

GLOBAL ANYWHERE WORKING

A guide to cultural change for a
happier, healthier workforce.



THE FUTURE OF WORK IS ANYWHERE WORKING

Most business leaders will agree that developments in technology have fundamentally changed both the way we do business and the way we work. So much so that the ‘future of work’ is no longer a conversation topic just for the collaboration technology industry. In fact, the technological innovations of the past decade have powered a digital transformation that all industries are now facing up to. ‘Innovate or die’ has never felt more real.

Our latest global consumer survey reveals a world moving from digital transformation of work, to the digital consolidation of work culture. Currently, 62% of the 25,234 people we surveyed across 12 countries said they take

advantage of anywhere working practices. It is now completely normal to see rows of people working in a coffee shop with their headphones in and a steaming cup next to them. The same is true of hearing fellow train passengers discuss their next big presentation with colleagues on a video call, and seeing airport lounges dotted with iPad users cramming in a few more minutes work before they have to switch to flight-safe mode.

It wouldn’t be possible to work anywhere without ready adoption of new technologies that open the door to better ways of collaborating. Technology has made it possible for teams of two, twelve, or even twenty to brainstorm in the round

in huddle rooms within an office building, or in a virtual face-to-face setting. What matters is they can always do it from the comfort of their preferred rather than assigned workspace. International teams benefit significantly from this new era of remote-working – a flexible approach allows people to do business face to face whilst defying distance (if not quite time zones), so teams can be more productive and efficient than ever.

But if it’s accepted that anywhere working has significant benefits to businesses and employees alike, how can businesses overcome the obstacles blocking their own development of an anywhere working culture? There are a number of perceived challenges that

come with defining a fair, productive anywhere working environment; and this eGuide and survey insights can go some way to help businesses and managers get the best out of their team.

As more businesses deploy new technologies that enable them to foster an anywhere working culture, it is crucial that nuances are understood and addressed effectively. Our goal is to help businesses create and nurture a truly anywhere working global culture, no matter where, how and with whom they work.

A man in a white jacket and glasses is sitting at a desk, working on a laptop. The background shows a modern office environment with other people and large windows. The image is overlaid with a blue and purple gradient.

Working anywhere, anytime.

According to “A Guide to Anywhere Working,” a recent survey of more than 25,234 workers conducted by Morar Consulting and commissioned by Polycom, anywhere working is becoming a need rather than a nice to have all for businesses. Collaboration technology, and video conferencing in particular, has become key to developing face to face relationships with co-workers around the globe and it allows multi-cultural teams to better understand each other and work together.

The survey shows that anywhere working is becoming the basis for truly digitally-transformed businesses – and more significantly, the basis for global success. Firms that wish to attract and retain the best talent must adapt to the ever-changing needs of a diverse workforce. The technology that makes this new way of working efficient plays a key role in boosting productivity and teamwork. In particular, video conferencing emerges as an essential tool that enables real-time, effective communication across borders and time zones.

- 62% of the 25,234 people we surveyed across 12 countries take advantage of anywhere working practices
- 61% of those surveyed believe that having the right technology would solve any issues remote workers may face, with examples including collaboration technologies and mobile technologies
- Video conferencing is the preferred collaboration tool for getting to know colleagues in other offices; 92% of respondents across the globe believe video makes building these relationships easier
- 89% of global employees say they use collaboration technologies, and 85% say they use them at least once a week

This eGuide is designed to provide guidance on how to better serve key groups of people with reference their lifestyle, drivers and needs, based on the global survey outcomes.



MILLENNIALS



**BABY
BOOMERS**



PARENTS



**WELLBEING
WARRIORS**

Profile

As the largest generation on Earth comes of age¹, it is a well-documented fact that millennials are shaking up ways of working. What impact is this highly influential group having on anywhere working?

Digital natives.

Remote collaboration is second nature to millennials, with only 3% never using collaboration tools at work. And it's not just messenger apps: 83% use video collaboration every week.

All about balance.

72% work anywhere to take control of their work-life balance, and millennials are also more likely to choose to work anywhere so they can be creative, exercise, or enjoy their hobbies more than any other group.

