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Personal Preferences in the Modern Office

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Why research office preferences?



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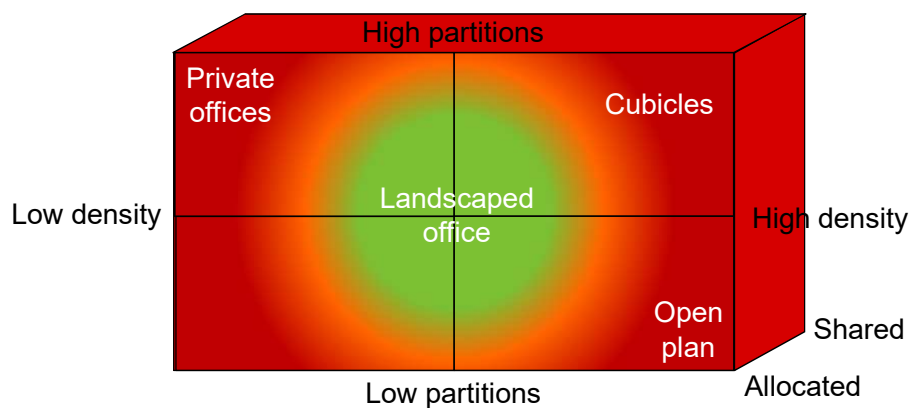
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What is open plan?



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Key survey variables

- Workplace preferences – private, open plan, agile ..
- Most important workplace conditions – personalisation, privacy, social ...
- Personality – Extroversion/Introversion, Emotional Stability/Neuroticism
- Current primary workspace
- Job role, tenure, age & country

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Workplace preference key question

1. Based on your personal preferences, how do you rate each of the following working practices?

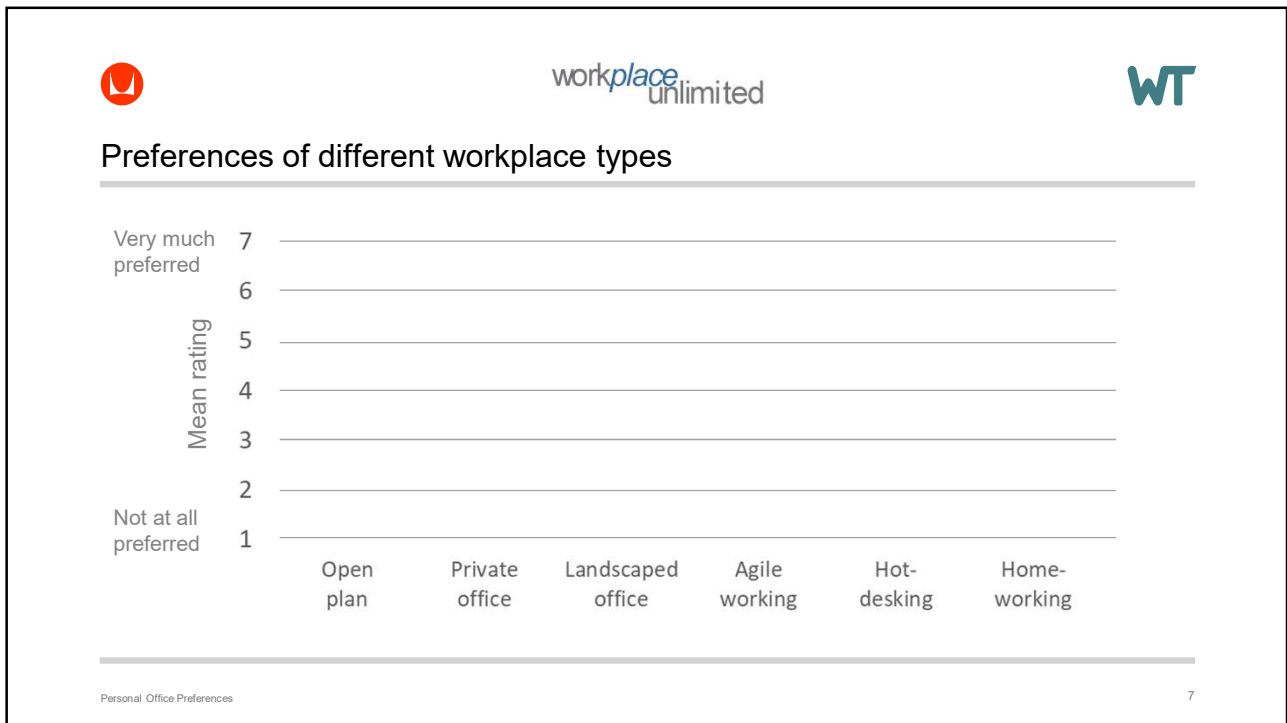
Rate each one from 1 to 7.

