



Intercultural school
Talents pour le monde

EPREUVES D'ADMISSION

1^{er} CYCLE

LANGUE DE TRAVAIL : ANGLAIS

Epreuve de la matinée : 9h – 13h

- **Lecture des documents**
- **Synthèse**
- **Traduction**

I. DOSSIER

Document 1

The case against hybrid work

It's the model that's being hailed as 'the [future of the work](#)'. Hybrid is being viewed as a happy medium, combining working from home and going to the office.

But just how viable is it? We know it's supposed to bring benefits, like more flexibility and autonomy for workers. We also know that it's a working model that many employees want – some studies show that up to [83% of workers want to go hybrid after the pandemic](#). Yet, is it really something that we can pull off successfully? Just how numerous are the downsides – and what can we do to avoid them if we're going to pull off the hybrid model successfully?

Fair for everyone?

First, the potentially unwelcome truth is that not everyone can work a hybrid model – something that could lead to resentment across workforces.

Michael Smets, professor of management at University of Oxford, says: "For many, hybrid working will remain an elusive dream. It may become the new normal for a select, even privileged, group of jobs. This is more than a little reminiscent of the old division of 'white collar' and 'blue collar' work."

According to Anu Madgavkar, a partner with the McKinsey Global Institute, who's been researching the future of work, "around 50% to 60% of work across different occupations need to be done in a site-specific way", where you have to be present at a certain place to do it. And even within the same office, some teams may have duties – like IT – that demand they come to the office full-time.

Companies are "wary about this 'two-track' culture", says Madgavkar. After all, analysts say that splitting workers at home and in the office [could create two separate, incohesive organisational cultures](#), in which one group feels more on the outs than the other within the company.

Investment needed?

Next, there are some practicalities to consider.

Hybrid, for example, could involve extra costs. Madgavkar points to massive spikes in potential cybersecurity spending – "you have to scale up your investments on all sorts of data security". That's because hybrid working as been described as "[a hacker's dream](#)"; many workers with many devices constantly coming and going through company networks.

Companies could also incur extra costs ensuring employees' workstations are fit for purpose, because [they may now be held responsible for workers' home set-ups](#), as well as their office spots.

How to structure it?

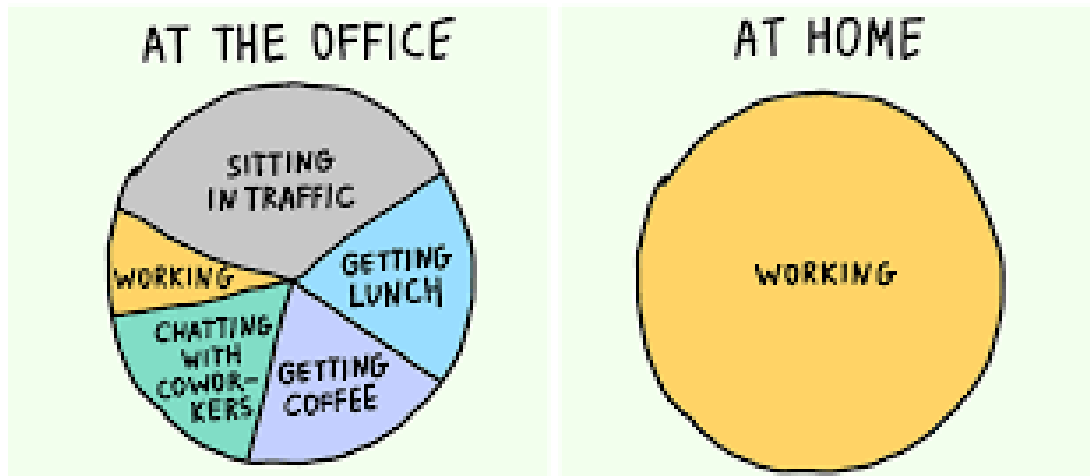
Then there's the fact that companies are trying out different forms of hybrid work.

Some are testing a casual hybrid system, allowing workers to decide when they want to come into the office. Others have asked workers to spend a certain number of days in the office each week, without specifying which days. But experts say that problems could arise if teams don't coordinate their schedules. For example, if you come in on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but your teammates come in on Mondays and Wednesdays, everybody misses out on the greatest benefits of in-person office time.

