A GUIDE TO CREATING A
HYBRID WORKSPACE

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Here is your guide to **creating a workspace** suitable for the **hybrid working model**.

At the end of each chapter, there is a checklist to help you work towards making the **company culture you need**.

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01 OVERVIEW

There has been a definitive shift in our relationship with the place of work.

Before the pandemic, working from the office every day was common practice for most businesses. Whilst some companies had already started implementing some form of hybrid working, the pandemic has rapidly forced many companies to introduce the hybrid working model or even fully remote working.

Many people have embraced working from home, but others were eager to return to the office, fuelling much debate about how the post-pandemic office should function and look.
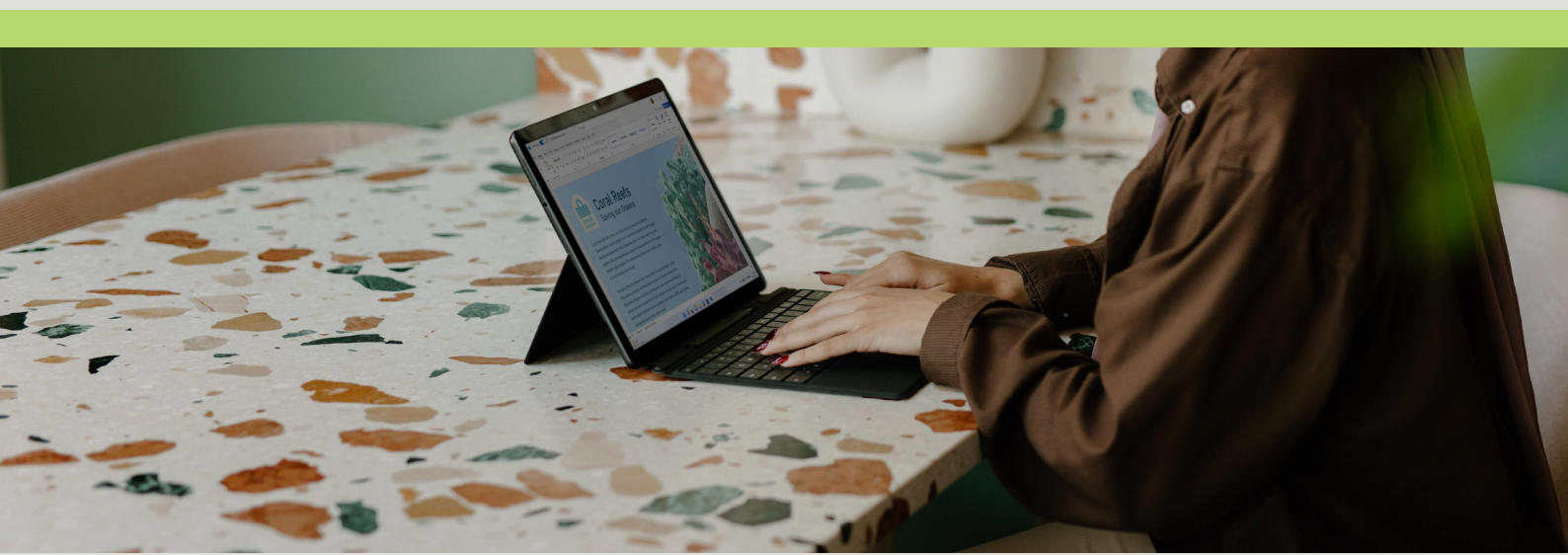
01
DATA

To get a clearer picture of how people are working today and how they see the office evolving, we completed a survey by office workers (2022).

55% work remotely 2-4 times per week.

5% work in the office every day.

93% prefer working hybrid or fully remote.

The data indicates that some people are required to go into the office even though they prefer to work remotely.

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01
RESEARCH

When we asked participants what the main reasons for going into the office were, the top three answers were:

1. Collaboration

2. Face-to-face meetings

3. Catch up with colleagues

Our survey clearly shows that the office has not been made redundant. Now, most people want to use the office for socialising and collaboration. Yet many people prefer working with a hybrid model to working at the office full-time. Your job is to make your office a destination.

02 DEVELOP YOUR HYBRID COMPANY CULTURE

Whether you have already moved to the hybrid working model or are looking to transition, one of the most significant considerations is how to promote your company culture with people working from home. All the points we address in this guide will help to provide a comfortable and practical space for your employees. There will always be those that would opt for fully remote working.

