# PROS – Home

***Pro\_home*** *What are the main things you appreciate about work from home?*

## Overarching changes / differences

* Flexible schedule (+ being at home)
* Differences between home and office environments
* No or reduced commute (savings of some form)

## Impacts identified

### Wellbeing factors

* **Better balance with non-work tasks / admin / HH chores (excluding family)**
  + Households admin / domestic issues (more time on weekends, less of this; easier during weeks)
  + Doctor’s appointments
  + Shopping, deliveries
  + Crisis situations
  + Convenience
  + Complete qualifications alongside job
  + Personal responsibilities
* **Family time**
  + More present with family, pets, spend time with children, childcare arrangements easier, lunch and coffee breaks with family, quality time with partner, arrange work around family commitments, kids’ home learning, help kids in morning and evening, school pick up and drop off, care for relatives better, home ‘already’
  + Look after family if ill
* **Sense of autonomy**
  + Self-determination; sense of control; sense of independence; ‘own’ my own workload; freedom; work without being monitored; organise as I see fit; sense of being empowered / trusted by the company; trust in me too
* **Physical health** 
  + Exercise: gym, walks, work out over lunch,
  + Eating better (more cheaply, healthier, nicer food options)
* **Improved work-life balance, feel happier, better mood, more free time, feeling of balance, improved mental health, hobbies, socialising**
* **Reduced stress, less drained, less tired/ not exhausted**
* **Comfort**
  + More comfortable, clothing and chairs, home comforts, better coffee / tea
  + More personalised (‘my own environment’), better working atmosphere, more casual and less stressful environment
  + Not having to get dressed up, don’t have to ‘perform’ / wear formal clothes
  + Able to relax more comfortably during breaks, more relaxing environment, safe and relaxing
  + Ease of downtime when not busy, more convenient
  + Better because of health reasons, better ventilation,
  + More personal space

### Work factors

* **Better time management (better allocation, more appropriate allocation to one’s work style)**
  + Work when in the mood
  + Efficient use of time (e.g. on quiet days do less; commute time spent wisely; on busy days do more)
  + Work with external colleagues
  + Work mornings and night / alternative hours / across timezones
  + Autonomy to work when suits boosts effectiveness
  + Time to think + able to act non-linearly
  + Improved work-load management
  + More time thinking
  + MS teams more efficient at running meetings
* **More time spent on work (productivity)**
  + Getting more done / more time spent on work
  + Meaningless meetings and talks in person
  + All hours access to urgent work
  + Time not wasted
  + No need to waste time for grooming and dressing up
  + "If I go into the office I have to write that day off in terms of billable productivity
* **Improved focus (effectiveness / efficiency)**
  + More focused workspace, not bothered by others as much, fewer interruptions
  + Concentrate more, ‘put head down and work’
  + No / less noise
  + Useful especially when busy, or when need to work in isolation, or have a large chunk of work to do
* **Better setup and equipment**
  + Dislike open plan
  + IT setup works easily and well
* **Ease / effectiveness of work** 
  + Better to make calls / hold meetings online (more privacy, no need to book meeting rooms etc.)
  + Easier to dial in / respond to colleagues not based in London
* **Avoid unwanted interpersonal interactions**
  + Avoid people you don’t like; avoid office politics; privacy; need own space; less social pressure; avoid some people in office; helps introverted staff avoid negative effects of open plan working; helps appreciate when in office

### Other

* **Time savings** mentioned explicitly, even absent what the additional time is used for
* **Monetary** savings
  + Commute public transport
  + Fuel and wear and tear
  + Parking
  + **Environmental costs: r**educed pollution and other environmental impacts
* COVID-19 safety: less safe at work and in travelling to work than at hom

# PROS – Office

***Pro\_office*** *What are the main things you appreciate about work at the office or workplace (e.g. client site)?*

## Overarching changes / differences

* Opportunities to socialise
* Face-to-face nature of the interaction
* Scope for informal / organic / unforced conversations
  + Informal connection with colleagues
  + Unplanned encounters, chance encounters
  + ‘Water cooler’ chat
* Differences in home and office environments

