle 3: Reflecting on your time in meetings**

This is the last time you'll focus on this topic. Since beginning your journal:

- what have you learned about challenges and opportunities?
- what would you suggest in a guide for others?
- what would you suggest to the company?
- if you've returned to the office, what has changed or should change about online meetings?

### **Journal entry 24 - Approaches - Final entry**

Since entry 24 was also the final entry of the journal as a whole, it contained both different overall reflective prompts and a speculative prompt about MR/VR meetings

- **Looking back over the last two months**
  - How much have things changed? If you've returned to the office, what has changed or should change about online meetings?
  - Have we passed a threshold of some sort in remote meetings and meeting from home?
  - Has there been any change in how we surface customer needs, make decisions, and handle disagreements?
  - What is crucial for online meetings in global crisis situations?
- **Looking forward to the future**
  - What approaches should we take to prepare for a **future of mixed reality meetings?** [an illustrative image was provided]
  - What will be or should be different from current 2D meetings?
  - What new opportunities and challenges are likely for MR meetings both at the office and at home?
  - What would make MR meetings compelling enough for you to switch from 2D meetings?
  - What would make MR meetings compelling enough reduce work travel?

### **3.3 Per-entry pulse questions**

At the end of every diary entry participants also answered the same eight questions to capture a quantitative 'pulse' of their experiences. These were 5-point Likert items labelled with the responses "strongly disagree", "disagree", "neutral", "agree", and "strongly agree".

The 8 prompts were:

1. I felt effective in my last three online meetings
2. I was more than normally tired by my last three online meetings
3. I could engage the way I wanted in my last three online meetings
4. I felt comfortable in my last three online meetings

5. Most people turned on video in my last three online meetings
6. My last three online meetings were well managed
7. I multitasked in my last three online meetings
8. People are getting better at online meetings

### 3.4 Diary demographics (N=715) (*True N' of study*)

#### 3.4.1 Gender

Four gender choices were provided: Female, Male, Non-binary, and an option to Prefer not to say. No participants selected non-binary.

Gender	Count	%
Man	428	59.9%
Woman	280	39.2%
Prefer not to say	7	1.0%

#### 3.4.2 Age

Ages were grouped into 6 ranges spanning 9 years each, starting from 18, and including an option to Prefer not to say.

Age range	Count	%
18-24	36	5.0%
25-34	204	28.5%
35-44	211	29.5%
45-54	196	27.4%
55-64	55	7.7%
65 or older	2	0.3%
Prefer not to say	11	1.5%

#### 3.4.3 Region

Participants were recruited from almost all regions in which the company operates.

Region	Count	%
North America	384	53.7%
Europe (incl UK)	147	20.6%
India	74	10.3%

China (incl Hong Kong & Taiwan)	31	4.3%
Central & South America	27	3.8%
South East Asia (excl China)	24	3.4%
Middle East & Africa	19	2.7%
Australia & New Zealand	9	1.3%

#### 3.4.4 High-level role

Participants were recruited from almost all operational groups and roles. There were some groups whose participation in research is generally restricted due to their access to sensitive personal and company information. These included the human resources and legal organizations, and very senior employees from all organizations. We report only high-level roles in this technical report. Roles were merged into six high-level roles.

Role	Count	%
Business & Sales	316	44.2%
Development	232	32.4%
Technical Operations	72	10.1%
Creative, Design, UX Research	61	8.5%
Research	25	3.5%
Administration	9	1.3%

#### 3.4.5 Location

Participants were asked to provide details on their current remote work location to indicate experience in working from home. We also counted some participants who had returned to work after mandatory WFH.

Normal workplace	Count	%
In Facility 100%	400	55.9%
In Facility 100% - Returned	15	2.1%
Remote 100%	60	8.4%
Remote 20%	67	9.4%
Remote 40%	48	6.7%
Remote 60%	73	10.2%
Remote 80%	52	7.3%

Participants were also asked to provide details of whether they were working in a place different to their normal situation, as people were required to change cities, states, or countries due to various domestic arrangements or visa restrictions.

<b>Abnormal workplace and/or timezone</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, I'm where I would normally work and live	669	93.6%
No, I'm somewhere different	46	6.4%
No, it's the same time zone	37	5.2%
2-4 hours different	5	0.7%
0.5 - 2 hours different	4	0.6%

### **3.5 Diary completion**

#### *3.5.1 Diary completion rate*

Given the size of this diary study and the situation in which it was conducted we expected a drop-off in participation and while we did encourage continued participation with weekly communication (reports on diary completions etc.), we did not oblige participants to continue. There was both a drop off in participation and variable participation. Some participants filled in multiple entries but did not complete full cycles and/or filled in a variable range of entries.

- 715 participants filled in at least one diary entry
- 691 participants filled in the first diary entry
- 266 completed one full cycle (Entries 1-8)
- 140 completed two full cycles (Entries 1-16)
- 106 completed three full cycles (Entries 1-24)

