





# RE-IMAGINING THE WORKPLACE PROGRAMMES OF TRANSFORMATION

The fundamental difference between the Great Financial Crisis and COVID-19 from a workplace transformation perspective is that in 2008, companies, clients and employees largely read about it, whilst in 2020, everybody has experienced it.

This means that, as well as the need to address cost savings for many businesses, there is a desire from employees to see change. They are looking for greater choice and flexibility, and a more rewarding and sustainable work experience. Businesses need to transformational programmes that leverage this desire for change and realise the benefits as quickly as possible.

#### What we have learned from COVID-19?

We have learned that people are able to work effectively from home on a mass scale, and indeed this has resulted in productivity improvements and work-life balance benefits for many. But for others, there has been a sense of isolation and/or issues related to not having the appropriate space to work from home effectively. But we emerge from this crisis, not asking whether people can work from home, but who should work from home and for how long. And not just from home but other options and settings are equally important.

Just because a person does not have the physical space to work from home, why should they be precluded from enjoying the benefits of a cancelled commute and a better work-life balance? Our clients are already developing strategies to explore how they could provide options for people to work closer to home (WC2H). This maybe through operational buildings that they already have, if for example they are a Bank or a Local Authority, but there is also an opportunity for the market to respond to this demand. In the future, we anticipate the co-working providers to respond to this need, as well as potentially coffee shops, which will provide more focus on local neighbourhoods and a positive story for the hard-hit retail sector.

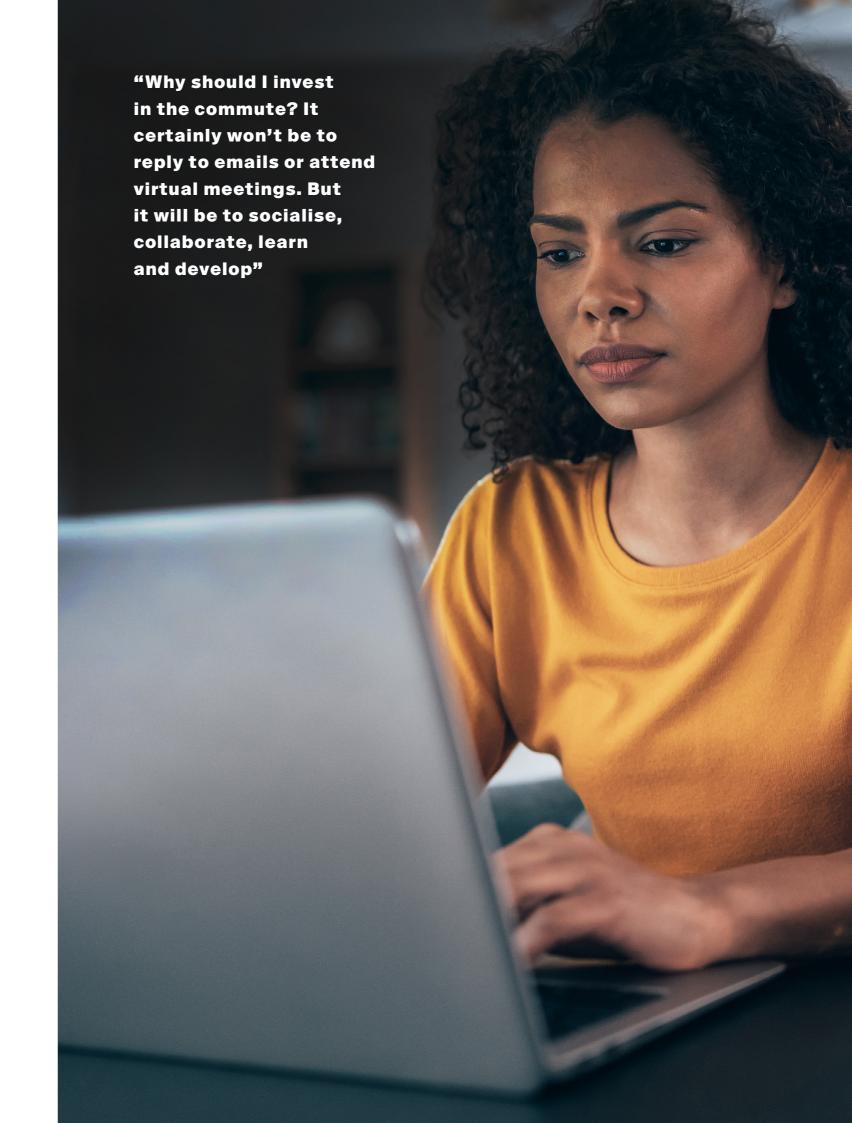
Within the workplace itself, we will also see a greater variety of spaces to cope with the changing needs of employees. This will be necessary to address the fundamental question: Why should I invest in the commute? It certainly won't be to reply to e-mails or attend virtual meetings. But it will be to socialise, collaborate, learn and develop.

