



vodafone

Vodafone Global Enterprise

# Mobile flexible working

Whitepaper

*power to you*

**The bottom line:** With the needs of the global business in mind, this white paper explains why it has never been more crucial to take an enterprise-wide view when implementing mobile flexible working solutions.

**Key concepts:** Mobile and flexible working is an irreversible development, a shift that is not just about complying with legislation but also about achieving social, economic and environmental benefits for your employees.

**Who should read:** This white paper is of particular relevance to senior management, Heads of Human Resource, Corporate Responsibility, Marketing, Finance, ICT and Property looking for ways to improve employee engagement, enhance brand reputation and support a sustainability agenda whilst also reducing property, energy and travel costs.

# Contents

<b>Executive overview</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Drivers for flexible working</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Establishing a flexible working approach</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Case study – Vodafone Global Enterprise SMARTER working initiative</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>16</b>

**Flexible working should be a journey that's designed around people and how they work best. It will help you significantly reduce costs and achieve greater productivity for your business if it's a solution that's implemented strategically and becomes a core part of your company and brand culture.**

# Executive overview

**Flexible working can have a positive affect on all aspects of a business from improved work/life balance and increased productivity to the reduction of ongoing costs.**

In a world of always on, always connected economies, working practices have changed immeasurably from those our parents were familiar with, and as employment patterns have changed, so too has the relationship between work, home and the community.

As a result many organisations have introduced flexible working practices that allow them to positively influence performance – with the added benefit of reducing the overall carbon footprint of the business.

Flexible working has been high on Vodafone's corporate agenda for nearly a decade.

In 2002 we consolidated more than 35 fragmented offices across the UK when we moved into our new head quarters in Newbury.

Since then we have continued our program of real estate optimisation and have reduced our buildings further by 53 in total.

Mobile technology and flexible working practices have helped us to rationalise expensive corporate real estate, reduce infrastructure costs, increase productivity, attract and retain valuable expertise and to help the environment.

Vodafone Global Enterprise has a range of innovative mobility solutions that are designed to simplify the deployment of flexible working practices within your organisations.

In this paper we share:

- highlights from the latest proprietary commissioned research and focus groups
- observations from our customer implementation experiences
- insights gained from our recent, highly successful internal flexible working initiative in the UK.

Armed with practical ideas, insights and innovations, our aim is to build the widest possible picture of flexible working, setting out why and how organisations should implement a flexible working policy, and who needs to be involved to deliver a successful solution.

As well as sharing best practice and highlighting the benefits, we describe how to overcome barriers to change and the means of effectively implementing and managing flexible working.

**A 2007 European Union survey, which interviewed HR professionals in 11 countries, concluded that 50% of employees would like to work more flexible hours<sup>1</sup>.**

**Fourth European Working Conditions survey and European Workplace Trends found two critical drivers of workplace flexibility – cost of real estate and culture<sup>2</sup>.**

**The Commission for Architecture & The Built Environment and the British Council for Offices stated that an employee's workplace is responsible for 24% of their job satisfaction and this can affect staff performance by 5% for individuals and 11% for teams<sup>3</sup>.**

**The Canadian Federation for Independent Business found the principal benefits of offering flexible workplace practice are:**

- **Better relationship with employees (77.3%)**
- **Higher employee job satisfaction (64.1%)**
- **Higher employee retention (60.7%)**
- **Fewer work absences (48%)**
- **Increased productivity (34%)**
- **More competitive in attracting employees (22%)<sup>4</sup>**

**Citrix Online Research – flexible working is the working parents' most sought after benefit. 87% of dads say their productivity would increase if they could avoid their commute. 54% of mums want to be able to work from home<sup>5</sup>.**

1. Equal Opportunities Commission report Working Outside the Box January 2007.

2. 4th European Working Conditions Surveys conducted every 5 years.

3. The impact of office design on business performance – The centre for Building Performance and Diagnostics at Canegie Mellon University and Arup. May 2005.

4. Canadian Federation of Independent Business Workplace survey Dec 17 2003 – Feb 12 2004.

5. The research was carried out among 350 working mothers, who are registered users of the Mother@Work website, and 1,450 fathers through the FQ Magazine portal.

