



| WHITE PAPER

Staying Productive When You Test From Home

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Introduction

At the beginning of 2020, companies find themselves having to deal with an unprecedented global health issue—the COVID-19 pandemic. The dreadful situation has put many lives at risk, changed the way people carry on in life, and caused disruptions to businesses. In other words, it is putting everything and everyone's normal routine to the test.

Working from home has become the new norm for businesses and their employees. People's safety and wellbeing become the top priority, as companies do their best to navigate through the challenging time.

In the software development industry, the impacts are also significant. Most technology companies have implemented new policies, tools, and workflow to make sure that the transition of working at the office to working from home takes place smoothly and efficiently.

This report focuses solely on the testing sector, which involves many roles in the software development cycle. The list of respondents spans from the QA, testers whose functions are to ensure the product quality and user experience, to the directors that oversee the entire building and releasing processes of the product.

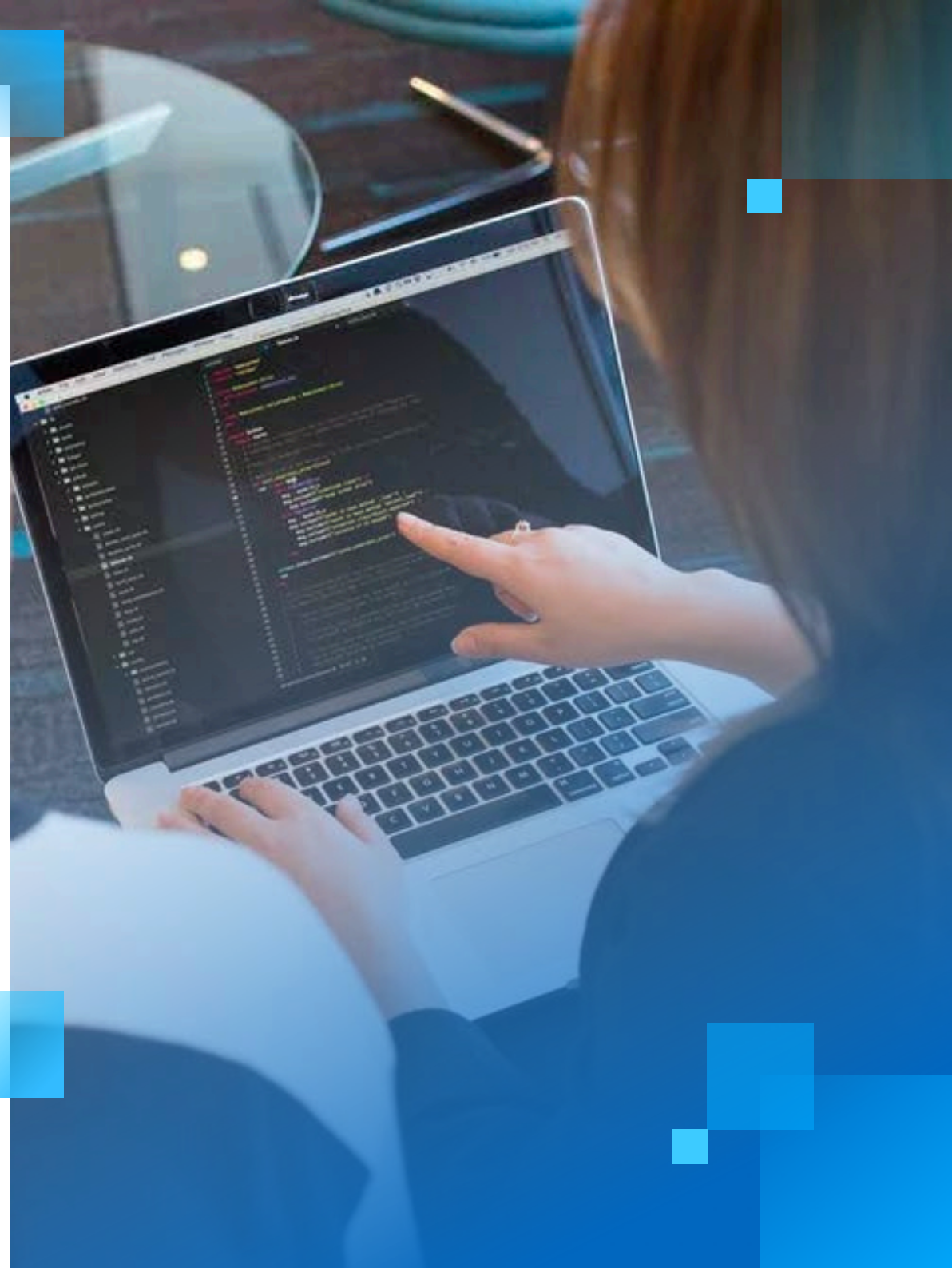
In such a unique situation, we believe that it is crucial to see how teams and individuals around the globe are working together to adapt and maintain productivity. Plus, you can see how organizations can collaborate effectively using the tools, technologies, and resources that are made available in this day and age.

