WORK AND ORGANISATION POST-CORONA

Contents

PREAMBLE

From the moment Corona struck, we have been inundated with messages about its impact on our way of working and our organisations. You can barely see the woods for the trees anymore.

For those who have been involved with new ways of working for some time now, as we have at Yolk and Graymatter, much of the confusion is recognisable. And so are the many questions that organisations are now facing. Will we continue to work from home? How do retain social cohesion? What sort of technology do we need? And what do we do with the office?

Fortunately, many of the answers are already available as many organisations were working in new ways before Corona. First known as teleworking, and then the New Way of Working, it was a movement that was popular in the Netherlands in the first decade of the 21st century. In that period, lots of research was performed into the benefits and drawbacks of a new way of working, in which staff were given greater freedom to determine themselves where and when they did their work. You chose the location that best suited your activity (activity-based working) and the time that most appropriate for you. Independent of time and place.

For this document we have looked at the research done into innovative ways of working. We have combined that with the latest research into work post-Corona and with our years of experience in assisting organisations that want to change the way they work.

We focus mainly on work that can be performed independent of time and place: i.e. knowledge workers.

We are two agencies for development, growth and communications that for some twenty years now have been involved with new ways of working. In the last ten years alone, we have helped over 100 organisations abroad and at home. All our projects have an Integral approach: Bricks, Bytes, Behaviour and Brand.

We are delighted to share our knowledge and experience with you. And hope that organisations currently addressing the question of the future of work will be better able to make the right choices.

Aart Bouwmeester
Henny van Egmond
Mark C. Gray

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1. INTRODUCTION

Many organisations are currently wondering what they should do when we start back at the office. Do we continue to work from home? What do we do with the office? Will the office become a sort of Starbucks, just for meetings and discussions? Can we significantly reduce the number of square meters and so cut costs?

Many of these organisations have decided that in future their staff can work from home on one or two days a week. This is already known as hybrid working.

There is no single answer as to whether this sort of decision is logical, and especially sensible. There are countless factors that determine whether people will be able to work effectively from home.

As matters stand, the discussions focus mainly on the benefits and drawbacks of home offices, and how much office space can be saved. But there is far more afoot in the world of work and organisation. Some are already calling it a tipping point. McKinsey[1] asked 800 top managers around the world and deduced several trends that impact our work. Some of the developments are known, but they have accelerated thanks to Corona.

- Digitisation and automation have taken off massively. This is more than obvious in client contact centres and in e-commerce. The latter has grown five times faster than before Corona. There has been explosive growth in turnover at Amazon and other online traders.
- Organisations are going to permit more remote working. But certainly not for everyone, and not every day. Top managers think that one tenth of their staff will work from home two or more days each week -

double the number before Corona. Remote work is limited to a number of sectors, such as IT and the financial sector, and up to middle management levels.
- Managers predict that there will be fewer permanent jobs, more externals, and more temporary staff through agencies. Because of the pandemic, organisations with lots of permanent staff got into trouble, especially in sectors like healthcare, catering and events. This was often because they were unable to bear the costs of permanent staff, and sometimes because there were too few people, like in healthcare.
- There will be more jobs in organisations that focus on security and healthcare.

The picture outlined by McKinsey's research is confirmed in research into 15 sectors and 26 countries by the World Economic Forum (WEF)[2]. This research suggests that more than 40 percent of the working population will have to learn new skills if they are to be competitive in the world of new work. These new staff especially include critical thinkers, creatives, and specialists in collectively solving complex issues. As to their characters, these people are active in terms of learning, are resilient and flexible and have a high tolerance for stress. Like McKinsey's research, the WEF's investigation predicts a sharp decline in available work due to automation, and a steep rise in external staff, especially for specialised tasks.

In short, it's clear that these trends will have a major impact on our way of working, and on organisations as a whole. There will be a short-term challenge - what to do after Corona - but especially a mid-term one. It is sensible to not see these challenges in isolation, but to think about how work will be organised post-Corona, and with a view to the longer future.

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[1] McKinsey Global Business Executive Survey, July 2020
[2] The Future of Jobs Report 2020

![yolk graymatter logo]

The amazement about working from home is amazing

The fact that a lot of people were able to seamlessly continue working - from home - without too many issues surprised many people. Not least the managers who often still have right of existence because they steer staff based on presence, and check whether they're actually working. This responsibility was handed over to employees from one day to the next. And what happened? In most cases it went fine. In many, it all went just that little bit better.

Rich history

For those of us who have been involved in new ways of working for some time now, this was not surprising. Large volumes of research performed in recent decades show that there are significant benefits to working remotely, including stronger involvement of staff (because they have a stronger say as to where and when they worked) and higher productivity.

In the Netherlands, a significant proportion of staff has been working from home (occasionally) for years: no less than 40% according to Dutch statistics agency CBS[3]. The number of people working from home has risen steadily over recent years.

