

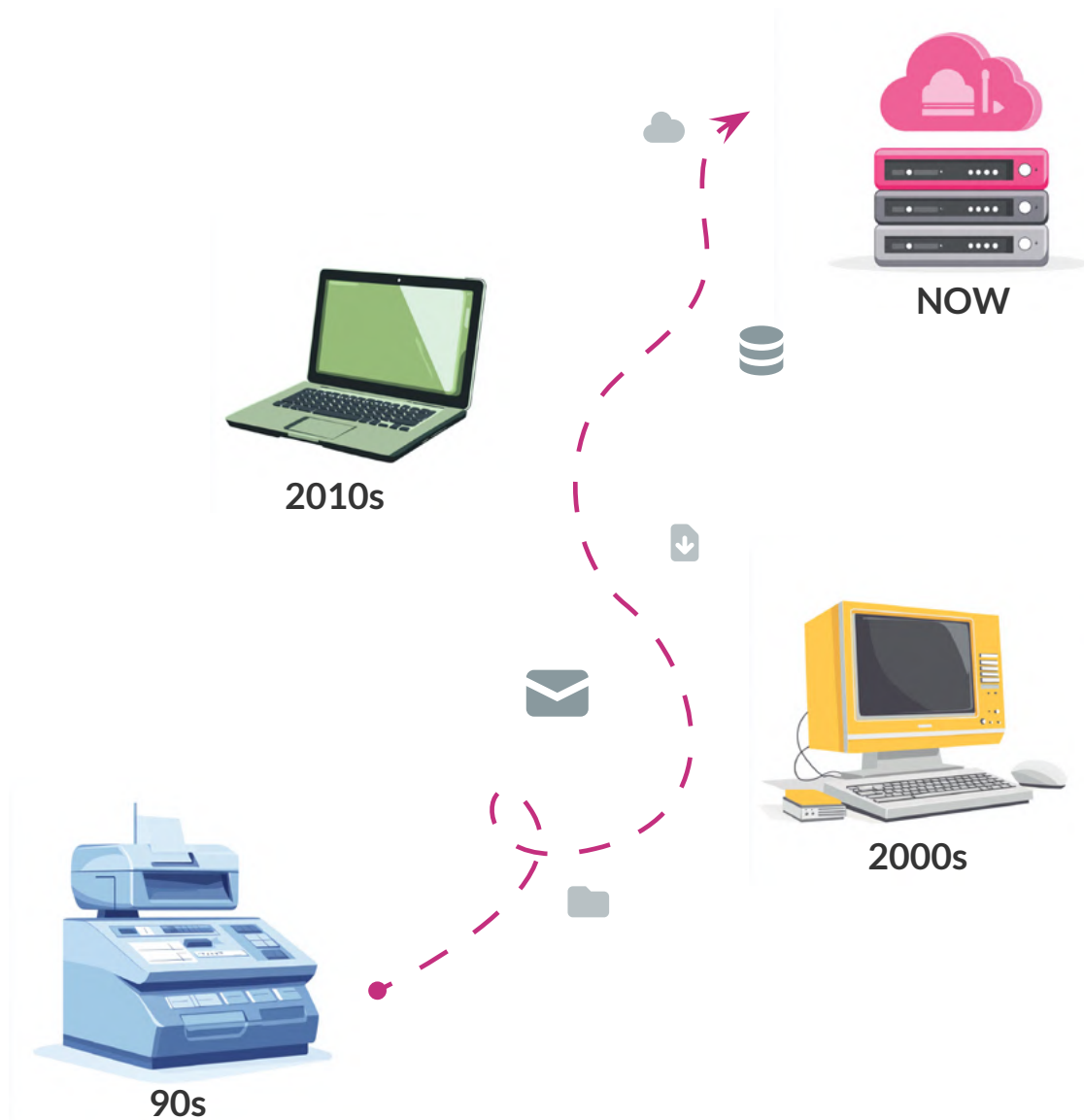


What can working from home and the office learn from one another?

The not-so-brief history of remote work

While the idea of remote work might seem like a product of the digital age, history tells a different story. Before the Industrial Revolution locked workers into factories and offices, people often worked where they lived. Artisans crafted goods in their workshops. Merchants ran businesses from their homes. Accountants kept financial records for wealthy patrons without ever stepping into an office. It wasn't until factories and corporate structures took hold that commuting became the default.

Fast forward to today, and technology has transformed the way we work, making remote and hybrid models more accessible than ever. But this isn't just a COVID-era phenomenon. Remote work has been evolving for decades, shaped by innovation, shifting workplace attitudes, and the growing recognition that productivity doesn't depend on a desk in a corporate office.



The 1990s - Pioneering remote work

The 90s saw the first real wave of remote work pioneers. This was the era of bulky desktop computers, dial-up internet, and email communication was just starting to gain traction. Freelancers, consultants, and tech specialists were the first to embrace telecommuting, while forward-thinking companies like IBM experimented with letting employees work remotely. It wasn't always seamless (and let's not even talk about how long it took to send an email over dial-up, or how you couldn't use the phone at the same time), but it was proof that work could happen outside the office. With that in mind, it only makes sense that Bell Labs dipped their toes into remote work too.

The 2000s - Remote work gets a lot easier

As technology advanced, so did remote work. The 2000s saw a rise in cloud computing and collaboration tools like Skype and Google Docs, which made it easier to collaborate without being in the same room. Some companies were already going fully remote, like Automattic (the company behind WordPress) and Basecamp, proving that entire organisations could operate without a physical headquarters. The world was starting to see that work wasn't about *where* you did it, it was about *how* you did it.

The 2010s - The remote work boom

By the 2010s, remote work was going mainstream. The explosion of cloud-based software like Slack, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams revolutionised how teams communicated and collaborated. Companies like GitLab and Buffer went fully remote, demonstrating that with the right tools and culture, distributed teams could be just as effective as those working in traditional office settings. Although it was gaining traction, it still wasn't the norm in workplaces.

The workplace has come full circle. Once again, people are working where they live, only now, they have the technology and flexibility to make it even more effective. The way we work will keep evolving, shaped by innovation, necessity, and the ever-changing needs of people.

Why does this history matter? Because it gives us context for our current research and how things might look in the future. Hybrid working is no longer a temporary fix, it is the go-to structure for modern organisations. What began as a reactive measure to a global crisis has evolved into a strategic choice for many organisations. But just because hybrid models are the norm, doesn't mean the journey is over. To understand where we stand today, we need to take an honest look at shifting

preferences, changing behaviours, and the ongoing challenges of hybrid work. By understanding the shifts that have brought us here, we can better predict where work is headed and how businesses can adapt to whatever comes next.

2020 - The democratisation of hybrid work

Then came 2020 and suddenly remote work wasn't just an option, it was a necessity. The COVID-19 pandemic forced businesses worldwide to go remote practically overnight. While many saw it as a temporary fix, it quickly became clear that remote work *worked*. Employees valued the flexibility, companies saw sustained productivity, and hybrid work models became the new gold standard.

The Genie is out of the bottle!

In 2020, we wanted to see how things had changed in the world of remote, hybrid and office working after the COVID-19 crisis was over. We found that 90% of people who experienced working remotely, wanted to continue to work remotely in some capacity, with 48% saying they would like to work remotely some of the time and 30% saying remotely most of the time.

Why COVID's democratisation of hybrid working changed everything

The COVID-19 pandemic was more than a temporary disruption to the workplace; it was a turning point. As businesses rapidly shifted to remote work in 2020, the democratisation of hybrid working began. People who had previously only imagined the flexibility of working from home, experienced it first-hand, and organisations that had resisted change found themselves forced into a digital-first model.

Increased demand, increased risk

The newfound freedom of hybrid working came with a surge in demand. People saw benefits in reduced commuting, better work-life balance, and greater autonomy and flocked to the hybrid model. According to our **2020** research, 90% of people expressed a desire to continue working remotely at least part of the time.

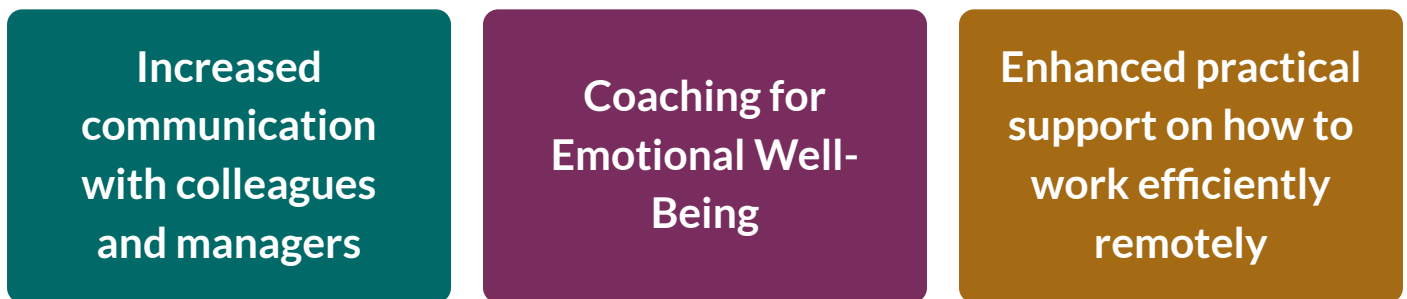
However, the shift into hybrid work has also introduced challenges for organisations, particularly

around productivity, engagement, and trust.

