Optimising workspaces

Contents

1. Introduction

The previous guidance note in this series explored the future of workplace through a cultural lens. It discussed changing attitudes towards flexible and distributed working and considered the critical role that culture plays in enabling or hindering changes to working practices in organisations. You can download the guidance note from: www.iwfm.org.uk/insight.

This guidance note explores what future changes in working practices could mean for the corporate workspaces most organisations inhabit. In one way or another, most types of corporate workspaces have been affected by the events of 2020, but in the case of retail, hospitality and offices, the impact has been particularly significant.

In this guidance note we focus specifically on the office. Much has been written during 2020 about the future of the office: some commentators have predicted the 'death of the office' due to a permanent shift towards more people working at home; others have taken a more measured view that offices will still be needed by most organisations in future, but perhaps for different purposes.

This guidance subscribes to the second viewpoint. We argue that a shift towards more distributed working creates a new role for the office and an opportunity to rethink how we use our corporate workspaces. Essentially, this guidance note is about how organisations can make optimal use of their workspaces, in service of individual and organisational performance.

We begin by considering how demand for workspace may change in future, following the events of 2020, and also longer-term changes in organisational working practices. We then consider what that might mean for the design and provision of workspaces in organisations.

The overall aim of this guidance note is to enable workplace and facilities management (FM) professionals to have more informed discussions about the role that workspace plays in enabling different working practices in their organisations or their client organisations. It's about helping them to see through the noise and beyond often sensationalised headlines created by both the mainstream media and the 'workspace industry'.

WORKPLACE AND WORKSPACE – A QUICK REFRESH

This is how we use the terms 'workplace' and 'workspace' in this guidance note:

• workplaces are the social places where people use the tools available to them to get their work done - a workplace contains and involves people
• workplaces can be fixed (for example hospitals, offices or our homes) or flexible (for example a work van or a temporary place of work)
• workspaces are the physical spaces or environments available for people to work in – spaces are empty and they become places when they have people in them.

Remember that words can be defined in different ways. These aren't the only definitions of workplace and workspace, but they are the ones that we believe allow FM to make the best contribution to organisations.

If you would like to provide feedback on this guidance note or have ideas for other workplace information, guidance or research please email **research@iwfm.org.uk**

HOW TO USE OUR WORKPLACE GUIDANCE NOTES

This new series of guidance notes is intended to help organisations to think beyond the challenges of 2020 and explore what the future of workplace will look like over the next few years. In doing so, we consider the future through the interlinked facets of workplace that underpin all of our workplace guidance notes, namely:

• **culture** – how people work
• **workspace** – where people work
• **technology** – the tools people use.

Our workplace guidance notes have been designed to be used as standalone resources or together as a series. Together, the guidance notes focus on the issues that organisations should pay attention to when changing existing workplaces or developing new ones. Previous guidance notes include:

1. 'Introduction to workplace', which explains what workplace is and the importance of viewing workplace in a joined-up way

2. 'Workplace data and decision-making', which discusses the role that data can play in helping organisations to make more informed workplace decisions

3. 'Selling your workplace vision', which explains how to communicate the value of workplace authoritatively and persuasively, and create a convincing case for change

4. 'Creating better workspaces', which is about helping non-designers to have a positive influence on the design of the workspaces they are involved with or responsible for

5. 'Leading successful workplace change', which provides guidance on the processes of change and practical ideas for bringing about effective workplace change.

2. Changing demand for workspace

Speculation about the future of the office has arguably received more mainstream media coverage in 2020 than in any year previously. For example, the cover story in the *Economist's* 12 September issue was titled 'Is the office finished?' and described how 'Around the world workers, bosses, landlords and governments are trying to work out if the office is obsolete'[1].

Predictions about the 'death of the office' are by no means new and have been made in the past, usually during times of technological change. Back in 1998 the American academic Rosalind Barnett suggested that 'The advent of the virtual office, telecommuting, and teleconferencing foretell the end of the office building and the movement of some types of work back into the home.[2]'

Clearly the end of the office building has not (yet) come about in the way that Barnett suggested. Indeed, one could argue that the last few decades have been a golden era for the office, with a rapid growth in the amount of office space in countries like China and India and continuing high levels of demand in more established commercial centres, such as London and New York.

