

01.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Navigating a path towards a 'new normal', leveraging the lessons from the remote working experience and defining its future ways of working.

This leading financial services organisation is embracing the opportunity created from COVID to define and embed a new way of working for approximately 1,200 staff nationally. There's a mix of 'in office' and 'mobile' roles and the workplace designs are slightly different in each of their centres, with some more equipped for agile working than others.

Before jumping to any conclusions, Puzzle helped the organisation to capture staff insights through survey and consultation. What they learnt is that the remote working experience has been positive and productive, and in future, most people want to split their time between working in the office and at home.


The Executive considered the feedback and in early 2021 introduced a virtual hybrid approach as their future ways of working. Essentially, people can split time between working in the office and at home, where the home working environment is safe and healthy. Or people will be able to return to the office full-time if that's their preference.



 **84%**
**want to split time
working at home and
the office**

By late 2021, FWOV appeared to be working as intended and anecdotal feedback indicated that staff were enjoying the additional flexibility, and in fact would like even more choice about where they work in the future.

In the first half of 2022, Puzzle helped the organisation to undertake further consultation with staff, introduced the next iteration of work models, and conducted a three-month evaluation | check in process with both staff and leaders to assess whether the new models were delivering the desired benefits to individuals, leaders and the business.



Maintaining culture and team connection is the biggest challenge. Agile working demands a different kind of leadership, to ensure a common employee experience, to avoid a situation of a dominant 'in office' culture, a scenario of the 'haves and have nots'.

02.

OUR APPROACH

A principle centred approach. Genuine consultation and empowerment. Clear performance standards. Creating safe environments.

Puzzle worked with its client to develop the strategy and future working model (FWOW), capture staff insights, develop the principles and standards, and designed the implementation program.

The Executive acknowledged that at the corporate level, no single policy or program would fit all circumstances and combinations of remote and onsite work should consider the unique requirements and roles of each team.

Instead, we helped them to develop a set of principles and standards, which created an equitable framework and clear expectations for how people should work.

The principles centred around the 'non-negotiables' of organisational performance, the employee and customer experience.

The standards addressed the operational considerations such as how many days people need to be in the office, team connection, consistent and effective collaboration and communication.

Within this framework, teams had the autonomy to define the norms for how they will work together, support each other, and contribute to the organisation's performance.

Leadership buy-in

Puzzle facilitated a series of workshops with the Executive and senior leader cohort to gain their alignment and commitment to the principles and standards, as well as the overarching implementation approach.

We also developed hints and tips for leading dispersed teams.

The narrative

We developed a comprehensive narrative about FWOW, the rationale, co-design process and programs to support people in the transition. The narrative was the basis for all internal communications materials.

Puzzle also created a simple infographic to support the internal communications program, including the FWOW principles, minimum standards and employee program.

Survey findings

Puzzle undertook extensive survey analysis, taking a deep dive into the results from individual and team feedback.

We created a comprehensive insights report and produced infographic summaries for the organisation overall, as well as the individual divisions.

Team Commitments

Puzzle designed and facilitated discussions for senior leaders to consider how they would operationalise FWOW. This included a process for developing Team Commitments, which detail how they will work together and support each other under the virtual hybrid model.

Materials included the Team Commitments template, detailed agendas, facilitation guides and workshop showpacks.

