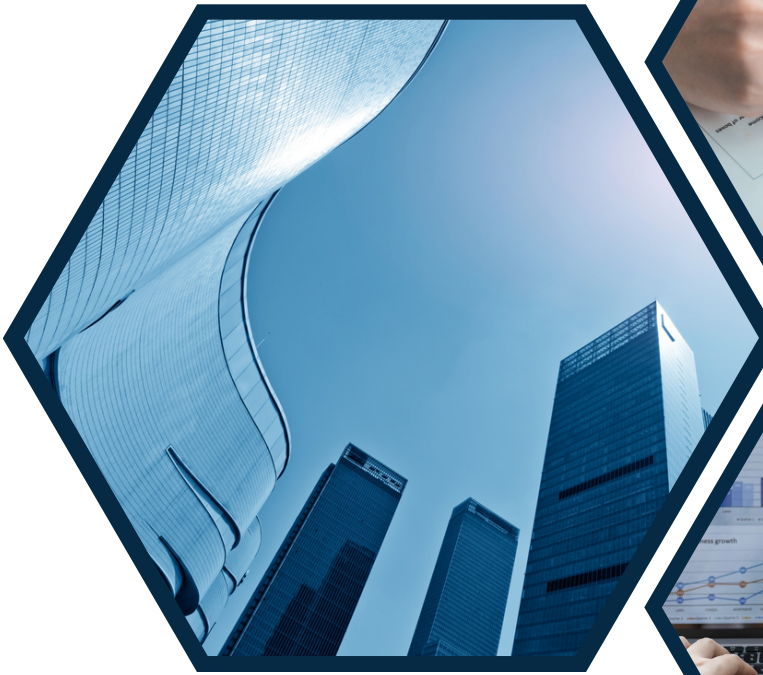


Evidence Based Practice



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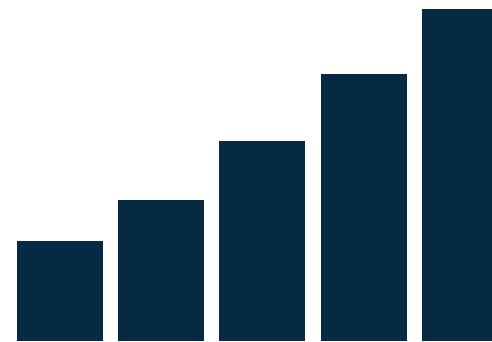
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Introduction

This report has been prepared to provide knowledge and understanding of Evidence based practice and the approaches that can be applied to promote critical thinking and to aid effective decision making.



What is Evidence based Practice?

AC 1.1

The basic principle of evidence-based practice (EBP) is that effective decision-making is achieved by critically evaluating the best available evidence from multiple sources (Young, J. 2023a).

Being evidence-based is a way of using supporting information to guide decisions; it goes beyond supporting one's viewpoint with facts or study. (Gifford et al. 2023).



(Young, J. 2023a)

Additionally, EBP uses various decision-making models to assist in the removal of bias and fads. Gathering evidence from many sources is a critical component of EBP.

There are four primary sources of evidence in HR and management (Gifford et al. 2023).

- Scientific Literature
- Stakeholder opinions
- Organisational Data.
- Expertise of practitioners/business leaders

All four types of evidence possess limitations, therefore it's crucial to remember that none of the above is sufficient on its own and that they should be analysed as a whole (Elder and Nikodem, 2023).

Gathering evidence from many sources is a critical component of EBP. There are six strategies that will promote this, as shown in our infographic above: (Young, J. 2023a). Therefore, it is crucial that people professionals, adhere to these stages when making decisions. Failure to do so can increase the risk of thinking heuristically based on a fictitious sense of reasonableness and making decisions with limited rationale. Taylor and Woodhams (2002 p.9-11).

Why do organisations use it?

To put it simply, making decisions based on evidence increases chances of achieving the desired results. Using any piece of information found is not how better informed decisions are made. Instead, the evidence should be reliable and relevant to the situation (Briner, 2019).

Using EBP means making sure the data retrieved is the best available—that is, the most relevant and dependable—and fits specific needs.

According to Briner (2019, pp 3-4) A more comprehensive picture is gained by combining various types of evidence from differing sources and applying it in a conscientious, explicit, and judicious way.

Why is it Important?

According to Young (2023a) It guarantees that decisions are made on the basis of facts rather than outdated knowledge, passing trends, or bias.

It also builds a more reliable profession by strengthening the body of information.

Professionals gain greater gravitas from it, which increases their influence over other company leaders and has a positive impact at work.

Furthermore the CIPD (2017), asserts that people professionals, ought to centre research on "critically appraised sources" rather than following the latest fad or most fashionable trend without enough proof that the result achieved had the intended effect.



Analysis tools, methods and diagnosing issues.

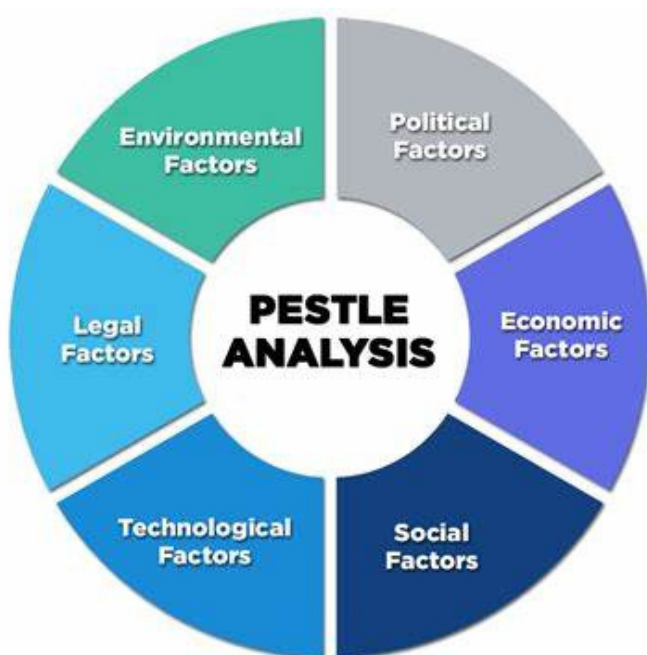
AC1.2

Analysis Tools

Numerous business analysis tools are available that provide insightful information to enhance an organisation's operations, procedures, and capabilities (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023).