The fact that working from home works is not strange. In the Netherlands, there is a rich history in this area. Interpolis started time- and place-independent working in the 1990s. Research was performed into what was then known as teleworking in the Economic Statistical

Messages (ESB): "IT facilities at home and in companies have improved rapidly, as a result of which the opportunities for teleworking have risen significantly. Although the definitions are not always the same, all research indicates that the phenomenon is increasing, and they expect further growth. There is a strong demand for working from home, caused by the desire to organise one's own day, reduce travel times and better focus.''[4]
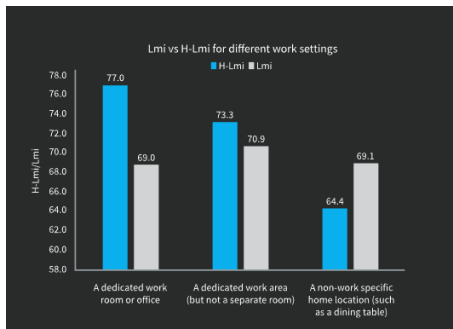
In principle, all the benefits that are mentioned now - over 20 years later - are reflected in this report. Lots of organisations followed and introduced the New Way of Working. In the Netherlands, Rabobank was one of the forerunners, as was Microsoft. Around 2010, internal research by the Rabobank indicated that over half the work was done by staff not located in one of the many offices. Yet the number of people who (occasionally) worked from home stayed steady at around 40 percent. The ESB article indicated that the low number of employees was due mainly to company policies: As things stand, the companies themselves are the largest stumbling block for a breakthrough in teleworking. These companies believe that, for many jobs, a physical presence is still necessary, while part of the job can certainly be done remotely.

This conviction still held true in 2018. Although 80 percent of organisations would have had the opportunity to offer remote work, only 11 percent of those organisations actually stimulated it. The most important obstacle: traditional managers who were not used to managing staff working away from the office based on trust.

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[3] CBS research: 4 out of ten employees work from home
[4] ESB, 85th year, nr. 4278, page D22, 2 November 2000

Lmi vs H-Lmi for different work settings

Leesman has been investigating working environments around the world for years. Straight after Corona erupted, they started specific research into working from home.[5]

Individual work is (generally) better done from home

The most important conclusion was that the home working environment is actually better than the office for lots of activities. Those with their own working room at home scored 77/100 in the Leesman index while giving their workspace at the office 69 points. Even those who had a place to work at home - but no dedicated space - scored three points higher. Those working from home, but from a kitchen table, for example, scored substantially lower. They gave working from home 64 points as compared to the 69 points for the office workspace. Lots of the complaints that are currently being published are about the lack of a good workplace at home. This is not just about an ergonomically responsible desk and chair, but especially about a peaceful environment.

Those whose job involves mainly individual work gave their home workplace an even higher score than those who work mainly with others in their job, the Leesman research indicates. This relates to activities like individual (focused) desk work, phone conversations, confidential discussions and preparing matters (like reading articles).

Individual productivity improves, team productivity falls

Those working from home are more productive. Numerous surveys show that - after we were forced to work from home - staff became more productive. These investigations asked about the experiences with working from home, and the effect on daily work. TNO[6] (Netherlands' Institute for Applied Scientific Research). for example, reported that over half of those working from home felt they were more productive working from home. There was a dip after the first school closure, to be followed by increased productivity. Numerous other investigations support this.

More email, more meetings

The question is whether we should be pleased with the increased productivity. Imagine you work in policy generation for a government agency, or in a commercial organisation. Are you being more productive just because you answer more emails in your overly full inbox? Too much information has a significant, negative influence. In 2009, Paul Hemp wrote an article on the topic in the Harvard Business Review[7] entitled Death by Information Overload. His conclusion: all that digital information has a negative impact on people's wellbeing, on decisiveness, innovation and on productivity. People are less productive because all the messages we receive via WhatsApp, mail, Teams etc. continually interrupt our real work. Note: this was in 2009. The amount of information we process each day has only increased since.

[5] Your workplace of the future, Leesman, December 2020
[6] TNO, National Survey Working Conditions, performed between the end of June and July 2020 and in August 2020
[7] Death by Information Overload, HBR, 2009

In 2011, Thierry Breton, the CEO of Atos Origin at the time and currently an EU commissioner, decided to impose a total ban on internal emails. A test among 300 of the 70,000 staff indicated that they send an average of 280 mails per week. Each week, managers spent between five and twenty hours writing and answering emails. Internal mails were a waste of time, as the same research showed that 9 out of 10 emails did not contribute to the company result. In short - banning internal emails was the next logical step.

Lots of the research into productivity during Corona is based on surveys. People were asked whether they are more productive. There is less research available into measured productivity. The National Bureau of Economic Research[8] in Massachusetts looked at metadata in 16 major cities around the world in which they were able to ascertain the amount of digital communication. As it turns out, our increased productivity is due to the fact that we have sent more emails (+5.2 percent). It's noteworthy that we have also attended more meetings (+12.9 percent) and that more people attended these meetings (+13.5 percent).