	1 Not at all preferred	2.	3.	4.	5	6	7 Very much preferred
Fully open plan office	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Predominantly private/enclosed offices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landscaped or hybrid office (open plan but broken up with semi-partitions, pods, meeting rooms etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agile/flexible/smart/activity-based working	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Desk sharing (hot-desking)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Home-working	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

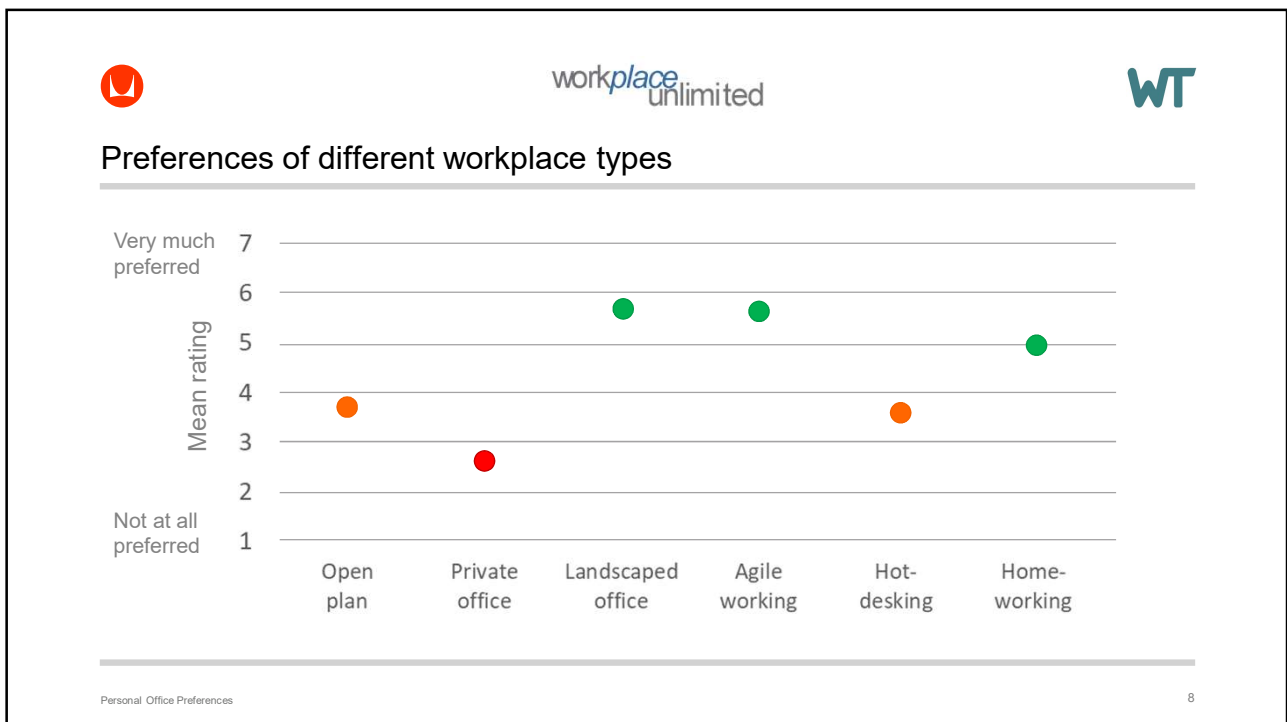
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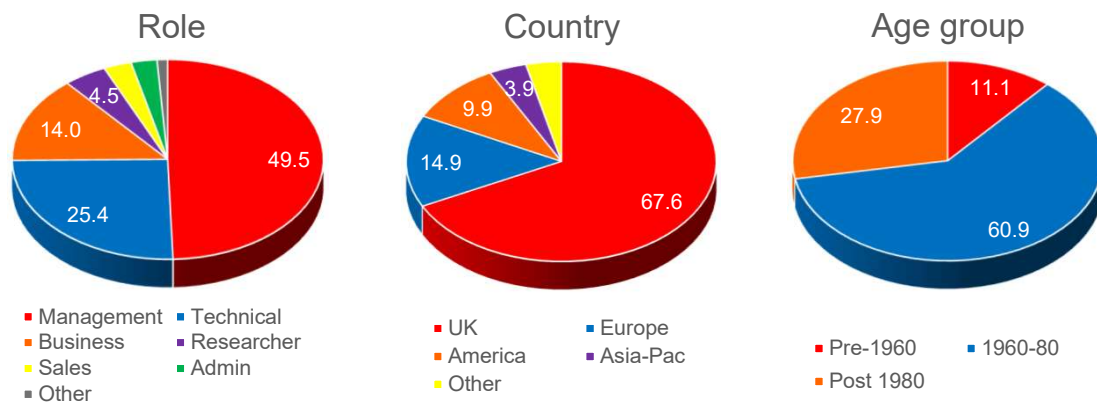
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Our sample – 700 respondents



