Covid-19

Returning to the Office Occupier Workshop Output Pack

27 May 2020

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We are stronger when we move together

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Introduction

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01. Introduction

On 23 March 2020 the UK Government imposed a lockdown, enforcing the closure of many businesses and mandatory home working for those who were still able to work. At the time of this report the Government's advice remains that every reasonable effort is made to enable working from home as the first option. On 11 May 2020 the Government issued guidance for working safely during Covid-19 in offices and contact centres, and most organisations are now considering how and when they may occupy their office space again.

When the HCG team considered how we could best support our clients and the wider industry we realised that we were not experts in returning to the office after a health pandemic. We also realised that nobody would be an expert because of the unique nature of this situation and decided that we could provide the most help by facilitating discussions and debates on some of the key issues that all organisations are facing. By encouraging and facilitating open and honest conversations our desire was to create a forum and subsequent output documents where we can share the best practice and lessons learned from many different organisations in order to create #workplacesthatwork whilst social distancing measures remain in place.

Following the completion of the initial workshops we have now scheduled further sessions which consider more detailed subjects including social distancing measures in the workplace, facilities management and implementing new ways of working and should these be of interest to your organisation we would welcome your input.

As we continue to learn together one workshop participant highlighted a key issue that cannot be overlooked.

"*This is not just preparing the office for the return of people, but more importantly preparing people*."

This document sets out a framework and checklist for the development of an engagement plan. Implementing successful workplace change is an area where we have a strong track record and experience. Should you require further support beyond what is contained in this document then myself or one of the team would be more than happy to discuss this with you. Whether a quick conversation or the development and implementation of a full engagement plan we are committed to helping our clients return to the office in a safe and positive manner.

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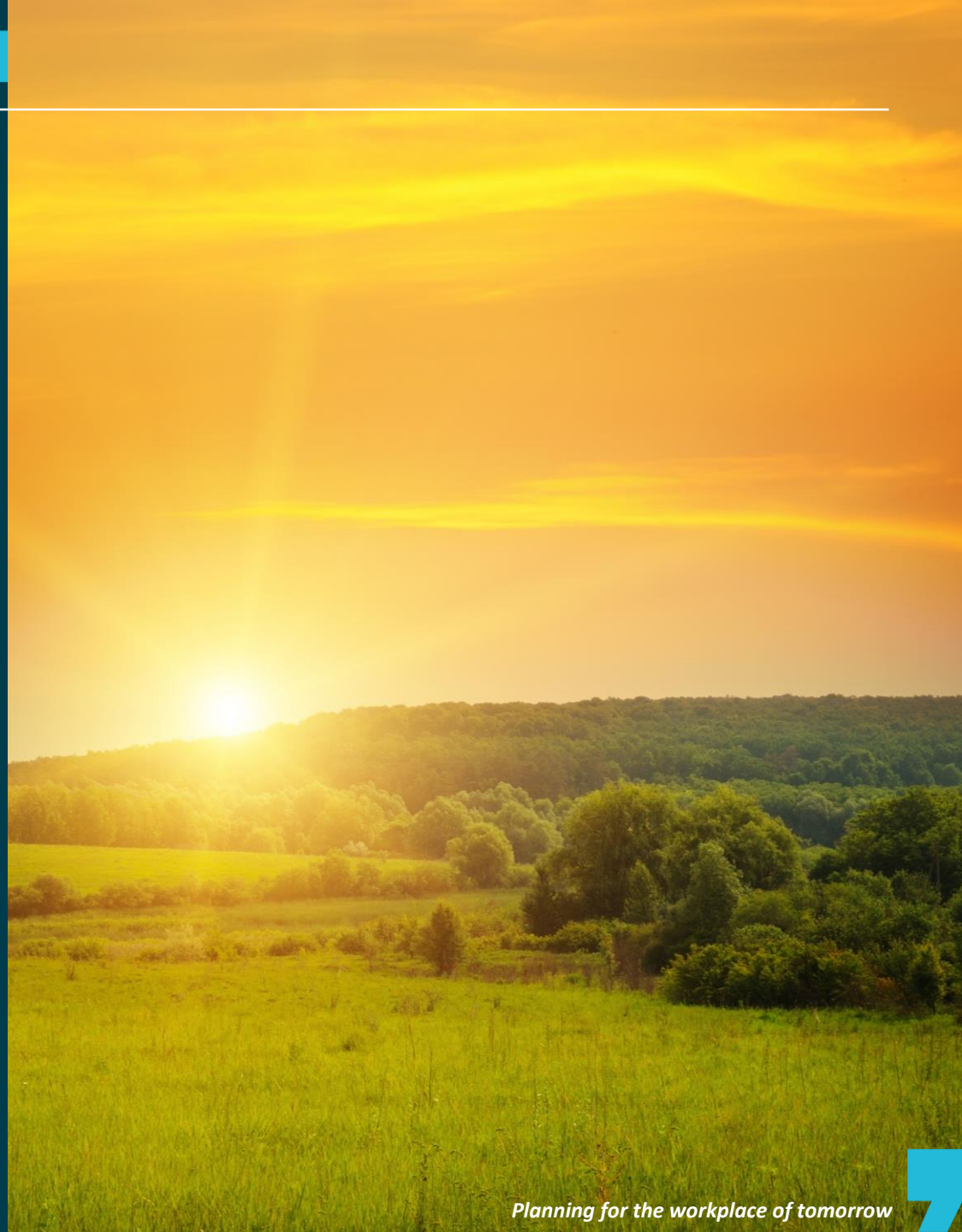
01. Introduction