But do more meetings genuinely contribute to productivity? Management guru Peter F. Drucker commented as follows thirty years ago:
'Meetings are the symptom *of poor organisation. The fewer meetings the better'*.

In his book The Essential Drucker, which summarises 60 years of his work, meetings are considered one of the four greatest obstacles for a well-functioning organisation. *"As a rule, meetings can never become*
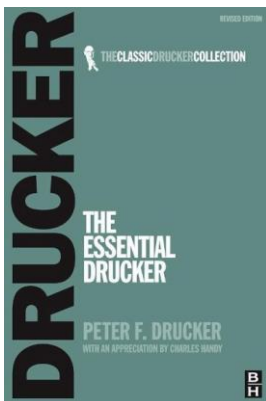
the most important activity for a knowledge worker (...) Too many meetings means that responsibility is diffuse, and that information is not reaching the people who need it".

Longer hours
The most striking result of the investigation into the metadata is that people's working hours became more distributed, no longer worked from 9 to 5, and actually made longer hours. Some 8.2 percent (!) more. In other words - those working in a full-time job worked an additional five hours per week. This also explains why people think that they are more productive: they simply worked longer hours. Unfortunately, they spent that time on activities that were not particularly useful, such as email and meetings. Pre-Corona research also showed that people who were given the chance to organise their work flexibly and work from home spent more time working than their colleagues who did the 9-to-5 office routine. Qualitative research shows that there was a sort of swap: because there was no travel time, people spent some of the time they saved working.

Individually more productive, cooperation drops
There is another perspective in terms of productivity that is important for work and organisation in the future. Activities that can easily be performed in a home environment are often tasks that you can perform individually, or the recurring standard meetings.

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[8] Collaborating during coronavirus: the impact of covid-19 on the nature of work, NBER

For routine activities that you can perform individually, it is known that productivity can rise significantly.

This was shown by research by Professor Nicholas Bloom from Stanford University[9] in 2013. Bloom investigated the impact on productivity for call centre staff who started working from home for Chinese travel organisation CTrip.

For nine months, some of the staff worked from home, and some worked at the office. They had the same manager.

Those working from home were 13 percent more productive. They handled more calls. Those working from home really worked from 9 to 5, did not take long lunchbreaks and were not interrupted by colleagues. And that wasn't all. Home workers were more satisfied and were half as likely to resign as compared to their colleagues at the office. The most important reasons were the autonomy and the chance for staff to organise their time as they saw fit. It should be noted, however, that a small proportion of people preferred working at the office.

Bloom, who delivered an interesting Ted Talk on the topic, concluded that an organisation can make an additional EUR1600 in profits per employee if they let people work from home. At the same time, he realised that this was mostly related to individual work, and routine work in this case.

In general, highly educated knowledge workers do not have that much individual, routine work, and they are expected to collaborate on more complex issues. They are also more involved in innovation. And that begs the question as to whether they are more productive if they work exclusively from home. For knowledge workers, it is less about individual productivity and more about the productivity of the team.

In 2015, the Center for Evidence-Based Management Investigated[10] what truly makes knowledge workers productive. There were three key points. One of the three - the degree to which knowledge workers experience support from their manager - has a positive impact on personal productivity. The other two issues were mainly important for team productivity - what teams produce together. They were social cohesion, i.e. the degree to which members of the team feel connected to one another and bear shared responsibility for the results, and the degree to which information is shared.

It's cooperation that suffers when working from home. Important reasons include that employees working from home are less involved and work together less. And it is precisely these elements that, among well-educated knowledge workers, deliver higher team productivity.

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[9] Does Working from Home Work? Evidence from a Chinese Experiment, Stanford University

[10] The performance of knowledge workers, Center for Evidence-Based Management

2. EFFECT ON STAFF AND THE ORGANISATION

Since we have been forced to work from home due to Corona, the newspapers are brimming with messages related to complaints by staff. Lots of them are anecdotes, personal stories, or are introduced by those who stand to gain from them. There are lots of messages, for example, from commercial organisations that claim that those working from home are more depressed, feel more stress and even are heading for a burn-out. These sorts of messages are also distributed by unions based on complaints at a reporting centre or on research among members[11]. But there is no scientific research that shows that stress increases. In fact - on average - working from home does not have any major negative influence in terms of stress, although there are exceptions. Pre-Corona scientific research points to other drawbacks of working from home.