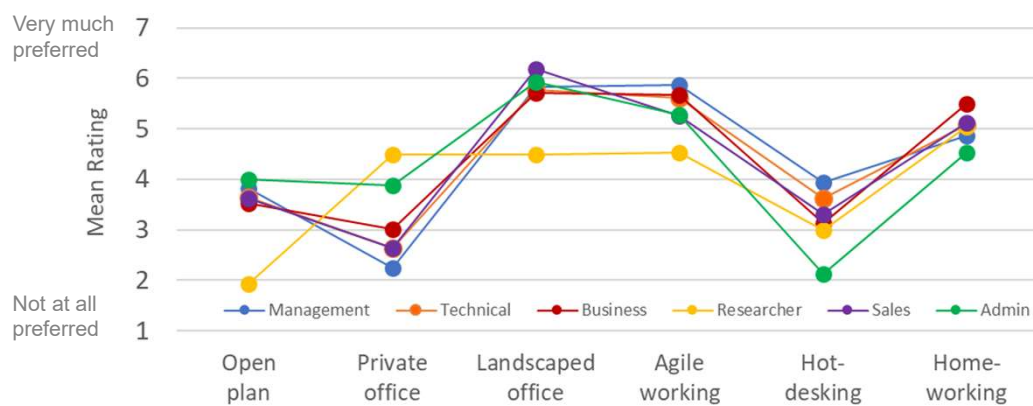
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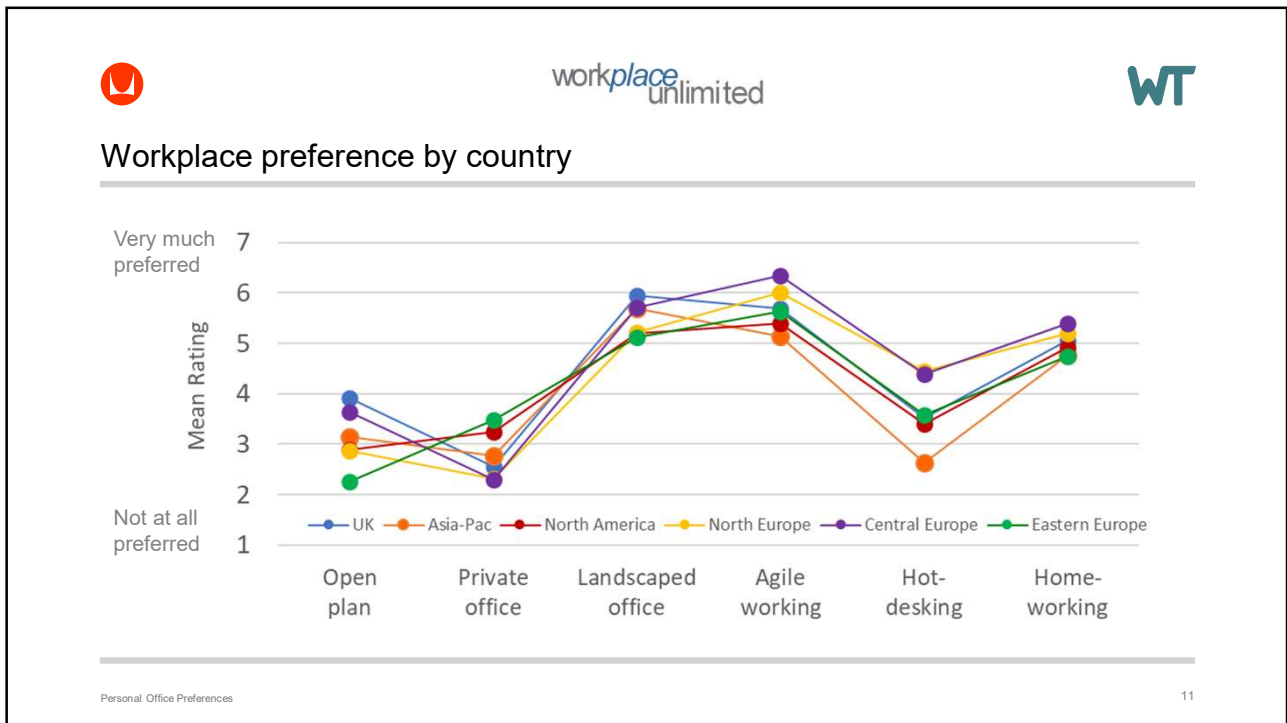
Workplace preference by job role



