Why the Office

The office originated as a production place for knowledge workers. It transformed to a workspace powered by hard-wired technology—and the center of work. Mobile devices and Wi-Fi allowed for increasing flexibility. Previously, we came to the office to work—now we can work anywhere.

Why do people value being in the workplace? To collaborate, create, and innovate. To connect socially. To leverage the teams, networks, and processes that help them perform their best. To be inspired. Its purpose has shifted from where we had to work to a place that’s more dynamic and experiential than ever.

Current State

The digital age enabled organizations to work virtually—and then the coronavirus pandemic forced us to embrace it. For months, approximately 85 percent of global employees were working at home. Now, organizations around the world are reactivating their office spaces while thinking through what’s next. The future state is one that reflects an ecosystem approach, which includes work in the office and in a multitude of spaces—home is just one of them.

70% of people want to work in the office the majority of their week.
— Gensler

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1. Leesman, 50k research

Of workers polled:

- **50%** like having no commute
- **45%** enjoying flexible hours
- **44%** miss human interaction with colleagues
- **58%** miss the office (65% among young professionals)

Source: JLL
Estimated Time for Employees* to Return to Their Usual Workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Sept. 2020</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Jan. 2022</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By June 2021</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work from Home indefinitely</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*90% of the workforce
Source: Fortune 500 CEO Survey, April 2020

It’s Not Home or Office—It’s Work from Anywhere

When given the choice, people are drawn to the places that make them feel the most comfortable and productive. What we previously knew as the “office” was already evolving into a place of social context—more collaborative than ever. After all, interaction with colleagues makes us happier and more engaged at work. These restorative activities are just as critical to the creative process as high-focus work—and significant for innovation to occur.2

Work from Anywhere Ecosystem

Work is likely to be done in more than one location. It is an integrated ecosystem balancing three primary physical locations: office, home, and third places.

Work from Anywhere is the ecosystem that gives organizations and employees choice in where and when work occurs. This flexibility also serves as an attraction/retention strategy for talent, offering improved work/life balance through flexible work schedules. The Work from Anywhere ecosystem supports organizational culture and employee well-being—so people can work fluidly.

In the pre-COVID environment, 63% of respondents indicated their company had no full-time remote work; today, only 10% expect no remote work policies in the future. — CBRE

50% of the workforce will likely be working across a Total Workplace Ecosystem balancing office, home, and third places.

Source: Cushman & Wakefield, The Future of Workplace report, 2020

Functional groups focused in creativity and client-facing activities were not supported from home as well, compared to other functions.

Source: Leesman Research, Haworth Global Study

2. Haworth white paper: Optimizing the Workplace for Innovation: Using Brain Science for Smart Design
“Workplace design will evolve to support distributed teams that function like binary stars—orbiting the central hub and organically creating the correct connections.”

Jeff DeGraff
Professor of Management and Organizations
Ross School of Business, University of Michigan

Three Critical Areas of Focus

Haworth has identified three areas of focus when considering an ecosystem that supports Work from Anywhere.

Culture & Innovation
Preserving your unique culture to empower your workforce and leverage your space is essential. This includes building community and empowering teams to perform and innovate.

Well-Being
Supporting people’s physical and psychological health builds confidence and enhances performance. Minimizing stress, promoting movement, and enhancing human performance are the themes emerging from our research.

Flexibility/Adaptability
People are empowered to work fluidly in an ecosystem that includes office, home, and third places. This flexibility lets them choose the right space for the right task, with the resources and technology that support both.

Organic Workspace

In this new ecosystem, the workplace floorplate needs to respond—creating environments that provide connection and adapt for occupancy levels. Organic Workspace is Haworth’s perspective and process for understanding the work environment and how people use it. We start by looking at the entire ecosystem—where interaction and collaboration take place—right down to the individual workpoint—whether in the office, home, or third place. Then we help our customers create solutions that ensures people perform their best, supports organizational culture, and leverages their existing products, enabling reconfiguration with ease and reduced cost.

Finding the Right Balance

The office is the epicenter of what makes work happen, to help people perform their best. Starting with the office, we’ll explore with you the right balance for your ecosystem. We can provide solutions that will accommodate a continuous flow of work in multiple environments, allowing people to be effective and real estate to be efficient.