Technology companies such as Google and Facebook have also brought the topic of workspace design into the mainstream. However, despite these developments, even before 2020 changes in the nature of office work had led some to question the long-term future of the office.

For example, there has been a steady increase in the number of people working at home (permanently, regularly or occasionally) in the UK and other countries over the last two decades, albeit in smaller numbers than some would have predicted. Process automation has also been predicted to lead to a reduction in the number of office workers in coming decades[3].

The reality is that demand for corporate workspace has always changed over time, but usually very slowly and sometimes imperceptibly. Such changes in demand can create a need for different types of workspaces, in different quantities and in different locations.

For instance, in the UK during the 1980s and 1990s, some types of office buildings that had been constructed in the 1960s became obsolete because they were not able to accommodate new office technologies and working practices. These obsolete buildings were either redeveloped or repurposed for uses such as housing[4].

One reason that the future of the office became such a hot topic for discussion in 2020 was that change in demand for workspace occurred suddenly and at a scale not seen before. It was hard to ignore the fact that millions of office workers were suddenly working away from their normal places of work; and it rightly raised questions about whether it made sense for those same workers to return to the way they worked previously.

Yet the reality is that for most organisations the events of 2020 were an anomaly, because COVID-19 created an artificial situation in which most office workers had no choice but to work from home. As 2020 progressed, the initial predictions about (and enthusiasm for) a permanent shift to home working were tempered by a realisation that this was neither feasible nor desirable for many workers and organisations.

It's clear, from survey after survey of office workers carried out during 2020, that for many people working at home has been advantageous in a number of ways, including:

• finding it easier to focus and concentrate, because there's less background noise and fewer disruptions than in an office
• being able to juggle work and home life more easily, including childcare, exercise and household chores
• saving time, money and energy by not commuting between home and the office each day.

Working at home seems to have given many people a greater sense of control – both over their physical environment (for example, noise and temperatures) and their daily routine – than they would typically have in an office. This is important because studies

Before 2020 **2021 and beyond** **2020/early 2021**

Working in a
corporate workspace

Doing a mix
of both

Working at
home/remotely

have shown that a sense of control is important in terms of people's job satisfaction and their satisfaction with their working environment[5].

However, that's not to say that everyone has found working at home to be a positive experience. Some people have young children at home, lack a suitable workspace or share their home with other people. It's also clear that some people have felt isolated when working at home, have found it difficult to separate home and work life, or have missed the routine of commuting into work.

Furthermore, even people who have reported enjoying working at home have highlighted the downsides of not being in an office, including:

• the lack of informal social interaction with colleagues
• finding it harder to get a quick or immediate response/answer from colleagues who would normally be in close (or relatively close) physical proximity
• not being able to hear what's going on in your team or pick up on relevant information or issues
• not being able to understand how colleagues are truly feeling about things, for instance by observing their body language and demeanour
• the challenges of integrating new starters into a distributed team.

These findings underline the fact that humans are social creatures and face-to-face interaction with other people is really important to us.

Given the above insights, it's perhaps unsurprising that when asked, most office workers say they would like a blended approach to working in future, involving a mix of working in the office and remotely (at home or elsewhere). A smaller proportion say they would like to work in the office most or all of the time, or would like to be based at home all or most of the time[6].

One way to think about this is as a normal distribution, with the majority of people being in (or nearer to) the middle of the distribution curve. Contrast this with the way things were prior to 2020, when most people spent most of their time working in an office (the peak of the curve is over to the left) or during 2020, when most people spent most of their time working at home (the peak of the curve is over to the right).

The shape of this curve will vary from organisation to organisation and even within organisations, from team to team. It will be influenced by a range of factors, including the culture of the organisation, the nature of the work being carried out, and also the availability of workspace . The shape of the curve will also vary over time as people adopt new technologies and new ways of working.

Clearly this more blended approach to working is dependent on organisations allowing and enabling their employees to work in a more distributed way – and not all organisations will do this, for various reasons – but it suggests that concerns about the 'death of the office' have been overstated and that the office does have a role to play going forward.

The question is, what is this role and what does it mean for the design and location of our offices? The answers to these questions will have profound implications, not just for the real estate and FM industries, but also for our towns, cities and economies more generally.

