

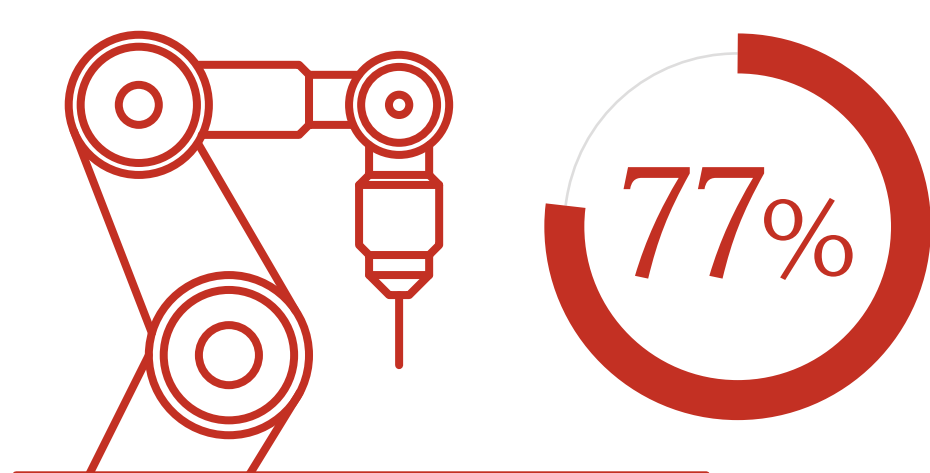
Reassembling the workforce: The new work paradigm in US manufacturing



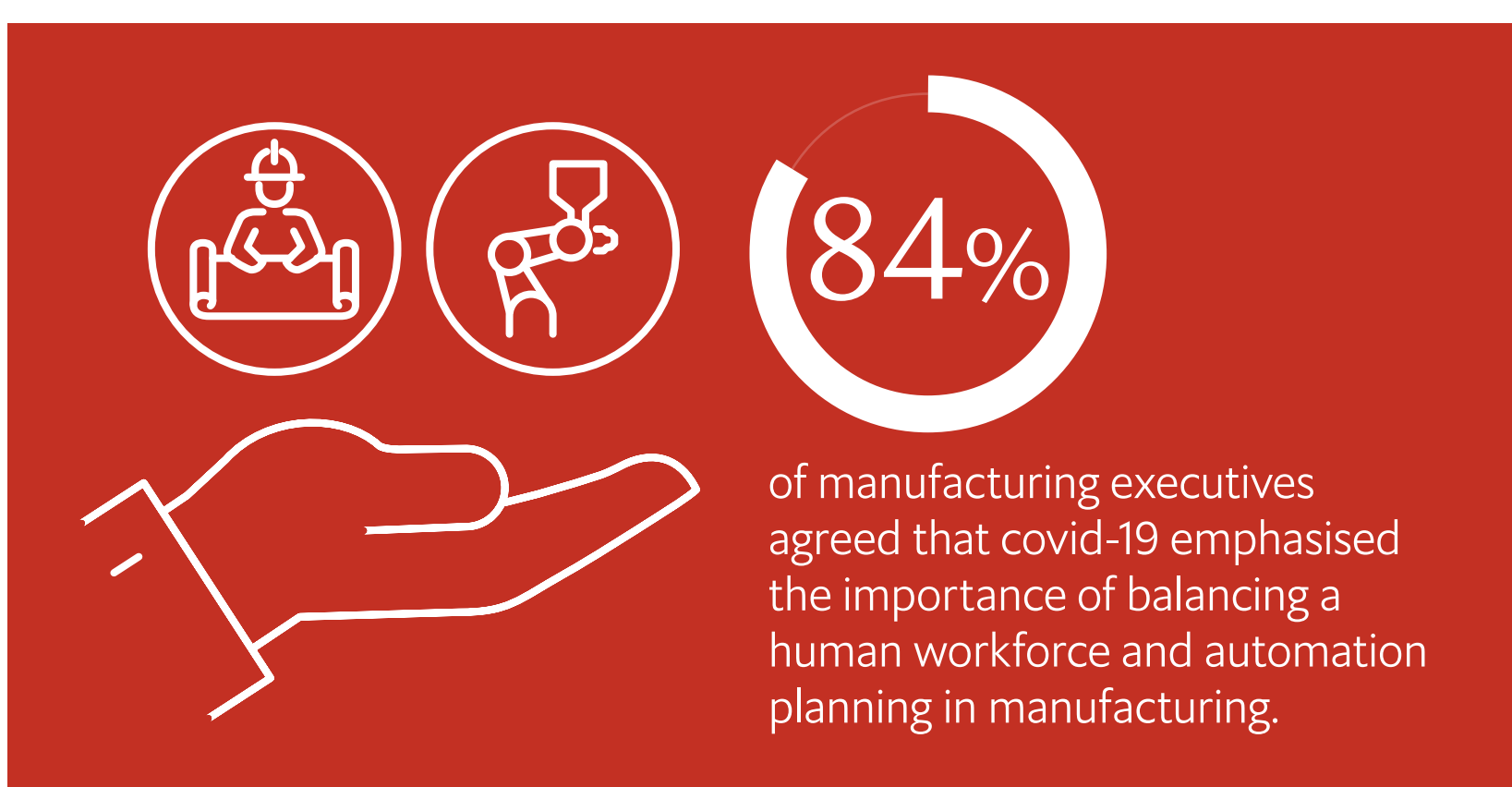
A sector-wide survey involving more than 1,100 workers and executives revealed how digital transformation is changing the manufacturing sector, shedding some light on the challenges and opportunities faced by organisations when looking at the future of automation and remote work.¹