## Impacts identified

### Broader connection and purpose

* **Sense of connection, culture**
  + Better sense of community; social nature of the workplace
  + Better sense of understanding morale
  + Deepening, maintaining, building work relationships
  + Energy from being with / seeing colleagues;
  + Feeling less isolated
* **Sense of belonging**
  + Sense of belonging
  + Feeling part of something, Feel I work somewhere, feeling like you work for a large company
  + Being surrounded by colleagues, comradery with co-workers, feeling of ‘we are in this together’
  + Motivation of working in a team that is difficult to replace virtually,
* **Meaning / purpose**
  + Feeling more connected to the work I’m doing and it gives me purpose
  + Feeling renewed purpose exists everyday
  + More meaningful interaction with colleagues
  + Feeling a sense of purpose
* **Motivation and engagement**
  + Feeling more engaged at work
  + More motivated to work in the office
  + Motivation increase from being in the office

### Social

* **Within the team**
  + Improving team cohesion
  + Feeling part of a team, team spirit (difficult to replace)
  + Learning more about colleagues
  + Meet coworkers to establish rapport
  + Humour in times of stress, laughter
  + More connectivity in the team
  + Formal and informal interactions with team-mates
  + ‘Real’ interactions
  + Easier to connect with colleagues
  + Using informal conversations to build relationships
* **Non-team colleagues / company at large**
  + Interaction / meeting with colleagues, non-team mates as well
  + Connect with people from other practices
  + Fun and personal chats in between work, non-work related conversations
  + Interactions and convos with peers
  + Lunch and coffee with colleagues
  + Meeting / bonding with NEW (/old) colleagues
  + No constant MS teams calls; Zoom fatigue
  + Personal contact
  + **Social events**
    - In office social events
    - Office events (training, breakfast, launch, etc.)
    - After work, end of month drinks
    - Having meals with colleagues
    - Catching up with SMD and seeing colleagues
* **Clients / stakeholders**
  + Face to face client relationship building / management are more productive / effective in solving issues
  + Easier to build client relationships in person
  + Seeing clients brings joy
  + Easier to socialise with clients outside of work
  + Direct client engagement
  + Casual discussion with clients
  + Brief moments with stakeholders are invaluable, outside normal, formal engagement process
  + Easier to access information from client

### Work collaboration

* **Team effectiveness and efficiency**
  + Better collaboration with colleagues
  + Team discussions
  + Better / good for brainstorming, ideas sharing, bouncing ideas
  + Have more fun
  + Creative sessions
  + Easier to work together as team members on a specific project
  + Better knowledge sharing
  + Ability to join impromptu meetings
  + Facilitates team discussions
  + Being able to draw solutions together on paper
  + Improved team-work
  + Inspiration from collaboration
  + Office is place where I go to catch up with people I need to see
  + Easier to work with more people if desired
  + Ask questions on work requirements whenever I want
  + Being more informed about what team mates are doing
  + Easier to discuss work with colleagues if working on the same project intensively
  + Quicker to resolve queries / get responses from people
  + Easier to ask for help
  + Better communication with colleagues
  + Chat quickly rather than over lengthy email
  + Easier to delegate or manage tasks in person
  + Getting quicker approval from colleagues
  + Some meetings are just better/easier f2f
  + Able to quickly liaise with members of team of SMD
  + Getting collaborative work done more quickly (e.g. proposals and pitches)
* **Business development**
  + Easier to exchange points of views and interact with others to create business opportunities
  + Business development is easier
  + Coffee breaks with productivity discussions
  + **Outside the team**
    - Collaboration to drive new opportunities across teams
    - Cross practice pollination
    - Ability to network across teams
    - Easier to collaborate with other teams
* **Feedback and problem resolution**
  + More open work-based feedback when f2f
  + Communicate more effectively about needs
  + Resolving problems quickly and directly
  + Ease of providing ad-hoc feedback
  + Creativity and efficiency of discussing issues in person
  + Easier to debrief after meetings and agree on next steps
  + Better environment to discuss and solve issues

