

Fellowes Working Well

Productivity Report 2017

100
YEARS

Innovation in Motion™
Since 1917

Productivity in the UK 2017

Fellowes asked UK office workers how they felt about their working environment, both in the office or at home, and what affected their productivity...

Summary

Britain today is caught in a distraction epidemic with half of office workers admitting they are unproductive for up to an hour every day, the equivalent of over 21million work days lost each month¹.

Our Productivity in the UK 2017 report highlights how often office workers are distracted, what causes these lapses and what can be done to increase our output.

DID YOU KNOW

50% OF OFFICE WORKERS
Admit they are unproductive for up to
an hour each day. The equivalent of

21 Million
WORK DAYS LOST EACH MONTH!

¹ Stats based on 16million office based workers in the UK.

Are we Working Well in 2017?

'Productivity' might have been a business buzzword for the last few years but **what do we do to seriously apply this to our everyday working life** and what lessons need to be learnt to ensure we are working smarter and not longer.

The UK trails 35% behind Germany² in productive output but we seem to be committing **more time and energy** to our work than ever before. Experts blame everything from our obsession with checking emails³ to ineffective managers⁴ to skills shortages but we wanted to find out **what workers on the ground thought caused the UK's productivity shortfall**.

Our study into the habits of **1,000 office workers across the UK⁵** found that over **50% admit being unproductive for up to an hour every day**, with the average worker being side-tracked **every 35 minutes**. On top of this, **almost half (43%)** of office workers claim they are distracted an alarming **15 times a day**. These statistics show just how much we are lagging behind on productivity in the UK causing an unprecedented **distraction epidemic**.



Productivity expert at Think Productive and author of How to be Really Productive Grace Marshall comments:

“It is our ability to think well without distractions that increases the quality and value of our work, not how many hours we show up at the office. In fact, working longer hours can diminish our productivity as well as our wellbeing.”

² <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/dec/25/what-is-productivity-why-uk-poor>

³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-32622224>

⁴ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2017/03/20/bad-managers-blame-uks-productivity-crisis-says-bank-englands/>

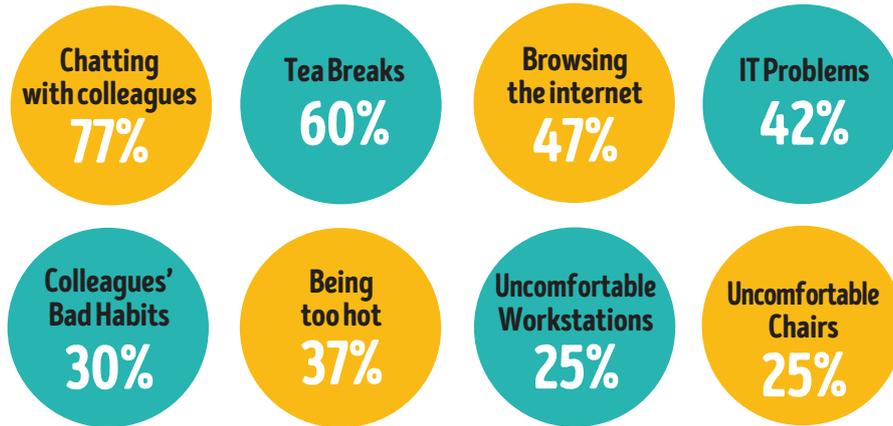
⁵ Censuswide survey of 1000 office workers commissioned by Fellowes and conducted in June 2017

⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=PDB_LV#

Distraction Epidemic

Despite being the **fifth largest economy** in the world, the UK sits at **number 15 in the productivity table**, behind the likes of Finland, Switzerland and Denmark⁶. Distractions, poor equipment, long hours and a lack of flexibility means the UK is losing a staggering **21 million work days each month**.

We were able to highlight the **challenges faced by workers** including things that stop productivity most, including:



Nearly half (43%) of 25 to 34-year-olds stated they **felt unproductive for a staggering 2-4 hours a day**, with 45% of 16 to 24-year-olds **checking their social media** channels when they procrastinate compared to only 12% of over 55s.

Despite this huge array of distractions stopping workers finishing their to-do lists, a huge **61% of office workers claim they would be more productive during a four-day week**.



What are the main frustrations in the workplace?

