WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF WORK? 2022

UNSW SYDNEY

Davenport Campbell

PART 1: WHAT?

PART 2: SO WHAT?

PART 3: NOW WHAT?

WHAT?

Thanks to the collective experiences of knowledge workers over the last 24 months of the pandemic we have become better at knowing what's best done at work, and elsewhere. Our purpose has been to understand how this plays out in the context of a more flexible work landscape.

Our next generation of workforce is further accelerating the rate of change with choice and flexibility now driving the conversation and talent war. The trick is how do you manage employee expectations with what your organisation can offer.

We have well and truly adjusted our workstyles. Yet we are innately social creatures that thrive with human connection.

WHAT WE'VE EXPLORED IS THE SENTIMENT OF GEN Z.

SHIFTING LANDSCAPE

WORK means different things to different people. There are different expectations and needs of the workplace. It's not just physical, it's now deeply personal.

With 5 generations and a greater focus on inclusion and diversity in the workforce, some of this is generational, but generational stereotypes and biases, such as ageism, gender and culture are diminishing as businesses focus on positive culture.

There is a new demographic currency emerging that is cross-generational – **WORKSTYLE**.

The next generation entering the workforce are unconditioned. A fresh perspective provided by our workshop participants shows us they are unconditioned to the corporate world and have no pre-conceived notions of what, how and where work happens. They are perfectly comfortable with the fluidity of a real desire for automony and to be inspired.
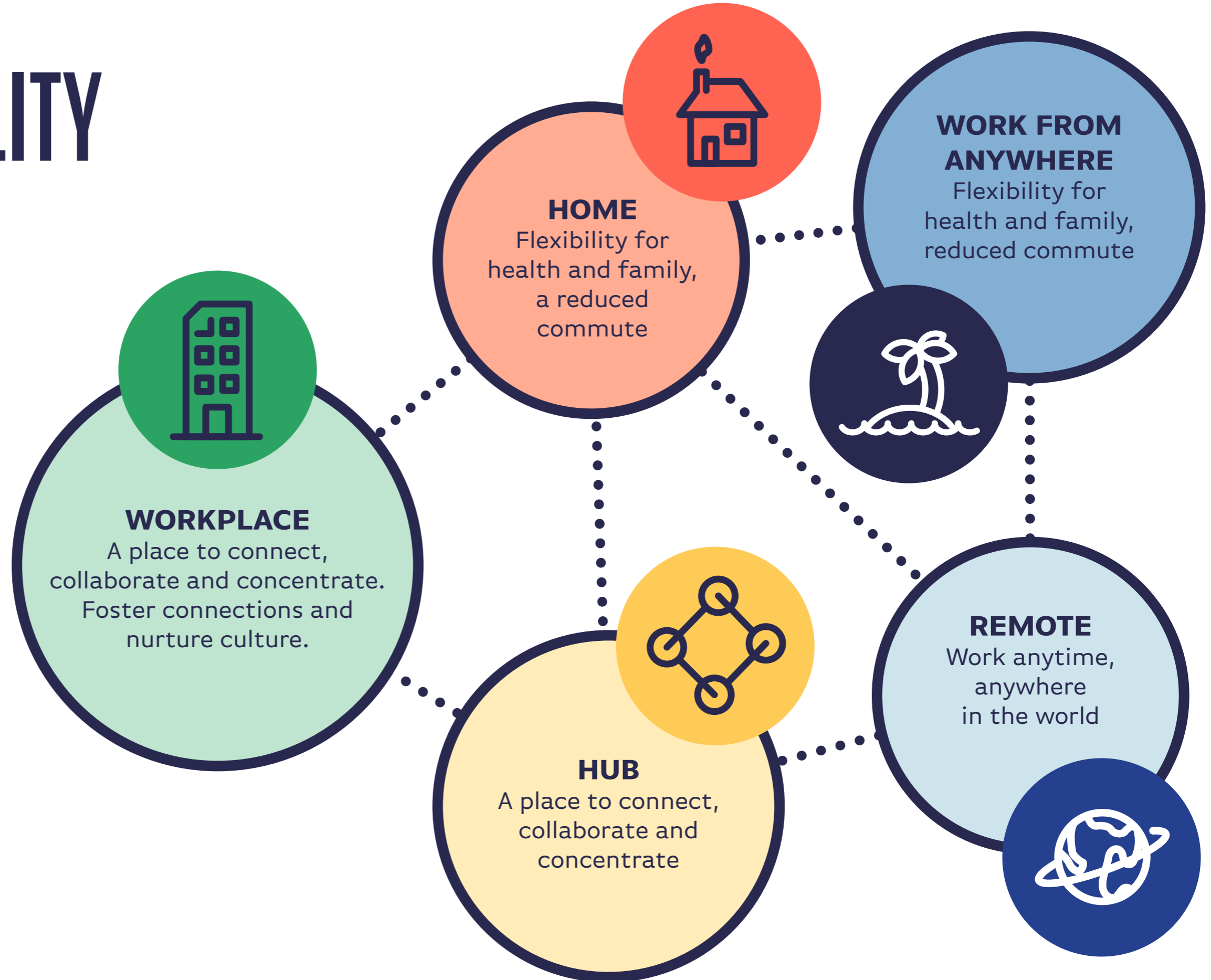
GEN Z ARE BETWEEN 13-27 YEARS OLD

