



# Culture clash: why employers want workers in the office

【经济学人播客 20250717 Editor's Picks 文化冲突：为何雇主希望员工重返办公室】

Summary: The Economist's Ethan Wu introduces a hand-picked article discussing the debate over office returns, highlighting how companies like Uber and Amazon emphasize culture-building, while research shows mixed impacts on innovation, job satisfaction, and firm performance.

摘要：《经济学人》的Ethan Wu推荐了一篇精选文章，探讨重返办公室的争议，指出优步和亚马逊等公司强调文化建设，而研究显示这对创新、员工满意度和企业绩效的影响参差不齐。

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🕒 Estimated Reading Time: 7 min

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 Hi, this is Ethan Wu, Co-host of Bunny Talks, our Business and Finance podcast.

大家好，我是Ethan Wu，商业与金融播客Bunny Talks的联合主持人。

 Welcome to Editor' Picks.

欢迎来到Editor' Picks。

 We've hand-picked an article we recommend from the most recent edition of The Economist.


我们从最新一期《经济学人》中精选了一篇文章推荐给大家。

 I hope you enjoy.

希望您喜欢。

 This isn't just about productivity metrics.

这不仅仅是关于生产力指标。

 Dara Kuzhreshihi, the boss of Uber, told employees recently, after the ride-hailing company said they should all work from the office at least three days a week.

优步老板Dara Kuzhreshihi最近告诉员工，这家网约车公司要求他们每周至少到办公室工作三天。


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 It's about building the culture that will drive Uber's next phase of growth.

这是为了建立推动优步下一阶段增长的文化。

 Mr. Kuzhreshihi is not the only boss to appeal to such fuzzy ideas, while herding workers back through the turnstiles.

Kuzhreshihi先生并非唯一呼吁这种模糊理念并督促员工重返办公室的老板。

🎧 In January, Stafford, Amazon, were told to return to the pre-pandemic norm of being in the office five days a week.

一月份，亚马逊员工被告知需恢复疫情前每周五天到岗的制度。

🎧 People riff on top of one another's ideas better when they're together, and Ejassy, Amazon's boss, told the Harvard Business Review when asked about the policy.

亚马逊老板Ejassy向《哈佛商业评论》解释该政策时表示，员工在一起时更能激发彼此的想法。

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🎧 Although company culture can be a slippery concept, executives are right to worry about it.

尽管企业文化可能是个模糊的概念，但高管们关注它是正确的。

🎧 Research suggests that a company's values and norms, including those governing how employees work, behave and interact, can affect innovation, profitability, and stock market returns.

研究表明，公司的价值观和规范（包括员工工作、行为和互动方式）会影响创新、盈利能力和股市回报。

🎧 But does forcing people into the office really improve a company's culture?

但强制员工到办公室真能改善企业文化吗？

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▶ Our analysis suggests that the answer may depend on the type that a firm is trying to instill.

我们的分析表明，答案可能取决于企业试图灌输的文化类型。

▶ Bosses, by and large, claim that having people in the office is a cultural boon.

老板们普遍认为，员工到岗对企业文化有益。

▶ The spontaneity that often leads to new ideas, is lost when staff work from home.

员工居家办公时，常会失去催生新想法的自发性。

▶ Collaboration suffers, too.

协作也会受到影响。

▶ A study of 61,000 Microsoft employees found that remote working in the first half of 2020 made the tech giant more siloed and less dynamic.

一项针对6.1万名微软员工的研究发现，2020年上半年的远程办公使这家科技巨头更封闭、缺乏活力。

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▶ It is also harder to integrate new staff.

新员工的融入也变得更困难。

▶ It virtually all employees say they would prefer to do at least some work at home.

几乎所有员工都表示希望至少部分时间居家办公。

▶ Mark Mar, of the University of Pittsburgh and his colleagues, found that firms which insisted on workers returning to the office after the pandemic, saw job satisfaction fall and staff turnover rise with no improvement in firm performance.

