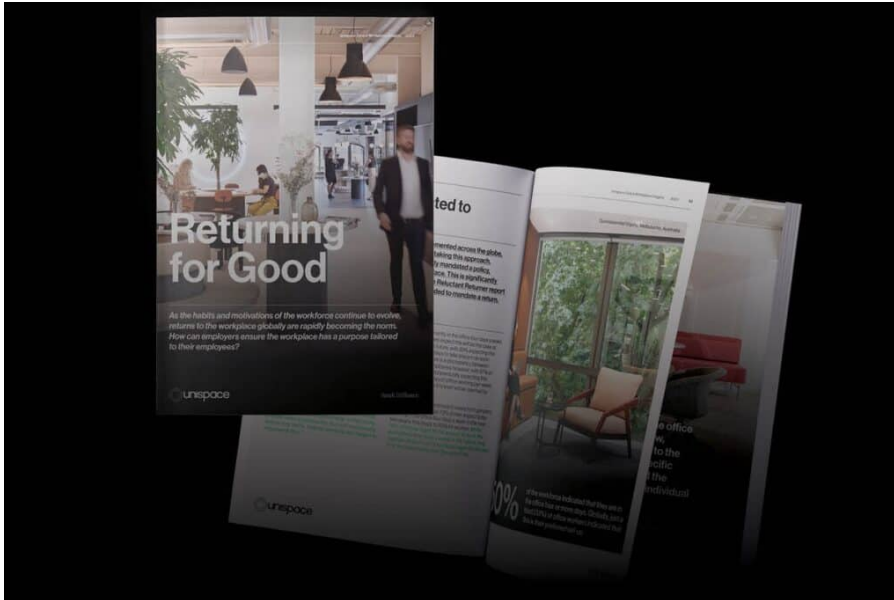


New Unispace study shows 72% of companies have mandated office returns

3 years ago



Almost half (42%) of firms who mandated returns have experienced higher than normal employee attrition, with 29% now struggling to recruit.

Employers across the globe report losing key employees due to mandates, with recruitment also being impacted by enforced returns. However, companies are failing to recognize the drivers of workers' reluctance to return to the workplace, and likewise, the opportunities and value that the physical workplace provides. That is according to a new study by global workplace creation experts [Unispace](#).

Returning for Good, a Unispace Global Workplace Insights report – which combined the results of a survey of 9,500 employees and 6,650 employers from 17 countries worldwide – found that, of the 72% of companies globally that say they have mandated office returns, 42% now report a higher level of employee attrition than anticipated, while almost a third (29%) are struggling to recruit altogether.

The study, an in-depth examination of the current habits and motivations of the workforce, found that employees are less reluctant to return to the office (51%) than they were in 2021 (64%). With a current reluctance of one in two employees however, there is still much to be done to engage the workforce.

Employers indicate notably higher levels of confidence around talent attraction activities carried out in the office when compared to remote, particularly for recruitment (89% versus 73%) and training new staff (84% versus 70%).

An overwhelming majority of employers (84%) also indicated that career prospects would be limited to those who work exclusively from home.

Three in four business leaders surveyed (75%) indicated that they have increased their real estate portfolio in the last two years, with companies across Asia Pacific reporting the highest rates of growth. This expansion includes talent attraction and revenue-generating trends such as creating hospitality spaces by 44% of firms.

Employers currently failing to recognise what employees need and value most

The study also revealed that employers have not recognized the challenges that employees have with their current workplace set up. The majority (58%) of workers indicated that they struggle to carry out their core job in the office due to distractions. Meanwhile, 83% of employers say that they believe that the office is set up to allow their employees to be productive.

Employers also underestimate key workplace dislikes. Employees put a premium on productivity and personal space – citing missing the privacy they can access at home (31%), the ability to be more effective in a quiet environment away from the office (27%), and feeling more productive at home (23%) as top dislikes. In comparison, employers suggested that the commute was the biggest barrier to getting workers back into the workplace.

Steve Quick, Unispace Global CEO commented: “Employee work habits continue to evolve as we all adapt in today’s rapidly changing work environment. Employers who take the time to understand what their employees need and value most from their office will be more successful in redefining the power and purpose of that workspace. This will drive strength of culture, brand, employee loyalty and wellbeing, and talent retention.”