Still, by creating a space that considers their needs, designed purposefully for their well-being, hopefully, people will naturally gravitate to the office more.

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02

COLLABORATION

Collaboration was the main reason people travelled to the office. It is crucial to come together to share ideas, discuss, debate, and collaborate when working in a team. Therefore, providing spaces and zones within the office is essential. Traditional meeting rooms still have their place, but less formal areas with soft seating where collaboration and creativity can come to life are also effective for collaboration. The key is to make the office feel more like home.

You may have heard the term "resimercial", meaning the mixing of residential design within commercial spaces.

02

SOCIALISING

The social aspect of working at the office was a top reason to go to work in our survey. It's just not the same catching up over a screen. Providing kitchen areas, tea points, and breakout spaces will allow your employees to come together and connect on a personal rather than professional level. Relationship building is crucial to creating a close-knit team. Working remotely, people have become used to having a break at lunchtime. People should not be eating at their desks anymore. Use some of the space saved in desks to provide a breakout area where people can catch up over lunch or coffee and get away from their screens.

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02
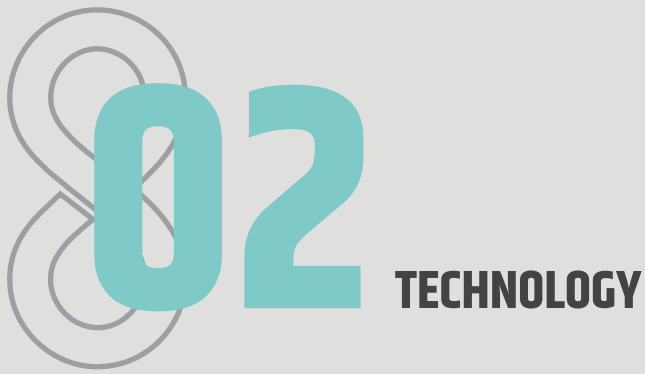
TECHNOLOGY

It is essential to have sufficient infrastructure and technology to support the hybrid working method. Online calls have become a huge part of working life. Video conferencing facilities throughout the office will allow those working from home to get involved in meetings. Facilities Managers can use technology to help manage the office. Desk booking systems ensure capacity is correct on a particular day. Employees checking in and out allows you to analyse how people are using the space, and it's a great tool to aid in fire evacuations and managing safety. It is possible to install sensors on mechanical & electrical equipment. With fewer people coming into the office, it may be possible to save significant energy and money on this equipment.

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02 DEVELOP YOUR HYBRID COMPANY CULTURE
CHECKLIST

☐ Soft-seating/breakout collaboration area

☐ 'Resimercial' feel through furnishings and fittings

☐ Allocated time slots for lunch breaks allowing employees to move from their desks

☐ Kitchens with microwaves so that employees can bring in a broader option of healthy lunches

☐ Tea points to reduce on single-use waste and costs from takeaway coffee shops

☐ Breakout space to socialise away from main work hubs

☐ Adequate technology in the office for online calls away from main work areas

☐ Desk booking systems

☐ Motion sensor equipment

03 IMPROVING YOUR PHYSICAL WORKSPACE

Whether you are looking to move office, refurbish, or make the most of what you've got, there are practical solutions to meet your individual business needs tailored to your company's culture and workflow.

If you're moving office, calculate how much space you require based on how many people will use the office each day rather than your total employees. If you're refurbishing, use a trusted firm to provide the fit-out and furniture. Suppose you are looking to make small changes without doing a considerable upheaval. In that case, it is possible to change the operation of your desks, add additional storage and reorganise spaces to allow for different privacy/noise levels.

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03

HOT DESKS

Offices were already evolving away from banks of fixed desks, but the vast uptake in hybrid work has accelerated the movement. If people can choose when they come into the office and work from home, hot desks are a much more viable option. If you can track the number of people coming into the office each day over a few weeks, you can quickly get an idea of the number of desks needed. You will probably need fewer desks than you currently have, creating more space.

With fewer desks required it may be possible to invest in some new furniture to improve employees' well-being. Standing desks are proven to support the physical and psychological well-being of users. Only 1% of UK workers use sit-stand desks, and many workers spend between 4 and 9 hours each day sitting.

03 STORAGE

If you are going to move to hot desks, people still need somewhere to store personal belongings whilst in the office.