Purpose

The survey and this report aim to give an overall update of how the testing community is affected by the pandemic, especially when team members have started working from home.

Such a change in the working environment can cause new challenges as people are struggling to stay safe, yet, still need to ensure their performance.

In addition to that, we also want to provide the tips and best practices for testing teams to cope with the changes and best leverage automation tools for when they are working from home.



Methodology

Our survey has a total of 705 respondents, providing the data for this report. The respondents consist of automation testers, automation engineers, developers, managers, team leads, directors, and more—from around the world.

Please note that Katalon does not describe this as a scientific study. The percentages in this report were rounded to the nearest whole number for the analysis.

The questionnaire was based on what we consider useful and informative to the software testing community, and the insights are concluded from their responses. We hope the information presented in this report will be helpful for the community.

Key Findings

01 Most testing teams have transitioned to working from home for more than one week

02 Preparation is key to prevent teams from being heavily affected by the change

03 Teams should leverage proficient tools to streamline working remotely

04 Tips and best practices for testers to make working from home an enjoyable and productive period

What is your professional role?



Demographics

The majority of the respondents, 66%, are automation testers or engineers. Managers and team leaders are the second most group of respondents, taking up to 18%.

There are also developers, directors, and other roles that involve the QA and development operations that have added their inputs to our survey.

Most of our respondents possess firsthand experience with test automation practices and are a part of the software development cycle.

This report will discuss the impacts and changes that occurred to the way testers work when transit to working remotely, both individually and collaboratively.



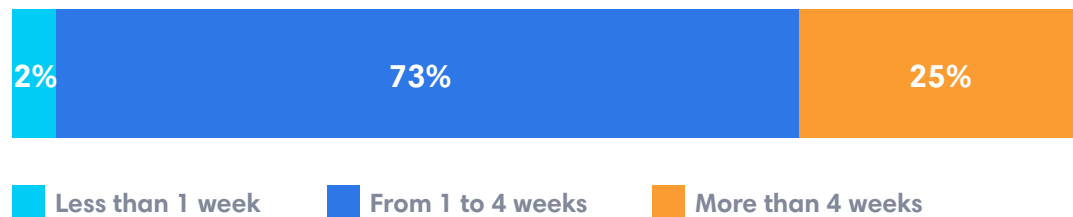
The State of Testing

Under the Influence of COVID-19

Under the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, does your team have to switch to working from home?



How long has your team been working from home?