BY 2025 THEY WILL MAKE UP **27%** OF AUSTRALIA'S WORKFORCE *1

GEN X & BABY BOOMERS
25%

GEN Z - 27%

2025

MILLENNIALS - 48%
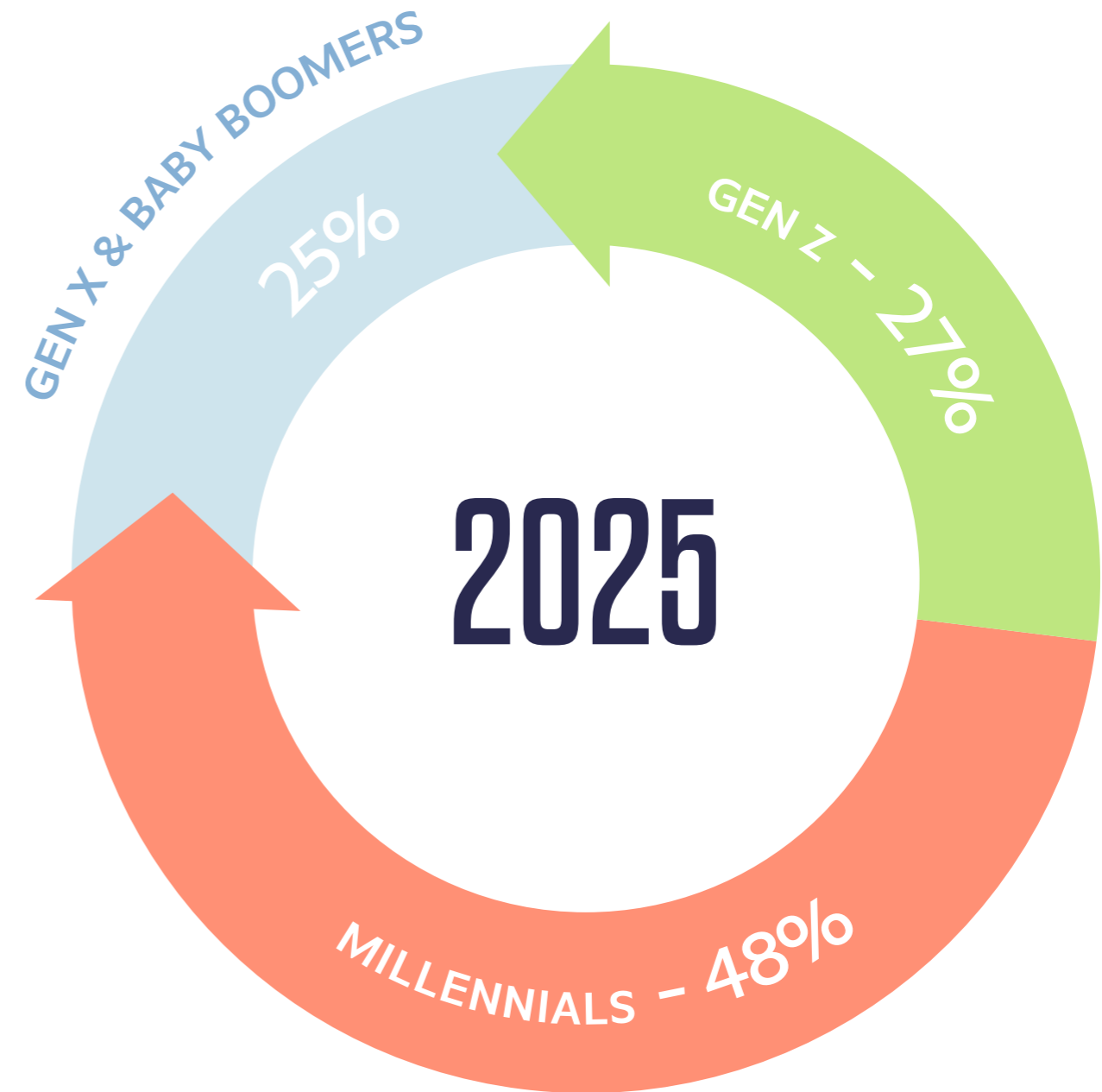
A NEW REALITY

We now know this is the new reality but where and how does this all happen? In the office or on a remote island, we want and value the human connection.

Solutions will be bespoke and focused on the individual business – spanning across an expanding network of work domains.

HOME
Flexibility for health and family, a reduced commute

WORK FROM ANYWHERE
Flexibility for health and family, reduced commute

WORKPLACE
A place to connect, collaborate and concentrate. Foster connections and nurture culture.

HUB
A place to connect, collaborate and concentrate

REMOTE
Work anytime, anywhere in the world

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

The workplace landscape was already shifting prior to the pandemic with these forces shaking up organisational leadership, culture, work practices and physical environments.

We were moving beyond super-experiences and incentives towards values alignment, engagement and demand for quality environments (digital, cultural and physical) to enable a thriving workforce and sustained human performance. Our social conscience was starting to question corporate responsibilities, purposefulness and meaning in our work.

These drivers have not changed, only amplified through the global disruption COVID-19 has brought. And through our experiences of extended isolation and absence from the office there is now a dramatically heightened awareness of our innate need for human connection.

Since we know these are the key factors driving change, we wanted to explore what are the most important factors to success from the perspective of Gen Z.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

GENERATION SHIFT

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

DISTRIBUTED WORKFORCE

TALENT WAR

COMPANY VALUES

ENVIRONMENT

CONNECTIVITY

WELLBEING

HOW:

In a 3 hour workshop, participants were guided through a series of activities designed to explore their ideas, opinions and values regarding the workplace. Starting with future design thinking, we asked for their views on the diverse personas of today's workforce, their ways of working, and the key elements critical to a purposeful, activated and enabling office of the future.

WORKSHOP : 3 HRS

USER GROUP WORKSHOP

10m · 10m · 30m · 10m · 45m · 45m · 30m · 30m
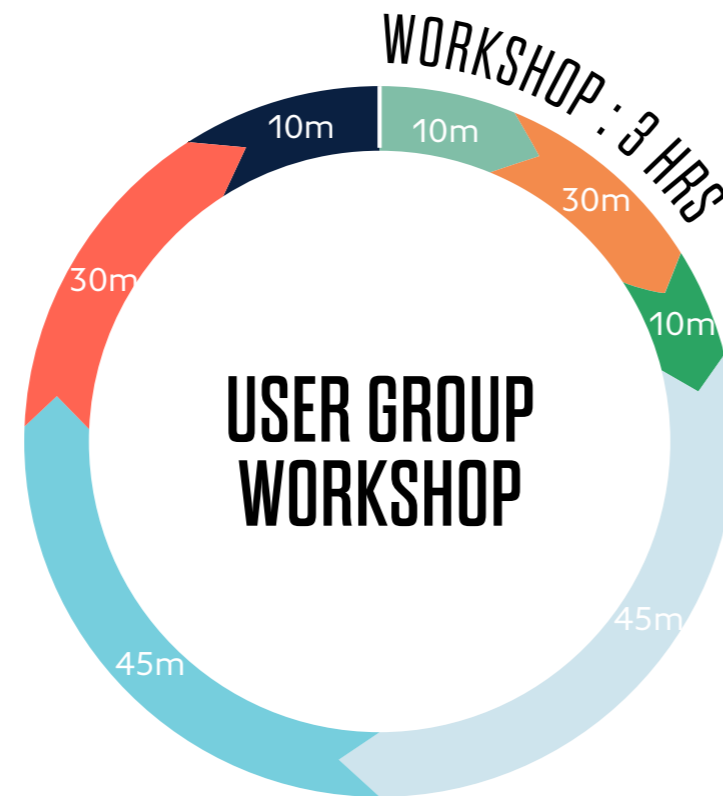
- ● THOUGHT PROVOKER
  Energise and stimulate future thinking
- ● TASK 1
  Winning students present their major work
- ● TIME TO MOVE
  Discussion with peers
- ● TAKE A BREAK
  Morning tea
- ● TASK 2
  Get into groups and work on persona's
- ● TASK 3
  Making a 'pizza' work out key elements of a workspace
- ● LET'S MAKE IT
  Lego making workshop
- ● WHAT DID WE DISCOVER?
  Reflection of today's tasks

WHO:

UNDERGRADUATES

A selection of top undergraduate UNSW Interior Architecture students completing their penultimate design projects for 'The Future of Work' - a Workplace Design Studio.