Fewer high-level tasks, burn-out complaints stable

	THUISWERKERS MEDIO 2020		THUISWERKERS EIND 2020	
	NEA 2019*	1e meting NEA-COVID-19	NEA 2019*	2e meting NEA-COVID-19
Hoge autonomie	79,9%△	76,6%▽	82,1%△	77,9%▽
Hoge kwantitatieve taakeisen	39,3%△	33,0%▽	40,0%△	34,1%▽
Hoge taakeisen en lage autonomie	10,2%	10,4%	9,4%	10,2%
Emotioneel zwaar werk	10,0%△	7,9%▽	9,8%△	7,7%▽
Extern ongewenst gedrag (door klanten, passagiers, leerlingen ed)	19,7%	-	20,5%▲	9,2%▼
Intern ongewenst gedrag (door collega, leidinggevende)	19,8%	-	19,6%▲	8,6%▼
Sociale steun leidinggevende	88,7%	90,1%	89,6%	90,1%
Sociale steun collega's	98,1%	98,1%	98,0%	98,2%
Concentratie	-	11,6%	-	11,7%
Aandacht	-	12,6%	-	13,5%

Long-term research[12] by TNO shows that the high emotional burden has not increased. While pre-Corona 10% of those working from home spoke of an emotional burden, end-2020 it dropped to less than 8%. The chance of a burn-out remained stable.

At the end of 2020, 17 percent of those working from home indicated they had burn-out-related complaints, the same as pre-Covid. The TNO research does not explain these figures, while it is noteworthy that fewer people indicate they had a high load in terms of quantitative tasks. In other words: the organisation demands less of them. Alongside the slightly increased social support by managers, which also influences people's wellbeing positively, this may explain why psychosocial complaints have not risen significantly.

Note: these are averages. Of course, there may be major differences among groups. It is known, for example, that those parents working from home while concurrently helping children with their home-schooling score worse. Younger employees - especially those who have just started work - also have more complaints.

The TNO research also points to a number of benefits from pre-Corona research[13] in that home workers experience a more work-related flow. In this research, work-related flow is a combination of work enjoyment (how people experience the quality of their work life), absorption (the situation in which people can get totally involved in their work) and intrinsic motivation (doing things that are satisfying in themselves and are enjoyable). This study looked specifically at empowering staff, making work times and location more flexible, and a culture of trust.

Managers who say that a feeling of responsibility is low in the organisation are not contributing to flow. Employees need to first experience it first-

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[11] CNV-onderzoek: werkstress neemt toe naarmate crisis langer duurt
[12] De impact van Covid-19 pandemie op medewerkers, TNO, januari 2021
[13] Plezier beleven aan het nieuwe werken, Peters, De Bruijn, Bakker en Van der Heijden, 2011

hand and be allowed to make decisions before it has a positive impact. Being given the choice of working independent of time and place - even for a single day per week - has a positive effect on an employee's flow. The greatest, single-most impact, however, is a *culture of trust*. These cultures are characterised by colleagues who demonstrate helpful behaviour, treat one another friendlily, and by managers who coach their staff. The researchers point out that this is especially important. Culture is often not given the necessary attention or is ignored all together.

Less chance of promotion

Research[14] performed in 2012 by the London Business School and the University of Colorado showed that those who do not work exclusively at the office are less appreciated by their managers and were promoted less readily. A remarkable note to the assessment was that it in no way related to the actual performance but rather only to the fact that people were less visible. What they were actually doing while at the office had no impact at all. Literally: out of sight, out of mind.

These scientists recommend that staff consciously make themselves more visible. For example, by calling more often or sending an update as to what they have been doing by mail. Specific behaviour to attract a manager's attention also works, they say. On days that you're at the office, point out that you are not going for lunch so as to make the impression that you are working hard. And when working from home, pick up the phone immediately. You could even send emails late at night or very early in the morning to create the feeling that you work long hours. It works. And apparently increases one's chance of promotion…

Work-life balance does not improve automatically through remote work, although this is one of the improvements often ascribed to working from home. The facts are less optimistic. The research by TNO mentioned earlier shows that some nine percent of home workers have an imbalance in their work-private experience, which is the same as pre-Corona. For those who, for whatever reason were not working from home, the percentage fell from 11 percent before Corona to nine percent during the pandemic.

In 2016, research by the Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Agency[15] showed that combining work and private spheres has a poor impact on many groups. The greatest issue is the fact that they are intermingled.

It would seem that one-third of the Dutch working population has a high personal need for structure. This is the result of PhD work by Marjette Slijkhuis[16]. In other words: they struggle dealing with autonomy and responsibility, are not good at separating work and their private lives, and therefore prefer managers who tell them exactly what they should do. When these people work from home, this often leads to poorer performance and a greater imbalance between their work and private life. There are even specific groups that suffer more from this imbalance. Those who still have to look after young children, or those who cannot themselves determine when they work, struggle more with working from home. Women also have greater issues in terms of organising work and the private sphere as they in many cases (still) do more in the home or in raising children than men.

[14] Want to get promoted: Stay at your desk, 2012
[15] Aanbod van arbeid 2016

[16] A Structured Approach to Need for Structure at Work, 2012

Job happiness

Job happiness has been an important theme in recent years. It is based on the conviction that employee satisfaction is not enough, and that job happiness is a better barometer for well-functioning staff. Where satisfaction is often related to highly practical matters, like job conditions, job happiness also address immaterial matters. It's more about how you experience your work in all its facets.