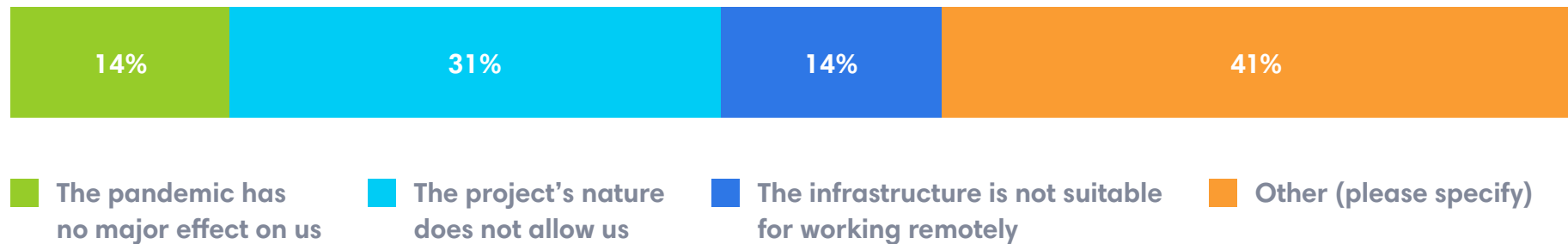


Among the total of 705 respondents, 97% of them have switched to working from home as an effect of the global pandemic.

Among this number, more than 70% of the respondents said that they have been working remotely from one to four weeks long.

24% of those who switched to working from home have been doing it for more than four weeks. There is also a small percentage of 2% who only started working from home for less than one week.

Your team does not work from home because



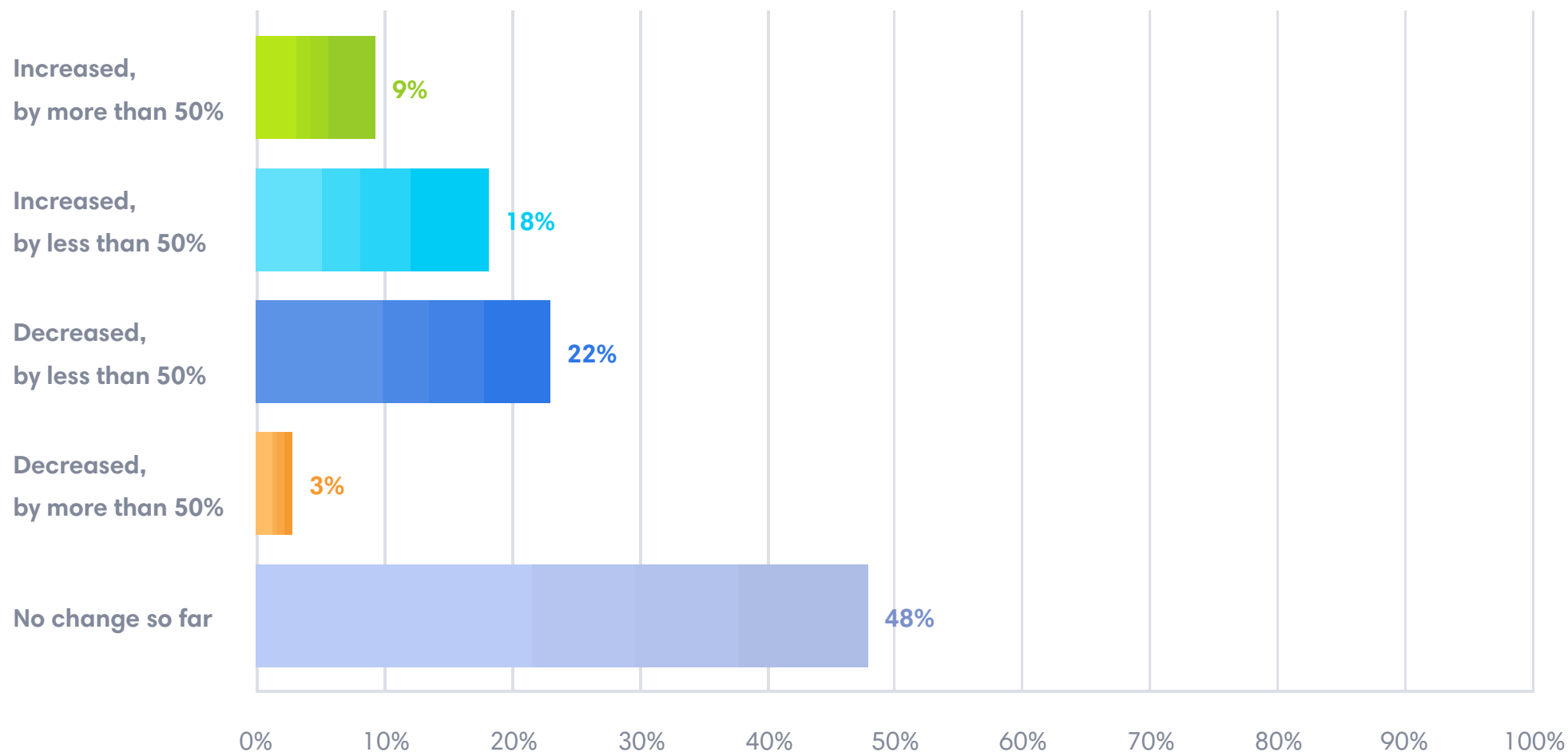
As for those who responded that they did not have to change to working from home, the reasons vary.