The office environment was undoubtedly a problem to a number of office workers, with a huge **25% stating work surroundings had a negative impact on their productivity.**

Discomfort was identified as another productivity preventer, with a **quarter of office workers admitting they were uncomfortable at their desks** or had **uncomfortable chairs.** Nearly one in five (17%) workers also listed **badly designed desks** amongst their top annoyances, with 18% saying they **ached at the end of the day because of the way their desks were set up.** Millennials (16 to 24-year-olds) were found to be the most uncomfortable at their desks with workers in the **North East aching the most at the end of the day (27%)**



1 IN 4	agree that the discomfort of being at their desk stops them being productive
OFFICE WORKERS	say uncomfortable chairs are one of their top frustrations at work (24%)

25%

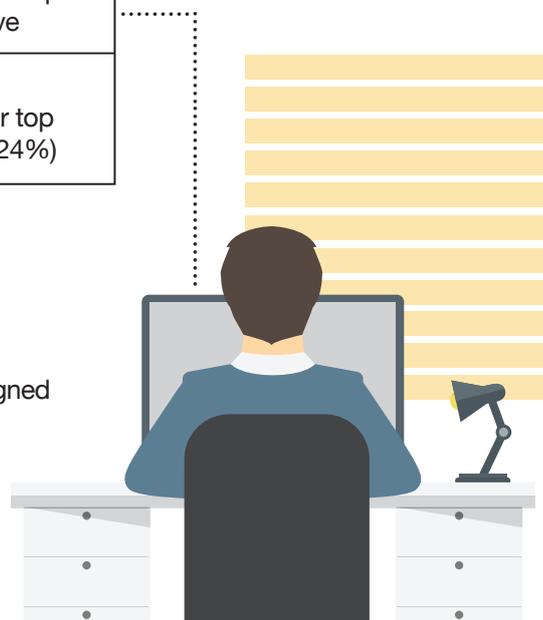
of people have missed a deadline due to not having the right equipment

20%

of people feel they are faced with not having the right equipment 2-3 times a week

17%

say badly designed desks are one of their top frustrations at work



Stephen Bowden, Fellowes Chartered Ergonomist comments

“One of the main causes of presenteeism is distractions that come in physical, psychological and social forms which reduces the ability of the person to concentrate on and complete the tasks at hand.

When it comes to distractions from your work area design you should try to pre-empt discomfort with a change of posture instead of being prompted by discomfort. The human body is designed to move throughout the entire day, so normal everyday movements such as standing up from sitting can help manage aches and pains. While working with your computer, simple ergonomic tools can support your posture whilst you're at work, such as foot supports, back supports, wrist supports, screen risers and sit-stand solutions.”

The **lack of satisfactory equipment** was also acknowledged as a huge contribution to unproductive offices. Shockingly, **a quarter of office workers admitted missing a deadline** due to not having access to the right tools, **whilst almost 20% admitted they didn't have access to the things they needed** at least three times a week. Almost **half of office workers (44%) believed they would be more productive if they had more comfortable chairs.**

Insufficient office equipment was another shortfall that workers felt contributed to low levels of productivity with **42% of respondents claiming productivity would increase if they had access to the correct tools.** With over **80% of those questioned saying that an organised desk made them more productive** even simple storage space is needed to help work levels.



What can we do to increase productivity?

It seems clear that the **current way of working can be highly ineffective** so what can employers do to make **workers happier, more comfortable and ultimately increase productivity?**

Flexible working was listed as one positive solution. In today's workplace it is an initiative that many companies have already introduced, but it doesn't seem to be enough. We identified sufficient evidence to reveal there is a **need for more remote working** opportunities, with **40% of workers saying they would be more productive working from home.**

Grace Marshall comments: "Time away from our workplace is vital for our productivity. We've found that a four-day work week increases momentum and motivation in the office, as well as giving employees more time to enjoy life outside of the office."

"Being distracted diminishes our ability to think clearly and creatively. Many office workers find they get far more work done in the day they work from home, or the hour before everyone else gets into the office - because they have less interruptions and distractions. Flexibility allows us to manage our availability, to balance the needs of our colleagues as well as the work we need to get done."

Avoiding Distractions

INBOX ZERO

Constant emails can be a huge distraction but remember that email is not your job, just one of the tools involved in your job. If your quest for Inbox Zero has you constantly checking and swiping, the chances are you're not applying enough attention to your to-do list. Switch off your email notifications and get into the habit of closing the whole thing down when you need to focus.



