

Remote Working

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Lecture outline



Work-life balance



Theories of work life
balance



Remote working

Work-Life Balance

- The concept itself is broad; no one definitive definition agreed upon
 - *(Clark, 2000; Jones et al., 2006)*

Kopelman et al. (1983)
The extent to which a person
experiences pressures within
one role that are
incompatible with pressures
that arise in another role

Work-Life Balance

- The concept itself is broad; no one definitive definition agreed upon
 - *(Clark, 2000; Jones et al., 2006)*

Kofodimos (1993)

A satisfying, healthy, and productive life that includes work, play, and love, that integrates a range of life activities with attention to self and to personal spiritual development; and that expresses a person's unique wishes, interests and values.

Work-Life Balance

- The concept itself is broad; no one definitive definition agreed upon
 - *(Clark, 2000; Jones et al., 2006)*

Greenhaus and Powell (2006)
The extent to which
experiences in one role
improve the quality of life,
namely performance or
affect, in the other role.

- Work-life balance = the proper prioritisation between 'work' (careers, ambition) and 'lifestyle' (health, pleasure, family, etc).

Work-Life Balance

WORK LIFE

Time spent in paid
employment

*McDonald and Bradley
(2005)*

NON- WORK LIFE

More difficult to characterise...

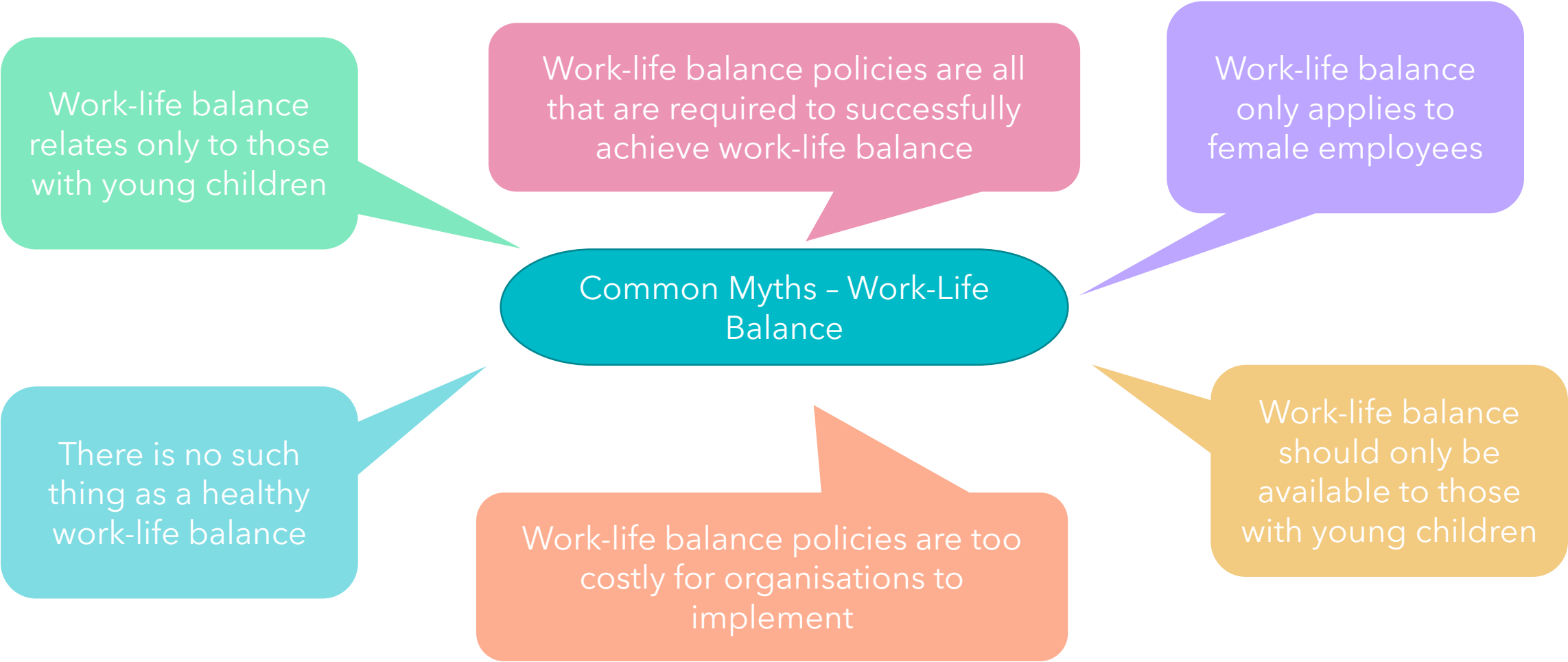
Barling and Sorenson (1997) – family life
Huang et al. (2004) – parental responsibility
and household tasks

Work-Life Balance

- Work-life balance is only a concern for certain people?
 - Parents / those with children or occupied in a dual-income household (Jones et al., 2006)
 - Unrealistic – work life balance is an issue for everyone (Hyman et al., 2003)
 - e.g., elder carer responsibilities, dedicating time to hobbies or sports, religious or community ventures, etc
 - Non-work life must encompass all activity that takes place outside of the working environment.
- 

Myths about work-life balance

Common Myths - Work-Life Balance



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graph TD; M1[Work-life balance policies are all that are required to successfully achieve work-life balance] --- C[Common Myths - Work-Life Balance]; M2[Work-life balance only applies to female employees] --- C; M3[Work-life balance should only be available to those with young children] --- C; M4[Work-life balance policies are too costly for organisations to implement] --- C; M5[There is no such thing as a healthy work-life balance] --- C; M6[Work-life balance relates only to those with young children] --- C;
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Work-life balance relates only to those with young children

Work-life balance policies are all that are required to successfully achieve work-life balance

Work-life balance only applies to female employees

Work-life balance should only be available to those with young children

Work-life balance policies are too costly for organisations to implement

There is no such thing as a healthy work-life balance

Work-Life Balance

- Kalliath and Brough (2008):
 - Work-life balance is the individual perception that work and non-work activities are compatible and promote growth in accordance with an individuals current life priorities

Woman with children



Emphasis on non-work life
when considering balance

Woman starting on career ladder



Emphasis on work life

Work-Life Balance



What does a 'healthy' work-life balance look like?

