

How to thrive in a more **FLEXIBLE WORLD**

Five ways to empower your workforce
to be more productive



A **xerox**™ Business Solutions Company

Introduction

Over the last two years, businesses from all sectors have had to reassess how they operate.

We've all adopted new and innovative ways of working to keep the business running and customers supported. And technology has been at the heart of it, enabling distributed business models, secure data sharing across networks, and the ability to collaborate remotely.

The nature of work has changed rapidly. In fact, when surveyed, 71% of SMB leaders acknowledged that they've made fundamental changes to their businesses as a result of the pandemic.¹

FLEXIBLE WORKING: HERE TO STAY

There have been many polls and predictions about what this means for the long-term future of work.

One of the largest and most significant studies was conducted by Ipsos for the World Economic Forum² which surveyed 12,500 employees in 29 countries. The results of this showed a clear consensus about what people want:

- 66% want employers to allow more flexible working in the future.
- 64% say they are more productive with a flexible work schedule.
- 30% would consider looking for another job if forced to return to the office full time.

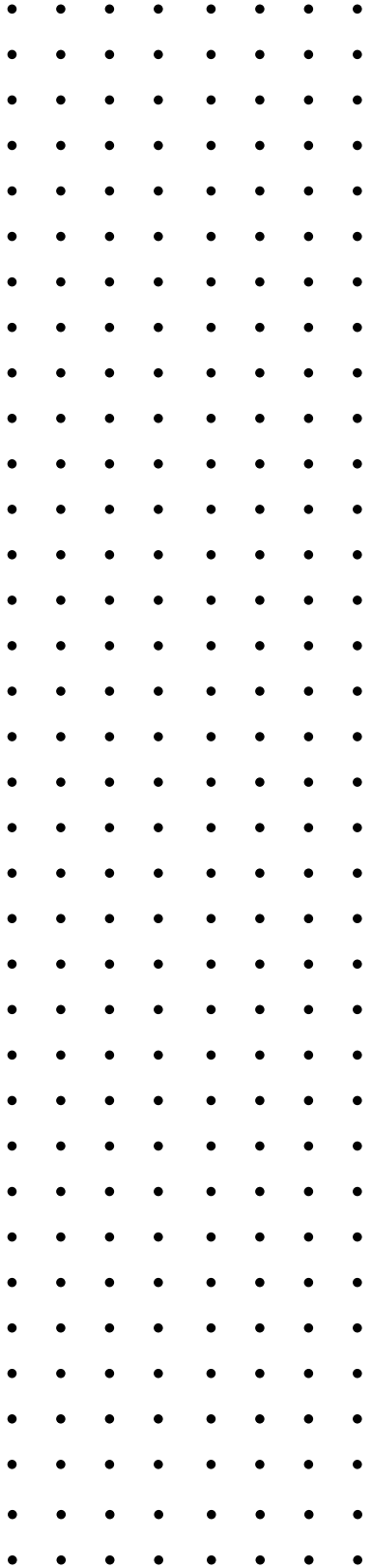
THE NEW BAU

Having pivoted quickly to support remote working during 2020, businesses are now making the transition toward permanent flexible working.

Many businesses no longer insist that staff come to a fixed workplace full time, but instead recognise the benefits of allowing choice over when and how often people come in. It's becoming business as usual.

However, embedding this fully into the culture of a business, and ensuring that the right processes and solutions are in place for the long term, brings its own set of challenges.

Enterprises are increasingly adopting decentralisation business models, with some staff working from HQs, but others in branches and different locations. These might stretch across a region, a country or even the globe.



1 Xerox: The Future of Work in a Pandemic Era, 2020
2 Xerox: SMB Future of Work Survey, 2021

Changing workstyles, **FOR GOOD**

Owners must now focus on long-term changes that will help their businesses to thrive in the new era of flexible work.

In this eBook, five things are outlined you can do today to embrace changing workstyles and keep your business resilient for the future:



At the end of the eBook, you can evaluate your current performance in each of these areas – next steps for improvement are offered.