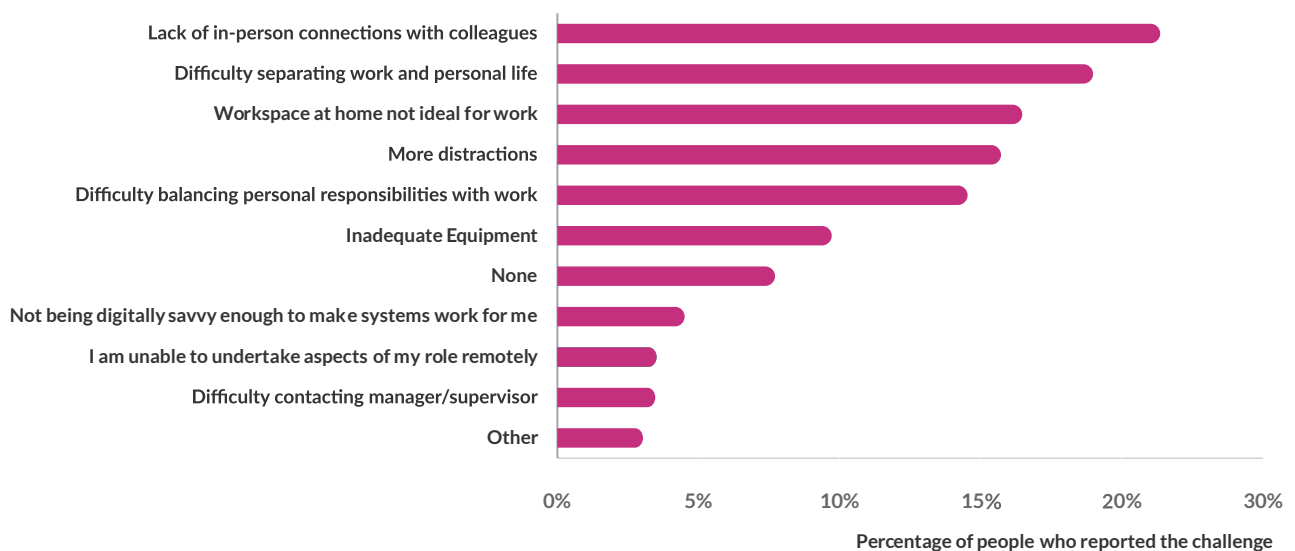
Many organisations struggled with visibility over employee performance, fearing that reduced face-to-face interactions might impact output (Wharton 2021). There was also concern about maintaining team cohesion, with 56% of people reporting feeling disconnected from colleagues and 62% feeling isolated. (Lumina Learning, 2020). The transition was not just a logistical challenge but also a cultural and behavioural one.

Organisational support shapes behaviour. Behaviour shapes performance outcomes.

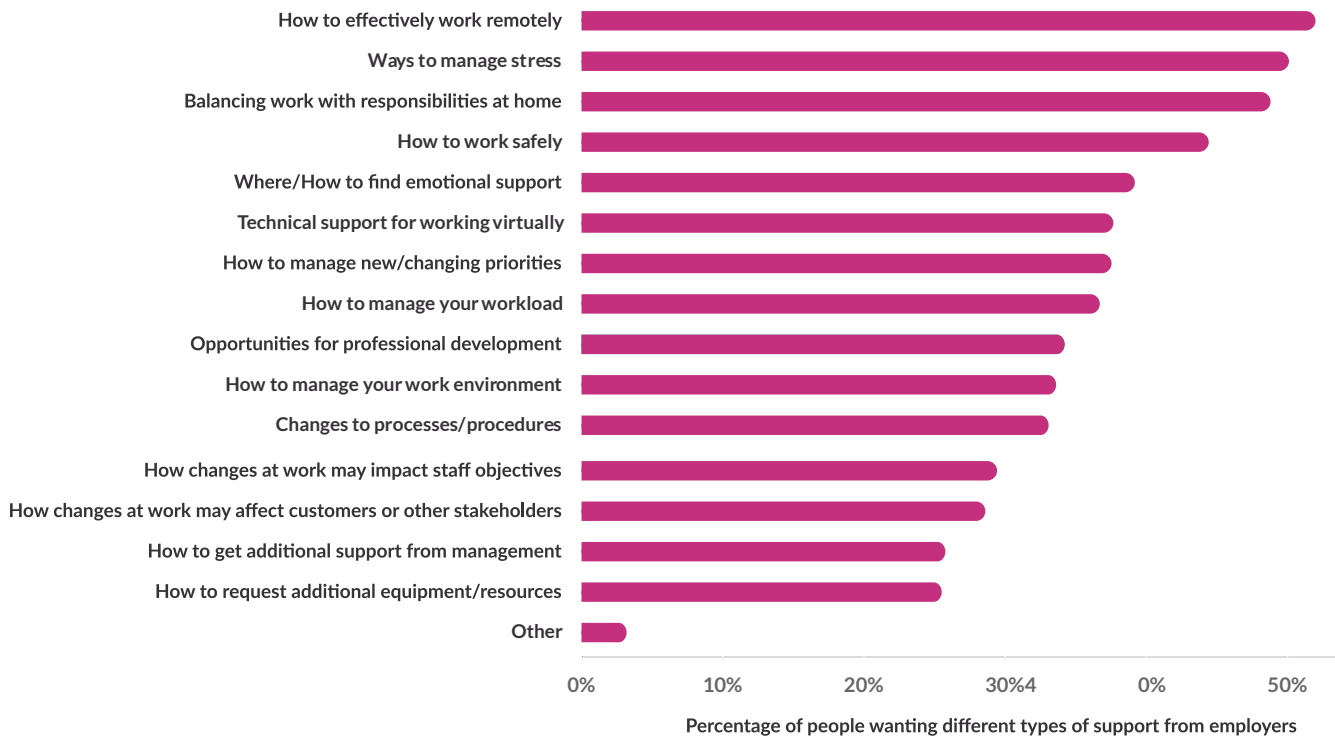
Employers need to support their new-found remote workers with:



What challenges have you faced since starting to work remotely?



What kind of additional support should employers provide their employees with?

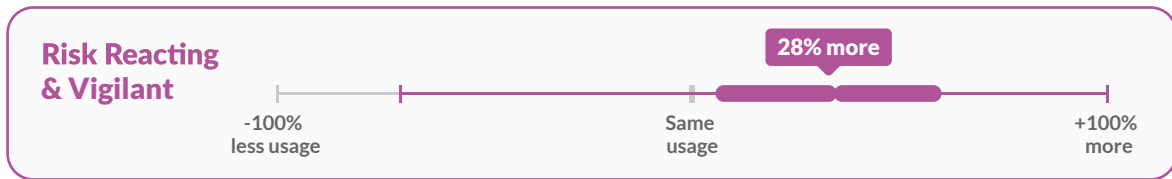
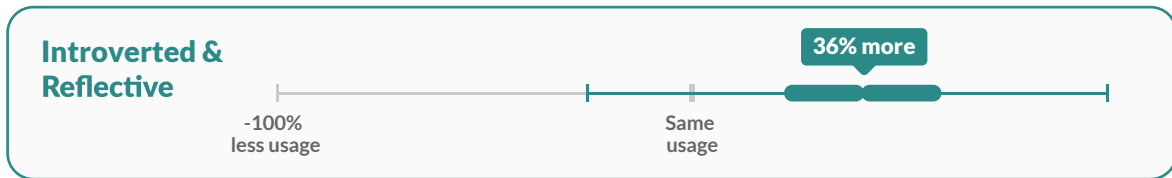


And what about personality? Our 2020 research found that the COVID-19 crisis had a big impact. People felt less extraverted and less spontaneous than ever before. Our personality impacted how we responded to the crisis, with some being more prone to becoming workaholics when working remotely, and others becoming less productive when working from home.

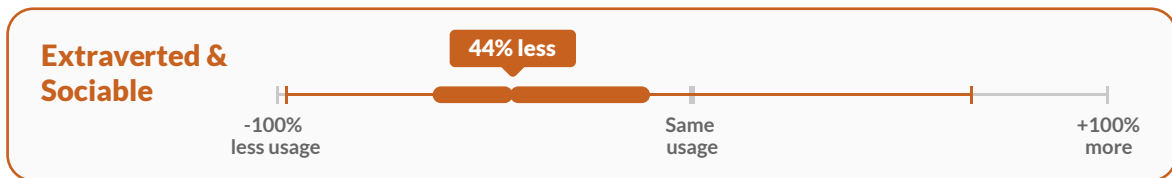
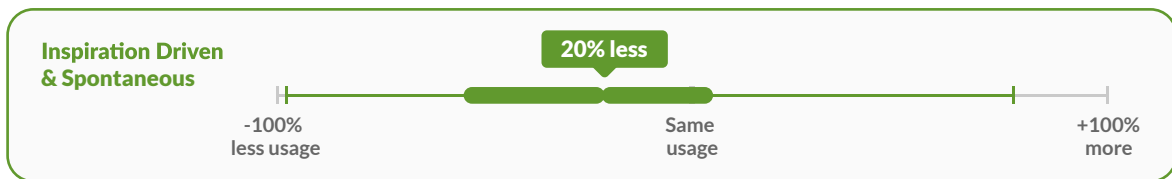
The crisis has also impacted our personality

- ✓ We are less extraverted and less spontaneous than we were before.
- ✓ We are more reflective and vigilant.