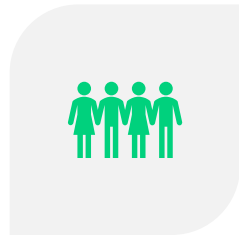
- Healthy work-life balance = the personal, optimum combination of participation in work and non-work life, with a minimum of **conflict**
- When a balance between work and non-work interfaces cannot be achieved, this will result in the experience of a negative work-life balance/imbalance
- Brady et al. (2008):
 - **Conflict** arises at home as a result of inability to detach and separate work from home life

Influences on WLB



The job itself

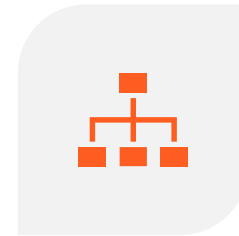
Demands, control
and support
(johnson & hall,
1988)



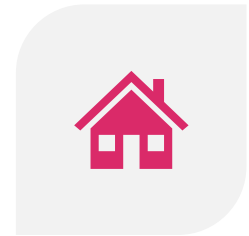
Workers attitudes



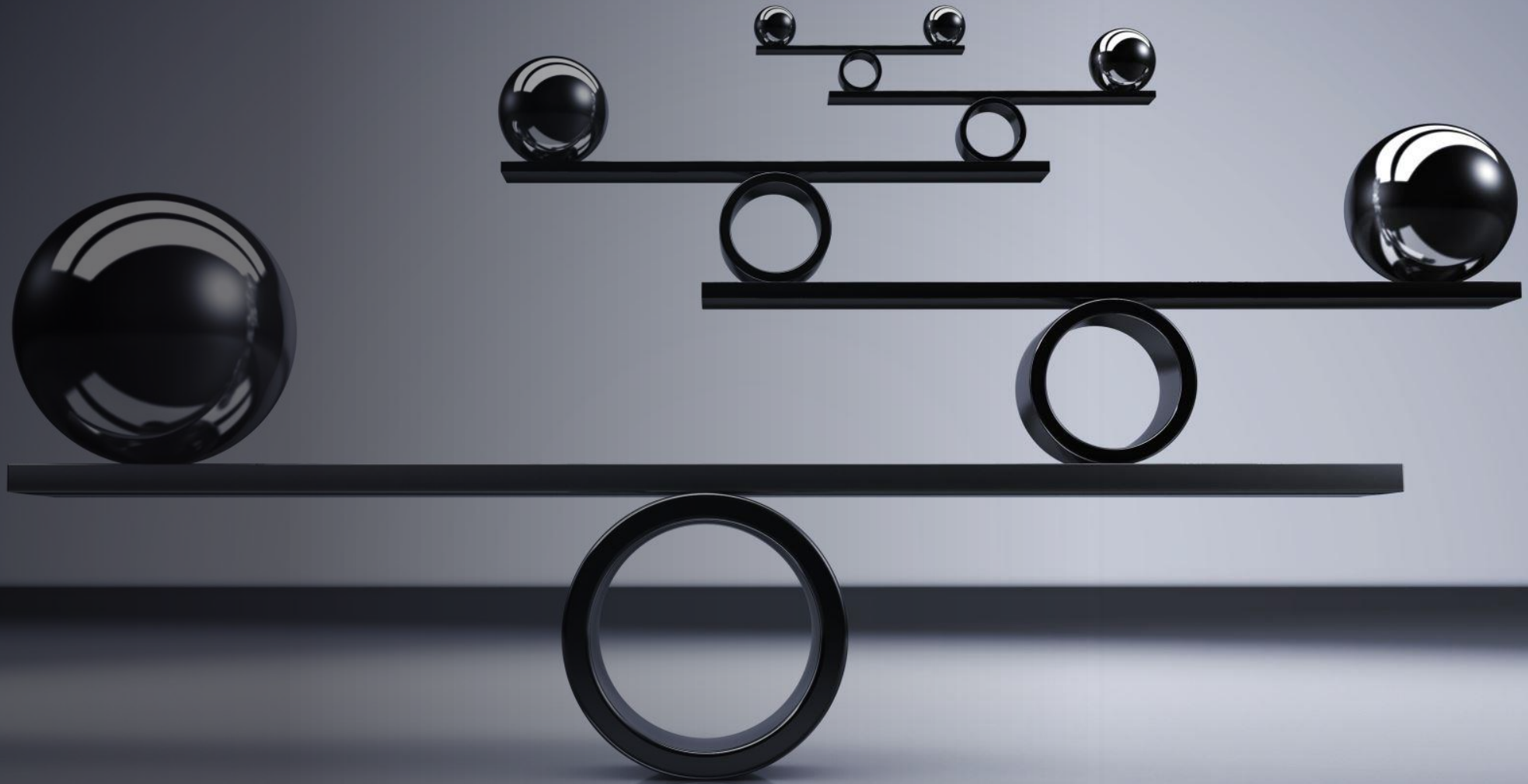
Job involvement / commitment



Organisational culture



Factors at home (stress, caring responsibilities, lack of support)



Theories of Work-Life Balance

Theories of Work-Life Balance



Conflict Model
(role conflict)

Greenhaus
and Beutell
(1985)



Boundary
Theory

Nippert-Eng
(1996)



Spill Over
Theory

Edwards and
Rothbard
(2000)



Enrichment
Model

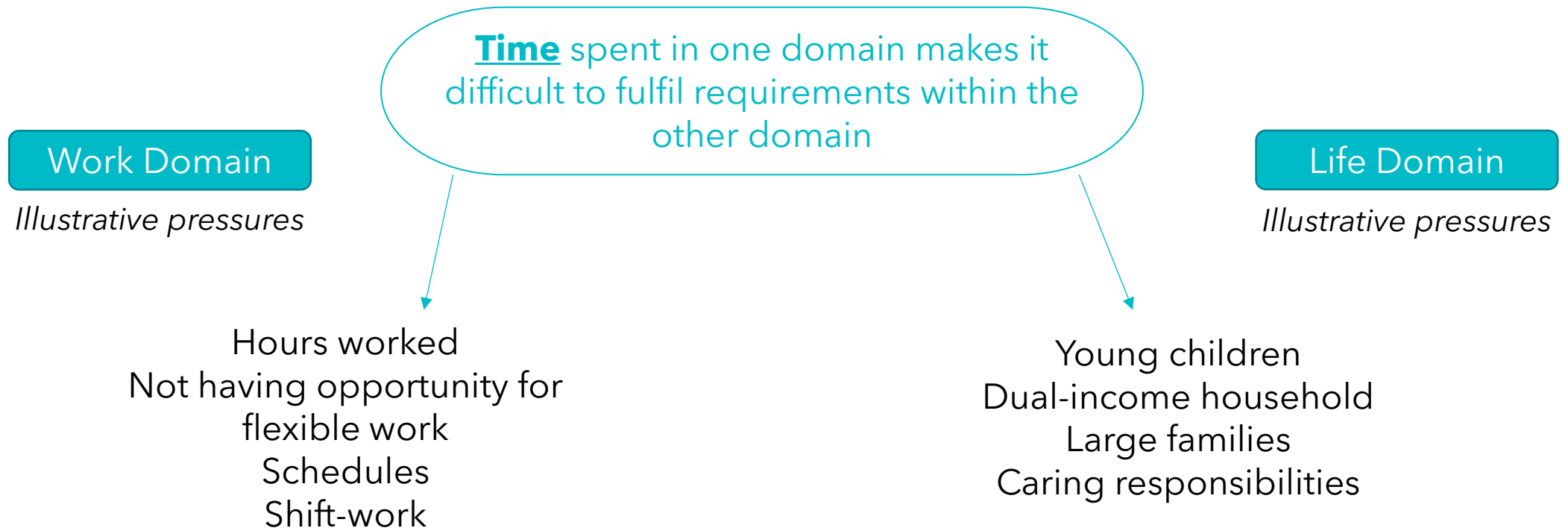
Ruderman et al.
(2002)