GRADUATES

Nominated graduate employees from KPMG and MIRVAC working across mixed CBD offices, locations and modes throughout 2020.
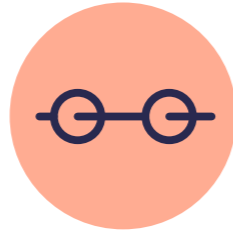
DC DESIGNERS

Graduate, mid and senior designers from Davenport Campbells Sydney Studio.

SO WHAT?

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE FUTURE WORKPLACE

FLAT HIERARCHY

A sense of equity and transparency across space, teams, management and culture is critical to the next generation's sense of belonging and psychological safety in the business.

Access to leaders without the barrier of middle management.

SENSORY INTUITION

Sensory intuition and stimulation of the environment – having the right, fast and responsive tools for the job is a given for these digital natives. More than that, they are looking for a mix of digital and analogue experiences which will stimulate and support different thinking needs intuitively and seamlessly. Something that home cannot offer.

A positive emotional response when coming into the office.

INCLUSIVITY AND EQUITY

The new generation workforces feel that inclusivity and equity are about learning and opportunities to contribute. Using digital mediums to their full potential in enabling access to opportunity beyond barriers of space, time and geography.

Leveraging modular, adaptable and tailored spaces to enable equal experiences, digital or face to face, with no discrimination or hierarchy.

MISSING ELEMENTS OF THE FUTURE WORKPLACE

PLAY, CREATIVITY, IMMERSION

For Generation Z, the rapid transition to work from home is akin to studying individually or attending lectures anywhere, anytime, between life. Going to campus represented an opportunity to create, use technologies and tools that would enhance their work and creative potential.

They see the office of the future as a key opportunity to build an immersive, augmented reality playground which would utilise, test and showcase the best tools and ideas to their people and clients.

NOURISHMENT

Social and emotional. More than simply a nod to wellbeing, the office is a place to cultivate team culture, a place to re-charge with emotional and social nourishment. Walking the talk with organisational culture and values are key here.

Well designed spaces with principles of conscious sustainability, end of trip, yoga and prayer rooms, healthy food choices, ergonomics and OHS are a given.

SPONTANEITY IN LEARNING

Disconnection from the office has illuminated how much knowledge we create, share and absorb through opportunities of physical proximity alone, particularly for those most junior in the workforce. The spaces in-between where we see, hear and feel how others solve problems and build relationships.

A culture of sharing ideas and hacks for the best ways of working needs to be part of both physical and digital workplaces.

TASK 1

A discovery session to understand what the key elements of the future workplace are and what's missing.

UNSW students* showcased their reflexive visions for the workplace.

*CRYSTAL NG

*ANDREA PICONES

*VIVIAN PHAN

*LIA PIPOLO

*ASHLYN GUINTO

TASK 2

The purpose of Task 2 was to understand what these personas mean to Gen Z, unpacking their definitions of different workstyles (45 mins).

WORKER PERSONAS

Role playing exercise, each group was given a worker persona.
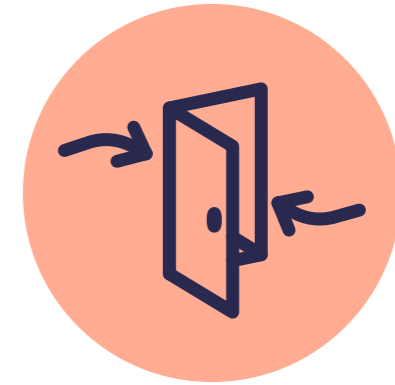
WHO, WHAT, WHERE?

- What is the definition of your persona?

- Who are they? (Generation, age group)
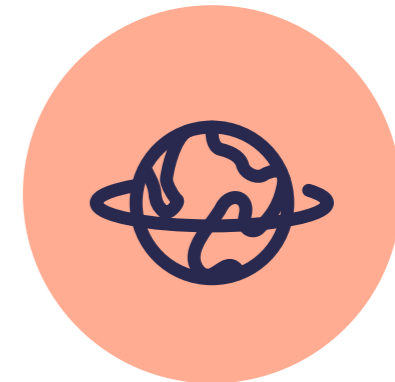
- Where are they working?

WORKER PERSONAS

A: OFFICE BASED WORKER

B: IN AND OUT

C: HYBRID

D: REMOTE WORKER

A: OFFICE BASED WORKER

I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED IN THE WORKPLACE

I can do individual work, feel motivated through collaboration, knowledge sharing and events, work with my team and socialise when I want – short social encounters.

My required physical presence is not inferior to the flexibility of remote because I set my time and boundaries.

The physical environment of the office offers clear boundaries of work and home. But my physical availability should not compromise my ability to focus and undertake individual work uninterrupted.

The office is a place to relax, exercise, access good food, gym classes - it needs to offer more than what I have at home for me to understand the "why" I am location based and bound.

Safety – I need to know that the office is properly cleaned, and measures are in place to protect my health.

OFFICE BASED WORKER 'pizza wheel' outcome of Task

B: IN & OUT WORKER

I'M IN THE OFFICE WHEN IT'S POPULATED – TO CONNECT, PROGRESS AND MEET WITH PURPOSE

I seek to engage in active collaboration when I'm there, not just be in the office to sit amongst the team.