Only 3% of all respondents said that they remained the same during the hit of the pandemic. The majority of this group (32%) stated that it is due to the nature of their projects, which does not allow their teams to work remotely.

Other respondents (14%) revealed that their current infrastructure does not allow them to stay functional if they switched to working from home. The result also shows that the pandemic situation has no effect on 14% of this group; thus, they made no changes.

As for other unlisted reasons, 41% of this group, mainly because some have been working remotely since day 1.

How does working remotely affect your team's efficiency?



In terms of how changing the working environment affects, the situation looks bright.

Almost half of those who switched to working from home (48%) said that the transition had made no changes to their team efficiency so far. This result shows that with proper preparation and an agile approach to collaborate between teams and its members, the transition to working remotely would not havoc the existing workflow.

It is also great news for teams or organization leaders who are still hesitant to apply the working from home policy.

The other half of the respondents said that the change had had a few distinct impacts on their efficiency—both positively and negatively.

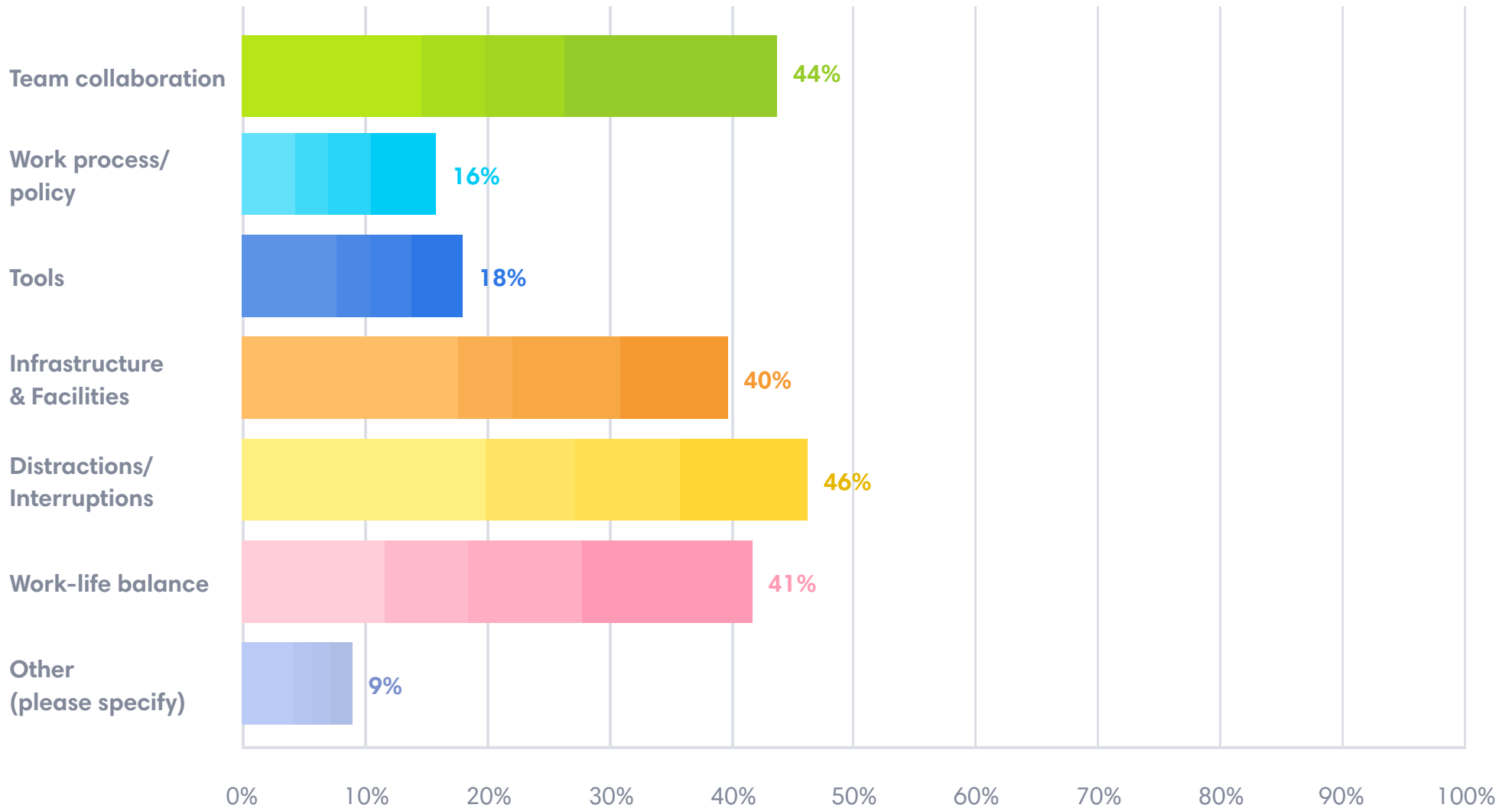
Specifically, 22% of the respondents believed that working from home has **decreased** their team productivity—by less than 50%. On the contrary, 18% of the respondents stated that their productivity has **increased** by more than 50%, suggesting that working from home has introduced new ways to collaborate effectively for teams.

Even more significantly, another group of respondents whose team productivity has **increased** by more than 50% when work remotely made up 9% of the respondents for this question. Only a small percentage of respondents: 3%, said that their team efficiency has **decreased** by more than 50%.