Conflict Model

- Related to role conflict: model proposes that, at times, work and non-work lives are incompatible and resources are limited
 - Conflict occurs when demands are equally high and difficult to satisfy
 - Participation in one domain = depletion of resources / interference with other domain
 - Sources of conflict can be work-related, non-work-related, or affected by individual differences
 - Three types conflict: **Time, Strain, and Behaviour**
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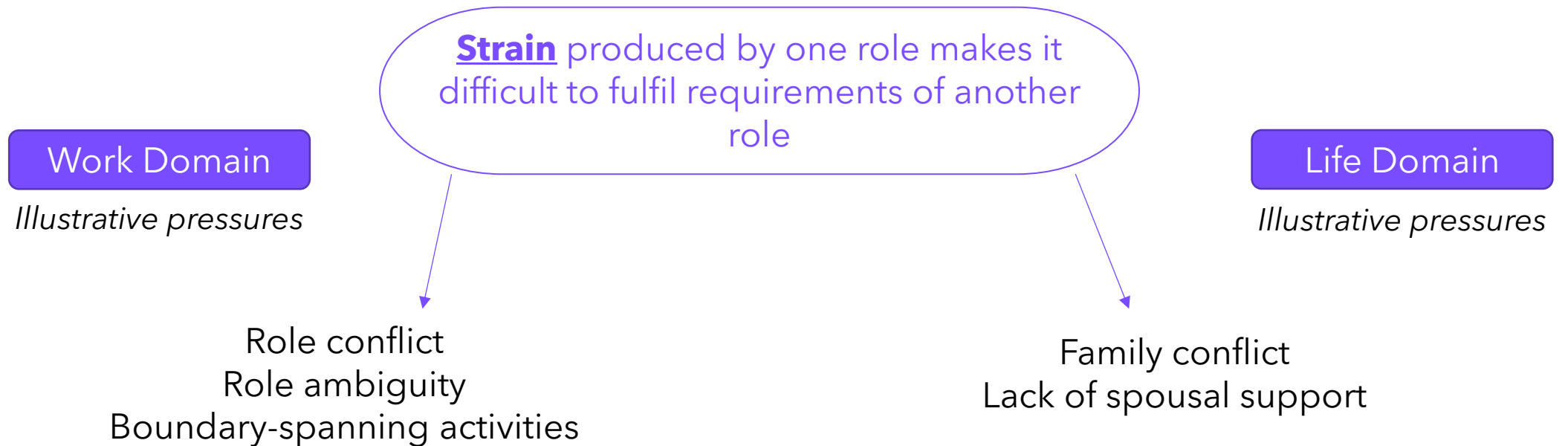
Time-based conflict

Occurs when demands from one domain prevents participation in the other



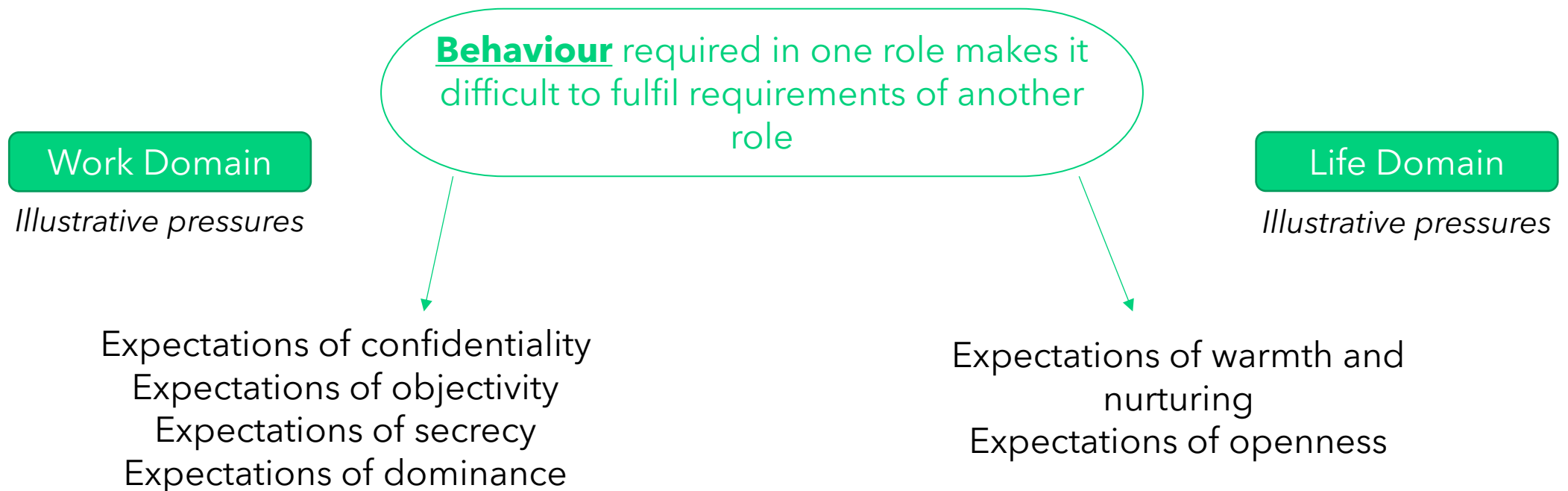
Strain-based conflict

Occurs when stress in one domain affects participation in the other



Behaviour-based conflict

Occurs when the expected behaviours in one role are incompatible with the expected behaviours in another role



Behaviour-based conflict

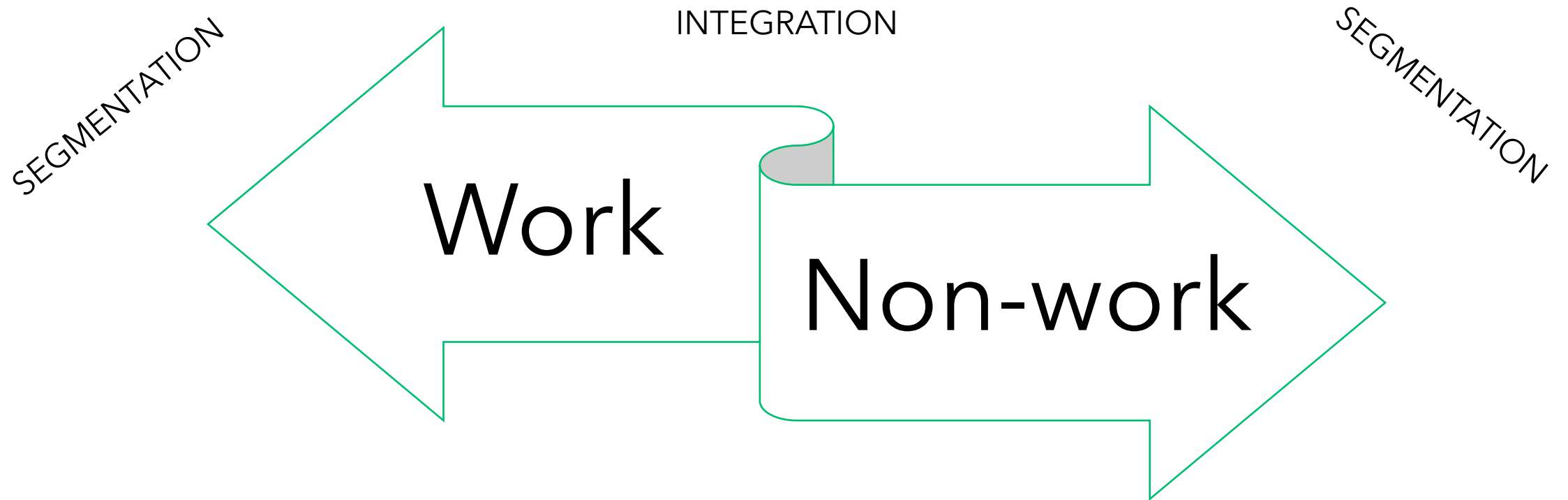
- Freund and Carmeli (2003) – support for behaviour-based conflict
- Male prison officers working in high-security prisons
 - Aggressive behaviour is expected at work which was not compatible with the behaviour expected in non-work lives
 - Results = difficult managing boundaries between the two domains, resulting in negative work-life balance