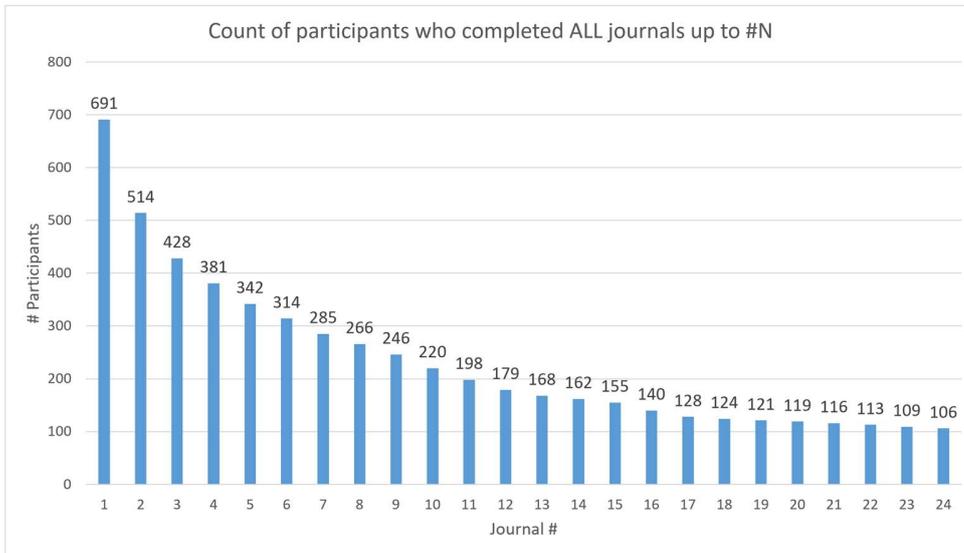


Figure 1: Distribution of journal completions. X axis is the journal entry number.

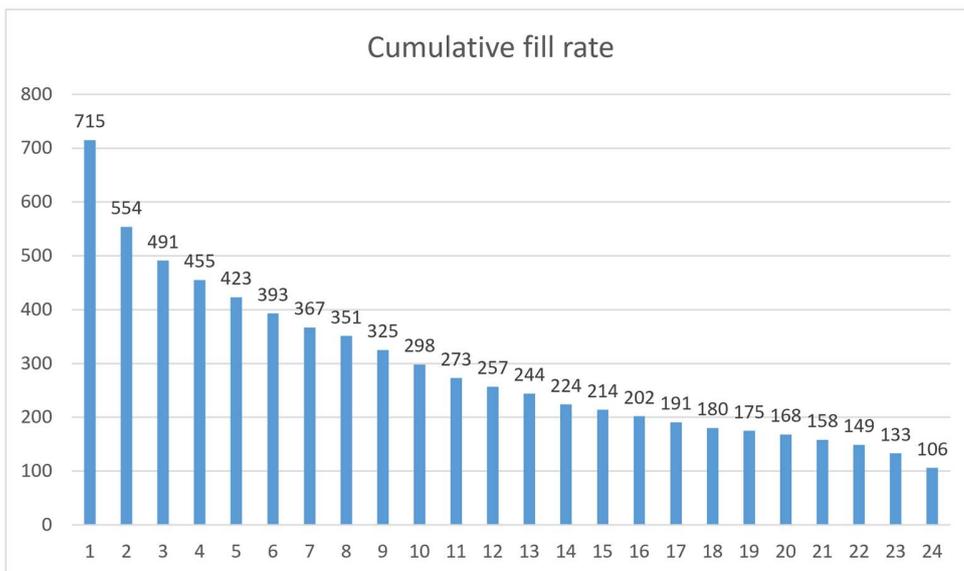


Figure 2: How many people filled \*at least\* N entries. The X axis here is the count of journals completed, **not** the journal number.

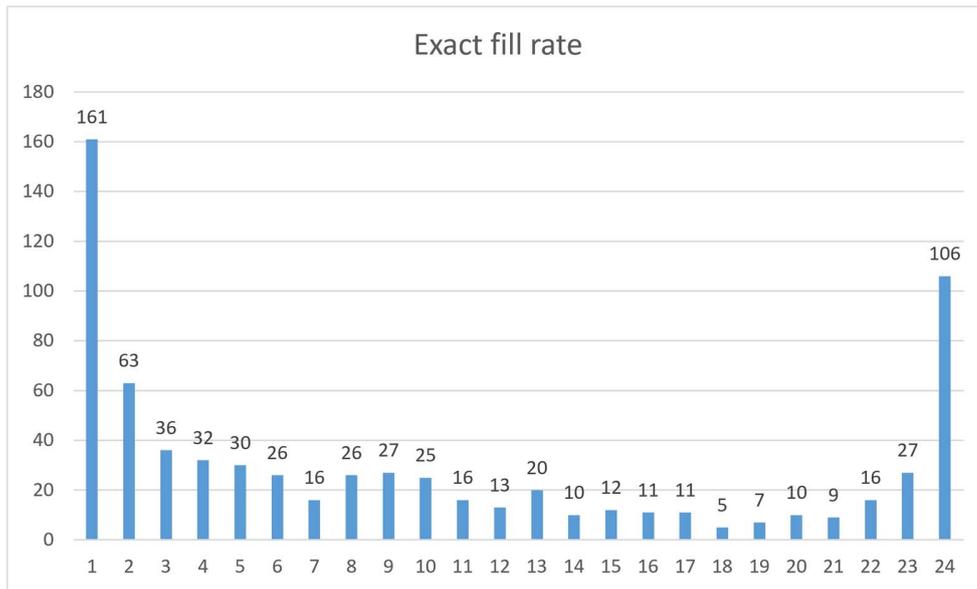


Figure 3: How many filled in \*exactly\* N entries. The X axis here is the count of journals completed, **not** the journal number.

### 3.5.2 Diary data rows and unique contributors

The diary portion of the study collected **7049** rows of qualitative and quantitative data in the final combined spreadsheet of all diary entries. The individual topics collected the following counts of data.

