FUTURE OF WORK

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The great rebalancing act

Companies are re-establishing domestic supply chains as a way out of the coronavirus downturn, but how will this affect the structure of the UK economy remains uncertain.

**FUTURE OF WORK**

**撑起中国经济的中坚力量**

在应对新冠肺炎疫情的冲击中，中国经济表现出了强大的韧性和活力。这主要得益于中坚力量的共同努力。

**经济复苏**

随着疫情防控形势持续向好，生产生活秩序加快恢复，经济运行正逐步向正常水平迈进。

**企业**

在疫情的影响下，很多企业采取了灵活工作模式，以减少不必要的出行和聚集。

**消费者**

随着消费市场的逐步恢复，消费者信心也在增强。但仍需注意保持理性消费，避免过度消费。

**专家**

专家表示，短期内经济恢复势头明显，但中长期来看，仍然存在不确定性。需继续加大改革力度，增强经济发展的内生动力。

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**经济复苏**

随着疫情防控形势持续向好，生产生活秩序加快恢复，经济运行正逐步向正常水平迈进。在疫情的影响下，很多企业采取了灵活工作模式，以减少不必要的出行和聚集。随着消费市场的逐步恢复，消费者信心也在增强。但仍需注意保持理性消费，避免过度消费。专家表示，短期内经济恢复势头明显，但中长期来看，仍然存在不确定性。需继续加大改革力度，增强经济发展的内生动力。
The news agenda is moving on, but the systemic issues around systemic racism in the workplace remain. Paris Petgrave, founder of Rare Seed Capital, says that the market will naturally fix itself if you let it. “It’s not a question he is spending much time on because there are enough other things that need to be fixed,” she says. Petgrave concludes. “We need to do things differently as organisations and individuals to drive change. Paris Petgrave, founder of Rare Seed Capital, says that the market will naturally fix itself if you let it. “It’s not a question he is spending much time on because there are enough other things that need to be fixed,” she says. Petgrave concludes. “We need to do things differently as organisations and individuals to drive change.”

Recent data showed first investors were more likely to back Black founders than their white counterparts. Petgrave and her team launched Rare Seed Capital in 2019 focused on Black startup founders. Currently, 93% of venture capital raises in 2019 went to majority white male teams, how ever, the $100 million fund that her team launched in 2019 only went to diverse teams. Rare Seed Capital’s work is also separate and distinct from the systemic conscious capitalism conversations that are happening in high-end and enterprise tech companies. The investment fund is part of a broader effort to bring more diversity into the tech sector. The fund is investing in companies that are socially conscious and have an impact on the world. The fund is looking for companies that are not just making money, but are also making a social impact. Rare Seed Capital’s work is also separate and distinct from the systemic conscious capitalism conversations that are happening in high-end and enterprise tech companies. The investment fund is part of a broader effort to bring more diversity into the tech sector. The fund is investing in companies that are socially conscious and have an impact on the world. The fund is looking for companies that are not just making money, but are also making a social impact.

Harnessing AI to impact the future of work

Breaking the mould to create successful Black startup founders is something that Petgrave is passionate about. “If your values align, then you are going to get the maximum benefit of your work,” she says. “If it’s a trillion-dollar problem, and your company is not solving it, then you’re not going to get the maximum benefit of your work.”

"If it’s just a case of looking for Black founders, but the rest of the structure is the same, we’re not going to see change," she points out. “We need to take a more systemic approach to looking for talent, so I continue to take their intentions for ‘we’ and ‘us’.”

Composed by the network animates diverse conversations in seeing – even teasing star lessons” says Petgrave. “This fund has really helped us to shine a light on the systemic issue of access.”

Big companies are also considering the potential of investing in a large scale of remote workers. The potential of remote work can drive a major change in the way companies operate and how they interact with their customers. Large cities’ centralised hotdesks will give way to distributed working models and collaboration settings. Some of the largest companies have already introduced remote working models as part of a long-term diversity strategy. Petgrave adds: “Remote working is a huge opportunity for organisations to be more diverse and inclusive.”