The workplace will evolve to place significantly less focus on workstation, and much more emphasis on a variety of work settings that facilitate these activities.

There are also several significant business drivers that will influence the blend of spaces and settings in the future workplace strategy. The first is innovation. At a national level, there is a need to kick-start our economies. At a business level, the crisis has already resulted in significant structural change in many sectors. Others are recognising that they can do business in better, simpler, faster and less expensive ways, which is creating opportunities and competitive threats.

We therefore see Innovation Hubs being a key component of the future portfolio mix, whether internal to the business or in a more co-working style shared operation. Innovation means education and development of staff, and COVID-19 has also demonstrated the potential of on-line learning, which certainly has a role to play in the development of staff in the future. But again, the benefits of a blended learning experience have also become clear as employees recognised the importance of face to face development in many areas. In the same way that working from home has raised the bar of the office workplace experience, the online learning experience means that the classroom learning experience needs to be much stronger, and so it is anticipated that there will be more shared high-experience centres.

Finally, two drivers that will only be turbo-charged in importance from their pre-COVID-19 status, which was already high, are wellbeing and sustainability. There is a global sense that these two issues are what people want governments and businesses to focus on as we emerge from the pain and anxiety induced by the pandemic. This will result in a lot less travel, commuting and face-to-face business, but more sustainable buildings and a focus on the physical, mental, spiritual and social needs of employees.



## **FUTURE SCENARIOS**

The future is therefore migrating from a One Size Fits Nobody world, where the choice was the office and occasional remote working, to a workplace is a service offering choice to staff world, and resulting in a more dispersed, localised, accessible and sustainable real estate platform.

Asking how the business will work in the future is halfway to finding the answer. We need to learn from the COVID working from home experiment to evolve and develop a new way of working that blends the physical and the virtual. Not just the home and the office, but many other settings. The answer will not be a one size fits all solution, but a workplace as a service offering to staff, resulting in a more dispersed, localised, accessible, and sustainable real estate platform.

The office, in some form, will remain at the heart, providing the glue that keeps the organisation together, building and cementing the relationships that work together, virtually and physically, which also fill the organisational purpose.

**Before COVID-19** 

90% office

One size fits all, or nobody?

10% remote



The platform and blend of solutions and models will vary depending on both sector and a business's starting point. A law firm with offices limited to global cities may remain centralised, whilst a public sector organisation servicing a specific area could become very localised. Likewise, an engineering firm with projects nationally could become dispersed, and a new start-up business could be virtual.

The industry also needs to respond to this opportunity creating solutions that focus on local access, innovation and education. This does not just mean creating the space, but the service, the content and the experience.

**After COVID-19** 

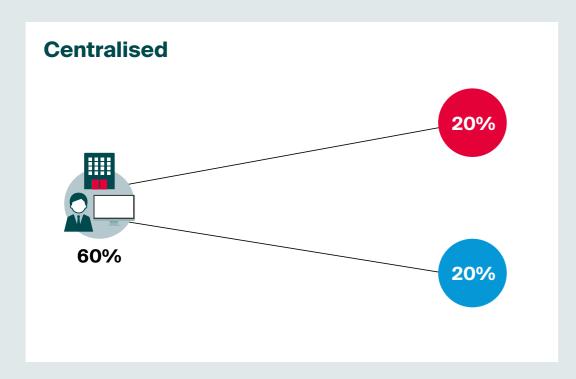
## Workplace as a service Offering of choices