I still need to be able to do focused tasks in a protected space if needed but my tools are mobile - quick stand-ups, touchpoints and to connect when I need.
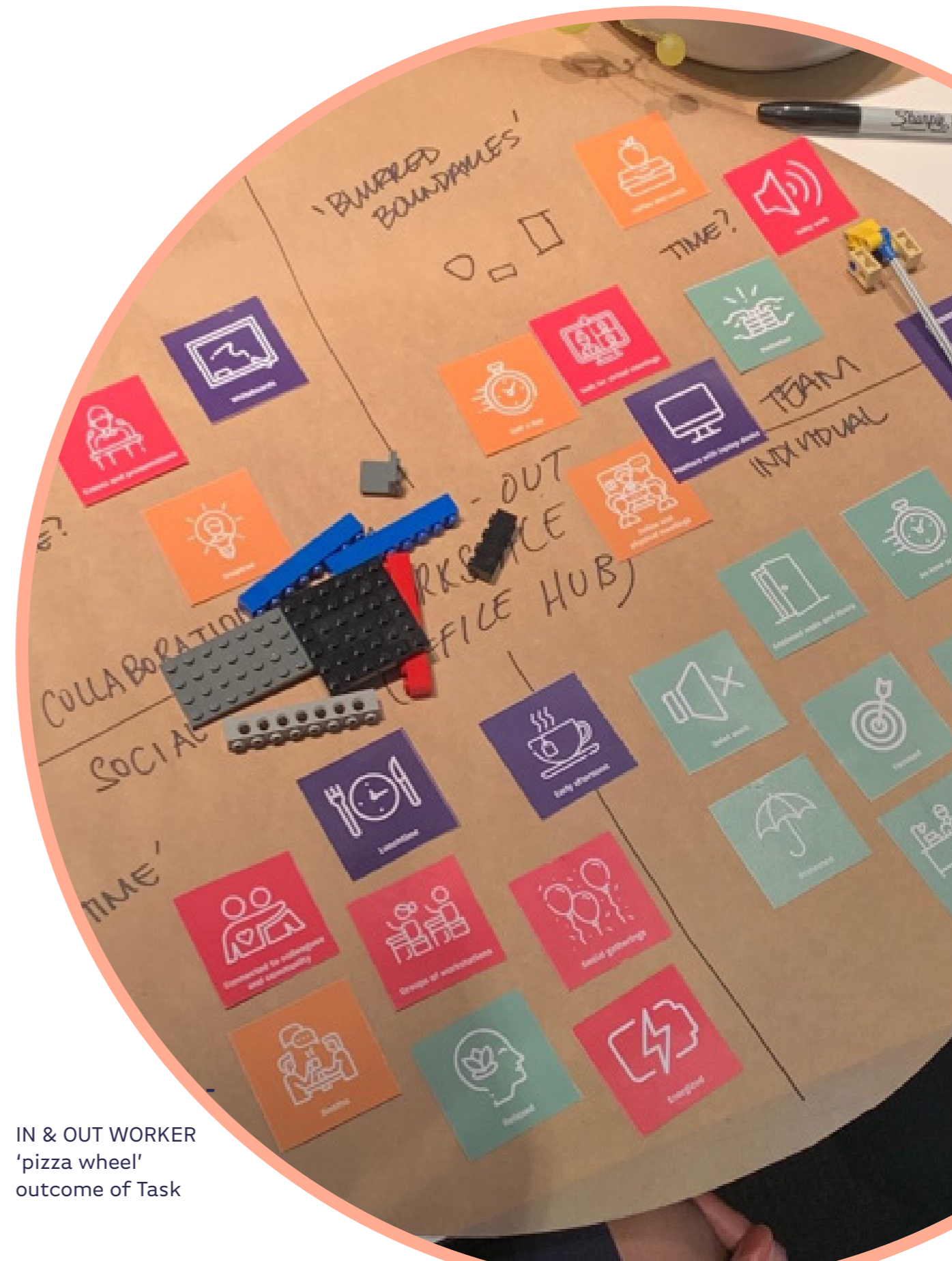
IN & OUT WORKER
'pizza wheel'
outcome of Task

C: HYBRID WORKER

NOT BOUND BY DEFINITIONS OF SPACE OR TYPES OF SPACE

The office is a complete blend and home an extension of my workplace

Activities are not bound by time – presence in the workplace is for full days not half. There are very clear definitions for when I'm in and not.

HYBRID WORKER
'pizza wheel'
outcome of Task

D: REMOTE WORKER

I'M ALWAYS OUT OF THE OFFICE SO DON'T NEED A PLACE

My individual work happens elsewhere and I connect in via tech for virtual meetings – an easily bookable place to work for the day is what I need.

I come in to be energised by collaboration, or for targeted work – short stays.

I will come into the office for team events when scheduled – for learning and social.

I mostly need the office for culture building and motivation - to connect with the organisation culture and community, otherwise quite happy remote. The business has positions that are remote – my job is defined clearly as remote.

REMOTE WORKER
'pizza wheel'
outcome of Task

ADJUSTMENTS OF CHANGE

Our surveys of Organisations and Individuals throughout the extended 2020/21 lockdowns and returns to office show a clear trajectory - we have adjusted, learned and developed new workstyles; as well as adopted or upskilled in collaborative technologies to make flexible working work. For us, our teams and our business.

Sense of cohesion with their team in daily interactions since WFH / shift in working

■ 2020
■ 2021

	CHALLENGING	NO CHANGE	BETTER
2020	40%	42%	18%
2021	22%	30%	48%
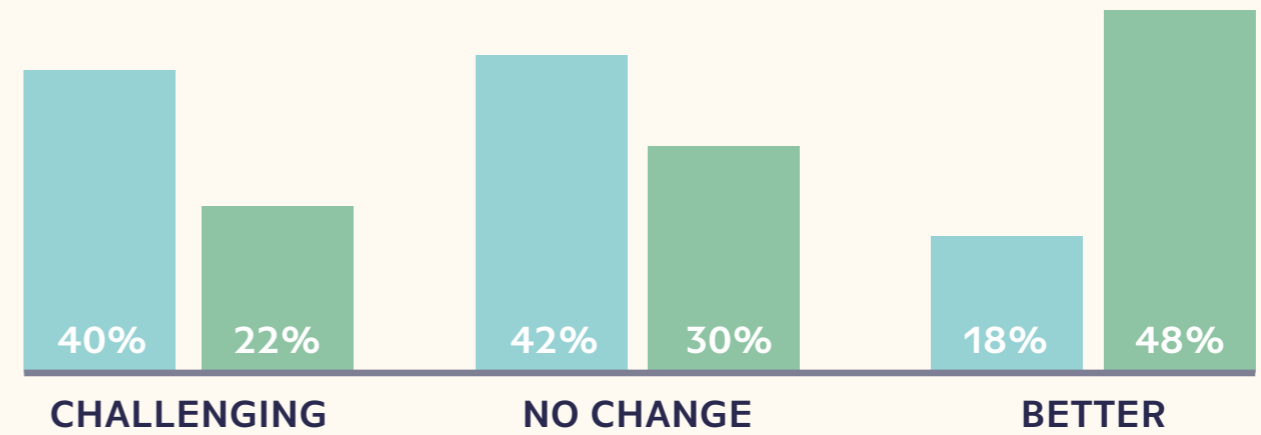
Belief that they can do their job as effectively remotely as in the workplace

