

The Future of Impactful Work

Creating the office of the future: A report helping businesses and charities understand the future of work

Impactful.

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Why are we writing about the future of work?

The world of work is changing fundamentally, and quickly. From a mass migration onto digital platforms, a sharper focus on physical and mental wellbeing through the pandemic, an absolute necessity to deliver on diversity, equity and inclusion and the climate crisis increasingly impacting every part of our lives. Every organisation will need to respond and adapt to these challenges.

What these multiple, intersecting challenges also present is an opportunity for forward thinking, innovative leaders to rebuild their organisations to create lasting commercial impact, as well as proactively improve people's lives and protect and regenerate the planet.

Whilst much has been written about the future of work, what we noticed was missing, was a specific focus on investing in the changes that centre environmental and social impact.

Where organisations can have the biggest impact is how they think about the work they do and how they do it, whilst nurturing their people that do the work too.

This report will help you:

- + Make the most of the opportunities that all these changes present
- + Take the learnings from covid into how you work in the future
- + Transition smoothly from working during the pandemic into the post covid world
- + Understand what your physical office strategy should look like given the move to a hybrid world
- + Maximise your employee, customer and wider stakeholders' health and wellbeing through everything that you do
- + Actively reduce your environmental impact in an operationally efficient way
- + Contribute to lasting social and environmental impact as a team and an organisation

We dive into:

+ **Impactful physical offices** - Designing spaces that are flexible and optimised for collaboration, learning and wellbeing.

+ **Hybrid work** - The skills, organisational policies and technology needed to get the biggest benefit from hybrid working.

+ **Organisational culture** - How prioritising accessibility, physical health, mental wellbeing and effective performance management will be critical to attract, motivate and retain your people.

+ **What you can do and how Impactful can help** - Throughout, we've included what you can do to invest in your impact and learnings from the work we do with our partners to develop sustainable, authentic impact strategies.

Increasingly, social and environmental risks *are* business risks. The organisations that will survive and thrive in the months and years to come will be the ones that recognise that risk and invest in building resilient, adaptable, impact driven organisations.

Who we are

Impactful is an **Impact Strategy Agency**.

Everything we do, as individuals and organisations, has an impact.

So, we work with forward thinking organisations to understand the impact you're already having and help you to design authentic, sustainable solutions that maximise both your commercial success, and your positive impact on people and the planet.

We decided to build Impactful after an immersion into the world of social innovation and entrepreneurship as fellows on [Year Here](#). We noticed an opportunity to bring our expertise in impact and innovation into the commercial world, to help businesses to develop ambitious and sustainable impact strategies.

Combining commercial success and positive impact shouldn't just be left to the social entrepreneurs. Our belief is that every business has the power, ability and responsibility to change people's lives for the better and co-exist regeneratively with our planet.

We spend our time simplifying how the businesses we work with can have more social and environmental impact.

What we do

- + Develop thought leadership, like this report
- + Design tools and processes to surface impact opportunities
- + Deliver training and education
- + Partner one-on-one with businesses who are committed to having more impact to design bespoke impact strategies

Why impact?

We use the word 'impact' intentionally. Impact, as defined by the [Impact Management Project](#), is:

"A change in an outcome caused by an organisation. An impact can be positive or negative, intended or unintended."

And falls broadly into three categories:

- + **A - Act to avoid harm**
- + **B - Benefit Stakeholders**
- + **C - Contribute to solutions**

This continues to be the working definition that we use at Impactful as it clearly articulates the effects that a businesses can have, be that intentionally or unintentionally, creating negative or positive impact. Our work helps you to identify the impact you are already having, reduce intended and unintended negative impact and maximise your intended positive impact.

We've learnt viscerally during the pandemic that we are all interconnected, and to solve human problems we need cooperation and collaboration at every level, interpersonal, in communities, nationally and globally.

What we have also come to understand is that "business as usual" needs to change. We have a chance now to "build back better", taking into consideration a wider breadth of stakeholders, including all parts of society and the environment.

