

# How to manage the **'always on'** culture





Our mission is...

...to inspire everyone to lead more successful and fulfilling lives



# Your presenter – John Hackston

- Head of Thought Leadership, The Myers-Briggs Company
- Chartered Psychologist
- Creating, using and researching psychometric tests and questionnaires for 35 years
- Using our tools – MBTI, FIRO, CPI, TKI – since 1997
- Regular speaker at conferences and author on the psychology scene



# What is the *always-on* culture?



Services and info **available**  
**24/7**

It's difficult to  
**switch off**



Increases **work-home**  
**interference, stress**

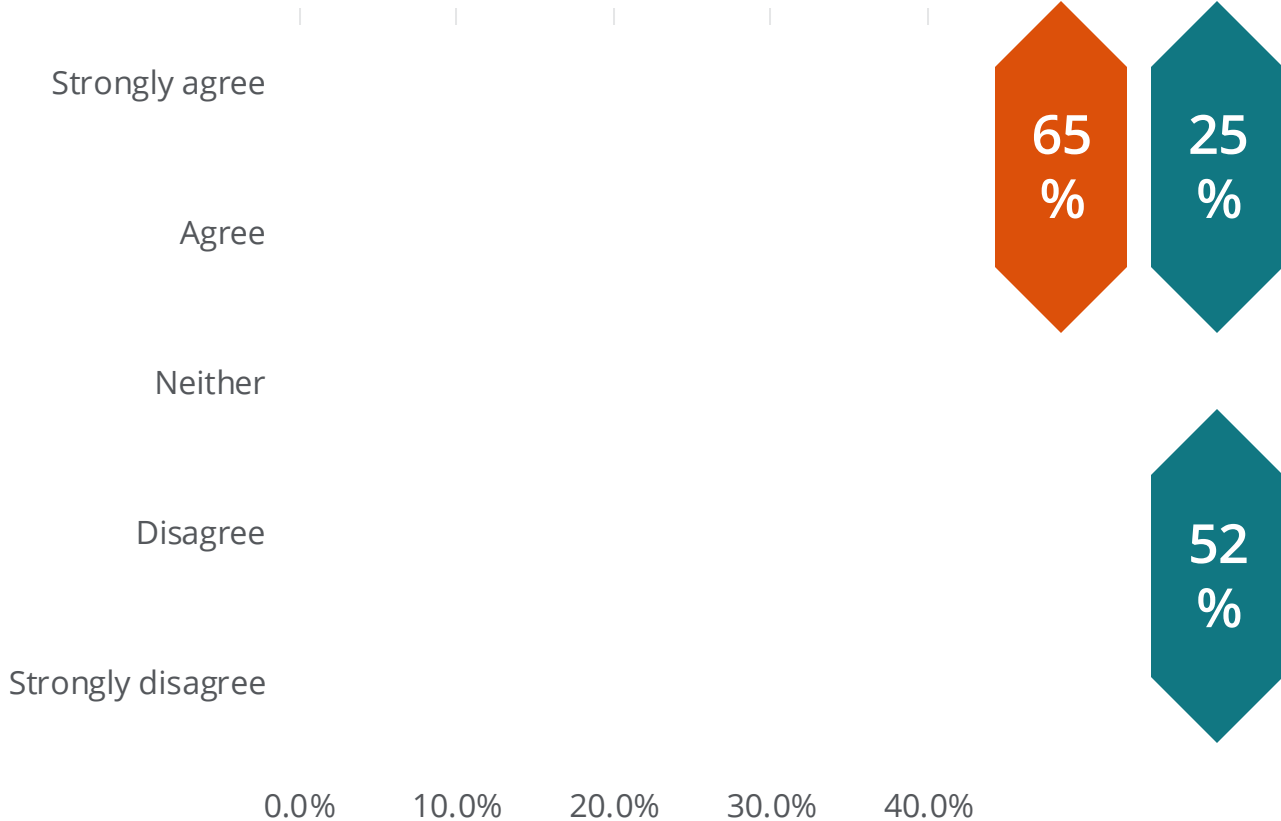
Can increase **empowerment** -  
and **enslavement**



