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“WITH MANY PEOPLE HAVING ADAPTED TO FLEXIBLE WORKING FOLLOWING THE PANDEMIC, AND A GREATER FOCUS ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE, THERE IS A GROWING NEED FOR BUSINESSES TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT HOW THEY OPERATE”.

There has recently been a major shift in the perception of a four-day working week, which is now starting to gain real traction as an exciting workplace policy.

At its core, the paradox of shortening working hours for no less pay is in stark contrast to the dominant burnout culture of past decades, where working more was viewed as working better.

Pilot schemes trialling the effectiveness of the four-day working week have yielded positive results. The largest to date was carried out last year in the UK by 4 Day Week Global, in partnership with Autonomy, an independent research organisation, University of Cambridge and Boston College.

Sixty-one companies employing 2,900 people took part in The UK's Four-Day Week Pilot between June and December 2022. More than 92 percent opted to continue with a four-day working week after the six-month study concluded.

With many people having adapted to flexible working following the pandemic, and a greater focus on work-life balance, there is a growing need for businesses to think differently about how they operate. A four-day working week could give some a competitive edge in the war for talent.

One of the most interesting findings of The UK's Four-Day Week Pilot was that, among the 61 participating companies, revenue remained broadly the same over

the course of six-month trial, rising by 1.4 percent on average, weighted by company size.

When compared to a similar period from previous years, participants reported an average 35 percent revenue rise.

So, while some employers are sceptical about the potential benefits of a four-day working week, my view is that it holds numerous potential benefits.

These benefits range from a competitive edge for employers in the employment market, to higher staff retention, improved wellbeing, lower absenteeism, less burnout, and reduced childcare costs for employees.