For instance, it's been estimated that every 'knowledge job' in a typical American city sustains around five urban service sector jobs, such as baristas, cleaners, transport workers and personal trainers[7]. Arguably, this systemic effect is why the UK Government spent part of 2020 (after the first lockdown) encouraging a return to the office where possible. The decisions organisations make about their corporate workspaces have the potential to create economic ripples far beyond their own businesses.

ACTIVITY

Pause and think about your organisation's (or clients organisation's) experiences of working during 2020 and 2021:

- how have these experiences influenced peoples' attitudes towards workspace (both positively or negatively)?
- in what ways do you think your organisation (or client organisation) will use its workspaces differently, beyond 2021?
- what implications will these changes have for the way the organisation's workspaces are managed?

CASE STUDY – REIMAGINING FRAIKIN'S CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

Fraikin, one of Europe's largest commercial vehicle leasing providers, had a vision to throw off its legacy image and become a smart, modern, digitally-driven industry leader.

An opportunity arose to establish a vision of a company that was modern, professional, digitally astute and better positioned to add new services and grow business opportunities.

Fraikin re-branded its corporate image but realised that fundamental change could only be achieved by reviewing the way the whole business operated. The problem was how to do it. Henry Horsfall, HR Director at Fraikin, says, 'If you wanted us to advise on the truck for the future, that's not a problem, but when it came to building an office, we didn't know where to go.'

Fraikin spoke to several suppliers but the proposals received were modern versions of the old design and did not address the fundamental challenge of business and organisational change.

Henry continues, 'When we visited Ricoh's headquarters, the questions from the team made us think differently about the type of space we needed to enable effective and efficient staff productivity.'

The solution comprised three main phases: analysis, design and transformation.

The first phase was Ricoh's analysis of Fraikin staff, workplace and processes, through photos, surveys, interviews and workshops to find out what staff thought about their jobs and workplace.

The design phase took the analysis to several design options – based on the 'Four Cs' concept of concentration, contemplation, communication and collaboration. These ranged from general layout, workspaces and meeting places to furniture and colour schemes. The aim was to create an environment where employees could maximise productivity and develop their own workstyles.

The transformation phase involved a single floor fit-out designed around two figure-of-eights, with meeting rooms, learning spaces and collaboration pods in the centre, and walkways and open-plan seating on the outside. Meeting rooms have the latest collaboration and communication technology. Departments and functional teams were located next to, or near each other with the aim of mapping business and workflows. As a result, people now work in a more agile and productive way.

One of the inspirations of the approach was getting all teams, not just management, involved in and responsible for the change process. Giving employees a sense of ownership and ability to personalise their workplace made it easier for them to adapt. To read the full case study and others visit: www.ricoh.co.uk/business-services/case-studies/fraikin/

Challenges
• adapt to industry change and new challenges
• location, workspace, business practices, attitudes
• support corporate rebrand and improve
  image perception.

Benefits
• transforms new headquarters into a modern,
  efficient, valued workplace
• improves inter-function communication
  and collaboration
• cuts space by 50% for same staff numbers
  and enables future expansion
• saves £40k a year on rent costs.

3. Reimagining our workspaces

The insights from various surveys of workers carried out during 2020 have served to confirm something that we already knew from decades of research: that many conventional office environments are better at supporting some work activities (those involving face-to-face interaction and collaboration) but not as good at supporting other activities (those involving focus and concentration).

For instance, if we look at information from the Leesman Index[8], we can see that desk-based focused work is rated as the most important activity by 91% of office workers globally, but only 78% of the same workers believe that their work environment supports this type of work. In contrast, planned meetings were rated as important by 74% of workers globally and 80% felt that their work environment supported this type of work.

The reality is that many corporate offices still offer a limited range of work settings – often banks of desks in an open plan space, along with some meeting rooms and perhaps some cellular offices and/or informal seating. Furthermore, these environments are often poorly designed. For example, it's not unusual to see informal seating areas being under-utilised because of where they are located relative to other work settings.

Some organisations have responded to these issues by creating activity-based working environments. These include a wider range of work settings, for instance dedicated spaces for activities such as focused work and private telephone calls. Data from the Leesman Index suggests that, when implemented properly, such environments can lead to more positive feedback from employees, and particularly those who have job roles with high task-diversity. However, it also suggests that such environments are still far from the norm, contrary to much workspace industry narrative[9].