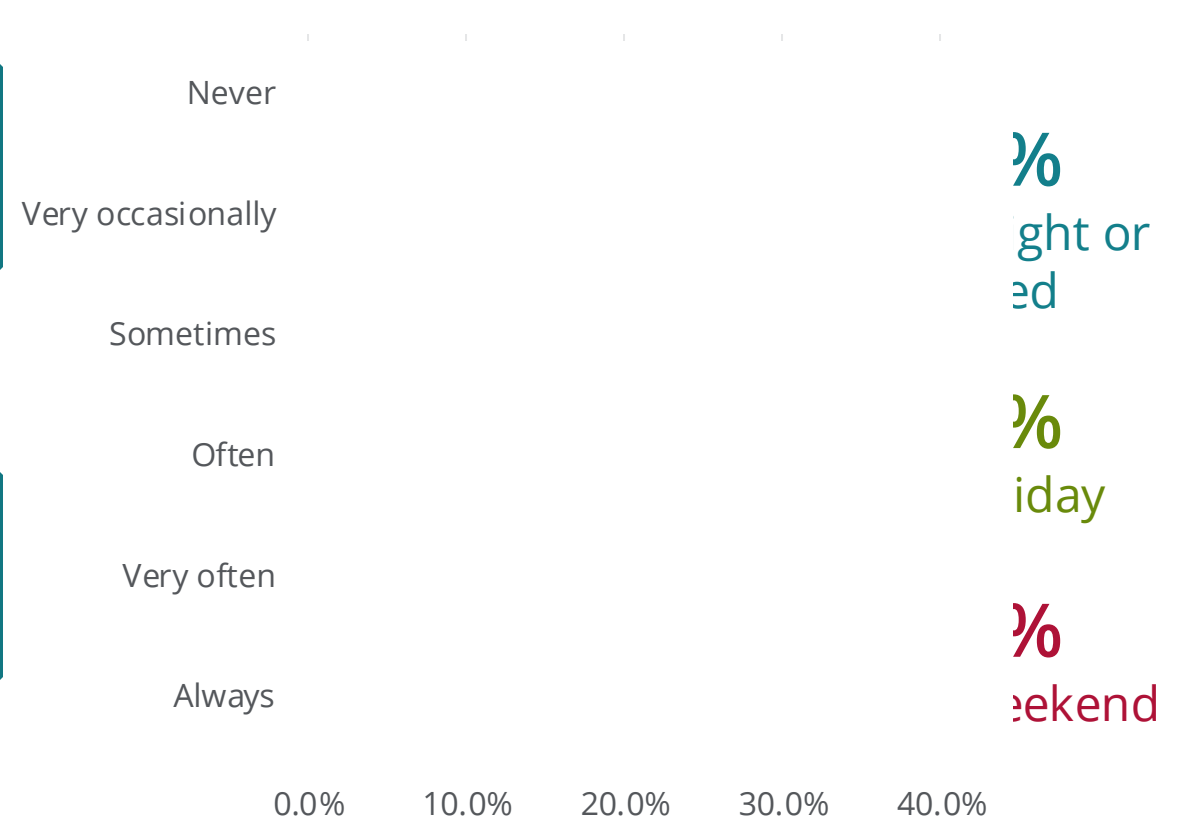


# Checking email outside of normal working hours

People shouldn't have to check their emails outside of normal working hours



Do you check work emails in the evening?



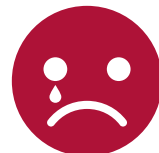
# But what's the effect of this?

People able to access work emails/calls outside of work



Reported greater:

- Work engagement
- Job satisfaction



But also more:

- Difficulty switching off
- Work-home conflict
- Compulsive checking
- Distraction

And higher levels of:

- Job stress
- Work-life interference
- Distracted and difficult to focus

# Today's agenda



## Research into the always-on culture

- The pros and cons of the always-on culture
- The role of personality



## Actions

- Strategies to deal with the always-on culture
- Using personality type to make a difference