### Support and guidance / mentoring and learning:

* **Support and guidance**
  + Provide better/ genuine support to team which can’t do over a teams call
  + Easier to judge when to approach a person who needs support
  + Body language easier to read in person
  + Ability to address staff questions and mentor more informally
  + Ensure juniors’ wellbeing
  + Easier to have team building events
  + Providing support where needed
  + Different level of conversation with passive people
  + Much better to motivate people in person
  + Body lang
* **Mentoring and learning**
  + Learning how other people do things easier f2f
  + Learn from senior colleagues on the job
  + Cross-pollination learning from other / previous projects, easier to learn about lessons from previous work
  + Shadowing = better leaning opportunities
  + Learning / coaching, learning effects
  + Good for junior staff to have some visible leadership
  + Casual learning opportunities
  + More effectively train juniors
  + Connecting with junior staff to be a mentor / coach to them
  + On the job coaching of junior staff much easier
  + Better for learning technical skills
  + Better coaching
  + Unconscious training as a new hire
  + Better knowledge transfer
  + Privy to informal conversations on projects you’re working on
* **Networking**
  + Networking
  + More informal connection with seniors from other projects
  + Exposure to other accounts and work
  + Better awareness of other projects and events going on
  + Catch up with what’s going on
  + Ability to pick up on opportunities / easier to get new tasks (seniors more likely to request a piece of work in person than on teams)
  + Vector for growth
  + Meeting new people and creating useful networks
* **Presenteeism**
  + Reminding senior people you exist
  + Showing depth to personality
  + Show work presence and hours in office
  + Accountability
  + Visibility of work load
  + Having line managers see I am present

*So even if there isn’t a bias to favour those in office with promotion, they naturally have more learning opportunities (which then makes it less unfair that they are promoted…)*

### Work-life balance

* **Boundaries: separation between work and home**
  + Draw an invisible line between home and office, easier to draw a line
  + Separation between personal time/space and work time/space
  + Improved work-life separation
  + Being able to switch off after work
  + Freedom from working from home
  + Space from home environ / separate space from home to work in
  + Reduced expectations to work after standard hours
  + Better managed work hours
  + Getting out of the house is good for mental health
  + Being active in getting to work is a good thing
  + Go out for lunch rather than being at desk all day
  + Good not to eat, sleep AND work from home
  + Commute creates natural breaks / gives start and end to the working day
  + **Adds some variety / spice**
    - Change in environment can maintain engagement and productivity
    - Sense of normality in going back to the office
    - Break the monotony of WFH everyday
    - Less monotonous
    - Change of scenery, including going outside
    - Adding variety to the day
  + **Dedicated workspace (focus)**
    - Formality of work setting designed for work
    - Dedicated space to get only work done
    - Being able to do dedicated work
    - Easier to concentrate and better productivity (no children around)
    - Get things done faster
    - Better performance of team members
    - Feel more motivated to work
    - Professional work environment
* **Structure and routine**
  + Structure to the day
  + Dedicated time to just work (e.g. children and housekeeping issues left at home)
  + Good to have some work structure
  + Discipline
  + Dedicated work environment can make one feel more productive
  + Work without other distractions
  + Ability to focus
  + Better work environment and productivity
  + Increased productivity / focus
  + Hybrid work makes us use office time more carefully
  + More defined routine, sense of routine
  + WFO sets structure to the week

### Office setup vs home

* **Equipment and environment**
  + More/better/bigger screens
  + Better tech / IT services
  + High quality, faster, stable internet / IT connection; no connectivity issues
  + Ease of admin, access to printer /scanning (large scale printing too)
  + Better work equipment
  + Access to stationary
  + Large desks
  + Access to meeting rooms
  + Office warmer in winter
  + Better equipment and resources to execute job efficiently
* **Amenities**
  + Free coffee and snacks
  + Fruit basket
  + Diversity of lunch options, wider food choices
  + Good food in office canteen
  + Paid dinners when working late
  + Office location
  + Free brekkie Fridays