The Challenges of Working Remotely for Testers

What are your team's major difficulties while working from home?



A complete change in the working environment can be challenging.

When changes are done to quickly respond to the situation, teams need to be carefully prepared with a predefined process of transition to working remotely. Without it, working from home can be difficult.

The biggest challenge is having to deal with distractions and interruptions. 46% of the respondents agreed on this matter. Next, 44% of respondents said that it is hard to ensure team collaboration when working apart from each other.

Another 41% claimed that working from home has made their work-life balance hard to maintain. In essence, it is easy to mix work with personal life when the boundary between them is thin.

The last difficulty that was voted by a large number of respondents is to have the right infrastructure and facilities when working from home. That means 40% of the respondents struggled to have the same infrastructure and facilities as when they were working in their offices.

Work process/policy and tools are the two options that were less popular for our respondents. The result shows that, respectively, there are 16 percent and 18 percent of the respondents have to deal with these two problems.

A minority of respondents mentioned that they have other issues to deal with when changing the work environment. Internet connectivity, direct communication, and VPN connectivity are some of the causes of disruptions for teams and individuals when working from home.



Utilizing Tools
is Recommended to Make
Testing from Home Easier

Communication tools

When your team no longer sits together in the same room, communication tools become essential to keep everybody on track with all the new updates and changes.