## Next steps

- Tools and resources you can use to help

# Research



1,116 people

74% female



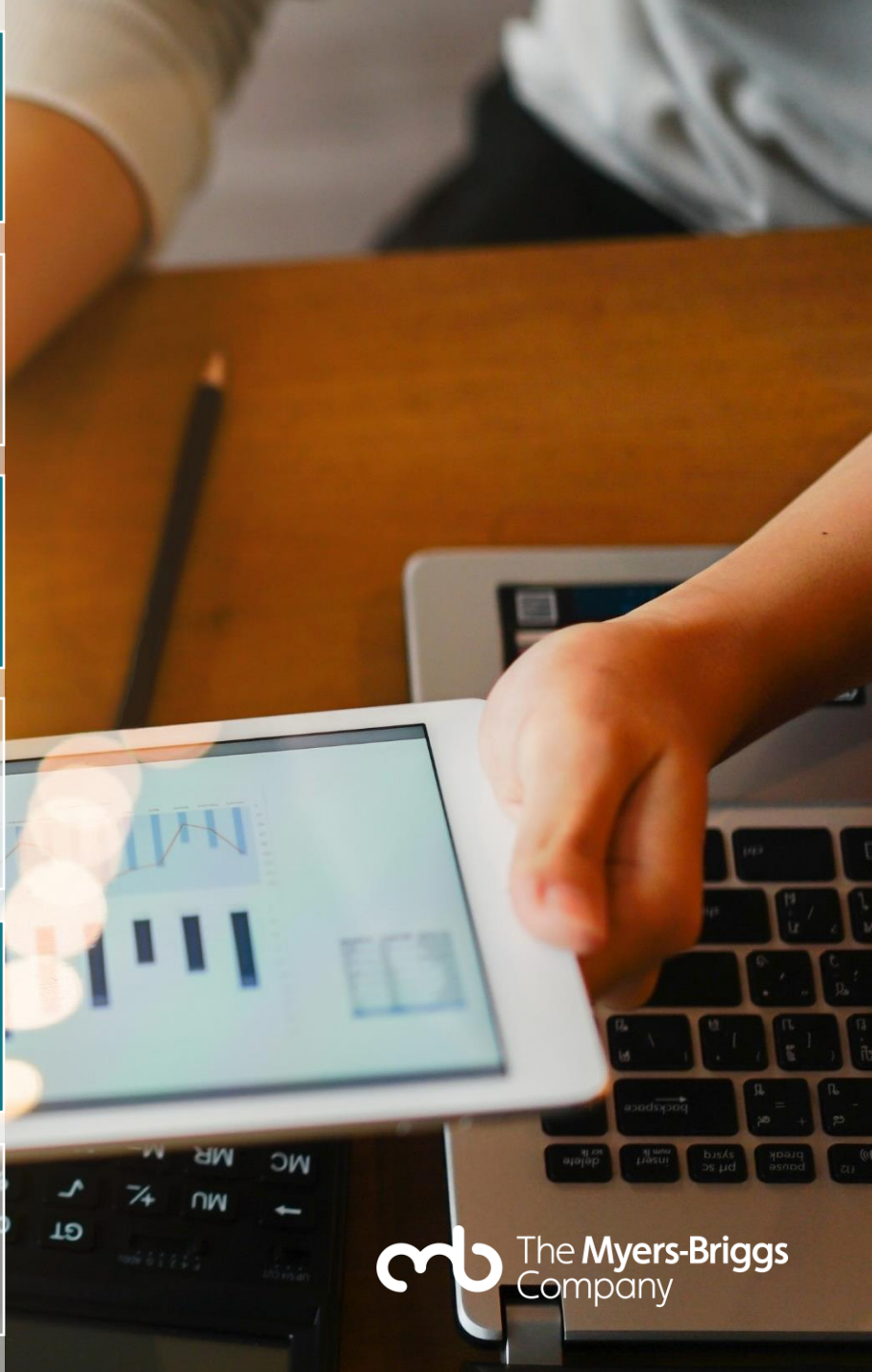
Age 16-88

Range of occupations



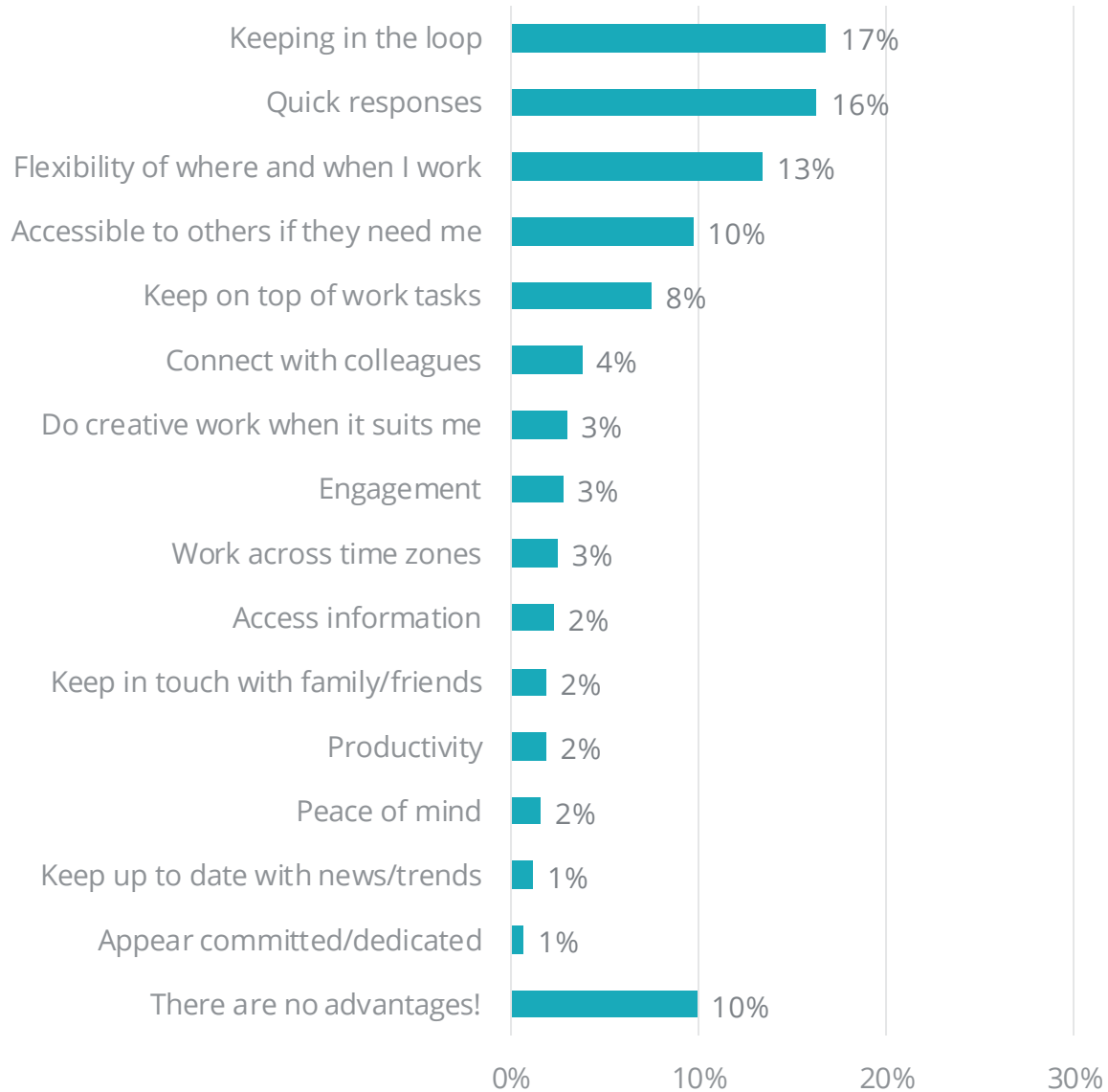
International sample

88% had access outside of work

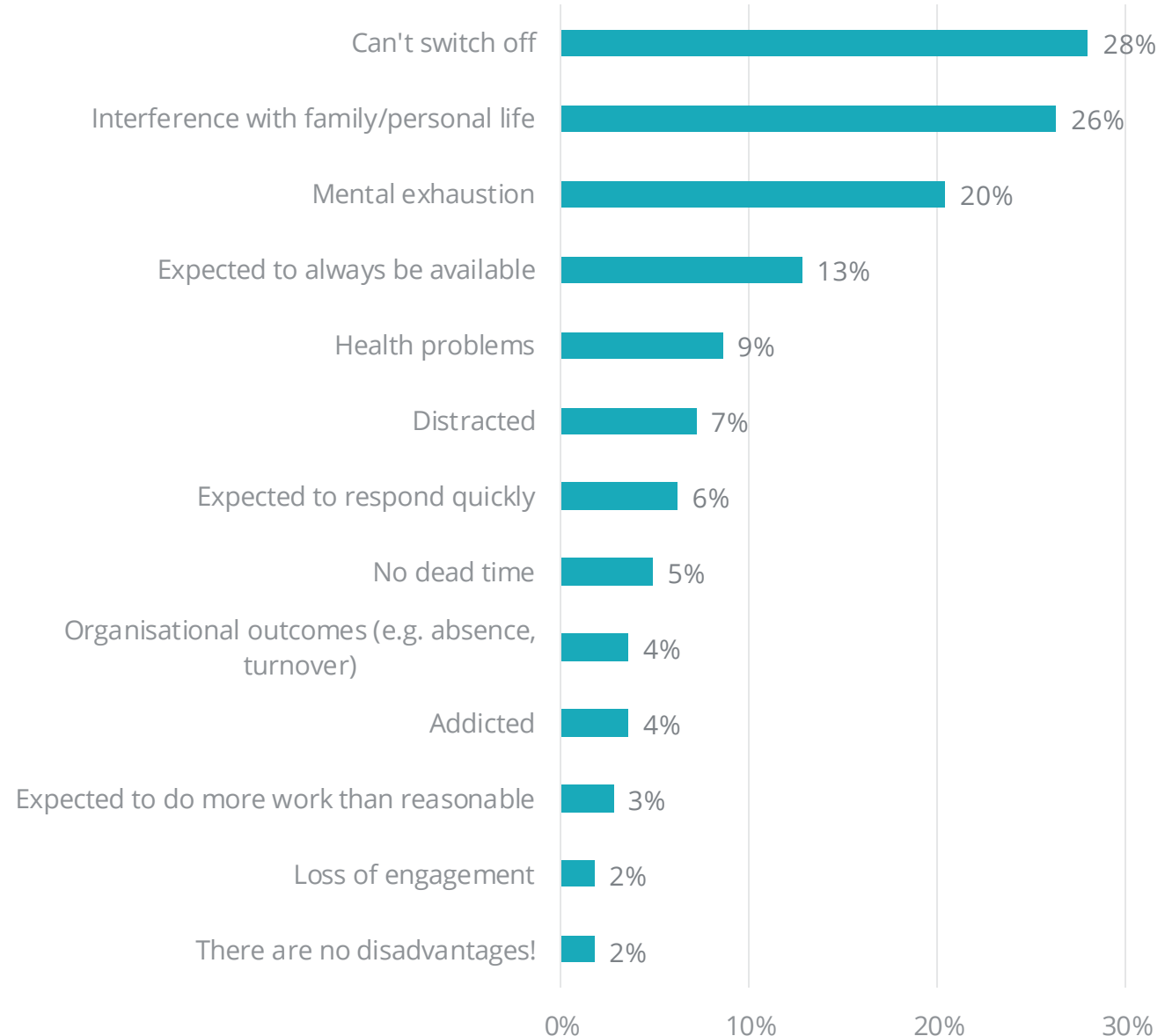





# Advantages





# Disadvantages






“ Never miss anything, I don't  
mind working outside of the  
office because I like to 'live  
and breathe' what I do. ”





“ Burn out, no private life, no time for children, regrets at the end of your life, many tense situations, losing friends or close relationships...”





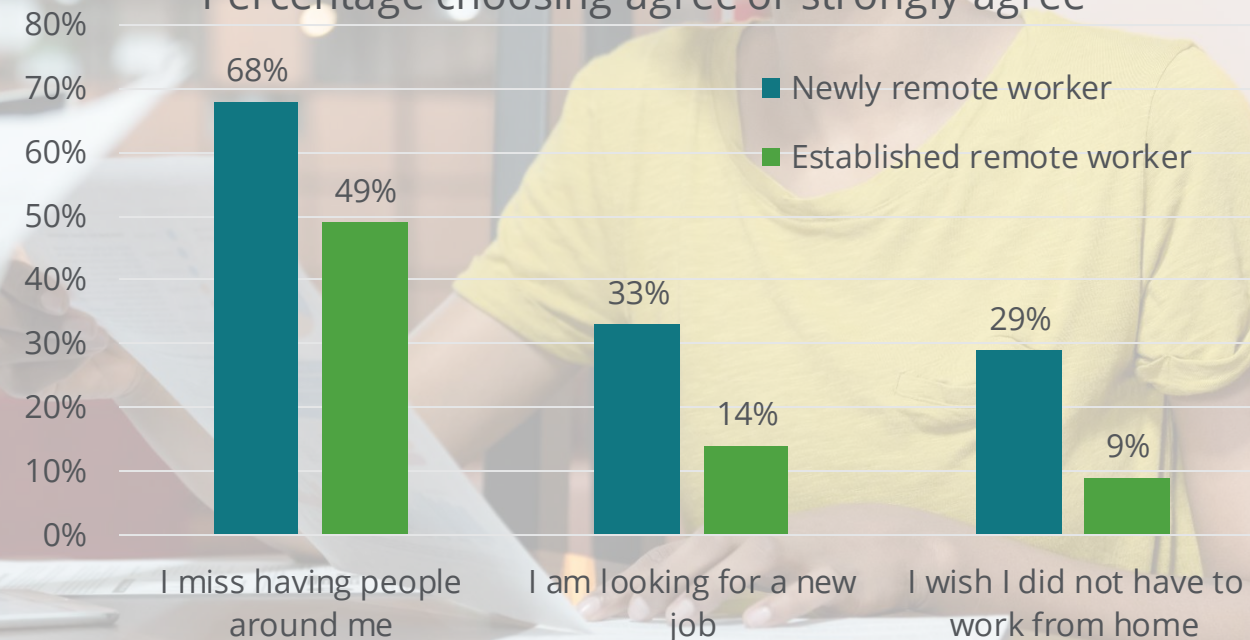
# COVID-19 may be making things worse

- Much large proportion of remote workers
- Downsizing and layoffs:
  - Fewer staff to do the work
  - Increased stress
  - Survivor guilt
- “We’ve just got to get through this”

US labor force



Percentage choosing agree or strongly agree



# What contributes to always-on stress?

- Lower job satisfaction
- Lower work engagement
- Greater compulsive phone checking
- Greater distraction
- Being younger
- Not being allowed to keep home and work separate
- Being female
- Higher job level
- Working full time vs self-employed vs part-time
- Number of people; stress increased for up to 20 people, then levelled off