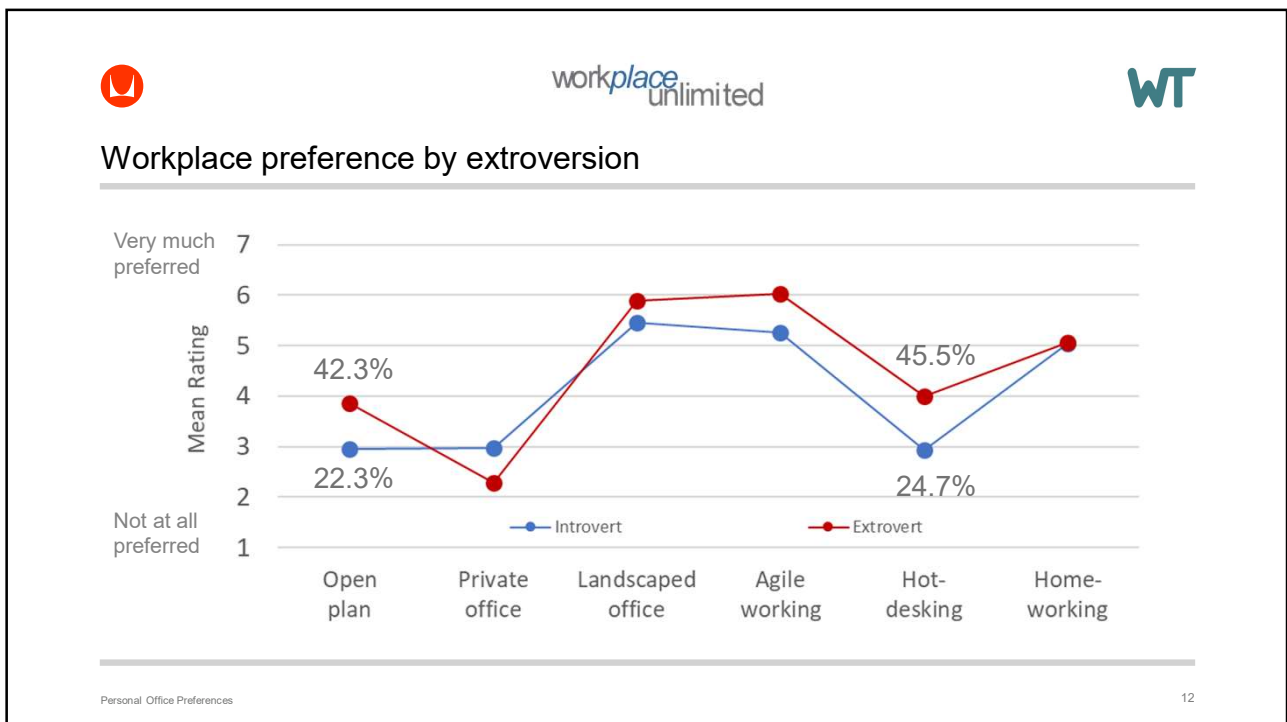
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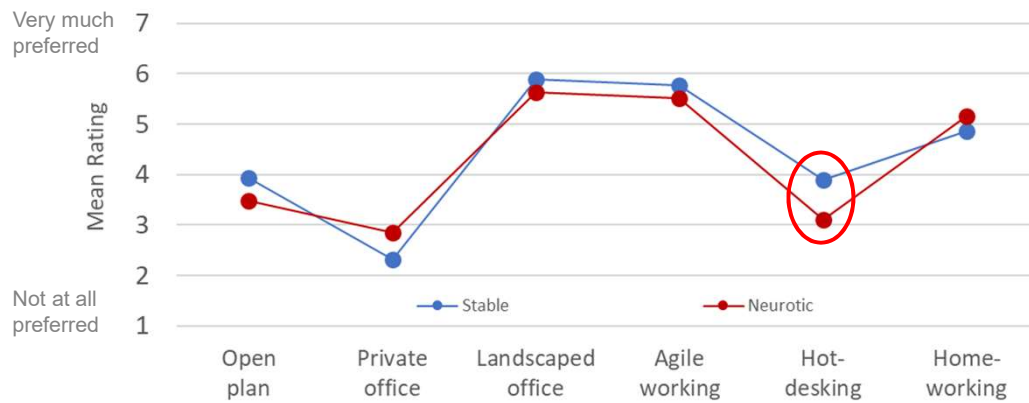
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Workplace preference by neuroticism