Boundary Theory

- A theoretical framework for understanding how people manage the boundaries between the work and non-work interface (Nippert-Eng, 1996).
 - Social grouping
- We create, maintain and/or change psychological boundaries in order to organise/simplify our environments
- Segmentation – Integration?
 - Create boundaries on a continuum – either through segmentation and integration



Boundary Theory



Boundary Theory

- Segmented = Mutually exclusive domains
- Integrated = More chance of roles pervading into each other
- According to segmentation, role specific pressures in one domain do not affect role pressures in the other domain (Michela & Hargis, 2008)
- However, Bulger et al. (2007) – ability to flex domains leads to preference for segmenting or integrating, and impacts on work-life interference and enhancement
- But – segmentation could also act as a negative buffer to stress
 - Less spillover of work-stress to non-work life and vice versa

Spill Over Theory

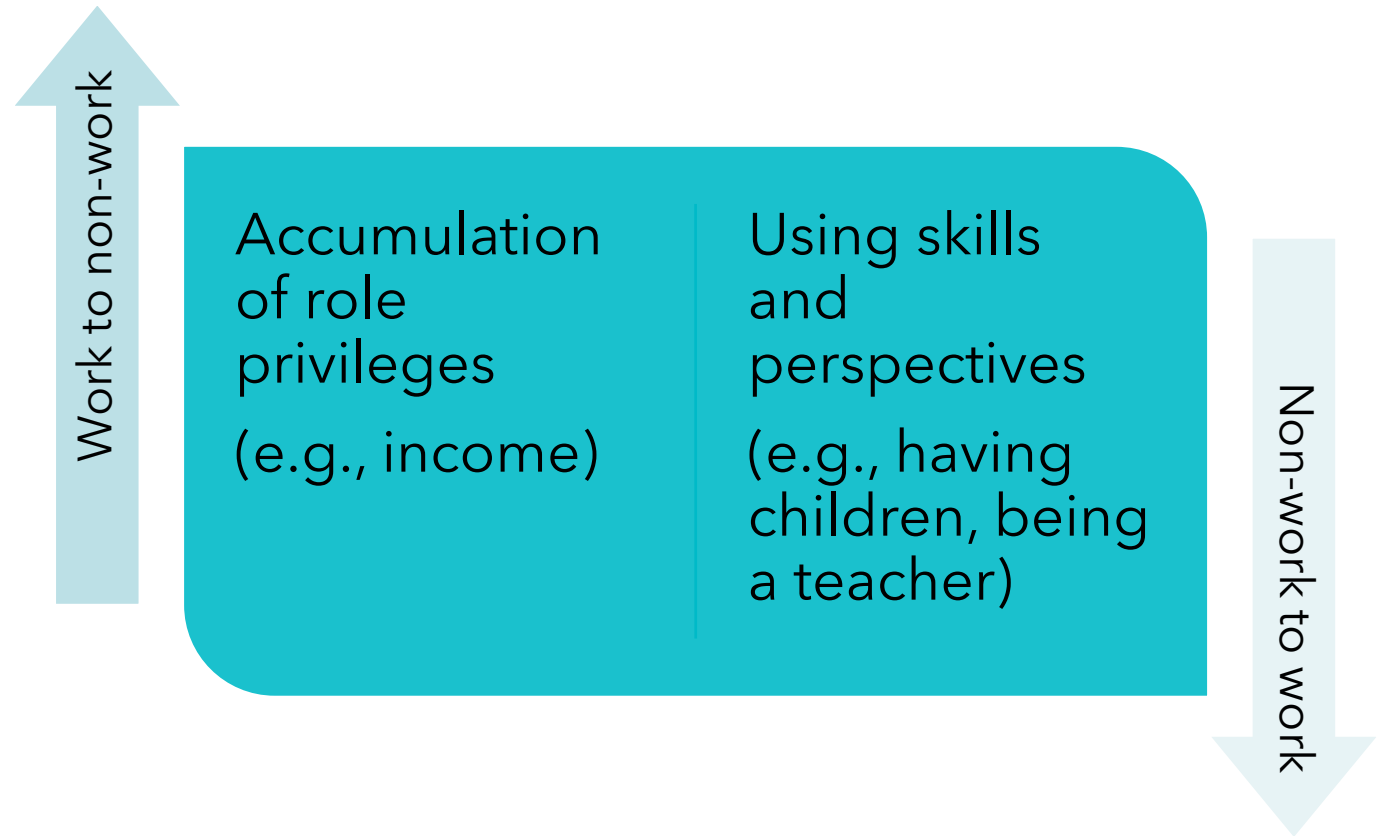
- Spill-over occurs when experience in one role spills over to influence the other role in **either a positive or a negative way** (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).
 - Negative perspective - lack of confidence at work may influence confidence in non-work roles
 - But, if roles are segmented - less likely to occur
 - Negative thought suppression easier when out of the work environment BUT miss opportunity for positive spill-over
 - E.g., positive mood from involvement in parenting could spill-over into work, positively affecting self-esteem (Kirchmeyer, 1993)
- 

Spill Over Theory

- Integration of domains may be in an attempt to alleviate conflict arising from multiple roles
- Rau and Hyland (2002) - relationship between work arrangements and conflict
 - Employees who work from home = integrator versus office-based employees with option of flexi-time = segmented
 - Integrating two roles may be beneficial in attainment of work-life balance
- But - integrated approach not wholly positive.
 - Possible that similar effects occur whereby negative thoughts from one domain spill-over into the other
 - Williams and Alliger (1994) - working parents; negative moods often spill over into non-work life, which may be the result of integrating roles.