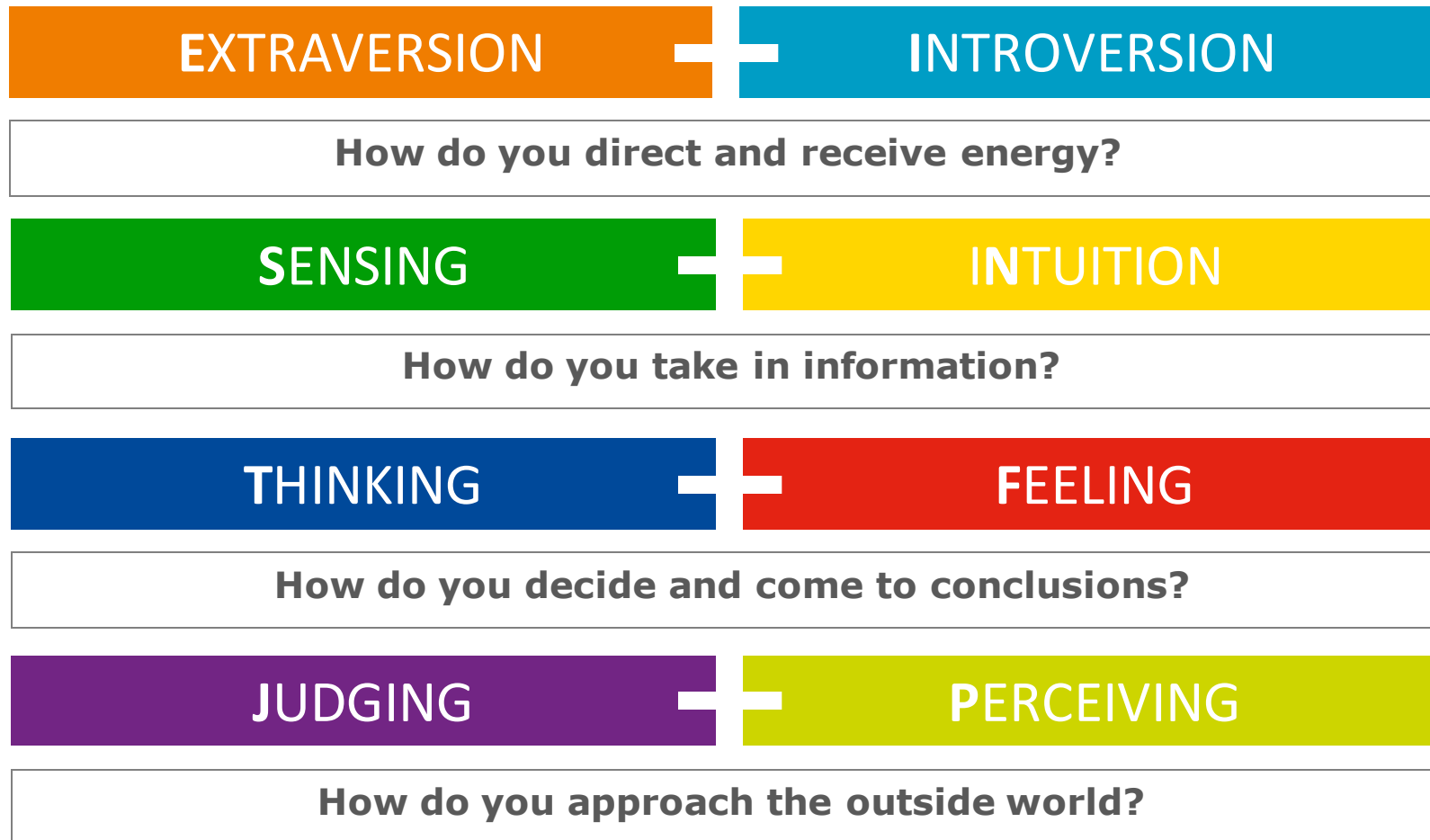


Job stress + difficulty switching off + private life/family conflict

Top  
5

1. Organizational culture
2. Employment type
3. Personality type: Sensing-Intuition
4. Job level
5. Number of people in organization

# The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) model





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EXTRAVERSION

INTROVERSION

Where do you get your energy from?

SENSING

INTUITION

What kind of information do you prefer to use?

THINKING

FEELING

What process do you use to make decisions?

JUDGING

PERCEIVING

How do you deal with the world around you?



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# The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) model

EXTRAVERSION

INTROVERSION

Where do you get your energy from?

More likely to have a work smartphone or laptop

SENSING

INTUITION

What kind of information do you prefer to use?

Greater desire to keep home and work separate

THINKING

FEELING

What process do you use to make decisions?

More likely have a work smartphone, higher job stress

JUDGING

PERCEIVING

How do you deal with the world around you?

Greater overall always-on stress, lower job satisfaction

Less likely to mention feeling 'always-on'

# Research summary

- The always-on culture has both advantages and disadvantages
- For most people, the disadvantages outweigh the advantages
- The COVID pandemic is likely to have made this worse
- Five top contributors to always on stress:
  - Organizational culture
  - Employment type
  - Personality: Sensing-Intuition
  - Job level
  - Number of people in organization
- Personality also has other effects