And... flex.

Millennials' desire for balance has led to increased demand for anywhere working - 70% of millennials work anywhere often, or from time to time – and only 15% claim never to do so.

Certainty crisis.

Not knowing the policy on anywhere working is an issue for a lot of millennials, who are more likely than their older colleagues to want HR to provide guidelines on anywhere working.

Beginning to want it all.

Although they are the youngest generation in the workplace, 45% of millennials are already parents, meaning that balancing children and careers are starting to become issues for almost half of the group.

Key Challenges

Staying on task.

According to the data, millennials don't trust themselves to get work done when they work anywhere, and think they might procrastinate. However, once they get started, anywhere working seems to boost their output, with 67% saying that increased productivity was the main reason they chose to work anywhere.

Keeping up with colleagues.

66% are worried that their colleagues won't think they are working hard enough if they work flexibly. This can lead to them overcompensating with unproductive overwork.

Stunted growth.

51% of millennials are in the early stages of their careers, either in graduate roles or as junior managers. As such, they are much more likely to worry that reduced facetime with their bosses through anywhere working will have an impact on their promotion prospects.

Biggest Concerns

If you employ Millennials

Keep their options open.

Providing break-out spaces, huddle room scenarios, portable technology or even organising work retreats in new places can help millennials feel less tied down and more creative.

Clarity is key.

Make sure the company's anywhere working policy is transparent and available to everyone, with clear boundaries and expectations for those who choose to take it up.

Lead with outcomes.

Communicate clear targets so both you and the employee are working to them, then it shouldn't matter where they are or the hours they keep.

If you are a Millennial

When you can't afford to procrastinate:

Schedule set times for each task on your list. Something as simple as setting a timer can really make a difference.

When you need to get creative:

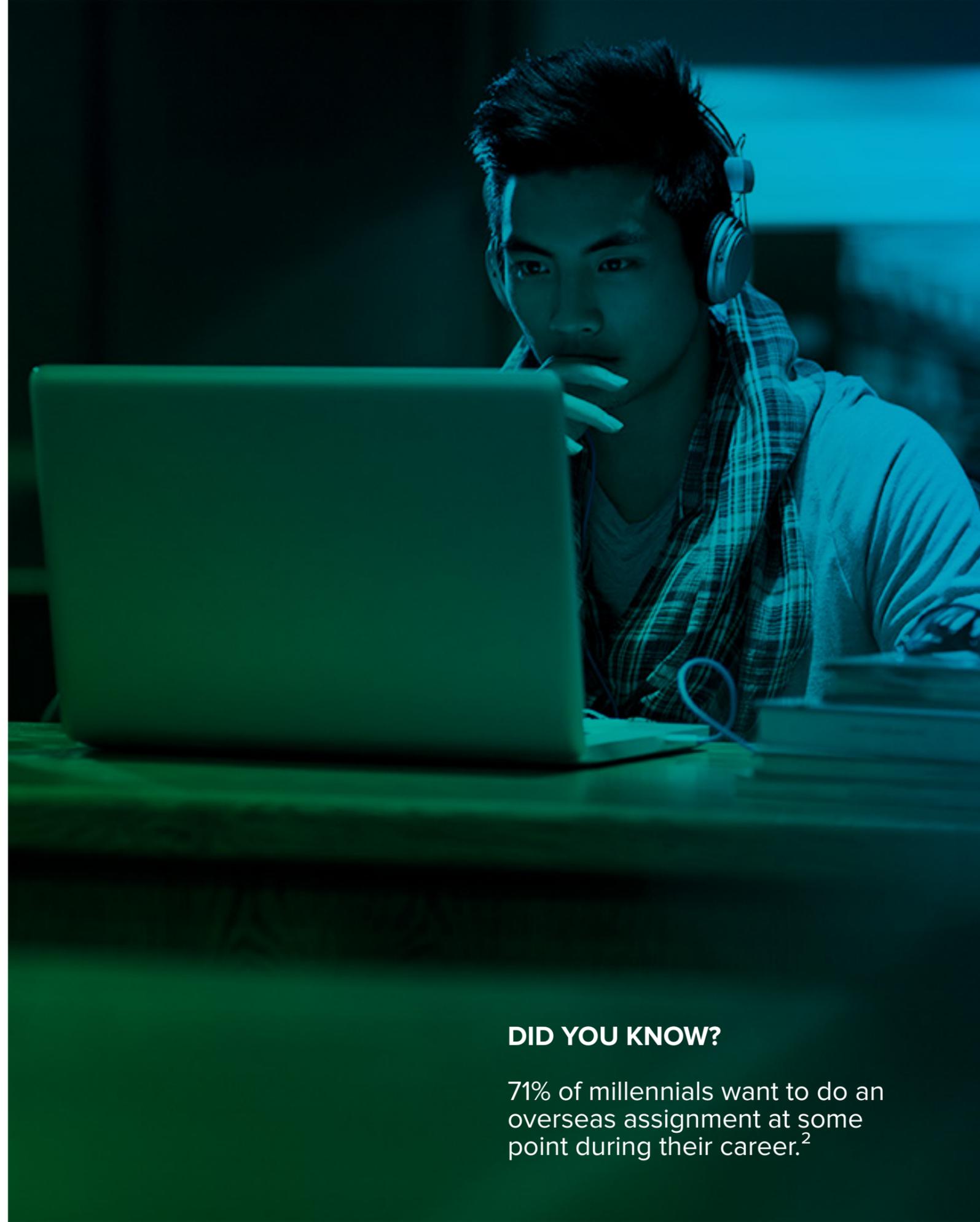
Try working in a completely new place, like the garden, a café or even a museum, to get a fresh perspective on the problem at hand.

