

A woman with long, wavy brown hair is seen from the side, looking out over a city at night. She is standing on a bridge with a teal railing. The background is filled with blurred city lights and a large archway. The overall mood is contemplative and forward-looking.

# No going back?

FUJITSU

The UK's irreversible work / life shift

shaping tomorrow with you



The UK's leaders in business and government should be proud of their achievements over the past year. It's been nothing less than a herculean effort to get people working from home, and top of mind at all times for leaders across business and government has been the need to get it right for their people when it comes to the 'work / life shift' they've been forced to make.

Whilst shouldering immense pressure, UK leaders have consistently put their people first, and continue to do so. Their deepest concerns almost universally come back to people and they worry about doing the right thing.

And UK employees, having adapted with aplomb, worry reciprocally about their leaders, wanting to prove that they can deliver just as effectively when working remotely as when they're in the office. For a continuation of the flexibility they have enjoyed, they will move mountains for their bosses.

It seems UK leaders and workers are steadfast in their drive to look after one another, each wanting to do their utmost for each other as they face the future together.

*Fujitsu commissioned independent third-party research company Vitreous World to survey 250 C-level executives and 1,000 employees across multiple UK public and private sector organisations with >1,000 employees, focused primarily on 'office-based' organisations. The survey took place in January 2021.*

*In addition, selected points are taken from Fujitsu's 2020 'Fragile to Agile' research, available at [fujitsu.com/adaptive](https://www.fujitsu.com/adaptive)*





## Leading with heart

UK leaders are a modest bunch; although they've done brilliantly in shifting everyone out of the office, only 48% of UK leaders believe the transition to remote working went 'very well'. Almost half of them (46%) admitted that the changes they'd made hadn't gone far enough, revealing an underlying sense of responsibility that there is still much more to do.

And although the pandemic provided the burning platform for remote working, a staggering 87% of leaders in the UK believed that their employees would prefer a hybrid working model, and they're determined to create an environment that will support them.

UK leaders care deeply; top-of-mind for them is employee mental health, with 90% of leaders stating that this is a priority.

Also on the worry list for leaders as remote working continues is the need to show appreciation; 59% are concerned that employees don't feel appreciated when working remotely, and 57% worry that their people will feel they're under greater scrutiny when not in line of sight.

And half of leaders are concerned that continued remote working means people won't feel as much 'part' of the organisation than when they were in the office, at a time when inclusion is high on everyone's agenda.

**46%** of leaders say the changes made to move to home working didn't go far enough and there is more to do to get it right

**59%** of leaders worry that employees won't feel valued when working remotely and **90%** believe employee mental health is a priority



# Following with dedication

UK office-based workers in the public and private sectors have embraced remote working; 55% believe the transition to home working has gone 'very well' (higher than their bosses, in fact) and are determined to prove that it's working just as well as being in the office.

Employees believe they are working just as effectively from home; 'productivity' didn't make the worry list of employees (although it did make the leaders' top three concerns), however collaboration with colleagues did.

Workers in the UK clearly don't miss time or money spent on the commute – in fact the time and cost of commuting were cited as the biggest down-sides of returning to the office.

Yet 84% of employees surveyed said they miss socialising with colleagues most of all. Surely then, this must be considered as a fundamental part of the hybrid model design; reimagining offices as collaboration hubs fuelling interaction and creativity, facilitating social connection.

**55%** of employees believe the transition to remote working went 'very well'

**84%** of employees miss socialising with their colleagues

## No going back?

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No surprise, then, that only 18% of leaders and employees said they wanted to go back to working in an office full-time.

Employees in the UK have adapted to the work/life shift they've all made so well that 74% are clear that hybrid working is their preferred option and that for them, there's no going back to the way things were.

Now that the shift has happened, the vast majority of leaders and employees would plump for a 'hybrid' way of working, blending home working with office working, given the choice.

The ideal outcome is to create a 'borderless office' where people can switch seamlessly between home and office, with no discernible change to their productivity or satisfaction.

To implement this effectively, there is much still to do. With some niggles around getting the right equipment and technology to literally thousands of 'remote offices' (homes) and concerns around security breaches, there's still plenty to do to make hybrid working work.



Only **18%** of leaders and employees said they wanted to go back to working in an office full-time

**74%** of employees say they want a blended ('hybrid') working style

**50%** of leaders feared employees were at risk of security breaches

# Shifting demands

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For many industries the pandemic fuelled a surge in consumer demand, which had to be fulfilled with an unprecedented level of urgency. So much so, that 41% of leaders said consumer demands changed weekly, and that they had difficulty keeping up with them.

And employees on the front-line clearly felt the pressure of delivering to customers at pace. Asked about the aspects of their roles that had become more challenging when working remotely, many cited customer-related challenges; 53% said it was more difficult to deliver excellent service and 60% found it more difficult to sell to new customers.