The book Werkgeluk (Job happiness) claims that those who experience happiness in their work

are more productive, more creative, more innovative and cognitively more flexible. And they are absent less often. Happy employees also better contribute to profits, performance, and sales than less happy employees[17].

Job happiness depends greatly, for example, on whether you are truly engaged as an employee in the organisation's objectives. Or as we say nowadays - whether you believe the 'why', the purpose of the organisation. A second important point is that you can connect your personal objectives to those of the organisation. And that you know which activities or tasks you can perform to achieve your personal objectives and in doing so contribute to the objectives of the organisation. If this is all aligned, we speak of flow - the concept of happiness developed by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi[18]. Through extensive scientific research, Csikszentmihalyi ascertained

that people achieve a state of happiness - which he calls flow - when they are capable of fully exerting their talents for a higher purpose.

Job happiness is therefore an important barometer for organisations. Research by Nyenrode and the Dutch Open University[19] found that this job happiness fell during Corona.

Just 21% of those working from home experiences job happiness every now and then.

Loneliness has increased, and people miss the informal contact. There is also a lack of support amongst colleagues. In other words, the home working as a whole has had a negative impact on job happiness, an important indicator as to whether people are being creative, innovative and productive.

Less connected, feeling left behind

It doesn't stop there. Those working from home often feel as if they are being left behind by those who are not using the opportunity to work from home.[20] They notice that they are missing information, have fewer informal discussions and think that they are the subject of gossip. And they are worried they are promoted less often. That fear is justified. Research[21] from 2012 by Kimberly Elsbach and Daniel Cable shows that staff who work from home more frequently get poorer assessments, fewer wage raises and are promoted less frequently than those who remain

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[17] https://worldhappiness.report/ed/2020/
[18] Wikipedia Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
[19] Onderzoek thuiswerken: verbinding met collega's en werkgeluk gedaald

[20] Remote Workers Feel Shunned and Left Out, HBR, 2017
[21] Why Showing Your Face at Work Matters, 2012

in their bosses' line of sight. All these issues have a negative impact on the social cohesion - the organisation's cement that is crucial for effective and efficient cooperation.

3. A FUTURE-ORIENTED APPROACH TO WORK

At the moment, the main question is whether and how many days we are going to be working from home post-Corona. Organisations are being led by investigations that indicate that people would like to work from home after Corona. Research published by the CBS[22] (Netherlands Central Agency for Statistics) shows that Dutch employees would like to work from home twice as much as before the pandemic: an average of 8 hours per week. These are mainly those who work for the government, and in corporate and financial services.

Research[23] by the Netherlands' Knowledge Institute for Mobility Policy of the Ministry for Infrastructure and Waterworks shows that not many more people will work from home (from 43 to 45 percent of all working people), but that those who worked from home before Corona will do so more than twice as often.

Those who are more highly trained people wanted to work from home more, as did older population groups. Yet those up to the age of 35 works from home significantly less than older staff. And they don't really want to work from home much more in the future.

In other words, the figures predict a growth in home working, but the increase would not seem to be so spectacular that organisations will be able to reduce office space by tens of percent, as perhaps they expect. Dutch television programme Nieuwsuur performed research among 25 of the largest Dutch employers and showed that half of them expect to be able to significantly reduce office space - some by 10 percent, others up to 30 or 50 percent. At first sight, this seems attractive for the financial managers in these organisations, as square meters and workplaces are expensive. In the Netherlands, every square meter costs an average of EUR490 per year. Per FTE, that means an office costs some EUR8000 per year, depending on office size. If organisations can truly reduce the number of square meters they need, for example by having 30 percent of staff work from home, the savings are significant.

Both perspectives described above are logical, but it is sensible to look at the issue of work and organisation post-Corona from a broader perspective. The location - where the work is done - is not an objective in itself. It is a tool, a facility, which ensures that people can do their jobs effectively, retain their connection to the organisation and experience job happiness.

The following paragraphs describe work and organisation in the future from a number of different perspectives.

Thinking of the future

Much of the research being performed is focused on current staff and the work they are doing now. We have previously looked at research by the World Economic Forum and McKinsey, which showed that work has slowly been changing in recent years. These changes are the result of technology and almost everyone predicts that, over the coming years, the speed of change will only increase. And so, the impact will too. The work is changing so radically that many new jobs are being formed and old jobs are being lost. *Almost half of those currently working will have to learn new skills and competencies*. Forty-seven

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[22] Nederlanders wil na corona 8 uur thuiswerken, onderzoek CBS

[23] Thuiswerken tijdens en na corona, KIM, januari 2021

percent of tasks currently being performed will be automated[24]. The number of external staff for specialised work is increasing. Research by TNO shows that, for 87 percent of staff, working conditions have genuinely changed. And that refers to different tasks and different skills.[25]

In short, those now making choices about ways of working should certainly keep the future in mind. Because according to the research mentioned, the probability that an organisation is still working the same way in five years is negligible. It would seem sensible, therefore, to take this into account. Especially in matters such as facility management.