Lockers are a great and secure way of providing storage, and there are so many different options and designs. They can be a design feature within the office. Some have lockers combined with planting or moss panels. Generally, one locker per hot desk is a good way of calculating how many you need. Coats and jackets cupboards are better than having them on the backs of chairs. You could opt for larger lockers or a large wardrobe cupboard at reception to hang coats, jackets and umbrellas.

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03

PRIVACY/NOISE LEVELS

People working from home have the benefit of privacy. Making a doctor's appointment or a personal call is more convenient and time-efficient. Speaking to a colleague is easy because you can phone or video them. It's not just about privacy; people often want to find private spaces because they tend to be quieter, allowing them to work on focused tasks like reading or writing. It is worth considering some private zones, such as smaller meeting rooms where colleagues can have one-to-one meetings without others overhearing. Phone booths or pods are ideal for private phone calls and focused working alone or in small groups.

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03 IMPROVING YOUR PHYSICAL WORKPLACE
CHECKLIST

- ☐ Hot desks & desk booking system

- ☐ Track current desking usage (currently hybrid or not)

- ☐ Calculate desking usage you will have when following the hybrid model

- ☐ Ergonomic furniture: Sit-stand desks, quality chairs and adequate height monitors

- ☐ With hot-desking (depending on your business' hardware), will people Work on laptops, plug them into a monitor or log in to the company's server on PCs?

- ☐ Lockers & coat/jacket/umbrella cupboard

- ☐ Private meeting rooms

- ☐ Private work pod for groups or individuals

- ☐ Phone booths for calls (private & reduces office noise)

04 IMPROVING YOUR WORK FROM HOME ENVIRONMENT

Our research found no point in dismissing the new WFT (work from home) culture.

Most people enjoy the flexibility of the hybrid model, working remotely and commuting to the office either as a set weekly schedule or sporadically. There has also been lots of data published on increased productivity levels.

However, there are downfalls when it comes to WFH too. It's worth noting that only some people have adequate space or set-up at home to work effectively, whether that's the environment (noisy kids/housemates) or the physical space (cramped room). Those people could choose to work from the office all the time. Although, WFH might be a possibility if they had the right equipment provided.

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04

COST OF LIVING CRISIS

With soaring energy prices, it may not be viable for people working from home to afford the additional cost of working from home. Using the office should always be possible to avoid putting pressure on those people. It also prevents those people from having to work in an unsuitable environment at home. On the other hand, people may have a costly commute to work with the inflation of petrol and train fares, therefore working from home might be more suitable for some. It depends on the person's circumstances which is why the flexible hybrid model is great. Ensure your employees are aware of their entitlement to the WFH allowance under the new 2022 rules.

04 CREATING A ROUTINE

Many employers worry about employees working from home and their productivity level. Data shows that people are working productively and efficiently at home. Employees can worry that the boundaries around working from home are blurred. Having a clear remote working schedule is imperative, so neither employer nor employee should worry about showing how much they are working and can get on with the tasks at hand whilst enjoying their routines. Establish working hours even if they are flexible. E.g., you must work 7.5 hours a day and take a 30-minute break. Start and finish times are flexible, but you must be available and working between 10:00 & 12:00 and 13:00 & 15:00 when WFH for scheduled meetings.

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04
ERGONOMIC FURNITURE

Many people working from home have reported increased back pain because they don't have the correct equipment at home. Employers should be looking after their employees, and they will likely reap the rewards as healthier, more comfortable people means increased productivity. Research what furniture your employees use at home and whether it is adequate. If not, consider giving people an allowance to spend on a sit-stand desk, task chair and height-adjustable monitor. Alternatively, partner with a furniture specifier and lend employees appropriate furniture, which can be returned at the end of employment and refurbished if necessary.

04
IMPROVING YOUR WFH ENVIRONMENT
CHECKLIST

☐ Make sure employees are aware of their options when using the hybrid work model and that they know they can use the office if they need to

☐ Ensure employees understand whether they are entitled to WFH allowance under the new rules

☐ Conduct research into what furniture your employees are using at home

☐ Provide an allowance to spend on a sit-stand desk, task chair and monitor or partner with a furniture specifier who will manage the furniture and delivery

☐ Set clear remote working boundaries, start and finish flexible timings, set hours and break times and must-be-available hours

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Many available solutions might feel daunting, but **effective change** doesn't have to be disruptive.

Whether you have decided to move office, refurbish, or make the most of what you've got, we can help **create practical solutions** to your business needs **tailored to your company's culture and workflow.**

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