Enrichment Model

- Participation in one domain can benefit and enrich participation in the other (Ruderman et al., 2002)
- **Resources** generated in one role can directly or indirectly affect performance or functioning in the other role
 - Ruderman et al. (2002); Rothbard et al. (2005)



Enrichment Model

- Benefits:
 - Participation in multiple roles → increase self-esteem and sense of well-being
 - Lower stress and higher self-esteem also reported in those that participated in both work and non-work roles compared to those who did not work (non-work roles only)
 - Edwards and Rothbard (2000) – status security secured when one role can act as a buffer or compensate the other
- Comparable to positive spill-over

Work-Life Balance Summary?

- Each approach introduced proposes different ways in which the work and non-work interfaces interact
 - Conflict – negative effects of participating in multiple roles
 - Boundary – how we manage the boundaries between work and non-work life
 - Spill-over – how the two domains are linked
 - Enrichment – how participation in both roles can positively influence WLB
- There are , of course, many other factors that influence an individuals sense of work-life balance
 - Gender, age, organisational trust, flexible working, work-life policies, government legislation, work culture, management/leadership styles, etc, etc, etc

Work-Life Balance Summary?

- What we can determine is that the maintenance of a healthy WLB is important from both an individual and an organisational perspective



*Satisfaction in both domains
Benefits to general health and well-being*

Imbalance → less likely for sense of fulfilment, prone to negative health issues (Lewis et al., 2007)



*Employees with positive WLB
regarded as benefit/resourceful
resource*

*Increased productivity and
engagement in work,, fewer
sickness absence → profitable*

*Imbalance → more absences, less
productive and less engaged
(unprofitable)*

**Remote
(flexible?)
working**

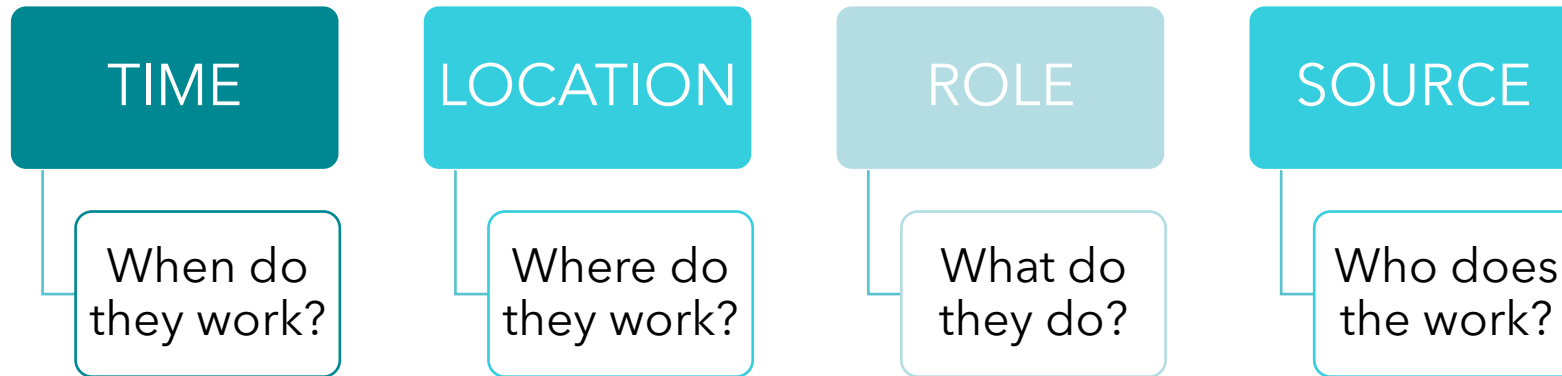


Remote / Flexible Working

Job sharing	Two people do one job and split the hours
Working from home	All or some of the work from home (or anywhere else that is not the normal place of work)
Part-time	Working less than full-time hours
Compressed hours	Working full-time hours but over fewer days
Flexitime	Employee chooses start and end times (within limits) but works core hours
Annualised hours	Certain number of hours must be achieved over the year, but have flexibility over work time. Core hours often apply
Staggered hours	Different start, finish and/or break times from other workers

Agile Working

- Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI, 2017):
 - Organisations should empower people to work where, when and how they choose
 - Agile working combines maximum flexibility and minimum constraints to optimise performance
 - ICT is often required to enable people to work in the ways that best suits their needs



Remote Working

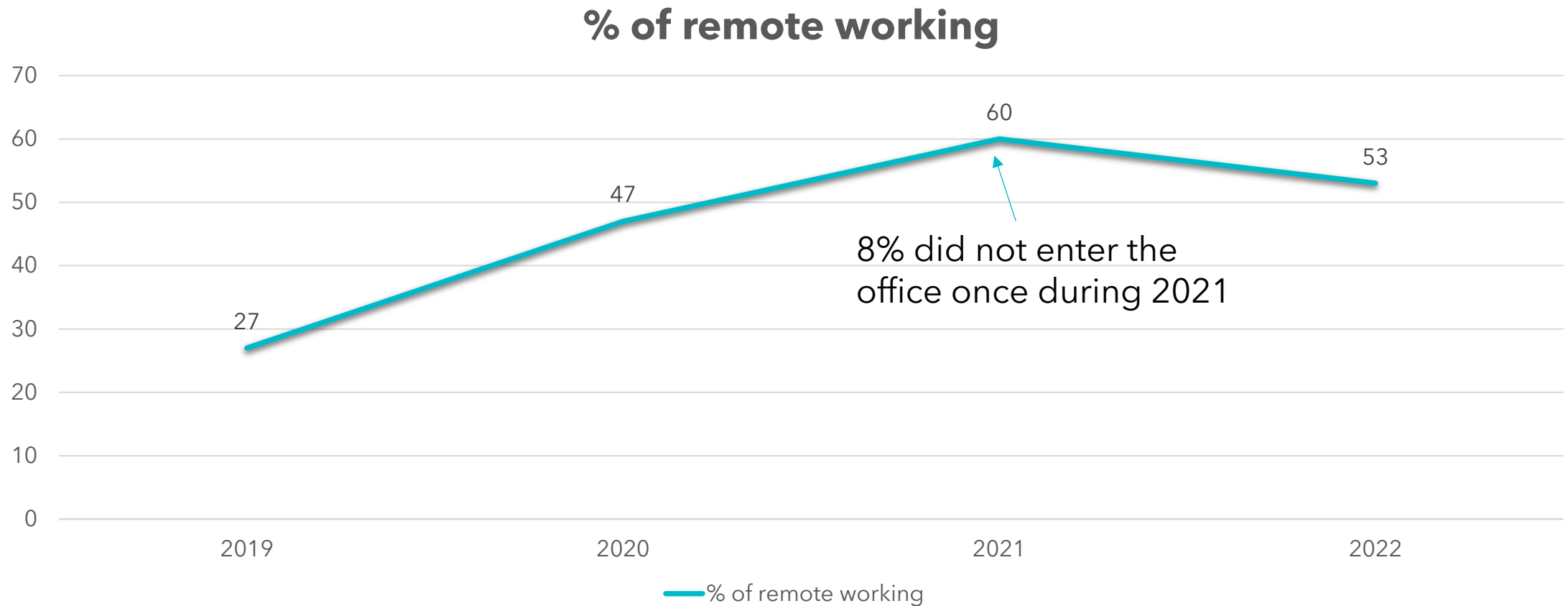


Focus on remote working from 2020 – COVID restrictions led to significant increase in 'home' working



Put simply – the practice of working at home or in some other place that is not the organisations usual place of business.

