

 Legatics



YouGov[®]

What's behind Law's
Great Resignation?



Foreword

As a company founded by - and for - lawyers, we have long believed that we know and understand the challenges practising lawyers face. Our own collective experience goes a long way towards understanding the problems junior lawyers face (and how to address them), and that has been a core part of the founding mission of Legatics: we are here to help alleviate the burden of low level work and overwork that plagues many lawyers, particularly junior transactional lawyers.

We know from our own experience that the job doesn't always match up to the imagination we had when we were studying law, hoping to make a difference in people's lives and feel fulfilled by our work. We are also familiar with the long hours, lack of work-life balance, and mental health burden that this places on many people.

On the flip side, we've seen our former employers try to implement measures to make the working lives of young lawyers better, and retain their talent. That means we've had some idea of what works, and what doesn't.


Overwhelmingly, we were moved to use that knowledge and try to become part of the solution. Individually, many of us concluded that automation could solve some of the problems of our daily lives, and wanted to help make that happen for the next generation of lawyers.

Now, six years into founding Legatics, we also have concrete data about how true this is. We've also lived through the acute phase of a global pandemic which has turned many people's priorities around completely, and changed our approach to work irreversibly. We are in a moment when many people are questioning what's most important to them, and what they will and won't put up with - and employers across all sectors are making changes to adapt in response.

We can still see from the headlines about the 'Great Resignation' that there is a particular problem in the legal profession, though. And to see just where our fellow lawyers stand, in addition to our own personal experience, we decided to commission research from YouGov to add some real numbers to our understanding of the problems we've faced - such as overtime, lack of recognition, and mental health challenges which all tend to culminate in burnout or even leaving the profession.

In addition to sharing this insight with you, we promise to continue to use it to change the industry for the better. We believe that law firms want happy, healthy, and satisfied lawyers working for them, and that nobody wants to walk away from what can be a fulfilling career. We think that our technology has an important role to play in improving the lives of lawyers. That is why we exist.

Anthony Seale, CEO Legatics




Many of the Legatics senior leadership team is composed of former lawyers, who have insight into the challenges facing the profession. According to Anthony Seale, CEO of Legatics, more lawyers are asking themselves: am I connecting with the reasons I wanted to be a lawyer in the first place?

'I expected to be conducting legal analyses and understanding the commercial motives for a transaction - things that excited me at law school - but the reality for a junior lawyer was that there was a huge amount of administrative work, and I was using very little of my technical skills,' said Anthony.

Dan Porus, CCO, agreed. *'In theory, [the job] sounded fantastic.' 'It was really sexy to be working on this huge transaction that's on the front page of the paper. But the reality of what I was doing day to day was quite menial. And I didn't feel that connected to the bigger picture.'*


People generally need a reason to do their jobs. Historically, when lawyers have been dissatisfied with working conditions, the solution was to throw more money at them. Good lawyers certainly need to be rewarded. But money only motivates people so far, and there are many law firms willing to pay good money. Money can compel people to work, but it can't make work feel meaningful or create a real connection with clients.



More than a quarter of lawyers say the main factor in choosing the profession was to make a difference to people's lives.



What do you consider to be the main factor for you becoming a lawyer?




Anthony says that even 6 years ago, when he was a lawyer, decreasing numbers of junior lawyers aspired to the traditional path of becoming partners. People were starting to care more about the experience they were gaining and what they were learning, as well as how they were being treated in their job.

Senior lawyers have a dilemma: they want to give interesting and meaningful work to junior lawyers, but there is a significant amount of grunt work that needs to be done. Lawyers need not only great working conditions, but also the meaningful work that makes them want to be there in the first place.

Luke Vancliff-Davis, Head of Business Development, said, *'When I got to actually practising as a lawyer, I realised that [there wasn't a good] work-life balance.'*

Ryan Turner, Product Lead, added another issue: the fact that law firms are not always the most adaptable environments. *'There was [little consideration of] is there a better way to do this?'* said Ryan.





Less than a quarter of lawyers feel supported by their firm when stressed or burned out. More than half are neutral, suggesting firms need to offer more support.