Topic	Rows	Unique contributors
Physical workspace 1	691	691
Physical workspace 2	318	318
Physical workspace 3	190	190
Physical workspace TOTAL	1199	699
Interaction 1	538	538
Interaction 2	289	289
Interaction 3	195	195
Interaction TOTAL	1022	289
Productivity 1	458	458
Productivity 2	264	264
Productivity 3	189	189
Productivity TOTAL	911	469
Tools 1	429	429
Tools 2	243	243

Tools 3	178	178
Tools TOTAL	850	438
Multitasking 1	392	392
Multitasking 2	248	248
Multitasking 3	179	179
Multitasking TOTAL	819	413
Types 1	378	378
Types 1	231	231
Types 1	179	179
Types TOTAL	788	393
Time 1	354	354
Time 2	219	219
Time 3	178	178
Time TOTAL	751	370
Approaches 1	331	331
Approaches 2	202	202
Approaches 3	173	173
Approaches TOTAL	706	348
GRAND TOTAL	7045	715

#### 4 WEEKLY POLLS

Participants were asked to enroll in optional weekly polls that we used to conduct one-off investigations of issues that became relevant as we looked through the diaries and as exogenous issues in the mandatory WFH became relevant. Like the diaries, polls had a rolling self-selected recruitment. The polls consisted of a few short quantitative questions and an open-ended field to explain quantitative responses. Ten weekly polls were conducted over the study period, on the following topics and dates.

Topic	Date (week of)
Spontaneous Interaction	2020-06-01
Parallel chat	2020-06-08
Contact networks	2020-06-15
Decision-making	2020-06-22
Turning video off	2020-06-29
Appearing as video off	2020-07-06
Reducing meetings	2020-07-13
Preparation	2020-07-20
Follow-up	2020-07-27
The future of hybrid meetings	2020-08-10

**4.1 Weekly poll questions**

**4.1.1 Spontaneous Interaction**

**1. Tell us about your needs for spontaneous interaction during the mandatory period of working from home.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
PRIOR to mandatory working from home, spontaneous interaction with people in my workplace mattered to me.							
DURING mandatory working from home, spontaneous interaction with people in my workplace matters/mattered to me.							
DURING mandatory working from home MY NEEDS ARE BEING/WERE MET for spontaneous interaction with people in my workplace.							

**2. What experience/s led to your answers above?**

*For example, to what extent did/does technology support your needs? (Optional)*

**4.1.2 Chat during meetings**

**1. Tell us about the use of text chat in meetings during the mandatory period of working from home.**

*Every Teams meeting has a text chat pane that opens on the right hand side on the meeting stage. This chat is also available before and after the meeting. We are calling this "text chat" in this question. (Even if you are no longer in a period of mandatory working from home, tell us about your experience during that time).*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
MY use of text chat in meetings has INCREASED compared to before mandatory working from home.							

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
OTHER PEOPLE'S use of text chat in meetings has INCREASED compared to before mandatory working from home.							
I find text chat in meetings DISTRACTING from the presentation or discussion.							
Text chat in meetings helps overcome CONVERSATIONAL ISSUES like interruption.							
Text chat in meetings helps add MORE RESOURCES like links.							
Text chat is a NET POSITIVE for meetings.							

**2. What experience/s led to your answers above?**

*For example: Does chat become more or less distracting or useful depending on the type of meeting, or the meeting size? Are there different kind of chat during meetings? Do you feel obligated to use text chat in meetings? (Optional)*

**4.1.3 How you've kept up with your network of contacts**

**1. Tell us about how you've kept up with your network of contacts during the mandatory period of working from home.**

- Your **DIRECT** network is the people with whom you have daily or weekly working relationships (collaborating on shared projects or goals).

- Your **INDIRECT** network is the people that you are usually aware of but don't collaborate with on shared projects or goals daily or weekly.

*(Even if you are no longer in a period of mandatory working from home, tell us about your experience during that time).*

	Much weaker	Somewhat weaker	No change	Somewhat stronger	Much stronger
Has the strength of connection to your DIRECT network changed since mandatory working from home?					
Has the strength of connection to your INDIRECT network changed since mandatory working from home?					

**2. Tells us about NEW and EXISTING working relationships during mandatory working from home.**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have MAINTAINED all of my valuable EXISTING working relationships during mandatory working from home.					
I have formed NEW valuable working relationships with NEW contacts during mandatory working from home.					
I have formed valuable NEW working relationships with EXISTING contacts during mandatory working from home.					

**3. What experience/s led to your answers above?**

*For example: To what extent did/does technology support your needs? What role do meetings play? What role do other tools (chat, email, social media) play? Have you made new working relationship as a direct result of the COVID-19 situation? (Optional)*

**4.1.4 Making Decisions**

**1. Tell us about how group decision-making typically worked/works in your experience both BEFORE and DURING the period of mandatory working from home.**

*(Even if you are no longer in a period of mandatory working from home, tell us about your experience during that time). This poll uses branching.*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
BEFORE mandatory working from home, I felt able to INFLUENCE decision-making in meetings					
DURING mandatory working from home, I feel able to INFLUENCE decision-making in meetings					
BEFORE mandatory working from home, DISSENTING OPINIONS were considered and discussed in meetings					
DURING mandatory working from home, DISSENTING OPINIONS are considered and discussed in meetings					

2. Does your work impact our customers?

- Yes (Go to Q3)
- No

3. Tell us about the focus on CUSTOMER NEEDS in group decision-making BEFORE and DURING the period of mandatory working from home.