"If we continue to drive it, and it becomes a real trend, then there’s no turning back for organisations which are not embracing diversity in the workplace," says Petgrave. "Organisations which are not embracing diversity in the workplace are going to lose more potential workers in the future."
Putting Black-owned businesses in the spotlight

How has recent heightened awareness of racial inequality and discrimination affected the support and backing of Black-owned businesses in the UK?

Jason Pinto, founder of Rare, says: “Our team has a huge amount of evidence and data that shows that diversity is a crucial enabler. It has the potential to drive culture and values fit. If you want to change culture, you have to get managers who are employee focused, which means you have to get rid of the people who are just there to do a job.”

He adds: “Companies will need to be less rigid in their approach to office culture, and less rigid in their approach to remote working.”

In this fast-changing new normal, the landscape of the workplace is changing. Companies are embracing remote working, with the possibility of a hybrid model where employees can work from a variety of locations and not feel they are sacrificing their personal or professional identity.

The workplace of the future will be smaller, more versatile work hubs strategically located throughout the city, with smaller, more specialized work spaces and remote meet spaces. The idea is to enable employees to network together and interact with other hubs using virtual tools. This way, employees can network together and interact with other hubs using virtual tools.

This will allow for a more agile and flexible way of working, enabling employees to work from wherever they choose, whether it be at home, in a cafe, or even a park. This will also allow for a more diverse range of employees, as it will be easier for people from different backgrounds to work together.

As governments start to lift lockdown restrictions, companies will need to move to a “business as usual” mindset. It is not a question of whether businesses will adopt a hybrid model suited to a world recovering from a pandemic, otherwise they will struggle to operate in a post-pandemic world.

75% will use video conferencing technology

When asked what the biggest remote working experiment in history was, 75% of respondents said it would be the pandemic.

Big companies are also considering the rational of investing in large office spaces. Virtual interactions can save a massive amount of capital and resources, as well as reducing the carbon footprint of the company. Large city-centre.headquarters are also considering moving to a more flexible model, with employees working from home more often and having the option to work from anywhere.

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**Designing the Post-COVID Office**

As many of us gradually begin to trickle back into offices, organisations are having to consider what actions to take to make our workplaces safe. Bridge actions such as increased cleaning protocols, an abundance of hand sanitisers, the adoption of hot desking and social distancing measures are good first steps, but there is a bigger opportunity now too; to reinvent the office of the future.

**Office Locations**

With an increase in remote working, many large organisations are pivoting to a “hub and spoke” model, whereby the office is seen as the hub, with a network of smaller, local offices to act as “spokes” for the more regular needs of a distributed workforce.

**Reception Areas**

Clearly, reception desks should be protected by glass or plastic protective screens. Deals can be set down on desk extensions rather than placing them on top, and visitor passes should be single-use digital, allowing for contactless entry and exit.

**Accessibility**

Making office spaces accessible for all, with new equipment and technology for the post-COVID office, such as under-the-desk work benches and lower accessible tables, is already being done by companies which can hugely benefit employees with their disabilities. Organisations should make sure that signage is clear and, where possible, tactile for those with limited vision; pay attention to the height of reception desks, and make sure desks and the immediate area around them are accessible to the 15% who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices; and ensure all chemicals used for cleaning are safe and appropriate to use near those with chemical sensitivities.

**General Space**

The once-trendy open-plan office gets a new lease of life in the post-COVID era. Office occupation has become denser over the last ten years, with desks becoming smaller and more tightly packed. This will need to change with social distancing, particularly the trend of hot desking. Organisations might consider repurposing the space to allow workers to work as close to each other as possible and space should be configured to allow for as much natural light as possible.

**Meeting Rooms**

A blend of new tech and social distancing will make the new meeting room viable. There should be limitations on how many people are allowed in at any one time to prevent overcrowding, with tables and chairs set up to reflect this. There should be easy access to fresh air or an air purification system. Mixed reality may become normal, with meeting and conference rooms equipped with large screens for video conferencing, gesture-controlled digital boards for collaboration and even augmented reality to incorporate remote team members.