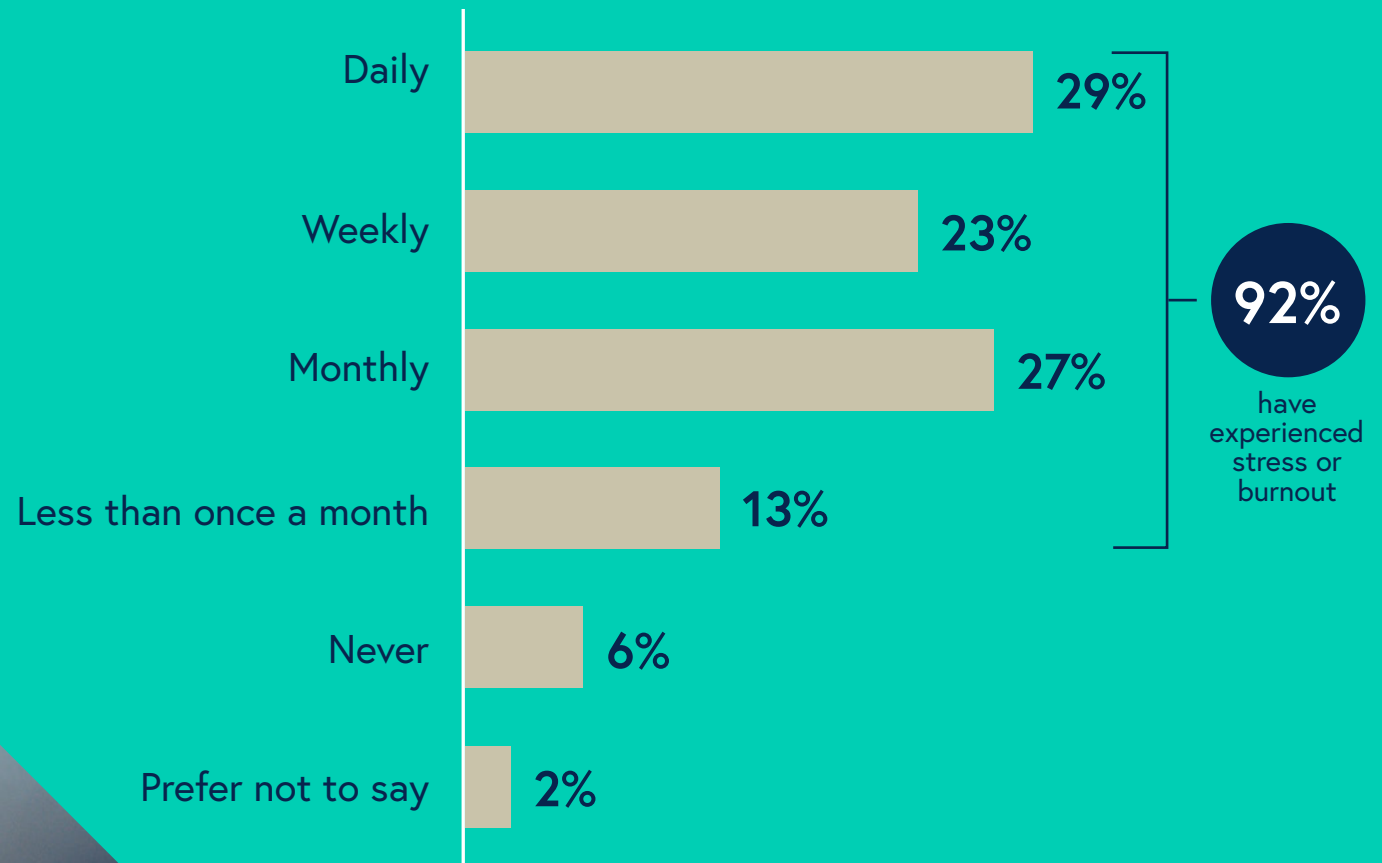
- Don't Know
- Net: Unsupported (0-2)
- Net: Neutral (3-7)
- Net: Supported (8-10)

SOURCE: Factors in becoming a lawyer, YouGov


On a scale of 0 to 10, how supported do you feel by your firm, in relation to feelings of stress or burnout?



