



Jabra GN
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Unlocking the productivity potential in your organization

The devil is in the detail.

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Abstract: Value creation in organizations relies on how well employees are able to live up to their true potential. Their ability to do so depends on many factors, but first and foremost they need to be empowered to adjust their own working environment. Being granted autonomy over technology, culture and location choices results in employees communicating, collaborating and concentrating more effectively, in turn delivering more organizational value.

Within organizations, four different archetypes of people work together:



Game Changer

always on the move, making smart decisions, connecting people



Guru

wise, applies experience well and great at tying actions to strategy



Genius

knows where information is, follows standard procedures and creates high quality results



Guardian

a rock-solid colleague and culture-carrier

Granting autonomy to each of these archetypes begins a new era of work where one-size-fits-all culture and technology are replaced in favor of employees self-selecting how they best perform.

While personality differences are widely acknowledged as influencing behavior and decision making, other influences on workplace behavior are not that well understood; variances in mindset towards work, work habits and technology preferences all impact productivity. In this White Paper we take a look at each of these areas to provide useful insights into the new world of work – one in which the individual takes center stage.

Introduction

In knowledge work, autonomy has long been the key to creating greater productivity and innovation.

Successful organizations realize that compelling knowledge workers¹ to conduct work in a certain way is counterproductive, especially if you want an organization that is agile and able to cope rapidly with ever-changing market requirements.

In order to better understand the underlying idiosyncrasies of humans at work that influence productivity and value creation, we designed the **Jabra Work Potential Test**. The data captured from the test has given us valuable insights which we'll share with you throughout this document.

Test yourself

Before reading on, we recommend that you do your own work profile assessment. The results will help you learn more about how minor work-style tweaks can make you more productive.

Take the test here at jabra.com/campaigns/nwow

This White Paper is designed to inspire you to take the first step towards creating a work environment in which you, your employees and your colleagues can achieve your full potential.

Choices and behaviors are to a large extent related to personality traits – studies have found that humans generally comply with five². For the purposes of our study, we categorized respondents as being one of four different 'Archetypes' according to which personality trait their behavior reflected: Guru, Game Changer, Genius and Guardian [see **table 1**]. Each respondent was asked five questions relating to their behavior and preferences in the workplace. Their responses, coupled with their archetype, enable us to understand more about the underlying variances in human behavior and the choices that are central to productive knowledge work.

The data that informs this White Paper comes from almost 880 respondents across Europe and the USA collected through September 2015 to March 2016. Patterns between the five questions posed, and the four archetypes, were explored using Watson Analytics.

While distribution and correlations in data sets provide new insights, they only deliver a general picture of what is actually happening. We have looked for more granular insights by exploring patterns of behaviors, preferences and mindsets, related to the four archetypes.

¹ Definition of the knowledge worker: The task based knowledge worker's primary tasks include turning data into knowledge and bringing these into play with colleagues and business partners in order to make good decisions.

² Method: We have used the OCEAN personality trait model, normally referred to as the "Big Five" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Five_personality_traits. Combined with experience of behavior in knowledge work we constructed four archetypes described in table 1. The relation to OCEAN is applied in the following way: Game Changer is related to personality traits of extraversion (E), Genius is related to personality traits of conscientiousness (C), Guardian is related to personality traits of agreeableness (A), and Guru is related to personality traits of openness to Learning (O). N (neuroticism) is not included.

The different archetypes in knowledge work.

As discovered in Jabra's Work Potential Tool

Guru



The Guru helps everybody keep the same perspective, make smart decisions and stay on course. They inspire colleagues, create new knowledge and share perspectives and insights with others. They love challenges and collaborating with colleagues but this takes up time which distracts them from their individual work. As a result, the Guru frequently works after office hours or at home.

Game Changer



The Game Changer is always on the move, applying energy to everything they and their colleagues do. When faced with a challenge, they can come up with a bold new solution or will know someone in their network who can get the job done. Their ability to network means their agenda is packed with appointments, but this places pressure on them to make swift decisions when perhaps they would have preferred more time.

Genius



In a full-on corporate world, the Genius manages to keep their cool, sticking to the facts and creating solid solutions that last. Their memory is crucial to the whole department and they're the ones who know where to find facts or tacit knowledge needed to get to the next level. When someone dreams up something leftfield, everybody looks to the Genius to cut through the clutter and create the proof of concept. The Genius prefers to communicate via email as it saves time over endless meetings, and keeps everything documented for further distribution or use.