Remote Working Statistics



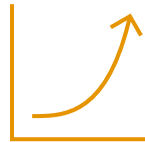
Remote Working Statistics



In 2022, 57% of British workers reported wanting to have the option of working from home



1 in 5 workers in 2022 working a hybrid model



Number of jobs advertising remote working options increased by 307% (approximately 78,000 more jobs - 2022)



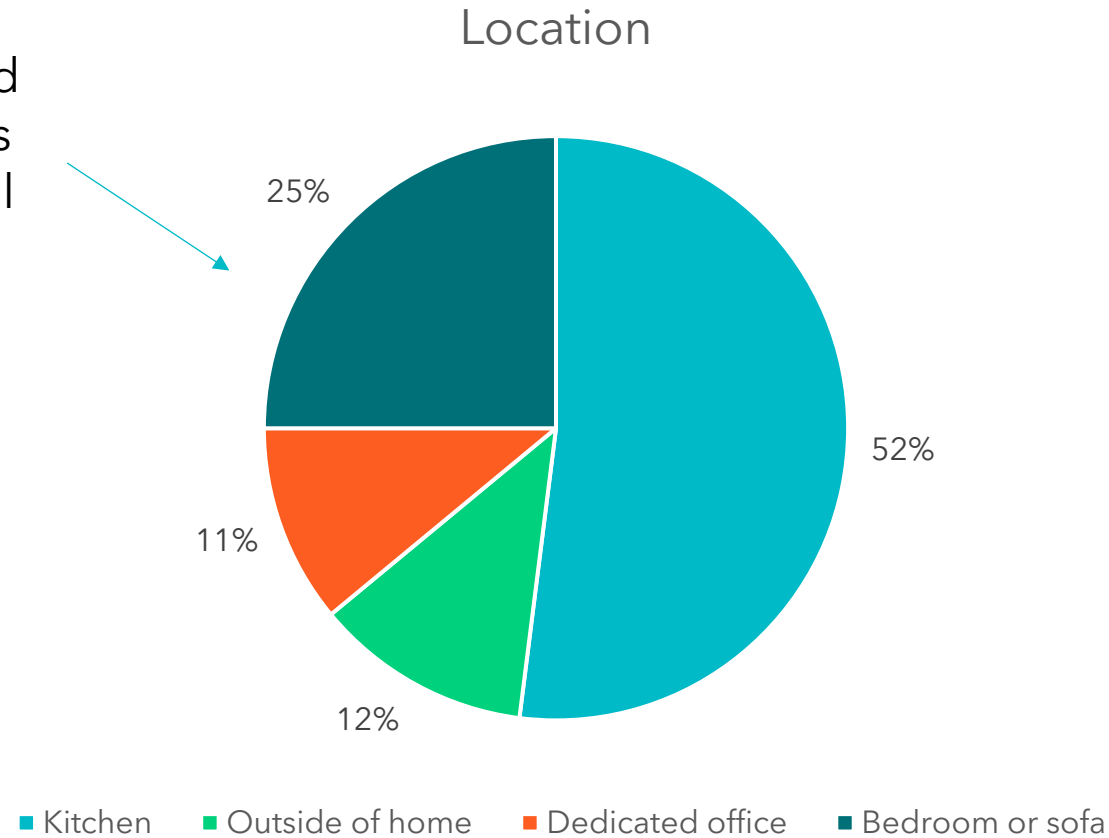
"Remote Jobs" searched 18,000 times per month (on average) over 2022 on Google

Remote Working

- Occupation matters
 - Professional jobs more likely to be able to be completed remotely
 - Occupations that require higher qualifications are four times as likely to offer remote work
 - Around 94% of those earning above £50k can choose to work from home on a regular basis if they wish
 - Of office-based workers - 80% likely to work from home at least once a week.

Remote Working – Where?

Half of these had reported various Musculo-skeletal problems



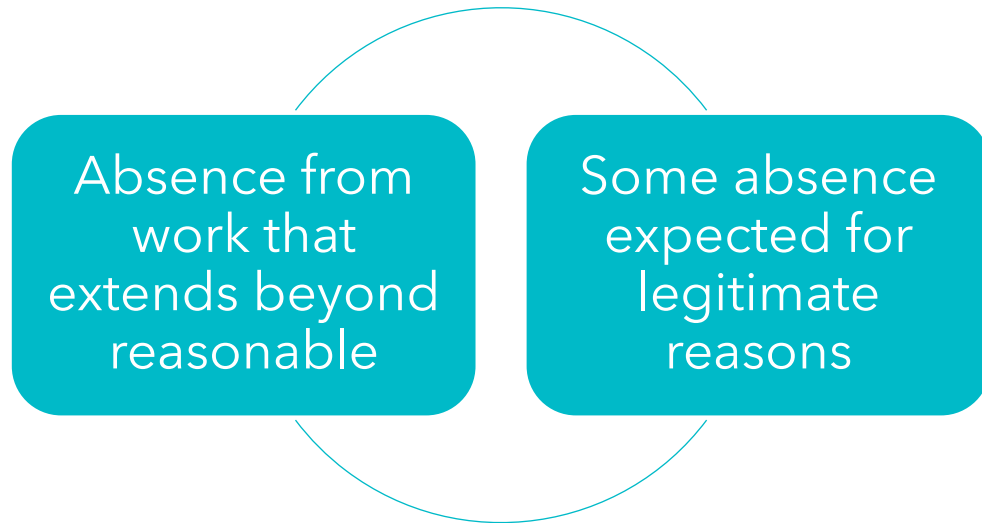
A top-down view of a person's hands typing on a white keyboard. The keyboard has a Cyrillic layout. To the right of the keyboard is a small, green, multi-lobed succulent plant. To the left, a pair of glasses and a pencil are partially visible. The background is a light-colored desk surface.