Actions



**Strategies to  
cope with the  
always-on culture**

Avoid technology use

Turn off devices 13%

Don't check 6%

Don't have/ accept a work smartphone 1%

Leave device somewhere else 7%





**Avoid technology use**

Turn off devices 13%

Don't check 6%

Leave device somewhere else 7%

Don't have/ accept a work smartphone 1%

**Separate work and home life**

Time "boxing" or keeping clear distinctions between home and work time 9%

Set boundaries with self 9%

Have separate phones for work and home 2%

Choose who you work for 1%





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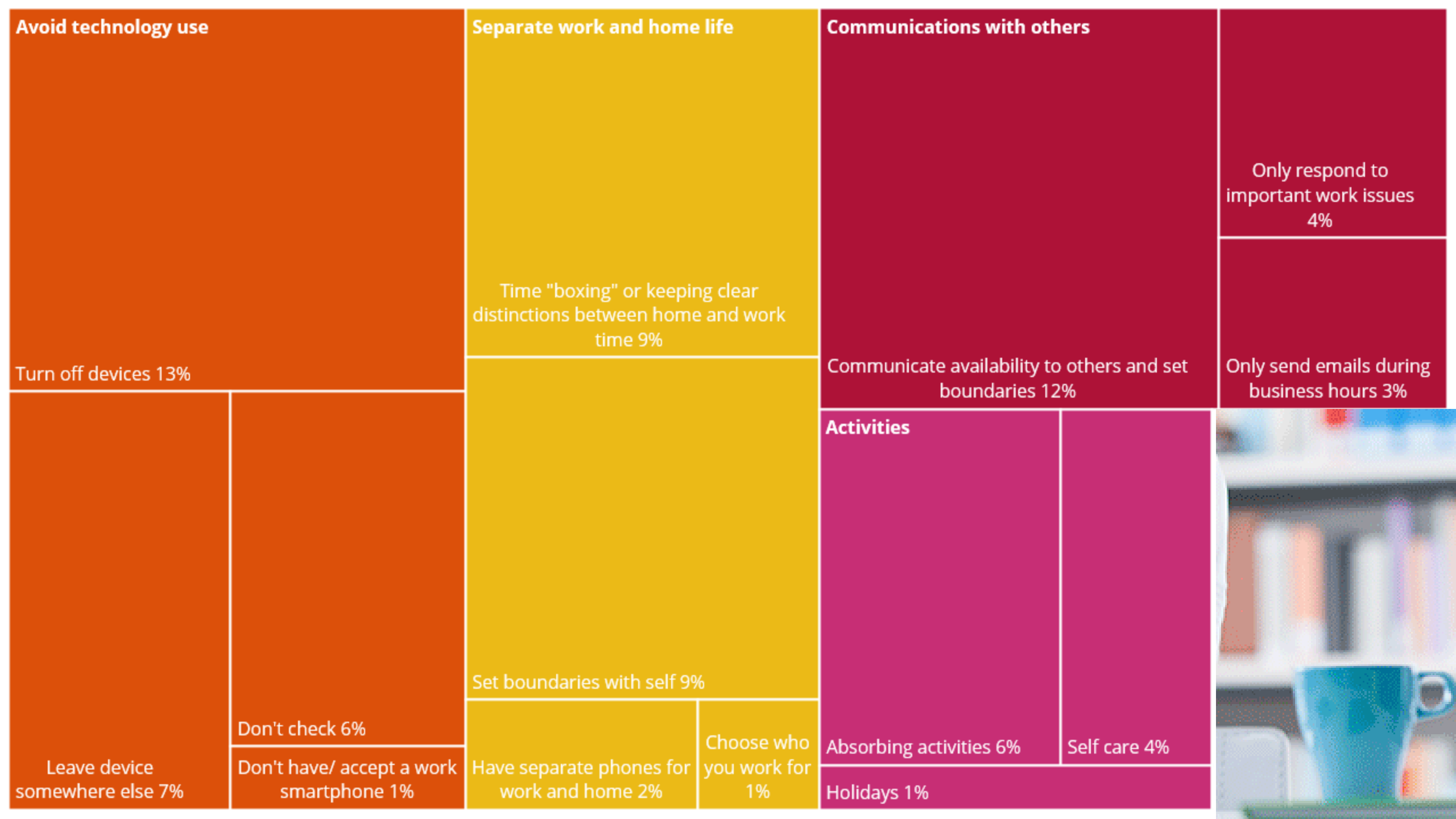
**Communications with others**

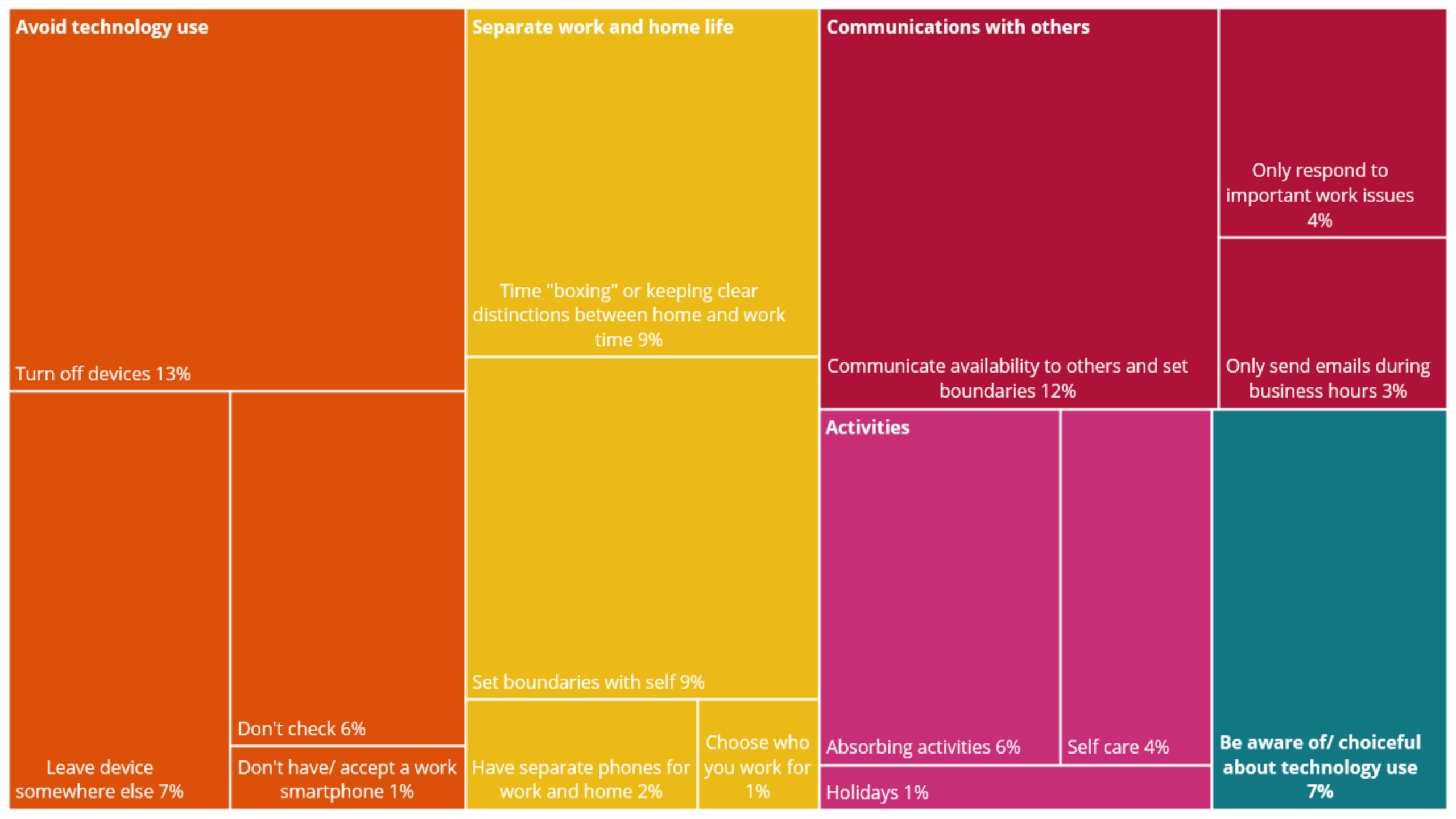
Communicate availability to others and set boundaries 12%