When you want to progress:

Be present via video link to make sure managers and colleagues know what your goals and ambitions are.

DID YOU KNOW?

71% of millennials want to do an overseas assignment at some point during their career.²



BABY BOOMERS

Profile

Think baby boomers are behind the times? Think again – the data shows that this generation is welcoming technology with open arms. Let's take a look:

Jumping on the collaboration bandwagon.

95% of baby boomers believe collaboration tools are important in some way for improving productivity between remote teams.

Using it, not losing it.

Over three quarters (77%) of baby boomers use some form of collaboration at least once a week. Nearly a third (31%) of all baby boomers could even be considered 'super-adopters', using collaboration multiple times a day.

Flexibility is key.

Where anywhere working is available, baby boomers make the most of it. 78% of those whose companies offer anywhere working choose to do so as often as they need to – or want to.

Key Challenges

No change or slow change.

Baby boomers are more likely to work in industries that do not allow them to work anywhere, such as manufacturing (17% vs 8% of millennials), or industries where adoption of new technology is lower and slower, such as government (9% vs 5% of millennials).

With great power, comes great responsibility.

Many baby boomers are higher up the chain than their younger colleagues, with 88% of them holding a managerial position of some level, plus the workload that comes with it. It's unsurprising then that 59% choose a work anywhere location based on where they can focus better, work more efficiently, or be away from distractions.

Biggest Concerns

Keeping connected.

Half of baby boomers (50%) worry that anywhere working will mean they do not build relationships as well with their colleagues. However, having access to the right collaboration tools would allay these fears; 85% say that video technology has helped them to get to know their colleagues more personally.

Maintaining work-life balance.

Taking control of your work-life balance is the most popular advantage of anywhere working for baby boomers, with 74% agreeing. But baby boomers are also more likely than their younger colleagues to be concerned about working longer when they work flexibly.

If you employ Baby Boomers

Let's stay together.

Make sure remote teams hold regular face to face video meetings with at least some unscheduled time to allow for brainstorming, catching up and getting to know each other better.

Quiet zones.

Providing designated areas for talking or for quiet, head-down work can help baby boomers make the most of working anywhere when they have to come into the office.

If you are a Baby Boomer

When you have to stay in the building:

Break away from the hubbub of the open-plan office and work away from your desk, or in smaller meeting spaces to get a change of perspective.