Increase in 2 Key Personality Traits During the Crisis



Decrease in 2 Key Personality Traits During the Crisis



Where are we now?

The era of hybrid work

The pandemic era reshaped workplace behaviours, and the rise of hybrid work has left a lasting impact. Now in 2025, hybrid work is not just an option; it is the norm. Organisations have realised that a one-size-fits-all approach simply does not make the cut. The focus has shifted to making hybrid models effective by supporting employee wellbeing, maintaining productivity, and strengthening trust within teams. It's time to explore the behavioural side of hybrid work, understanding how to balance autonomy with connection, and ensuring that policies are not just written but actively integrated into daily practice.

Because remote working has been a part of the workplace for a while now, so we decided to look into it again with a fresh lens.

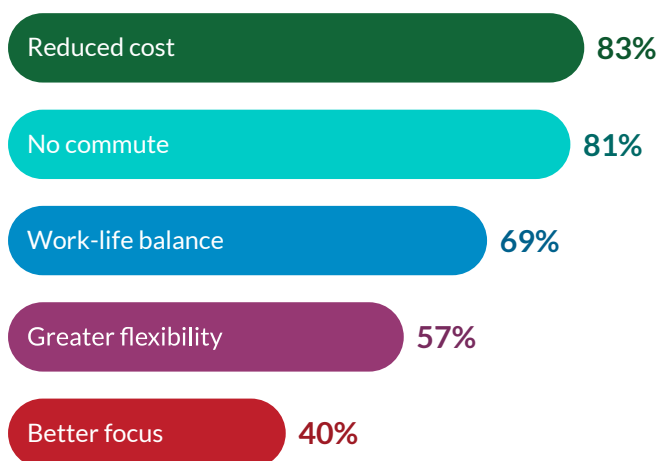
Our 2025 research found that people continue to value the flexibility offered by hybrid working. The research indicates that on average, people spend 43% of their working time remotely. The top benefits of remote work remain strong from our 2020 research - reduced costs (83%), no commute (81%), and improved work-life balance (69%).

However, office work still holds unique advantages. 75% of people appreciate the deeper connections and stronger collaboration opportunities that arise from being in the same physical space. Hybrid work, seen as the “best of both worlds”, appeals to 80% of people, who enjoy balancing focused remote work with intentional in-office interactions.

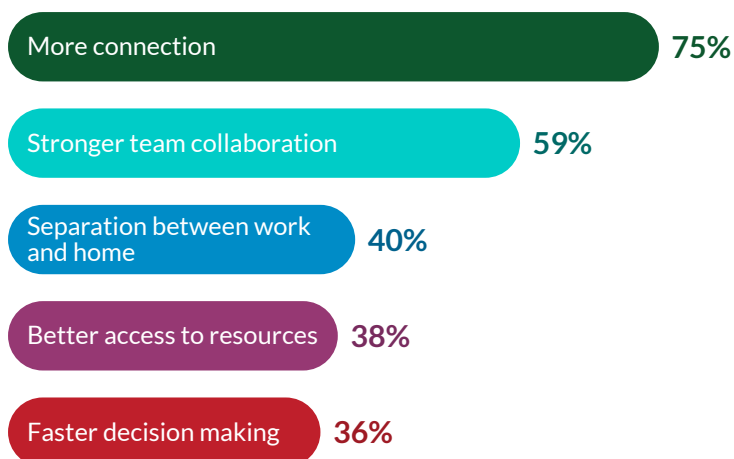
So, what did people say were the top 5 reasons they wanted to work remotely vs in office in 2025?

There are some clear benefits to both environments, each environment bringing out different strengths at work.

5 best things about working remotely



5 best things about working in office



We asked, what are the top 5 best things about hybrid working?

Best of both worlds

80%

Enjoy the flexibility of remote work while maintaining in-person collaboration

Reduced commuting time

68%

Fewer trips to the office while still benefitting from in-person work

Work-life balance

65%

Flexibility to manage personal and professional responsibilities more effectively

Flexible scheduling

43%

Ability to structure my week based on priorities and preferences

More meaningful
in-office interactions

32%

Time in the office is used more intentionally for collaboration

The rapid adoption of hybrid working has led many organisations to focus on policies, processes, and technology. But one crucial element often left out of the conversation is behaviour. While policy sets the framework, it is behaviour that determines how effective hybrid working can truly be. The gap between strategy and practice is not just about systems, it's about people.

Is behaviour being ignored?

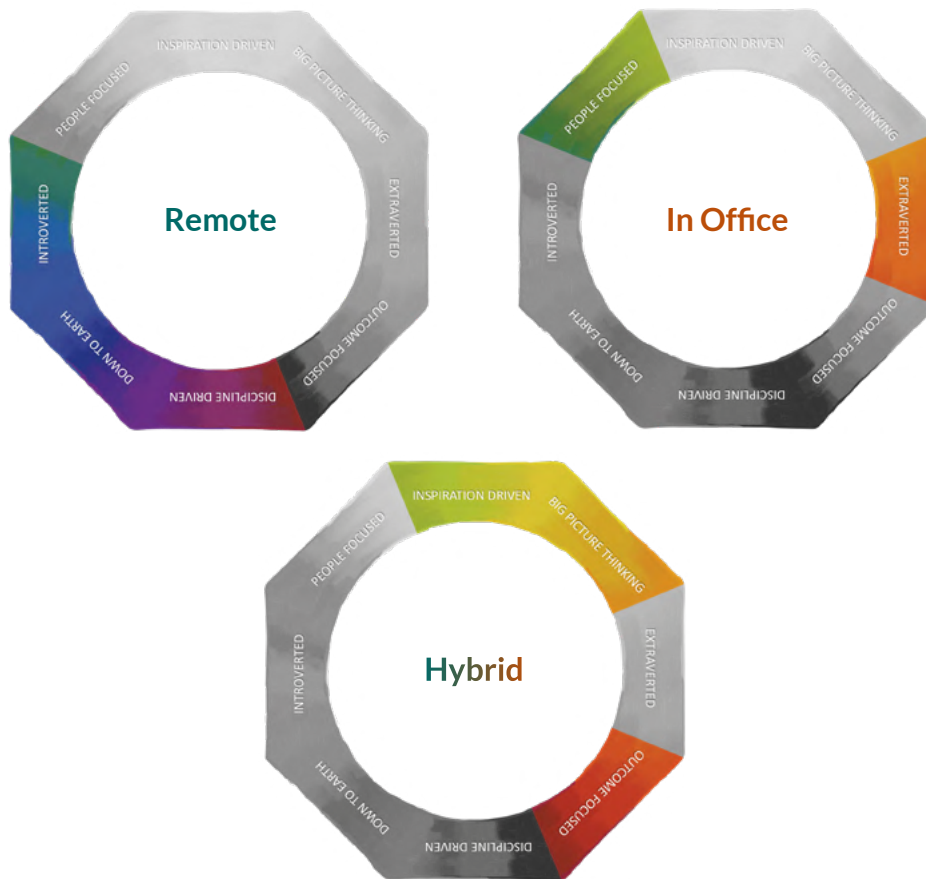
Policies are essential for setting expectations around where and when people work, but they rarely address how people should behave in different environments. Hybrid work demands a nuanced approach, recognising that behaviours can shift dramatically depending on whether someone is working remotely or in an office.

To bridge the gap between strategy and practice, you have to understand the behavioural dimensions at play. So, what Aspects are most important for remote, in office, and hybrid working?

% = Proportion of people who selected that behaviour/quality as being relevant for that specific work arrangement.

	Remote	In Office	Hybrid
Big Picture Thinking Conceptual, Imaginative, Radical, Introspective	36%	32%	47%
Down to Earth Practical, Evidence-Based, Cautious, Grounded	42%	34%	39%
Extraverted Sociable, Demonstrative, Takes Charge, Expresses Emotions	14%	75%	23%
Introverted Observing, Measured, Intimate, Contains Emotions	72%	13%	26%
People Focused Accommodating, Collaborative, Empathetic, Regard for Others	14%	62%	45%
Outcome Focus Tough, Competitive, Logical, Independent of Others	37%	30%	52%
Discipline Driven Purposeful, Structured, Reliable, Focuses Feelings	51%	28%	42%
Inspiration Driven Adaptable, Flexible, Spontaneous, Follows Feelings	39%	27%	54%

Here's how this would look mapped out on a Lumina Spark Mandala



What is that telling us? It shows that certain traits can lend themselves better to certain working environments. People who are **Introverted**, **Down to Earth** and **Discipline Driven**, thrive in a remote environment. In office, work needs to be more **People Focused**, and it's probably no surprise that **Extraversion** thrives in office environments with Sociable, Demonstrative and Takes Charge ranking highly. And in hybrid work environments, the Aspects; **Big Picture Thinking**, **Outcome Focused**, **Inspiration Driven** all win out.