Only respond to important work issues 4%

Only send emails during business hours 3%









# Which strategies were more effective?



Switching off

People who said they **turned off devices, did not check their phone** and **set boundaries** with themselves and others found it easier to switch off than those who didn't



Work-family  
conflict

People who **did not check their phones** reported less work-family conflict



Job stress

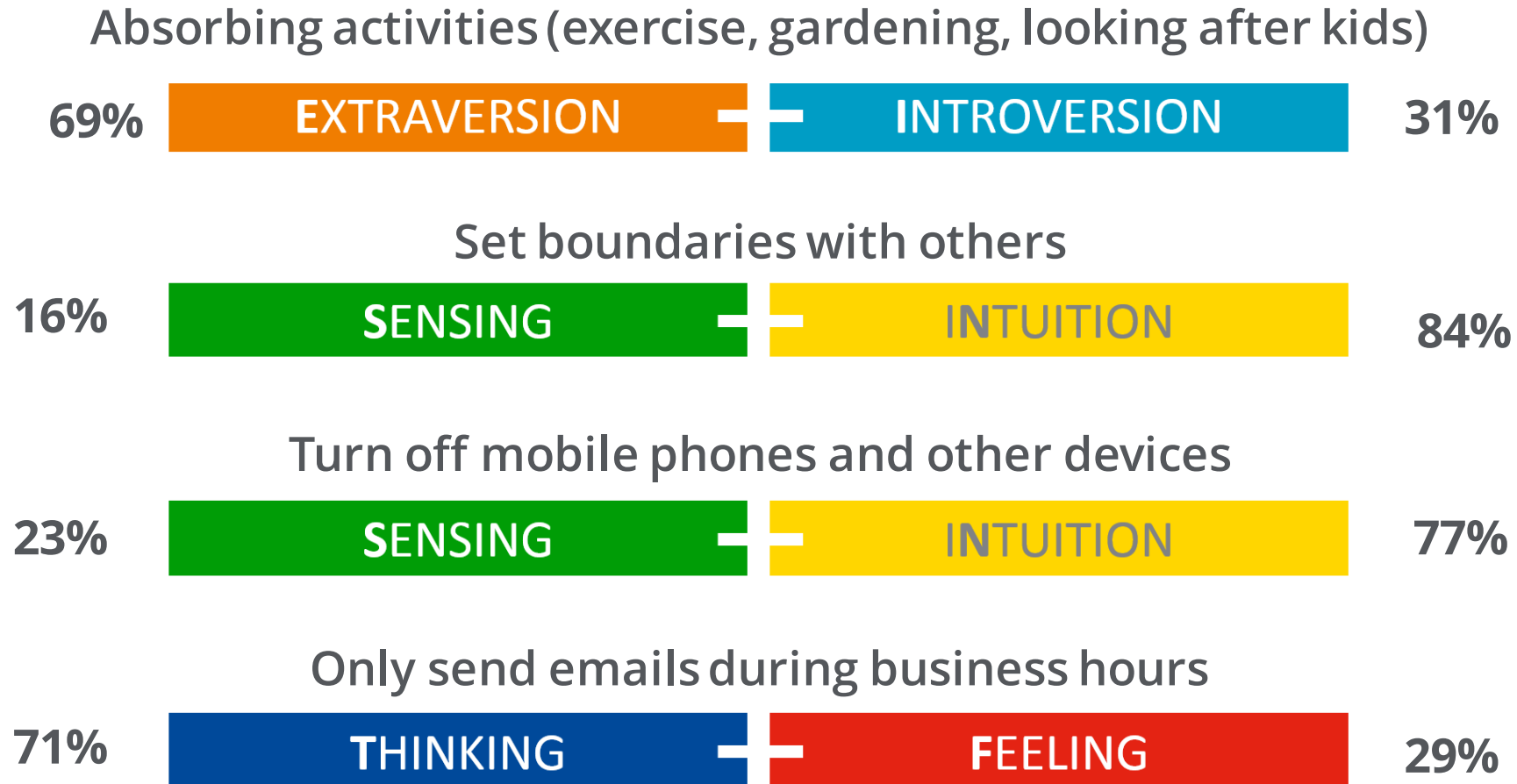
People who **set boundaries with themselves** about when to use technology, **only responded to work emails if important** and **set boundaries with others** reported lower levels of job stress