■ 2020
■ 2021

	YES	NO
2020	65%	35%
2021	65%	35%
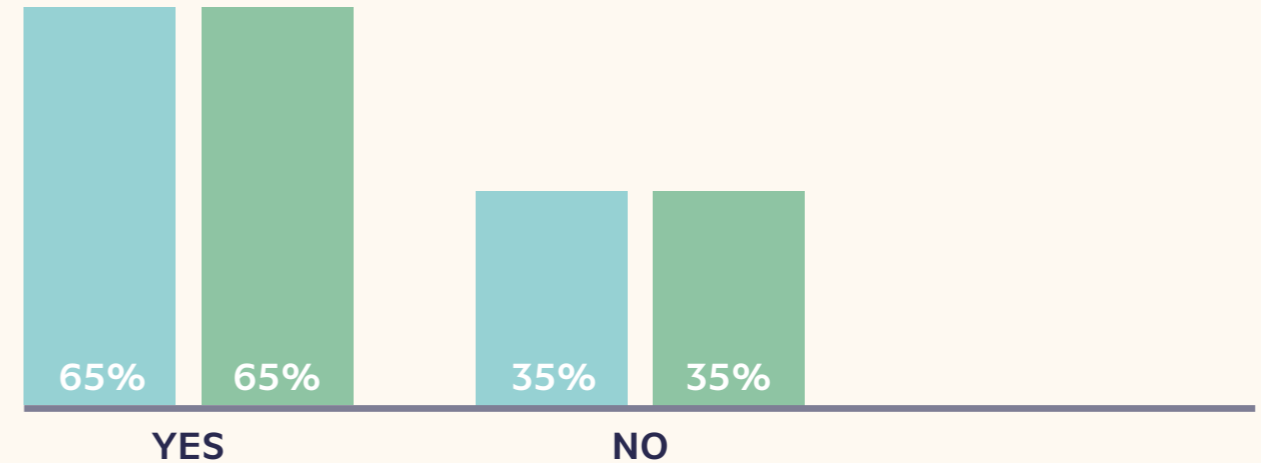
Self-rating of productivity since WFH / shift in working arrangements (as a result of COVID-19)

■ 2020
■ 2021

	SAME OR BETTER	LOWER THAN BEFORE
2020	75%	25%
2021	80%	20%
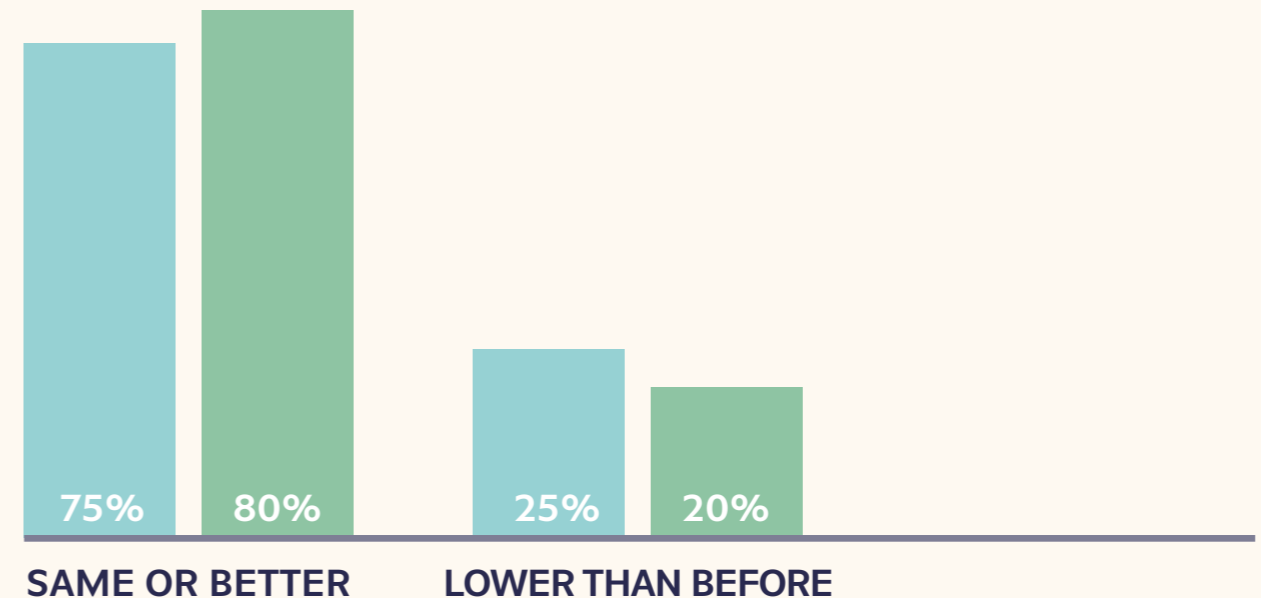
LEARNINGS FROM CHANGE

The long periods of absence and isolation from face to face connection has affected us on deeper levels and is starting to show in other aspects of our work.

As a result of our personal experiences and this research, our need and understanding of human connection in work is deeper:

- Engaging with team strengthens and enables us to feel valued
- Fosters and increases our motivation to take part
- It supports us on a personal and emotional level

*1 Our sense of community weakened during the second lockdown as isolation fatigue set in with no clear end in sight. Our brief return to the office only amplified the critical glue human connection provides.

*2 Whilst our autonomy increased rapidly in 2020, the extended absence of team touch points to validate our work's value and purpose is diminishing its relative importance. Autonomy is dependent on our sense of value, and purpose in our work that comes from face to face social work connection.

Sense of community in teams since WFH / shift in working arrangements *1

■ 2020
■ 2021

	STRONG	NO CHANGE	WEAK
2020	48%	37%	15%
2021	41%	28%	31%
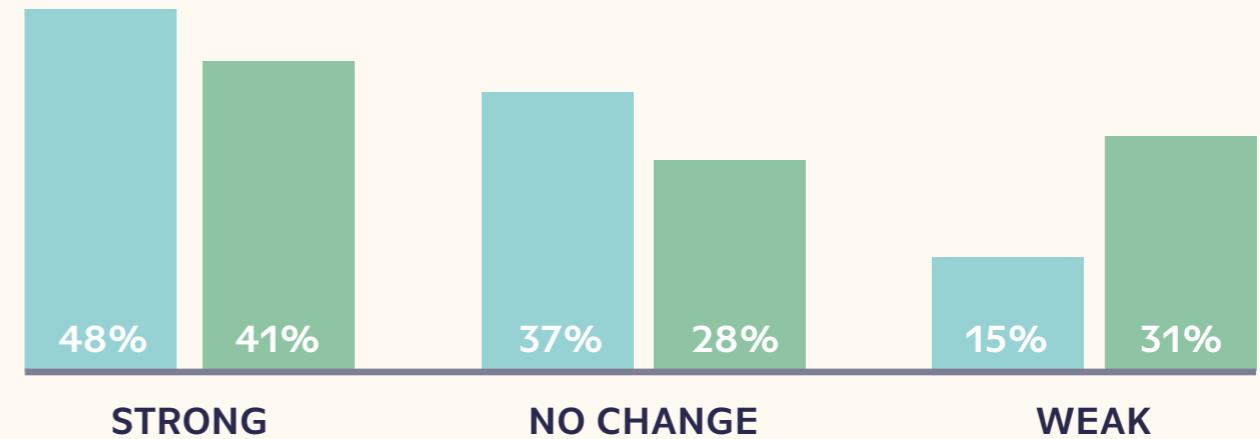
Sense of value to their team since WFH / shift in working arrangements *2