Around nine in ten lawyers experience stress or burnout at some point as a result of their job, with more than a quarter experiencing it on a daily basis.



How often do you feel stress or burnout as a result of your job in law?



The best lawyers are the ones who love what they do and connect with the commercial purpose of their clients - but if in day-to-day life they're stuck completing enormous administrative tasks or sitting on long coordination calls, they're not going to feel that sense of purpose.

This was echoed by our Engagement Manager, Unna Bhatt, who also left law to work at Legatics. *'One thing I think could have been done differently is [encouraging] different ways of working,'* Unna said. *'I didn't want to be firefighting the whole time, I wanted to go somewhere and make a real change.'*

Things like recognition from managers and flexible hours matter more to many than a marginal pay increase on an already high salary. But so does the quality of work junior lawyers are receiving, and whether they feel they had a meaningful role in the legal transaction they were working on.

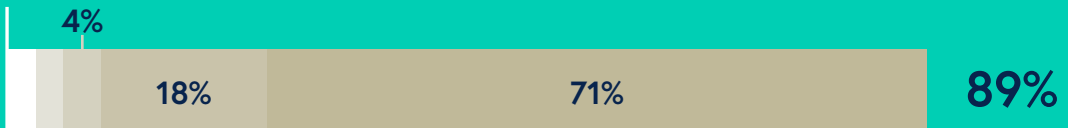
In the short term, if people continue to just throw money at the problem, we're likely to see a price war over increasingly unhappy lawyers. And in the long term, we'll see burnout amongst the unhappy lawyers, and clients who feel that their lawyers don't fundamentally care about them or the work they're doing.



According to lawyers, the issues contributing to feelings of dissatisfaction are high workload, work not being recognised, and a lack of support.



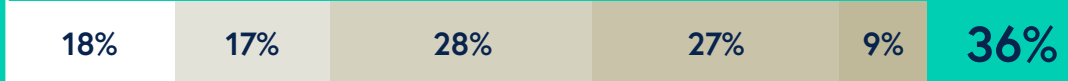
High workload



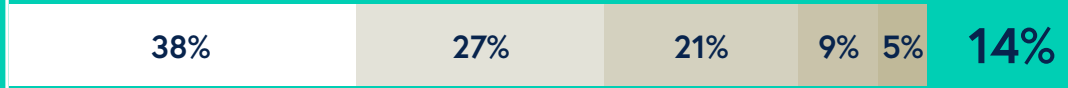
Work not being recognised by senior managers