Impact opportunities for people

The pandemic did not affect everyone equally. This last year has shone a light on how differently we have experienced the consequences of Covid-19 depending on our gender, race, socio-economic status or disabilities.

We discovered who our true key workers were, those people working on the frontline and risking their lives to keep society running smoothly. The pandemic highlighted how young workers, women, people with disabilities and ethnically diverse communities were at a much higher risk of job insecurity.

The Black Lives Matter movement gained worldwide traction after the murder of George Floyd. We all realised we had much more to do to tackle racial injustice. Businesses began to notice their (lack of) diversity, with many creating new strategies around Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and explored practices to ensure they were actively anti-racist.

Organisations became more accessible overnight. Reasonable adjustments were offered to knowledge workers and office based workers, something that was historically fought for by communities with disabilities, carers and working parents. Now, they provide flexibility for everyone. More geographically diverse hiring has become common place as people aren't required to be within commuting distance of an office.

Work-life flexibility has taken new forms as many of us blend our work days and personal lives at home. This has come with upsides: no commutes, time to be with loved ones, taking breaks and opportunities to exercise; as well as some downsides: isolation, mental health struggles, longer working days and exhaustion.

Technology now mediates more of our lives than ever, at home and at work. Naturally this will favour digital natives and those who have access to strong wifi, appropriate hardware and software and digital skills. The digital divide became more apparent over the past year and we have a long way to go to ensure that no one is left behind.

Impact opportunities for planet

We saw the largest reduction in annual CO2 emissions ever recorded over the pandemic, but a lot of work is needed to ensure that 2020 was not a one off. With COP26 scheduled to take place in Glasgow at the end of this year, the UK can lead by example in the mission to get every country to commit to net zero by 2050. [#Racetozero](#), an initiative from the UN, was created in order to get businesses, cities, regions and investors to also make a commitment and show the steps they are going to take to achieve net zero by the latest, 2050.

The absence of commuting or flying has provided an opportunity for the environment to get some much needed respite from our activities. Now we know we can connect with colleagues and clients across the world from our living rooms, we can reduce unnecessary business travel.

The option to work from home also means cutting out significant commuting and emissions from transit. Where office space is needed, local co-working spaces and community hubs are popping up, so employees have the option of staying local rather than commuting into big cities.

We've seen the fragility and instability of just in time, hyper-globalised supply chains. Are there opportunities to create local, resilient supply chains which support communities and reduce emissions further?

Businesses have a rare opportunity to take the learnings from how we've worked in the pandemic to drastically reduce their carbon footprint.

The Opportunity

Businesses at their best can contribute to so many of the challenges surfaced over the pandemic. There is a huge opportunity to innovate, as many organisations did spontaneously over the past year, making PPE or hand sanitiser, providing meals for those in need, fundraising, offering their skills and resources.

We need to maintain that momentum to tackle other global crises we're facing from climate change, racial injustice, inequality and more. The pandemic has shown that it is possible, mutually beneficial and potentially hugely impactful.

As the world of work changes seismically again for the second time in less than two years, the question won't be, 'What will the world look like in the future?'. Instead, it will be, 'What characteristics will organisations need to display in order to succeed?' [Oliver Wyman](#) completed a study that identified the following characteristics as important for organisations who are looking for success in unstable times:

1. Confront reality – Be honest about what is not known.

Urge people to trade in facts, not optimism. Instead, admit you don't know and explain that you are dealing in several different scenarios.

"We believe organizations should embrace New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman's perspective that humans who want to adapt in an age of acceleration must develop "dynamic stability." Rather than trying to stop an inevitable storm of change, Friedman encourages leaders to "build an eye that moves with the storm, draws energy from it, but creates a platform of dynamic stability within it." [Deloitte](#)

2. Develop resilience

As the COVID-19 pandemic ebbs and markets and economies re-open, our longstanding focus on efficiency and growth in the workplace will likely give way to one on business-model resilience. The companies that thrive will be the ones that get the new work equation – flexibility + agility + resilience – right. [WEF](#)

3. Become a 'learn-it-all', not a 'know-it-all'

The velocity of change in our world also suggests that only humble learners who enable their people to stretch and grow sustainably will remain relevant as leaders. As Peter Drucker once famously said: "The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence. It is to act with yesterday's logic." [Oliver Wyman](#)

The characteristics above describe an organisation that can succeed in the choppy waters of short term change; however, the prevailing hope is that the size and frequency of change will start to return to more normal manageable levels soon. With that in mind there are longer term trends that organisations should be tracking against and preparing for. [Corporate Rebels](#), a Dutch workplace and culture hub, identified eight trends that separate the most progressive workplaces from everyone else.