# The drivers for flexible working

**In a time of economic uncertainty, when greater cost control and efficiency is essential, the commercial arguments for investing in mobility and flexible working are extremely strong.**

There are many, varied, drivers for the introduction of flexible working practices across the enterprise including:

- Reducing employee commute time, with associated benefits including improved productivity and lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Reducing corporate real estate, infrastructure cost, business travel costs and tax burden.
- Meeting customer needs and being more easily able to adapt to changing demands and fluctuating market conditions.
- Preparing for future regulations limiting greenhouse gas emissions.
- Helping to meet corporate sustainability objectives which supports the corporate brand and instil investor confidence.
- Adopting strategies that help to optimise the effectiveness of the workforce and increase the efficiency and competitive advantage of the business.
- Cultural change from one of 'presenteeism' or 'being there' to one in which people are measured on output.
- Taking advantage of mature and fast mobile technologies.
- Positioning the company to be able to attract and retain high calibre talent.

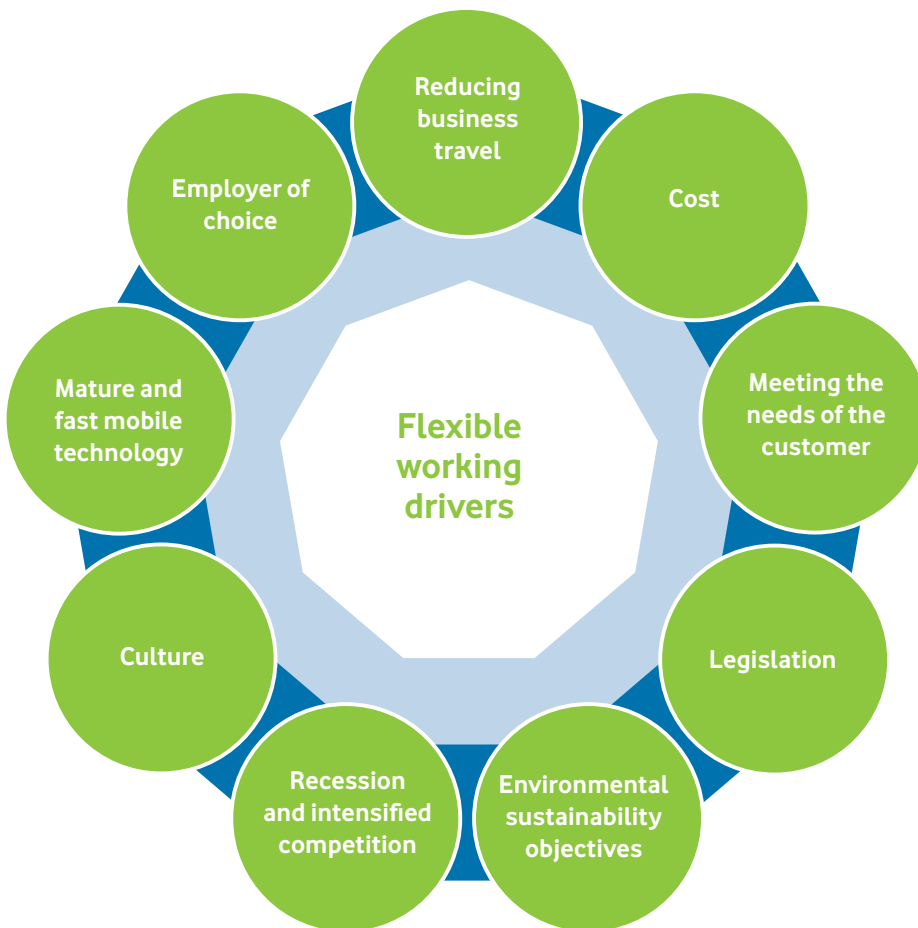
## **Overcoming the barriers to change**

For most organisations, the main barriers to implementing flexible working are cost, security, employee accountability and ongoing support.

### **Cost**

Flexible working will necessitate an investment in IT and communications, which means added cost.

But these costs look far more reasonable when you compare them with the cost of providing a company desk, replacing and retraining lost staff and the other savings that can be achieved through rationalising corporate infrastructure and reducing business travel and absenteeism.



### Security

The nature of remote working is that it takes confidential information outside of the corporate firewall, where traditional security measures are ineffective.

Effective security management policies such as central device management, securing devices, data and connection to the network, and the ability to lock and wipe devices remotely is essential.