Allowing employees to adopt a more blended approach to where they work gives organisations another means to balance the tensions between interaction and distraction. People can work at home when they need to concentrate on focused, individual tasks and go into the office when they need to collaborate or interact face-to-face. On the face of it, this seems like common sense, because it provides employees with the best of both worlds from a work setting perspective.

But true activity-based working is more than just about providing a wider range of work settings within the office. As the technology writer and speaker Dave Coplin explained in his 2013 talk on 'Re-imagining work', it's about encouraging and allowing employees to be more mindful about the best place to work for the task they are doing – whether that's at home, in the office, with customers or in a 'third space', such as a local café or library[10].

It's tempting to jump to the conclusion – as many commentators have done – that a shift towards more distributed working will mean that organisations will require less office space. Whilst this may be true for some organisations, the likelihood is that many organisations will still need spaces for their employees, but different types and with a wider variety of work settings.

For many organisations, the problem posed by a move towards more distributed work might therefore be less about how they can reduce the amount of space they occupy – although that will clearly be a goal, particularly in challenging economic times – and more about how they can optimise their workspace. In other words, how they can make better use of it, in service of improved individual and organisational performance.

... the likelihood is that many organisations will still need spaces for their employees, but different types and with a wider variety of work settings.

THE HOT DESKING HOT POTATO

The most obvious change to the design of many offices will be that they are likely to require fewer desks and more spaces for face-to-face collaboration and teamwork. That said, for most organisations the provision of fewer desks already made sense before the shift towards more distributed working, given that the average desk in a traditional (assigned desk) office was typically only occupied around 60% of the time[11]. Of course – pandemic aside – such changes hinge upon the ability for individuals, teams and departments to learn to share.

In a world where people work more remotely more often, the idea of providing everyone with a dedicated desk seems wasteful and nonsensical. What for many organisations was still a taboo subject before 2020 – some employees not having a desk permanently assigned to them – will be easier to approach going forward, because people will need to make trade-offs in order for distributed working to stack up.

This doesn't (and shouldn't) mean a shift to hot desking en mass, because other solutions are available. Nor should it result in workspaces being allocated based on hierarchy and status, because managers and leaders are also likely to be working more remotely, so they will also need to make trade-offs.

An alternative approach would be to create team zones, containing desks that can be booked when needed. These zones would accommodate 'anchors' (employees who want or need to be in the office and at their desk most of the time) and have 'soft boundaries', comprising shared desks that adjacent teams can use when they need to. Increasingly sophisticated workspace resource management platforms can now facilitate such an approach.

More progressive organisations are beginning to recognise that they might not even need traditional desks in corporate workspaces anymore. For these organisations the office will serve as a place for collaboration, socialising and creativity, rather than focused work or admin. However, for this to work effectively they will need to invest in the technology to enable employees to communicate seamlessly and reliably, regardless of whether or not they are in the office or working remotely.

A RECIPE FOR STICKY WORKSPACES

Another thing organisations will need to consider is how to make corporate workspaces places where employees want to be, rather than have to be. Some senior leaders have voiced concerns about their employees not wanting to return to the office for various reasons, and have suggested (quite justifiably) that this could have a harmful impact on their organisation's culture and performance.

Surveys of employees suggest that these cultural and performance concerns are probably unfounded, because most people want and need to spend some time in the office, for the social and collaborative reasons we have already discussed. But a key factor will be whether the office provides something that makes it worth spending time and money travelling to.

Some organisations will address this problem negatively, by creating rules that limit people's choice to some degree – for instance by mandating that people must be in the office a certain number of days per week or month. Such approaches may make sense from a functional perspective, but they may also undermine trust and empowerment because they imply that employees can't be relied on to make appropriate decisions for themselves.

One knee-jerk reaction we've seen and heard play out many times before is the three-line whip from senior leaders requiring their people to return to the office. Marissa Mayer, ex-CEO of Yahoo, caused controversy back in 2013 when she banned Yahoo employees from working at home. As many commentators have pointed out[12], such actions indicate a lack of trust within organisations and are likely to have a negative impact on organisational culture.

In contrast, more enlightened organisations will approach the issue far more positively. They will seek to create workspaces that employees want to spend time in because they are positive attractors, or – to borrow a term from the higher education sector – 'sticky'. This is more than just about providing great free coffee and other perks. It's about providing employees with experiences in the office that they can't get elsewhere, so that they want to be there.