■ 2020
■ 2021

	STRONG	NO CHANGE	WEAK
2020	51%	43%	6%
2021	35%	46%	19%
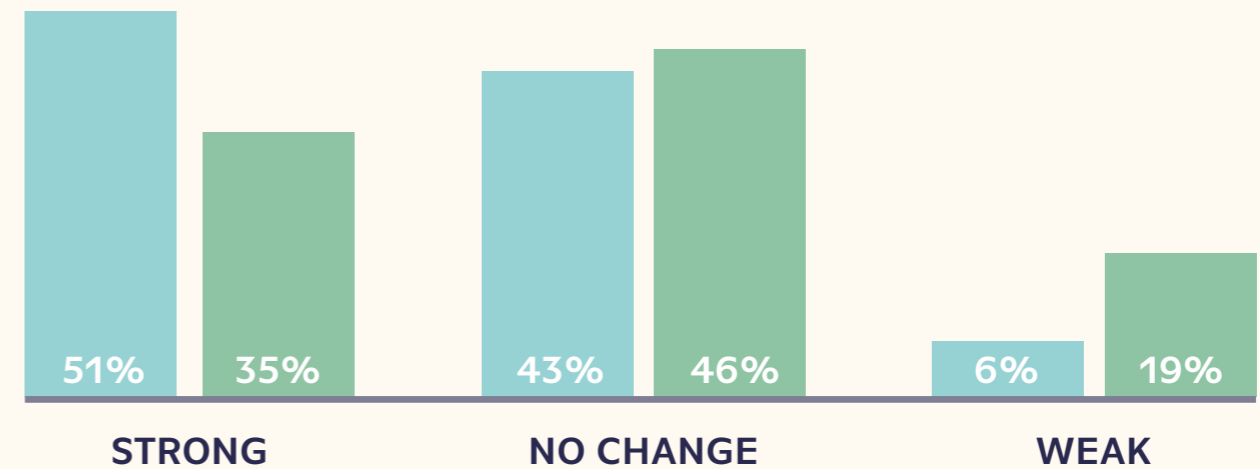
Sense of autonomy and ownership over their work since WFH / shift in working arrangements *2

■ 2020
■ 2021

	STRONG	NO CHANGE	WEAK
2020	79%	17%	3%
2021	54%	43%	2%
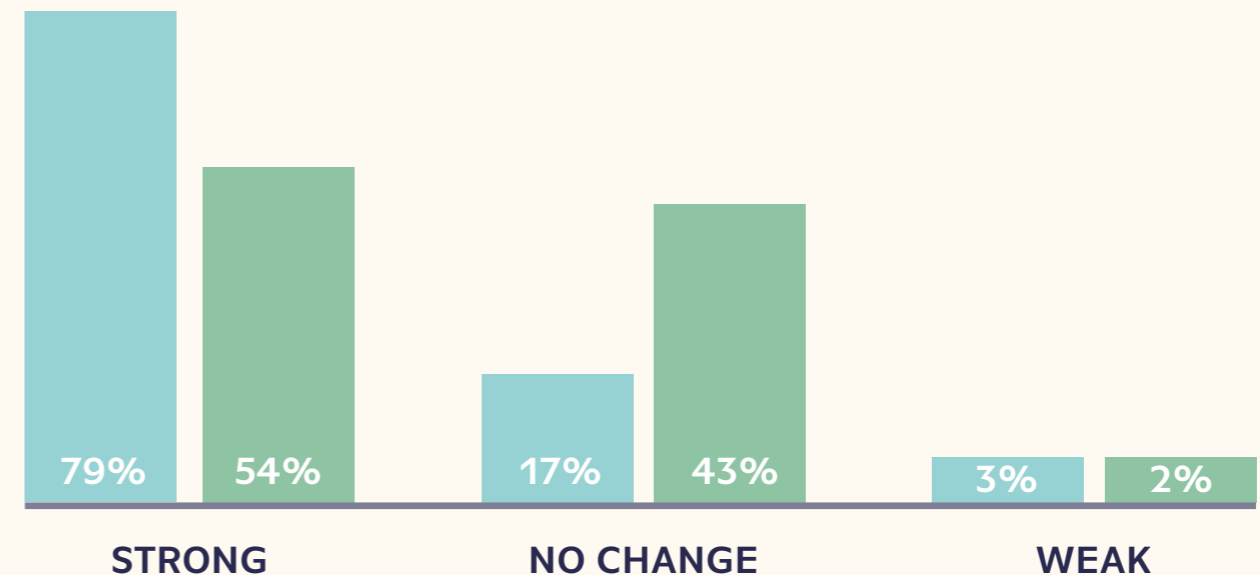
RESULTS OF CHANGE

Our data shows that the top enablers of work have not changed, from Individual's and Organisations perspectives. What has changed is the importance placed on each of these.

Particularly in 2022, technology is a given, as is recognition of the need to connect with people both in-office and elsewhere. Technology solutions must enable a sense of equality that everyone regardless of their location feels engaged, seen and heard.

The most interesting shift is how Individuals and Organisations have re-prioritised the top enablers. Individuals have placed Human Connection as No.1 above Technology. Organisations are pl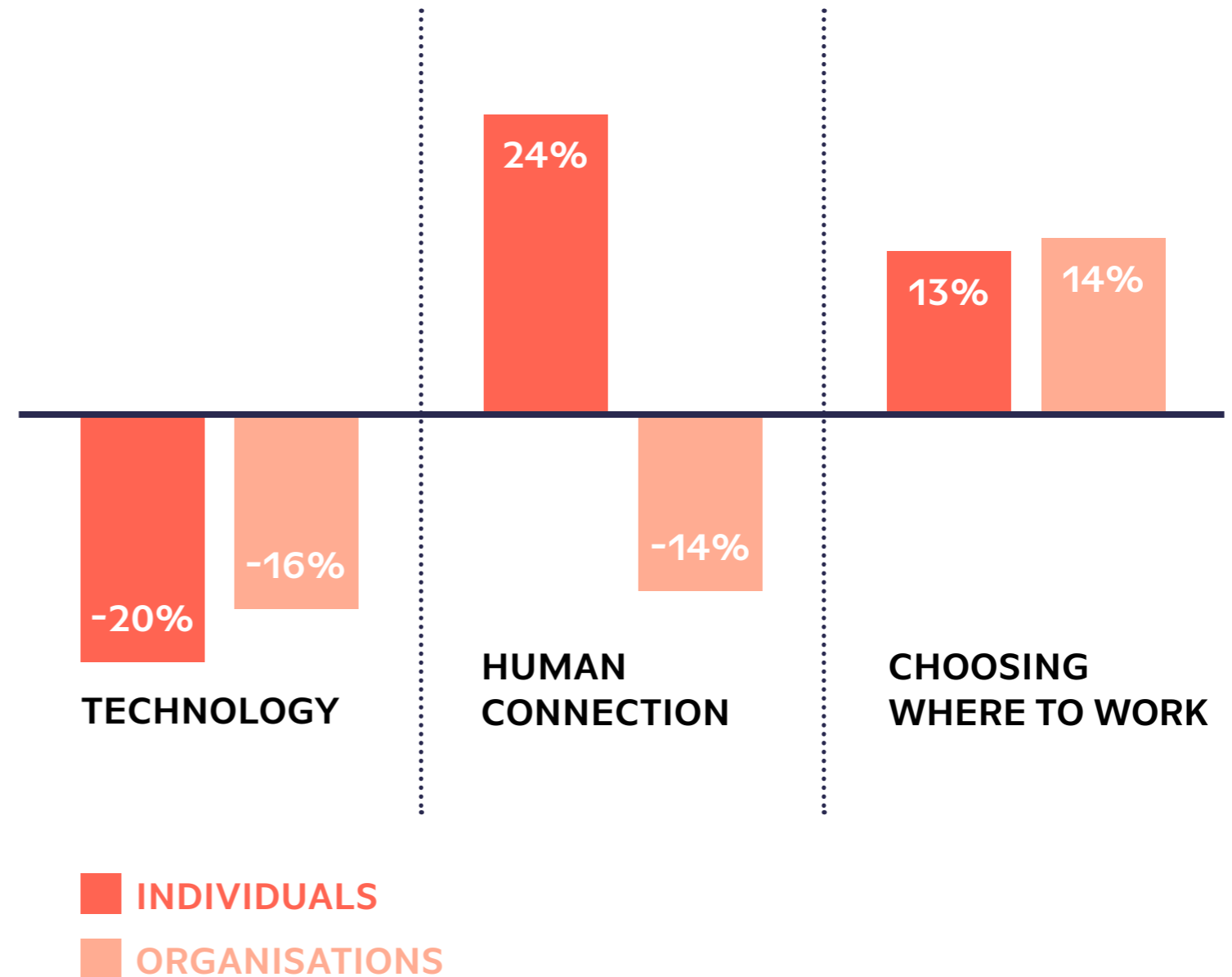acing increasing importance on the technology enabling effective hybrid working and connections whilst also increasing their focus on providing choice in response to employee demand.