When you want to skip the commute:

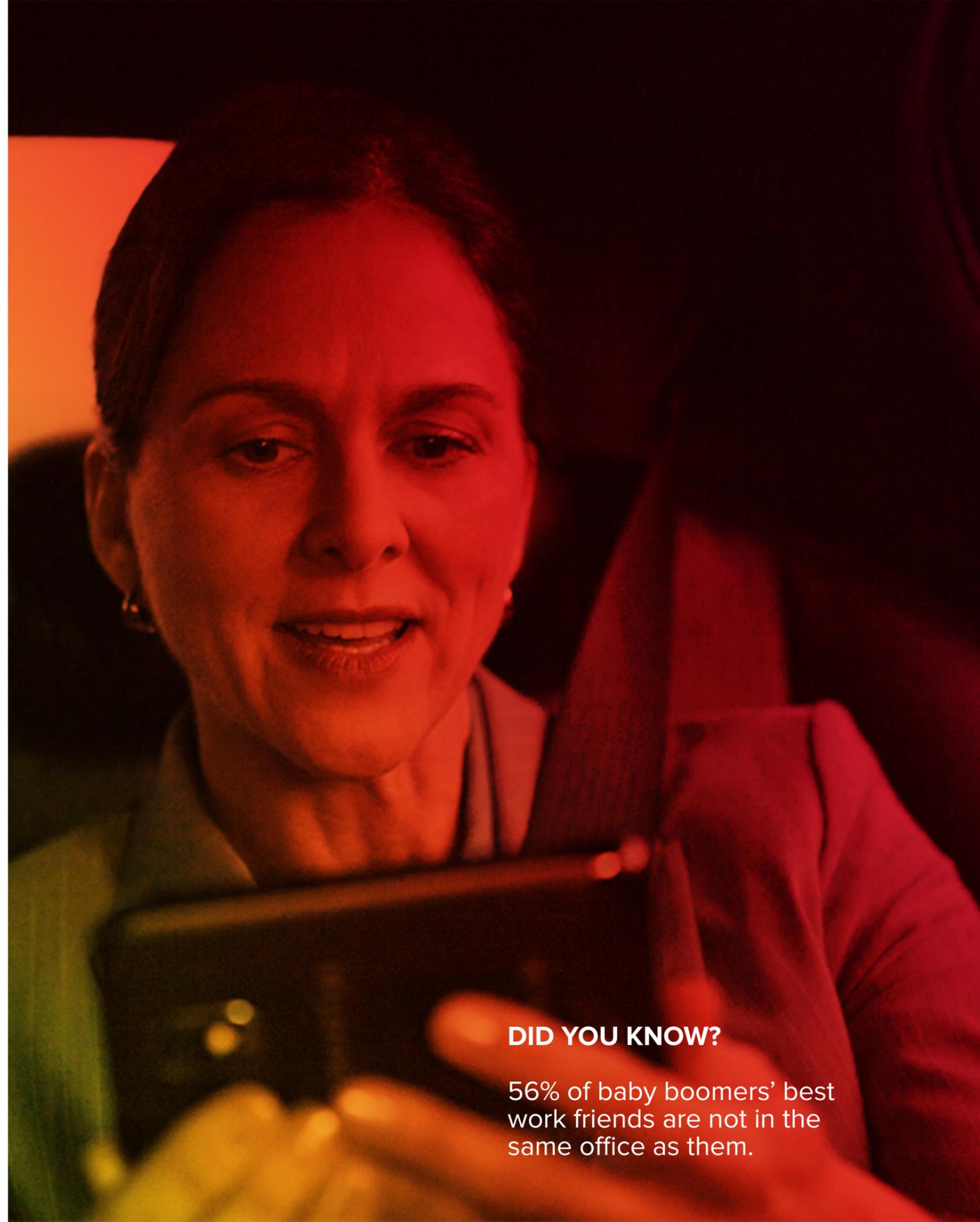
Start your day in a peaceful way and attend face to face via video from home.

When you need to get things done:

Work somewhere calm and quiet, like a home office or huddle space, to avoid the distractions and start ticking things off your list.

DID YOU KNOW?

56% of baby boomers' best work friends are not in the same office as them.