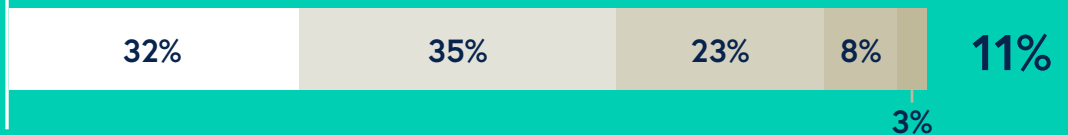
Lack of support from team



Mundane work



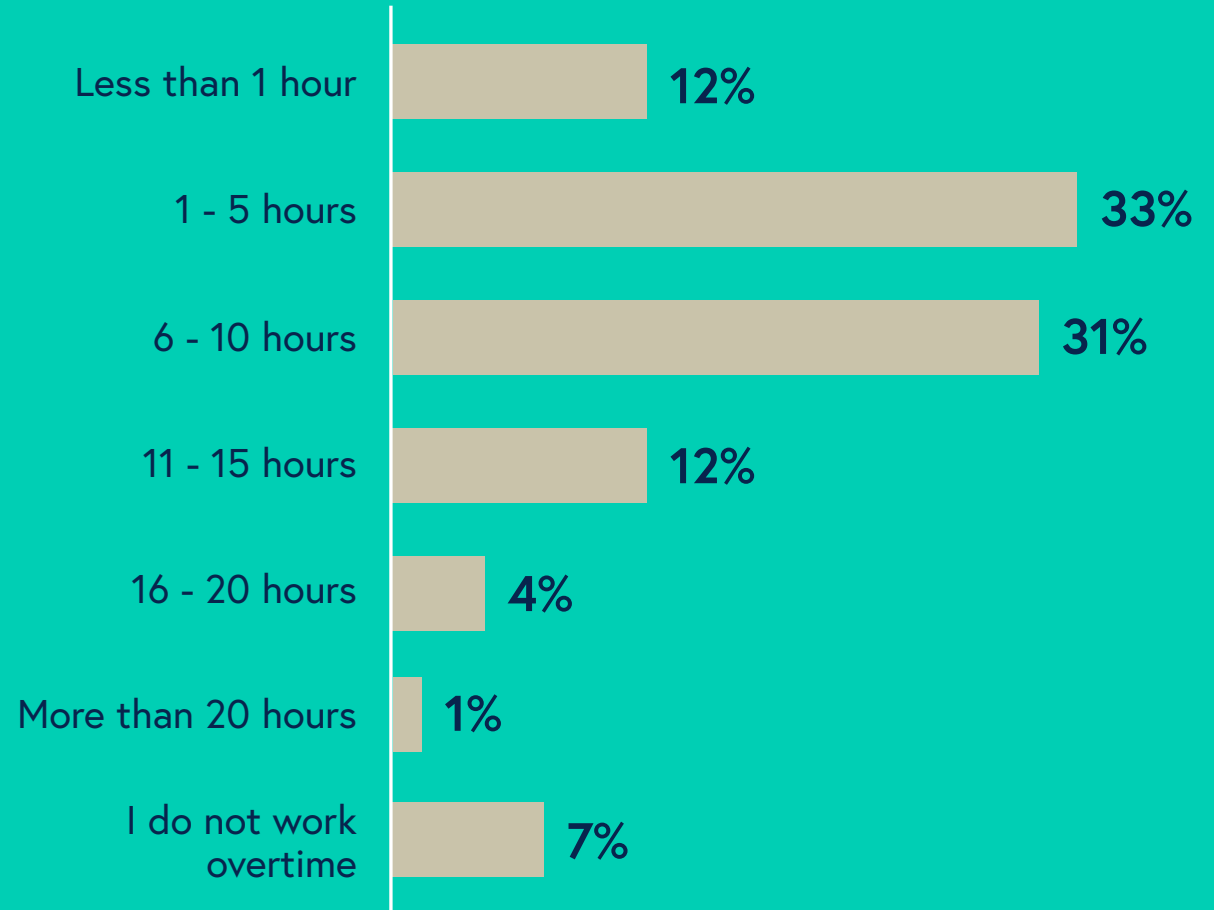
Lack of autonomy



Least important Most important

How do you feel the above contribute to feelings of dissatisfaction for lawyers? Ranked from most important (1) to least important (5).