Automation represents an opportunity for organisations to upskill their workers.

The majority of executives do not see automation as an immediate threat to workers' jobs.



More than three-quarters (77%) of executives believed that increased automation is not a threat to workers' jobs but will simply change the nature of what they do.



Meanwhile, workers are willing to expand their skills set, and manufacturers should consider making upskilling efforts a top priority to address the skills gap.



Around **two-thirds** of workers were "moderately" or "very" interested in improving or expanding their skills.



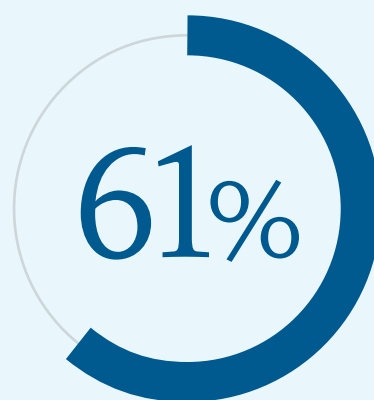
Manufacturers confront the promise and pitfalls that come with remote work.

The workforce demand for remote work is high, suggesting that remote work is here to stay.



Almost three-quarters of surveyed workers would like to **continue working remotely** at least half of the time.

In response, organisations are increasing investments in the remote work experience and supporting technologies.



of organisations registered a moderate or high **increase in remote work investments** since the pandemic began.



of executives anticipated a moderate or high increase in investments on **cloud technology, supply-chain continuity, and data security** and protection in the coming 2-3 years.

Nonetheless, the manufacturing sector faces unique challenges as it expands remote work capacity, mainly due to the physical nature of its activities.

73% of non-frontline workers either started to or increased the time spent working remotely, while the rate was much lower among frontline workers (54%).



Non-frontline workers

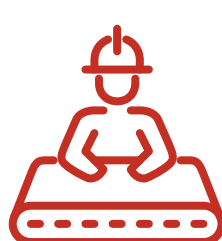
73%



Frontline workers

54%

In light of the challenges and opportunities brought on by automation and remote work, it is imperative for organisations to:



Invest in upskilling workers whose jobs may be otherwise replaced.



Ensure frontline workers who cannot work remotely feel equally valued—such as by decent pay and benefits.

Source:

1. Unless otherwise indicated, data based on a survey of 1,139 workers and 199 executives in the US manufacturing sector conducted by Economist Impact (formerly The Economist Intelligence Unit) in November and December 2020 and sponsored by Prudential.

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