Profile

Everyone has competing priorities, but the demands on working parents are particularly pressing. The benefits of anywhere working for this group could be enormous - but are they making the most of it?

Double trouble.

Almost 7 in 10 people in the workforce are parents and, in most families, both parents work. That means two incomes, but it also means two work schedules to coordinate.

Crying out for flexible options.

In 2014, 36% of working women with children under 6 requested more flexible hours, and fathers have started to work fewer hours to accommodate childcare.³

Millennial shift.

60% of parents already work flexibly, but millennials are more likely to do so (65%) than their older colleagues (55%).⁴ As more and more millennials become parents, this shift looks set to continue.

Key Challenges

Balancing act.

As people go further into their careers before having children, more first-time parents find themselves juggling children and higher levels of responsibility at work. 44% of parents would be happy to downshift to a less stressful job; in fact, 37% of parents feel resentful towards their employers because of their poor work-life balance.⁵

Between a rock and a hard place.

In the UK, the average weekly cost of full-time childcare for a child under 2 is £217.57 – that can easily add up to over £10,000 a year. And, the more hours parents spend in the office, the more money they need to spend on childcare.

Biggest Concerns

Lack of boundaries.

Clear limits are important for successful anywhere working, because while anywhere working is in demand, without proper discipline work can quickly take over. 56% of parents say it's a struggle to balance work and family demands⁷, and 48% of parents say work regularly impacts the amount of time they spend with their children.⁸

Commitment issues.

While boundaries are needed to establish a good anywhere working arrangement, just under half of parents (49%) would not feel comfortable talking to their employer about reducing their hours or imposing limits around their work, for fear of appearing uncommitted.⁹

If you employ Parents

Trust is the answer.

With an anywhere working policy, employers could hugely improve employee performance and engagement, as with millennials, managing via outcomes-based tasks is a win-win. Parents think having a flexible employer would make them happier (60%), more loyal (57%), more productive (55%) and more likely to go the extra mile for work (50%).¹⁰

Reduce lost time.

When emergency childcare is needed, like if a child is ill, one of the parents will have to leave work 70% of the time.¹¹ By making anywhere working possible and empowering the employee, you can keep everything running smoothly, no matter what life throws up at them.

If you are a Parent

When you feel overwhelmed:

Turn your phone off or turn off notifications from your work email for a while so you can decompress before coming back with renewed energy.

When you need to be in two places at once:

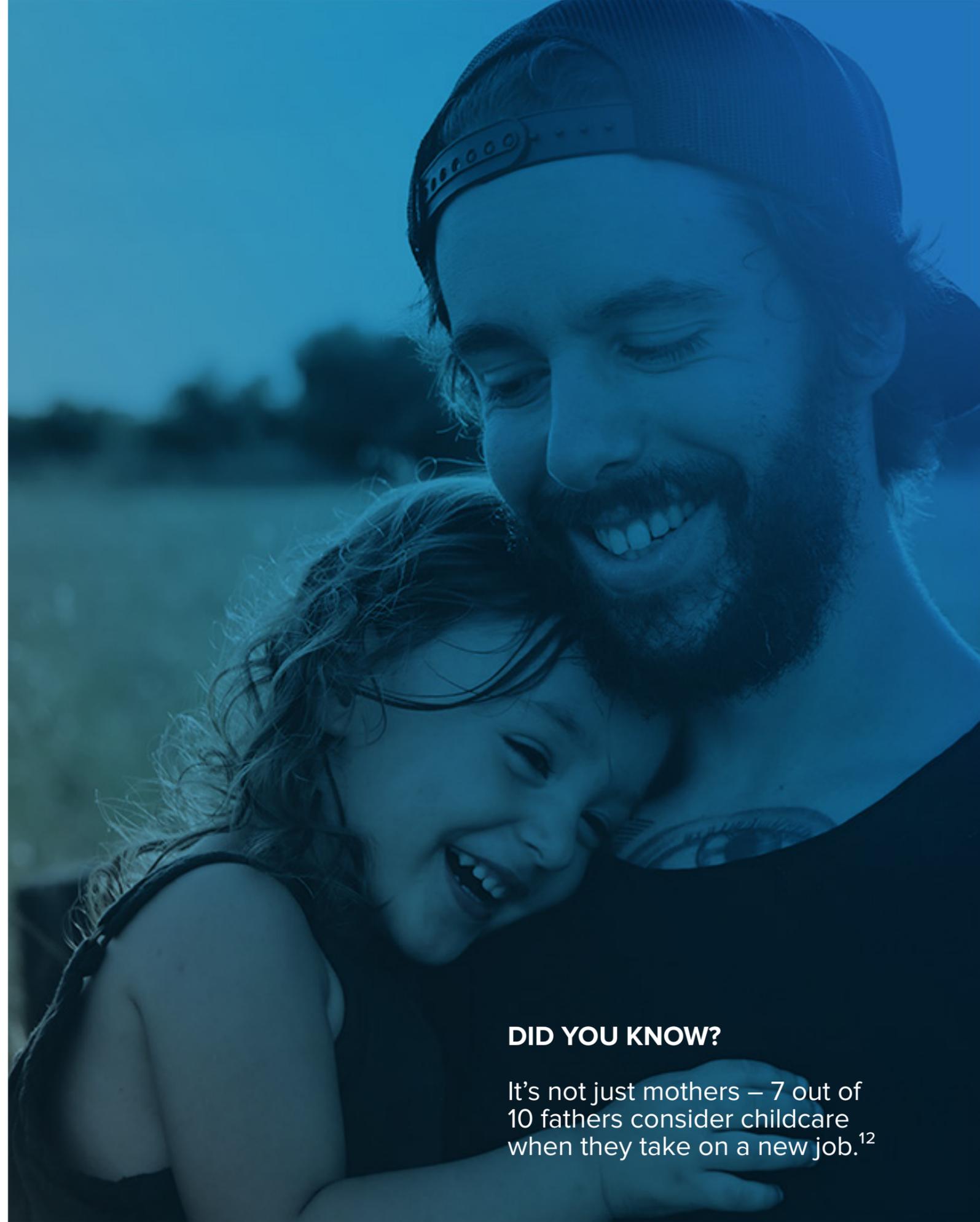
If you need to look after your child for a long period of time, having access to the tools that enable you to work anywhere can go some way to alleviate the pressure of an overflowing inbox.

When you need more flexibility:

Have an open conversation with your employer about working anywhere; they can't help if they don't know what you want.

DID YOU KNOW?

It's not just mothers – 7 out of 10 fathers consider childcare when they take on a new job.¹²



WELLBEING WARRIORS

Profile

Work can be many things, including fulfilling, rewarding, and even part of our identity. However, when the pressure is on, it can also lead to problems with general wellbeing - let's dive in.

Burning out.

Employees are hitting a point where they can't deal with the pressures that are put on them; in the UK, 11.7 million days were lost due to stress in 2015/16 alone.

Work, work, work.

Often stress manifests outside of work, but for 55% of people,¹³ problems at work were more stressful than those of health, finances, debt, or relationships. As such an integral part of many people's day-to-day, it seems that if work is stressful, it can overshadow other aspects of life.

Yearning for more.

Given an extra hour in the day, 24% of people would exercise, 27% would sleep and 36% would relax.¹⁴ It seems many just don't have the time to adequately look after themselves.

Finding the time.

Work-related stress often stems from having too much to do; however, this can be resolved by increasing productivity. Having the freedom to work anywhere you like can boost productivity; even being able to take a long nap can boost productivity by 40%.¹⁵

Not on the menu.

For 29% of people, anywhere working is not an option that is available to them because their employer or the nature of their job prevents it. This means stress can easily build up, damaging their health.

Key Challenges

Overlap.

For those who are already stressed, the idea of work creeping into their precious free time is not appealing. However, 70% of people think a key benefit of anywhere working is being able to control their work-life balance, suggesting that the advantages outweigh the fears.

Overcompensating.

56% of people worry that anywhere working might mean they end up working longer as they overcompensate for being out of the office. If proper boundaries are established, however, this issue can be easily sidestepped.

