



**ukgovcamp**

**Session: 3**

**Room : HMS Daring Room**

**Session title : Wellbeing in the workplace & the role of unions**

**Session leader : Neil & Tory**

**Volunteer to continue conversation after :**

Notes taken by : Darren

### **Notes**

- Wellbeing in the workplace – theory that people can have a hard day at work but when they get home, leave it all behind. Sleeping OK, energy OK, not bringing home that stress and worry
- What energises you at work? What top tips do you have for managing work stress and not bringing work home with you?
- Overlap with the role of the union movement – protecting workers. Are they doing enough?

Starting with wellbeing

- Return to office can be beneficial for the wellbeing for some, because it enables easier compartmentalisation – not having that workplace stress in the home. Physical proximity can make a big difference, and having those “unwinding” conversations can be harder when working remotely
- Hybrid/remote isn’t just a matter of location, it’s also about structure, it often requires much more rigidity and fixed working patterns. Not everyone has the luxury of a dedicated space for compartmentalising the work day.
- Union overlap – union membership in the UK is plummeting and it can be hard to organise people who don’t want to be organised

- Commuting sucks and a lot of people really object to the cost, ignoring the impacts of how different working patterns and environments can invoke stress.
- **Presence with purpose.** If you're in the office, make it for a reason and not just for having Teams calls in a different place... but we recognise that people are individuals and one size doesn't fit all.
- Make time for doing the things that bring joy to your world, the little walks or playing with your kids or something.
- There is a tension between the individualistic aspects of wellbeing and the collectivist approach of the union movement. Both sides have roles to play.
- Unions can give employees the confidence to take their wellbeing seriously and help set the frameworks for team and individual wellbeing
- Wfh can be exploitative and used by employers to leverage even more productivity from their workers.
- Leaders have a role to model good behaviours, in terms of both organising/collectivising and wellbeing. How else are younger or more junior or inexperienced colleagues going to learn, instead of running themselves ragged?
- A lot of this (e.g. red lines, boundaries) come with wisdom and experience, so those of us who have been around for a while need to step up.
- Going back to union membership – why are new entrants to the workplace not joining unions? What messaging can we give new workers to persuade them of the benefits of joining a union? Do unions have a PR problem? Do employers see union members as “troublemakers”?
- Young people are more likely to self-organise around single issues; does this make unions irrelevant for that cohort?