1. **Profit** to **Purpose & Values**

Having purpose and meaning gives people the energy, passion and motivation to get out of bed in the morning.

2. **Hierarchical pyramid** to **Network of teams**

The rigidity of command-and-control does not promote agility, speed, and engagement.

3. **Directive leadership** to **Supportive leadership**

They do everything in their power to remove barriers. They help their employees thrive. Authority is no longer linked to rank, but rather to the ability to lead by example.

4. **Plan & predict** to **Experiment & adapt**

The new reality is that as the environment gets more complex, it's impossible to make precise predictions. Adaptability is now much more important.

5. **Rules & control** to **Freedom & trust**

Employees are responsible adults who can be trusted. They don't need extensive control. They perform best when given a high degree of autonomy. They can be trusted to do their job in the way they see fit.

6. **Centralised authority** to **Distributed decision making**

Employees on the frontline have the best understanding of customers, suppliers and production. Therefore, frontline employees should make the majority of the decisions—if the aim is to be agile in responding to clients.

7. **Secrecy** to **Radical transparency**

To be able to distribute authority to frontline employees requires a culture of radical transparency.

8. **Job descriptions** to **Talents & mastery**

People prefer working on tasks they like, ones that fit their talents and strengths. We know that doing what you are good at increases motivation and engagement.

The Future of Work

It's clear that the pandemic has accelerated some work trends, eroded norms and created new challenges. What these trends are and how to go about tackling new challenges is the focus of the rest of this report.

However, before we dive in, we wanted to explore what good work itself looks like and what sort of work people are more likely to be looking for.

Good work principles ([RSA](#))

In 2020 the RSA released a blueprint for good work. Within which they note five good work principles:

- + **Security** – all should enjoy work that provides enough economic security to participate equally in society;
- + **Wellbeing** – all should enjoy work that positively affects their physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- + **Growth** – all should enjoy work that grows and develops their capabilities;
- + **Freedom** – all should enjoy work that provides freedom to pursue a larger life;
- + **Subjective nurture** – all should enjoy work that nurtures their subjective working identity.

What employees are looking for

+ **Flexibility** - The next generations will prioritise flexibility with remote work options, cost savings from daily commutes and progressive organizations that are purpose-driven with CSR initiatives. [Forbes](#)

+ **Purpose** - In addition to flexible working, almost one fifth of the workforce (16%) said they want to do more to help their community and society after the pandemic, suggesting that COVID-19 has continued the trend of drawing employees towards socially responsible organisations and opportunities. [KPMG](#)

+ **Wellbeing** - Now is the time to embed well-being into every aspect of the design and delivery of work itself and to fundamentally redesign work toward outputs instead of activities. This will open up the possibility for workers to both live and perform at their best. [Deloitte](#)

“What is an ideal worker? For decades, scholars have described how organizations were built upon the implicit model of an “ideal worker”: one who is wholly devoted to their job and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, every year of their career. This was an always unrealistic archetype, and the Covid-19 crisis has shown just how unrealistic it is. Post-pandemic, can we create a system that fits real workers, not just idealized ones? If so, we have the opportunity to emerge from this crisis with both healthier employees and better performing organizations.”

[HBR](#)

The Office

In the post pandemic world, after a year of many of us working remotely some have been rightly asking '**What is the office actually for now?**'.

We used to go to the office because that's where the tools of our work were, it's where all our colleagues were and because we were told we had to by our bosses.