Guardian



The Guardian keeps the ship on course and their impeccable project skills are highly prized, but actually it's their people skills that make them successful. They spot how people feel from afar and make sure that everybody is included - the Guardian loves project meetings for giving overviews and getting everybody on the same page. In between meetings the Guardian talks continuously with the entire team to make sure everyone is happy and the project proceeds as planned. Unfortunately, their talking steals time from their own work, which leaves them stressed and somewhat disorganized, especially when unexpected issues arise.

About the data: From September 2015 – January 2016, we asked 1100 individuals from 22 countries a series of questions as part of the Jabra Work Potential Tool. We asked about their preferences in work situations, habits of knowledge-sharing and choices of communication technologies, all in relation to being a knowledge worker in a modern global organization. People were prompted with 5 specific questions, categorizing all respondents according to pre-designed archetype categories of Guru, Game Changer, Genius and Guardian (see fact boxes) which represent different traits in humans. In a work-related context, the archetypes deliver value to the overall value-creation process but in different ways. Respondents used the assessment tool to get tips and tricks to raise their productivity. While the original number of respondents was 1100, we erased all blanks which left us with 888 responses. The data from these responses was analyzed using Watson Analytics to explore patterns between archetypes and specific choices, preferences, and behaviors.

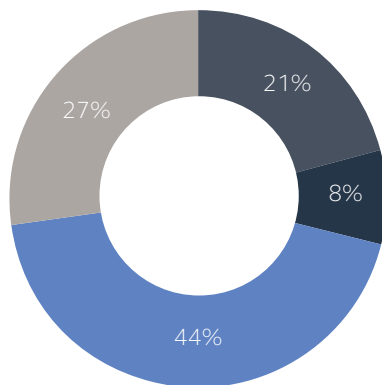
Understanding differences

Differences in behaviors, habits, mindsets, work routines and use of technology are important to recognize. When people are granted autonomy they organize their work based on their values and personality traits and so it is vital to get a deeper understanding of the “archetypes at work”. We’ve looked at who they are, how they define work, when they feel most productive, where they do their best work and when they prefer to concentrate.

How do you define work?

A large number of those surveyed (44%) define work as a continuous learning process, while 27% define it as working in short cycles with other people. To 21% work means showing up at the office and undertaking tasks assigned to them, while 8% see work as an activity that means following standards. The overall picture is that 71% define work as something in which they proactively apply knowledge and experience, while 29% are more reactive.

Figure 1:



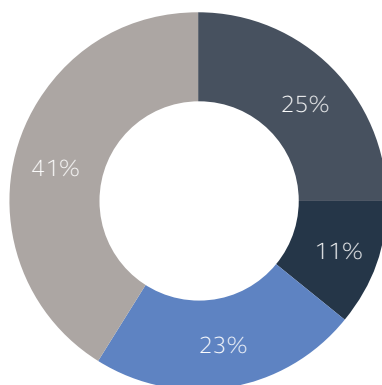
How do you define work?

- Being at the office means working
- Following standards and processes of our “production line”
- Continuous learning process using knowledge to create new ideas
- Working in short cycles together with others

When do you feel the most productive?

Focused in front of the computer is regarded as the most productive way of working - 41% gave this response. 25% feel most productive “in well planned meetings” while 23% associate maximum productivity with 1:1 dialogues. Only 11% regard e-mail communication as a productive way of working. The overall picture is that time to focus is important in order to be productive.

Figure 2:



When do you feel the most productive?

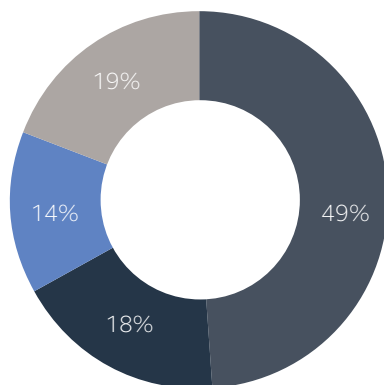
- a. In well planned face-to-face meetings
- b. Through email communication
- c. In 1:1 dialogues (phone/instant messaging/video conferencing)
- d. Focused in front of the computer



When do you prefer to concentrate?