To use the example of universities, if students can now access online learning materials anytime, anywhere, the sticky campus needs to be about creating digitally enabled spaces where students want to spend time, even when they don't have a formal teaching session to go to. It's about providing a learning environment that gives students everything they need for collaborative and solitary study, to promote active learning, support inclusivity and enable rich, enjoyable learning experiences.

The shift to a more distributed workforce will also mean that organisations need to think carefully about managing demand for their workspaces, particularly if they contain fewer desks and more collaborative spaces. The most obvious example of this is if most teams in an organisation want to be in the office on the same day each week. Dynamic booking and resourcing tools will certainly help in this regard, but effective demand management will also depend on developing a culture of sharing and teams being willing to flex around the needs of other teams.

Some organisations have already talked about getting all of their employees together in the office on particular days of the week – the Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays model is a good example that gained social media interest following the first lockdown of 2020[13], not least because of its cheeky acronym. However, such practices raise questions of what the office experience will be like on other days and whether organisations will be willing to pay for space that they are only using for a smaller proportion of a week.

The shift to a more distributed workforce will also mean that organisations need to think carefully about managing demand for their workspaces, particularly if they contain fewer desks and more collaborative spaces.

SHIFTING PORTFOLIO NEEDS

More distributed working may therefore challenge the traditionally conservative real estate industry to come up with new models for occupying space[14]. It may also see organisations creating more geographically dispersed portfolios of offices, or making better use of the 'hub and spoke' provision that may already be available to them from regional and satellite sites.

One of the benefits of 'knowledge-job' workspaces clustered in major cities is an 'agglomeration effect' where their density facilitates improved productivity[15]. This is historically why different streets or districts represented different trades, and for example why many insurance businesses surround Lloyds of London in the EC3 postcode area. A more distributed approach to workspace bucks this trend, but the growing use of co-working spaces in local towns is an attractive and often low risk option for organisations to explore.

As with any other conversation around workspace, it's very easy to become influenced by industry narratives on what organisations should (or should not) be doing. 2020 prompted a plethora of surveys, reports, white papers and 'how to' guides on this topic. But it's important to recognise that many of these come from businesses who have a vested commercial interest in organisations continuing to occupy workspaces and/or adapting their workspaces.

The fact of the matter is that organisations need to be mindful of their own unique circumstances and needs. We don't yet know what impact the events of 2020 will have in the longer-term and there's a risk that organisations will make knee-jerk decisions that they subsequently regret. One way that organisations can avoid this is by adopting a low cost, low risk 'test and learn' approach. Rather than making immediate and wholesale changes to their workspaces, they can undertake pilots and experiments and engage willing groups of employees to help explore what their workspaces could be like in future.

CASE STUDY – OPTIMISING SPACE TO DRIVE PLAYER PERFORMANCE AND EXPERIENCE FOR A SPORTS GOVERNING BODY

This exciting project targeted and transformed several key areas to improve first impressions, comfort and experience, each to positively impact player performance. From the initial discussions and consultancy, Ricoh helped design the various spaces from furniture to technology to drive user experience for the varied user personas. Throughout the pandemic, the delivery phase of the project commenced, initially with a quick turnaround in the hope that the users could return!

To address first impressions and functionality, a bespoke reception desk and digital signage solution were installed, along with a bespoke digital marketing solution for the new reception and the high-performance areas. Reception now displays the latest and greatest sports action to the visitors, players, and employees along with useful information on transport and sports news.

For the player performance centre space, a mix of high-end furniture and technology solutions have been fitted to promote flexibility and collaboration. The spaces are now work areas that can be adapted to a range of needs to maximise the space and functionality of each user persona, including the capability to review match and performance statistics.

The players' lounge was designed to promote relaxation, with flexible and comfortable high-end workspace features. Meeting rooms were installed with the latest conferencing equipment for increasingly required remote collaboration, as well as digital whiteboards to promote simplified collaborations alongside the ergonomic, aesthetic furniture.

The customer received end to end service and solutions with project management from a trusted provider of over 10 years.