There were, however, shifts in the way we used our office spaces long before the pandemic hit. Many forward thinking organisations, often innovative tech companies, saw the opportunity to create an environment much like a university campus, one that promoted collaboration, learning, sharing, impromptu conversations and individual wellbeing. This all served to help the organisation innovate, develop ideas and attract the best talent, keeping them productive and happy.

What will be the hallmarks of the office of the future?

+ Embodiment of the organisation's brand and ethos

One of the few things that an office can still uniquely do is represent the values and story of the organisation to anyone entering that space. Whether it's for new joiners, clients, current staff, investors, partners or any other stakeholder, the physical space often gives a visceral first impression of what that organisation stands for and the mission it's working towards.

+ Serendipitous conversations and knowledge sharing

Productive eavesdropping and informal conversations happen organically when people are co-located. People are naturally reminded of what others are working on and prompted to ask questions or connect over shared interests. This could be amplified in the future, with project displays or shared collaboration spaces to encourage curiosity and interaction.

+ Brings people together

Socialising virtually has its limits. Coming together in person after a busy week or to celebrate a big win or personal milestone is something many people have missed. The microinteractions, water cooler moments, chats over a cup of tea are vital to create a sense of team cohesion. The office will still be an important place to gather and get to know one another outside of a work context, building social capital between colleagues.

+ Facilitates health and wellbeing

Everyone has become conscious of their own health and wellbeing over the past year. Employees will be looking at how the return to the office supports their wellbeing. This could be in the design of the office to allow for better ventilation, natural light or greenery, installing bike racks and offering the cycle to work scheme, creating quiet spaces or investing in more hygienic office equipment.

'It turns out that work, which is what the office was supposed to be for, is possible to do from somewhere else.'

The New Yorker

If we think of offices as places where we collaborate and create community, we probably wouldn't design them as lines of desks (factory optimised for maximum number of backsides on seats).

Dr Nicola Millard,

Principle Innovation Partner, BT

"Essentially the office becomes a break from working at home, you get to socialize with coworkers, help people, get help, learn, teach and discuss ideas."

TIME

The Office

What could the office of the future look like?

To bring these elements to life, some simple, smart design is all it takes.

- + Flexible spaces that are intentionally multifunctional will allow your team to work in the way they need to, switching from solo work to quick catch ups, to more involved discussions.
- + Smart use of dividers, storage and furniture can create clever areas where people can gather and it provides some degree of privacy & noise barriers.
- + Maximising use of natural light, plants and comfortable soft furnishings creates a sense of wellbeing as people work.
- + Upgrading technology and installing collaboration tools will enable all your team's interactions in person and hybrid, to be easy and effective.

"Our design teams have been busy creating office environments that facilitate collaboration, and effective space usage for a personalised, productive office that inspires creativity. We embrace these design trends that focus on enhancing employee happiness while making the most of the company building and use of actual office space.

By removing banks of desks, you can instead create relaxing break-out areas and beautiful reception spaces that welcome your clients and staff alike."

Matthew Letley, MD, [Redbox](#)



Concept images from [Office Snapshots.com](#)

Home office

With more working from home, employers have a responsibility and opportunity to ensure that their staff have the best set up for work. [Back pain from poorly set up work spaces](#), [inadequate ventilation](#) and [poor quality technology](#) could all contribute to poor health and wellbeing as well as a loss of productivity. Businesses who invest in [display screen equipment assessments](#), adequate wifi, high quality audio/visual equipment and offering wellbeing support and benefits suited to home workers will make all the difference in keeping those staff happy and healthy.

Third spaces

With less people coming into centrally located offices, could your organisation offer and encourage use of local third spaces to work from? With more geographically diverse colleagues, there is an organisational benefit to considering a regional hub to foster connections in different regions and becoming less one location centred. Exploring the use of local co-working spaces, cafes, libraries or community centres could be a great way to support local economies, connect with others and have effective spaces to get focused work done, whilst supporting more diverse talent.

The Office: Things to consider

+ Revisit your mission, vision and values

Your mission, vision and values are the north stars for your business. Now is the perfect time to re-engage with them, crafting them to set your course for emerging from the pandemic. So much has changed in the past 18 months, you might find that your business' ambition has evolved. Take this transitional moment to redefine where you're heading, including all your stakeholders in that journey.