*(Even if you are no longer in a period of mandatory working from home, tell us about your experience during that time).*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
BEFORE mandatory working from home, CUSTOMER NEEDS usually received appropriate consideration when decisions were being made in meetings					
DURING mandatory working from home, CUSTOMER NEEDS usually receive appropriate consideration when decisions are being made in meetings					

4. What experience/s led to your answers above?

*For example: How, if at all, did/does technology support decision-making during meetings? How, if at all, did/does physical workspace support decision-making during meetings? How, if at all, has remoteness affected your influence on team/group decision making? How, if at all, has remoteness affected how dissenting opinions are handled when making decisions? Finally, if applicable, how, if at all, has remoteness affected the degree to which customer needs impact product and business decisions during meetings? (Optional)*

4.1.5 *Choosing not to show your video in meetings*

1. **Think back to some specific meetings during mandatory working from home in which you were capable of showing video but chose not to. How important were the following factors when CHOOSING NOT TO SHOW YOUR VIDEO?**

*(Even if you are no longer in a period of mandatory working from home, tell us about your experience during that time).*

	Not at all important	A little important	Somewhat important	Quite important	Very important
Technical performance and/or bandwidth					
The alignment of my camera and screen/s					
The background of my video (without background effects)					
I was self-conscious about my appearance					
The effort of being seen on video					
Other people turned their video off					
I was not actively participating					
I wanted to multitask					
I was not familiar with the other participants					
Organisational culture					
Regional culture					
Meetings were in my non-native language (use "Not at all important" if this is not applicable to you)					

2. **What experience/s led to your answers above?**

Are there any other factors that are important in deciding to not show your video? Were your decisions related to the type of meeting or the size of the meeting? Do different factors affect your decision to not show video from the beginning of a meeting (e.g. muting video in the pre-meeting screen) to turning video off during meetings? Do you make decisions per meeting, do you have a blanket policy, or do you have a policy for different types or times of meetings, or meetings with specific other participants? (Optional)

4.1.6 Video off/audio-only appearance in meetings

When people turn off video or don't have video, audio-only participants using the desktop, web, or mobile Teams clients can appear as a picture in a circle or initials in a colored circle. We are not considering the visual appearance of dial-in participants in this poll.

This poll asks you to first consider your SATISFACTION with the visual appearance of video/off audio-only participants in the Teams meeting interface, and then asks you to consider the EFFECT of video off/audio-only appearance in three different types of meetings: small group discussions without any screen-sharing, small group collaboration with screen-sharing, and large presentations.

1. How satisfied are you with the visual appearance of video off/audio-only participants in meetings?

	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
Picture version (left)					
Initials version (right)					
Animation while talking (left)					

2. Video off in discussions

Consider a small meeting involving just discussion, without the use of any screen-sharing in the Teams meeting interface or document/resource sharing external to the Teams meeting interface.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
OTHER participants' video is DISTRACTING					
When MY video is off, other participants ENGAGE with me					
When OTHER participants' video is off, I wish I had MORE INFORMATION on their attention and reactions (exclusive of chat)					

**3. Video off in collaboration**

Consider a small meeting involving collaboration using any resource that is screen-shared within the Teams meeting interface.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
OTHER participants' video is DISTRACTING					
When MY video is off, other participants ENGAGE with me					
When OTHER participants' video is off, I wish I had MORE INFORMATION on their attention and reactions (exclusive of chat)					

**4. Video off in large presentations**

Consider a large meeting involving a presentation when very few audience members have video on. In addition to pictures or initials for some audio-only participants, the overflow count of those who do not fit on the screen is represented by a number (e.g. +22).

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
When I am PRESENTING, video of the AUDIENCE is DISTRACTING					
When I am in the AUDIENCE, video of the rest of the AUDIENCE is DISTRACTING					
When I am PRESENTING and the AUDIENCE has video off, I wish I had MORE INFORMATION on their attention and reactions (exclusive of chat)					
When I am in the AUDIENCE and the rest of the AUDIENCE has video off, I wish I had MORE INFORMATION on their attention and reactions (exclusive of chat)					

**5. What experience/s lead to your answers above?**

For example, Are there particular meetings in which being audio-only has been useful or challenging? Are there any other meetings types in which it matters how audio-only participants are represented? Are there things you don't like or cause problems? What ideas would you have for improvement? Have your behaviors or opinions changed because of mandatory working from home? (Optional)

4.1.7 Reducing calls or meetings with alternative communication tools

In this poll we ask about whether you have tried reducing three kinds of calls or meetings (spontaneous, one-off, or recurring) by using alternative communication tools during mandatory working from home. If you have returned to the office, tell us about your experiences during mandatory working from home.

1. DURING mandatory working from home, have you/your team tried to reduce SPONTANEOUS voice or video calls or meetings using any of these tools?

	No	Yes but it was unsuccessful	Yes and it was somewhat successful	Yes and it was very successful
Teams chat				
Teams channels				
Apps in Teams				
Bots in Teams				
Document collaboration				
Email				
Yammer				
External tools				

2. DURING mandatory working from home, have you/your team tried to reduce SCHEDULED ONE-OFF voice or video calls or meetings using any of these tools?