5. What should I do next?

We recommend that you:

1 give this guidance note to colleagues (including clients and senior managers) who you think might be interested in it. Make sure to have a follow-up conversation about it and what it means for your organisation's or your client's organisation's approach to managing its workspace

2 complete the self-assessment on page 15 for your own organisation or your client's organisation. This will give you a high-level indication of where your organisation (or client) stands in relation to its workspace, and the opportunities and challenges this may present. Use the results of your assessment as a basis for a follow-up conversation with your colleagues and/or client

3 read the earlier guidance notes in the series, but particularly the one on Creating Better Workspaces[16].

LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF WORKPLACE

There are a number of ways you can learn more about this topic:

• IWFM's 'Navigating Turbulent Times' webinar series, which can be found at: www.iwfm.org.uk/coronavirus-resources/ webinar-series-navigating-turbulent-times.html

• Ricoh's Work Together, Anywhere webinar hub, which can be accessed at: tools.ricoh.co.uk/work-together-anywhere-webinar-series

• Ricoh's Conscious Workplace report, which can be accessed at: www.ricoh.co.uk/news-events/ricoh-insights/ conscious-workplace-report/index.html

• the other workplace guidance notes in this series, which are available to download at: www.iwfm.org.uk/insight/research-partnerships/ creating-better-workplaces.html

We have also partnered with workplace specialists 3edges to provide workplace and leadership CPD courses which explore many of the issues discussed in this guidance note. These courses can be attended individually or delivered for groups 'in-company'.

Multi-course discounts are available. To find out more about our courses or to book a place, visit: www.iwfm.org.uk/professional-development/ academy

The ideas and approaches in this guidance note also form part of our 'Level 6 Diploma in Workplace Leadership, Insight and Change'. This is the first workplace qualification of its kind. If you would like to learn more about the Diploma, please contact: qualifications@iwfm.org.uk

OPTIMISING WORKSPACES - SELF-ASSESSMENT

This thinking tool has been designed to help you reflect on the degree to which your organisation or client is thinking about the future of its workspaces. It will help you to identify whether enough attention is being given to this issue.

As with any self-assessment, this tool requires you to reflect on your own situation critically and honestly. Remember, sometimes honest truths can be uncomfortable!

You might find it helpful to complete this self-assessment individually within your team and then come together to discuss your responses.

To complete the self-assessment, read each statement and pick a point on the corresponding scale that feels about right for you. Try not to overthink the statements!

Let's take statement 3 as an example. If you think that your organisation (or your client) has a clear picture of how its people will work in future, then pick a point somewhere to the right hand-side of the scale.