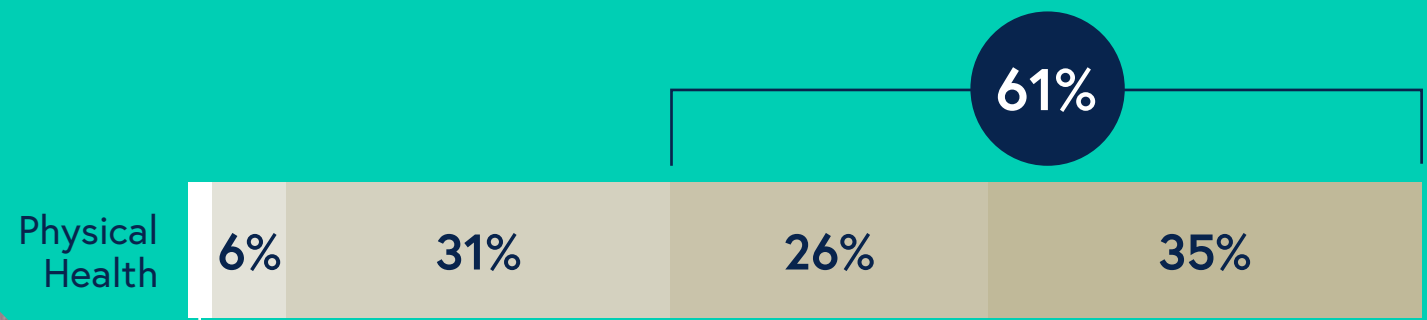
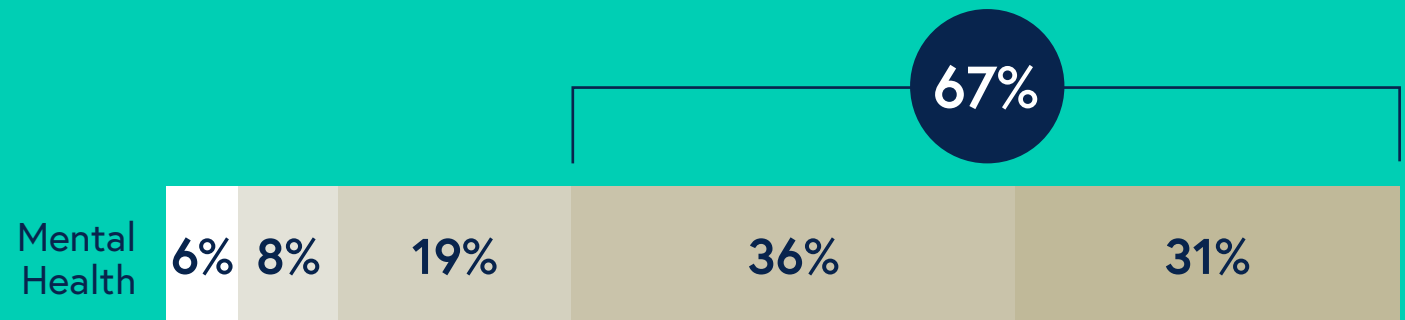
Most lawyers spend 1-10 hours overtime per week



On average, how much time do you spend working overtime in the evenings and/or on weekends per week?



Almost two thirds of lawyers feel that their job has had a negative impact on both their mental and physical health – the biggest impact is felt on their mental health.



- Prefer not to say
- Don't know
- No impact
- Short-term impact
- Long-term impact