Organisations that still have a lot of operational, routine administrative work, or with large call centres, are likely to experience a greater impact than those organisations that already employ mainly well-trained knowledge workers. The more routine the work, the larger the probability that it will be automated in the coming years. But higher-trained staff are also going to be doing different things. The work will focus more on solving complex issues, will demand more creativity, and cooperation will be ever more important.

Attractive employer

Involved and engaged staff will be increasingly important for organisations over the coming years. As will job happiness and people's willingness to consistently develop. The way of working, and especially the responsibility and autonomy that staff have to determine themselves how they do their work, will strongly influence the bond they feel to the organisation

for which they work. Pre-Corona research shows that those who are permitted to work independent of time and place are more engaged.[26] This and other research[27] makes it clear that the new way of working genuinely has to be implemented integrally, which includes a new style of leadership based on trust and connection.

The changing composition of the working population is at least equally important. Around the world, some 800 million baby boomers are retiring, and 1.3b digital natives from Generation Z are entering the job market[28]. The newcomers have a greater need for freedom and flexibility, are seeking work with a *purpose* and assume that everything they do is connected digitally and seamlessly.

Home is just one of the places they want to be able to work. This group also has a strong wish for collaboration. Those looking to employ mainly younger staff therefore need to take a very close look at their technology when introducing new ways of working. Here, many organisations still have a lot of work to do. In the Netherlands, half of the municipalities were still using Windows 7 during the first lockdown. This led to all sorts of security issues. And the civil servants were unable to use Microsoft Teams, because Windows 7 did not support it.

Not everyone wants to work from home

Although one may have the impression that working from home will be introduced on a massive scale, certainly not everyone is happy about home offices. Large-scale international

[24] Corona dwingt tot versneld digitaliseren en draagt bij aan fundamentele herziening van arbeidsmarkt
[25] De impact van de Covid-19 pandemie op werknemers, TNO, januari 2021

[26] Plezier in het nieuwe werken, 2011
[27] Verbondenheid in het nieuwe werken, onderzoek bij de Rijksgebouwendienst, 2011
[28] Demographic Shifts: The World In 2030

research by Leesman[29] into working from home shows that it's especially those with a separate office space at home who are satisfied with working from there. Satisfaction drops if the workspace has to be shared and is even lower if the work has to be done at a kitchen table, or the like. During the pandemic, there was the additional issue of parents whose children were being home schooled who were especially negative. But even pre-Corona, it was clear that working from home was liked to varying degrees.

Young staff, for example, are far less enthusiastic about remote working - they are more productive at the office.[30] Parents with young children, on the other hand, like the fact that they can be flexible in terms of the time and place where they work as it allows them to better combine work and their private lives.

Cooperation in teams is increasingly important

Around 2005, when more and more organisations in the Netherlands started working in new ways, one of the reasons was that they felt they needed to work together more, especially outside of one's own team. By equipping staff with the right IT equipment (mobile phone, laptop) they were able to work independently of time and place. *Working anytime, anywhere*, as Microsoft called it in 2006. It gave people the chance to join other teams: for example, working in one's own team one day and in a project team on the next, etc. Research performed in 2010 - four years after the new way of working known as Rabo Unplugged was introduced at the Rabobank - showed that cooperation with the team and those outside had improved significantly.

By giving people mobile equipment, with which they could work from anywhere, individual workplaces were no longer necessary so that the number of workplaces could be significantly reduced too. This is not an option for everyone, however. There are organisations in which collaboration takes place mainly within the own team. This reduces the necessity of being able to work from anywhere, as well as the option of reducing the number of workplaces.

Coaching leadership and a culture of trust

The last and perhaps most important perspective is that of leadership and culture.

When the Netherlands, like Germany and the UK, were forced from one day to the next to work from home, employees were concurrently given the responsibility for organising their own work. And much to the surprise and expectations of many managers, it went well. So well in fact that the management of many large organisations are now looking to permit working from home as a structural option.

Yet this sort of transition calls for far more than words. Before Corona it was mainly middle management that struggled with flexible work methods as they did not have enough trust in their staff. They preferred to have their staff at the office. Not because they were then able to keep an eye on each member of the team, but rather because that at least meant they were present. This conviction by managers has not disappeared over the last few months, of course. This is now certainly a challenge in those organisations in which, before Corona, working from home was possible from a technological perspective, but staff were not permitted to

[29] Measure remote working, Leesman

[30] New ways of working seem unpopular among younger staff

work this way. It will now be clear to staff that these organisations are working according to the adage: trust is good, but control is better.