Debunking the myths

We've all heard the argument that spontaneity thrives in the office; collaboration thrives in the office; creativity thrives in the office. Right? It's often an argument used by people encouraging the masses to come back into the office. But our research shows something else.

❌ People are more creative in the office

70% said they are actually able to explore big ideas and creative thinking when working remotely.

❌ Working from home encourages a deep focus on single tasks

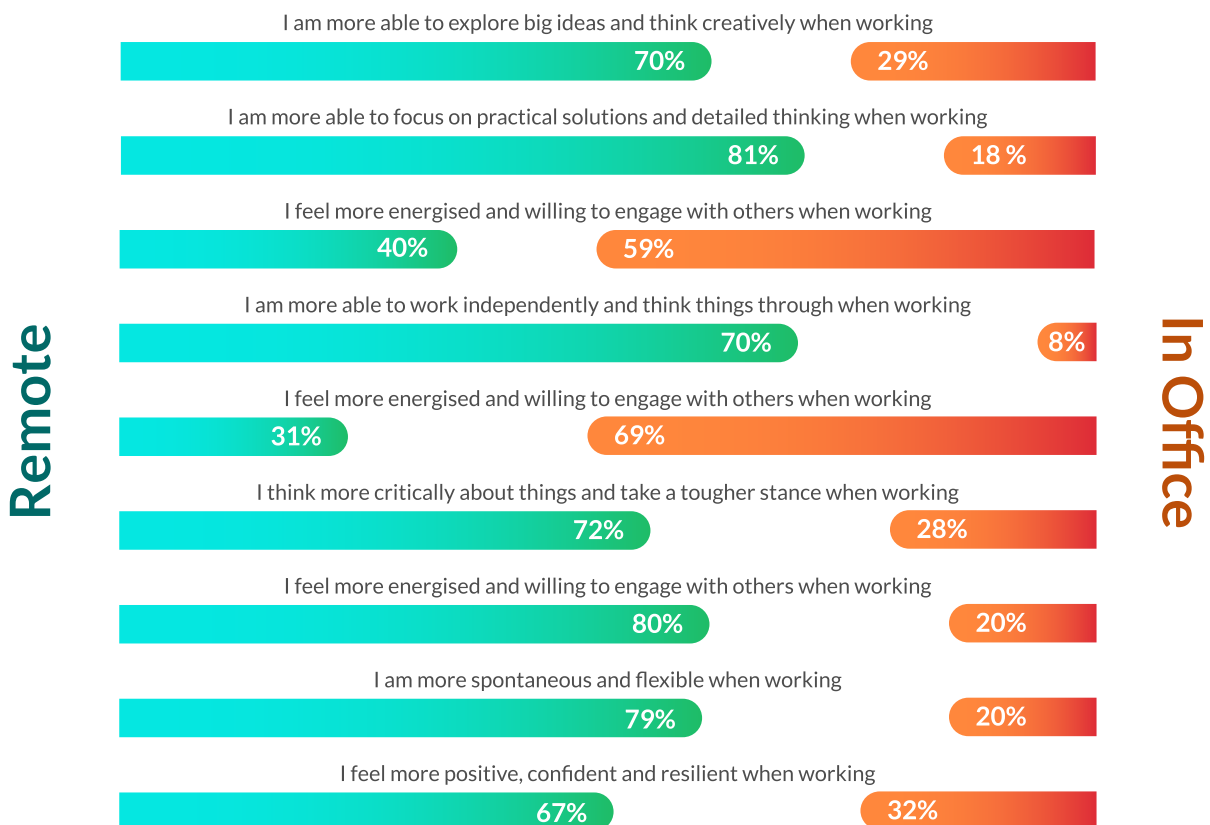
79% said they feel *more* spontaneous and flexible when working from home.

❌ Collaboration can only happen in the office

While collaboration does win out in office environments, it's not as big of a gap as you might expect with only just over half (59%) feeling more willing to engage with others when working in office.

Remote work however has its own advantages with a whopping 92% reporting that they are able to work independently and think things through more when working from home, 81% saying they are able to focus more on practical solutions and detailed thinking when working remotely, and 80% reporting that they can plan and work in a purposeful way when working remotely.

% = Percentage of those who selected Remote vs in Office (or vice versa)

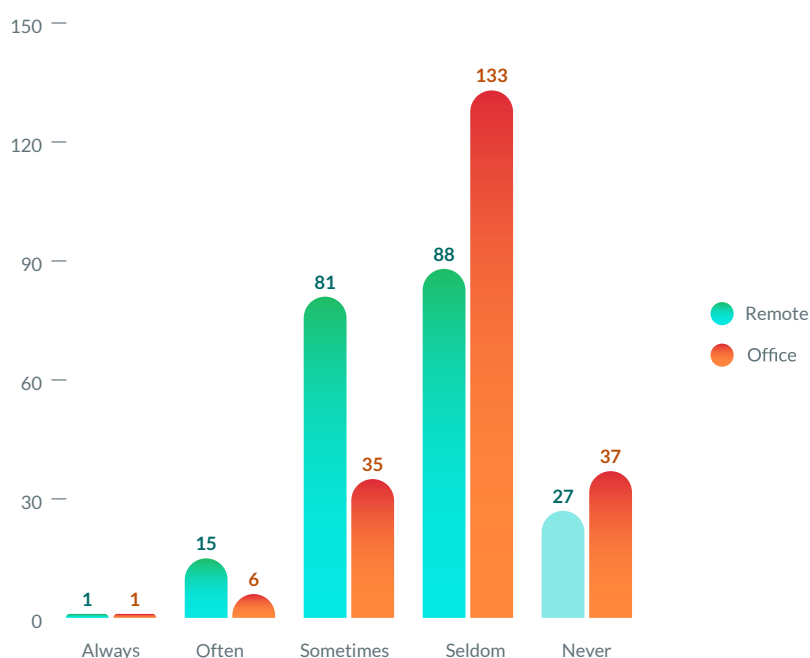


These behavioural shifts are not merely preferences, but reflections of how different settings can bring out different aspects of our personalities.

What about the communication gap?

Communication between office work and remote work is a big one. People found that working remotely resulted in more communication misunderstandings compared to in the office. Communication challenges exist in all work environments; the nature of misunderstandings differs between remote, office, and hybrid settings. While face-to-face interactions often reduce misunderstandings due to non-verbal cues, remote communication can sometimes lead to misinterpretations of tone and intent. Many people appreciate the clarity that in-person discussions provide, particularly for complex or sensitive topics. But some find remote communication beneficial as it allows them to carefully structure their messages and review information at their own pace. Hybrid work environments add another layer of complexity, as informal office conversations can leave remote workers feeling out of the loop, and hybrid meetings sometimes create imbalances in participation.

How often do you feel that your communication with colleagues is misunderstood?



Well the office takes the win on this one with miscommunication happening more frequently in a remote setting than in office.

How often do you feel that your communication with colleagues is misunderstood?

Well the office takes the win on this one with miscommunication happening more frequently in a remote setting than in office.

Communication misunderstandings play out differently across remote, office, and hybrid work settings, shaped by the nuances of tone, immediacy, and clarity. In the office, face-to-face interactions provide an advantage. Non-verbal cues like facial expressions and body language help colleagues grasp intent more easily, reducing the chances of misinterpretation. A quick chat by the desk or a casual clarification in passing can resolve confusion before it even starts. But just because in-person communication may work for some people, it may not work with others' personal style. Someone with highly Introverted Qualities for example, is more likely to appreciate a private one-to-one conversation, whereas someone with Extraverted Qualities might be happy to have a group discussion in the office.

Remote work strips away these visual and vocal cues, leaving messages open to misinterpretation. An email that was meant to be neutral might come across as blunt, while a brief chat message can feel abrupt. The lack of immediate feedback can mean that small misunderstandings snowball into bigger issues. Yet, some people argue that remote communication actually improves clarity so, having time to craft a well-structured message can reduce the risk of off-the-cuff miscommunication. For those with more Discipline Driven Qualities who thrive with a structure in place, remote work can be a blessing.

Hybrid work presents a unique challenge, often creating an invisible divide between those in the office and those working remotely. Information is sometimes passed informally between in-office colleagues, leaving remote workers feeling out of the loop. Hybrid meetings can also be a struggle when those with Extraverted Qualities in the room may overextend and dominate discussions, while remote participants find themselves relegated to the background, struggling to break into the conversation.

But it's not just about location; miscommunication happens everywhere. Fast-paced office environments can lead to rushed conversations that aren't fully absorbed, while remote workers might miss nuances hidden in a hastily typed message. The real key lies in communication skills, adaptability, and a conscious effort to ensure everyone, regardless of where they work, is included

and understood. Organisations that invest in clear communication practices, bridge the gap between remote and in-office workers, and refine hybrid meeting strategies, will be the ones who thrive in this ever-evolving work landscape. But ultimately, effective communication relies more on individual skills than on the work setting itself. People who adapt their personal style based on the context, whether by being more deliberate in written messages or actively engaging in online meetings, can communicate more successfully.