The social aspect is also a consideration. Experts say office time helps build deeper, more collaborative relationships with colleagues. Feeling disconnected from your team – either because you're missing them in the office or you're working from home – could potentially affect your job performance. For example, one 2020 survey of over 12,000 workers in the US, Germany and India showed that workers who felt less socially connected to their colleagues during the pandemic were less productive on collaborative tasks, compared to before the pandemic.

Document 2

working



Document 3

What's the purpose of the office – and do we still need it?

The employees of LendingTree, an online loan marketplace headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, US, are still working from desks and couches, on patios and in libraries. But rather than doing so remotely, they're in a corporate office that's been re-designed to include environments that mimic working from home. LendingTree calls the concept "resi-mercial".

"It's a blend of a residential and commercial feel," says Jill Olmstead, LendingTree's chief human resources and administration officer. "The idea is that it's comfortable, and you want to be here as much as you want to be at home."

When the world transitioned to remote work near the start of the pandemic, employees' ability to adapt became rapidly apparent. A massive number of people, suddenly forced to work from home, were able to do their jobs as well – or, in some cases, even better – than they could in the office. One survey of close to a million US workers at Fortune 500 companies showed [**productivity remained stable or increased after employees began working remotely.**](#)

In short, workers have proved remote work is both possible and profitable. But now that we've seen how we can do our jobs efficiently from home, and found methods that keep us connected to colleagues, what is the office really for – and is it possible to make employees want to be there?

What the office offers

After more than a year of full-time remote work, LendingTree's Olmstead says the new office opened to a limited number of people just a few weeks ago. Employees were asked to sign up for days they wanted to come in, and Olmstead and her team weren't sure what to expect.

"When we opened those slots and said, 'come if you're ready,' within two hours we'd filled them all," she says. "There are roughly 550 people who will be coming back, and over half are ready to come back now. We were surprised by that number, and that we had that many employees so quickly say, 'I'm ready' tells you people are missing something."

What exactly those people missed about the office, she adds, is "different for different people". For some, the primary function of the office is socialisation. "I know people can get a lot of that in their home lives," says Olmstead, "but not everyone does."

For others, the office provides a distraction-free environment a home workspace may not.

"One person told me, 'I've got young children, a wife who also works and I've been working in our bedroom closet for a year,'" says Olmstead. "For some people, being in the office is about focus, and needing to get away."

Some people simply function better in a place that's strictly intended for work, says Mark Dixon, founder and CEO of IWG (International Workplace Group), a UK-based office space firm with more than 3,500 buildings in 120 countries.

"Some people can work from home, and they're good and really disciplined. Others do fare much better in an office," he says. "Maybe at home there are too many interruptions. Personally, I like to go to an office because if I don't, I'll work day and night. Being able to leave the office is an important mental break."

The end of the open office

While the office era isn't over yet, the role the office plays in workers' lives is changing, and it seems natural that the layout of the place should change with it.

The primary feedback LendingTree's leadership received from employees "was they wanted a variety of spaces", says Olmstead. "They wanted places they can collaborate in different ways: booths or areas to sit down and have a cup of coffee. Lounge spaces to sit and talk. Traditional conference spaces. Places introverts could get away. Gathering spaces for people to come together in an informal way."

"Right now, I can look out in workspaces and see about a third of our team," she says. "I don't know if [the rest] are working from home, or if they're here and they're in the fitness centre or in a library somewhere."