Steering on presence is an example of a controlling management style - it's pretty much steering on input. Working independently from time and place asks for leadership that steers on output or, ideally, on outcome - the intended effect of the work. Or more simply: it's not just about the number of customers someone talks to in a call centre (output), but rather about whether the customers are satisfied with the call (outcome). Steering on output/outcome calls for clear objectives, agreements in terms of results, autonomy and clear-cut responsibilities for staff. And that in turn calls for coaching and connective leadership. This is *servant leadership* that makes it possible for employees to do their work effectively and so fulfil the agreements as to their outcome.

New forms of leadership and a new culture do not arise of themselves. Culture is the result of years of working in a certain way and is often based on deep-rooted convictions. These convictions do not disappear overnight, or even since the Corona period has shown that working from home is certainly possible. In contrast - research by Getapp[31] among 1,230 staff and managers shows that over one-third are being monitored with special software. This software, for example, keeps an eye on the number of keystrokes, which internet sites people visit, and which social media they are using. It can even take a screenshot every few minutes or constantly check on staff via the webcam. Almost one quarter of those who are now being monitored were not monitored pre-Corona. In

short - there is a great deal of mistrust in these organisations that has only increased during Corona.

Engagement and involvement

A final perspective in this context is that of involvement and engagement. We have touched on the topic a few times earlier. Involvement and engagement are often used to define the same thing. In this document we use differing definitions: engagement is about your work. At the core, it is about how motivated you are by the content of your work. It's about craftmanship and mastery. About people who talk about what they have achieved with pride. Involvement is about how involved you are with the organisation where you work. Involved people are motivated because they are aligned with the objectives of the organisation. They are proud of what the organisation achieves.

Numerous studies, for example by Gallup[32] and ADP Research[33] show that while involvement is fine, staff's engagement is falling.

In terms of engagement, numerous countries in north-western Europe have engagement figures of around 10%. In other words, one in ten staff are not engaged with the objectives of the organisation. In government agencies, this is often even lower than in business. This means that civil servants may be involved in terms of the content of their work, but are not particularly enamoured by the municipality or city where

[31] Stijging employee monitoring software
[32] State of the global workplace, Gallup

[33] The global study of engagement, ADP Research

they work. Healthcare is perhaps an even better example: the nurse or doctor may be fully engaged in terms of helping patients, but there is little willingness to think about how the hospital or healthcare in general could function more effectively. One cannot blame individuals as the lack of engagement is often the result of the fact that they are never invited to talk about or think along with how the organisation operates, or its objectives. Organisations in which this does happen and where there is genuine interest for the ups and downs of staff are generally more successful in every area.

4. WHAT NEXT?

If you take a good look at all the surveys done into new ways of working before and during Corona, you see that there are no simple answers. There is no one-size-fits-all. How you organise the way you work in the future is subject to all sorts of variables. And although cost savings related to reducing the number of square meters can be significant and are within reach, there is a risk of a far greater negative impact in the mid-term. It is tougher to calculate the costs of reduced innovative capacity, poor cooperation internally or less happy and engaged staff. Nevertheless, we're prepared to say that those costs are far higher than the savings.

Approach

Surveys also show, of course, that there are all sorts of reasons to develop a new way of working. Hybrid working, in which staff can choose for themselves where and when they do their work IS going to be the new standard. Organisations that don't facilitate this will become less attractive, certainly for younger staff. The challenge is now to not make the same mistakes that were made when the New Way of Working became popular in the first decade of this century.

Below we address the most important steps needed to develop a new style of working: hybrid working.

1. Insight into current working methods

The first step is to get a good idea of the current way of working. Answer the following questions:

- What is our culture actually like? Are staff used to having responsibility? Do they get the space to be responsible for themselves from their manager?
- Which activities are we currently performing in the organisation?
- What is our policy in terms of working independently of time and place?
- Which facilities do we offer our staff to do their work effectively? Think beyond a workplace at home and good IT facilities – include training and development options, and expenses.
- How do we use our offices as things stand? Is it activity-based? Did people still have individual workplaces or were they already sharing desks?

2. What is going to change in the way we work?

The second step relates to what is likely to change in the way you work. Global trends show that routine, repetitive work is going to decrease. Cooperation in multiple teams is becoming increasingly important. What does that mean for our organisation? Will we need lots of people to perform administrative tasks? Will we still need a large call centre for customer contact of which we know many of the tasks are going to be automated? These trends can have a major impact on the activities that we facilitate as an organisation.

Of course, we also have our normal ambitions. We want to achieve certain goals as an organisation. For example, we want to be more attractive for younger employees. Or we want to work on job happiness. Perhaps we need people with stronger engagement. Or perhaps the culture no longer aligns with the objectives we

have. All these ambitions have an impact on the way we work.

Now we relate the choices we make regarding these global trends and our own ambitions in terms of the current way of working. The crucial question is: does the way we currently work align with the choices we are making for the future?