Of those surveyed, 49% prefer to concentrate in the morning, while 18% prefer the afternoon. 19% say that they can concentrate no matter what time of day and 14% state that evenings are their preferred choice. The different preferences expressed signal that people are very aware of which time of day suits them best – knowing this about your employees is extremely valuable if you want to get the most out of them.

Figure 3:



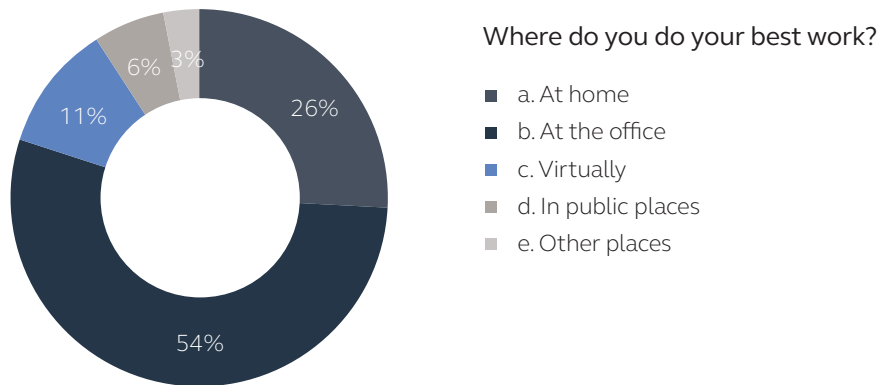
When do you prefer to concentrate?

- a. Morning
- b. Afternoon
- c. Evening
- d. All day

From where do you do your best work?

Physical location still matters. 54% see the office as the location from where they do their best work, 26% state that working at home is where they best perform. Working virtually – not showing dependency on a physical location – is the third most popular choice, but only for 11% of the respondents. ‘Other places’ make up the final 9%.

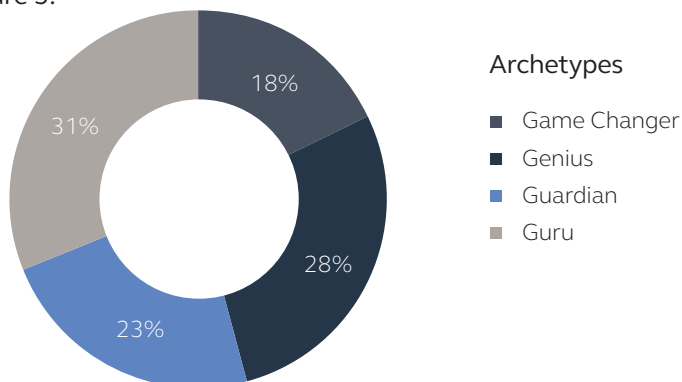
Figure 4:



What is the distribution of archetypes?

The most well-represented archetype in the workplace, at 31% (288 respondents), is the **Guru**. They have the role of counseling and coaching and typically make smart decisions that link to the overall strategy based on reflection and experience. **Geniuses** are represented by 28% (264); they typically fill out an expert role, knowing where to find information and sharing knowledge in order to solve problems. **Guardians** are represented by 23% (214); others come to them to get direction on how to follow procedures and receive insights on company culture. Lastly, 18% (171) exhibit traits that allow us to group them as **Game Changers**. They network and innovate, connect the dots and motivate others.

Figure 5:





Diverse styles at work

Exploring patterns between archetypes and the answers given reveal small but interesting differences.

What is the relation between "How do you define work?" and "Archetypes"?

In figures 6-9 we see the following: The **Guru** sees work as a continuous learning process (77%) [Figure 6]. The **Game Changer** predominantly sees work as short cycles of interacting with others (66%) [Figure 7]. The **Guardian** [Figure 8] sees work as a learning process (38%) but also as being present in the office (29%). The **Genius** [Figure 9] on the other hand stands out by also seeing work as following standards (19%). The differences reflect what motivates and guides the different archetypes in the way they organize their work and when they are at their most productive.

How do you define work?