Biggest Concerns

If your employees are Stressed

Don't lose time.

Stress accounts for 5 of the 6 leading causes of death in the US – heart disease, cancer, stroke, lower respiratory disease and accidents.¹⁶ By introducing anywhere working, employers can alleviate stress and recoup almost half of all sick leave – not to be sniffed at.

Activate the core.

Enhance productivity by setting core hours (for example, 10am to 3pm) and allowing your workforce to make up the additional hours in the best way for them. Being able to self-schedule hours leads to better mental health and happiness,¹⁷ meaning more productive employees.

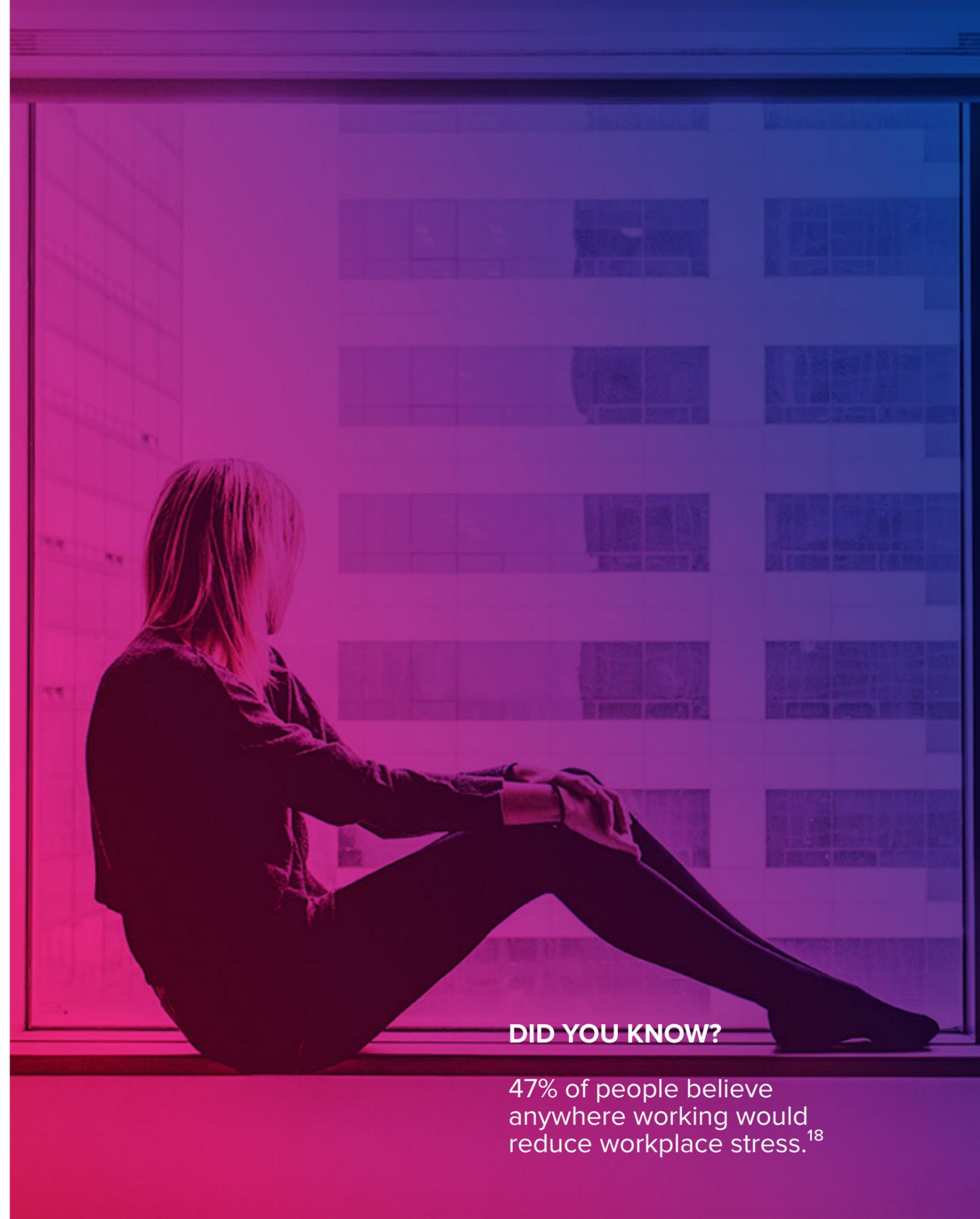
If you're Stressed

When you need more sleep:

Decide to work from home, and spend the amount of time you usually need for your commute catching up with a little more rest.