匹兹堡大学的Mark Mar及其同事发现，疫情后坚持要求员工返岗的企业，员工满意度下降、流失率上升，且企业绩效未见改善。

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▶ To assess the link between firms working policies and their culture, we turned first to Culture X, a research firm run by Don and Charlie Sull.

为评估企业工作政策与文化的关系，我们首先咨询了Don和Charlie Sull运营的研究公司Culture X。

▶ They supplied us with a database of nine corporate culture indicators across some 900 firms, built using feedback on Glassdoor, a workplace review website.

他们提供了约900家企业的九项文化指标数据库，数据源自职场评价网站Glassdoor的反馈。

▶ Our second source was Work Forward, an advisory firm that publishes the Flex Index, a database of the remote work policies of employers.

第二数据源是咨询公司Work Forward发布的Flex Index，收录了雇主的远程办公政策。

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▶ It sorts firms into three categories, full time in the office, fully flexible and hybrid.

它将企业分为三类：全员坐班、完全灵活和混合办公。

▶ Combining the two databases, we found that firms which insist on staff being in the office five days a week, one better ratings from their employees on agility, a company's ability to anticipate and respond quickly to changes in the marketplace.

结合两个数据库发现，坚持员工每周五天到岗的企业在"敏捷性"（企业对市场变化的快速响应能力）上获得更高员工评分。

▶ If you're in the office, explains Charlie Sull of Culture X, you're going to be able to receive information much more quickly and efficiently and respond to new circumstances in a more

adaptive way.

Culture X的Charlie Sull解释称，在办公室能更快高效获取信息，并以更灵活的方式应对新情况。

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▶ But on other measures, companies that were strict on office time scored worse than more relaxed ones.

但在其他指标上，严格规定办公时间的企业得分低于更宽松的企业。

▶ Firms with five day mandates received lower marks from their employees for supportiveness, whether workers feel their bosses care about them.

强制五天坐班的企业在"支持度"（员工感知上司关怀程度）上得分更低。

▶ Quality of leadership, toxicity, the extent to which disrespectful behavior is tolerated in the workplace.

领导力质量、职场毒性（容忍不尊重行为的程度）

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▶ Candle and work-life balance.

以及工作与生活平衡。

▶ On the remaining three measures tracked by Culture X, the scores were not meaningfully different based on location policies.

Culture X追踪的其余三项指标中，办公政策未导致显著差异。

▶ The analysis has its limitations.

该分析存在局限性。

🎧 For example, it could be the case that firms which care less about supporting employees or rooting out toxic behavior are less inclined to heed workers' pleas for more flexibility.

例如，可能那些不太关注支持员工或消除毒性行为的企业，更不愿理会员工对灵活性的诉求。

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🎧 Even so, the results are suggestive.

即便如此，结果仍具启发性。

🎧 Companies that really score highly on agility, Nvidia, SpaceX, Tesla, tend to strike a deal with their employees, says Don Sull, who is also a professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management.

MIT斯隆管理学院教授Don Sull表示，英伟达、SpaceX和特斯拉等敏捷性高分企业通常与员工达成协议。

🎧 Employees are offered generous pay, great career opportunities and other perks, but the trade-off is the work-life balance tends to be really bad.

员工获得丰厚薪酬、职业发展和其他福利，但代价是工作与生活平衡极差。

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🎧 More than five years after the pandemic began, companies are still trying to find the right mix of in-person and remote work.

疫情五年多后，企业仍在寻找线下与远程办公的合适比例。



🎧 As labor markets cool, shifting power from employees to employers, bosses may be tempted to demand more office time, claiming that it will help corporate culture.

随着劳动力市场降温，权力从员工转向雇主，老板们可能要求更多坐班时间，声称这有益企业文化。

🎧 For firms that prize agility, this makes sense, but the data suggests it comes at a cost.

对重视敏捷性的企业这合乎逻辑，但数据显示这是有代价的。

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