### Trust

In order to establish a successful flexible work culture, it is essential to ensure that employees understand and work within, an environment of mutual trust and obligation.

Processes need to be put in place to ensure work and performance standards are monitored and maintained.

Collaborative tools and always-on technology can be used to enable employees to work remotely and to monitor business effectiveness.

Keeping lines of communication open, and ensuring that all staff have regular face-to-face contact with Managers and colleagues is also critical.

It is important to remember however that flexible working is not 'always working'. Employees must understand that it is acceptable to turn their phone off.

### Ongoing support

Providing the right support, including adequate IT training, health and safety advice, guidance on security and access to technical support, are all essential to making a flexible working approach successful.

**In a time of economic uncertainty, when greater cost control and efficiency is essential, the commercial arguments for investing in mobility and flexible working are extremely strong and should not be ignored. The question is not whether an organisation should consider flexible working, but whether it can afford not to?**

# Establishing a flexible working approach

**True flexible working is not just about saving costs or giving people a broadband connection at home – it involves a thorough programme of cultural change and a holistic approach to deploying the right solutions to make employees effective wherever they are working.**

Many companies have already implemented some form of mobile or flexible working policy, although they have tended to be on an informal, ad hoc, departmental level.

As a result they may fail to achieve the financial returns that only a full end-to-end organisation-wide implementation can offer.

In order to achieve maximum benefit from flexible working, it is essential to avoid fragmented piecemeal implementations that are unable to interact and result in inconsistent policies and employee satisfaction.

Flexible working must be implemented strategically, so that it becomes part of your brand culture. It should be a journey that's designed around people and how they work best.

There are two different ways in which to approach change:

#### **Transactional change - a 'tell' approach**

Using real-estate rationalisation and cost savings as the primary vehicle for change, may be quicker to implement and save costs in the short term.

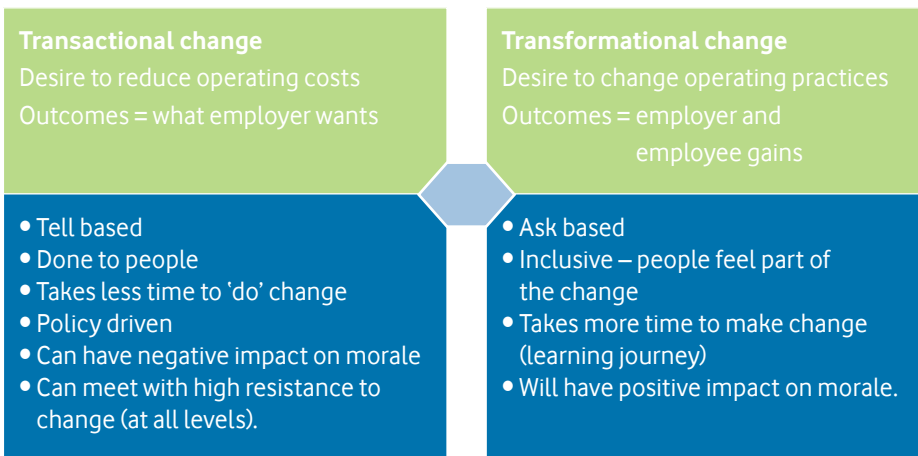
However, in our opinion, this type of policy driven approach is likely to result in low take up and therefore substantially lower savings in the longer term.

#### **Transformational change – an 'ask' approach**

In our experience, flexible working based around transformational change that gives people an element of choice in how/when/where they work will lead to greater take up in the new way of working.

A transformational approach to implementing flexible working will take longer but in general will deliver a more successful outcome as employees feel intrigued or excited and become brave enough to try new ways of working.

Whichever route your organisation takes, policies on flexible working cannot be effective without the full support and commitment of senior management who must actively encourage the use of flexible working arrangements.



Two different ways to approach change, 'tell' or 'ask'.

**A question of balance**

There is a risk however of producing a reverse effect if excessive control is exerted.

Employees might not only have difficulty understanding the new arrangements, but may also go to the extreme of thinking that policies were devised just to restrain behaviour in a few.

A balance needs to be reached between depth and scope, so that policies and guidelines regarding flexible working are comprehensive, but not to such an extent that they are not accepted or followed.

**Solid set of rules and policies**

The ability of a business to effectively maximise mobile and flexible working for organisational transformation is based on establishing a solid set of rules and policies that are fully documented and accessible to all staff.