SOURCE: Factors in becoming a lawyer, YouGov

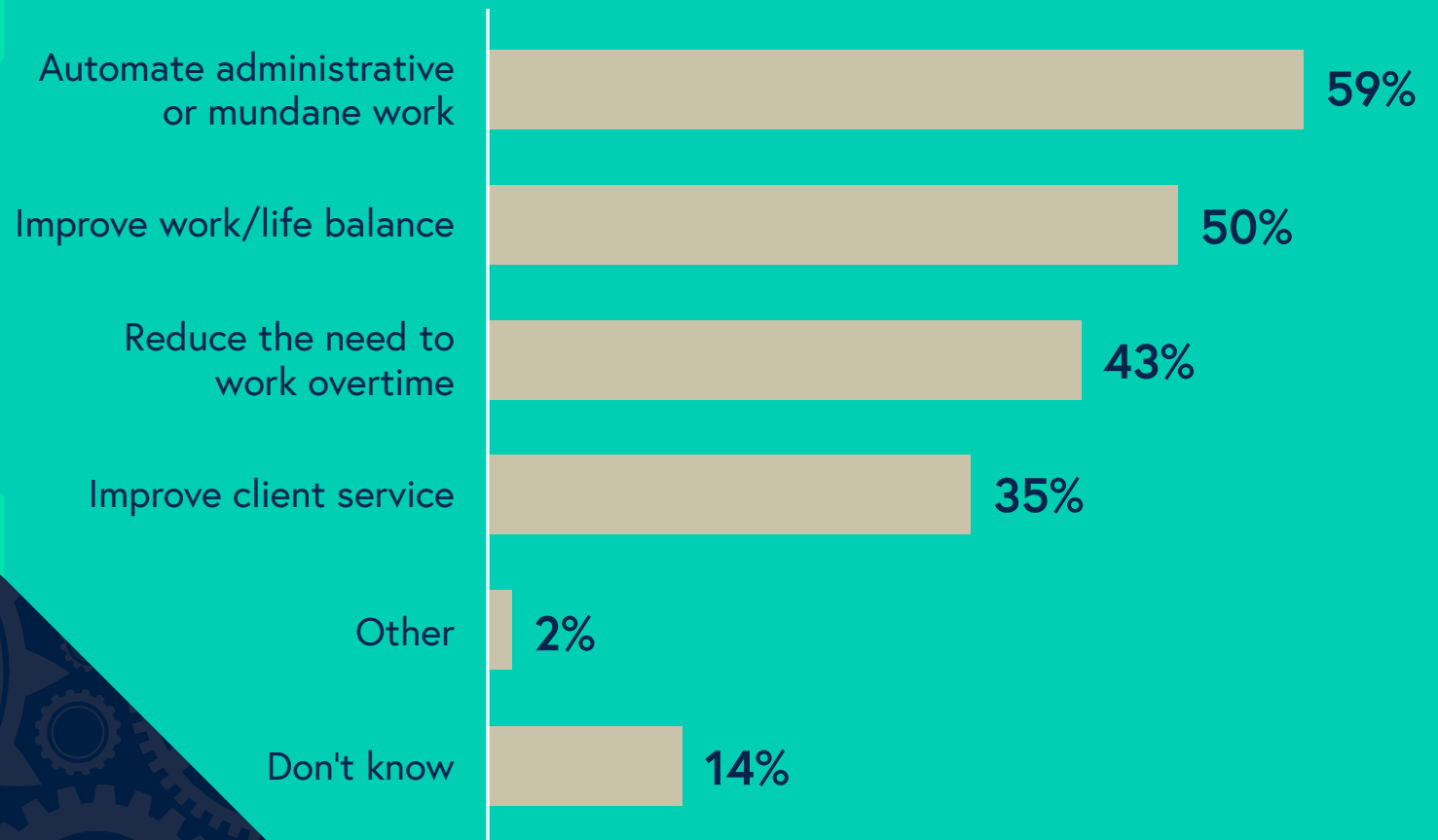
What negative impact, if any, do you feel your job as a lawyer has had on your physical and mental health?



This is where technology provides a great opportunity. Technology like Legatics can transform legal transactions, provide a better deal experience for all parties, and free lawyers from unnecessary administrative tasks.



