



# Working At The Office Will Never Be The Same Again – Why?

Sophie Hutcherson, Non Executive Director, Bellecapital UK

Wednesday, 31 August 2022



# A Word From Today's Chairwoman

**Charlotte Dawber-Ashley**  
Manager, FS Club  
Z/Yen Group





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# Today's Agenda

- 11:00 – 11:05      Chairwoman's Introduction
- 11:05 – 11:25      Keynote Presentation – Sophie Hutcherson
- 11:25 – 11:45      Question & Answer



## Today's Speaker

**Sophie Hutcherson**  
Non-Executive Director  
Bellecapital UK







# Old Office v New Hybrid Office



- Did the old office environment deliver the best way of working?
- New positives of WFH?
- Will we lose new techniques, routines, rhythms we would like to keep or will they dwindle into memory?
- What had we missed about being in the office?





Q1 for audience: What is your Preference now that many of us are operating in a hybrid environment?

- WFH
- Hybrid
- Office based

Q2 for audience:

- Has your organisation set out its expectations ? Y/N
- Are you happy with them? Y/N



# Future Needs

- **Balance** strategy delivery (performance) with needs of employees
- **Enable** not hinder performance
- Safe, comfortable, **flexible** Environment
- “Build an **inclusive** culture everywhere”
- **Financial security**
- **Reconnect** and **reinvigorate** workforce

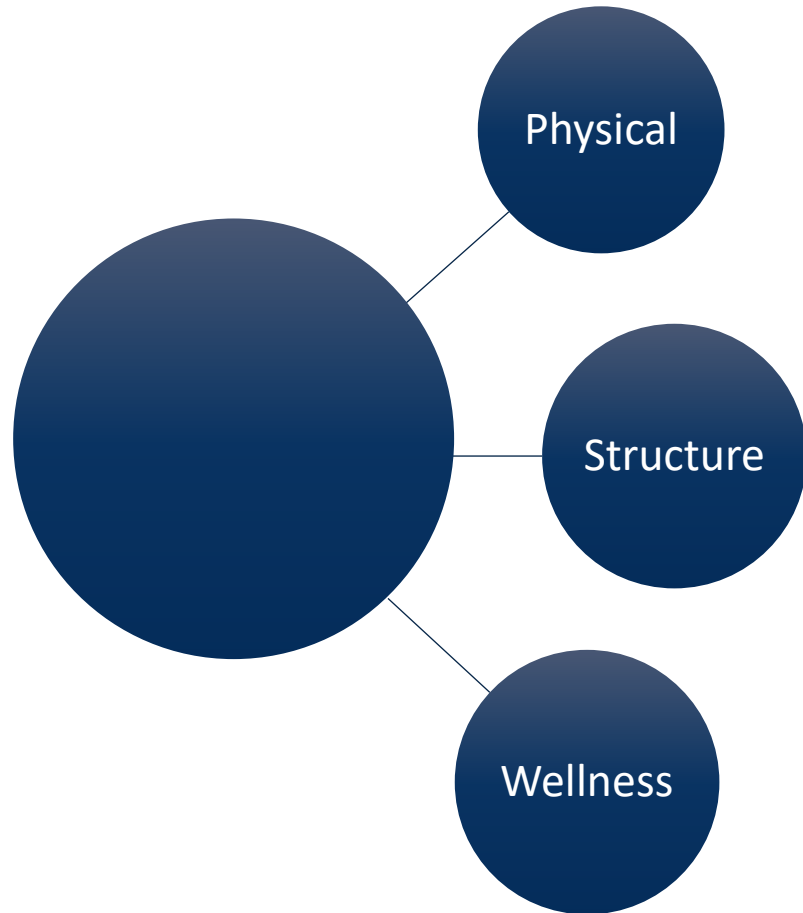


**Does it have to be a trade-off?**





# Work Environment should be Human Centric



- Is office layout optimal, safe/secure?
- Does WFH ergonomically separate home v work?
- New adaptations for split locations?
  