The respondents have listed out some of the most important communication tools for them while working from home. Slack, Hangout, Skype, and Zoom are some of the most common tools that offer capabilities for effective communication between team members.

Besides using communication tools to keep in touch with other team members, the capability to integrate these tools with the automation tool is just as important. When all tools are integrated, it enables real-time updates of the execution results and helps maintain work efficiency even with limited communication.



Centralized code repository and report

For testing teams, the capability to integrate with other tools or repositories has become more critical to streamline the new working-from-home mode.

Reporting on the cloud is another valuable feature that helps to ensure the whole team is on the same page. With real-time data and ready-made report templates, reporting and analyzing can be quickly generated on demand.

Specifically, having the automation tool able to seamlessly integrate with Git has been mentioned multiple times in the survey. It is highly beneficial for testers to leverage Git as a centralized repository for the team to work on their tests together, and have only one unified source of truth.





CI/CD tools integration

Besides integrating with Git, testers are also keen on combining their testing tool with other CI/CD tools. Thus, new builds and commits are ensured to be constantly tested. Seamless integration with the CI/CD pipeline makes sure the product grows without disruptions, even when the team no longer sits next to each other.

Leverage cloud execution platforms can reduce the time and communication effort of each member as they can access the server easily at all times.

Additionally, test case management is another aspect that needs extra attention when testers begin working from home. The ability to share test artifacts, send test results, and sync up test case contents help to simplify collaboration and improve visibility for all team members.



Tips and Best Practices for Testers to Work from Home Effectively

Be prepared

- Provide laptops/portable workstations and client/Internal VPN connectivity steps and guidelines for all the team members
- Setup a proper coordination channel for the team with proper training so that their internal coordination do not hamper
- Gather the details of the internet connectivity and the connection speed at their homes and provide the minimum required bandwidth to the team to maintain the workflow
- Make sure all required software has been pre-installed for continued smooth working
- Provide security and ISO guidelines updated for the team while working from home
- Set up and share IT Service/Support contact details with the team



Move your test projects to the cloud

- Make sure if the projects have any device/mobile requirements then your team has real devices ready, or subscribe to an online device lab solutions, such as BrowserStack, SauceLabs, Kobiton, etc.
- Apply CI/CD cycles more frequently with CI/CD mirrored to a secure cloud environment
- Test through a pipeline associated with code merging and committing, and in small batches
- Sync up test case contents with Test Case Management Systems (Jira or qTest Integrations) for scripting—reduce the effort for communication
- Integrate with a cloud reporting platform (Katalon TestOps) to get real-time execution results, generate and view reports quickly

Stay dedicated, communicate, and remember to take your breaks

- Develop good work ethics and stick to it. If you use collaboration tools like Teams, Skype, leave a short message if you are away from your desk to take care of something if it would take longer than 15 mins
- Make sure to set up a definitive workspace, and that you get up and walk and move around for little breaks
- Get dressed or at least change out of pajamas like you would still be going into the office
- Pick the channels for audio/video meetings in place for the whole team
- Have escalation tree/call tree prepared and shared with all team members
- Provide contact numbers, alternate contact numbers, and addresses of each person before the team works from home





Thank you for reading!

**Check out more tips to make
remote working easier 💡**

[Read more](#)



ABOUT KATALON

Katalon is a leading provider in software test automation solutions. The company offers a flexible platform for web, API, mobile, and desktop testing that fits teams and projects of any size, for any purpose — from creating tests, execution, reports, to seamless integration with the CI/CD ecosystem.

Katalon is widely adopted by a global community of users across 160+ countries. It is recognized as a top automation tool by prestigious reports such as Gartner, Capterra, and IT Central Station. Katalon solutions include Katalon Studio, Katalon TestOps, Katalon Recorder, Katalium, and Katalon plugins. For more information, visit www.katalon.com.

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