**Facilities/Appliances**

The water cooler moment gets a makeover too in the post-COVID office. It can still be used with the coffee machine and in self-service taps, but employees are encouraged to bring their own. Whereever possible, kitchen areas should be well ventilated, to allow for frequent cleaning, and made traditional café style tables and booths to baths to keep usage and touchless doorways, are already developments which can hugely benefit employees with their disabilities.

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**WHAT DO WORKERS MISS MOST ABOUT THEIR OFFICE?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do workers miss most about their office</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled meetings with colleagues</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialising with colleagues</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impromptu face-to-face interaction</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be part of the community</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to technology</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To focus on my work</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled meetings with clients</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development/coaching</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to amenities</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**WHAT EMPLOYEES NEED TO BE COMFORTABLE IN THE OFFICE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What employees need to be comfortable in the office</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shifting positions against coming in</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased opportunities to work from home</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased office cleaning</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased distance between workstations</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide hand sanitiser</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touchless bathroom facilities</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install air purification system</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fenced face-to-face meetings</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More private offices</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More defined private space</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate shared workstations</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**HAS COVID CHANGED THE COMMERCIAL PROPERTY MARKET FOREVER?**

Quarterly investment in London office real estate understandably dropped in March 2020, but with many businesses opting for smaller local offices, it remains to be seen whether this will recover (figures in £ million):

- **Q1 2019**: £1,810
- **Q2 2019**: £2,000
- **Q3 2019**: £2,210
- **Q4 2019**: £2,300
- **Q1 2020**: £2,720
- **Q2 2020**: £2,525
- **Q3 2020**: £2,625
- **Q4 2020**: £1,430

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**Workers are keen to return to the workplace**

10% of UK workers are already working in a hybrid model. This involves having one large HQ “hub” in a city centre, with a number of smaller, local offices to act as “spokes” for the more regular needs of a distributed workforce.

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**CBRE Group 2020**

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**Gensler 2020**

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**British Council for Offices 2020**

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**Tower Group 2020**

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**BRE 2020**
Designing the Post-COVID Office

As many of us gradually begin to trickle back into offices, organisations are having to consider what actions to take to make our workplaces safe. Bridge actions such as increased cleaning protocols, an abundance of hand sanitiser, the abolition of hot desking and social distancing changes are good first steps, but there is a bigger opportunity now to re-Imagine the office of the future.

OFFICE LOCATIONS
With an increase in remote working, many large organisations are pivoting to a "flex and spike" office model. This involved having two large "hubs" in a city centre, with a network of smaller, local offices to act as "spikes" for the more regular needs of a distributed workforce.

RECEPTION AREAS
Ideally, reception desks should be protected by glass or plastic protective screens. Desks can be set lower to discourage visitors from placing their hands on it, and visitor passes should be single-use or digital, allowing for contactless entry and exit.

ACCESSIBILITY
The need to restructure office spaces creates a sleek opportunity to make workplaces accessible for all, embracing new architectural and technologies for the post-COVID office, such as under-desk mirrors and touchless desks. As we already develop ways to help people with disabilities, we should make sure that signage is clear and, where possible, tactile for those with limited vision; pay attention to the height of reception desks, sinks and hand-driers to accommodate those with mobility issues or other mobility devices; and ensure all chemicals used for cleaning are safe and appropriate to use near those with chemical sensitivities.

GENERAL SPACE
The once-trendy open plan office gets a new lease of life in the post-COVID era. Office occupation has become denser over the last ten years, with desks becoming smaller and more tightly packed. There will need to change with social distancing, particularly the trend of hot desking. Organisations might consider repurposing old meeting or coffee break rooms to act as contactless workstations for those with limited space, or put attention to the height of reception desks, sinks and hand-driers to accommodate those with limited vision; pay attention to the height of reception desks, sinks and hand-driers to accommodate those with mobility issues or other mobility devices; and ensure all chemicals used for cleaning are safe and appropriate to use near those with chemical sensitivities.