Participants

Representatives from 28 organisations participated in individual briefing sessions and facilitated workshops to discuss key issues, share steps and measures they had or will be taking and agree on practical next steps. With thanks to the following organisations for their involvement:

- Arm
- AVEVA
- BACB
- British Council
- Bulb
- Chevron
- Closed Loop Medicine
- Coventry University London
- Discovery Inc
- Frontier Economics
- Glas
- Honeywell
- Kantar

- Low Carbon Contracts Company
- Millennium Capital Partners LLP
- Natwest Group
- Ninety One
- Nuffield Foundation
- Pan Macmillan
- Roche
- Smart Pension
- The Francis Crick Institute
- UPP
- Willis Towers Watson
- XLN Telecom/ Business Services

Executive Summary

02

02. Executive Summary

The approach that every organisation takes to return to the office may be subtly different. That is not to say there is a right or wrong way but the needs and desires, and the constraints and challenges for each organisation will be different, requiring different steps. From the workshops we have seen that, understandably, those organisations with a global portfolio have more advanced and detailed plans, as they prepare to re-open offices in Asia and Africa ahead of those in Europe and specifically the UK. To help organisations navigate the decision making process we have developed a framework which can be used to assess each situation and decision. The framework is based on the consideration of three factors;

Behavioural – Government Guidelines

In each jurisdiction, local or national Government has set out guidelines for returning to the office. Due to the complex nature of the issue, guidelines (and for the purposes of this report the discussions have been based on those issued by the UK Government) are not exact and require each organisation to determine what is right for them based on the criticality of their operations and individual circumstances.

The UK Guidelines make specific recommendations regarding issues such as restricting access between different areas, holding meetings outdoors and using floor signage to help people maintain social distancing.

Physical – Capacity & Occupation

The constraints and challenges for each workspace will be different from the more obvious issues such as single tenant versus shared tenant, to specific challenges around meeting room sizes, locations/ sizes of desks, and desk allocation strategy. The occupation strategy, configuration of the floorplans and agreements with landlords will all dictate what can physically be achieved within the workplace.

The 2 metre social distancing guideline will mean that many spaces including workstations, meeting rooms and breakout spaces can not be safely operated as they were previously.

Emotional – Public & personal feeling

In our opinion the most important factor is the most difficult one to define. Surveys have shown that approximately 2 out of 3 people are feeling stressed and anxious about the current situation and are worried about the future. Concerns about personal and loved one's health will rightly be a priority for most people and therefore it is essential that where required organisations go above and beyond the other 2 factors to make their staff feel safe and protected.

The wearing of face coverings has divided opinion and at this moment in time there is no requirement to wear them inside an office in the UK. However some organisations are both mandating and providing face coverings for their staff, demonstrating their commitment to their employees wellbeing.
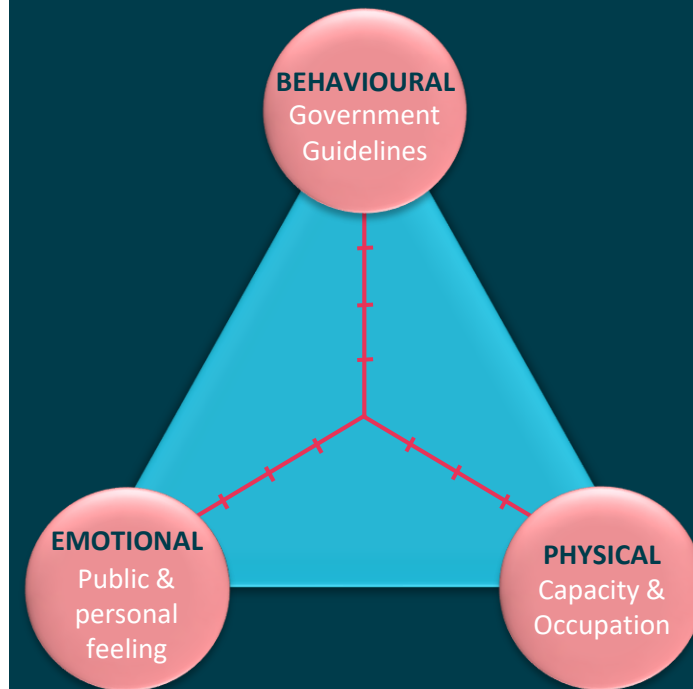

Figure 1: *HCG Returning to the Office Decision Framework*

02. Executive Summary

Key Findings

As a company we often challenge the status quo, striving towards continuous improvement, increased productivity and employee satisfaction. At this time organisations need to really think about their culture and values when thinking about their response to the wellbeing of their employees.