Ensuring there is continuous dialogue between employees, managers and IT staff, and that rules and policies can be adjusted if necessary, is also critical to successful implementation.

**Best practice**

There is considerable benefit to be gained through working with a partner that has proven mobility and flexible working expertise. Sharing advice and best practices will ensure that the desired outcome can be delivered with fewer problems and unforeseen complications.

# Case study

## The Vodafone Global Enterprise SMARTER working initiative

**Vodafone Global Enterprise understands the effects of introducing an enterprise-wide flexible working policy. We implemented a successful programme which changed our work place and working styles.**

### SMARTER strategy

Vodafone Global Enterprise is a business with a presence in 21 countries across Europe, the United States and Asia Pacific.

Mobile working has always been a key feature of our business involving an intelligent approach to how and when our employees need to work, and how efforts can be better directed to ensure we have the right skills in the right place, at the right time, to meet the demanding needs of our customers.

The objectives behind our flexible working initiative were to:

- Challenge accepted beliefs and assumptions about how we work
- Identify opportunities to rationalise or reduce corporate real estate, business travel and infrastructure costs
- Identify opportunities to improve working patterns and working styles
- Make better use of our own products and services and ensure customer-facing staff have more time to spend supporting our customers
- Create a modern, future-focused work environment for our employees and guests
- Identify measurable steps to reduce our carbon footprint.

### SMARTER working

Recognising the importance of the human element behind the initiative, we chose a project name that clearly communicated what we wanted to achieve:

SMARTER working

- Space optimisation
- Mobility and freedom
- Advocacy (brand and products)
- Rethinking the ways we work
- Team collaboration
- Environment
- Results

## SMARTER steps

A strategic initiative of this nature can often take many months if not years to implement.

At Vodafone Global Enterprise, we set ourselves an organisation-wide programme launch time frame of just 12 weeks.

However timeframes can differ across different organisation and will depend on the starting point, culture, leadership, funds, and readiness to take risks.

Our approach was straightforward with just three key steps: Plan; Deploy; Manage.

A powerful group of cross-functional individuals were drawn together to define the overall vision and strategy for the change effort, and manage the programme development and execution itself.

As well as support at board level, department heads from IT, Human Resources, Finance, Operations and Property were also all closely involved.

**The SMARTER initiative required everyone to take a different approach to the workplace. It's no longer about owning a particular desk, but about having guaranteed access to the facilities you need to get work done.**

STEP ONE	STEP TWO	STEP THREE
<b>PLAN</b>	<b>DEPLOY</b>	<b>MANAGE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting the scope for change</li> <li>• Profile user needs and map out the technology needs</li> <li>• Build a strong business case</li> <li>• Understand the change management implications (culture, policies and processes)</li> <li>• Gain funding and sign off at senior level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detail the solutions required</li> <li>• Manage change requirements (culture, policies and processes)</li> <li>• Deploy solutions</li> <li>• Provide training and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage mobile estate and spend</li> <li>• Provide help desk support</li> <li>• Evaluate success</li> <li>• Gather user feedback</li> <li>• Act upon feedback improve performance</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure senior management and heads of all departments are onsite and active in their support and engagement with the programme</p>		

**Vodafone Global Enterprise has developed a successful methodology that can dramatically reduce the time it takes to implement flexible working across the enterprise.**

**Step 1 – PLAN**

The planning stage is a key one that is often rushed, which can dramatically impact timescales, costs and ultimately the success of the initiative,

Return on investment is clearly a deciding factor in any initiative, particularly one of this size. It was important therefore for us to identify potential cost savings from more effective use of existing real-estate, reduction in travel expenses and energy costs and demonstrate that they would be sufficient to fund the new change programme.

Once we had an outline business case that demonstrated significant ROI, we were able to establish senior-level sponsorship and obtain the 'go ahead' to proceed with the detailed planning.

We took an honest look at our working practices, our employees and the communication technologies we used.

Profiling our employees by roles, activities and distinct needs enabled us to decide what tools they needed to do their job effectively, but also how different groups should be managed, what additional support they would require, even what levels of productivity we could expect.

User profiling is a vital planning stage. By surveying a representative sample of employees it is possible to define groups or profiles according to where and how they work best, those that need to be based at customer locations or in the office. We used this information to map out the communication and information technologies required to enable them to work smarter and make them more productive.