Using these tools is primarily to improve organisation and efficiency. They also enable it to analyse the data collected more thoroughly, producing a stream of quality data together with a more accurate analysis that an organisation can use to determine its future direction and decision making (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023).

One example of an analysis tool is PESTLE. This particular tool helps an organization establish the external factors that could impact decisions made inside the organisation. It can aid senior managers and human resource professionals in making strategic decisions in a variety of situations (Battista, 2023)



Ghandi, 2020.

A PESTLE analysis audits the external environment to identify and comprehend long-term, broad trends. This can help with a variety of business planning scenarios, including:

- Business strategy planning
- Workforce planning
- Organisational Change (Battista, 2023).

Advantages

- It is a simple framework- easy to understand and conduct
- It facilitates a wider understanding of the business environment.
- It enables an organisation to foresee future business threats and allows it to minimize the impact
- It also allows organisations to spot an opportunity and to capitalize on them (Pathak, 2020).

Disadvantages

- It's easy to get lost in the huge amounts of data. Undertaking too much data analytics that may lead to 'paralysis by analysis'
- A PESTLE study may rely on some assumption, so there is always a chance for error.
- Once in while attitude doesn't work with PESTLE analysis. It needs to be a routine procedure. It is hard to predict future developments due to the rapid rate of change, which could have an impact on the organisation in the long run. (Pathak, 2020).

Analysis methods

As well as understanding external factors, internal factors also need to be considered.

To do this we use a variety of People analytics, this is the study of using people data analytics to help organisations identify and diagnose workplace issues (CIPD,2022).

When undertaking analysis, consider using a variety of techniques. All methods use different types of data depending on the circumstance (Indeed Editorial team, 2023).

For example Observation, to assess the behaviour and performance of employees. In order to better determine the pace of work and the quality of the work being done, the first step in data collection is to observe from a distance, this can provide both qualitative and quantitative data, you could measure the number of tasks performed and the quality of the work produced (Indeed Editorial team, 2023).

Insights from this data analysis can then be used to drive organisational change and improve processes and performance. Making decisions about organisational success more effective (CIPD,2022).

Critical thinking & Applying the principles

AC 1.3

Principles of Critical thinking

A critical thinker will consider concepts rather than just accepting ideas without question, enabling them to tackle issues more successfully (Paul and Elder, 2019). Howlett, W. (2019) expands on this idea stating there are three essential components that make up critical thinking.

Criticising the thoughts, beliefs, and arguments of others is the first of them. The second aspect is how to construct an argument and opinion and how to relay that effectively to others. The third component is recognising when other people's use of critical thinking strategies influence the way a professional presents a case or develops an argument supporting a business case (Howlett, W. 2019).

Applying the principles

It doesn't matter what your opinion is in any given situation; what matters is that people professionals have the knowledge and abilities to influence people and can make an informed assessment. Gaining credibility and influence as a practitioner requires using critical thinking techniques and making judgements based on the best available evidence Taylor and Woodhams (2002 p.114-115).

As discussed in (1.1) by applying the 6 principles - Asking, Acquiring, appraising, Aggregating, applying and assessing we are more likely to achieve our desired outcome. (Young, J. 2023a)

In order to hone these abilities, we must challenge and verify the reliability of sources and spot bias in data and other people's viewpoints.

Many pieces of evidence, particularly those found online, are portrayed as "fact" while, in reality, they are opinions. A knowledgeable HR professional will use the critical thinking techniques above and base judgement on reliable, verifiable data Taylor and Woodhams (2002 p.114-115).

Taylor and Woodhams (2002) conclude that, A judgement made objectively on the basis of evidence will be less erroneous than one made based solely on opinion. They will be easier to justify ethically. Being aware of and rigorous about the criteria used to make decisions is essential to holding managers accountable for the effects their choices will have, whether good or bad, on an organisation.

Decision making processes for effective outcomes

AC 1.4

Decision making is the process of making a choice. However, making decisions is rarely simple, and it can be especially difficult in an organisational setting (McKinsey, 2023).

Methods of decision Making

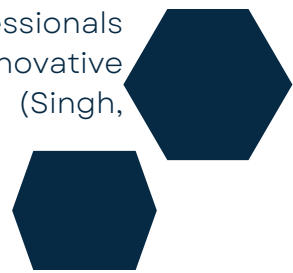
De Bono's "Six Thinking Hats" is a method for clearly evaluating a topic from several angles in a conflict-free manner. Individuals or organisations can utilise it to break free from ingrained thought patterns, experiment with new strategies, and then come up with useful ideas for the future (Mind Tools, 2023). The process involves looking at a problem from 6 different perspectives (the 6 different coloured hats) each represents a unique style of thinking. For example, the 'Black hat, would look at the risks or reasons why it may not work - with the intention of overcoming them. The yellow hat symbolises optimism and would look at the benefits (The De Bono Group, no date).

Another method is 'Lateral Thinking' this involves approaching an issue from various angles, applying reasoning and imagination, and questioning presumptions and conventions. Because it highlights the inconsistencies and holes in your logic, it can also assist you in avoiding cognitive biases and traps (LinkedIn, 2023). In order to produce as many creative and original ideas as possible, lateral thinking challenges conventional linear thought processes through spontaneous, free-flowing brainstorming (Miles, 2023).