Demand

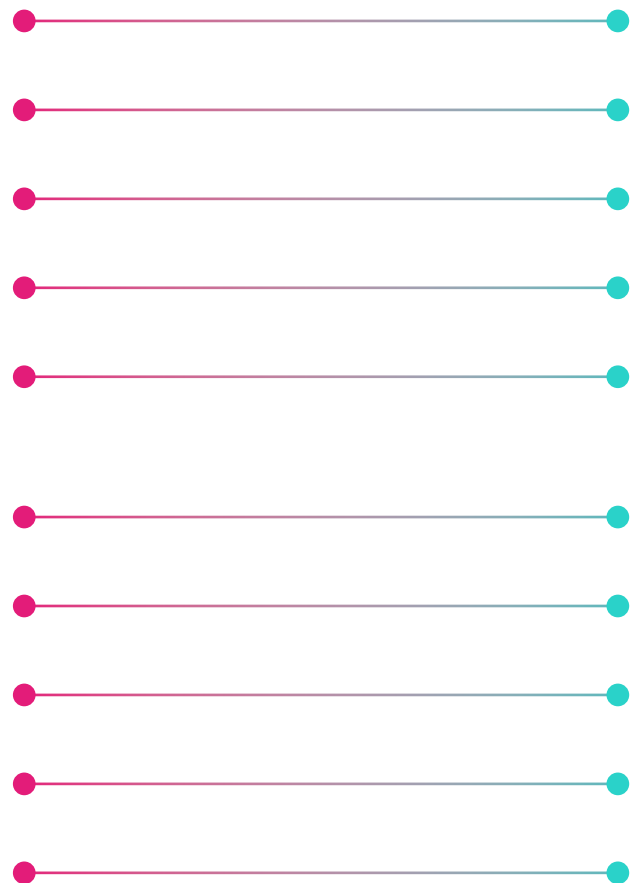Strongly disagree   Strongly agree

1   The future of work is on the agenda at executive level in our organisation.

2   We have given serious consideration to how our people will be working in future.

3   We have a clear picture of how our people will be working in future.

4   We have engaged our people in conversations about how they will work in future.

5   We know what the demand on our workspaces will be in future.

Supply

6   The future of our workspaces is on the agenda at executive level in our organisation.

7   We have given serious consideration to what workspaces we will need in future.

8   We have a clear picture of what workspaces we will need in future.

9   We have evaluated the suitability of our current workspaces to meet our future needs.

10 We have a workspace strategy that looks beyond the current situation.

Once you've put a mark on each scale, draw a line down through the marks so that you can see the profile of your responses.

Then take stock of the overall picture and ask yourself:

• are we giving enough attention to the future of our workspaces?
• what should we be doing that we aren't doing?
• who do I need to talk to about this?

References

1 www.economist.com/leaders/2020/09/12/is-the-office-finished

2 Barnett, R. C. (1998). Toward a review and reconceptualization of the work/family literature. Genetic Social and General Psychology Monographs, 124(2), 125-184.

3 See for example CIPD's work on the impact of AI and automation in the workplace, available at: www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/work/technology/emerging-future-work-factsheet (Accessed 18 December 2020).

4 Barlow, J., & Gann, D. (1995). Flexible planning and flexible buildings: reusing redundant office space. Journal of Urban Affairs, 17(3), 263-276.

5 For example, see Kwon, M., Remøy, H., van den Dobbelsteen, A., & Knaack, U. (2019). Personal control and environmental user satisfaction in office buildings: Results of case studies in the Netherlands. Building and Environment, 149, 428-435.

6 JLL (November 2020) Reimagining Human Experience: How to embrace the new work-life priorities and expectations of a liquid workforce.

7 The Economist (2020) Covid-19: is working from home really the new normal? Available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxDVucUZCnc (Accessed 18 December 2020).

8 Leesman Index (2020) www.leesmanindex.com/benchmark-employee-experience/ (Accessed 18 December 2020).

9 www.leesmanindex.com/The_Rise_and_Rise_of_Activity_Based_Working_Research_book.pdf

10 www.thersa.org/video/animates/2013/09/rsa-animate---re-imagining-work

11 Many workspace consultancy and design agencies have collated client workspace utilisation data over the years, some to the degree where benchmarking is possible (see for example AMA's WorkWare tool (http://aleximarmot.com/workware/, accessed 18 December 2020). Whilst most organisations are convinced they deviate from the average – and commission yet another utilisation study to prove it – the consistency is striking. Most traditional offices with assigned desking are less than 60% utilised, on average. This level of waste in other sectors (e.g. hospitality or public transport) would severely jeopardise their long term viability. Yet many organisations still seem to tolerate it in their workspaces.

12 e.g. see www.wired.com/insights/2013/03/yahoos-ceo-is-right-about-culture-wrong-on-trust/

13 In these episodes of the Eat Sleep Work Repeat podcast, host Bruce Daisley speaks with a range of people about their company activities, ideas and solutions to help their own organisations work differently post-lockdown: https://eatsleepworkrepeat.com/the-big-return/ (Accessed 18 December 2020).

14 In this episode of the Eat Sleep Work Repeat podcast, host Bruce Daisley speaks with Antony Slumbers about his early predictions of future corporate real estate models: https://eatsleepworkrepeat.com/whats-the-value-of-an-office/ (Accessed 18 December 2020).

15 The Economist (2020) Covid-19: is working from home really the new normal? Available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxDVucUZCnc (Accessed 18 December 2020).

16 Pinder, J. and Ellison, I. (2020) *Creating better workspaces*. IWFM guidance note available at: www.iwfm.org.uk/resource/creating-better-workspaces.html

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This guide has been produced as part of a partnership between IWFM and Ricoh.

About Ricoh
Ricoh is empowering digital workplaces using innovative technologies and services enabling individuals to work smarter. For more than 80 years, Ricoh has been driving innovation and is a leading provider of document management solutions, IT services, communication services, commercial and industrial printing, digital cameras, and industrial systems.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh Group operates in approximately 200 countries and regions. In the financial year ended March 2019, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 2,013 billion yen (approx. 18.1 billion USD).

For further information, please visit
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