Five areas to
power up
**A FLEXIBLE,
PRODUCTIVE
WORKFORCE**



1. Keep up **PRODUCTIVITY**

Recently, safety has been the first and most important concern. But you still have a business to run. Hopefully, you are confident that you've met your responsibilities for employee and customer welfare, so your focus is now on how you continue to deliver your products and services efficiently.

Employees at many businesses find themselves spending large chunks of their time searching for documents or struggling to access them remotely. They may not have access to the right data and applications, or they may have challenges connecting to remote servers.

These productivity snags will continue to present a challenge for businesses, especially in a hybrid environment. Those that set their systems up properly will be more efficient and gain a competitive advantage.

Those that don't resolve these issues – perhaps sticking with the quick fixes they implemented in early lockdown – could fall further behind.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

How has flexible working affected your employees' ability to find, access, and share documents?

Where could your document approval processes be sped up to improve remote workflows?

HOW WE CAN HELP

DIGITISE YOUR DOCUMENTS

Capture, digitise, share, and access documents including physical mail easily, wherever you are, to help increase your team's productivity.

PUT PROCESSES ON AUTOPILOT

Lift the admin burden and reduce errors by automating labour-intensive tasks, so that your team can focus on more high-value jobs.

ACCESS YOUR WORK ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

No matter their location, or what time of day, your team can easily access documents and perform tasks via server or cloud-based solutions.



2. Give employees **FLEXIBILITY**

Flexible working is what employees expect in many industries. But for employers, promising flexibility is not the same as delivering it. The logistics involved can cause headaches for business owners and project managers.

They need to know where employees are going to be at a given time, what equipment they currently have, and what they're going to need in the future – such as the right print and digital materials required to do their work. And it's important to have a real-time view of which employees are coming into the office and when to help with capacity planning.

They also need robust digital security protocols that enable staff to remotely access company information, customer data, and corporate communications securely.

Shift management applications can help with this. They allow business owners to safely coordinate teams and manage capacity and resources – plus, they demonstrate to employees that the business has an ongoing commitment to flexible working. Similarly, flexible print solutions can meet the needs of both office and flexible workers, allowing documents to be printed on site, or at a production centre, or at their closest retail location.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

How are you managing the number of employees on your premises? Is it feasible to keep what you're doing going long-term?

What is the experience like for employees switching between working from company premises and their homes? Is their access to data disrupted?

Can your employees complete all their work, no matter where they are? Can you remotely access cost-controlled production of digital and print communications?

HOW WE CAN HELP

BETTER REMOTE WORKING

Comprehensive support packages ensure your remote team members get everything they need to keep working more securely and productively.

SEAMLESS WORKING, HOME OR AWAY

Tools designed to give your employees the same experiences, and be productive whether they're in the office or at home.

EMPLOYEE FLEXIBILITY

Give your team the chance to create a working environment that works for them, while benefiting from the tools and technology to manage them efficiently from a distance.



3. Communicate and collaborate

SECURELY

As well as being able to access documents and data, employees also need to be able to access each other. Collaboration has changed for many businesses, with people switching to digital chat channels, video conferencing and shared documents on the cloud, sometimes for the first time in their careers.

Collaboration tools have quickly stepped in to fill the gaps, but they don't always include the functionality you need, like easy auditability and teamworking. And crucially for businesses that work with sensitive data, there are questions around their security credentials.

The increase in remote working has drastically expanded the attack surface for most organisations, and cyberattacks have been on the rise. Investing in efficient and secure collaboration software today isn't just about facilitating communications. It's about doing the right thing, not the simple thing, and providing a reliable productivity platform for years to come.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Are your employees all using apps approved by your business to collaborate?

How easy is it for your staff to collaborate on documents in real time?

How confident are you that their communication channels are secure?

Can your employees connect with customers, wherever and whenever they need to?

HOW WE CAN HELP

SECURELY MANAGE YOUR CONTENT

Your teams can collaborate and make more informed decisions with access to a central and secure documents hub. They will be able to upload or download information, anytime, anywhere.

A SMOOTHER WORKFLOW AT HOME

Working from home made easier, thanks to hassle-free printer installation and configuration, and automatically restocked supplies.