In addition to these, making decisions by considering how a decision will affect the future is known as future-pacing. Artificial intelligence and technology are continuously changing the way we work and live, which makes this kind of decision-making increasingly important. When choosing 'future Pacing' as a decision making process, it's critical to keep the big picture in mind. It considers more than just the decision's immediate effects; it also considers the decision's possible future implications. For example, a company may consider the long-term effects of a new product or service on its reputation and profitability in addition to the short-term financial rewards. This tactic helps to guarantee that the decision is beneficial in both the short and long term (Lindmayer, 2023).

Why its important for success..

Organisations have to navigate difficult issues and make strategic decisions that promote growth and success in today's business environment. By using different methods, organisations can be more confident in their decisions. People Professionals involvement is essential to guaranteeing long-term viability, promoting an innovative culture, and matching the company's human capital with its strategic goals (Singh, 2023).



Ethical Perspectives & how they influence decision making.

AC 1.5

What are ethics?

People typically have a personal code of ethics that is shaped in part by family, religion, and social conventions (BBC, 2014). Different ethical perspectives are adopted by individuals, groups, and cultures; these include utilitarianism, teleology, and deontology, to mention a few. Rather than a circumstance being viewed as right or wrong, it may be viewed differently based on the ethical beliefs we have been exposed to (Green and Russell, 2022).

Ethical Practice.

Applying moral principles to organisational activity is known as ethical practice. It has to do with the decisions that organisations and the individuals who work for them make, "doing the right thing, because its the right thing to do" . It goes beyond our own personal code of ethics and focuses on the greater good for everyone impacted (Green and Russell, 2022).

Understanding perspectives.

As mentioned above There are several ethical perspectives to to consider when making a decision -

- Deontology - acting morally on the grounds of justice, equity, and equality, presuming that there are fundamental rights and wrongs (Waite et al, 2021). According to this viewpoint, behaviour is more important than outcomes; especially if outcomes don't justify the methods (Taylor and Woodhams, 2022).
- Utilitarianism - Pursue the greatest good for the largest possible number of individuals. It refers to the theory of morality that takes into account actions and decisions that make one fulfilled when they do the right thing (Waite et al, 2021).
- Equity Theory - According to the theory, employees' motivation at work is primarily influenced by their perception of justice (Gartner, 2023) A reward must be fair and equitable in order to motivate. A person should receive compensation that is proportionate to the effort they have put into their work and equitable in comparison to the contributions of other employees of the same organisation (Adams, 1965).



Using perspectives to influence decision making.

There isn't a set formula for handling ethical difficulties , various circumstances and settings bring forth ethical conflicts. There's never a "rule" that applies to every ethical choice; instead, making ethical decisions will always need work, creativity, and understanding. In addition to understanding ethical perspectives, CIPD also aims to assist in ethical decision making by looking at workplace dilemmas through 8 ethical lenses depicted below (CIPD, 2015).

Summary of the eight lenses

Fairness <i>Everyone in an organisation should be able to agree to it, whatever their place in it.</i>	Merit <i>Jobs and their rewards should track talent and hard work.</i>	Markets <i>Jobs and their rewards should follow from voluntary market exchanges.</i>	Democracy <i>No one should be subject to a regime in which they have no say.</i>
Well-being <i>Work should be good for us.</i>	Rights and Duties <i>Everyone has rights to do some things and to be free of some things, and everyone has duties not to violate others' rights.</i>	Character <i>Each of us should work to develop the best ethical character for our roles.</i>	Handing Down <i>We can't reinvent or master the world, and are instead responsible for conserving and maintaining the small part of it over which we currently have stewardship, and for passing it on undamaged to our descendants.</i>

CIPD, 2015

These lenses along with the theories offer several perspectives on ethical challenges that arise in the workplace. For instance, the perspectives of Character and Handing Down address issues about the moral obligation that individuals who create work procedures have to society (this also links to utilitarianism). Democracy and fairness would relate back to Deontology. Both of these rely on our worldviews and the extent to which we embrace the principles of virtue and stewardship as integral parts of who we are, as opposed to overlooking them to achieve convenient or temporary ends (CIPD, 2015).

The benefits of ethical decision making

An organisation's reputation is derived not only from the goods and services it provides, but also from the way it values its relationships with its stakeholders and how it assumes obligation and duty for them. Proven ethical behaviour not only reduces risk but it also gives businesses a competitive edge. Building trustworthy relationships with suppliers, customers, workers, and the community is essential to an organization's success (Green and Russell, 2022).

How organisations measure financial and non financial performance

AC 3.1

Measuring performance

An organization's ability to survive depends on its performance. It is crucial that we can measure it as a result (Buchanan, 2019).

Organisations use Key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate their overall effectiveness. they come in many forms, but organisations primarily focus on two types of KPIs: Financial and non-financial. Both measures are needed for a comprehensive picture and to understand a company's success more thoroughly (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023b).

Non -financial Measures

An example of a non-financial measure would be Customer experience or satisfaction. Organisations look at where a customer interacts with the company to measure customer experience. Metrics such as short waiting times, could be a sign of a positive customer experience. In addition to this, customer retention metrics can also evaluate the proportion of customers who stay or leave the business. This could also indicate customer satisfaction (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023b).

Non-financial Key Performance Indicators are important, They aid in shedding light on financial KPIs. Financial metrics are simple to assess because they often centre on indicators that examine historical performance. Nevertheless, they frequently exclude information, such as reasons behind a decline in performance. Measures of non-financial performance aid in providing context for this examination (Indeed Editorial Team, 2023b).

Secondly, it is easier to connect non-financial KPIs to specific elements of your overall strategy. More precisely, the mission and vision of most organisations are not centred on finances (Jackson, 2023).