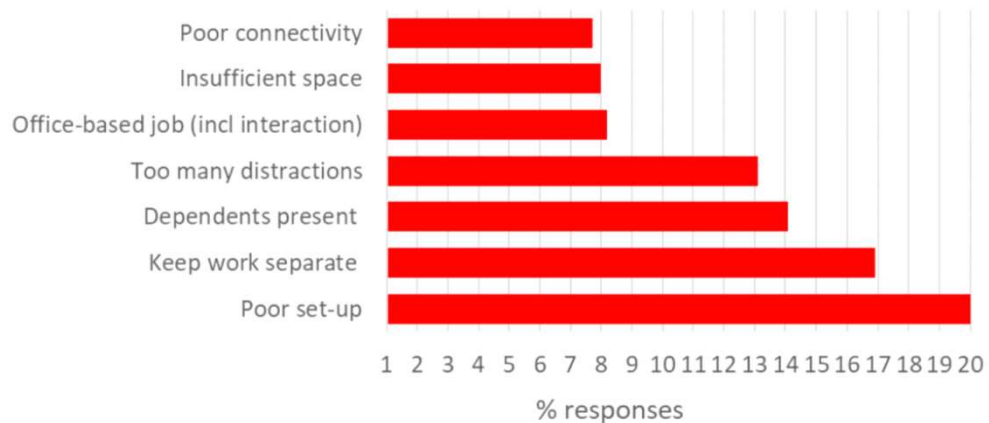
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Reasons for not home-working