Burnout factor

The debate around remote vs office work often includes concerns about work-life balance and burnout. While the issue may seem straightforward at first glance, a closer look reveals a more complex picture. Office workers often struggle with work-life balance due to the demands of commuting and rigid schedules that limit flexibility for personal time. Remote workers face their own set of challenges, such as the difficulty in setting clear boundaries between work and personal life, and the risk of isolation and disconnection from colleagues.

What does the data show?

24% of remote workers reported that working from home blurred the boundaries between work and personal life, making it harder to switch off.

45% of office workers said they had less time for family, exercise, or personal activities, highlighting the strain of commuting and rigid schedules.

Burnout is not simply a byproduct of working too much, it's a result of overextending personal strengths without the right support. By recognising the behavioural factors at play in different work environments, organisations can foster resilience, engagement, and wellbeing among their people.

Aspects that do well in office can still overextend in the office.

Mapping how behaviour shows up differently remotely vs in the office

8 Aspects and 24 Qualities you'll likely to see play out.

Hybrid work isn't just about swapping the office for your kitchen table. It's about understanding how different personality traits show up in different environments. Working remotely can unlock deep focus, autonomy, and flexibility. However, it also comes with the risk of isolation, miscommunication, and (let's be honest) spending far too much time in pyjamas.

So, how do different Lumina Spark Qualities thrive in remote work? And where do they risk tipping into overextension? Let's dive in.

Extraversion

Bringing the buzz (or just shouting into the void?)

Sociable



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You're the one keeping the team connected; during back-to-back virtual meetings, you take a few minutes to ask how people are doing and make sure the WhatsApp group stays lively. Who needs a water cooler when you've got a well-placed emoji and a GIF for every occasion?

⚡ **Watch out for going from Sociable to Can't be Alone:** Overextending into a flurry of messages, voice notes, and surprise Zoom calls. Your introverted colleagues may have been hoping for a quiet morning of deep work. Remember, just because you're feeling isolated doesn't mean everyone else is!



✓ **Strength in the office:** You're in your element, bouncing between desk chats, grabbing gossip at the water cooler, and making sure no decision goes unnoticed in those all-important corridor conversations. You bring energy, build connections, and keep things lively.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Overextending into verbal diarrhoea! It is true that chatting is great, but if you're forcing a software developer to remove his noise-cancelling headphones just to ask if he fancies a Marmite sandwich, you might need to rein it in.

Demonstrative



✓ **Strength in remote work:** Even from behind a screen, your energy is contagious. You liven up team meetings, keep the vibe positive, and make sure no one sinks into the soulless abyss of silent video calls. Your facial expression says it all!

⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Demonstrative to Overbearing:** Forgetting that not everyone wants their morning meeting to feel like a motivational seminar. If your enthusiasm is met with blank stares (or worse, as cameras mysteriously start turning off!), it might be time to dial it down a notch.



✓ **Strength in the office:** You bring the Tigger energy, radiating enthusiasm as you bounce from meeting to meeting. People feed off your positivity, and your presence in the office keeps morale high.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Be careful not to overdo it—there's a fine line between infectious energy and being the reason your more introverted colleagues start researching remote work policies.

Takes Charge



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You make things happen. When others are lost in a sea of Slack threads and endless email chains, you step in, take control, and keep things moving forward.

⚡ **Watch out for spilling over from Takes Charge to being Controlling:** Steamrolling decision-making just because you don't like the agonisingly long pause after you ask, "Any thoughts?" in a remote meeting. Just because no one speaks up immediately doesn't mean they agree! It might just mean they're thinking (or on mute!).



✓ **Strength in the office:** Your animated arm-waving, bold gestures, and natural ability to drive things forward make you incredibly persuasive in the moment. People listen when you speak, and you make sure decisions actually get made.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Letting that persuasiveness tip into steamrolling. If colleagues start popping on their noise-cancelling headphones as soon as they see you coming, it might be time to dial it down.

Introversion

Enjoying the peace (or slowly fading into the background?)

Observing



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You listen first, think carefully, and contribute with precision. In written communication, your carefully crafted insights often cut through the noise and add real depth to discussions.

⚡ **Watch out for your Observing becoming detached and aloof:** Holding back so much that your brilliant ideas stay locked in your head. If the loudest voices dominate the chat, don't be afraid to hit 'unmute' and remind everyone you exist.



✓ **Strength in the office:** You choose your words carefully, and people listen when you speak. You create space for meaningful conversations and ensure that the loudest voices in the room don't just dominate discussions.

⚡ **Watch out for:** ...choosing your words so carefully that you never get a word in edgeways. Sometimes, you need to jump in before the meeting moves on without you.

Measured



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You bring a calm, professional tone to the chaos of remote work. While others are juggling distractions, you create an environment of order, keeping things structured and on track.

⚡ **Watch out for your Measured overextending into "Serious and Withdrawn":** Being so composed and restrained that you're mistaken for disengaged. Watch out for keeping your camera off one time too many. A little warmth in your messages goes a long way, and maybe even (dare I say it?) the occasional emoji!



✓ **Strength in the office:** You bring a sense of professionalism and composure to the office environment. Your calm presence creates order, making the workspace feel structured and respectful.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Be careful not to underdo it – as too much composure, and suddenly, the office starts feeling low-energy. Don't be afraid to show a little personality.

Intimate



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You're the go-to person for those deep one-to-one chats over a quiet video call. You create safe spaces for real conversations, ensuring colleagues feel heard and supported. You are the master of the Zoom breakout room!

⚡ **Watch out for your Intimate overextending into passive behaviour:** Becoming the remote team's unofficial therapist. If you're the person everyone vents to, you might find yourself emotionally exhausted by the end of the day. Protect your own boundaries too!



✓ **Strength in the office:** Even in a busy, open-plan office, you find ways to have meaningful, one-to-one conversations in the building's nooks and crannies only you seem to know about. People trust you and appreciate how well you listen.

⚡ **Watch out for:** ...your listening skills are being misinterpreted as agreement. Just because you're nodding doesn't mean you have to buy into every wild idea someone shares with you.

Big Picture Thinking

Visionary genius (or lost in the clouds?)

Conceptual



Strength in remote work: When you've got the space to work in peace, your mind can absorb complex frameworks, models, and theories. Without interruptions, you can deep-dive into ideas and connect the dots between abstract concepts.



Watch out for overextending and your ideas becoming Unfeasible: There's a risk of getting lost in endless internet searches, bouncing from one theory to another without landing on anything practical. Without external input, it's easy to spiral into complexity without an action plan.



Strength in the office: A 20-foot-long whiteboard is your best friend. You love mapping out intricate models so everyone can take them in during a coffee break. The physical space allows for tangible creativity and big-picture thinking.



Watch out for: Sharing your grand concepts over lunch, only to find that others see them as overly complex or ambiguous. Without grounding, you might struggle to translate vision into execution.

Imaginative



Strength in remote work: Without the distractions of the office, your imagination can truly take flight. You're free to explore fresh ideas, letting creativity run wild without anyone pulling you back to reality too soon.



Watch out for overplaying your imagination and becoming a bit of a Fantasist: It's easy to lose hours or even days pondering your next big idea without taking concrete action. Too much solo brainstorming can lead to impractical solutions.



Strength in the office: People come to you when they need inspiration. A quick chat with you sparks their own creativity, and you're known for your never-ending stream of original ideas.



Watch out for: Scheduling one too many brainstorming sessions, only for others to critique and shoot down your ideas before they've had a chance to develop.

Radical



Strength in remote work: You're a natural change agent, and working remotely removes the external filters that might hold you back in an office setting. Without immediate feedback, you feel free to push the boundaries.



Watch out for overextending into Change for the Sake of Change: Without colleagues around to provide reality checks, you might get carried away advocating for radical shifts that lack feasibility or buy-in.



Strength in the office: Your unconventional thinking gives the office an edge. You challenge norms, stimulate fresh thinking, and encourage others to embrace new ways of doing things.



Watch out for overextending: Your relentless drive for innovation can be exhausting for colleagues who prefer stability. You might hear, "We've tried that before, and it didn't work," more than you'd like.

Down to Earth

Pragmatic problem-solver (or stuck in the weeds?)

Practical



✓ **Strength in remote work:** Without distractions, you can focus on what actually works in the real world. There's nobody to interject with random ideas that could take you off track, allowing you to refine a solid, actionable plan.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending and shifting from Practical to Narrow-Sighted:** Being too grounded can mean missing out on imaginative or innovative solutions. Others may see your approach as predictable or lacking creativity.



✓ **Strength in the office:** Your sensible, down-to-earth approach helps keep teams realistic. You bring practicality to discussions, ensuring that grand ideas don't lose touch with reality.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending:** Colleagues might see you as resistant to change if you dismiss new ideas too quickly. There's a fine line between being pragmatic and being perceived as closed-minded.