+ Connect with your team to understand their needs, priorities and preferences

What worked before, will not necessarily work in the future. Every person's work preferences, personal and professional priorities, and lifestyles will have changed dramatically. Take the time to understand what your team needs moving forward. Work to create working practices and adapt your physical spaces to suit these new dynamics.

+ For physical spaces, optimise for interaction and collaboration

Offices are going to become places where people come to work together. Design deliberately for these changes so that people can gather, share, ideate and learn together. Your physical spaces will need to be flexible and multifunctional, whilst enabling in person and hybrid work.

+ Assess your space for impact on the health and wellbeing of staff

Be ready to design your physical spaces in both big ways and small to make people feel better. Natural light, plants, wellbeing spaces and activities and healthy food offerings can all contribute to staff wellbeing.

+ Support staff to create effective home working spaces

Set your staff up for success with support for equipment, strong wifi, home office supplies and tips for working at home. Few people have a private home office, so helping your staff to create effective work spaces will help them and help you.

+ Explore options to utilise third spaces

Look into encouraging staff to work from local spaces such as cafes, coworking spaces, libraries or community centres. Particularly for those who can't work from home and/or have challenging commutes, third spaces could prove to be invaluable.

How Impactful can help



Mission realignment



Return to work staff engagement



Impactful office strategy development

Hybrid Work

“Zoom, the poster child of video- conferencing platforms, is now worth more than the world’s seven largest airlines combined.”

Business Insider

“We want our colleagues to be hyper productive at home and hyper collaborative in the office.”

FT

UK home working grew 19% almost overnight, with 47% of workers in the UK doing at least some of their work from home, compared to 28% pre-pandemic. And with only 12% of knowledge workers wanting to return to full time office work, it looks like some form of hybrid remote-office model looks set to become the norm moving forward.

Whilst remote working existed before the pandemic, the national lockdowns effectively broke down many of the barriers that were in place for remote working to not be more widely adopted.

Many organisations operated on legacy technology, software and hardware more suited to physical office based work. Leaders weren’t sure how to trust and manage remote employees and data security was a challenge, too. In addition to the more operational barriers, a psychological barrier existed with working from home often seen as slacking or solely for those with caring responsibilities outside of work.

In the forced experiment of remote working over the past year, we’ve had to overcome these barriers as we’ve had no choice, adapting rapidly to video conferencing software, developing new methods of organisation and management, implementing new policies and normalising a more blended approach to work and life.

In doing so, we’ve discovered there are actually a number of benefits of remote working. For employees themselves, 61% identified a better work-life balance, 43% greater collaboration and 38% a greater ability to focus with fewer distractions. Not to mention the potential benefits to the organisation, which include increased productivity, better workplace inclusion, talent acquisition, employee wellbeing and even sustainability. The move towards remote working may also allow for a greater diversity of talent to access jobs, from accessing regionally diverse candidates to those who have accessibility needs or caring responsibilities to juggle.

This isn’t to say that there weren’t downsides. 47% of businesses noted employee mental wellbeing as a real challenge of remote working and 33% cited effective line management of home workers too, not to mention a lack of connection to colleagues. Research also showed that the average working day increased by 48 mins, with an increase in emails.

It’s clear that moving to a hybrid model has the potential to be better for business and employees alike, but this won’t happen automatically. An effective transition will be a careful transition, investing in proactively supporting your team and evolving working practices to take best advantage of the benefits and mitigate against the potential negatives.

Hybrid Work

Effective hybrid working principles

+ Flexible working is more than just working from home

Flexible working isn't new. Since 2014, all employees in roles for more than 6 months have the legal right to request flexible working, but before the pandemic a third of these requests were turned down, [according to the TUC](#).

To make flexible working an accepted and supported working practice, we need to expand our understanding of it to include [options like](#) staggered hours, compressed hours, shift rotations, any 5 from 7 and more, whilst building a culture where flexible working is valued, encouraged and role modelled throughout your organisation.