Many organisations will not get the strategy and processes right first time so there will be a degree of testing and rebalancing. Changes will be integrated from now until potentially the end of 2021 and beyond depending on the speed at which a vaccine can be found, if at all.

Whilst every organisation, workplace and situation is different our workshops identified a number of key themes and actions which would seem relevant to most organisations and their workplaces in the UK.

Who & When

Where possible returning to the office pre vaccine should be a voluntary personal decision. Organisations should ensure that their employees fully understand the nature and restrictions of the workplace when they make this decision so it is based on a genuine need to return to the office and not the perception of returning to "normal" life.

Over 80% of organisations we spoke to are planning a phased return over the next few months and into the Autumn. There are a few who are actively planning for a return in the coming weeks and no one is planning to wait beyond 2020 to begin occupying their workspace again.

Capacity & Occupation

Maintaining social distancing means in the majority of workspaces less than 50% of the current desks can be occupied and alternative strategies must be employed in order to safely allow employees back to the workplace.

The UK Government guideline states that workstations should be assigned to an individual and not shared. It was unanimously agreed in our workshops where desk sharing was already the practice, desks could continue to be shared providing that they are allocated to specific individuals for a pre-defined period. Where 1:1 desking strategy is the norm then steps can be taken to move to an interim shared strategy to allow maximum occupation by different teams at different times. Different approaches to length of assignment were discussed with some organisations considering daily assignment whilst others are implementing a 1 or 2-week shift system.

The most important factor is a clean desk policy to allow full cleaning of the desk and equipment, particularly in between allocations when different individuals will be using the desk. In addition to the practical need to clean desks on this basis, organisations must demonstrate to their employees that the organisation is doing everything it possibly can to make them safe.

Engagement & Communication

Engagement with staff has never been so important. With surveys suggesting an increase in levels of anxiety and worry, communication alone carries the risk of misinterpretation. What we are experiencing is a fundamental change to the way that we work, and like any other change, it must be carefully navigated and managed. Organisations should develop and implement an employee engagement programme which considers the current home working phase and all subsequent sub-phases of the return to the office transition.

In all phases genuine two way engagement and open, honest messaging is encouraged. The informalisation of communication mediums has been well received as have the acts and engagements from leaders which show humility and a true sense of togetherness.

02. Executive Summary

Checklist

- ❑ Convene a return to the office planning team, consisting of colleagues from Workplace, HR, Leadership, and others as required

- ❑ Collect data where possible on people's views about returning to the office, either informally through line managers, or by running an online survey

- ❑ Agree a plan on criteria for returning to the office. Where possible this should be on a voluntary basis

- ❑ Develop a stakeholder matrix to identify all those groups who need to be communicated and engaged with

- ❑ Obtain Senior leadership support/ sponsorship for the proposed actions and ensure that this visible

- ❑ Prepare a detailed staff engagement plan. The Prosci ADKAR methodology provides a useful framework and it is likely that this plan will develop and change over time

- ❑ Communicate high level messages asap – voluntary coming back, not until sept etc

- ❑ Understand how many work settings can be made safely available in your workspace (Social Distancing workshop will cover this in more detail)

- ❑ Implement a temporary and cost effective desk booking system/ process

- ❑ Consider steps to make your office more welcoming upon people's return, such as supplementing new signage with planting

- ❑ Develop new cleaning protocols (Facilities Management workshop will cover this in more detail)

- ❑ Consider ways of making the office low-touch (Facilities Management workshop will cover this in more detail)

- ❑ Review existing utilisation levels to understand typical occupancy and size of challenge

- ❑ Engage with your landlord to share your plans / health and safety guidelines, and understand those of the landlord and other tenants

- ❑ Share the details of new behaviours / protocols to support social distancing in advance of reoccupation

- ❑ Share agreed risk assessment with staff

- ❑ Implement desk sharing for those individuals who need to come into the office. Consider allocating desks on a daily or ideally weekly basis, particularly if operating a shift A/B plan

- ❑ Make a plan for personal possessions to be collected before reoccupation phase

- ❑ Consider whether personal IT equipment can be provided to all staff during the phased return stage

Deciding who and when we return to the office

03

03. Deciding who and when we return to the office

Rather than starting with the what - the workplace and social distancing (although we prefer the term physical distancing), how many desks and the fit factor, like Simon Sinek says the greatest leaders 'start with why?', so "*Why are people going back to work?*"

From our conversations it was very clear that companies are putting people first. In practical terms this meant in many cases that the return to the office would be voluntary, at least for the foreseeable future.