WORK MORE SECURELY TOGETHER

Protect your devices, emails and data from would-be thieves and other threats for better peace of mind.



4. Put the right infrastructure **IN PLACE**

Flexible working requires an agile, cloud-based infrastructure that can support a variety of devices. Whether you have a 'bring your own device' or a business-owned strategy, you need to ensure that all devices are set up securely and effectively from the outset.

This includes devices like printers, which are essential for industries that rely on physical paperwork, such as legal, financial services, and healthcare. It's important that flexible workers have the ability to print and digitally scan and share materials from a home printer securely – and an easy mechanism for ordering supplies and getting technical support when they need it.

But also, new laptops, tablets, and mobile phones aren't often set up to connect to these printers automatically. So, how do you create an environment where flexible workers receive new devices that are provisioned correctly and securely, straight out of the box?

Without this, you'll likely see an increase in IT issues, which puts strain on your internal teams. Here's where a managed service can help. By handling those more basic requests, it frees your skilled staff to work on higher-value tasks. And it gives you peace of mind that employees can get the right advice whenever they need it.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

How many of my employees are using unsecured devices for work purposes? This includes laptops and phones, but also printers and other connected hardware.

How much pressure are your IT support and operations people under? At what point is it easier to invest in a managed support service, rather than hiring more administrative support staff?

Do you know if internal or confidential information is being printed on home printers? Do you have any processes in place for ordering supplies, and monitoring them upon arrival?