- Review operating and organisation model, tasks, processes
- Focus on RE-building team and relationships
- Are working practices still optimal to performance?
  
- Human / Emotional needs –recognise and articulate challenges (Long Covid, Anxiety, Isolation etc)
- Consider social wellness of group, not just individual
- Inclusivity, diversity, environmentally friendly

- Support: Process Engineers, Organisational Anthropologist, Psychologist, HR specialist



# Tough challenges to address

- Acknowledging the obstacles and the need to trial/evolve/adapt
- Relationship building and RE-building
- Visibility and trust
- Selling change to a fatigued workforce
- Working practices / tools and techniques
- Development and Learning





# Tips to address Challenges

## Acknowledge obstacles – evolve & adapt

- Articulate hybrid environment phases - immediately back (done), intermediate and future
- Acknowledge we are all learning, and office life will evolve and change
- May be unsettling and uncomfortable BUT we've achieved so much so believe in ourselves
- Be realistic and show humility

## Relationship building and RE-building

- Managers listen, coach, develop – air challenges or successes at each team meeting
- Encourage casual and spontaneous interactions eg Coffee n Connect, managers walk the floor informal “chat”
- Spaces and encouragement for meals and breaks away from desk
- Mentoring and buddying programs – groups not just individuals
- Engage the informal networks and consider champions to help

## Visibility and trust

- Manager led panels / town halls – adapt to your organisation and remember one size doesn't fit all
- Focus groups, hotline for staff to raise Qs about the workplace and publish responses
- Encourage ideas and solutions from staff and where adopted give recognition
- Leaders can tell stories personal to their experiences – be honest – warts and all!



# More Tips to address Challenges

## Sell change to fatigued workforce

- Celebrate last 3 years' successes
- Cultural dialogue – feedback routes, choreographed sessions, regular check-ins, surveys
- Keep an open mind and don't be afraid to course correct
- Engage younger cohorts / new joiners for ideas
- Develop new work rituals and social rituals (Friday event, 1<sup>st</sup> month event)

## Working practices/tools/techniques

- Flex approach for different cohorts – one size doesn't have to fit all
- Consider Op model review – What's changed: keep v chuck - What's missing: frustrations, blind spots, tensions, delays
- Time mgt – refresher and reset the boundaries of work and home time, release more time
- Keep Inclusivity and collaboration as strong tenets of any new practices to reinforce the sense of belonging
- A manager doesn't just supervise but creates lines of sight between activity and strategy

## Development & Learning

- Formal sessions - in person and online simultaneously
- Focus on soft skills – juniors have missed 2 years+ watching how others run meetings, behave in office, influence etc
- Informal “Get to know the Organisation” sessions led by team or department heads
- Don't make it all about work, poll for other topics (Environment, demystifying scientific/technology developments)

- Encourage “Pay It On” mentality – how do we hang on to that?



# Conclusion

## Keep Experimenting to Evolve

- Balance strategic performance with human needs
- Watch out for emerging variables
- Accept and acknowledge working environments will change and we won't get all aspects right immediately
- Elicit feedback from all groups - some will be vociferous, some will be polarised, most will be fatigued with change and disruption
- Psychologist's Tip - Don't respond to emotional response with logic
- Thanks for Your Attention

31/08/2022







# Questions & Answers and References



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[Navigating The New Physical And Digital Workplace In The Age Of Pandemics](#)  
- Melissa Fisher

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# Comments, Questions & Answers





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# Thank You For Participating

## Forthcoming Events

- Thu, 01 Sep (16:00-16:45) The Unsustainable Cost Of The EU's Sustainable Finance Regulations
- Mon, 12 Sep (10:00-10:45) The World Is Burning – Climate Change & Global Fires
- Wed, 07 Sep (10:30-11:15) Accelerating Innovation Using Third Party Technologies
- Thu, 08 Sep (16:00-16:45) Dead In The Water: What Happens When Organised Crime Targets The City Of London?

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