Timescales

One of the consequences of Covid-19 has been the enforced move to a home working model. In our workshops many organisations regardless of size indicated this could herald a permanent change in working practices.

More than three quarters of our workshop attendees felt that the return to the office would not happen imminently.

Health and Wellbeing

What we heard is that companies' criteria for selecting who returns to the office is based around personal circumstances, and health and wellbeing over productivity and performance. Organisations in general are prioritising the needs of their people over the needs of the shareholders.

The role of HR is changing to building new ways of

working that create sustainability for people and their organisations. In some cases contracts between the employee and employer will change, both employment contract and psychological contract.

More companies have carried out pulse surveys. New roles are being created such as mental health and wellbeing champions who are working very hard to understand the needs of individuals. Also workplace compliance officers that report back to the central team (selected on a volunteer basis).
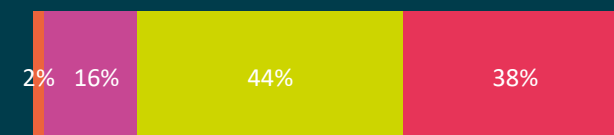
Personal Circumstances

Participants in our workshops were clear that the experience of working from home can be very different for different people. Not least, this can be a result of their personal circumstances, such as:

- Home ergonomics, with some using kitchen tables and ironing boards as a substitute for a desk. Those without the ability to setup a dedicated workspace at home may find it harder to maintain boundaries between life and work

- Who we share our home with, such as flat mates, or children and pets who need our attention

We should recognise that this is not working from home as we would design it – this is surviving a pandemic and trying to remain productive.

When do you think people will start coming back to the office?

2%	16%	44%	38%

- ■ Immediately
- ■ In the next few weeks
- ■ In the next few months
- ■ In the Autumn
- ■ Next year

Figure 2: *Results of workshop poll: return timescale*

03. Deciding who and when we return to the office

How productive is working from home?

There are always challenges in measuring productivity. Some organisations have been able to measure productivity through speed to market and have seen productivity increase. Others feel they achieve more in less time and benefit from not commuting, and fewer distractions.

21% of respondents to our poll felt they are more productive in the office, whilst the remainder felt they are either just as productive if not more so at home. That validates the early results from the Leesman home working survey, however, we feel there may be several nuances that warrant more consideration:

- Some people may feel more productive because they can do focused work, but that may be at the expense of informal collaboration and learning from others

- Perceived productivity is not an absolute measure and should be considered for what it is – a perception

- Some people may be claiming to be more productive as a response to fears around job security and furlough

Most organisations agreed that some tasks can be done at home but others can't, such as mentoring and training employees. Whilst you can give people tools and protocols in the digital space it's hard to access the culture and nuances that you get from serendipity, comradeship, etiquette and cultural cues.

In general, technology has not been cited as a barrier to home working, although it was noted that some people have specialist programs and equipment, only some of which can be accessed remotely.

There is a variation both across industries and across roles. Many agreed that the support staff such as Finance and Legal (with the exception of FM) that had previously been assigned desks were identified as the last employees that would return to the office.

Long-term productivity

There was acknowledgement from workshop participants that we may be approaching the end of the 'honeymoon period', and there was a risk that productivity may start to decline as people realise they may be working from home for considerable periods of time.

Organisations are keen to make sure whatever steps they take are successful. For many this means taking a cautious approach and waiting to see what others do before implementing their own measures.

In the longer-term, one consideration for organisations is the introduction of working closer to home. This may provide some of the social aspects that people are missing from the office without the need for long commutes.

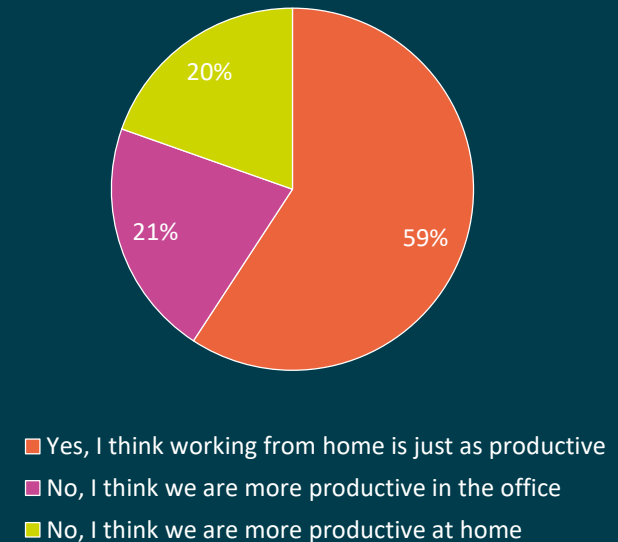**Do you agree that people are being as productive whilst working at home during Covid-19 ?**

- 🟧 Yes, I think working from home is just as productive
- 🟪 No, I think we are more productive in the office
- 🟨 No, I think we are more productive at home

Figure 3: *Results of workshop poll: productivity stats*

03. Deciding who and when we return to the office

Purpose of the Office

As we are thinking about why people are returning to the office, we also need to think about what they are returning to.

