Q5

In partnership with

beamible

"*Not since the industrial revolution have companies really had to think about work design, about what tasks get done and where do those tasks get done, and when and how do you deconstruct work so that it's done in an optimal manner*"

Nickle LaMoreaux CHRO, IBM
LinkedIn Global Talent Trends 2022

Workplace flexibility: beyond a 'one size fits all' approach

A curated approach to designing a strategy and operating model that embraces workplace flexibility

The genie is out of the bottle.

Whether those impacts were positive or negative, the expectations of the workforce have shifted so dramatically that flexible working is now no longer a 'nice to have'.

Flexible working arrangements for many are now non-negotiable.

And that's ok.

63%

of professionals selected work-life balance as their top priority when picking a new job (this was the highest priority - even above compensation and benefits at 60%)
LinkedIn Global Talent Trends 2022

82%

of business leaders plan to maintain a partial work-from-home structure even after COVID-19 is no longer a threat.
Gartner, 2020

The issues of flexible as the new default.

The flexible plans many of us put in place were a stop-gap and just about worked for us in a crisis.

We now need a long term, sustainable organisational design that treats flexible working as the default, not something that will fade away.

To incorporate flexible working into our organisations in the long term, we need to address these key issues.

Creating clarity
We know that employees want flexibility on location and time, but we don't often talk about their need for certainty and clarity of expectations

Office usage
Understanding how and when employees will use the office and how many will come into the office, impacts how businesses invest in office space and equipment in the office and at home

Software, hardware & security
Collaboration tools, hardware and security requirements are also a key consideration for investing to ensure customers and compliance is maintained during flexible work arrangements

Different job needs
The ability to offer flexibility varies by job and industry – we need to find the right balance to optimise productivity and performance

Re-establishing culture
For some, purely remote work has had a damaging impact on company culture and so we need to identify when to physically come together to celebrate, socialise and collaborate in a much more deliberate way

Urgency to act
As we transition into new and more agile ways of working, employees want to know when they need to come back into the office and how often

The challenge for leaders.

These issues create two clear challenges for leaders:

Challenge #1

How can leaders provide clear guidance to employees on where[1] work can be done to maximise wellbeing, engagement and productivity, whilst still allowing for flexibility for individual circumstances?

Challenge #2

How can leaders get a clear, objective view on the requirements for office space (both how it is used and how much of it is needed) and what requirements there are for those working from home?

Do I get a choice?
Can I work from home?
Can I choose?
Can I conduct my role remotely?

And if savings can be made, where should be invested –
better facilities, salaries, profit, reinvesting in tech for remote work?

1 Flexible working is a broad term that can cover flexibility of location, flexibility of time and other factors. The primary focus here is on location; where work gets done.

The mindset shift required.

1

Remote first.
"The next generation company is not seeking to return to the office but adapting to a more distributed world. This form of remote working — in many cases enforced by the isolation economy — is now seen as the new norm[1]." We are going to see rapid growth in remote working practices.

2

The need for safety.
The boundary between personal life and work is now even more blurry. Sharing individual circumstances requires trust that it won't negatively impact career opportunities. Managers have even more responsibility with this information and a need to ensure that all members are treated fairly.

3

Flexible ←→ inclusive.
"For some employees, remote work is about much more than flexibility and productivity. It is about the ability to work at all. The option to work remotely is not just good for employees. It is a major step toward creating more inclusive organisations."[2]

1 2021, Research from Simon Wardley, Industrialisation, next generation behaviours
2 Forbes, 'How Hybrid Remote Work Improves Diversity And Inclusion'

Key elements of our approach

Our approach enables teams to identify what location flexibility works for them based on the nature of their work. This is especially relevant if your organisation has very different business units.

Once clear expectations, are in place, there are areas, such as policy and processes that also need to be aligned.
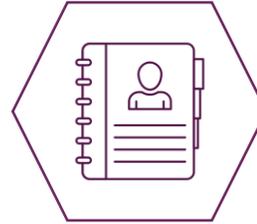
Focuses on the nature of the role
We create a role-based guide, capturing the nature of work for each team, key principles, requirements and behaviours and giving a consistent structure to the time and place requirements of each type of role.

Builds capability in your managers
We co-design an approach for managers to capture their team's flexible working preferences consistently and build capability so they can lead those discussions effectively.

Identifies efficiencies and re-invests
We model the additional costs and savings that moving to a flexible model will bring e.g. property capacity requirements based on new team ways of working.

Breaking it down

To create this nuanced view of what the potential is within your organisation for flexible work, we focus in on the nature of work you do and redesign to optimise productivity, creating a clear guide that can be shared across the organisation.