Financial measures

Financial KPIs are measurements that businesses use to assess their financial standing. These KPIs are divided into several groups, such as valuation, profitability, liquidity etc. By assessing your organisations financial performance allows you to continuously adapt objectives to support strategic goals (Storbierski, 2020).

An example of a financial measure is Gross Profit Margin - This is a crucial success indicator since it provides organisations with precise revenue information and suggests goals for the future. By understanding how to calculate gross profit, you can focus on raising your profit margin and running your firm more effectively (Indeed, 2022).

Gross profit is the main metric used to determine the viability and sustainability of an organisation. It demonstrates how effectively a company uses its manpower and material resources. Businesses can track gross profit to see what contributes to its growth or decline and then concentrate on adapting and overcoming any obstacles to support organisational goals (Indeed, 2022).

How people practices add value

AC 3.2

According to Edology (2023) There is a general perception of Human Resources or people professionals duties inside a business and what HR stands for: Because HR specialists are "people, people," they are involved in hiring, and terminating staff members as well as trying to retain them (Edology, no date).

With mis-conceptions around HRs contribution being considered as primarily an administrative role (Klempt, 2023) and technological advancements such as hiring and firing and recruitment being mostly handled by AI and technology (CIPD, 2017) This is making it increasingly difficult to measure the value that people professions are adding to organisations (Personnel today, 2012).

People professionals should be involved in developing internal programmes and procedures to support employees' success since they are advocates for people and culture. Employee experience suffers when HR isn't included in strategic planning (Klemp, 2023).

Klemp (2023), goes on to say that Taking into consideration the following HR methods, Organisations align employee experience with company objectives and add value to an organisation.

Employee Engagement

According to Young (2023b) The definitions of engagement speak about fulfilled, motivated, or healthier workers. Aspects of employee engagement have been found to positively correlate with various company measures, such as customer happiness, productivity, innovation and staff retention.

An effective way to asses employee engagement could be by compiling a staff engagement survey, The survey can provide metrics to identify problem areas and challenges within areas of on organisation. Practitioners can focus on engagement boosting strategies such as promoting recogniton, valuing employee feedback and providing adequate development opportunities (Workleap, 2022). By repeating surveys periodically and tracking responses allows an organisation to track their overall strategy progress and show value creation (Klemp, 2023)

Employee turnover & retention

According to Peters, (2023) The performance of an organisation can be negatively impacted by employee turnover. By understanding why employees leave their employment organisations can devise strategies to help reduce turnover and increase retention.

Turnover may also draw attention to problems in the workforce, such as discontent with opportunities for professional advancement or lack of engagement or recognition.

Exit interviews can be a valuable way to gain insight into an employees reason(s) for leaving. However, employees can be reluctant to disclose criticism of management or colleagues. When undertaking an exit interview it is important that an external provider is used, this will help capture more accurate data and encourage honesty when there is reassurance of anonymity (Peters, 2023). By using this data people professionals can develop a retention strategy that targets the problems and reasons behind employee turnover. Thus retaining staff and addressing any underlying issues, creating a more positive workplace (Peters, 2023).

Quantitative and qualitative analysis review

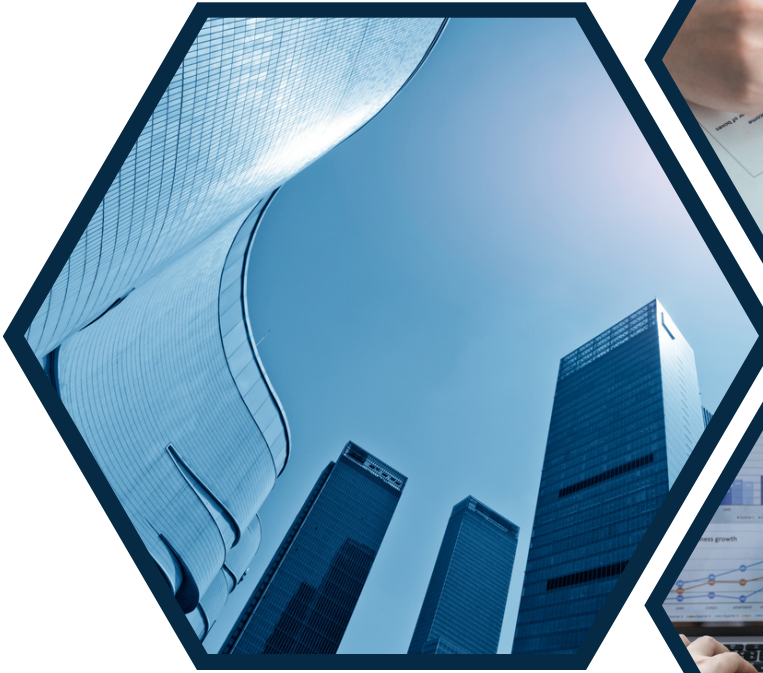




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(A)Percentage of Genders by type