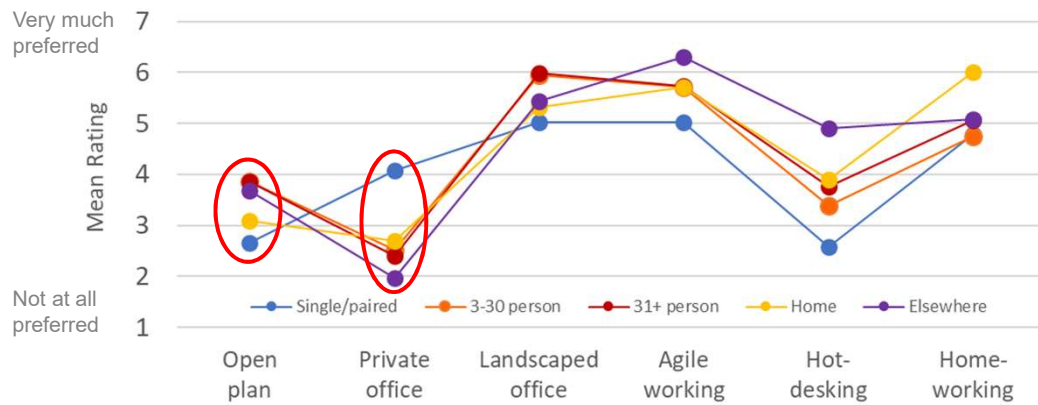
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Workplace preference by current primary workspace



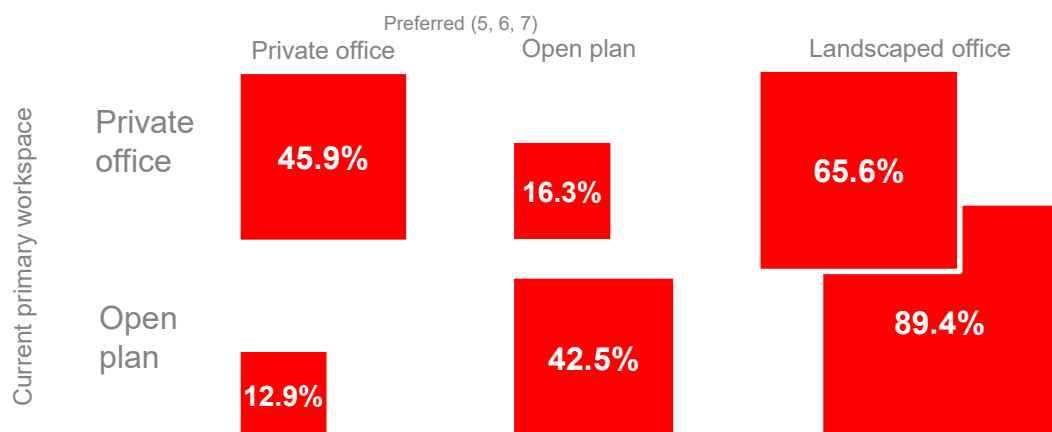
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High preference by current workspace