Evidence-Based



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You thrive on deep research. With the time and space to dive into AI searches, industry reports, and case studies, you ensure that decisions are backed by solid evidence.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending and becoming Lost in the Details:** The pursuit of evidence can be endless. Without a deadline or external pressure, you risk spending too much time gathering data rather than acting on it.



✓ **Strength in the office:** Your attention to detail helps challenge assumptions. Colleagues look to you to fact-check ideas and provide solid reasoning behind decisions.

⚡ **Watch out for:** If you overplay your evidence-based approach, you might be seen as pedantic or overly critical, which can alienate more intuitive thinkers.

Cautious



✓ **Strength in remote work:** The quiet of your home office allows you to methodically assess risks and consider the consequences before acting. Your thoughtful email responses help others see the value of careful decision-making.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending and becoming Change-Resistant:** Without the energy of those around you, it's easy to get stuck in an echo chamber of deferring decisions to mitigate risk. You may unintentionally slow progress.



✓ **Strength in the office:** People seek you out to have their plans sense checked. Your caution helps prevent reckless decisions and ensures that all angles are considered before moving forward.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending:** Don't become the office naysayer. If you push caution too far, you risk gaining a reputation for shutting down new ideas. People might start bypassing you when they want to move fast.

People Focused

The heart of the team (or the emotional sponge?)

Accommodating



✔ **Strength in remote work:** Your diplomacy keeps remote teams running smoothly. You make sure everyone feels included, listen to concerns, and go out of your way to create harmony in virtual meetings. If there's a dispute, you're the first to mediate and keep things on track. You like to use the applause emoji to recognise others!



⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Accommodating to Acquiescing:** The desire to keep the peace can mean you agree to everything – even things that push your workload to the brink. Without the physical presence of colleagues, it's harder to set boundaries, and before you know it, your 'quick favour' list is turning into unpaid overtime.



✔ **Strength in the office:** In-person, your ability to smooth over workplace tensions and create a collaborative atmosphere shines. People can see your diplomatic body language, and it rubs off. You keep morale high and ensure that everyone feels heard and valued in meetings.



⚡ **Watch out for:** Becoming the office 'yes person'. If you're agreeing to every request that lands on your desk just to avoid friction, you may end up overwhelmed – and others might start taking advantage of your good nature.

Empathetic



✔ **Strength in remote work:** You pick up on subtle emotional cues, even over Slack and video calls. When a colleague is struggling, you check in with a well-timed message to show you care. You create a safe space for open conversations, making sure no one feels isolated.



⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Empathetic to Emotionally Stretched:** With limited physical interaction, it's easy to shoulder everyone else's problems without the usual office energy to balance things out. If you find yourself constantly absorbing the emotional weight of others, burnout isn't far behind.



✔ **Strength in the office:** Your natural empathy makes you the go-to for a supportive chat in person. You bring warmth, create a trusting environment, and help defuse workplace tensions before they escalate.



⚡ **Watch out for:** Taking on too much emotional labour. If you're the one always offering support, who's supporting you? There's a fine line between being a great empathetic listener and becoming the office therapist.

Collaborative



✔ **Strength in remote work:** You're proactive in bringing people together across digital platforms. Whether it's brainstorming in virtual whiteboards or setting up informal 'coffee catch-ups,' you make sure teamwork still thrives, even when everyone is working from different locations.



⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Collaborative to Consensus-Obsessed:** Remote work means decisions sometimes need to be made quickly, but if you're waiting for everyone to weigh in on every little thing, progress can grind to a halt. Sometimes, a call for action is needed over another round of 'what does everyone think?' messages.



✔ **Strength in the office:** You bring people together, foster team spirit, and make sure everyone has a voice. Meetings flow well under your guidance, and colleagues trust you to keep things inclusive and fair.



⚡ **Watch out for:** Seeking input from so many people that decision-making slows down. While collaboration is great, some situations call for confident, individual action rather than an endless group discussion.

Outcome Focused

The results-driven powerhouse (or the corporate bulldozer?)

Logical



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You cut through the noise and focus on facts. You are the voice of reason in the virtual session. This is even easier without the body language of others to distract you face-to-face. Without office distractions, you thrive in the clarity of logic-based decision-making, ensuring every remote meeting is based on solid analysis.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Logical to Argumentative:** You might overlook the human element if you're too focused on rationality. In the heat of the moment, you may hurt feelings with cold logic. It's easy to do this if you are just looking at a talking head on the screen.



✓ **Strength in the office:** You bring clarity to complex problems through incisive thinking. This helps others keep emotions out of decisions. Your analytical approach helps separate emotion from decision-making, keeping things on track.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Coming across as too pedantic in your line of reasoning. In a face-to-face setting, body language and tone can soften logical reasoning, so don't let your line of argument unintentionally put people on the defensive.

Competitive



✓ **Strength in remote work:** Without office distractions, you thrive on setting ambitious goals and planning to beat the competition to achieve them. Remote work allows you to stay hyper-focused on performance and crushing the enemy.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Competitive to Win at all costs:** When you're laser-focused on winning, collaboration can fall by the wayside. It is easier to forget the views of others if they are not around you. If team success starts feeling like an afterthought, you might need to check if your drive is lifting others up or leaving them behind.



✓ **Strength in the office:** You bring a direct competitive energy to the office, and others will feel it. Your enthusiasm for competition and winning can push colleagues to achieve more and aim higher.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Turning every project into a personal contest. Naturally, collaborative people may physically start to avoid you face-to-face. Healthy competition is great, but teamwork can take a hit if you're too fixated on outperforming colleagues.

Tough



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You're candid, independent, and don't need constant validation. You focus on what needs to be said, and not having body language to worry about means you can focus on being objective.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Tough to Seeks Conflict:** While remote work suits your direct and to-the-point nature, you may unintentionally come across as blunt or unapproachable. If others start to fear you, there are no face-to-face social niceties to defuse tension, and conflict can escalate.



✓ **Strength in the office:** You're decisive and unafraid of difficult conversations. Your ability to handle pressure makes you a strong leader who will challenge others face-to-face when needed.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Being too direct. In an office setting, a little diplomacy goes a long way. If people start avoiding difficult discussions with you, it may be time to soften your approach.

Inspiration Driven

The spark of innovation (or the chaos generator?)

Adaptable



Strength in remote work: You thrive in the fluidity of remote work, effortlessly adjusting to shifting priorities and unexpected changes. With fewer rigid office structures, you can pivot quickly, finding new solutions when challenges arise.



Watch out for overextending from Adaptable to Unfocused:

Your willingness to shift gears can leave you jumping from one task to the next without fully completing any of them. With nobody with you in an office, it is easy for your constant tweaking and adjusting to mean you struggle to follow through on long-term plans.



Strength in the office: You bring an easygoing mindset to the workplace, helping teams navigate uncertainty without stress. When office goals morph, you're the one keeping a cool head and showing others how to adjust on the fly.



Watch out for: Becoming too reactive. If every new idea or change of plan sends you in a different direction, you risk losing credibility and creating unnecessary confusion for colleagues.

Flexible



Strength in remote work: You make the most of remote work's lack of rigid schedules, adjusting your day to fit your energy levels and peak productivity times. You work best when you have autonomy over your time and tasks.



Watch out for overextending from Flexible to Chaotic:

With so much freedom, you may struggle to work according to your colleagues' structures. The risk is that working invisibly remotely may lead to missed deadlines or last-minute scrambles to complete work. Sometimes, a bit of routine can be helpful.



Strength in the office: You're the person who keeps things moving even when unexpected challenges arise. If "computer says no" at work, you will lead the charge to charge the system. If a project takes an unexpected turn, you can quickly work around an unhelpful process to find a way forward without losing momentum.



Watch out for: Letting flexibility turn into inconsistency. If colleagues can't count on you to stick to a process, it can create frustration, and they will see you as a rule breaker.

Spontaneous



Strength in remote work: You embrace creative bursts of energy, using remote work's autonomy to run with ideas and inspirations as they come to you. Without rigid office schedules, you have the freedom to act on inspiration when it strikes.



Watch out for overextending from Spontaneous to Impulsive:

Acting on inspiration is great, but be careful it does not lead to half-finished projects and missed priorities. Working remotely means nobody can see you do this, and if you're jumping from one idea to the next without thinking things through, you might need to rein it in.



Strength in the office: Your spontaneity adds energy to office life. You inspire colleagues with fresh ideas and keep things from feeling stale or routine. They will come to you for disruption!



Watch out for: Engaging in so many random changes of direction that nothing gets fully explored. If every conversation turns into a new direction, your colleagues may struggle to keep up or take your suggestions seriously.

Discipline Driven

The master of structure (or the rigid rule-follower?)

Purposeful



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You excel at setting long-term goals and sticking to them, ensuring that every task you complete contributes to the bigger picture. Working remotely allows you to focus on your objectives without being sidetracked by office distractions.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Purposeful to Goal Fixated:** You may resist necessary course corrections if you're too locked into your plans. In remote settings, where communication isn't always instant, you might press ahead without considering new input.



