

Employees in the United Kingdom spend less time in the office than any other country globally – but still want to reduce this time even further

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- Just 34% of employees are in the office four or more days a week, below the global average of 50%
- Businesses and employers are at odds, with 74% of firms expecting increased office attendance
- Career progression is at risk with 75% of businesses stating this is limited for hybrid workers

Workers in the United Kingdom (UK) spend less time in the office than any other country, however they want to further reduce their days as unhappiness with the office grows. That is according to a new study by global workplace creation experts Unispace.

Returning for Good (<https://www.unispace.com/thought-leadership>), a Unispace Global Workplace Insights report – which combined the results of an in-depth survey of 9,500 employees and 6,650 business leaders from 17 countries worldwide – found that just 34% of employees in the UK are in the office four or more days a week, less time than workers in any other country.

Despite these comparatively low attendance levels, employees want to reduce the number of days spent in the workplace even further, with just 21% of workers in the UK currently happy to spend four or more days per week in the office.

Hot-desking is prominent in the UK, with 56% of employees indicating their office is set up to work in this way, above the global average of 48%. Of those who do hot-desk, 76% would be more inclined to head into the office on a regular basis if they had an assigned desk.

Employers and employees at odds

The data did highlight a misalignment between employers and employees that suggests a lack of communication. Only 53% of UK workers expect to eventually be in the office at least four days a week, but employers are more likely to perceive that a return is on the cards, with 74% expecting this to happen in the near future.

While 75% of employers highlighted that career progression including pay rises, promotions and bonuses will be negatively impacted for hybrid workers, employees are less aware of this risk, with only 59% stating that they believe this to be the case.

Workers in the UK also recorded the lowest level of company loyalty (68% versus the global average of 77%), though this was also underestimated by employers, with 74% believing their employees were devoted to their organisation.

Lawrence Mohiuddine, CEO, EMEA at Unispace, commented:

“Results from the UK highlight that employees are now in the driver’s seat and are better able to make demands of their employers more than ever before over where and how they choose to work. However, there is a clear lack of communication between employees and businesses, with views around future office returns and the impact of hybrid working on career progression differing between the two groups. Businesses need to find a way to strike the right balance to encourage people to form new habits and head into the office but, equally, employees need to be given a compelling reason to do so.”

“With 58% of workers across the country still reluctant to return to the office, even if it impacts their career prospects, businesses will only continue to face recruitment and retention issues if they do not address the underlying challenges around workplace returns. This includes listening to what employees want in the UK, including creating more private spaces, mimicking the benefits of home working environments, whilst still gaining from the benefits of collaborative and social workspaces.”

Ends

About Unispace

A strategy, design, and construction leader creating experiences for work for a rapidly changing world. Unispace is a global firm that offers a unified team solution for creating people-centric spaces with purpose – including offices, laboratories and life sciences facilities, campuses, HQs, hospitality and sports venues and retail 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 700+ employees

worldwide, our goal is to create spaces that spark brilliance for the people who use them – powered by collaborative client partnerships, delivered seamlessly across borders, and enabled by real-world insights.

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