

Flexible working has become an unexpected gift for employers, CBRE survey reveals

2 years ago



A recent survey from global real estate advisor, [CBRE](#), canvassed the views of over 20,000 employees globally to understand their views on the changing world of work. The findings revealed the importance of flexibility in both employee and employer decision making, with positive outcomes for both, including increased productivity and innovative thinking, that employers can also capitalise on.

Flexibility about where and when work takes place was particularly important to workers. Around 40% of workers both globally and in the UK, noted flexibility as the primary factor in assessing job opportunities, with a company's commitment to work-life balance another crucial factor.

Half of survey respondents (50%), and more than half of remote and hybrid workers (54%), reported an increased level of trust in their employer compared to pre-pandemic - presenting organisations with a positive basis to engage with employees.

The research also showed that the experience of working flexibly has generated positive consequences for employees across wellbeing, productivity, and connectivity. More than half (52%) of hybrid employees in the UK said their relationship with their colleagues had improved since the pandemic, compared to office first (44%) and fully remote (41%). When asked if they feel connected to the work of both their immediate team and other teams in their organisation, a significant number of hybrid employees agreed (60% and 56% respectively), more than office-first employees (56% and 48%) and remote employees (45% and 41%).

Furthermore, the desire for flexibility appears to be permanent. Globally, the proportion of workers who want to work solely from the office falls from 38% at the time of the survey to just 20% when considering the future. The number of respondents wanting to work as 'predominantly hybrid' rises from 16 to 26% globally, and from 20% to 30% in the UK.

However, there is a definitive long-term need for the office. When asked about their ideal future work schedule, 90% of consumers surveyed still want to be in the workplace at least some of the time.

Georgina Fraser, Head of Human Capital, CBRE UK, said: "Our insights have shown us for a while now that flexible working is considered important to a large part of the workforce. However, what is new, is the quantifiable evidence that flexible, hybrid working can also benefit the employer. If companies can harness the increase in trust and connectivity that is created by hybrid working and use it to fuel creativity and innovation, it could be a win-win in unexpected ways."

Richard Holberton, Head of EMEA occupier research at CBRE, said: "In an environment where company leaders are seeking to find workable arrangements that reflect both individual preferences and corporate culture objectives, a hybrid offering has shown it can strengthen bonds rather than weaken them. Hybrid can be an unexpected gift for team leaders if they can harness it effectively."