Choice is the new currency for employees when negotiating their levels of flexibility in how and where they work; and this conversation has become vital for employers in attracting and retaining talent.

TECHNOLOGY: -20% (Individuals), -16% (Organisations)

HUMAN CONNECTION: 24% (Individuals), -14% (Organisations)

CHOOSING WHERE TO WORK: 13% (Individuals), 14% (Organisations)

■ INDIVIDUALS
■ ORGANISATIONS

Figures show indicative % shift in respondent's rankings of enablers as #1 between 2020 and 2021

NAVIGATING THE CHANGE: CRITICAL HUMAN FACTORS

1. MOTIVATION IS LINKED TO PURPOSE AND ENGAGEMENT

All human behaviours are motivated to fulfill three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. And theory teaches us that human motivation for pursuing an activity can be understood based on whether those needs are fulfilled during the activity.[*2]

Translated to a work context, we can use this to understand them as factors critical to human performance (driven by intrinsic motivation) and wellbeing:

FELT-COMPETENCE
Getting the work done, sense of accomplishment and effectiveness

AUTONOMY
Choice, flexibility and agility to be able to make the decisions I need, get the direction and feedback I need, and trusted I will deliver

RELATEDNESS
Part of something bigger and that I belong, that my work and organisation are aligned to my values, self and purpose

2. TRUST + UNDERSTANDING YOUR PEOPLE

> "There was probably a time initially in lock-down where I shouldn't have been trusted – I was being given work but I was getting through it and instead of asking for more, just being free to do whatever I wanted. But one morning I had an epiphany and realised that no-one was checking in on me which gave me this huge sense that I was trusted. That really flipped my mindset, so now I communicate when I need more work and as a result am more motivated to get through it and seek out new tasks and challenges"
>
> *- Workshop participant*

According to the 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer we are in a unique position globally where businesses are more trusted than governments[*3].

This affords enormous opportunity and responsibility to organisations.

In April 2020 we saw the direct impacts of trust between organisations, employees, and their teams on productivity[*4]. Yes, there was also a good dose of adrenaline at play then, but the effects of trust in working relationships are still being evidenced in our studies and globally.

Fundamentally, the relationship between employees and managers is changed – rather than just an employment contract, it is now also a social contract. This phenomenon started long before the pandemic but the extended time we have spent adapting to new remote working styles, removed from the 'perks' of the office (social, incidental, learning, location based prestige, quality of environment, corner office views, the list goes on...) has laid bare to us the work itself. Call it the Great Resignation, Great Reshuffle or Great (Australian) Yeah-Nah, it has simply prompted many to re-evaluate their work purpose and values.

NOW WHAT?

How can organisations use these findings when thinking about the design of their future workplace?

In the context of this shifting landscape, we've discovered a NEW HYBRID REALITY.

WHAT IS HYBRID?

Whilst we cannot label new ways of working - as by their very nature they will continually evolve - it is important to recognise that we are evolving within a new set of parameters, no longer bound by space, time or process as we knew it.

This new landscape is:

HYBRID WORK

/ˈhʌɪbr d wəːk/ *n.* ᴵ

(adjective)

————————

A workstyle that seamlessly encompasses the continuum of virtuality and distributedness, in time, space and method (tools).

The key now is to develop a unique set of elements, their proportion, and their arrangement, to support the way of working for each individual organisation.

HYBRID

/ˈhʌɪbr d/ *n.* ᴵ
(adjective)

————————

Of mixed character; composed of different elements.

THE NON-NEGOTIABLES OF THE WORKPLACE:

PHYSICAL + EMOTIONAL EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEES

TECHNOLOGY

Seamlessness and ease of connection. We take for granted being supported with tools that work intuitively with our how / where / when, equal to the experience of being co-located in the office.

PLACE TO CONNECT

We all recognise the value of a physical place where we can connect with teams and clients to progress work as well as connect socially, gain sense of belonging and connection to the wider organsiation.

WELLBEING: PHYSICAL

Having spaces and freedom to break away, focus, do my best work and manage my own needs for work / life integration. Freedom to define our own boundaries.

WELLBEING: EMOTIONAL

We all appreciate a healthy, supportive and safe place to work which nourishes us in mind (psychological safety, I feel safe in the business), body and spirit. Feeling that my wellbeing is important to the business and I am valued.

CHOICE

We expect to be trusted and enabled to define our own working parameters in how where and when we get the job done.

IT COMES DOWN TO:

T-E-A-M

T E A M

TOGETHERNESS

"I come in to work with my Team. You can bump into people who can share their knowledge through impromptu interaction and that way you also get a sense of being seen which is important for career progression. My leaders are more accessible as I can just sit with them to see how they do things and learn."
(Workshop participant)

What's missing in Gen Z's view is a workplace that enables physical proximity and spaces for choreography of serendipitous interactions that prompt productive knowledge exchange conversations.