+ Flexible working is a skill that can be built

Working flexibly and remotely requires different skills to being based in an office. In a hybrid world your teams will need to upskill in the following areas:

- + Digital & tech expertise
- + Mental and physical health of staff and other stakeholders
- + New management and leadership skills
- + Work life balance in the new world - inc. mental health support
- + Cyber security

Investing in these skill areas for all your staff will ensure that they are able to transition to the new way of working in the most effective way.

+ Establishing clear norms is key

What has become clear over the past year, with an enforced remote model is that some activities and roles are much better suited to being done remotely and some work much more effectively in person. Getting a sense of which fall into each category for your organisation and establishing some rules of thumb will allow people to get into good habits from the start.

Negotiations, brainstorming, feedback sessions and onboarding employees seem to [lose some level of effectiveness when done remotely](#). Innovation teams and sales teams also seemed to struggle most whilst working remotely. Where as deep, focused work, operations and support functions all seemed to suit remote working much better.

Organisation wide rules around video meeting lengths, encouraging no meeting blocks and how and when people should switch off will also be essential to support people to take control of their schedules.

+ Blending synchronous and asynchronous communication

The ease and informality of bumping into colleagues in the office and sharing information is harder to replicate in a hybrid model. There needs to be a mix of synchronous virtual and in person meetings, where people can share and collaborate in person, in real time; and ways to communicate asynchronously, through messaging platforms or collaborative tools. Again, it will be key to set norms for which format is used for which type of communication so that everyone is working in a consistent way, information flows freely and people can work together across different platforms and across time.

Hybrid Work

The hybrid workplace is digital first. Technology is increasingly mediating every aspect of our lives and our work is no exception. The challenge is to ensure that the tech we adopt works for us as individuals and organisations and not against us. In and of itself, technology is neutral but how we use it can determine if we feel like it's enhancing our experience or just creating another thing to manage.

Any new technology you're considering should be:

+ Simple to use

Can every person who needs to use the tech within your organisation learn how to use it, regardless of experience, age, accessibility needs or role? The user experience is critical to make sure that everyone can take full advantage of the benefits of new systems.

+ Standard across your organisation

Using the same systems across your teams is more efficient and means much smoother workflows. Information is easy to find and people can collaborate freely, and you're not paying for more services than you need. Take the time to find the right tool for the right task and plan how they work together to create a seamless digital working environment.

+ Secure from any device or location

With people working remotely and across multiple devices, it's more critical than ever to have fully secure systems that protect your data, people and IP. Invest now to protect your organisation from future cyber threats, prevention is much easier, and cheaper, than a cure.

With all the potential of new technology, it's worth caveating that whilst it might be tempting to think of it as a way of creating efficiency through replacing the need for people, the more productive and exciting opportunity is to find ways for technology to enhance human capital and vice versa.

Upskilling your teams to work with and develop cutting edge, innovative technology will help you stand out from the crowd and future proof your organisation.

"The FBI reported up to 4,000 new cybersecurity complaints per day, a 400% increase, after the onset of the pandemic."

[Forbes](#)

Hybrid Work: Things to consider

+ Establish forward thinking, flexible working policies and processes

Flexible work is more than just allowing staff to work from home and it's not just for parents or carers. Co-design policies with your team that allow each person to work in ways that supports their personal commitments and enables them to be most productive.

+ Invest in flexible working skills training for your team

Working flexibly requires different ways of working and new technology, too. Ensure everyone is confident in these new ways of working so good habits and practices are set from day one.

+ Develop a set of flexible working norms across your organisation

Having set rules of thumb for working hours, meeting etiquette, communication and knowledge sharing will help to build trust and smooth work flows. These norms will be unique to your organisation so work with your team to find what works for you.

+ Reimagine your knowledge sharing processes for a hybrid working environment

How people learn and share will be fundamentally different in a hybrid organisation. Actively design a knowledge management system that doesn't rely on informal in-person communication and allows information to flow freely between different parts of the organisation.