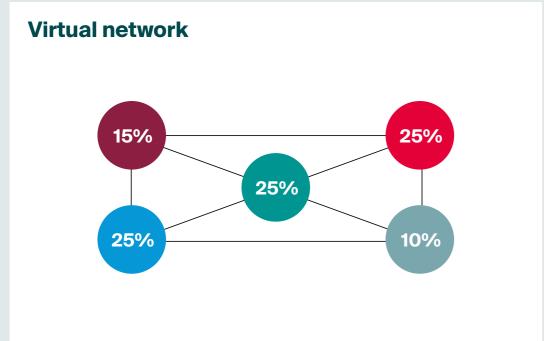
Client facing space Community building



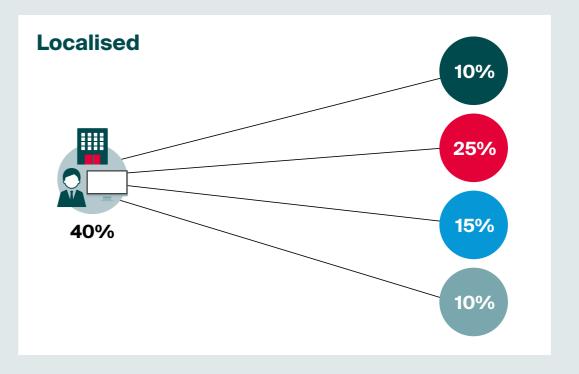
**Local or Regional Office** 

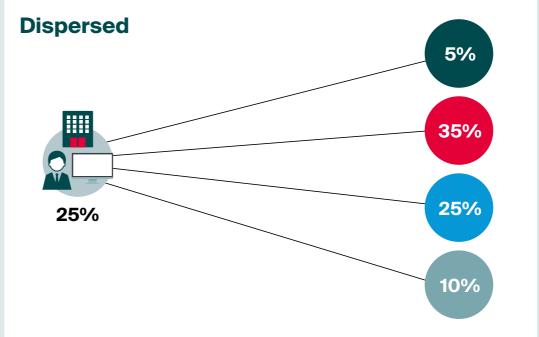
# NEW POTENTIAL WORKPLACE MODELS













## PROGRAMMES OF TRANSFORMATIONS

Here are the following programmes of transformation that will allow business to recognise the changing needs of their employees, and to realise the benefits effectively:



## **Profiling**

The future is therefore not a one size fits all solution for employees, but a blend of different options, within and beyond the office. It is therefore essential to develop a much more customer-centric perspective on your workforce. This means profiling based upon insight into how it is working and what the preferences are. This is multi-dimensional and requires an understanding of how to blend the physical and virtual platforms, psychometric and personal preferences, and work activities.



## Workplace Service strategy

Having profiled the business, the scenarios can be assessed, and a workplace service strategy can be developed, integrating HR, ICT and Real Estate/Workplace functions. This can then be developed into a programme of works with associated costs and benefits, to inform the business case. The benefits realisation would focus on productivity, experience and efficiency.



## **Change Management**

It would be a mistake to conclude that because we have worked from home for a while we do not need to manage the change. There will be multiple changes in terms of how we use the office and behave in it, management style, team dynamics, collaboration and different people starting to work in different ways. All this needs to be communicated effectively, while managers and teams need to be educated and developed appropriately.



## **Delivery and Benefits Realisation**

Once the transformation business case is approved the programme needs to be delivered and the benefits realised. This is likely to mean multiple buildings will be impacted in different geographies as well as many work streams, whether workplace design and delivery, real estate disposition and/or acquisition, technology and change management. The economies of scale and delivery effectiveness of this at a programme level are undoubted. Designing and managing the programme accordingly will be critical to its success, driving its performance, managing the risk and integrating the components whether within the business or externally. The programme itself needs to be a process of continuous challenge and process improvement resulting in enhanced outcomes beyond the original business case aspirations, and incorporating the changing needs of the business.





Workstyle B Internal Networker



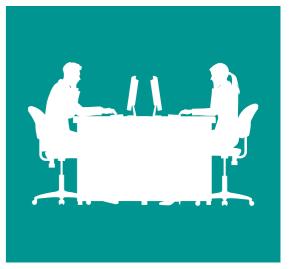
Workstyle C Static



Workstyle D Flexible



Workstyle E Office Based



9

## **GLOBAL CAPABILITY**



We have over 150 workplace consultants speaking over 20 languages and skills that range from strategy to change management and from wellbeing to sustainability. Since 2016 our consultants have transformed how over 300,000 employees have worked.

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