	No	Yes but it was unsuccessful	Yes and it was somewhat successful	Yes and it was very successful
Teams chat				
Teams channels				

	No	Yes but it was unsuccessful	Yes and it was somewhat successful	Yes and it was very successful
Apps in Teams				
Bots in Teams				
Document collaboration				
Email				
Yammer				
External tools				

**3. DURING mandatory working from home, have you/your team tried to reduce SCHEDULED RECURRING voice or video calls or meetings using any of these tools?**

	No	Yes but it was unsuccessful	Yes and it was somewhat successful	Yes and it was very successful
Teams chat				
Teams channels				
Apps in Teams				
Bots in Teams				
Document collaboration				
Email				
Yammer				

	No	Yes but it was unsuccessful	Yes and it was somewhat successful	Yes and it was very successful
External tools				

**4. What experience/s lead to your answers above?**

*For example, are there particular types of meetings that have been reduced or even fully replaced? Have any of these tools helped reduce the time in meetings? Have any of these tools improved the effectiveness of meetings? Are there any meeting types that just cannot be reduced, replaced, or shortened? Where are there gaps in tools that might reduce, replace, or shorten meetings? Have your behaviors or opinions changed because of mandatory working from home? If one of your answers was "YES" to "EXTERNAL TOOLS", please name the tool/s. Are there any particularly valuable external tools that can reduce meetings? (Optional)*

**4.1.8 Preparation for meetings**

**1. Since mandatory working from home, has there been a CHANGE in activities prior to meetings, such as pre-reads, agendas, deliberate discussion, and spontaneous discussion?**

- Yes (Go to Q2)
- No (Go to Q5)

**2. Has the frequency of PREPARATION gone up or down?**

	Much less frequent	Somewhat less frequent	About the same	Somewhat more frequent	Much more frequent
Meeting invitations that include PRE-READS					
Meeting invitations that include explicit AGENDAS					
Meeting invitations that include explicit GOALS					
Pre-meeting preparation discussion in ASYNCHRONOUS modes (text chat or email)					

	Much less frequent	Somewhat less frequent	About the same	Somewhat more frequent	Much more frequent
Pre-meeting preparation discussion in SYNCHRONOUS modes (collocated talk or voice or video calls)					

**3. Has there been any IMPACT of PREPARATION on meetings?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I am better prepared for meetings					
Others seem better prepared for meetings					
Meetings are shorter					
There are fewer meetings					
Meetings run more smoothly					
Meetings have better outcomes					
Time spent preparing for meetings improves my overall productivity					

**4. What experience/s lead to your answers above?**

*For example, is there a trade-off between the effort of preparing for meetings and time spent in meetings? What kinds of preparation are most valuable? What kinds of preparation are the hardest or least done? Did you always prepare as you do now? Has the amount or form of preparation for meetings changed over the course of mandatory working from home? (Optional)*

**5. Why has there been no change?**

*\* If you always prepare, what are the key things you do and what are their benefits?*

*\* If you feel you don't need to much do preparation, what is it about your job or team that makes this possible?*

4.1.9 Meeting conclusion and follow-up

1. Has the frequency of the following MEETING CONCLUSION AND FOLLOW-UP issues changed since mandatory working from home?

	Much less frequent	Somewhat less frequent	About the same	Somewhat more frequent	Much more frequent
Meetings end with a clear statement of ACTION ITEMS					
Conversation continues in the MEETING CHAT THREAD					
Meetings are followed up in Microsoft Teams CHANNELS					
Meetings are followed up in Microsoft Teams PERSONAL CHAT					
Meetings are followed up with DOCUMENT COLLABORATION					
Meetings are followed up with EMAIL					
Meetings need to be followed up with MORE MEETINGS					

2. Has there been any IMPACT of CHANGES TO FOLLOW-UP on meetings since mandatory working from home?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
NEXT STEPS are CLEARER after meetings						
Getting RESOURCES for MY NEEDS is EASIER						
Providing RESOURCES for MY TEAM'S needs is EASIER						

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
Meeting follow-up is MORE EFFECTIVE						
Time spent following-up on meetings improves MY OVERALL PRODUCTIVITY						

**3. How SATISFIED are you with existing methods for following up meetings**

*Methods include calls or meetings, meeting chat thread, channels, personal chat, document collaboration, email, or methods that your team has devised*

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**4. What experience/s lead to your answers above?**

*If there has been no change for you, let us know why. If there has been a change, is it for the better? What kinds of follow-up are most valuable? What kinds of follow-up are the hardest or least done? Did you always follow-up as you do now? Has the amount or form of follow-up for meetings changed over the course of mandatory working from home? What are the reasons for your level of satisfaction with existing methods for meeting follow-up? Has your team devised specific methods for meeting follow-up? (Optional)*

**4.1.10 A hybrid meeting future**

*It is likely that the future of work, and meetings in particular, will be even more hybrid than it was before the COVID-19 pandemic, with more people permanently working remotely and with time in the office reduced. In this \*final poll for Project Tahiti\*, we are asking you to consider what was and what might be most valuable about time spent in meetings.*

**1. How EFFECTIVE have the following kinds of meetings been during mandatory working from home COMPARED TO your experiences pre-pandemic?**

	Much less effective	Somewhat less effective	About the same	Somewhat more effective	Much more effective	NA
Information sharing (Presenting with Q&A but no defined outcome)						

	Much less effective	Somewhat less effective	About the same	Somewhat more effective	Much more effective	NA
Reviewing (Providing feedback on work and making decisions)						
Short-term planning (Deciding tasks, work goals, steps, work completed or outstanding)						
Long-term planning (Developing, assessing, or revising longer term strategic goals)						
Brainstorming (Generating and promoting new ideas interactively)						
Analysis (Evaluating materials to derive insights)						
Troubleshooting (Identifying problems and solutions)						
Influencing (Pitching concepts to get resources)						
Transactional (Securing a contract for giving or receiving resources)						
Refining (Editing or revising materials to improve them)						
Instructing and testing (Transferring and evaluating knowledge)						
Mentoring or coaching (Providing feedback on performance)						
Socializing 1:1						