+ Complete a tech and internal systems audit

You've likely got a mix of tech from before the pandemic and new tools that supported you over the lockdown period. Now is the perfect time to review your systems and tools to ensure that each element is necessary, has a clear function, and syncs up with every other element.

How Impactful can help



Team skills and professional development programme



Creating impactful People policies



Internal comms strategy development

Our priorities and expectations in relation to work have changed over the past year. Coming out of the restrictions of the pandemic, we have an opportunity to create a working culture that seeks to support individual wellbeing and fits a more diverse range of people. Adapting these more intangible factors will be key to supporting people to transition safely and thoughtfully into a hybrid world.

+ Physical health

Undeniably, many of us have become more aware of our physical health during the pandemic. We've all become accustomed to wearing masks, social distancing, higher levels of hygiene and despite the threat from covid-19 coming down, these practices have made us feel safer and will be here to stay. [There are many ways](#) to ensure a safe return to the workplace, start by asking your staff about what they would be comfortable with and work from there.

+ Mental health

The pandemic and successive lockdowns have put a huge strain on people's mental health. Whether that's from the stress and anxiety of changing life circumstances, social isolation and loneliness, grief over losing loved ones or pressures of childcare or additional responsibilities, many people will need care and support to return to full health and productivity. Actively offer support to your people through their benefits, pastoral support, team activities and working practices to ensure these struggles don't go unnoticed.

+ Building social capital & fair performance management

A recurring concern of people who choose to work more flexibly is the potential of being treated differently than those who spend more time in person with colleagues and bosses. Working in the office allows people to be able to connect more informally and be more visible raising the possibility of people being unfairly prioritised for projects or promotions. It is essential to design performance management processes based on outcomes rather than presence and availability and create spaces for all staff to intentionally connect, socialise and share their work regardless of where they work from.

+ Accessibility for all

The pandemic has shown us that the ways of working that were often championed by people with disabilities or accessibility needs, are actually completely achievable and have multiple benefits for all staff. It would be a wasted opportunity to not integrate more flexible approaches to allow more diverse talent to work for your organisation and work to their strengths. This includes everyone from individuals with caring responsibilities, disabilities, from regions where you're not located, neurodivergent colleagues and more. By actively embracing flexibility and different ways of working, more of your staff will flourish, allowing them to perform at their best.

"Human capital is as important as financial capital. Our attrition rate in all the countries that we operate is half of that of the national average. And 76% of the graduates who apply to us say that they believe that Unilever is a force for good and stands for goodness in the world, and that has led to my recruitment costs in the last seven years falling by 90%. Putting human resources at the top table has real business benefits."

[Leena Nair, CHRO, Unilever](#)

Culture: Things to consider

+ Co-design your staff benefits package with staff to centre their needs

As your ways of working change, the way you support and reward your staff will also change. Explore ways to enhance your team's health and wellbeing and support their development that fits a hybrid model.

+ Complete an accessibility review across all parts of your business

From your hiring practices to your physical spaces to your technology, review what you do and how you do it to ensure that people with different accessibility needs aren't being unintentionally excluded from working in or engaging with your organisation.

+ Develop a performance management framework that supports your new ways of working

Hybrid working brings new challenges to understanding individuals and organisational performance. Having a clear mission, strategic priorities and KPIs as a business which feed into individual goals and outcomes will be essential in driving progress.

+ Review your social and cultural activities for inclusivity and belonging

Inclusion and belonging has become even more important whilst we've not been able to see each other and social justice issues globally have taken centre stage. At an organisational level, creating opportunities that allow every person to bring their whole selves to work is a key part of delivering on your DEI&B promises.

How Impactful can help



Impactful lunch & learns



Diversity, equality, inclusion and belonging assessment



Designing an impactful employee journey

Where do we go from here?

How we work matters. There is an opportunity, as we emerge from the pandemic, to build back better.

Better for people, better for the planet and better for business, too.

Now is the time to invest in better. Your stakeholders, your people, your customers, government, investors, local communities, future generations and more are looking to you to commit to creating positive change.

If you're looking to build a more impactful organisation, we'd love to help.



Impactful.

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