



COVID-19 could be catalyst for remote working to become the norm

According to Colliers International 82 per cent would like to work from home one day a week or more after COVID-19 crisis is over

London, April 02, 2020 – The coronavirus pandemic could be the catalyst for increased working from home in the future, a survey by global real estate advisor Colliers International has revealed.

The 'Working from home during COVID-19' survey was launched by Colliers to discover people's experiences of the shift to remote working introduced by businesses around the world in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Initial insights based upon over 3,000 responses from over 25 countries, from a broad spectrum of office-based professions, show that:

- 82 per cent would like to work remotely one day a week or more after the COVID-19 crisis is over.
- 71 per cent of people who had never worked from home before COVID-19 would like to work remotely at least one day a week in future.
- 53 per cent of those surveyed believe their productivity has not changed as a result of working from home, and 24 per cent believe their productivity has increased. However, 23 per cent said their productivity has declined.
- Productivity has increased most in the financial services, professional services and technology industry. Productivity has decreased most in the legal and education & research sector.
- 55 per cent consider they are able to perform individual, focussed work better or much better working from home than in the office.
- 76 per cent of respondents still feel connected to their team while working remotely, despite the physical distance. However, 58 per cent believe they are better able to collaborate from the office compared to from home.

Chris McLernon, Chief Executive Officer for Europe, Middle East and Africa at Colliers International, said initial survey results indicated that the coronavirus pandemic would bring about fundamental changes in ways of working.

"We are in the middle of the largest remote work trial in human history which will have a significant impact on the way we will work in the future," he said.

"It is essential to understand how people are experiencing working from home during this challenging period, and this study from the Workplace Advisory team of Colliers International is uncovering unique global data that will help us to provide fact-based advice on short term improvements and long term impact.

“Already it is clear that many people are embracing working from home, and are likely to want to continue a certain level of remote working for part of the week, even when they are able to return to their offices.”

The initial ‘Working from home during COVID-19’ survey will conclude at the end of April and a report will then be published. It is the first part of a multi-phased study by Colliers, which aims to give insights into working from home during the COVID-19 outbreak, and in doing so identify opportunities for improvements and explore longer term implications for office space.

Jan Jaap Boogaard, Head of Colliers Workplace Advisory for Europe, Middle East and Africa, said: “We find ourselves in a challenging, but also unique situation which offers opportunities to rethink the way we work.

“We should use this opportunity to measure what works and what doesn’t work to benefit from in the future, which is why we started our working from home study.

“First results show some very interesting insights. The majority of the people have indicated that productivity has not changed since working from home. Approximately the same number of people have indicated their productivity has increased as those who say theirs has decreased

“Also, over 70 percent of people who had never worked from home before COVID-19 would like to work at least one day a week remotely in the future. This will have a significant impact on the space requirements of organisations.”

Details from the initial findings of the survey indicate a desire to continue flexible working to some extent after the COVID-19 crisis. A total of 49 per cent said they would like to work on average 1-2 days remotely, while 32 per cent wanted to work three or more days remotely, and 19 per cent wanted to work remotely for less than one day.

Differences were apparent between people who had recently started working from home, and people who had already been working from home for a couple of weeks. Of those who had already been working from home for four weeks because of COVID-19, only 7 per cent wanted to go back to working in the office every day after the end of the pandemic. By contrast, among those who had been working from home for just a week a total of 22 per cent wanted to return to spending their working week in the office after COVID-19.

The survey also revealed that experiences of working from home differed between those with and without children in the house, and those with housemates.

A total of 33 per cent of respondents reported having more distractions when working from home. The top distraction was identified as children, followed by other people in the household and pets.

People living alone and those who live with a spouse or partner showed the lowest productivity decrease.

The main location for working from home was an enclosed room dedicated to work (39 per cent), followed by the living room (32 per cent), the bedroom (17 per cent) and the kitchen (15 per cent). The majority of those who live alone chose to work from their living rooms, but the majority of the people with children worked from an enclosed room dedicated to work.

The initial survey results also showed that people with housemates would like to work more from the office after the COVID-19 situation, compared to people who live alone, people with children and people that live with a spouse or significant other.

To take part in the survey, go to: <https://bit.ly/2WFluGs>