**53%** of employees worry about delivering excellent customer service when working remotely

**85%** of leaders said hybrid working would make them more resilient to future challenging events

**41%** of leaders said their customers' needs alter within weeks and that they're unable to keep up with them

# Shifting focus

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Whilst worrying about the wellbeing of their employees is consuming much leadership time and energy, as well as fuelling many a debate about the future, it's evident that UK business and government leaders feel more fundamental change is coming and that they need to be on the front-foot.

Words such as 'adaptive' and 'agile' are the buzz of the moment, and it's clear that beyond the constant worry about people is that nagging feeling over half of leaders expressed when it comes to needing to 'do more'.

So much so, that 83% of leaders said they need to react faster when faced with market uncertainty and change and 70% said they need a drastic overhaul of their business' technology and strategy. And 64% said they would go as far as scrapping their current transformation plans and starting again.

When turning to future-proofing their organisations, 85% of leaders and 71% of employees felt that sustained hybrid working would build resilience so they would stand a better chance of surviving further disruption.

**70%** of leaders admit they don't have the agility in their technology to adapt to further disruption

**70%** of leaders say they need a drastic overhaul of their strategy

**83%** of leaders say they need to react faster to change





## Shifting up a gear

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We should all feel immensely proud to be part of a nation of people who care; leaders want to do the best for their people and employees want to do the best for their bosses. And everyone wants to do the best for their customers.

From a platform of willingness and openness to change, leaders and employees have an enormous opportunity to sustain the work / life shift we've made and use it to create new structures based on flexibility, trust, and empowerment.

And whilst this optimism is encouraging, we mustn't forget to temper it with a dose of realism. The burning platform was just the beginning – the hard part starts now.

Leaders have stated that the changes made don't go far enough and know they need to take significant leaps forward when it comes to equipping their people to do their jobs effectively.

That means better tools and equipment (delivered to remote settings at the right time) better access to modern systems that allow them to deliver excellent service to ever-changing consumer needs, better experiences when they do visit offices to allow for social interaction and connection to the organisation, and better job security because they are truly adaptive, whatever comes their way.

The prize is worth the effort; happy, empowered people who have plainly stated that they will move mountains for their employers if only they can retain some of the flexibility they have come to value so much.

That's a long list; and it's a list of interdependent elements, that rely on transformation at every level. Technology, of course, is key to this, to reimagine the experience for customers, employees and everyday operations.



# In summary...

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The UK's workforce should feel proud – leaders and workers alike have shown they care and done their utmost to support one another during an exceptionally challenging time.



## UK leaders are all heart

90% believe employee mental health is a priority

**Employees want to prove they can still deliver remotely**  
55% of employees believe the transition to remote working went 'very well'



## No going back?

18% of leaders and employees want to go back to working in an office full-time

## Sustaining the work/life shift

84% of employees miss socialising with their colleagues, but they don't want to return to the daily commute

87% of leaders believe their employees prefer hybrid working long-term



## Moving forward with confidence

85% of leaders said hybrid working would make them more resilient to future challenging events



# No going back? Moving forward with FUJITSU Work Life Shift

## Creating the Borderless Office where people can thrive

Creating a hybrid-working model where people can switch seamlessly between the home setting and the office is the strategy of choice for the UK's leaders and employees. Most organisations have made a good start, but what's needed now is for leaders to go beyond 'remote working' driven by necessity, to creating a 'borderless office' where people can thrive.

FUJITSU Work Life Shift is a global portfolio of solutions designed to change the way organisations work, and comprises three core elements: Borderless Office, Culture Change and Smart Working. Each of these elements contains a blend of technology and services to bring our expertise to your organisation, based on specific needs – after all, one size doesn't fit all.

FUJITSU Work Life Shift not only ensures technology is kept up to date systematically, but also guides employees on how they can get the most out of it. With digital advisory services built-in, we continuously check and improve the digital experience of employees, allowing them to stay focused on what matters most – customers. The time they save and reduced complexity of accessing systems allows them to thrive – all adding up to a digital workspace that gives people the flexibility to work securely, wherever and wherever they choose.

FUJITSU Work Life Shift is built on industry leading cloud technology such as Microsoft 365 (M365) and Citrix Workspace, as well as security to allow people to be productive both at home and in the office, using their preferred devices, whether these are corporately or personally owned. Service is delivered from Fujitsu's eight ISO27001 certified Global Delivery Centres (GDCs), providing a flexible service that can scale up, down, or out – as and when it's needed most. The technology is complemented by a multi-lingual Customer Experience Centre delivering 24x7 service across 180 countries to keep delivering continuous support.

If you're looking for a fresh perspective from an organisation that has been ranked a 'Leader' in Gartner's Magic Quadrant for Managed Workplace Services, Europe, for four successive years, we'd love to hear from you. And there's so much more we'd like to tell you, but we know your time is precious, so to find out more go to [fujitsu.com/worklifeshift](https://fujitsu.com/worklifeshift).