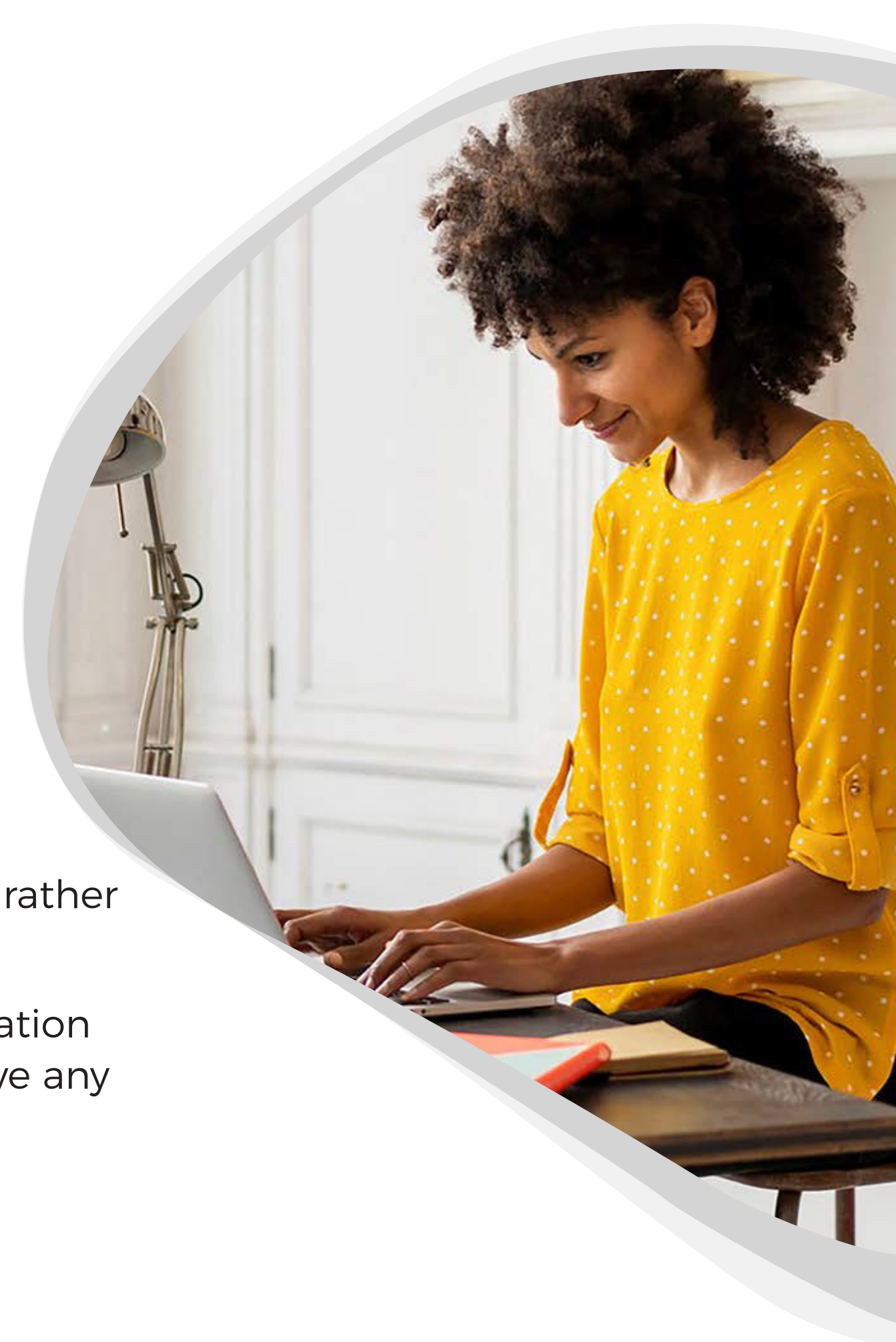
HOW WE CAN HELP

SUPPORT WHENEVER YOU NEED IT

Reduce costs and time addressing issues with Xerox flexible support packages. So you can concentrate on your customers, rather than problems. Home printers can be included in reporting and analytics.

EASY DEPLOYMENT AND SET UP

Avoid the headaches of installation issues by quickly connecting all your hardware devices through an email or QR code and support services which can include delivery and setup of a printer.



5. Prepare for **THE FUTURE**

Businesses experience disruption – whether it's changing market conditions or unpredictable events. This shouldn't be concerning, but rather seen as an opportunity for differentiation: businesses who are agile, adaptable, and resilient are best placed to weather any future storms.

Now is a great time for business leaders to reflect on the last few years. How well did we perform? Where were our weak areas? Which processes were most at risk when the disruption hit?

And it's also the time to make any necessary changes. Many of your competitors are already doing so. Who knows what the next major disruption will look like, or when it will happen? So why not get prepared now?

Many of the recommendations in this eBook are imperatives for business leaders, and deserve attention today:

- Turn data into insights that help you understand what's really happening in your business.
- Support productivity measures for flexible working.
- Digitise and move business processes to the cloud for scalability.
- Ensure that devices and processes are secured from end-to-end.
- Personalise customer communications across channels to boost engagement.
- Ensure that internal disruptions don't impact the customer journey.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

How will you keep essential processes running if we have another major disruption in the future?

Where were your biggest weak points during the last two years? And what have you done to ensure that those weaknesses are eliminated?

What are the steps you can take to increase the overall resiliency of your business?

HOW WE CAN HELP

ANALYTICS THAT WORK FOR YOU

Get a better understanding of your company data to see where you could optimise, automate, and improve your paper-based processes, print, and IT infrastructure.

MANAGED SERVICES BUILT AROUND YOU

With managed services for print, scanning, creative services, and digital mailroom, it's easy to scale support and monitoring based on your specific requirements.

PEACE OF MIND

Your infrastructure will be managed and maintained to prevent, detect, and report on threats.