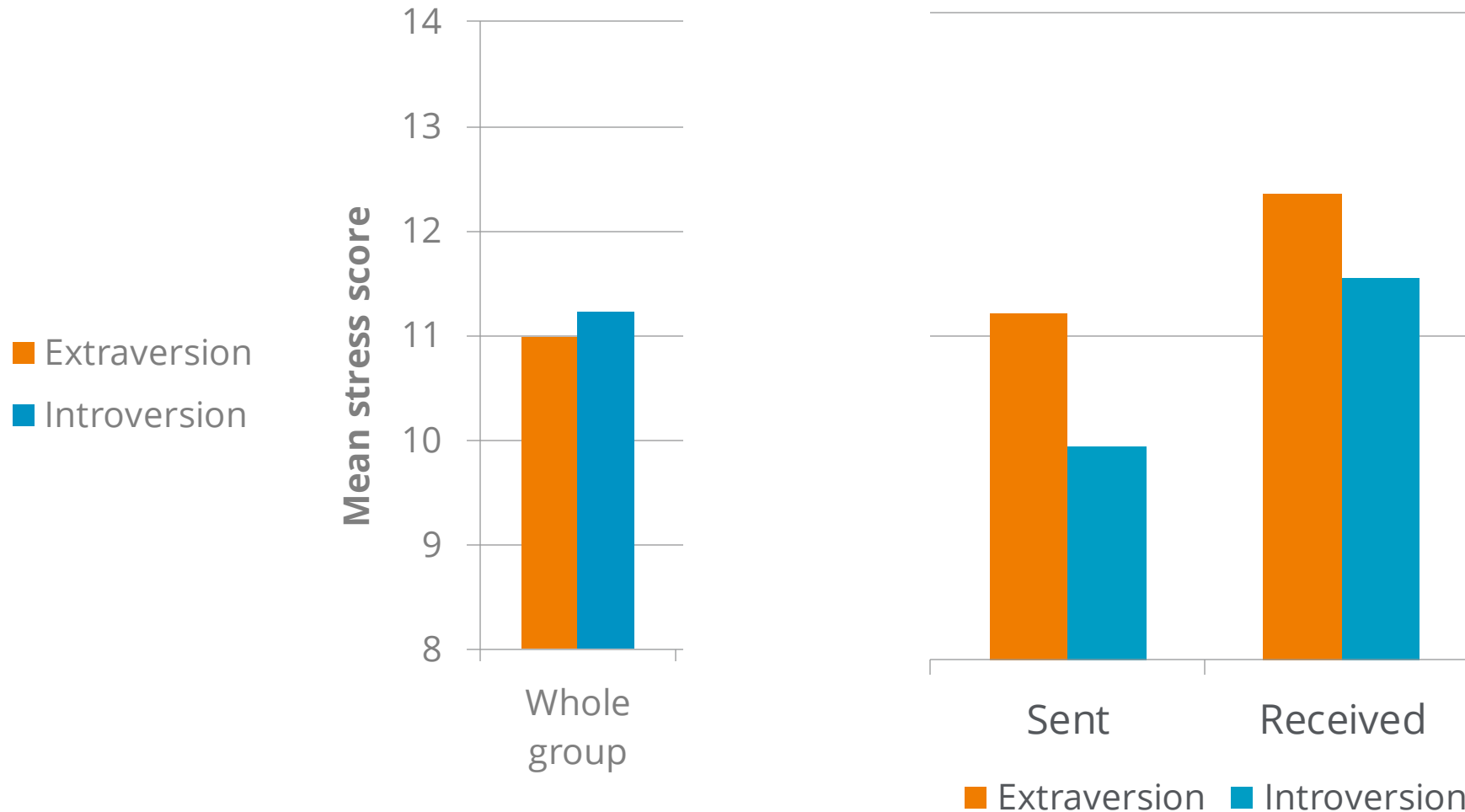
Work  
engagement

People who used **"time boxing"** and practiced **choiceful technology use** showed higher work engagement than those who did not.

# Personality and use of strategies



# Email stress and Extraversion-Introversion



# Actively using personality-based strategies

Doing something active, and/or with others Doing something new	<b>EXTRAVERSION</b> — <b>INTROVERSION</b>	Doing something that allows you to reflect Get absorbed in...
	<b>Create time and space to switch off</b>	
Take a step back, focus on the big picture; what's important?	<b>SENSING</b> — <b>INTUITION</b>	Step back and ground yourself in the moment Try one thing at a time
	<b>Beware of information overload</b>	
Consider the impact of being always-on on others	<b>THINKING</b> — <b>FEELING</b>	Is it important to help others/respond right now? Find a balance
	<b>Form boundaries with yourself and others</b>	
Set boundaries on when you will/will not use tech at home	<b>JUDGING</b> — <b>PERCEIVING</b>	Enjoy working when you want but don't expect others to do so
	<b>Find a form of work-life balance that suits you</b>	






# Three key principles

**Key principles**

**For individuals**

**For organizations**

# The always-on culture and teams

Key principles	Points to consider
 <p>Switch off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What would be the impact on the team if individuals made time to switch off from technology?</li><li>- What would help people to switch off from technology?</li></ul>
 <p>Set boundaries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What is the team culture about using tech, inside and outside work? What is the organizational culture?</li><li>- As a team, can you agree some guidelines?</li></ul>
 <p>Consider &amp; communicate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How often do you initiate emails to team members outside of work hours? How might this affect others?</li><li>- Do you know everyone's preferences for using technology? Perhaps set up a discussion.</li></ul>



# Next steps

# Options for you



Online team building at your pace

- MBTIonline Teams



Facilitated, virtual team building

- MBTI® Insights Virtual Workshop



Certify a team-building expert

- MBTI® Certification







Any questions?



Thank you!

Good luck & STAY SAFE!



# Polls

Does your organization have an always-on culture?

- Yes
- I'm not sure
- No

People shouldn't have to check their emails outside of normal working hours

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

MBTI knowledge poll

Which strategy would you be most likely to use to cope with the always-on culture?

- Activities – do something away from the always-on culture
- Avoid using technology
- Be aware of how you use technology and make careful choices about how you use it
- Be clear and strict about how and when you communicate with others
- Keep work and home life separate