

# Why it will be a shame if the office space is no more

By [David Seinker](#)

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It's been over two months since many of us last stepped into the office. And while we were all excited about working from home, minus the traffic jams and worrying about getting all dressed up for the day, it's beginning to wear thin for a lot of us.



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Home schooling, along with the 24/7 nature of the life-work balance, is taking its toll, and the realisation is dawning that getting up every day and going to a place where we see people other than those in our immediate households wasn't such a bad thing after all.

The demise of the office as we know it is being widely predicted, thanks to the impact of Covid-19. But if we're really honest, we would miss it if we could never go back, and all those things the office space offers that actually enrich our daily lives.

## Structure and purpose

First off, getting to the office, and then heading home at the end of a busy day, gives many of us the structure and the sense of purpose we need to operate optimally. We definitely didn't expect to miss the daily grind we were all so used to, but the unpredictability and disorganisation of the lockdown weeks has served up a timely reminder that working from an office with colleagues provides us with the essential mental stimulation that's very difficult to replicate at home.

Parents have especially run into trouble during this period of remote working. Pre-Covid-19, the office was a place that freed them up to focus solely on their jobs and careers. They could be someone other than Michael's mom or Sophie's dad. It was a place where the world was theirs without having to wipe jam out of a toddler's hair, or to have a meeting that isn't interrupted by a sibling wrangle over the TV remote. And while I have no doubt that parents miss their children while they are at work, the office was a sort of refuge for many.

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Michael Aldridge 15 May 2020



### Sense of camaraderie

In addition, many of the best friendships have been struck between colleagues who share the same space for eight hours a day. And there is certainly a sense of camaraderie that's difficult to do without as you and your contemporaries grow and develop together through your work experiences. Let's be honest, the thought of sitting in a space with real people who challenge you on the career front, push you in your job and help spark ideas and creativity is more appealing now than it's ever been before.

I think the truth is that many of us have developed a newfound respect and love for the office. Yes, that very same space we couldn't wait to get away from every Friday afternoon pre-lockdown. And while we all accept that things won't return to how they used to be, it certainly doesn't mean that this marks the ultimate death of the office space. So, perhaps instead of predicting the demise of this way of working, we should rather consider how to do things a little differently going forward.



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### Reducing risk of infection

At The Business Exchange, for example, we have reappraised our serviced office spaces and implemented a number of new measures that will reduce the risk of infection in the workplace. This includes adopting a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to the wearing of face masks. Everyone entering the premises has to wear one, no exceptions. And for those who don't have one, we have options available for purchase.

We have also made hand sanitiser available throughout our spaces, introduced non-touch temperature checks, provide regular training and information to all staff to stay up-to-date on Covid-19, and we have reviewed all touch points within the office with a view to finding alternatives. We are also tweaking our desk spacing to ensure social distancing. Interestingly, we are seeing a spike in queries from corporates considering splitting their workforce across multiple locations, so we're all ready to meet the demand.

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7 May 2020





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The good news for those longing to return to the office is that there are, clearly, ways in which we can make it work - even in the time of Covid-19. We just need to think about it differently because, like so many of you out there, I honestly believe that we'll all be worse off without the office if we had to lose it.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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