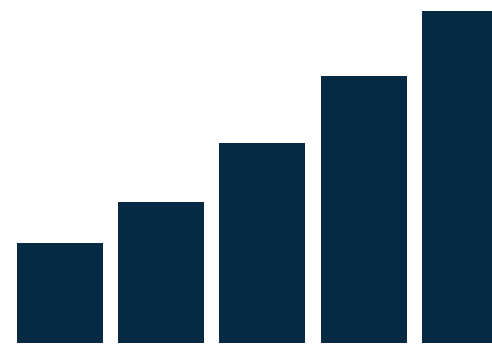
(B)Ethnicity as a percentage by team

(C)Disability percentage as an Organisation & by team

(D)Salary difference across genders

(E) Overall Salary paid by organisation

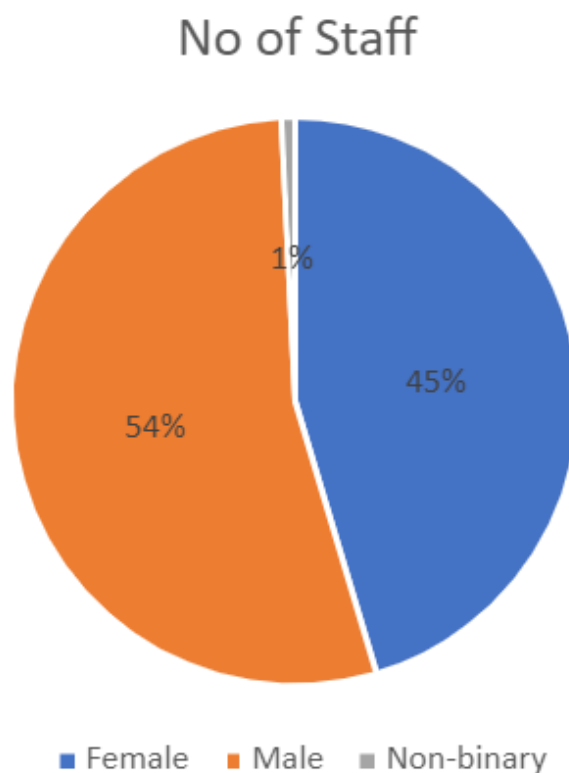
(AC 2.3) Recommendations



Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis Review

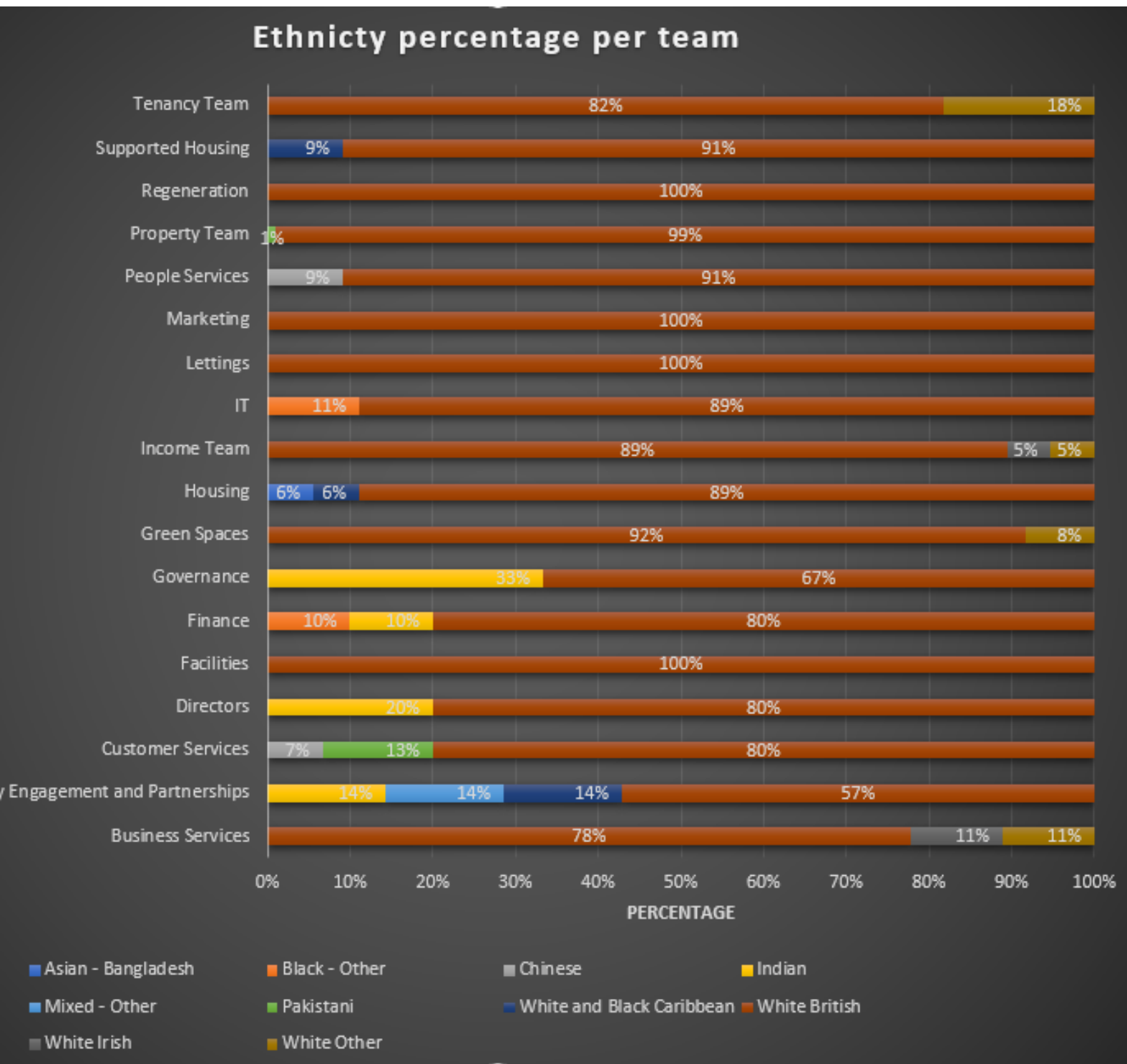
Section 2

Percentage of Genders by type



The results demonstrate that there is a pretty equal balance of male and female employees within the organisation. However there are a very small number of staff who identify as non-binary.

