

# People Don't Want To Go Back To The Old Way Of Work

**Recent statistics show one-third of Britons are still working from home despite the rule changes. Working from home has proven to be successful over these last 2 years, and on average, those who work from home are 67% more productive. Therefore, if it is not adversely impacting business, forcing people back to the office just for the sake of it, simply does not make sense. At the end of the day, if someone gets the job done quicker and faster remotely then why not let them.**

Leaders worldwide need to accept that employees don't want to go back to the old way of work - the world has changed and they need to embrace it or they could risk employees jumping ship to join more progressive businesses. To flourish in the 'new age' of work, CEOs should consider the following:

## Flexibility

In today's world flexibility is a must in one shape or another. The pandemic has changed the way we work forever, with a third of millennials saying they would leave their job if they had to come back into the office more. This highlights the importance of this factor, and demonstrates many people have gotten used to the freedom that flexible working provides and do not want to give up the benefits associated with this, such as time and money saved commuting. Although it is not a one size fits all approach, it is clear that rigid rules and barriers are outdated and should be a thing of the past.

Firms should be as flexible as they possibly can to enable the better work-life balance that employees seek. Whether that is relooking at the standard 9am to 5pm hours by being flexible so employees can work around things like the school run and doctors' appointments, or whether it is providing the option to choose your location and setting- i.e. working remotely in another town or country, or in 'offices' as and when they want to. This empowers staff, enabling them to make their own decisions and structure their workday to suit their needs.

## New Age 'Office'

Now remote working isn't all sunshine and rainbows. Some people prefer working out of their homes, going to an 'office' environment,

or just want a change of scenery every now and then. That is why it is so important to have those options. Shared workspaces can be great for this where employees choose when and where to go in allowing employees to work in a hybrid mode if they want to. If you want your employees to come in more often, entice them with 'attractive facilities' (coffee machines, free food, refrigerators, options to rent a desk/desktop, private room options if needed, community events etc.).

Then there are some things that just work better in-person, like brainstorming or collaborative projects. It is important these environments are optimised for this to stimulate creativity. Ideally, offices should be re-designed with this in mind. If you are asking people to commute hours to come to an office to do what they can do at home, it is not worth it. Value your employee's time and instead use these in-person formats as space for networking and team building, something they cannot do remotely, and make it different from the average working day.

## People Before Profits

Your employees are valuable assets. A company's very essence is built on great people and giving employees what they want will benefit you more than them. Therefore, looking out for their well-being should be your no.1 priority. Implementing care packages, increasing social activities, or rethinking traditional structures like the 5-day working week could be beneficial - experiments thus far have been resulting in reduced stress levels and overall, more positive mental health.

It is important businesses consider everyone's individual needs, especially taking into consideration various situations like coming back from maternity leave, dealing with bereavement, or recovering from an illness.

## The Great Resignation

The 'Great Resignation' is down to people putting their lives first and the want for better balance and flexibility post-Covid (which showed we can work productively from pretty much anywhere). They don't want to feel constrained by lack of freedom and choice. Returning back to the 'old way' of work will encourage employees to look to more forward-thinking companies.

The UK Labour Force Survey shows resignations and job-to-job moves in the UK

are at the highest level in 20 years. If your employees are thinking of leaving, there is probably something you could be doing better as a company to improve employee satisfaction. Investigating the reasons people leave is paramount in order to both attract and keep people.

## Staff Retention

Gartner surveyed more than 3,500 employees around the world, and 65% said the pandemic had made them rethink the value that work should hold in their lives. Also, 56% said it made them want to contribute more to society, and 52% questioned the purpose of their jobs. This highlights how the pandemic has been a catalyst to elevate personal purpose and values.

The ultimate attraction for an employee is to join a true purpose-driven organisation. If staff members truly believe in the purpose and that they can make a difference, they feel there is a real value behind what they are doing. Remember, when an employee is hard working, driven and believes in the purpose of the organisation, this is called passion. Whereas when an employee is working at something they don't believe in, this is called 'Stress'.

The Employee Retention Report has found that career development is one of the top contributing reasons why employees leave their jobs. Lack of growth and development opportunities can cause job dissatisfaction leading to staff leaving their role in search of better career opportunities. Therefore, it is important to ensure people have a sense of advancement within the organisation. If you do not invest in your staff, they will not invest in your business. You get what you put in at the end of the day.

## JEFF DEWING

Jeff Dewing is the CEO of Cloudfm and author of *Doing the Opposite* - a bestselling book following his incredible journey from owning a successful business (and football club) to losing it all and having only £7.60 in his bank account. Despite this Jeff, who started his career as a fridge and air-conditioning engineer, managed to turn his life around and build a new business from £1m to £70m turnover within four years. He attributes much of his success to his belief that you should never take the easy, straightforward path - if you challenge things and do the opposite good things will happen.