**Step 2 – DEPLOY**

This stage is about detailed deployment planning, getting the right team on board, and developing and rolling out the solutions around all aspects of SMARTER working including space, technology, culture, policies and skills.

The right engagement approach needs to be chosen for the organisation (for example 'ask'/transformational or 'tell'/transactional).

From the moment we started making our people aware of the opportunities for flexible working, through to its successful implementation, effective two-way communication has been vital.

Communications planning is critical to get and keep people on board and ensure clarity of objectives, changes, allay fears and ensure that employees and importantly customers are informed about what is happening.

At Vodafone Global Enterprise we ensured that a flow of best-practice communication continually moved throughout the company at all levels and that information about flexible working, workspace behaviours and policies was built into all employee induction programmes, and reinforced by training.

The right support to change working practices must be provided including technical training and working practices/management training, policies and incentives.

All employees, regardless of where they are working, have access to 24/7 support in the event that their mobile device or equipment develops a fault, is lost or stolen, or simply if they have an issue or query that needs to be resolved.

Remote users can log their own support calls, access Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and resolve many of their IT issues on-line.

Comprehensive reporting facilities help us identify areas where a high number of queries or issues are received.

Using this information we can target training, produce more detailed FAQs and on-line education, reduce further problems and enable our people to work more effectively.

### Step 3 – MANAGE

During this stage, it is essential to determine and control Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), analyse and manage spend from a central view point, and ensure that mobile devices are secure and used according to best practice and company policy.

It is worth assessing whether your mobility partners have the tools and resources in place to provide these services. It is also worth considering having a global standard set of terms for devices and ongoing costs such as voice or data usage. This will not only ensure you get the best deal overall and will greatly simplify the processes within your business for managing your ICT estate.

Providing the right support for employees in and out of the office was absolutely critical, including help desk (for example extended hours/services) and management trust and support.

To fully understand concerns, opinions, expectations, and results we surveyed employees before and after the initiative.

The surveys were used to gather initial data on people's working styles and to highlight any concerns or issues that we may need to address before making decisions regarding flexible working or changes to working practices.

Ensuring that we had senior management buy-in and support, throughout the entire period of change, was pivotal to the success of the initiative.

Following the implementation of flexible working, surveys were used to measure the success of the programme and identify any areas where improvements might be required.

A large percentage of employees reported real benefits from being able to work flexibly. Vodafone Global Enterprise sales and service teams particularly found the ability to spend time at customers' offices beneficial.

**In April 2009, Vodafone will deploy unified communication services to 30,000 employees with an estimated business case net present value return of € 6.5m.**

**Real estate optimisation since 2002 through the reduction of 53 buildings in the UK.**

**In 2008 payback for the cost of change in the UK was less than 4 months. This was achieved through 120% building occupancy and several integrated initiatives including outsourcing, downsizing and flexible working.**

**In 2008 65% of UK employees reported an improved work/life balance.**

**In 2008 Vodafone Group's business travel CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction, from using video and teleconferencing, is estimated at 1,449 tonnes.**

## **SMARTER results**

The provision of flexible working arrangements is now part of the Vodafone Global Enterprise culture.

With flexible working our staff can operate anywhere as though they were in the office, with full and secure access to the information and applications they need.

All our employees are now able to adapt their working style to their personal circumstances, increasing their effectiveness, job satisfaction and morale. They now spend less of their valuable time commuting and going to and from meetings.

Our offices are a vibrant and energetic environment in which to meet, collaborate and work.

The SMARTER working initiative has helped us rationalise expensive corporate real estate, reduce infrastructure and travel costs, and become a more agile company.

The initiative is also helping to meet sustainability objectives and reduce carbon footprint, which helps to support our corporate brand and instill investor confidence.

We believe that our flexible working policies have helped to make us an 'employer of choice' and that we are better able to attract and retain high calibre talent.

The valuable insight and capability we have gained from creating a more agile and flexible organisation has had a positive effect on every aspect of our business – management, employee morale and customer service.

Now every Vodafone Global Enterprise employee, no matter where they are located in the world, is a flexible worker and understands the true holistic SMARTER benefits that can be realised.