MEETING ROOMS
A blend of new tech and social distancing will make the new meeting room viable. There should be limitations on how many people are allowed in at any one time to prevent overcrowding, with tables and chairs set at a Covid-safe distance. There should be a way placed to fresh air in or near any ventilation system. Most newly established rooms must be equipped with large screens for video conferencing, gesture-controlled digital boards for collaboration and even augmented reality to incorporate remote team members.

FACILITIES/APPLIANCES
The water cooler moment gets a makeover too in the post-COVID office. It is now with the coffee machine and in with employees bringing their own whatever a café, however possible. Kitchen areas should be well ventilated to allow for frequent cleaning, and made traditional of available from tea to dishes. Businesses may even consider getting rid of exposed doors to increase comfort areas of contact.
Flexible workspaces are increasingly attractive to the new era of work.

Oliver Pickup, survey published by Office Space Direct, indicates that 97 per cent of employees want to work remotely going forward. Just 5 per cent of employees feel disconnected from their company.

Richard Hyams, founder and director of architecture company Hyams, which specialises in workspace design, says that 80 per cent of businesses that are currently operating remotely, which just set up to offer the space density and flexibility required in our new normal.

Happily, most flexible workspaces are set up to offer the space density and flexibility required in our new normal.

For employers, there is an increased responsibility to provide a workplace that supports the wellbeing of employees as flex-space providers often offer, and increased levels of sanitation and improved hygiene.

To reopen an entire workplace is a major logistical and financial undertaking. According to the Chartered Institute of Learning and Development, 91 per cent of businesses have or are planning to use online education during the pandemic.

Training during the current climate

E-learning can make a difference to people’s learning experience, especially when it comes to safety and wellbeing.

In addition to helping businesses reopen and reskill workers, e-learning also makes for a more engaging and memorable learning experience. We now have a wealth of technological tools to help people learn.

It’s important to keep our e-learning courses fresh and updated. We have to train our people to have a good understanding of how our clients operate and what role our clients play in the future of work.

At iHASCO, we are ensuring that our e-learning content is up to date. During lockdown, we launched a library of online mental health training courses, which was one of the most popular courses we have ever offered.

In an online survey of 286 workplace leaders, E-learning is identified as the most important step that businesses can take to future-proof their workspaces against health risks.

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Organisations are thinking twice before committing to a long-term office lease in the current climate, so flexible workspaces are increasingly attractive to businesses as employees emerge from lockdown.

Oliver Pickup

*Future of Work*

**To reopen an entire office is likely to prove too costly and uneconomical.**

**Flux space for the new era**

in April, as evidence of the pivotal role in the space. Aqua tenants three-quarters of these surveyed 15 per cent of their employees to provide some form of flexible workspace following the lockdown. However, he urges that flex space presents instant cost, technology and better ventilation systems to take advantage of the potential agric in health.

Richard Hyams, founder and director of architects astudio, says: "While we were married to the idea of a 9 to 5 work setting in the past, we are now free to design in a variety of options, such as contract and shared offices, as well as virtual workspaces and services. This flexibility allows us to provide our clients with a variety of options that suit their needs."

"We are also seeing a shift in how people are choosing to work, with more people working remotely. This has led to an increase in demand for flexible workspaces, which can provide employees with more control over their work environment."

"In addition, many businesses are looking to reduce their overhead costs, and flexible workspaces offer a way to achieve this. They can be set up and closed down quickly, allowing businesses to adapt to changing needs."

"The rise of the gig economy has also led to an increase in demand for flexible workspaces, as freelancers and contract workers require a space to work in. Additionally, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of flexible workspaces, as businesses have had to adapt to remote working."

"Finally, many businesses are looking to create a more inclusive workplace, and flexible workspaces can help to achieve this by offering a range of options for different employees."

"Overall, flexible workspaces are becoming a more popular option for businesses as they offer flexibility, cost savings, and a better work-life balance for employees."
Normalising flexibility could change lives

The new era of remote working has opened up more opportunities for disabled workers, many of whom had previously been excluded from the workplace by the difficulty they need

disabled people are left out of the equation. "We had many cases that got stuck," she says. "The lack of flexibility in the workplace has been a major challenge for many workers." As a result, many workers have been feeling increasingly isolated and disconnected from their colleagues.