Implications of Remote Working

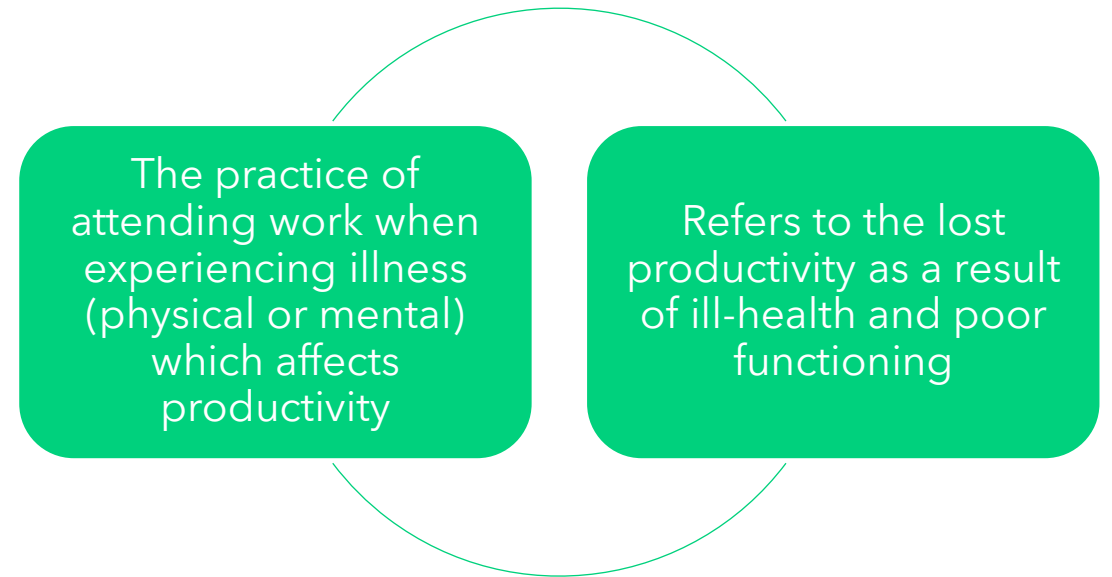
- Absenteeism / Presenteeism
- Productivity
- Work-Life Balance
- Parents and carers
- Cost / Time
- Workplace Technology / Cybersecurity

Absenteeism / Presenteeism

Absenteeism



Presenteeism



Absenteeism / Presenteeism

- Generally, the increase in remote working has seen a decline in absenteeism
 - Possibly due to flexibility afforded in remote working
- Levels of presenteeism, however, have increased for employees who work remotely
 - Physical and virtual presenteeism - both linked to negative productivity



Presenteeism

- *Ruhle and Schmoll (2021)* - virtual sickness presenteeism
 - Aimed to explore changes in perceptions of acceptable presenteeism behaviour since pandemic
 - Virtual Sickness Presenteeism (VSP), Regular Sickness Presenteeism (RSP), and Sickness Absenteeism (SA)



1. How does RW affect decision to show absence or presence in case of illness



2. How covid has affected the perception of sickness presenteeism



3. How have these perceptions impacts individuals and organisations

Presenteeism

- Pandemic didn't impact decisions made re: presenteeism

Previously able to work remotely → opted for VSP



Having the option for remote working during covid → opted for VSP rather than absence

- Presenteeism at home viewed as alternative to sick leave
- Remote working seen as a benefit and a major reason for demonstrating VSP
- Implicit pressures and expectations

Presenteeism

- 68% of employees engaged in VSP (27% on-site)
 - 'Work piles up when absent' was a major factor in engaging in VSP
 - Career pressures – job and role demands
 - Not pandemic specific, but seen as a factor in increased engagement in VSP
 - Job resources (adjustment latitude) → increase VSP
 - Job satisfaction not regarded as major influence in VSP
- 

Presenteeism

- *Steidelmuller et al. (2020)*
 - Employees who work from home demonstrate more presenteeism than those who work on-site



No commute



No way to infect others



Increased adjustment
latitude

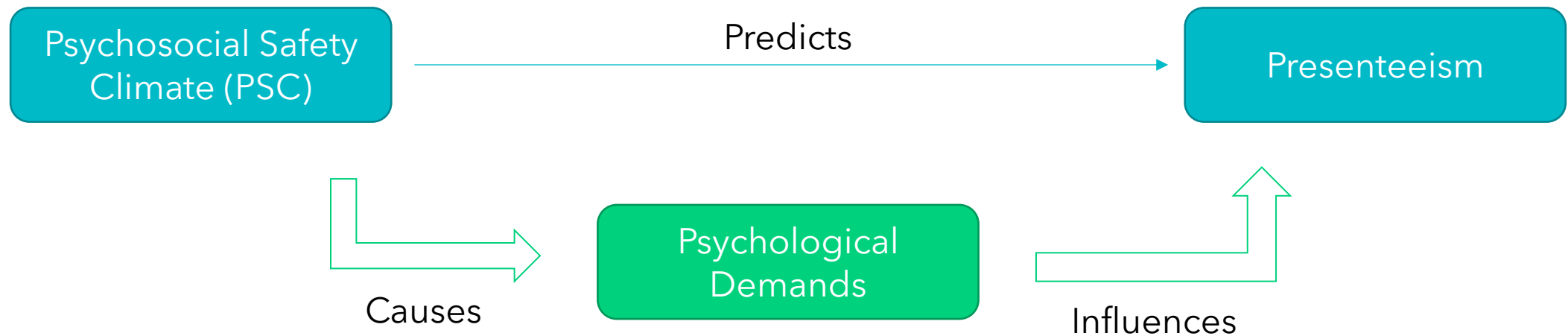
- But – virtual sickness presenteeism = self-endangering

Presenteeism

Ferreira et al (2022)

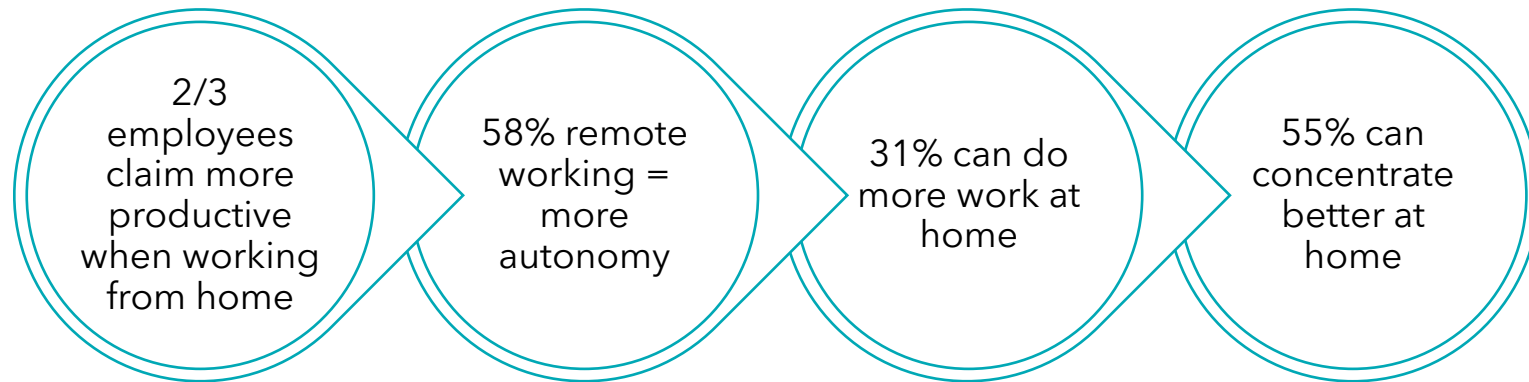
Is presenteeism remote work behaviour the new (ab)normal?

- Psychosocial safety climate (PSC): perceptions of employees regarding policies for protection of employees psychological health and safety.



