



Kate Le Blond, Inward Investment Development Manager at Locate Jersey, provides some insight. “We’re seeing increasingly that the digital infrastructure Jersey can provide is having an impact on decisions to relocate business operations here. Having a robust digital platform and a strategic vision for a digitally enabled society in place has been a game-changer for Jersey, and we continue to see it as being a core part of our proposition for businesses looking to relocate here in the years to come.”

SECTOR APPEAL

Are there specific industries more suited to remote working than others? John Davison, CIO of Guernsey-based First Central Insurance & Technology Group, suggests non-customer facing roles are good candidates for distributed working. “And the technical industries are very well suited to remote working,” he adds, “because code is uniform; you can be from any background and speak any language, but you’ll write the same code.”

Parrott agrees that technology, IT, finance and accounting roles are particularly suited, as well as marketing. But she points out that, increasingly, industries such as teaching, transcription, travel and hospitality are becoming forerunners of flexible working.

Richard Sheldon, Group Partner in the Guernsey office of Appleby, says one of the key advantages of global working is being able to provide clients with a 24/7 service.

“With a global team – someone in Asia, Europe and the Americas – you’re able to service a client around the clock. This is so much more attractive to a client than working with a company that works nine to five from an office in London.”

From an employee perspective, studies suggest that flexible working is more sought after than salary. Parrott believes such freedom of choice leads to empowerment and that, in turn, leads to engagement. “Retention levels are higher and morale is more positive,” she says.

“Budgets are healthier (as less physical office space is needed) and employee costs are down (since related travel and working costs are reduced) – it’s a win-win. Declines in stress levels have also been shown, and a dramatic drop in mental health issues and absenteeism.”

Nixon agrees that reduced office costs are an obvious consideration, but says they are seldom the driving factor.

“Yes, remote working is a way of keeping costs down, but just as important is that it allows employees more autonomy and engenders greater loyalty.”

Nor does he believe that there is a trade-off with regards to productivity levels. Nixon points to Sweden, where remote working has been strongly supported for more than 10 years now.

“The productivity levels from those working remotely in Sweden is phenomenal. It’s time we look to other economies and see if we can learn a lesson or two from our neighbours and create better work/life balance for all.”