MEETING FREE MONDAY

If you have back to back meetings all day every day, when are you actually going to do the work that comes out of these meetings or the preparation that goes into them for that matter! Try having a set day in the week when no-one can book meetings into your diary and hold those boundaries firm.



PREP LIKE A CHEF

Give yourself ten minutes at the beginning of the day to make sure you have everything you need to complete your jobs, just like a chef would line up their ingredients. Make sure you are comfortable at your desk and all your equipment is working properly. This helps to stop any unnecessary trips to the printer or stationary cupboard and cuts down on more distractions.



WALK AND TALK

When we have autonomy over where and when we work we can choose the environment that increases our productivity, whether that's going offline to write that report or taking a walking meeting to literally think on your feet.

Hello

Hi

DECISION FATIGUE

Making decisions is hard work! Even on the days when it feels like you haven't done anything, made any progress or have anything to show for it (perhaps especially those days), the chances are you've been doing a lot of mental heavy lifting. Try getting a fresh perspective or asking a colleague to help, and forget about what you're going to buy for dinner until home time.

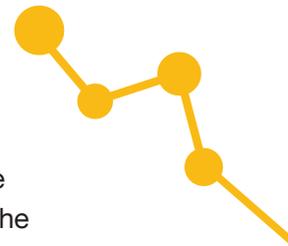


CHAMPAGNE MOMENTS

We all know that morale helps to boost productivity and remind you what you are working towards. Whether it's an email folder or board in the office keep a copy of nice things people have said, a client testimonial, a thank you, success stories of what people have gone on to do next as a result of something you have done.



Solutions



Fellowes Brands™ is a market-leading manufacturer of products that help people to be better organised, more productive, secure and healthy – at work, in the home and on the go. Our products include an intuitive range of ergonomic workspace solutions that help you to reduce risk in the workplace, enhance wellbeing, improve morale and increase productivity.

From FIRA accredited monitor and laptop supports, back supports, foot supports and wrist supports with Microban® antibacterial protection – to a new range of Sit-Stand Workstations and Work Platforms, Fellowes is actively helping the nation to be working well.

Being organised and having an effective records management system frees up time to be more productive. The Bankers Box® Premium and System Range storage solutions are engineered for strength but designed for convenience. They are easily portable and allow files to be accessed with ease.

Reliable, fast and efficient business machines are essential for optimising productivity in the workplace. Fellowes business machines are well known for their quality of build, their cutting-edge features and their time-saving performances.

The AutoMax™ line of paper shredders provides automatic shredding for maximum productivity. With their superior auto feed technologies, it's just a case of loading a stack of paper into the drawer, pushing a button and walking away to focus on a more important job. No more standing around to feed in sheets of paper – no more pulling out staples, paper clips or even smoothing wrinkled paper.

Similarly, Fellowes laminators deliver perfect results – without the wait. In the time it takes some laminators to warm up, it's possible to trim, laminate and bind a document with the Fellowes Creativity Suite, comprising Laminator, Binder and Trimmer.

Monitor and Laptop Supports

Back, Foot and Wrist Supports

Sit-Stand Workstations

Storage Boxes and Solutions

Shredders

Laminators

Binders



FIRA International is an Independent Ergonomic Consultancy. Products with this logo are accredited to EU Health and Safety Legislation: BS EN ISO9241/1995/Part 5; EC Directive 90/270 EEC and amends 2002.

Conclusion

Our report has confirmed that a variety of things are distracting workers across the UK each day, from colleagues to office environments, costing the UK economy in both time and money. Thankfully there are solutions that can help us get the time back we are losing and ensure that we stop working longer hours at the office but better utilise the time we have each day.



Fellowes UK Sales and Marketing Director Darryl Brunt

“It’s clear that our workplace has a huge effect on our productivity and our report shows a real need for businesses to take heed. Making small changes to an employee’s workstation comfort can reap rewards for their wellbeing and their working life. Employees who feel more productive working from home shouldn’t be forgotten either, everyone should be given access to the right products to ensure they can work well.”

As part of its Actively Working Well campaign, Fellowes, which is celebrating 100 years in the office product industry, aims to create an office environment which allows employees to reach their full potential.

Find out more at www.fellowes.com

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