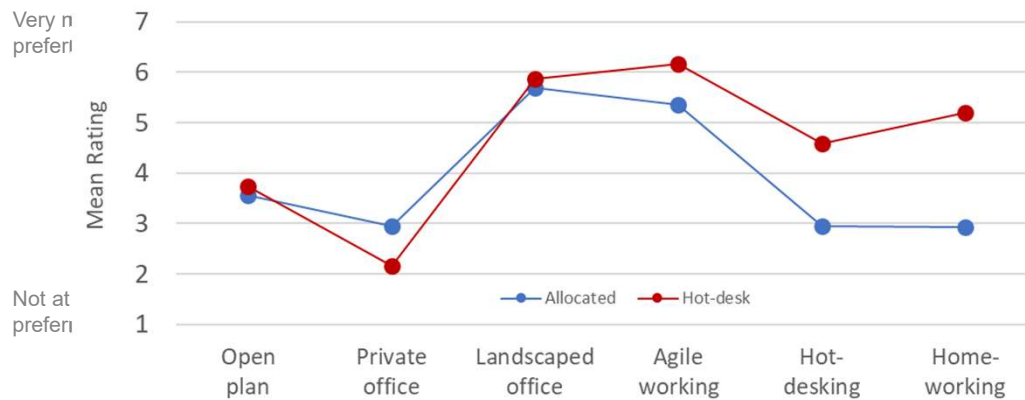
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Workplace preference by current primary workspace



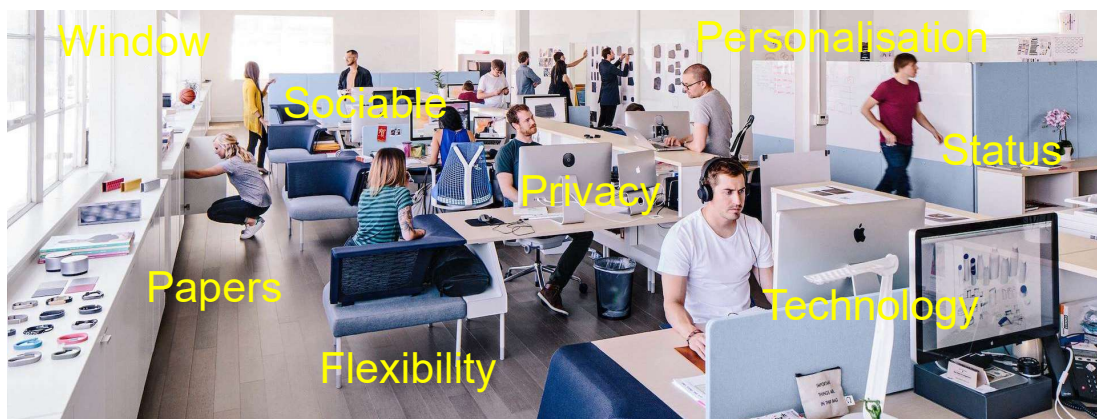
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Important workplace conditions



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What do you consider to be the most important workplace conditions?

- | | |
|---|--|
| ... I can personalise my desk space | ... I have the flexibility to choose where I work |
| ... my colleagues are sat nearby | ... my workplace gives me a sense of belonging |
| ... my role involves lots of interaction | ... I am not overlooked/overheard by my colleagues |
| ... I am not distracted by office noise | ... I am not interrupted by my colleagues |
| ... I have flexibility over my work hours | ... I can leave my papers out on the desk |
| ... I can choose to work from home | ... I do not have to commute at peak hours |
| ... I can sit at the same desk each day | ... I can conduct focused work requiring concentration |
| ... I have my own private workspace | ... my work involves a regular routine and fixed hours |
| ... my workspace reflects my status | ... my role is not purely desk-based work |
| ... my manager is sat nearby | ... I do not spend every day in the office |
| ... no one sits at my desk | ... I do not feel isolated during work hours |
| ... my workplace is sociable | ... I am dependent on the technology fixed to my desk |
| ... I am near a window | ... I like the familiarity of sitting at the same desk |

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Top 10 most important workplace conditions

Flexibility
Connected
Concentration
Window

>4 on scale:

1 = very dissatisfied

5 = very satisfied

It is important to me that ...	Rank
... I can choose to work from home occasionally	1
... I have flexibility over my work hours	2
... I have the flexibility to choose where I work	3
... I can conduct focused work requiring concentration	4
... my role involves lots of interaction	5
... my workplace is sociable	6
... I do not spend every day in the office	7
... I am near a window	8
... my role is not purely desk-based work	9
... my workplace gives me a sense of belonging	10

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Top 10 least important workplace conditions

Personal Interruption Status Technology

<3 on scale:

1 = very dissatisfied

5 = very satisfied

It is important to me that ...	Rank
... I can personalise my desk space	17
... I am not overlooked/overheard by my colleagues	18
... I am not interrupted by my colleagues	19
... I have my own private workspace	20
... I can leave my papers out on the desk (overnight)	21
... my manager is sat nearby	22
... no one sits at my desk	23
... my work involves a regular routine and fixed hours	24
... my workspace reflects my status	25
... I am dependent on the technology fixed to my desk	26

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Top 3 and least important conditions by primary workspace

It is important to me that ...	Single/ Paired Office	Small 3-30 Person Office	Large 31+ Person Office	Home Worker	Elsewhere Worker
... I have flexibility over my work hours	●	●	●	●	●
... I can choose to work from home occasionally		●	●	●	
... I have the flexibility to choose where I work			●	●	●
... I can conduct focused work requiring concentration	●				●
... I am near a window	●				
... my workplace is sociable		●			
... my manager is sat nearby	●				
... no one sits at my desk			●		●
... my work involves a regular routine and fixed hours	●	●		●	
... my workspace reflects my status		●	●	●	●
... I am dependent on the technology fixed to my desk	●	●	●	●	●

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Most important conditions by preferred workspace (correlations)

It is important to me that ...	Open plan	Private office	Landscaped office	Agile working	Hot-desking	Home-working
... I have my own private workspace	●	●		●	●	
... I can sit at the same desk each day		●		●	●	
... I like the familiarity/routine of sitting at the same desk		●		●	●	
... no one sits at my desk		●		●	●	
... I can personalise my desk space		●			●	
... I have the flexibility to choose where I work				●		●
... my role involves lots of interaction	●		●			
... I can choose to work from home occasionally			●			●
... my workplace is sociable	●		●			
... I do not feel isolated during work hours	●		●			
... I have flexibility over my work hours			●			●
... I do not spend every day in the office						●
... my colleagues are sat nearby						●
... I am not overlooked/overheard by my colleagues	●					

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Most important conditions by preferred workspace (multiple regression)

It is important to me that ...	Open plan	Private office	Landscaped office	Agile working	Hot-desking	Home-working
... I have my own private workspace	●	●	●	●	●	●
... my role involves lots of interaction	●	●	●	●		●
... I can choose to work from home occasionally			●			●
... I like the familiarity/routine of sitting at the same desk		●		●	●	
... I have the flexibility to choose where I work				●	●	
... I am not overlooked/overheard by my colleagues	●	●	●			
... my colleagues are sat nearby						●
... I can personalise my desk space					●	
... I do not feel isolated during work hours		●	●			
... I do not spend every day in the office				●		●
... my workplace is sociable	●				●	
... my manager is sat nearby	●					
Explained variance (adjusted $r^2 \times 100\%$)	11.0%	29.8%	9.8%	28.2%	40.5%	15.5%

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Key points

- Landscaped office and agile working preferred to open plan and private offices
- Those in private offices prefer private offices and vice versa



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Key points

- Preferences vary by personality, country and job role
- But no significant age or tenure differences



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Key points

- For all respondents, the most important workplace conditions are flexibility
- For those currently in private offices, concentration and window also most important



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Key points

- Those who prefer private offices place more importance on personal/desk conditions
- Flexibility and connectedness more important for those who prefer landscaped offices
- Connectedness is more important for those who prefer open plan



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Summary



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