Some organisations have seen strong interest in returning to the office. When presented with more details views have changed as people realise that what they considered 'normal' before may not be replicated on their return, with facilities such as gyms closed, social spaces restricted, and restaurants / cafés adapting.

Many of the organisations we spoke to saw less need for individual work which can be supported by working from home, and a higher need for the office to be a social hub for team-based work and collaboration.

Some companies such as Twitter have made headlines by suggesting their staff work from home 'forever'. For others the notion of bringing employees back to the office to work at a permanently assigned desk, in a building with a high percentage of individual desking is being questioned. The desk is no longer a commodity.

The office will transition into a space for social connection. Serendipity cannot happen in virtual space.

Government Guidelines

In the UK the Government has put the onus on the employer to create and communicate detailed safety plans based on individual risk assessments. Despite this, employees should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal risk assessment and safety.

Trust

Whilst some organisations sensed that the presenteeism culture is still there, all agreed that the level of trust had increased. Moving forward HR and Workplace will need to work much more closely in creating a more engaging workplace experience whether physical or virtual. Corporate communication will need to make way for a more open and human-centric style.

Protocols and the right behaviours will need to be set for remote working and office working as more people will likely be working from home more often. This will create another dynamic that strategists and employers will have to review and monitor

"This is not just preparing the office for the return of people, but more importantly preparing people"

Workshop Participant

Capacity and Occupation

04

04. Capacity & Occupation

Whilst in the short term working from home should remain the default option for those who can, most organisations are starting to consider how they can occupy their workspace again at the appropriate time. Maintaining social distancing means In the majority of workspaces less than 50% of the current desks can be occupied and alternative strategies must be employed in order to safely allow employees back.

Pre Covid-19 Utilisation

Almost half of the participants responded that their desk utilisation level was between 50-75%, above the average of our utilisation database, but illustrating the key point that not all desks were occupied in a pre Covid-19 state. Therefore, as we plan for a full return to the office, it should be planned based on the actual occupancy patterns not the maximum capacity.

Occupation Strategy

Organisations are at very different stages of their planning, with those who have a presence in APAC naturally having more advanced and detailed plans. From those who have commenced their planning it would seem that between 25-50% of workstations could potentially be used whilst maintaining social distancing.

Organisations are being guided by local Government guidelines, and where they span multiple countries are generally adopting a global policy that can achieve all local guidelines. As a result, in some locations it will go above and beyond what is required.

The UK Government sets out a clear hierarchy of guidelines, providing different options where particular criteria cannot be achieved.

1. Make every reasonable effort to enable working from home as a first option

2. Where working from home is not possible, workplaces should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines

3. Where social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, businesses should consider whether the activity needs to take place and if so take further mitigation actions including the use of screens and barriers, and using back to back, or side to side working

At this stage almost all organisations are developing plans based on items 1 and 2 above only.

What was your office utilisation level before Covid-19?

■ Less than 50%   ■ 50-75%
■ More than 75%   ■ Not sure

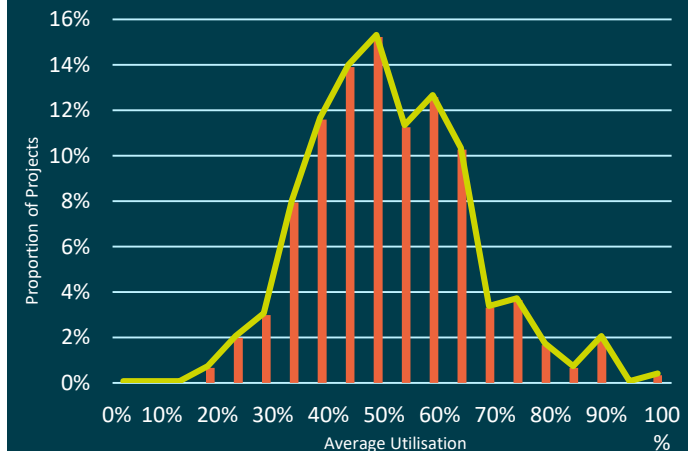*Figure 4:* *Results of workshop poll: utilisation*

Figure 5: *HCG utilisation results of over 300 projects*

04. Capacity & Occupation

Assigned or Shared Workstations?