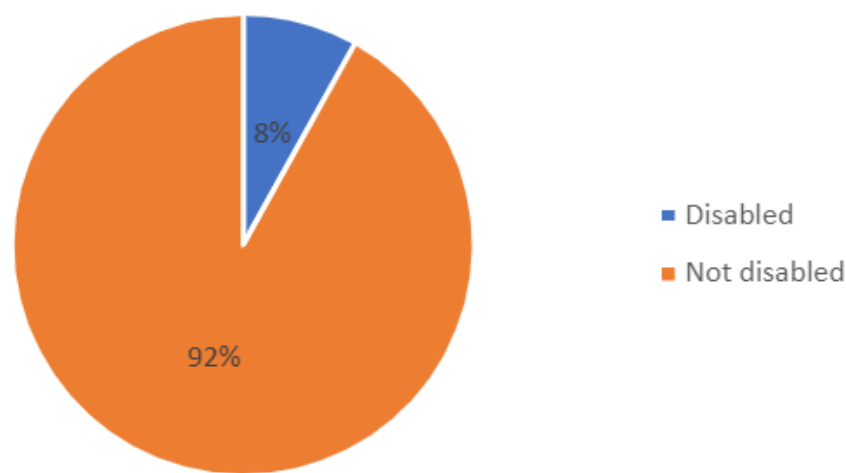
Ethnicity as a percentage per team



These results demonstrate that over 91% of staff are 'White British' and less than 9% of the overall workforce represent other ethnicities. This shows there is quite a poor representation of ethnic minorities within the workforce, furthermore a third of the teams within the organisation have no diversity at all within them. However, on the contrary to this the Community Engagement and Partnerships team show a positive mix of diversity with 50% of employees being from an ethnic minority background.

Disability percentage as an organisation

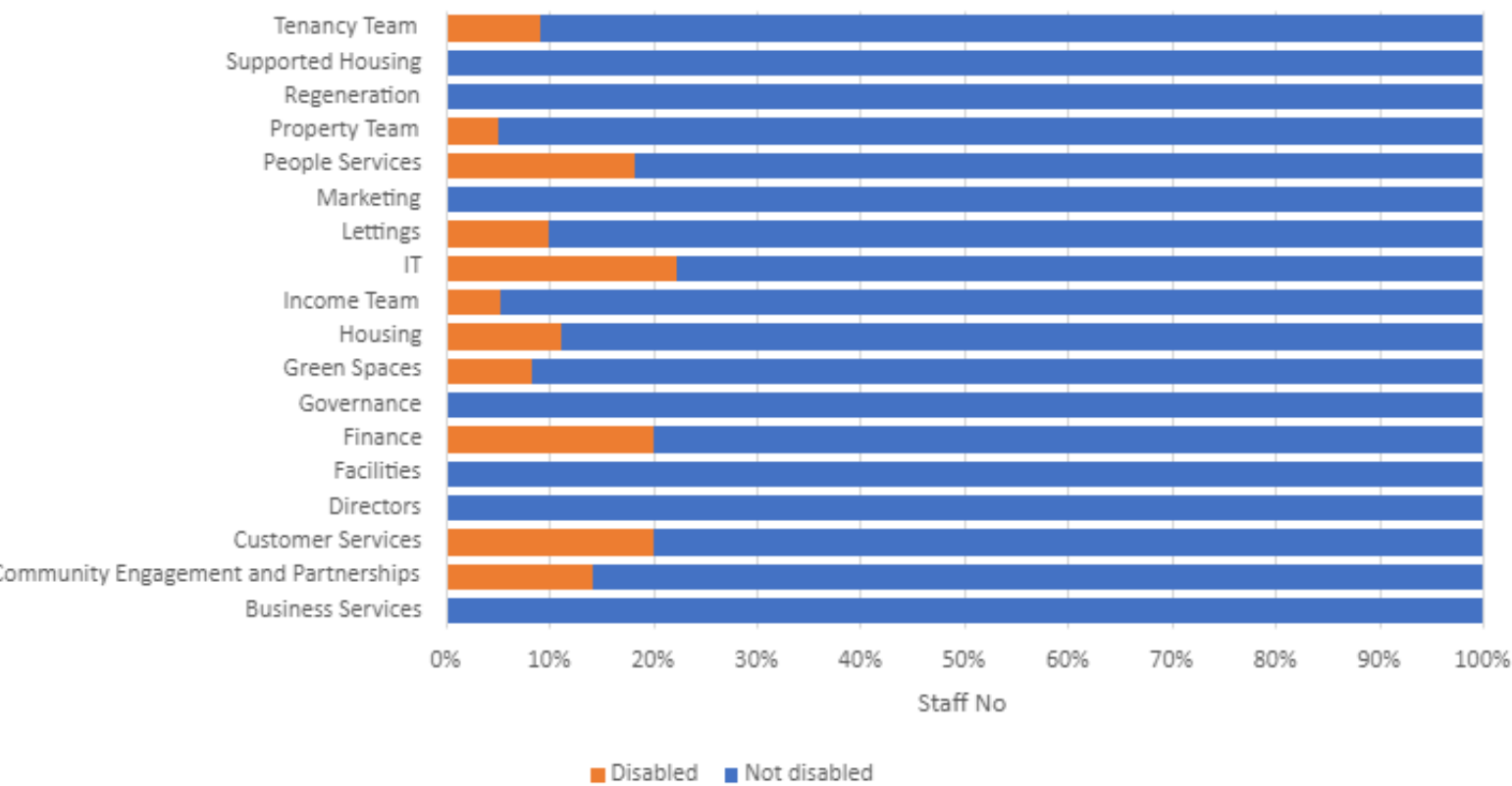
Disability Percentage as an organisation



As you can see here there is a very small number of disabled employees which represent the overall workforce, with only 8% of employees classing themselves as disabled.

