

Dump on your office all you like. You'll miss it when it's gone

The office, for the foreseeable future, is dead. Google and Facebook are telling employees they can work remotely until 2021. Twitter is allowing employees to work from home "forever."

The modern office may be the target of bleak *caricature*: The lighting is bad, the meetings are long, the only *recourse* to boredom is *filching* a colleague's *stapler* and embalming it in lemon Jell-O. But over the coming months, I suspect that those of us who spent most of our careers in offices will grow to miss them.

caricature 讽刺漫画

recourse 求助; 救援

filch 窃取; 偷窃

stapler 订书机

What will we miss about them, specifically? *Camaraderie*, for one thing. Two-thirds of all women who work outside the home, for instance, say that "the social aspect" of their jobs is a "major reason" for showing up each day, according to a comprehensive survey by Gallup.

camaraderie 友情; 同志感

But the benefits to office life are more than just social. They are also *intellectual*. Without offices, we miss out on the chance for serendipitous encounters, and it's precisely those moments of *felicitous* engagement that spark the best ideas.

intellectual 智力的; 聪明的

felicitous 恰当的; 幸福的

But to me, the best arguments for the office have always been psychological — and never have they felt more urgent than at this moment.

Remote work leaves a terrible feedback vacuum. Communication with colleagues is no longer casual but effortful; no matter how hard you try, you're going to have less contact — particularly of the casual variety — and with fewer people.

And what do we humans do in the absence of interaction? We invent stories about what that silence means. They are often negative ones. It's a formula for anxiety, misunderstanding, all-around messiness.