7-12 weeks depending on scope, variation in role types and number of employees

Understand your work

Engage your team leaders using Beamible, an online tool to identify the nature of your work, through the roles and tasks they perform

Assess scope for flexibility

Map the roles and tasks to the key drivers of productivity. Assess how these drivers will be affected by where and when employees work

Define role based profiles

Create role-based profiles based on the nature of your work and develop a guide for managers

Clarify expectations & understand circumstances

Ensure managers are equipped to facilitate conversations with their teams. Review existing policies and assess property capacity

What we give to you

1 Location flex insights.
Access to Beamible data shows what work each team does and any constraints on location. This dataset can include office capacity data and the assumptions you'd like to apply to specific work types, i.e. *'we believe all customer collaboration should be on client site'.*

2 Team leader guides.
What you get is a set of clear workshop and conversation guides for your leaders to support them engage and have the right conversations with your teams. This doesn't replace one-to-one conversations about individual circumstances; this is where we can support your managers.

**3** A communication strategy that you can *actually* communicate.
A clear plan on what to communicate, when, and to who. This is an ongoing and continuous approach that is driven by transparency – not a surprise at the end. A considered approach is required to support transitioning away from established ways of working.

Using data to better understand your people

beamible

We'd love to introduce you to our partner Beamible who are our flexible work experts. Through tooling, data and intelligent insights, Beamible provides solutions for HR teams and managers to enable flex at scale.

Together we are a formidable combination in the design of effective teams and organisations in light of hybrid ways of working.
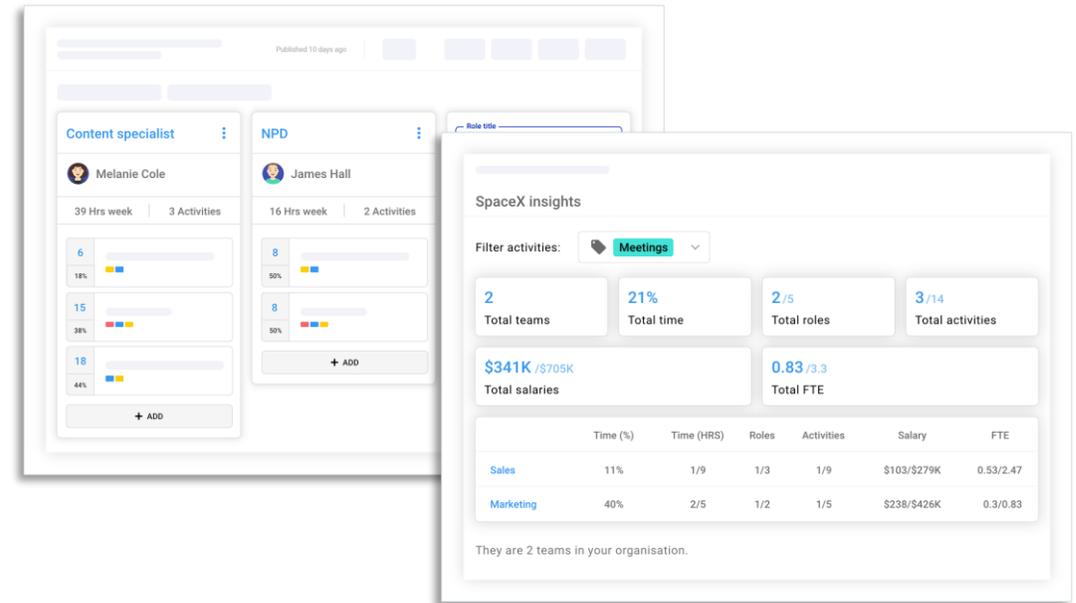
What this means for your business

There are several benefits that are realised by following our approach:

Unlock productivity
By mapping the work to the key drivers of productivity and designing accordingly, we ensure that each role has the right make up of place and time to optimise productivity.

Increase employee satisfaction
By giving flexibility to roles and personal preferences, employees are more satisfied leading to higher performance and higher retention.

Inclusive and fair
Our approach accounts for unintended consequences for specific employee groups that has been identified through recent research.

Identify cost & effort savings
By understanding whether tasks can be done remotely or outside of regular working hours, we can identify opportunities to reduce costs e.g. office space and to make processes more efficient.

Expand talent pool
By allowing for more flexible working arrangements, you can access a much larger potential talent pool of those who work remotely or those who cannot work 9 to 5.

Ready to make hybrid working work for you?

Speak to any of our team below to learn more.

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