Disability percentage per team

Disability percentage per team

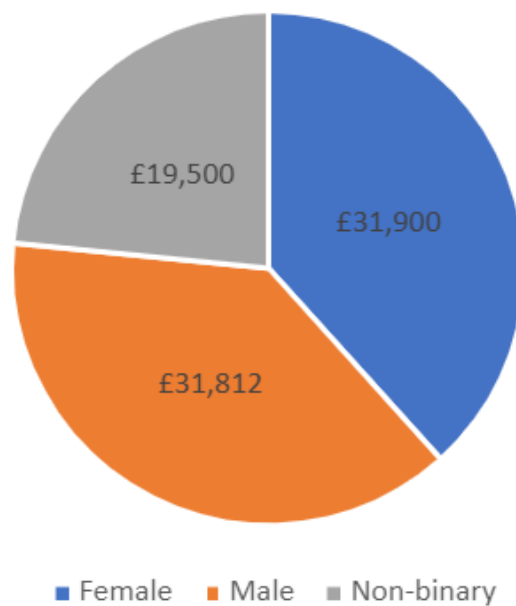


When broken down into teams, the results show that almost two thirds of the teams within the organisation contain disabled employees, which on the surface demonstrates a certain level of equality. However, even within these teams, on average disabled personnel only make up 13% of the individual teams.

Upon further analysis of the data, there doesn't appear to be restrictions to the roles or departments in which disabled employees are confined to which is positive.

Salary difference across genders

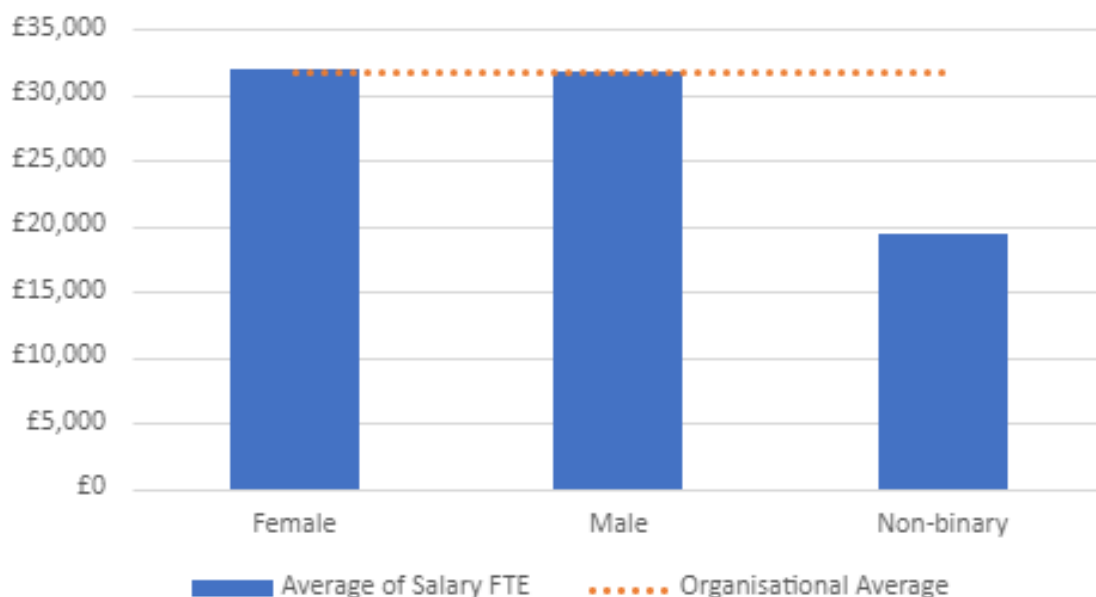
Salary Difference across genders



The chart above shows the average salary across genders, highlighting the differences in salary. At a glance it does look like there is huge gap between non binary and binary employees with their salary being approximately £12,352 lower than average. However, with Non-binary personnel only making up 1% of employees, there is not enough evidence to support that theory. Interestingly, even though the average salary for women is higher than men, upon further analysis the data shows that 85% of women are earning under that average in comparison to 54% of males. Which does suggest there are significantly more women in lower paid roles than men.