When you have to remain on site:

If your employer enforces a rigid schedule, try to find some element of flexibility within that framework. For example, try taking your phone call in a different part of the building, or while on a walk.



DID YOU KNOW?

47% of people believe anywhere working would reduce workplace stress.¹⁸

A LITTLE BIT EXTRA...

DID YOU KNOW?

BRICs nations (Brazil, Russia, India and China) are the most likely to have colleagues working in different offices to themselves.

According to our survey, 90% of Brazilians have a favourite colleague that doesn't work in the same office as themselves! They are followed closely by China and India, where 87% and 86% of workers have a BFF based in a different location.

Luckily, they are also the most likely to use collaboration technologies more often: 95% of Brazilians believe it is a life-saver!

Anywhere working myths

Myth: Working away from the office will make me lonely.

Truth: Jumping on video calls ensures that you develop and maintain good relationships with all colleagues and stakeholders.

Myth: Anywhere working could jeopardise my career progression chances.

Truth: Make sure you deliver strong results and keep in touch with your manager by scheduling regular video catch-ups. You'll see yourself at the top in no time!

Myth: Anywhere working just means working from home.

Truth: Anywhere working really does mean anywhere. Pick your favourite place, and work from there. Airports, hotel lounges, coffee shops, the gym lobby - as long as you've got the technology, you could work from the park if you wanted to!

CONCLUSION

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a red button-down shirt, is seated at a desk in a modern office. She is looking at a laptop screen while holding a white coffee cup with a brown sleeve. The office background is blurred, showing other people and office equipment. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

There are many ways to adopt an anywhere working culture, as there are many types of companies out there. If you're looking to join in and reap the benefits of anywhere working, don't get caught in the details. Find a solution that's fair, works for everyone, and reflects your company's ethos. Sometimes that means rolling out one solution for everyone, sometimes it means looking at policies on a case-by-case basis.

Whichever your approach, there is one thing that's for sure: anywhere working is good for everyone and it can be done successfully if you bring in the right technology to help you.

Never tried video conferencing before? Have a go - you'll be surprised at how easy it is. After all, 35% of all survey respondents said they make decisions much quicker when on video than via email, IM or phone!

The workflow, workplace and work experience are shifting. But by understanding and analysing the data you possess on the current state of affairs you can make better decisions about improving, enhancing or expanding your IT deployments.

For more information visit the RealAccess page on our website.

Got a question?

Use the instant chat tool on our website or Tweet @Polycom

1. <http://www.datamentors.com/blog/insurance-generations-marketing-boomers-and-millennials>

2. <https://www.pwc.com/m1/en/services/consulting/documents/millennials-at-work.pdf>

3. https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Modern-Families-Index_Full-Report.pdf

4. ibid

5. ibid

6. <https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/childcare-costs>

7. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/11/04/raising-kids-and-running-a-household-how-working-parents-share-the-load/>

8. https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Modern-Families-Index_Full-Report.pdf

9. https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Modern-Families-Index_Full-Report.pdf

10. https://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Modern-Families-Index_Full-Report.pdf

11. ibid

12. ibid

13. <https://www.theguardian.com/careers/careers-blog/how-to-deal-stress-at-work>

14. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/08/02/extra-hour-a-day_n_3697387.html

15. <http://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/sleep-helps-learning-memory-201202154265>

16. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joe-robinson/stress-and-health_b_3313606.html

17. <https://www.dur.ac.uk/wolfson.institute/wrnews/?itemno=9586>

18. <https://www.employeebenefits.co.uk/issues/november-online-2016/47-believe-flexible-working-hours-can-reduce-workplace-stress/>