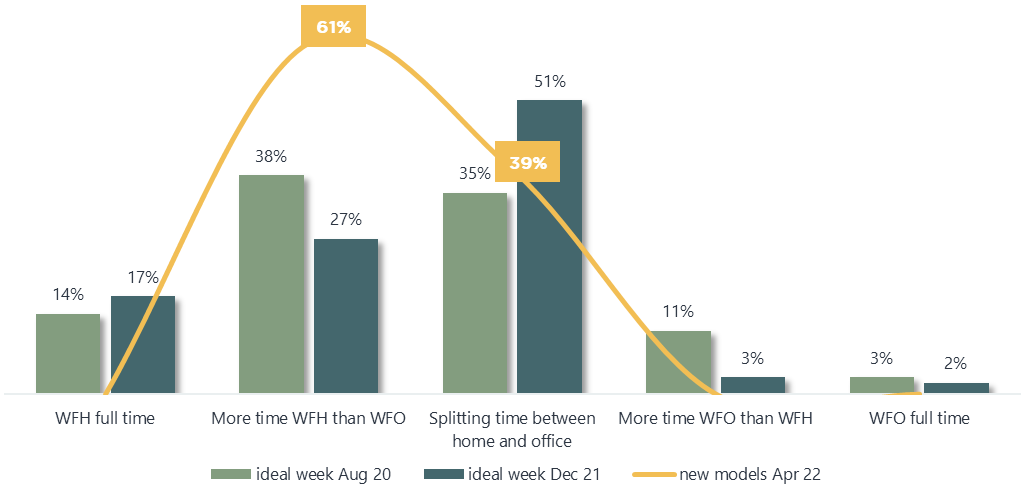
Refining & iterating the work models

By late 2021, FWOV appeared to be working as intended and anecdotal feedback indicated that staff were enjoying the additional flexibility, and in fact would like even more choice about where they work in the future.

Puzzle undertook an extensive evaluation and consultation process in February | March 2022 to define, introduce and agree the next iteration of work models to be implemented by each business area.

What we found was that, as the lived experience of remote working continued, staff’s desire to return to the office (while still maintaining flexibility) strengthened.

The main reasons for wanting to return to the office were for social connection, team cohesion, and collaborating | brainstorming with colleagues.



FWOW 2.0

In April 2022, four new working models 'went live', guiding how people within each business area work together and collaborate. For many, the new models offered additional flexibility and work-life balance, while aiming to maximise productivity and organisational performance.

Puzzle designed and conducted a three-month evaluation | check in process with both staff and leaders to capture early insights and assess whether the new models were delivering the desired benefits to individuals, leaders and the business.



 **61%**
of staff are able to spend more time WFH than the office under the new models

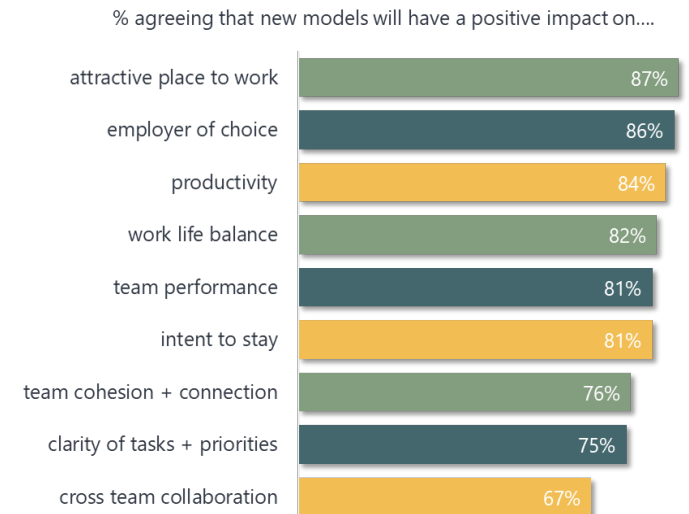
03.

THE RESULTS

Early feedback indicates that the organisation is on the right path to providing staff with the additional flexibility they are seeking, balanced with maintaining organisational performance and productivity.

Results from the FWOW 2.0 evaluation process conducted in July 2022 were very promising:

- 80% of respondents are finding the current working arrangements to be effective or very effective
- leaders reported that 76% of the feedback they have received thus far has been positive (24% mixed)
- almost half of the leaders felt that team engagement levels have improved since implementation of the new models, and
- 77% of staff and 84% of leaders agree that the working models will be successful in the long-term



The project highlighted how genuine and ongoing consultation with staff and being willing to refine the approach along the way can result in win-win outcomes for both the organisation and the individual team members; without needing to invest in significant fitout changes.

It also demonstrated how Puzzle's thought leadership on future ways of working, can be augmented by applying this strategic thinking in practical ways to help our clients transition to their 'new normal'.

“ **The new work model shows that this company and my leaders trust me to do my work from anywhere, which has directly resulted in me choosing to remain here longer term (as other companies cannot match this benefit!). I enjoy working for a department that does not promote presenteeism, which highlights to me that development opportunities and career progression will not be based on people who attend the office.** ”



This was just one of our 1,200+ workplace adventures. We'd love to help you with your next adventure!

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