Long live corporate headquarters

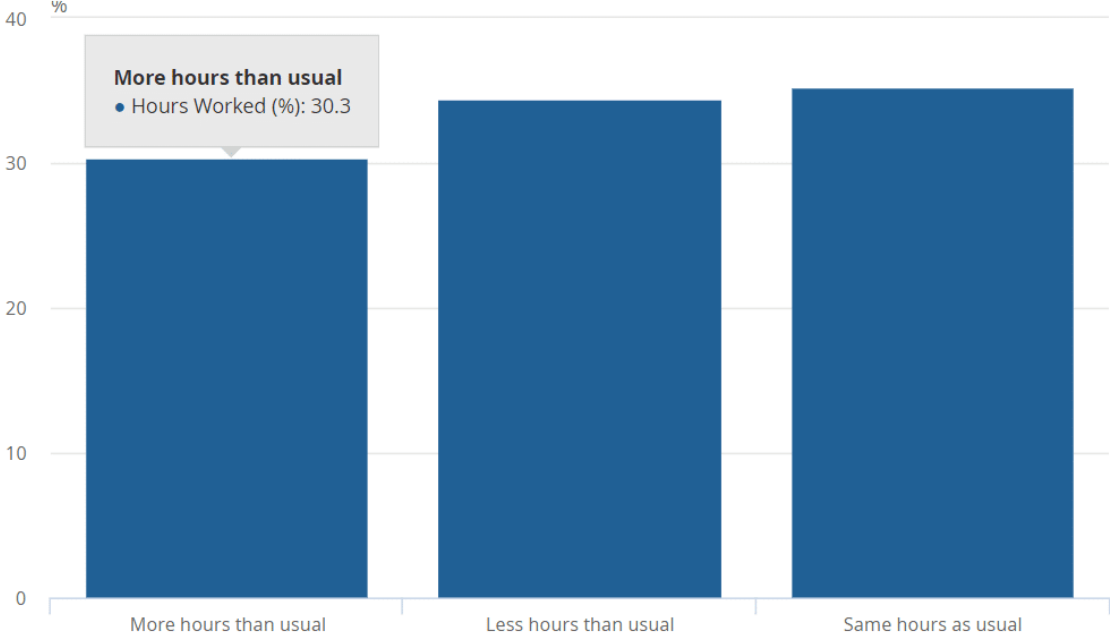
But that doesn't mean companies don't need office space at all.

"For now, the purpose of an office is still to give a company identity. Substance. Old fashioned things," says Dixon. "It's a place with their name over the door. It gives people a sense of belonging. To get rid of it is like having an army that doesn't have a basecamp. You have to have a place to bring your army together."

And despite a newfound deftness for using online collaboration tools, for people working together toward a common goal, spending time in the same physical location is likely as invaluable as ever.

Document 4

Hours worked rates for homeworkers (aged 16 years and over),
UK, April 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics - Labour Market Survey

II. SYNTHÈSE

Vous réaliserez une synthèse en langue anglaise en vous appuyant sur les documents du dossier. Vous veillerez à ne pas dépasser 400 mots.

III. TRADUCTION

Vous traduirez vers le français le texte suivant, extrait du Doc.1

The case against hybrid work

It's the model that's being hailed as 'the [future of the work](#)'. Hybrid is being viewed as a happy medium, combining working from home and going to the office.

But just how viable is it? We know it's supposed to bring benefits, like more flexibility and autonomy for workers. We also know that it's a working model that many employees want – some studies show that up to [83% of workers want to go hybrid after the pandemic](#). Yet, is it really something that we can pull off successfully? Just how numerous are the downsides – and what can we do to avoid them if we're going to pull off the hybrid model successfully?

First, the potentially unwelcome truth is that not everyone can work a hybrid model – something that could lead to resentment across workforces.

Michael Smets, professor of management at University of Oxford, says: "For many, hybrid working will remain an elusive dream. It may become the new normal for a select, even privileged, group of jobs. This is more than a little reminiscent of the old division of 'white collar' and 'blue collar' work."

Next, there are some practicalities to consider.

Hybrid, for example, could involve extra costs. Madgavkar points to massive spikes in potential cybersecurity spending – "you have to scale up your investments on all sorts of data security". That's because hybrid working has been described as "[a hacker's dream](#)"; many workers with many devices constantly coming and going through company networks.

The social aspect is also a consideration. Experts say office time helps build [deeper, more collaborative relationships with colleagues](#). Feeling disconnected from your team – either because you're missing them in the office or you're working from home – could potentially affect your job performance. For example, one 2020 survey of over 12,000 workers in the US, Germany and India showed that workers who felt less socially connected to their colleagues during the pandemic [were less productive on collaborative tasks](#), compared to before the pandemic.

Epreuve de l'après-midi :

IV. REDACTION

Comment imaginez-vous le lieu de travail de demain ? Selon vous, l'avenir du travail réside-t-il dans le présentiel, dans le distanciel ou dans un mélange des deux ? Pourquoi ?

Votre rédaction, écrite en français, ne doit pas excéder 500 mots.