

Data reveals Gen Z rely on the traditional office more than any other generation

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Though digital natives, research indicates that Gen Z rely heavily on the professional and social structure of the office, with 78% finding it easier to bond with colleagues in the workplace and 81% feeling disconnected from their peers when working from home.

Gen Z crave in-person socialisation

The data, from global workplace creation experts, Unispace (<https://www.unispace.com/>), taken from a study of 3000 office workers, 1/3rd of which were in the earlier stages of their career, also revealed that the majority (79%) of Gen Z respondents felt more active when working in the office, while among older workers this figure sits at 66%. Most early careers professionals (60%) also admitted that work-from-home restrictions made them value the office more whereas this figure stood at just 43% for older workers. This suggests that Gen Z values the structure, socialisation, and support that a physical office provides more than older members of the workforce.

A lack of peer-to-peer learning

According to the study, younger demographics are also vying for learning and development opportunities from peers, but want to be able to access this in person. The vast majority (80%) of Gen Z respondents indicated that access to training would encourage them back to the workplace. The same percentage said they would be happier to return to work if they knew their team was going to be in the office, underlining the importance of face time for those in the earlier stages of their careers.

Despite the evident value that the younger generation put on the physical workplace, just 11% say they are happy with the way their office is set up, which is indicative of a huge opportunity to better support Gen Z in the workplace and subsequently bolster early career recruitment and retention.

Stuart Finnie, Head of Design at Unispace, commented:

“While younger generations may face the stereotype of being a ‘digital-only’ group of workers, our research clearly shows that they prioritise the ability to learn from others face to face. And despite prevailing technology, nothing can replace the sense of belonging that in-person socialisation can bring. While younger workers generally have access to technology and the digital skills to work remotely long-term, our research suggests that this group values the opportunity, collaboration, and support that a physical office provides more than any other age group. But employers are seemingly failing to utilise the power of the office to attract these individuals.”

“With Gen Zers now accounting for around a third of the global population, for employers looking to beat the competition, considerations must be made to improve the quality of the environments they provide. Those employers who consider their workplace and generational needs, will be able to not only engage and retain their best talent, but also attract new staff in our current candidate-led jobs market.”

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