

The Debate: Office Dogs

Posted by **Hayley Blacker** on 07/06/2019

Taking the **lead**: Is the advent of the **office dog** just a current fad...

...or is it a vital part of workplace wellbeing? Here we delve deeper into the pros and cons of having work friends of the four-legged variety.



According to Amazon, their employees share their workspace with 6,000 dogs a day – a statistic that reflects the rising popularity of canine work colleagues. Coinciding with the increasing focus on workplace wellbeing, office dogs epitomise the blurring of home and work lives; arguably the key revolution that we've seen in the workplace over the last decade.

Here at Interaction, some of our favourite days are when clients bring their dog in tow – but this is an appreciation not shared by all office workers. With that in mind, we thought we'd weigh up the arguments for and against...

The Perfect antidote for a 'ruff' day

snuggle in times of stress” and that “you can never feel sad when her nose is on your lap”.



Barney

Barney quickly made himself know in the office for his big smiles and wagging tail!



Penny

Penny was particularly interested in our feature moss walls on her visit to our office!



Mavis

Combine this with the fact that dogs can also force people to go outside, it's clear to see why office dogs are great for mental health, as well as boosting productivity. Proud office-dog owner Jocelyn Smith at Box Twenty can vouch for this thanks to Gadget the Greyhound, stating that: "Even though he sleeps for 85% of the day, he lifts everyone's mood in the office" and he "also means I leave my desk every lunchtime to get some fresh air, rain or shine".

When it comes to brand image, office dogs can work wonders too. This is because they can highlight a forward-thinking yet relaxed company culture – and one that would appeal to clients, visitors, and both existing and future employees. Dog-friendly offices could even help a company when it comes to shortlisting new recruits; as Ian Lamb describes: "it goes without saying that any new employee is going to have to get along with Penny".

Barking up the wrong tree

Yet what if dogs in the workplace are just a case of people jumping on the current bandwagon? After all, it could be argued that dogs can be distracting, and that productivity comes from clearly differentiating between home and work.

Equally, if we go back to basics it's clear that not everyone likes dogs, whether this be because of simple preference, allergies or fear. For example, according to The Independent, cynophobia (a fear of dogs) is one of the UK's top 13 phobias.

It's therefore fair to say that dogs in the workplace won't reduce everyone's stress levels. Even advocates for office dogs empathise with this; Jocelyn at Box Twenty commented that "not everyone likes dogs, so I have to be very aware of meetings happening in the office to ensure Gadget has a home day when we have visitors who we haven't told about him". Similarly, Nik Margolis at Team Eleven (second home to Bear the Siberian Husky) suggests that it can "take regular effort to dissuade him from sitting under the desk of the one person who doesn't really like dogs".



Gadget

Retired from racing, Gadget now enjoys a more relaxing life with Box Twenty!



Bear

Little Pomsy, Bear, is always happy to be part of a 'talk and walk' meeting around the surrounding fields!



Olive

Always up for a nice back rub, Olive patrols the eXPD8 office floor for the perfect spot for a nap!

A way to counteract today's stresses

Chances are, dog friendly offices will remain as a topic of debate for years to come, so we can't ignore their fast rise in popularity. Perhaps it all boils down to the fact that the ever-increasing pace of life is causing a chain reaction for more innovative ways to combat stress.

When it comes to an office dog, you won't know until you try. If the positive engagement with our recent "office dog of the fortnight" social media campaign is anything to go by, we bet many office-dwellers would jump at the chance of a canine companion.

look at some of our other blogs? Whether it's [Mental Health in the Workplace](#), [Emotional Intelligence](#) or [Work-Life Balance](#), we're passionate about workplace wellbeing – so much so that it shapes every single one of our office designs.

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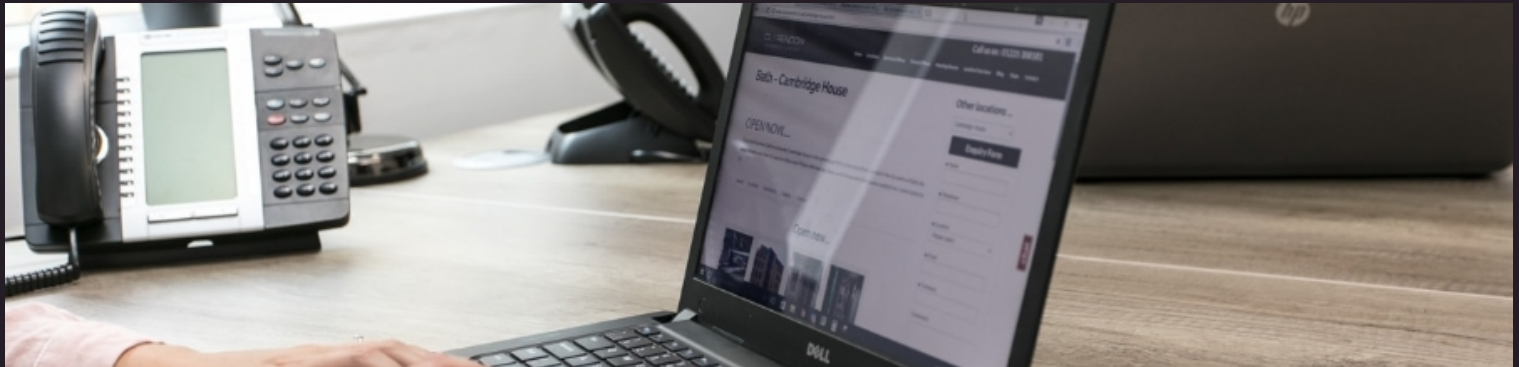
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