	Much less effective	Somewhat less effective	About the same	Somewhat more effective	Much more effective	NA
Socializing as a group						
Spontaneous work calls/meetings						
Spontaneous social calls/meetings						

**2. How much do you agree that the following practices SHOULD PERSIST OR BE RECOMMENDED in future meetings in HYBRID world?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Active MODERATION should be used in larger meetings					
Parallel chat should be used for asking QUESTIONS for speakers/presenters without interruption					
Parallel chat should be used to increase PARTICIPATION					
Everyone should TURN ON VIDEO (assuming sufficient bandwidth)					
Everyone should UPLOAD A PROFILE IMAGE to represent them visually when they are audio-only					
Meetings should have AGENDAS with clear goals and structure					
Meetings should include time to confirm NEXT ACTIONS					
Meetings should NOT be scheduled BACK-TO-BACK					

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Groups should seek to REPLACE some meetings with alternative modes					

**3. If in the future at least some people are able to meet in the same room, how much do you agree that the following policies would maximize the value of that time together?**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
We should prioritize FULLY SAME ROOM MEETINGS with the expectation that REMOTE team members ONLY watch RECORDINGS					
We should prioritize HYBRID meetings in which the expectation is that SAME ROOM ATTENDEES ENGAGE FULLY but REMOTE attendees just MONITOR or ENGAGE LIGHTLY					
We should prioritize HYBRID meetings in which the expectation is ALL ATTENDEES ENGAGE FULLY					
We should prioritize same room meetings for which PHYSICAL RESOURCES WITHOUT DIGITAL EQUIVALENTS are required					
We should prioritize same room meetings of THREE OR MORE PEOPLE over 1:1 meetings					
We should prioritize same room meetings which are WELL-PLANNED, so that meetings are efficient					
We should prioritize same room meetings for which PLANNING IS DIFFICULT, so that meetings facilitate creativity in the moment					
We should build in same room 1:1 SOCIAL TIME					

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
We should build in same room GROUP SOCIAL TIME					

**4. What experiences have led to your answers above?**

Tell us about each question above, if you have time:

*\* Why have certain kinds of meetings been effective or not?*

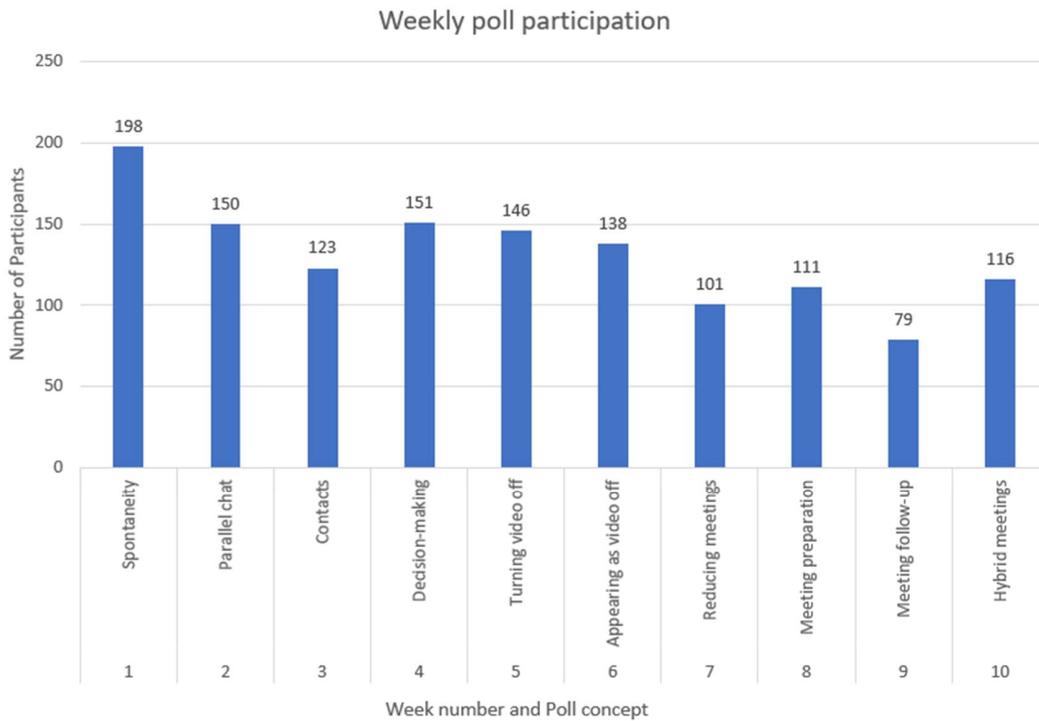
*\* Why do you think certain practices should or should not persist or be recommended?*

*\* Why do you think some policies should or should not be implemented to maximize the value of time together in the same room? (Optional)*

**4.2 Weekly poll completion**

**4.2.1 Aggregate weekly poll completion**

The 10 weekly polls averaged 131 respondents, with the lowest having 79 respondents and the largest 198 respondents.



#### 4.2.2 Number and proportion of polls taken

357 unique participants responded to the weekly polls, representing just under half of the diary participants (49.9%).