Overall average salary for organisation

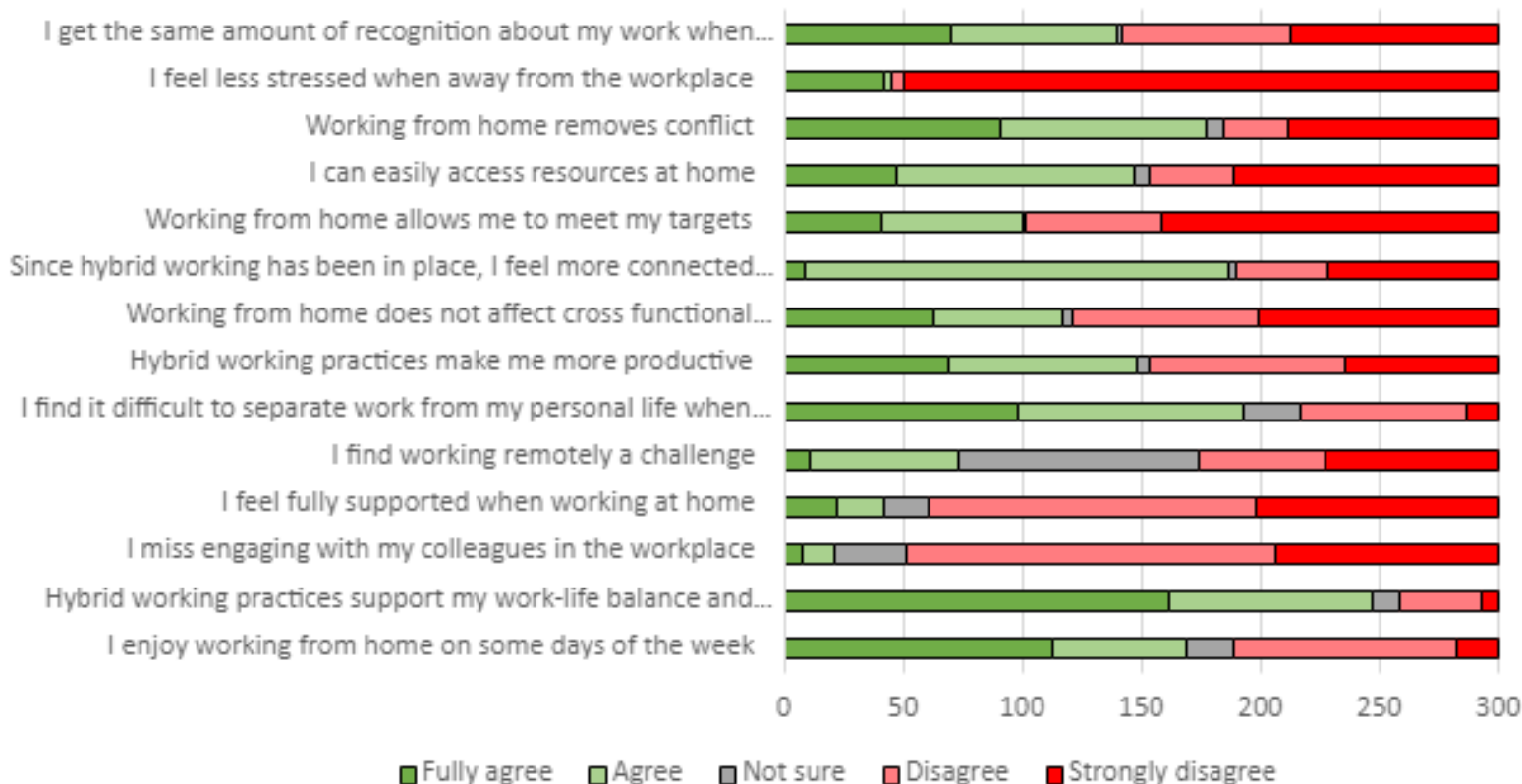
Average salary across Organisation



The findings show the overall average salary for the organisation as £31,757.46 which aligns with the average salary by gender. Upon further analysis, the data shows this isn't an entirely accurate representation. When broken down, The directors, who account for this Organisations highest paid staff members is composed primarily of women (80%), with an average salary of £92,613.75. On the contrary, Green Spaces, where 75% of the workforce is male, is the team earning the least money, with an average salary of £21,030. The income team appears to be the team reflecting the organisational average most closely with the average salary of £30,364 with an even ratio of male to female workers.

Employee survey results

Feedback scores from employee survey



Key Findings

Positive

- Over half of the respondents feel more connected to company culture since hybrid working has been in place and find it easier to meet targets
- Almost 60% feel that working from home removes conflict

Negative

- 85% of staff are more stressed when working away from the office and feel that working from home affects team communication and collaboration.
- 80% of respondents don't feel supported when working from home and almost half of respondents find working remotely a challenge.

Recommendations

AC 2.3

1. Create inclusive initiatives (such as flexible working, transparent career paths and recruitment and selection process reviews) to support gender equality. Provide equal opportunities for employment and advancement, review salaries to ensure they are fair and equal (CIPD, 2023).

The benefits of gender equality include

- Varied perspectives
- Improved collaboration
- More comprehensive talent pool
- Increased staff retention
- More innovation
- Enhanced productivity
- Flexibility

(people management, 2021).

-
2. Implement an effective strategy to promote and deliver EDI in the workplace in line with *The Equality Act* (2010). Including developing an inclusive culture, implement inclusive and fair employment policies and practices and role model inclusive behaviours.

This can be achieved by Analysing existing behaviours, reviewing and updating policies, assess practices and monitoring culture to help Identify barriers and biases, discrimination and prejudice to ensure diversity, inclusion and equality is achieved.

The benefits of achieving Equality, diversity and inclusion within an organisation are

- Attracts & retains talent
- Enhances Reputation
- Better business performance

(Ali, 2021)

Recommendations

3. Develop working practices/ policies to support Hybrid / flexible working.

Additional training for managers in performance management, remote communication and relationship building in order to manage hybrid teams and support hybrid workers.

Examining HR policies and practises over the whole employee lifecycle to ensure they facilitate hybrid working in reality and promote inclusivity and well-being.

Engage in ongoing, continuous active listening with staff members, supervisors, and employee representatives. in order to understand the initial findings from hybrid working and determine whether or not it is benefiting people and the organisation as expected.

Closely monitor any hybrid working regulations and standards, taking into account their effects on workers with protected characteristics, and ensuring that any detrimental effects of hybrid work are addressed.

Consider that hybrid working is merely one type of flexible working: Look at alternative flexible working approaches.
(CIPD, 2021).

Benefits, Risks & financial implications

If the recommendations are not followed through, there could be serious financial implications and risks to the organisations future success.

Not promoting diversity and inclusion, as well as allowing prejudice and discrimination to continue, can have negative effects on the organisations success, job satisfaction, and work-life balance. These can also result in absenteeism, high labour turnover, the loss of talented personnel, costly tribunals, and the negative publicity they generate (Institute of development studies, 2017).

By not developing and supporting Hybrid/ Flexible working, organisations face incurring additional and unnecessary costs for rented office spaces / work areas. Revenue that could be used elsewhere within the business. This could also have a negative impact on recruitment and retention where comparable business work Hybridlike and offer potential staff more flexibility (McCartney, 2023).

Workers who are able to work flexibly not only have a high level of job satisfaction, but are more committed to their employers. In addition to lowering absenteeism rates, flexible working enables workers to manage long-term medical conditions and disabilities while also promoting mental well-being and alleviating stress (McCartney,2023).

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