The UK Government guideline states that workstations should be assigned to an individual and not shared. It was unanimously agreed in our workshops where desk sharing was already the practice, desks could continue to be shared providing that they are allocated to specific individuals for a set period. Different approaches to length of assignment were discussed with some organisations considering daily assignment whilst others are implementing a 1 or 2-week shift system.

Those organisations currently operating at a 1:1 desk ratio with generous space standards are not automatically considering sharing.

Some global organisations, particularly those headquartered in US, are reluctant to move towards a desk sharing strategy and are considering a move back towards more cellular spaces whilst in parts of APAC a big cultural shift will be required to introduce sharing.

The most important factor is a clean desk policy to allow full cleaning of the desk and equipment, particularly in between allocations when different individuals will be using the desk. As well as the practical need to clean desks on this basis, organisations must demonstrate to their employees that the organisation is doing everything it possibly can to make them safe.

In addition to the enhanced cleaning regimes that are being proposed by all organisations some are also requesting that individual employees clean their desk upon arrival and leaving with specially provided wipes and sprays.

Shared IT Equipment

HCG research from pre Covid-19 workplace projects illustrates that sharing a keyboard and mouse is one of the biggest concerns of desk sharing. As we return to the office this concern will be heightened and organisations must take every effort to ensure their employees feel comfortable. Options that are being considered include;

• Enhanced cleaning regimes in between assignments

• Providing individuals with their own keyboard and mouse

• Introducing STERILE flat keyboards

For those individuals who have very specialist IT equipment the above may just not be possible.

Desk Booking

If desks are to be assigned for set periods of time it is essential for both the local management team and the individual employee that the desk can be allocated through a central booking system. Whilst it is unclear how long social distancing measures will need to be in place in the workplace it is agreed that this is a temporary measure and therefore there is little appetite from most organisation to invest in expensive booking systems. Options that are being considered include;

• Online booking platforms such as Skedda or Google/ Microsoft calendar systems.

• For smaller officers managing the process manually using excel sheets and floorplans

Engagement & Communication

05

05. Engagement & Communication

Engagement with staff has never been so important. With surveys suggesting an increase in levels of anxiety and worry, communication alone carries the risk of misinterpretation. What we are experiencing is a fundamental change to the way that we work, and like any other change, it must be carefully navigated and managed.

Change Curve

There are 4 key points to note around the change curve that came out strongly in our work sessions.

- We all move through stages at different paces
- Peaks and troughs might look different
- The curve can go in both directions
- We can experience multiple curves

Reactions to Covid-19 have differed markedly from person to person, role to role, organisation to organisation and country to country. During the workshops we asked individuals to recognise where their organisation was on the 'change curve'. There will be some aspects as a business that you will be unable to affect.

The overwhelming majority of respondents felt their organisation is either in 'acceptance' or 'problem solving'. Despite the positive outlook of these results, it was acknowledged that each 3 week extension of the lockdown measures had potential for people and organisations to slide back through the curve.

On an individual level, whilst the pandemic is one element there are also a financial and commercial challenges.

Regional Differences

Other companies headquartered in the US find US leadership on a different stage on the curve. As the pandemic has spread to different countries and continents on different timescales, so too has their response. For instance, in the US there was a time lag that means some organisations with a US headquarters are slightly behind those in the UK.

Similarly companies have seen lags between APAC, US & within EMEA. Even within APAC there are differences, for example China is getting back to normal while Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong have faced second waves of infection.

Organisations with a global footprint acknowledged the challenges in getting the communication right in different regions, and the struggle in adopting a single approach when the advice in different countries has been so different.

Where do you think your organisation sits along the change curve today?

Legend:
- 1. Shock
- 2. Denial
- 3. Anger & blame
- 4. Bargaining
- 5. Depression & confusion
- 6. Acceptance
- 7. Problem Solving
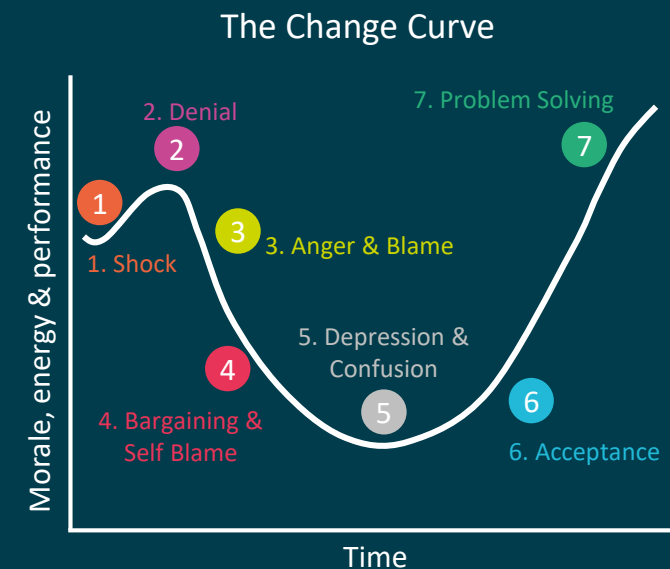
The Change Curve

Figure 6: Results of workshop poll: change curve

05. Engagement & Communication

Keeping in touch

During this time we have in formalised communication and made it more personal. With organisations finding different tools in the virtual environment to connect employees back to the business goals, values and aligning where people are.