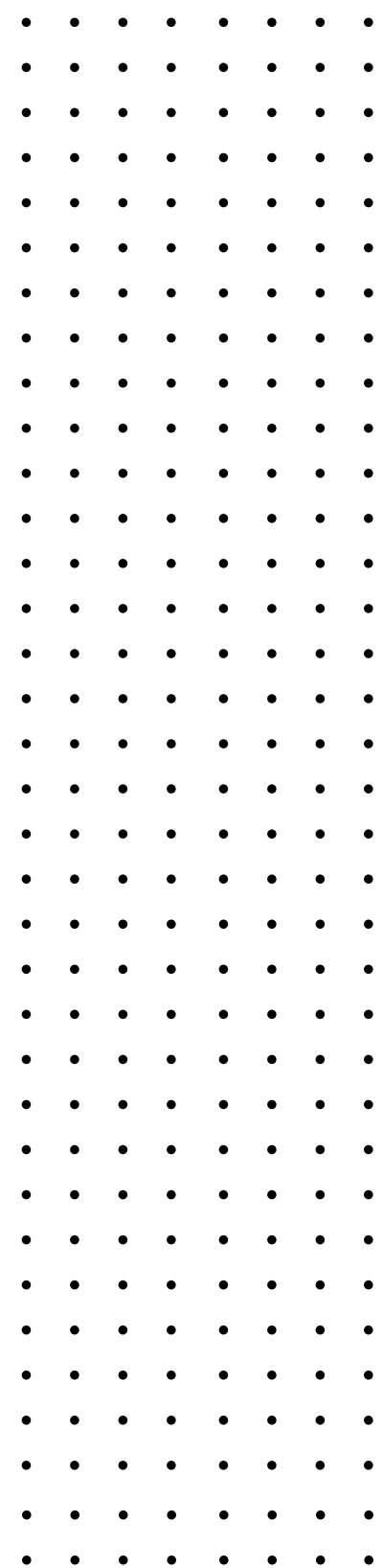


Assess your
**CURRENT
SITUATION**



Assess your current situation

FOCUS AREA	CONCERNING (1 POINT)	MODERATE (3 POINTS)	MATURE (5 POINTS)
 KEEP PRODUCTIVITY UP	<p>Flexible working has significantly slowed down many of our key workflows and processes.</p>	<p>We've put in place acceptable workarounds for key workflows and processes, but they're perhaps not long-term solutions.</p>	<p>Working flexibly doesn't slow down or affect our processes and workflows in any significant way. We are just as productive as before, or better.</p>
 COMMUNICATE AND COLLABORATE SECURELY	<p>I'm concerned about the amount of time being lost due to slow communications. I am unsure if the channels we use are secure or not.</p>	<p>While flexible working has posed some minor problems for collaboration, it only has a limited effect on our ability to get work done.</p>	<p>The internal and external communication channels in my business are open, secure, and easy to use.</p>
 DO MORE TO ENABLE FLEXIBILITY	<p>We've struggled since re-opening to manage shifts and co-ordinate our workforce. We still don't know where they will be on a given day.</p>	<p>Our premises are open, but we're relying on some workarounds to understand where our staff plan to work each day. It's not a great solution.</p>	<p>We've implemented an effective shift management system which works at scale. It's straightforward to find out who's working where at any given time.</p>
 PUT THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE IN PLACE	<p>A lot of our processes rely on the secure exchange of information - both printed and digital. This has been a challenge with people working flexibly.</p>	<p>Although we have some processes in the cloud, there are several critical business functions that we still struggle to scale and update efficiently.</p>	<p>I am confident that the infrastructure we have in place - both physical and digital - is ready to scale with our business. I understand the print patterns of our staff working remotely.</p>
 PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE	<p>I don't think we've made much progress increasing the business' resiliency against another major, unexpected disruption.</p>	<p>We have contingency plans for future disruption, but I am not 100% confident in our business continuity capacity.</p>	<p>The systems we have in place give us flexibility, security and stability for the future - I feel like we are in a strong place.</p>