There are basically three answers:

1. Yes, we have a modern and innovative way of working, and hybrid working was already an option.
2. We still have some doubts. We have taken initial steps towards new ways of working, but there is still ample room for improvement.
3. No, we are not prepared for a new way of working.

Clearly, if you're in category one, you don't have to change anything. For 2 and 3 you have some work to do. And that starts with a good story.

3. Your story: your vision of work

So. There is still room for improvement, or you are only just starting to address hybrid working.

It all starts with a good, attractive story about why you need a new way of working. You need your own 'vision of work'. If you do this properly, you will create a unique vision for your own organisation. This vision lays the link between the existing working methods, the trends we see in society and the objectives and vision we have as an organisation. If the story makes sense, you don't talk about new ways of working or hybrid working: it is simply a logical consequence of trends and vision. It's a way of working that suits the organisation and a view of the future that

staff will recognise and embrace. This vision is the start of an effective change approach and the basis of the change process.

4. Integral process

Using the vision, you now need to develop an integral process for the upcoming changes. It needs to be integral in the sense that you address all the facilities that support the work. In other words, it's not just about the office, the home-based workplace, the IT facilities, or the HR regulations. You cannot separate these things.

An integral approach helps to put things into perspective too. For example: additional investment in good IT (devices and software) can lead to additional savings in terms of office space. With good IT support and training you can improve virtual cooperation so that people need to be in the office less. In the Netherlands, for example, the costs for IT per employee are around EUR3000 per year, while a workplace at the office costs around EUR8000 per employee. In other words, raising the IT budget and therefore reducing the number of square meters is a smart investment.

Our experience and the work done by Leesman, for example, show that it is not sensible to cut costs by reducing the quality of facilities. Poor workplaces at home have a direct impact on the way work is experienced, on productivity and on involvement and engagement. The same is true for offices with poor acoustics. Open offices or cubicles may well be unsuitable in the future. Not so much because of possible infection by a virus, but because we will continue to hold video conferences at the office instead of everyone being on-site for meetings in standard meeting

rooms. Acoustics will therefore be an even greater challenge than before.

5. Change

To close, a brief comment about the change. Due to Corona, work from home was unavoidable. Resistance was pointless. But post-Corona, everything will change yet again. Staff will want to be able to choose whether they can work from home or from the office. Yet some organisations may benefit more from having people at the office regularly. You can make this obligatory as an organisation, but the better approach is to make working at the office logical and attractive. In other words, if your activity-based approach to work means you have to have people at the office, you are better off creating a working environment in which people want to work and are prepared to travel to.

Although a number of organisations are suggesting that in the future offices will be used only for meetings and discussions - Starbucks is often used as an example – all the surveys indicate that cooperation will be the most important activity, in particular for knowledge workers. In teams.

It is smart, therefore, to integrate this change into the teams themselves. Within the team, make agreements as to how you are going to be working. Name the activities, agree where they can take place, and discuss as a team how often you want to see one another – physically and online – so that you can fulfil the agreements you have made in terms of outcome.

To close

Organisations that limit the issue of hybrid working to the number of square meters in an office or providing a good workplace at home are not making the best use of this huge opportunity. This document summarises the findings and conclusions from a great many surveys and research so that organisations can make a substantiated decision. We hope this helps.

5. Next Steps

Should you want support in introducing a new way of working, or simply to initiate the thought process, Yolk and Graymatter offer three levels of support.

Online introduction to hybrid working
In six online modules, each lasting around an hour, you are introduced to the basics of hybrid working. Oriented around four basic principles - Bricks, Bytes, Behaviour and Brand – you have the opportunity to create a basic roadmap for introducing hybrid working in your organisation.

Future of Work Lab
In these Labs, we will work with you to rapidly develop an integral vision of hybrid working in your organisation. In six half-day sessions – either online or physical depending on possibilities – we address introducing hybrid working in your organisation in far greater depth, including the use of relevant tooling and communications.

Tailored guidance
Introducing hybrid working is not easy, but has huge rewards when done properly. Through tailored guidance, we will help to analyse your current situation, create an effective roadmap for implementing hybrid working, and assist you in its introduction. Together we address complex issues such as leadership styles, behaviour, communications and implementation strategies.

www.hybrid-working.eu
Mid-summer 2021, we will be going online with a dedicated portal for hybrid working. We plan to offer registration options for workshops, a wide range of background information, and the
option to purchase relevant tooling for introducing hybrid working in your organisation. Should you want to be kept informed, just send an email as below.

Contact options
As we develop our online material, you can in the meantime contact us as follows: If you are in the Netherlands, visit www.yolk.nl for more information. For those of you who are English or German speakers, visit www.graymatter.works, or send us a message via info@yolk.nl or contact@graymatter.works respectively. If you're in Germany, you can also call +49 176 3014 5171.

This document is a joint publication by Yolk and Graymatter, agencies for development and growth and communications respectively. We have composed it with the greatest possible care. Should you have comments or additions, we would be delighted to hear from you.