Workshop participations shared best practice from their own organisations around keeping in touch with colleagues. From team departmental coffee breaks where employees talk about how people are doing, their families and wellbeing, through to movie / music / book groups.

We heard of one global organisation where the CEO has had one to one conversations talking and listening to each individual employee. As a result, more people feel connected to the CEO. This has been teamed with fun 'challenges' for staff to try such as a virtual sporting relay, and the creation of virtual social groups. Another CEO has become a role model as a result of sharing their own personal situation being in isolation away from family.

On a practical level, many organisations are utilising tools like MS Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, and more social-based platforms like Workplace from Facebook, Slack, and Yammer for day-to-day engagement.

Building on a shared culture across the organisation many organisations have found that internal communication and emails have reduced as more people are meeting over Zoom or picking up the phone. There has been a marked increase in empathy, engagement and meaningful interactions.

Inclusivity of experience

The skills required to work in the office as part of a team are different to the skills required to work in a mix of settings with less face to face interaction. One area in particular that requires different skills is hosting meetings. One major positive that we have heard about is the improved inclusivity of experience; as more meetings are entirely remote, people find themselves on a level playing field. This is a major shift from the experience people had joining meetings remotely pre Covid-19, and something organisations can learn from going forward.

Change engagement

Organisation that haven't already are realising that they need to find time for change engagement. Some organisations are putting together a welcome packs for staff. Others are looking to produce a 'return to the office' video and sending out floorplans and images to educate people around the workflow, and what the office will look like on day 1.

We know that this pre-engagement, and clarity around what to expect, can be really important in helping to reduce people's anxieties about change.

Awareness
I know I have to return to the office on xx date, and I understand why.

Desire
I understand the benefits, and am content to return to the office.

Knowledge
I know how I will get there, and what's expected of me when I arrive.

Ability
I have the ability to do what is being asked, and have the resources needed.

Reinforcement
I am learning from the early experiences, with key messages being reinforced.

The Future Workplace

06

The future workplace will enable work to be undertaken in new and different places

06. The Future Workplace

Over two thirds of organisations expect their real estate footprint to shrink as a result of the changes that have been enforced by Covid-19. Our workshops have illustrated that for many organisations this may not be a significant change, but with growing importance of both organisation and employee flexibility we see the development of alternative models to the traditional fixed lease arrangement.

Whilst co-working and shared spaces may not be attractive in the current climate we foresee a shift towards more flexible arrangements when the Covid-19 restrictions are finally lifted. This does not mean the death of the office but in fact reinforces the need for the office to be a destination. It will be even more critical that people are given a reason to go to it.

Working with other subject matter experts we have developed a turn key solution. Our approach allows you to understand the full benefits and savings that can be offered by a more flexible approach whilst also understanding and planning for challenges such as the implications of changing employment contracts, adapting IT strategies and how to utilise serviced offices and meeting rooms on demand. We would welcome the opportunity to share our ideas and approach with you at a suitable time.

Employer Flexibility

- Reduce conventional lease obligation and associated cost savings

- Resilience to unknown future events

- Providing a better holistic employee experience

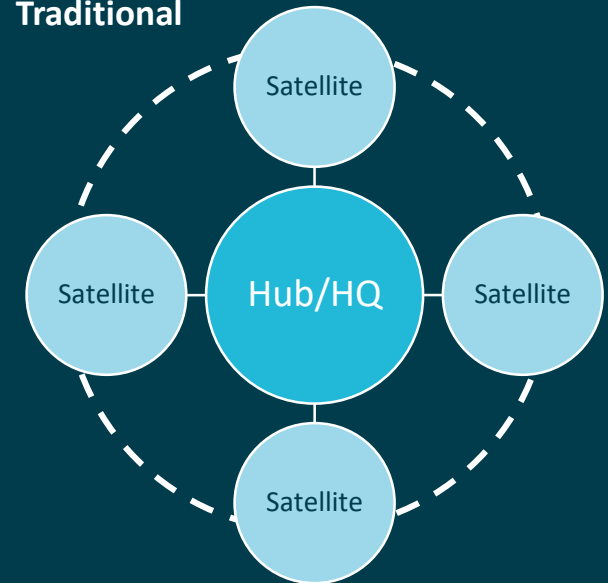- Ability to quickly and cost effectively change real estate demands