Assessing **YOUR SCORE**

IF YOUR TOTAL ACROSS ALL FIVE CATEGORIES IS BELOW 15

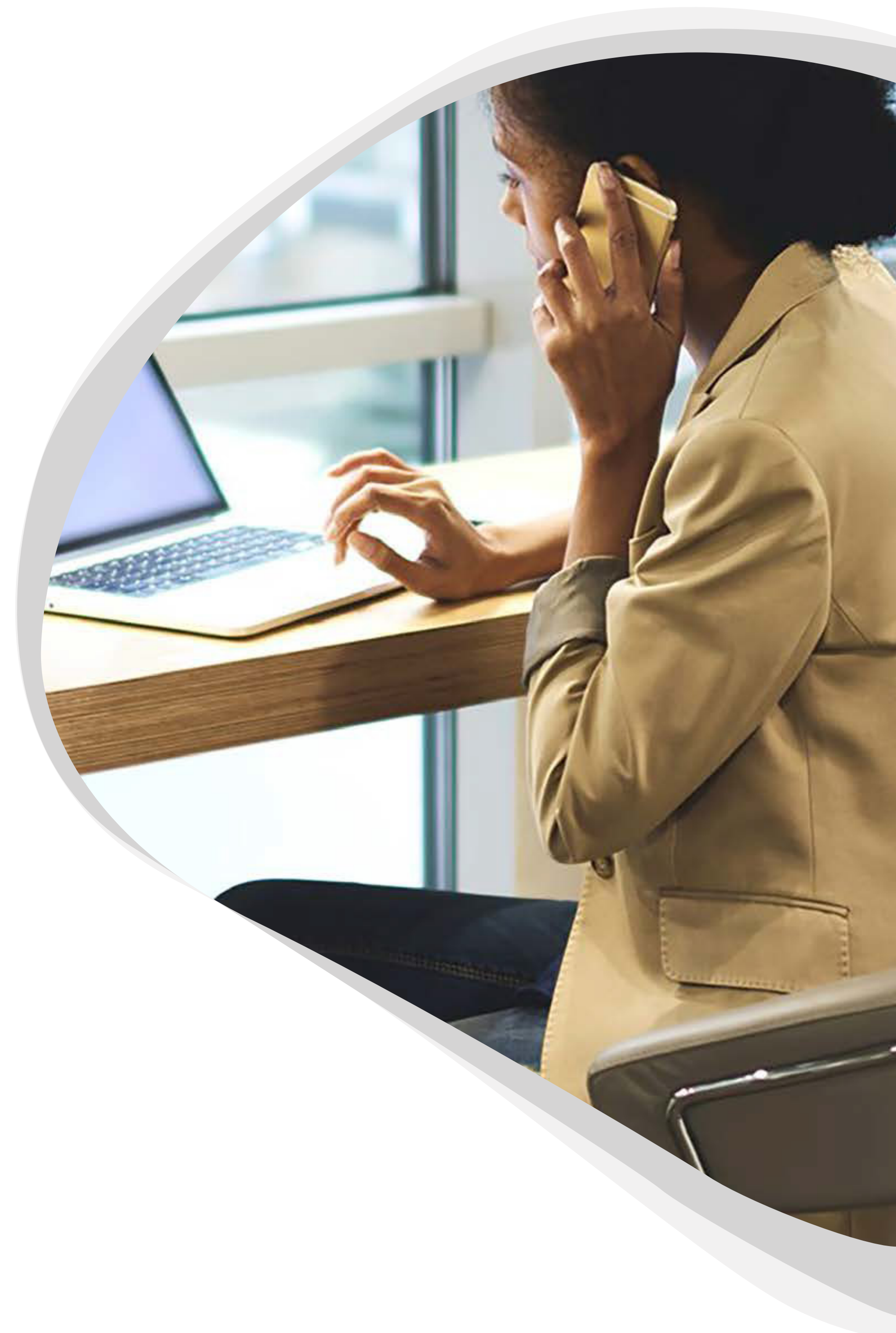
You either have some major concerns or you have a series of minor risks which could compound in a crisis. It would be shrewd to address these immediately, before the risks turn into reality.

IF YOUR SCORE IS BETWEEN 15 AND 22

You probably have at least a couple of issues which are worthy of attention. Shoring up these areas would improve your resilience and help you retain your competitive edge in years to come.

IF YOU SCORED 23 OR HIGHER

You are in a strong position for the future. However, situations change and technology evolves rapidly – there's no room for complacency. An external partner may be able to identify risks you've overlooked.