**By making the jump to flexible working now you won't be storing up bigger challenges for the future, when traditional work models will no longer support the levels of flexibility, adaptability and communication that your organisation demands.**

### **SMARTER best practice**

The following ideas and recommendations are put forward as best practice:

- An 'ask' approach to implementing flexible working is likely to deliver a more successful outcome.
- Assume any role can be done flexibly providing it is not to the detriment of the business.
- Ensure that senior managers buy in to the initiative, review take up of flexible working options and listen to employee opinions.
- Carry out full evaluations of people, policies and technology to find the most appropriate route to success.
- Review, amend and relaunch policies to encourage changes in culture regarding all varieties of flexible working.
- Review policies and job design to maximise the use of flexible working.
- Allow teams and individuals to tailor flexibility and mobility to suit their own needs.
- Embed flexible working policies into the culture of your organisation.
- Build a culture of trust and focus on the results your employees deliver, not how they deliver them.
- Invest in the right technology to facilitate remote working.
- Provide training and support.
- Branding is an important part of making the flexible environment feel new and exciting.
- Communicate your organisation's commitment to flexible working and actively encourage staff to take up the options.
- Publish guidance and give practical examples of ways to achieve a better work/life balance.
- Measure success and ensure correct processes in place for managing and maintaining the new flexible environment.

# Conclusion

**Any organisation, no matter what its size or market, can realise the benefits of flexible working by combining the right information and communication technology with the right management strategies.**

The success of mobile and flexible working will depend on your aspirations to innovate and accommodate change into the very heart of your organisation.

Implemented strategically, flexible working will deliver significant benefits well into the future.

Vodafone Global Enterprise can help you to get a deeper understanding of mobile technologies and the multiplicity of business and organisation issues that have to be considered before and after implementing a flexible working solution.

We have a range of mobility products and services, extensive intelligence about IT and communications and know how they can be maximised to sustain mobile and flexible working.

We have a tried and tested methodology that will enable you to deploy flexible working policies quickly and painlessly at a local, regional and global level.

Our success in deploying flexible working within our own organisation has enabled us to develop exceptional insight into the impact the process can have on a multi-national business.

Vodafone Global Enterprise can help your organisation to fully understand the mobility needs of your employees, to determine aims and requirements and to devise effective policies for mobile and flexible working.

Because we understand the global nature of flexible working, we can either design and coordinate the process on your behalf, or support you through current flexible working projects.

To learn more about how Vodafone Global Enterprise can help you to successfully deploy mobility and flexible working policies across your business please contact your Account Manager.

**This paper outlines our approach to mobility for global businesses and forms part of a series. Further papers and information can be found at: [www.enterprise.vodafone.com](http://www.enterprise.vodafone.com)**

## Benefits of flexible working

- Real estate optimisation, since 2002, through the reduction of 53 buildings in the UK
- We now have building occupancy of 120%
- 25% reduction in the amount of office space required in New Zealand
- 50% reduction in on-site filing space (leading to a 40% cost saving)
- 75% reduction in printer lease costs
- 65% of employees reporting improved work-home life balance
- 13% increase in team performance through right the tools
- 100% business continuity for over 3,000 employees during flood at global HQ
- Sales and service flexible workers gained more customer face time and are 24% more productive
- Projected savings of €20m from clearer travel policies
- 26% reduction in energy consumption in New Zealand
- 60% reduction in waste paper from printing.

**Implemented well, flexible working offers significant benefits for the business, its employees and customers, and the environment.**

#### **Benefits to your business**

- Significant savings in office space requirements, company vehicle and parking costs
- Recruitment and training cost savings
- Retention of experienced employees
- Government incentives
- Greater employee satisfaction and loyalty
- Employees have more time to spend on customers
- Decreased risk of disruption from events such as road closures and industrial action.

#### **Benefits for your customers**

- Higher standard of service forged on trust-based relationships
- Extended hours of service
- Sustainable supply chain.

#### **Benefits for your employees**

- Greater freedom to manage time and tasks and improved work/life balance
- Fewer co-worker interruptions and distractions
- Improved efficiency and productivity
- Greater freedom to plan around other commitments including those of a family
- Fewer hours committed to work day (such as time spent organising, dressing and commuting) – without actually working fewer hours.

#### **Benefits for the environment**

- Potential to reduce office environmental footprint and business travel
- Fewer commuters on the road, congestion is reduced and carbon dioxide emissions are lower.

[www.enterprise.vodafone.com](http://www.enterprise.vodafone.com)

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