

## **‘Distraction epidemic’ a major contributor to UK productivity gap**

### **Productivity research shows 21million working days lost every month from distractions**

Half of office workers in the UK admit they are unproductive for up to an hour every day, the equivalent of over 21million work days lost each month\*, according to the Fellowes Productivity in the UK report, released today.

Despite this, two thirds of those questioned believe a four-day week would make them more productive when at work.

Nearly half of people surveyed admit they get distracted up to 15 times a day, with the average worker getting distracted every 35 minutes.

The study, by office products firm Fellowes, reveals a distraction epidemic in the UK workplace, with internet browsing, IT issues and unfit office products bringing the UK’s productivity down dramatically.

Productivity expert at Think Productive and author of *How to be Really Productive* Grace Marshall comments: *“It is our ability to think well 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.”*

Despite being the fifth largest economy in the world, the UK sits at number 15 in the productivity table, lagging behind the likes of Finland, Switzerland and Denmark<sup>1</sup>.

Top British office distractions:

1. Chatting with colleagues (77%)
2. Tea breaks (60%)
3. Browsing the internet (47%)
4. IT problems (42%)
5. Colleagues’ bad habits (30%)
6. Being too hot (37%)
7. Uncomfortable workstations (25%)
8. Uncomfortable chairs (25%)

The report, part of Fellowes Working Well campaign, shows the issues that office workers believe are contributing towards their productivity.

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<sup>1</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development [http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=PDB\\_LV#](http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=PDB_LV#)

A quarter (25%) of workers claim to have missed a deadline because they couldn't get their hands on the right equipment in time. While almost 1 in 5 office workers say they don't have access to the equipment they need at least two to three times per week.

Only half of respondents said their office had a positive impact on productivity, with over two thirds (40%) believing that working from home or remotely would help them with their workload.

With a huge 61% of office workers claiming they would be more productive during a 4-day week, is it time for more flexibility in the workplace?

Grace Marshall thinks so: *"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 workplace."*

*"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 day, balance the needs of our colleagues and deliver the work we need to get done."*

Fellowes UK Sales and Marketing Director Darryl Brunt added: *"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 employee's work station 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 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](http://www.fellowes.com)

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\*Stats based on 16million office based workers in the UK.

**Notes to editors:**

Censuswide survey of 1000 office workers conducted in June 2017.

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### **About Fellowes Brands**

Fellowes is a global manufacturer and market leader of products for improving life at work, at home and on the go, including business machines, Bankers Box records storage solutions, workplace management products, home and commercial air purification and mobile technology accessories. For more information, visit: [www.fellowes.com](http://www.fellowes.com)

### **About Grace Marshall**

Grace Marshall is the author of How to be Really Productive, winner of the CMI Management Book of the Year Commuter's Read Award. She is also a 'Productivity Ninja' with Think Productive, working with a range of organisations globally to help employees reduce stress and increase productivity.