"One group, in particular, has been impacted by this," Nurieli says. "People who have been diagnosed with a disability, or those who have a chronic illness. These individuals have been reluctant to adopt it, mistakenly believing workers will be less productive."

"In many cases, this is not the case," she says. "Flexible working can really enhance productivity. It can enable employees to better manage their work-life balance." Nurieli says that employers need to be open to the idea of flexible working arrangements, as it can benefit both the employer and the employee.

"It's important for employers to understand that productivity can improve with flexible working. People who work from home can often be more productive, as they have more control over their working environment."

"In addition, from a bottom-line perspective, allowing flexibility means employees can know their hours in advance, which was granted, and set goals for the year. Setting flexible working hours can change lives, and can have a profound impact on the overall wellbeing of the organisation." Nurieli concludes.

"For one of our customers, before the pandemic, they were having issues with their cash flow. They had a lot of uncollected accounts receivable. But with the shift to remote work, they have been able to automate their accounts payable, only 3 per cent of which is being automated. They have automated their accounts receivable, only 3 per cent of which is being automated. They have automated their accounts receivable, only 3 per cent of which is being automated."

"With COVID-19 as a backdrop, the need for automating processes has become even more pressing. For one of our customers, before the pandemic, they were having issues with their cash flow. They had a lot of uncollected accounts receivable. But with the shift to remote work, they have been able to automate their accounts payable, only 3 per cent of which is being automated. They have automated their accounts receivable, only 3 per cent of which is being automated.

"The importance of retaining customers and building relationships with them is more important than ever," says Nurieli. "With the shift to remote work, customers can be proactive advocates for your organisation."

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Normalising flexibility could change lives

The new era of remote working has opened up more opportunities for disabled workers, many of whom had previously been excluded by workplace by the inability to flexibly the flexibility they need.

A study by the employment advocates also found that more than 600,000 disabled workers are still denied the opportunity to work from home due to the lack of proper equipment and support. This has led to a significant increase in mental health issues, especially among those who are unable to access the necessary support.

The report also found that many businesses are failing to make the necessary adaptations to accommodate disabled workers, which is leading to a significant loss of productivity and talent. In some cases, businesses are even refusing to hire disabled workers, which is causing a significant loss of talent and hindering their ability to operate efficiently.

The report recommends that businesses take more active steps to accommodate disabled workers, including providing them with proper equipment, offering flexible working arrangements, and ensuring that they have access to the necessary support and resources. This will not only improve productivity and reduce costs, but it will also help to build a more inclusive and diverse workplace that is welcoming to all employees.

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When employees understand the needs of their disabled colleagues, they can provide proactive advice and allies.

A large source of capital exists in organisations biggest asset - their debtors

Intelligent automation

Intelligent automation provides a organisation with insights and actions to react to changes in the behaviour of your customers, to help spot trends, flag new warning signals and prevent problems before they occur. Build confidence in risk, cash flow and receive proactively with these automation techniques.

"A large source of capital exists in organisations biggest asset - their debtors"

Releasing cash flow fuels much-needed business resilience

Liquidity is important at the best of times, let alone during a global pandemic. But with cash being held hostage in accounts receivable, automation is crucial to free it into the business.

By automating accounts receivable, businesses can help to improve their efficiency, productivity, and overall performance. This can be achieved through the use of technology such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and automation, which can help to reduce the amount of time spent on manual tasks and improve accuracy.

In addition, automation can help to reduce the risk of errors and fraudulent activities, which can lead to financial losses for businesses. By automating accounts receivable, businesses can help to ensure that payments are processed accurately and on time, which can help to improve customer satisfaction and reduce the risk of late payments.

But with the rapid pace of technological change, automation can be a challenging task. Businesses need to be able to react quickly to changes in the market and continuously improve their processes to ensure that they are staying competitive.

In conclusion, automation is crucial to helping businesses improve their accounts receivable processes and ensure that payments are processed accurately and on time. By automating accounts receivable, businesses can help to improve their efficiency, productivity, and overall performance, which can lead to increased profits and improved customer satisfaction.
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