Number of polls taken	Count of unique respondents	% of unique poll respondents	% of unique diary respondents
1	121	33.9%	16.9%
2	50	14.0%	7.0%
3	39	10.9%	5.5%
4	30	8.4%	4.2%
5	28	7.8%	3.9%
6	20	5.6%	2.8%
7	16	4.5%	2.2%
8	19	5.3%	2.7%
9	21	5.9%	2.9%
10	13	3.6%	1.8%
	<b>357</b>		<b>49.9%</b>

13 participants filled in weekly polls *but not diaries*. P218 (5 polls) appears to have treated the polls as the work of the study. P92 filled in two polls and all others one poll, suggesting that they were only interested in or had time for specific topics, or filled in a poll randomly.

PID	Spontaneous interaction	Parallel chat	Contact networks	Decision-making	Turning video off	Appearing as video off	Reducing meetings	Preparation	Follow-up	The future of hybrid meetings
P00085					Yes					
P00092						Yes		Yes		
P00218	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes			
P00274					Yes					
P00311	Yes									
P00318	Yes									
P00439				Yes						
P00515						Yes				
P00564		Yes								
P00667	Yes									
P00770	Yes									
P00796				Yes						
P00808			Yes	Yes						

Figure 4: Participants who filled out polls but not diaries

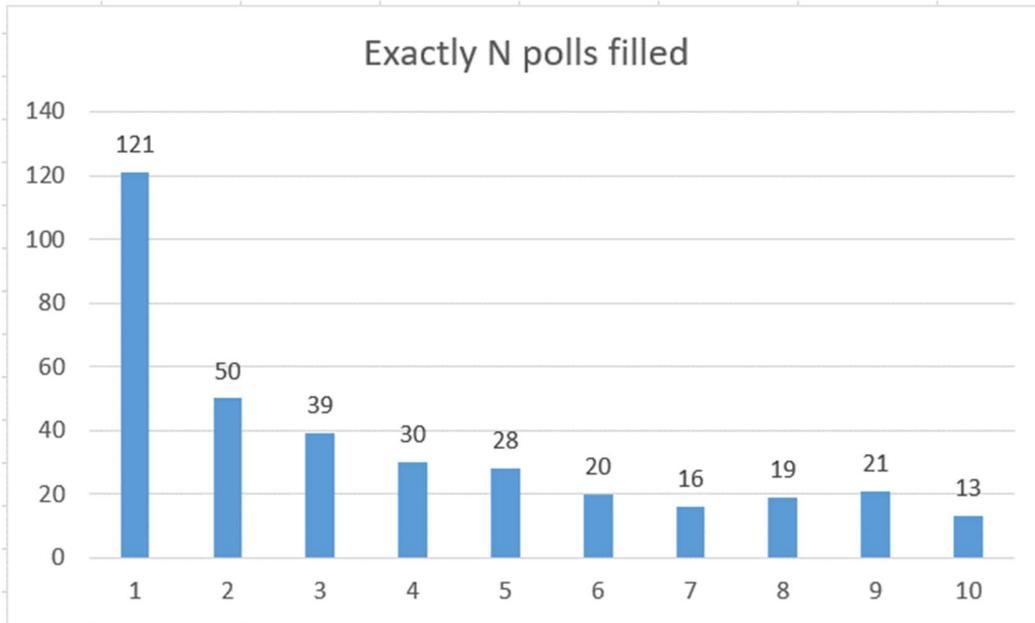


Figure 5: How many participants filled out exactly N polls

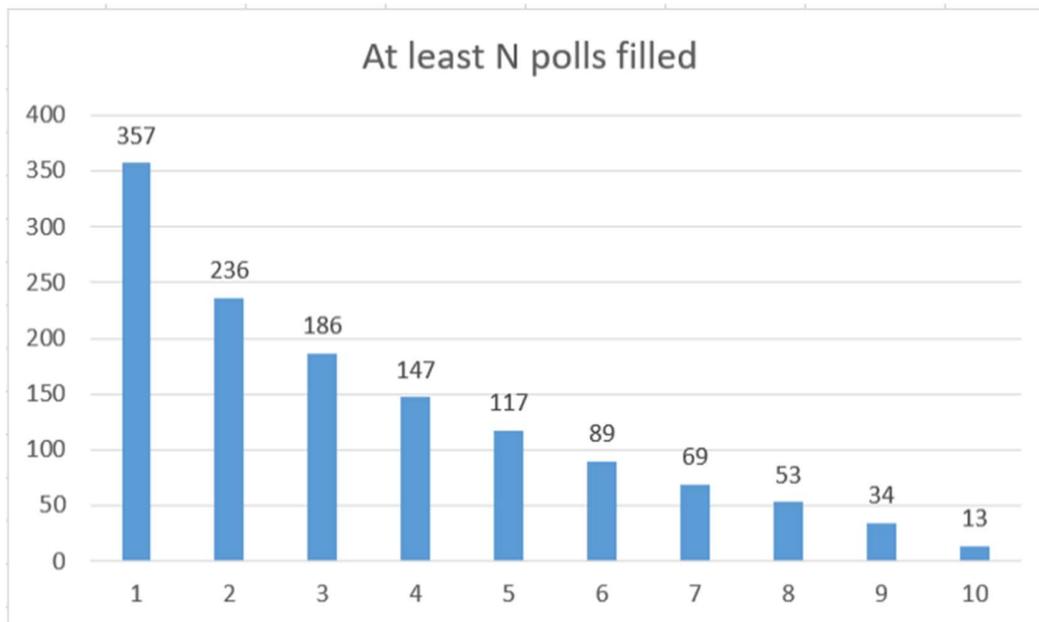


Figure 6: Cumulative poll completion rate (At least N polls filled)