Productivity

- UK Gov (2022):
- 71% of managers reported being surprised by workers productivity
 - 58% of these also stated that teams were **more** productive than when in the office



Productivity

Ranses et al. (2022)

Balushi et al. (2022)

George et al. (2022)

Significant positive relationship observed between remote working and productivity

70% of participants reported significant increase in creativity levels

27% disagreed that productivity was higher when working remotely

Stress decreased; but health problems were more prevalent

Emotions re: remote working affected productivity:

- Negative emotions → decrease in productivity in subsequent week
- Positive emotions → increase in same-week productivity

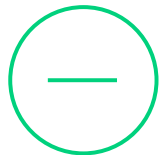
Work-Life Balance

- Work-life balance associated with organisational commitment and job satisfaction

- *Felstead and Henseke (2017)*



- Organisational commitment significantly higher for remote workers compared to on site workers
- Remote workers regard work as significantly more enjoyable and stimulating



- Unable to 'switch off' and unwind
 - Boundary theory? Transitions and spill-over

Work-Life Balance

- Remote working negatively affects WLB of public servants (Palumbo, 2020) and those working in the education sector (Palumbo, 2021)
 - Related to conflicts in both directions (work-to-life and life-to-work)
- Palumbo (2020):
 - Work engagement shown to be positively related to WLB
 - Females reported higher levels of WE, but also greater work related fatigue
 - Work engagement shown to positively mediate the negative effects of working from home on WLB
- Putra et al. (2020) - remote working has a greater impact on WLB than flexible working hours

Parents and Carers

- Darouei and Plutt (2021) → working while taking care of children, in noisy home environment, or experiencing loneliness during RM may affect stress reactions and work productivity

Pre-pandemic

Positive effects overall:
Ability to care for family members
Arrange work schedules
Balance of work and non-work, saving time and energy

*(Allen & Shockley, 2009;
Ranhuram et al., 2019)*

Mid-pandemic

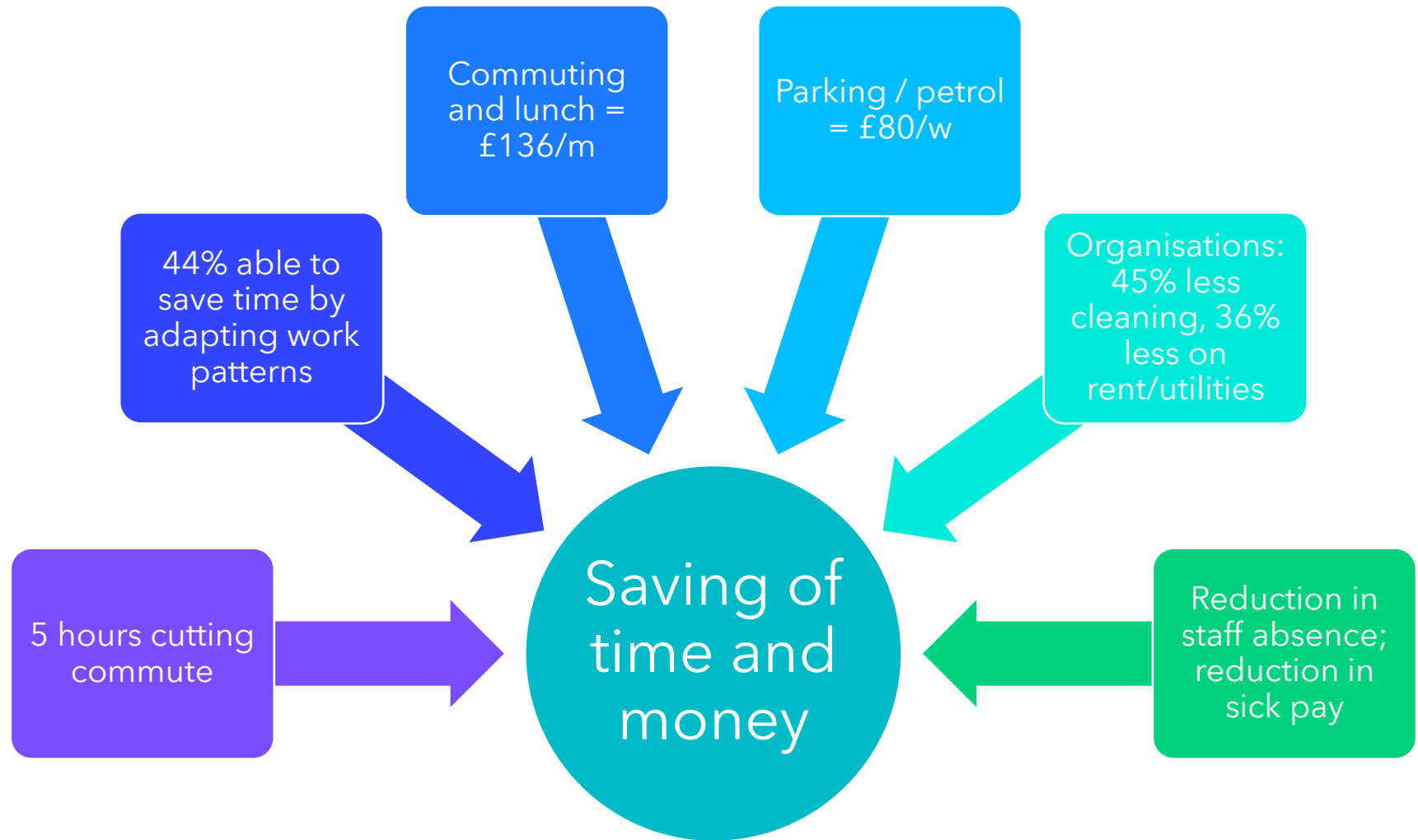
Parents/cares hit with intensive responsibilities
Most childcare related tasks fell on women; men also took on house care duties

(Ayuso et al., 2020)

Post-pandemic

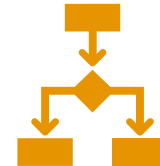
Can we now expect a shift back to positive pre-pandemic effects?

Time and Cost



Technology at Work

- Modern advancements in information and communication technology (ICT) allows connection to work when in remote locations (Allvin et al., 2011)



- As many as 90% of workers have reported, at least once, that their work related well-being decreased and attributed this to having an increased workload.

Technology at Work

Problems for employee:

- Deterioration in skills
 - Cost
- Lack of self-discipline can lead to confusion
 - Decrease in morale
- Inability to separate work and home life

Problems for employer:

- Lower quality work
- Cost of providing equipment
- Health and safety standards
- Monitoring performance
 - Losing touch

- 2022 UK Government Survey:
 - 61% of spending in 2022 will be in cybersecurity
 - Only 34% of UK companies use Virtual Private Networks (VPN's)

Overall Summary

- Remote working increase in necessity from 2020, but many UK organisations are continuing to provide remote working opportunities
- Over half of the UK workers surveyed want the option to be able to work remotely for some part of their job/role
- Many implications of remote working; positive and negative – many things to consider re: work-life balance for employees
- Technology provides opportunities for remote work, but there are considerations that need to be made by employees and employers