

Why the four-day working week might not be fit for all

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

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London, 6th June 2022 – As firms across the UK begin the biggest experiment of four-day working weeks without a decrease in pay, global leader in creating people-centric spaces Unispace has warned of the need to take a tailored approach to working styles.

Following the confirmation today that firms across a range of sectors in the UK will be trialling reduced working weeks without loss of pay, Unispace urged employers to ensure flexibility in working styles isn't reduced as a result.

Lawrence Mohiuddine, CEO EMEA at Unispace, commented

“This trial of a new working style is certainly laudable in the new world of work, but as a CEO I would be wary of pushing one set up for many in an environment where flexibility is key. Just as we've learnt that the five-day work week isn't viable for all, so too could the four-day week be for some. If there's one crucial takeaway from the pandemic, it's that taking a catch-all approach to working style mandates isn't always the best option. People from different demographics and home lives will have different preferences and if the right balance in working styles is to be achieved there needs to be flexibility, rather than broadly dictating requirements for all.

“For some, the option to get out to the office five days a week is appealing and it's important that this isn't overlooked. In fact, in a study of 3,000 office workers and 2,750 employers across Europe we found that 65% of those living with a spouse or partner and children preferred to be in the office, while 59% of those living alone also had a desire to be in the workplace rather than at home. While there will be many individuals who value the extra time they get from home, for others, the option to work amongst their peers for a full week in order to progress their careers is also still desired and they shouldn't be disadvantaged by this change. As a case in point, our same study showed that the younger generation of the workforce would be happier to return to the office if they had access to training and development programmes (cited by 80% of respondents aged 18-35). A further 81% of those living with housemates and 75% of those living with a spouse / partner and children also cited a desire to return if they could gain access to training.

“The future workforce is flexible and while four-day working weeks is an innovative approach that should be explored, the voice of all talent pools needs to be listened to in today's talent-short

market. No single approach to working set ups will meet the needs of everyone, but a flexible style that puts the power in the hands of today's talent will be more desirable for a greater range of individuals.”

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Editor's notes

About Unispace

A strategy, design, and construction leader creating people-centric spaces for a rapidly changing world. Unispace is a global firm that offers a unified team solution for creating spaces that spark brilliance, deepen connections, foster a sense of belonging and propel success. With 5,500 projects completed, a presence across 26 countries, and 600+ employees worldwide, Unispace creates spaces powered by collaborative client partnerships, delivered seamlessly across borders, and enabled by real-world insights.