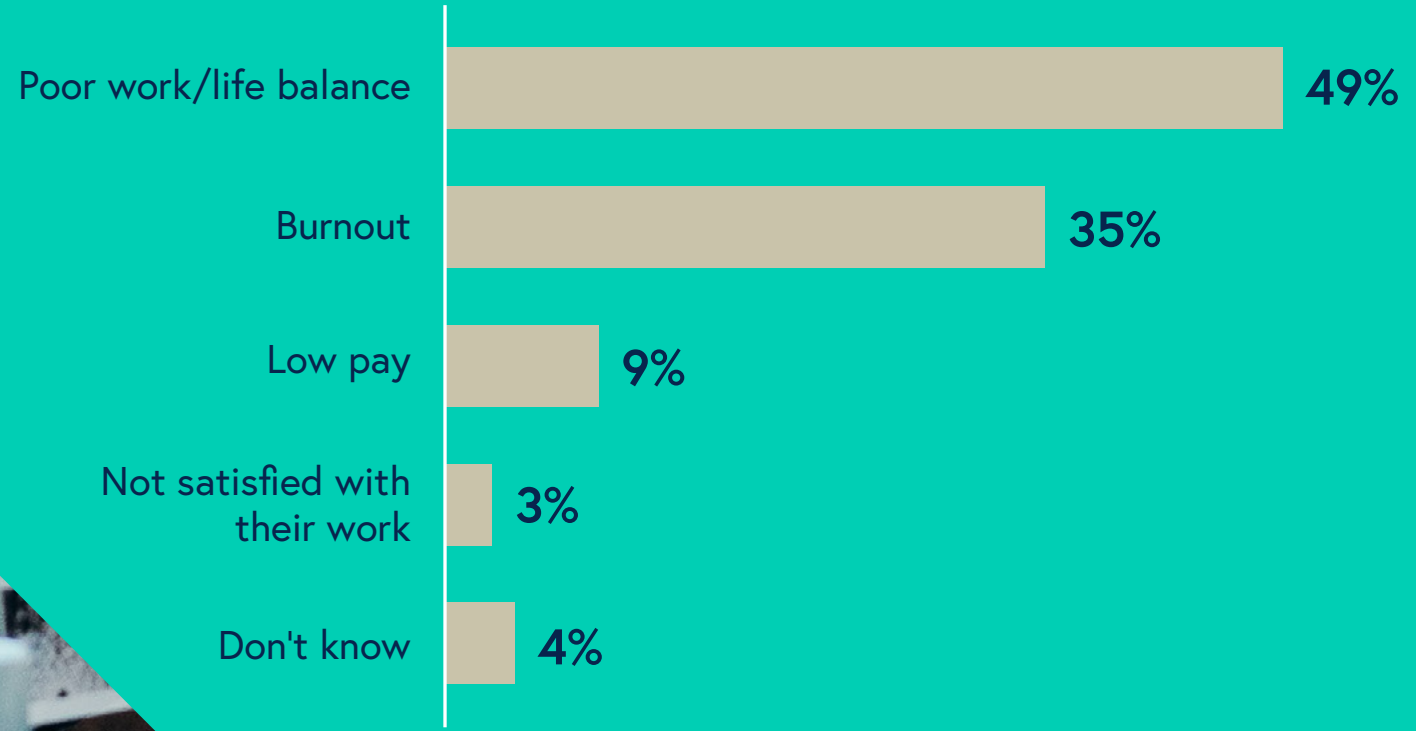
Automating admin work is considered by lawyers to be the most impactful way that technology could help with stress and burnout.



How do you think technology could be used in law firms as a way to help with stress or burnout? Option to select more than one.



Poor work/life balance is considered to be the biggest factor contributing to lawyers leaving the job or profession, with almost half reporting this.



What do you think is the biggest contributing factor to lawyers who leave their job or the profession?

Conclusion

As most people know, law is a profession that requires advanced qualifications, and can be a rewarding career - so the decision to leave isn't taken lightly. For members of our team, solving these problems was so important, they decided to leave the profession and work on a solution.

Anthony said that he decided the work he was doing as a junior lawyer could be better structured, and more automated.

'My brain always seemed to work differently to those around me, I think I was the lawyer who picked up a contract and was disappointed that there weren't any graphs or not enough numbers in it,' said Anthony. 'And when I approached the world of junior lawyer tasks, I started thinking in terms of automation, process, systems, software and platforms. And before I knew it, I was starting a platform for the management of legal transactions.'

The benefits aren't just for lawyers, though. Dan Grant-Smith, Customer Engagement, says that the process improvements will lead to more transparency and collaboration with clients. *'Our clients are happier, but also our lawyers are doing less menial work - they're less bogged down in low value activities, and they can focus more on adding value to their clients and to the processes that are powerful,'* he said.

In addition to all the reasons that our own team of former lawyers like Legatics, they also have a strong understanding of the challenges of adopting new technology at law firms. They've experienced issues with adapting to change, as Ryan described, but also have some experiences combating it.

Anthony also points out that there are big opportunities for the role of technology to expand, and that Legatics is always keen to be at the forefront of these advances.

'There's an enormous role for technology to play in making transactions and legal work more efficient,' he said. *'I think it's probably one of the last undisrupted industries. If you go and try and find another efficiency saving in the Amazon warehouse, you're going to struggle, but if you go into a law firm and look for how technology can help, you'll find a lot. The opportunity is enormous, and we're really helping to bring that.'*



Legatics, trusted by leading law firms from around the world, is a transaction management platform designed by lawyers to improve legacy working methods and solve practical transactional issues. Legatics transforms legal transactions, providing a better deal experience for all parties, and freeing lawyers from unnecessary administrative tasks.



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