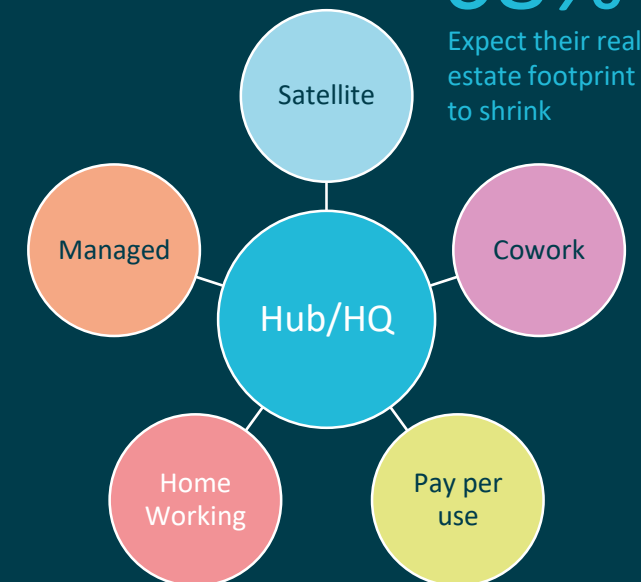**Employee Flexibility**

Empowerment, choice and trust

Access to a broader range of spaces and settings on demand

Ability to work at home or closer to home when required

Traditional

Future Flexibility

68%
Expect their real estate footprint to shrink

Resources

07

07. Resources

Links to other resources

Whilst developing the content for this workshop, and through our discussions with the organisations involved, we have amassed a collection of useful resources, some of which we wanted to share with you:

Government Guidance

5 steps to working safely:
A short summary of the key points from the Government guidance

Working safely in offices and contact centres:
The main Government guidance document for office spaces

Risk Assessments

Society of Occupational Medicine toolkit:
Risk assessment toolkit for returning to work

CIPD HR-Inform template:
Risk assessment template

Remote Working

CIPD Home Working Guide

HCG Tips for Remote Working

Physical & Mental Wellbeing

Every Mind Matters:
Looking after your mental health

NHS:
Latest NHS guidance

CIPD Mental Health Awareness Week:
Impact of Covid-19 on mental health

Business Disability Forum:
Resources for employers and employees

Disability Smart:
Blog and content

Equipment / Systems

Antibacterial medical keyboards

Skedda room booking software

Guides by others

British Council of Offices

JLL

Cundall webinars Part 1 and Part 2

07. Resources

Future workshops

We have developed a series of workshops exploring different themes relating to the return to the office. Naturally, these themes overlap and many of the issues are interrelated. This page summarises some of the discussions from this workshop that we feel worthy of further discussion in one of our future workshops.

NEW WAYS OF WORKING

Transitioning to Shared Workstations

Those organisations already working in a shared desk/ agile environment will have the required infrastructure such as lockers and a clean desk policy. For those looking to implement this on a short term (which may become a long term consideration) there are a number of challenges that must be overcome. Firstly, when individuals left the office pre- lockdown it is likely that they still have personal possessions and the like stored at their workstations. Organisations in this stage will be allowing individuals or team representatives back into the office to remove or collect their possessions before occupation commences. Further consideration then needs to be given to the storage of items when individuals are not assigned a workstation.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Work Settings

Whilst it is relatively straight forward to plan the occupation of workstations, other spaces including agile settings, meeting rooms and circulation spaces are more complex. Short term drop-in desks/ hot desks and other settings that are used by multiple individuals on a frequent basis will be taken out of allocation as it will not be possible to maintain the required cleaning regime. One observation was whether plants could be used in these spaces to signify areas that cannot be used, helping to make the workplace welcoming upon people's return.

For many organisations their collaborative spaces have higher levels of utilisation than their desks. However given Government guidelines around the need to maintain social distancing, the usability of these spaces may be impaired temporarily.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Temperature Checking

It was highlighted that in some non European locations mandatory temperature checks were being introduced at the point of building entry. Whilst not mandatory in the UK a number of organisations have considered it.

However given that the results are not 100% accurate and the logistic challenges it is not broadly being adopted in the UK. Challenges included;

- High temperatures from those running/ cycling to the office. If they were required to wait a short period of time before re-checking this would require a holding area

- Who should administer the check and then make the final decision on whether an employee can/ cannot enter the building? It was felt this went beyond the role of the FM team and would need specialist medical professionals

Landlord/ Shared Areas

Landlords will have a significant role to play in shaping the return to the workplace. Organisations in multi-tenant buildings may need to coordinate efforts with other tenants through their landlord. We heard from some attendees that this is an area they are still awaiting clarity on.

Budget

Some of the changes explored in this report, including temporary screens and enhanced cleaning, may result in increased expenditure. We heard that some organisations are addressing this by utilising their business continuity budget line.

Thank you

Henigan
consulting group