

The companies that encourage staff to socialise with each other

There's no reason why a social work culture has to be awkward or embarrassing, as these UK companies prove Socialising with work colleagues can be a tricky balance to strike.

While studies show that it increases productivity, supports wellbeing and can lead to lasting friendships, there is always the fear that work might take over your personal life. That you may blur the boundaries of professional relationships or, even worse, end up embarrassing yourself on the karaoke machine when it goes too far.

However, it seems that we are certainly not adverse to workplace relationships. In fact, one in five of us (22%) met our partner at work – according to a YouGov poll for the TUC – while a third of us have had a relationship with a colleague at some point.

A 2016 study from Peldon Rose found that: 91% of employees value friendships within work 85% of employees count colleagues as friends Two-thirds (66%) say social events are important in helping them bond with their colleagues 80% say friendships with colleagues help them to be more productive at work 69% say social events at work are important in supporting their mental health and wellbeing.

“If you look at how modern office spaces are designed – for instance Google's or Facebook's – you will see that they are designed to maximise employee interactions away from the desk,” says Dan Rogers, founder of Peakon – a company specialising in people management.

“This is something that Tony Hsieh has focused a lot on at Zappos, a company renowned for its innovative and exceptional culture,” Rogers continues. “He designed the Zappos office to maximise serendipitousⁱ meetings between employees with the hypothesis that the best things happen when people are bumping into each other and sharing ideas.

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ⁱ Serendipitous : unexpected and happy