Space, whether physical, virtual or a combination, can shape positive behaviour, practices and habits that enable employees to support each other.[*5] Touchpoints are still needed to satisfy our sense of connection but are not possible without:

TIME: The ability to set our own timeframes, both scheduled and incidental.

TOOLS: Access to the right tools, people and spaces to get the job done.

TRUST: There is simply no one-size fits all approach. Organisations who embrace a culture of trust as their navigation tool will be far more successful in riding the hybrid disruption to retain and attract talent - and this means modeling behavior.[*6]

EFFECTIVENESS

"It depends on the type of work I have to do - if I'm just transcribing recordings then I can pump that out more effectively from anywhere with my headphones in, if it's a Friday and I want to stay out afterwards to connect with people or if we have a workshop or something then it's more beneficial that I am in the office that day."
(Workshop participant)

Gen Z want to feel effective. They can get their work done within the parameters of their workstyle, seeing the workplace tools, people and spaces as an aid not a constraint in their productivity.

Work is not primarily about the paycheck (though they are, like all of us, incentive driven), it is about impact and growth. Personal and professional growth that comes from feeling valued and engaged with the business.

Equity of experience is critical as a core value of their Organisation ensuring there is no discrimination against those not in the room.

AUTONOMY

"My friend gets all her allocated work done in about two hours... working remotely she could ask her manager for more work but she can choose not to... she can choose how and when to structure her day."
(Workshop participant)

The Great resignation (or Yeah-Nah) is fundamentally about an alignment of purpose and core values between employees and organisations. How this is practically achieved varies but core to any solution is an understanding of the "why" behind an Organisation's actions:

Why I am being asked back to the office or to adopt a particular workstyle?

And leaders must equally seek to understand their people, most importantly:

Why my people want to work the way they do?

Extended working from home has evolved an inherent flexibility which makes day to day work manageable, and more worthwhile. This requires agility and adaptability in the physical and organizational solutions for any future workplace. But Gen Z have told us they also need to feel a sense of place and belonging through familiarity and an element of permanence in their work environment.
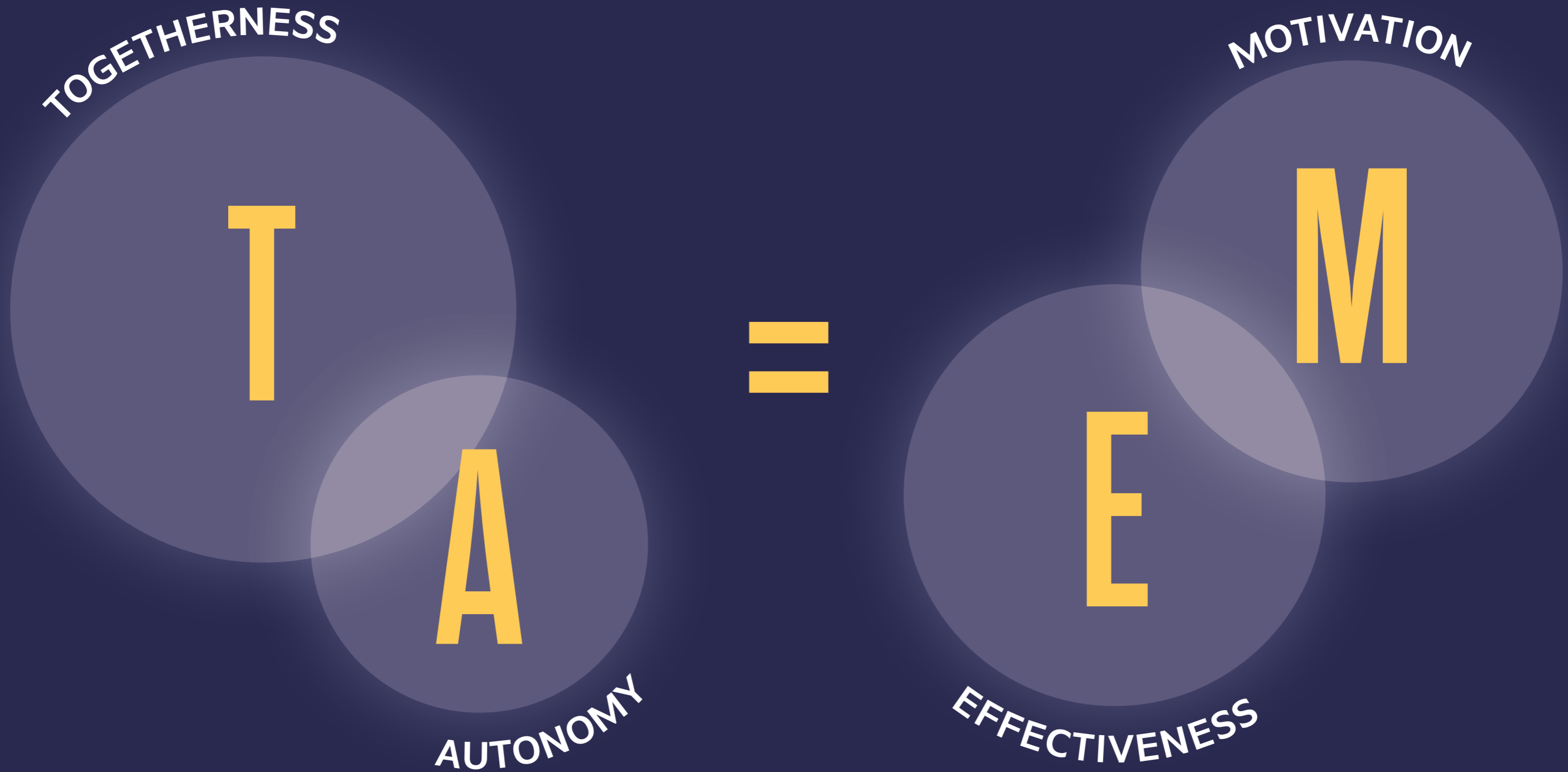
MOTIVATION

"I want to learn from my supervisor but it's hard as she prefers to work from home... if I could somehow co-ordinate the days with her in the office or even sit with her at her home" *(Workshop participant)*

We learned that one of the greatest incentives for the next generation is the motivation and energy gained from access to mentorship from their more experienced counterparts. They want to learn and be in the office when presence really counts. To know and feel that their value is recognised (on their timeline - now), and that they are readily exposed to opportunities to grow.

The future workplace should be a medium that supports evolving professional identity, learning and growth. A place that holds and transmits energy, motivation, connection, support, nourishment and creativity.

All this requires skillful management – Gen Z want leadership and effective management which accommodates togetherness, effectiveness, autonomy and fosters their intrinsic motivation.

TEAMWORK FORMULA

TOGETHERNESS

MOTIVATION

T

A

AUTONOMY

=

E

EFFECTIVENESS

M

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NOW YOU KNOW WHAT