✓ **Strength in the office:** You bring a sense of direction and clarity to office projects, ensuring that team efforts align with the organisation's broader objectives. You favour putting goals and targets on the wall and in visible places throughout the office for all to see. Your visible focus helps others stay on track.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Becoming overly fixated on your goals. If you're so focused, you may dismiss alternative approaches, and you risk missing valuable insights from colleagues.

Structured



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You create and maintain routines that help you stay productive and efficient. While others might struggle with remote work's lack of external structure, you thrive by setting precise schedules and priorities. You don't need others to remind you of this need.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Structured to Rigid Planning:** If your need for routine becomes too strict, you may struggle when unexpected changes arise. Remote work often requires flexibility, and being too structured can cause frustration and inefficiency.



✓ **Strength in the office:** You provide stability and order, ensuring that meetings, projects, and workflows stay organised. Colleagues rely on your structured approach to keep things running smoothly.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Resisting a flexible response in the face of change. Sometimes, office environments require quick shifts in priorities, and if you're too committed to your structure, you might struggle to go with the flow.

Reliable



✓ **Strength in remote work:** You pride yourself on delivering what you promise, no matter where you're working. Colleagues know they can count on you to follow through, meet deadlines, and maintain consistency. You keep your focus remotely and systematically work through your to-do list.

⚡ **Watch out for overextending from Reliable to Hesitant:** Your focus on dependability might make you reluctant to take risks or take on new tasks. In remote settings, where experimentation and flexibility are often required, you may need to step outside your comfort zone.

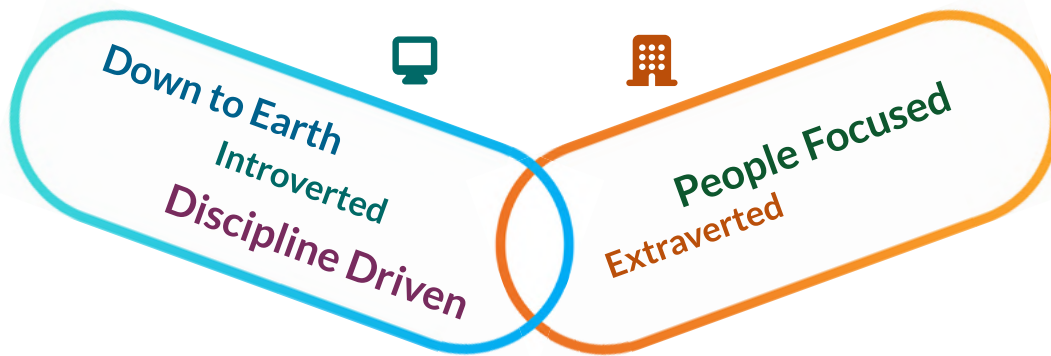


✓ **Strength in the office:** You provide a steadying presence in the workplace, ensuring tasks are completed efficiently and correctly. Colleagues trust your consistency and know they can rely on you in a crisis.

⚡ **Watch out for:** Becoming too hesitant and not committing to new needed actions. This frustrates others as you will undoubtedly miss opportunities to improve working practices.

The common behavioural challenges in remote work vs office work

Our research found common behavioural challenges in remote work and in office work. We wanted to see how each Top Aspect for their respective work environment could look when overextended.



*According to a study titled **The Cost of Interrupted Work**, it takes an average of 23 minutes and 15 seconds to get back to a task after flow is broken.*

Both in office and remote work have different kinds of distractions. Both hurt productivity.

47% reported challenges with distractions when working from home with household responsibilities, noise, or family members disrupting focus.

61% said there were distractions in office with noise, interruptions, and office chatter affecting focus.

Distractions

← Top Remote Aspects

Top Office Aspects →

Down to Earth



Distractions at home can cause people who prefer structured, practical approaches to get lost in minor details, reducing efficiency and adaptability.

Office chatter and disruptions can make evidence-based thinkers feel overwhelmed, making it harder to focus on facts and logical solutions.

Introverted



Online team messages and calls can push introverted people to withdraw further, making them reluctant to reengage with colleagues or work tasks.

Office noise and constant interaction may overwhelm introverts, leading to disengagement or increased stress.

People Focused



Empathetic and Collaborative people may get pulled into too many online chats or video calls, feeling pressure to respond immediately to messages, which fractures their focus.

The need to engage with everyone can lead to exhaustion and difficulty setting boundaries, causing indecision.

Discipline Driven



Household distractions may disrupt the structured routines of disciplined people, causing them to rigidly overcompensate by creating strict, inflexible schedules that reduce adaptability.

Constant interruptions and shifting priorities can frustrate structured people, making them resistant to change and slowing down decision-making.

Work-life balance

← Top Remote Aspects

Top Office Aspects →

Down to Earth



Practical and structured people may struggle to stop working at the end of the day, as they feel compelled to complete every task perfectly.



Cautious and Evidence-Based people may feel pressured to stay late, double-checking details and ensuring everything is in order.

Extraverted



The lack of social interaction may lead Sociable and Demonstrative types to overwork as a way to compensate for feeling isolated.



Takes Charge people may struggle to step away from work, feeling responsible for keeping things running smoothly even after hours.

Introverted



The lack of immediate access to colleagues can make it challenging for more reserved people to ask for help which could lead to working longer hours to solve problems on their own.



By not speaking up in face-to-face meetings, a more introverted person may take on extra work leading to working longer hours.

People Focused



Collaborative and Empathetic people may find it difficult to set boundaries with colleagues, leading to overworking to meet everyone's needs.



The desire to maintain harmony and accommodate others may lead to staying late or taking on too much work to avoid disappointing others.

Discipline Driven



Reliable and Structured people may overcommit to rigid schedules, feeling guilty if they don't meet their self-imposed targets.



The need to maintain order and consistency may lead to staying late or micromanaging tasks, reducing personal time.

Social pressure

← Top Remote Aspects

Top Office Aspects →

Down to Earth



Remote work often requires a more flexible approach; people might face social pressure to adapt to these less structured environments, even if their preference is to stick to proven methods.

In creative face-to-face meetings, someone who is focused on practicalities and evidence might feel social pressure to join in, even though they prefer structured, data-driven conversations.

Extraverted



In remote work, Extraverted people might feel pressured to overcompensate for the lack of face-to-face interaction by dominating virtual conversations, leading to social insecurity.

The highly social nature of office work can push Extraverted people into hyper-engagement, making them overly assertive or involved in office politics, sometimes at the cost of productivity.

Introverted



Without regular social engagement, highly Introverted people may withdraw too much, losing opportunities for collaboration and professional visibility.

Observing and Measured people may feel drained after a full day of social interaction, needing longer recovery time in the evenings.

People Focused



The lack of direct social cues leads them to overthink emails, meetings, and virtual interactions, making them strive for consensus and unable to make a decision.

They might invest so much energy in supporting colleagues, listening to concerns, and managing team morale, that they risk becoming emotionally drained and exhausted.

Discipline Driven



In a remote setting, the lack of immediate feedback or team collaboration might increase their reluctance to make decisions, as they fear not meeting expectations without direct guidance.

The social pressure to accommodate changing priorities or adjust deadlines, can conflict with their attachment to fixed goals and timelines.

Collaboration and communication barriers

← Top Remote Aspects

Top Office Aspects →

Down to Earth



The lack of immediate feedback may cause Down to Earth people to become overly cautious, resisting new approaches and limiting collaboration.



Where group discussions and quick decision making are common, a Down to Earth person might require evidence before agreeing to anything, slowing down processes and creativity.

Introverted



Remote work's reliance on written and asynchronous communication may push introverted people further into isolation, reducing their ability to build strong team relationships.



Their quiet nature may cause them to withdraw from spontaneous conversations or group activities, leading to missed chances for networking and building relationships with colleagues.

Discipline Driven



Working independently may amplify structured peoples' need for rigid planning, leading to frustration when remote work requires quick adaptability.



In-person collaboration may amplify the need for rigid planning, causing frustration when spontaneous adjustments are needed in dynamic, face-to-face meetings.

Clarity on behaviour is clarity on performance.

Let's work on best behavioural practices for teams to develop so we can bring out the best in people's personal style whether they are WFH or in the office.

In reality, whether it's communication, collaboration, creativity, distraction, or burnout, both WFH and office setups face the same challenges. How they typically show up might be different, but the behavioural triggers remain similar.

The future of work isn't about choosing sides; it's about making every environment work for the people in it. Whether remote, office-based, or hybrid, the key to success lies in recognising the unique benefits and challenges of each model and ensuring that employees are set up to thrive wherever they are.

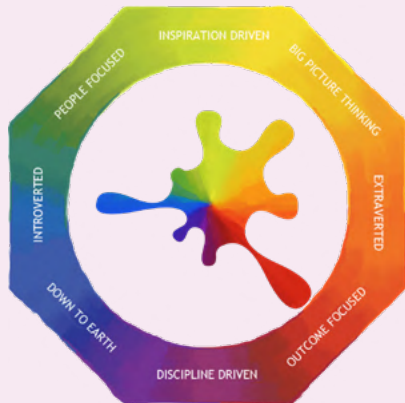
For too long, the conversation has been framed as an 'either-or' battle between remote and office work. But the real opportunity lies in the space between, where businesses can craft a flexible, inclusive, and high-performing work culture that empowers employees while delivering results. A one-size-fits-all approach won't cut it. Organisations that embrace adaptability, fairness, and purpose-driven policies will build stronger, more engaged teams that can navigate this evolving landscape with confidence.

