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# Shifting Leverage Between Employee and Employer and its Effect on Office.

**We live in precarious and interesting times. That is a statement of the obvious, but that simple reality, perhaps more than ever before, seems to be the continued and persistent driver behind confusion around what work will, can and should look like going forward. And with the economy suddenly on the verge of real turmoil, if not already there, it only muddies the water further. One of the things I have observed that doesn't necessarily help advance sustained and healthy work environments is the leverage shifts in these economic ups and downs between employee and employer. The tension that naturally exists in companies is the fact that companies don't exist without employees while employees don't have jobs without employers. But it is within that natural tension where many office asset managers and owners historically struggle to find a delicate balance, a sweet spot if you will, from which to achieve sustained success.**

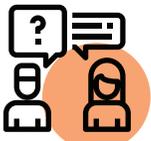
**Employee Get It While You Can:** Show me a world where there are 30 jobs for 2 employees and I'll show you an employee base that can, if not careful, overestimate their capabilities and worth, while shortchanging their learning and productivity. Bosses burn out and become bitter scrambling to hire and appease to retain the best talent pool they can. This is where WFH seems to have found an ideal moment in time to thrive, thanks to the added boost from Covid.



Rather than truly seek a solid solution to make it work, employers have gritted it out and said, “some productivity is better than none” while employees have said, “I’ve dreamed about this my whole career... let’s make the most of it while it lasts.”



**Employer Make It While You Can:** Show me a world with 30 employees and 2 jobs, and I’ll show you an employee who, while not happy inside necessarily, is extremely compliant just to keep a job that 28 others will gladly take if they walk away. However, employers in this moment, if not careful, can view people as mere tools necessary to accomplish tasks. Times are generally tough and thoughts around employee growth, training, and environments are at risk to be shortchanged. Office leases are structured with the best economic terms in mind first and foremost which inevitably leads to several employee-centric offering casualties. Because the economic terms are so devastating to the owner, the only solution to salvage an acceptable NER is to extend the term as long as possible to minimize the damage. This only prolongs and locks-in the subpar environment for the employee.



**The Needed New Office Posture:** In the sales world, there is an analogy of “hunter” and “catcher” to describe the two approaches to securing new business. In this whipsaw world described above, owners and operators of Office have played the role of desperate catcher in trying to assemble assets that reflected the group with the upper hand. The employee-heavy world gets more coffee kiosks and pickleball courts while the employer-heavy world gets more conference rooms and higher parking ratios. With both sides in a bit of a confused state today, it’s time for owners and operators to take on the hunter role and lead the solution set that works for both groups and is more resilient to market shifts. Create spaces and services that make for more satisfied and fulfilled employees while simultaneously and naturally making them more efficient and productive for their employers.



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**Leadership:** That's what it will take in the coming months and years in Office to find our way through and out of this moment into what comes next. This is a decades old dilemma that will require several generations worth of leaders to unravel. The pioneers that lead today don't need all the answers – simply the conviction and passion to step out and the desire to train up the next generation who can take the baton and run even further. We can either live in this current and often unhealthy tension between employee and employer or embrace and thrive in the great opportunity the current societal and economic upheaval offers to rebalance and level the shifts between cycles and achieve more sustainable success.



Sincerely,  
Mike Fransen  
Founder / CEO, Workng