Next **STEPS**

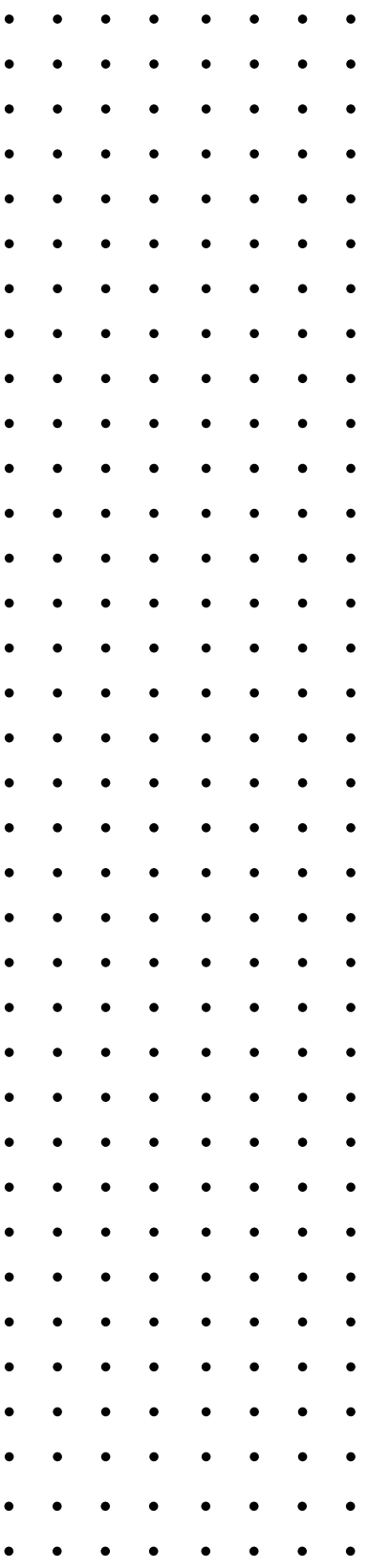
Flexible working is becoming embedded in the culture of most businesses today.

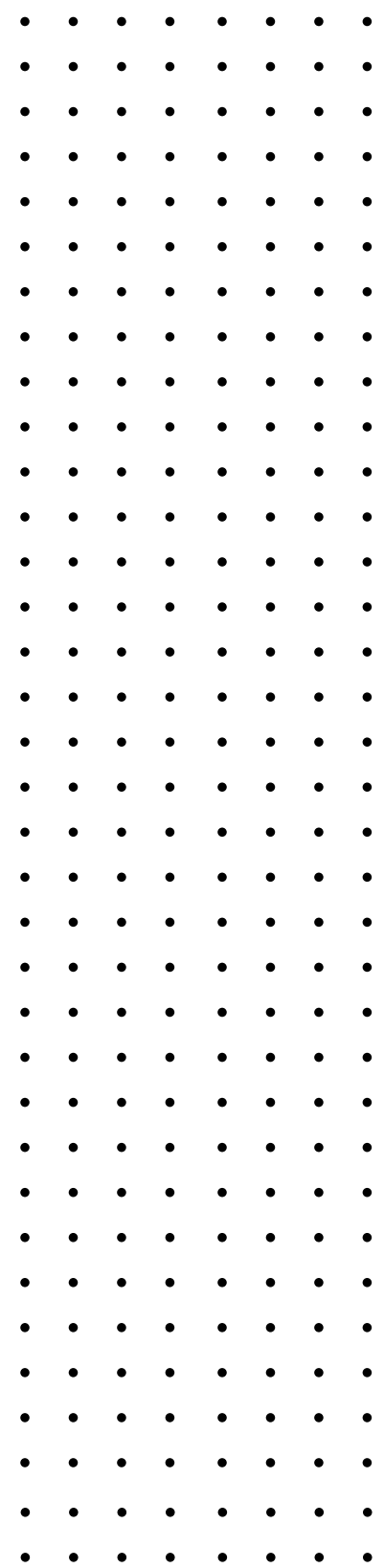
So, it's vital that future-facing businesses put in place digital infrastructures to help their workforces create, communicate, and collaborate, wherever they're based.

Not only will this ensure that business critical services continue to run smoothly, but will also allow employees to learn new skills, fill new roles, and drive productivity from anywhere.

Itec has a long and successful track record in driving digital transformation – and we can support your plans with software, hardware, services, and expertise.

To find out how we're helping businesses like yours to empower their flexible workforce and improve productivity, please contact us.





About **US**

We work side by side with you to improve the productivity and efficiency of your operations by providing business process services, printing equipment, software and solutions that make a real difference to your customers.

Contact us today, and let's start a conversation.