The conversation has moved beyond logistics and technology to focus on people's behavioural needs. The most successful organisations are those that recognise and support the diverse personalities within their teams. They're investing in training, coaching, and resources to help people manage their Overextensions, the idea that our strengths can also be challenges depending on the situation.

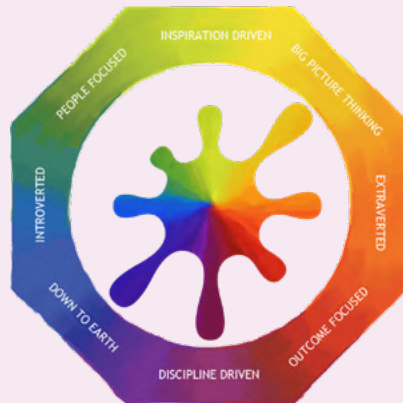


How Chris adapts his personal style for working from home vs the office?

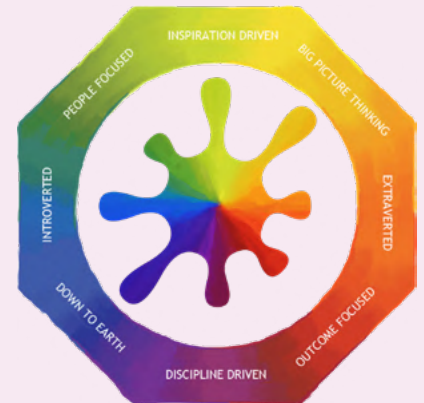
Effective



Remote



In the office



In the office:

- ✓ Chris makes a conscious effort to be more **Inspiration Driven** in the office to adapt himself in the spontaneous conversations and willingness of others to jump in and support his workload. He does this by keeping an extra hour or two open in his calendar because he knows people will want to connect with him to share new ideas meaning he will need more flexibility across his priorities during the day.
- ✓ Chris knows he can easily get distracted in the office by socialising, so he chooses to dial up his introversion to focus on meaningful one-to-one conversations that will support him to be productive rather than being continuously pulled away by the office chit-chat at any given moment.
- ✓ The unique value Chris brings to the office: he is open and flexible to discuss new ideas and opportunities, selectively open to connecting with others and deeply listening on new ideas they might have.

Working from home:

- ✓ Chris doubles down on his underlying **Discipline Driven** energy to do his deeper thinking and focused work when he is working from home. He blocks out time in his calendar to focus on tasks that require deep focus and prefers to make sure his deadlines revolve around days working from home ensuring he can always get challenging tasks over the line.
- ✓ Chris leans on his **Extraversion** during calls, seeing them as an opportunity as a welcome break from his singular deep focus that is maintained across the rest of the day and a chance to ensuring he is connecting with colleagues just as consistently well as he would when in the office.
- ✓ The unique value Chris brings to remote working: Chris spends his working from home to be deeply focused and reliable on high stake deliverables. Yet he also brings a connective spirit to online calls that gets people engaged with him and gives him a balanced and refreshing break between those deep focuses.

1. Make flexibility the foundation

A rigid approach to work settings can limit the ability of people to adapt their behaviour based on the task at hand. Instead of imposing strict policies, organisations should empower employees to align their environment with their needs, whether that's needing quiet time for focused work or collaboration for team building. Trust your people to make choices that balance deep focus with meaningful collaboration.

2. Get rid of the barriers

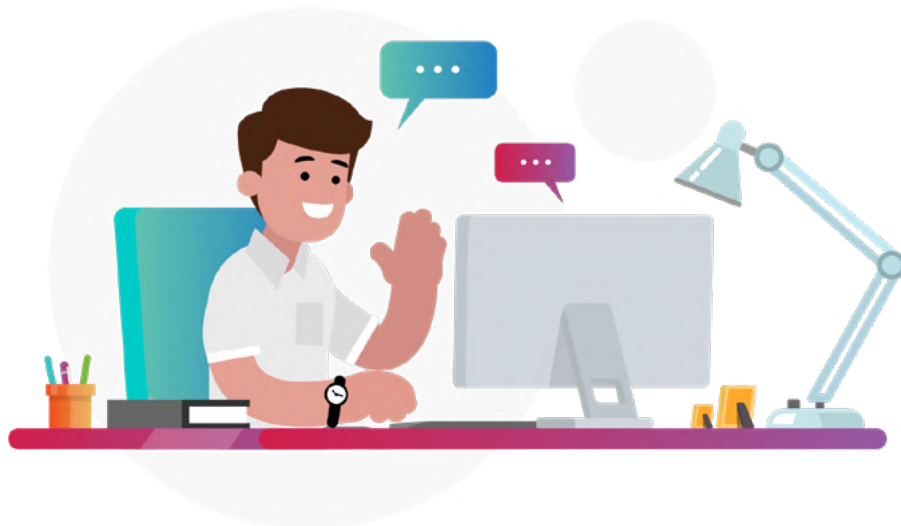
Hybrid working can create invisible gaps between remote and in-office employees. Avoid the 'out of sight, out of mind' trap by ensuring equal access to information, recognition, and career opportunities. Communication needs to be intentional—don't let important conversations happen informally in the office without looping in remote colleagues. Invest in technology that truly supports hybrid teams, ensuring that collaboration tools and meeting spaces foster inclusion rather than exclusion. Recognise the differences in behaviour—such as introverts thriving in written communication and extraverts flourishing in face-to-face interactions— this ensures that all voices are heard.

3. Redefine productivity

Being in the office doesn't equal being effective, and working from home doesn't mean working less. Organisations must shift from valuing visibility to valuing outcomes. Performance should be measured by impact, not how often someone is seen at their desk. Measuring impact over visibility allows people to use their individual strengths to create real value, regardless of where they work.

4. Invest meaningful collaboration

If people are coming into the office, it should be for a reason. Ensure office time is purposeful, whether it's for brainstorming, team building, or sharing knowledge. Don't bring people in just to sit in virtual meetings that they could have done at home. Create spaces that encourage connection and innovation while respecting the need for quiet focus zones.



5. Support the whole employee experience

From financial support for home office setups to covering commuting costs, organisations need to recognise that working effectively comes with different needs in different settings. Provide people with the resources they need to succeed, whether that's ergonomic office spaces, better hybrid meeting tech, or flexible working hours that accommodate personal commitments.

6. Cut the noise - literally and figuratively

Unnecessary meetings drain productivity, whether in the office or online. Be ruthless in cutting down the volume of meetings and focus on making the ones that remain truly valuable. Encourage

asynchronous communication where possible, and reserve meetings for discussion, decision-making, and collaboration—not for reading out information that could have been shared another way.

7. Invest in behavioural communication tools

For remote workers, understanding how to craft clear, structured messages is key. Providing tools and training that focus on effective communication for all behavioural strengths, will help ensure messages are received and interpreted accurately.

8. Strengthen the social and cultural bonds

Connection matters. Whether through informal coffee catchups, structured team building activities, or mentorship programmes, organisations should actively foster a sense of belonging. Hybrid work doesn't mean sacrificing workplace culture, it means being more intentional about how it's nurtured. Make in-office interactions count and find creative ways to build relationships remotely.



The path forward

The most successful organisations won't be the ones that cling to outdated models or force a return to old ways of working. They'll be the ones that listen, adapt, and create workplaces where people feel empowered to bring their behavioural strengths to work, wherever that may be. Organisations must focus on supporting people to understand how they can adapt their behaviour across different environments. Whether remote, office-based, or hybrid, a focus on behavioural flexibility and understanding will create happier, more productive teams that can thrive no matter where they work.

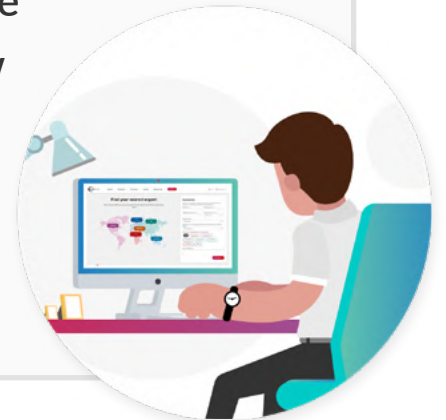
This isn't just about where we work, it's about how we work better together. The organisations that get this right, won't just survive the changing landscape of work, they'll lead the way forward.

Discover the psychometric revolution for working better together.



All your individuality. All your talent. All your potential. Creating more self-aware organisations who have the clarity and confidence to adapt their behaviour so they can perform at their best, is what our psychometrics are all about.

Get to know why organisations are switching to Lumina Spark for smarter, behavioural change with a precise and practical perspective on how their people, teams and leaders connect.



Just fancy exploring more of the trending behavioural challenges influencing outcomes right now? Take a look at what people are gathering for at our free community events.