4.2.3 There was a small 'hardcore' group of respondents who filled out multiple polls

As the polls went on, we started to see more of the participants being from a 'hardcore' group. Polls 6-9 in particular had low participation from one-timers (i.e., almost everyone who filled those later polls also filled in a few others). The final poll on hybrid meetings shows a big spike of one-timers, suggesting that a lot of people were motivated to weigh in on this.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Participation	Spontaneous Interaction	Parallel chat	Contact networks	Decision-making	Turning video off	Appearing as video off	Reducing meetings	Preparation	Follow-up	The future of hybrid meetings
2	1	32	11	8	9	12	6	3	4	1	35
3	2	24	13	8	15	13	7	5	11	1	3
4	3	25	19	13	21	12	9	1	7	3	7
5	4	17	15	12	14	20	19	10	4	3	6
6	5	18	18	14	15	14	18	11	13	12	7
7	6	13	16	9	16	13	16	9	12	8	8
8	7	12	11	12	12	14	12	12	13	7	7
9	8	18	15	14	18	15	15	17	14	13	13
10	9	21	19	20	18	19	21	19	19	17	16
11	10	13	12	12	13	13	14	13	14	13	13
12	Total	193	149	122	151	145	137	100	111	78	115
13											
14											
15	% GT										
16	Participation	Spontaneous Interaction	Parallel chat	Contact networks	Decision-making	Turning video off	Appearing as video off	Reducing meetings	Preparation	Follow-up	The future of hybrid meetings
17	1	17%	7%	7%	6%	8%	4%	3%	4%	1%	30%
18	2	12%	9%	7%	10%	9%	5%	5%	10%	1%	3%
19	3	13%	13%	11%	14%	8%	7%	1%	6%	4%	6%
20	4	9%	10%	10%	9%	14%	14%	10%	4%	4%	5%
21	5	9%	12%	11%	10%	10%	13%	11%	12%	15%	6%
22	6	7%	11%	7%	11%	9%	12%	9%	11%	10%	7%
23	7	6%	7%	10%	8%	10%	9%	12%	12%	9%	6%
24	8	9%	10%	11%	12%	10%	11%	17%	13%	17%	11%
25	9	11%	13%	16%	12%	13%	15%	19%	17%	22%	14%
26	10	7%	8%	10%	9%	9%	10%	13%	13%	17%	11%

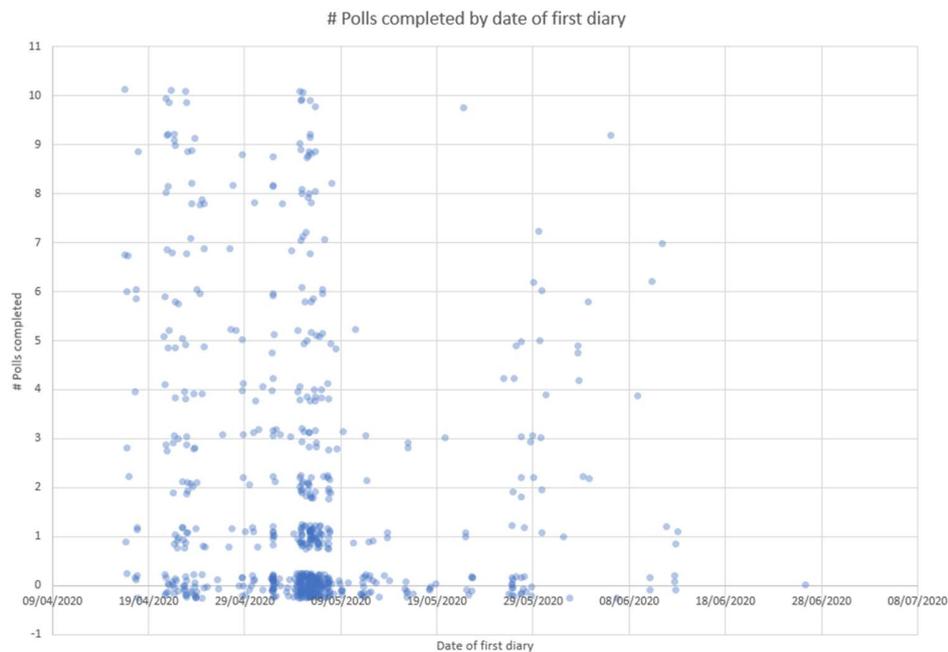
Figure 7: One-off and hardcore poll participants

Grouping people into one-timers, those who filled in 2-3 polls (casuals), and those who filled in 4 or more (hardcore) shows that most polls had a significant majority of hardcore participants.

Participation	Spontaneous Interaction	Parallel chat	Contact networks	Decision-making	Turning video off	Appearing as video off	Reducing meetings	Preparation	Follow-up	The future of hybrid meetings
1	32	11	8	9	12	6	3	4	1	35
2-3	49	32	21	36	25	16	6	18	4	10
4-10	112	106	93	106	108	115	91	89	73	70
%GT										
Participation	Spontaneous Interaction	Parallel chat	Contact networks	Decision-making	Turning video off	Appearing as video off	Reducing meetings	Preparation	Follow-up	The future of hybrid meetings
1	17%	7%	7%	6%	8%	4%	3%	4%	1%	30%
2-3	25%	21%	17%	24%	17%	12%	6%	16%	5%	9%
4-10	58%	71%	76%	70%	74%	84%	91%	80%	94%	61%

Figure 8: One-off and 'hardcore' poll respondents aggregated into groups

There was no correlation between the date participants started the study and filling in one or more polls (Pearson correlation between start date and entry count is -0.14).



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