Summaries of different qualitative factors from other questions

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Qualitative Factor** | **% of respondents** | **Description** |
| Desire for greater flexibility than HWP allows | 19% | * Majority are suggestions for 2 days in office, 3 at home * Less rigid system, e.g. office time counted in days per month, or weeks per month * Flexibility of schedule (hours) as well as location is crucial * Possibility of working remote (inc. abroad) for extended periods * Suggestion of no office mandate at all; let individuals choose their own schedule |
| More autonomy needed than HWP allows to decide WA | 7% | * Blanket 2/3 days split is arbitrary given differences in individual, team and project needs * Should be up to individuals and teams on a case-by-case basis, e.g. only as project needs require (early or late in project development) * More empathy for those with different flexibility needs, notably parents and those with health concerns |
| Flexible work boosts work-life balance | 2% | * Work-life balance greatly improved by not needing to commute; including stress reductions * Work quantity *and* quality is better * Major wellbeing gains from spending more time with family |
| Better guidelines needed for WFH | 3% | * Need guidelines and clear expectations regarding work hours; higher work pressures * Inability to switch off after work; expectations to be on call even before or after work hours * Lack of clarity over how early or late meetings can be held given expanded work day |
| WFH boosts effectiveness | 1% | * WFH ease of conferencing tools, especially with colleagues from different locations * Lack of distractions in home environment |
| Better resources needed for WFH | 6% | * Need for more cost or equipment support for creating a better home working environment, mentioning desks, chairs, WIFI, screens, cameras, supplies and accessories, computers |
| Stronger commitment and buy-in needed for HWP | 3% | * Line managers should respect WFH allowance, and should treat it as a default rather than a request * Fear of ‘presenteeism’ * Working charter to which all levels are accountable, and in which inputs from all levels are included * Guidance and support from the top for middle managers in implementing policy |
| Clear and consistent communication needed re HWP | 4% | * Ensure HWP is clearly communicated across the firm (not only via managers), with regular updates on what is and isn’t working * Consistency across teams, so that all in the org are treated with the same opportunities * Ensure expectations are continually clarified about who is coming in and when, and about work hours |
| Client requirement pressures influence WA | 1% | * Clients may pressure employees not to work from home; support from team leads required * Employees should be flexible when it comes to client requirements at certain times |
| Lack of flexibility compared to competitors | 1% | * Failure to allow flexible working, or even fully remote, will impact hiring and retention * Offering less flexibility than some competitors |
| Safety concerns of returning to office | 7% | * Feel safer at home given the rise in COVID cases due to Omicron * Less comfortable visiting the office and attending socials * Anxiety commuting on public transport |
| Need to improve office environment | 4% | * Open plan office is not well set up for conducting meetings easily and often (lack of privacy, dearth of meeting rooms) * For some regions, office equipment can be improved, they can offer better lunch and other facilities to encourage people to come in * Office space is impersonal and less pleasant / comfortable to work in than at home |
| Remote working reduces social connectivity | 4% | * Missing social interactions in the company both within and beyond one’s team * Missing collaborative teamwork sessions * Hard to feel connected or a sense of belonging without interpersonal connection |
| Generate and maintain trust in employees | 3% | * Trust employees to work as they know best, regarding their location and schedule * Trust and responsibility were earned during the pandemic when employees showed they can work from home effectively * Imposing and enforcing HWP, rather than using it as a guide, undermines faith in the company |
| Positive and satisfied with the HWP | 14% | * Strong sense of gratitude for the ability to work hybrid * Appreciation of in-person benefits, e.g. coaching and mentoring, networking * HWP is good though continued refining of it to ensure it works properly is needed * Encouragement needed to get more buy in for policy |
| Coordination challenges in implementing HWP | 11% | * Coordination issues making HWP implementation more difficult, notably ensuring teams are in office together and that meeting rooms are available for hybrid meetings * Need for better office use management system, to track availability and coordinate teams in office * Need creative ways of building team spirit and making meetings interesting when held online * Some teams are not following HWP and should be encouraged to do so |
| Anxiety from WFH | 1% | * Feeling under constant anxiety and pressure * Remote working can feel isolating |
| Can't answer yet | 1% | * Some regions haven’t implemented HWP yet |