Figure 6: The Guru

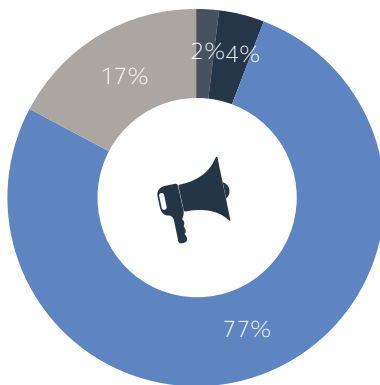


Figure 7: The Game Changer

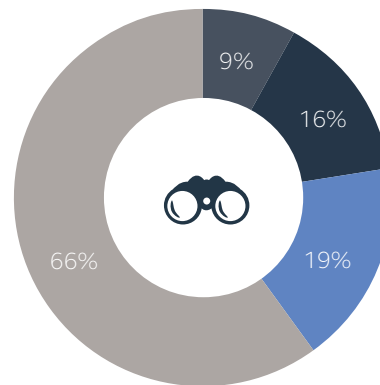


Figure 8: The Guardian

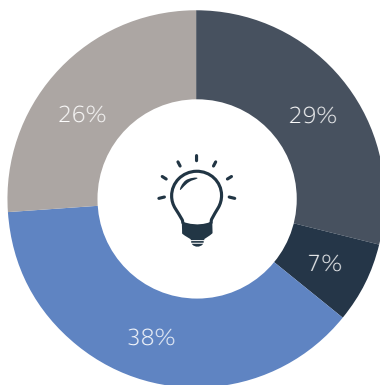
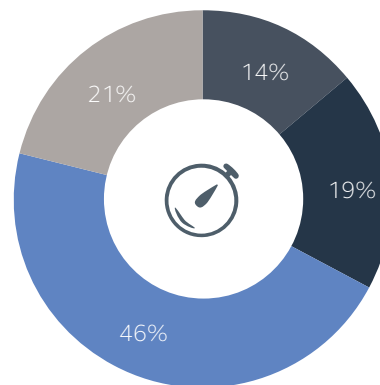


Figure 9: The Genius



- Being at the office means working
 - Following standards and processes of our "production line"
 - Continuous learning process using knowledge to create new ideas
 - Working in short cycles together with people where and how it best fits
-

What is the relation between "When are you the most productive at work?" and "Archetypes"?

In figures 10-13 we see the following: The **Guru** [Figure 10] is dependent on focus time in front of the computer to be productive (44%), and sees meetings as productive too (27%), but dialogue is not high on their agenda (20%). The **Game Changer** [Figure 11] is also dependent on focus time (35%), feels almost as productive in 1-1 dialogues (33%), and meetings are not high on their agenda (21%). The **Genius** [Figure 12] feels most productive while focusing (41%) but also feels productive in dialogues (24%) and meetings (23%). The **Guardian** [Figure 13] is the one that feels most productive in well-planned meetings (28%), and focuses best in front of the computer (40%). 1:1 dialogues are regarded by the Guardian as the least productive at 19%.

None of the archetypes feel productive e-mailing; responses ranged from just 9% to 13%. Gurus and Guardians seem to prefer well-planned meetings over 1:1 dialogues, while the opposite is applicable to Game Changers and Geniuses.

When do you feel most productive?

Figure 10: The Guru

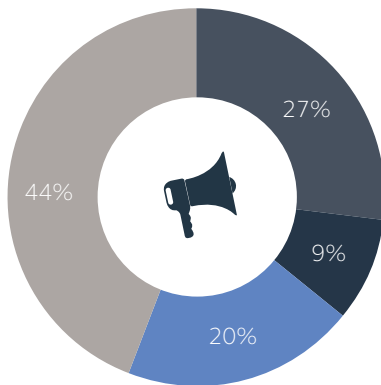


Figure 11: The Game Changer

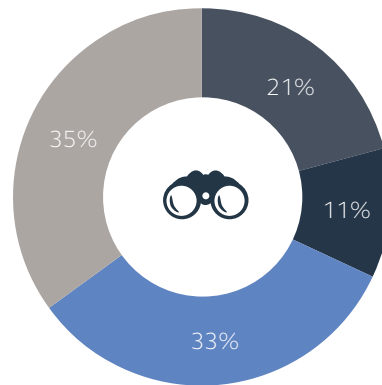


Figure 12: The Genius

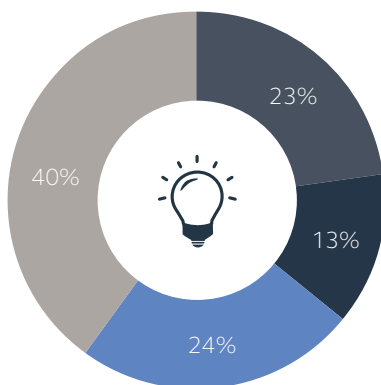
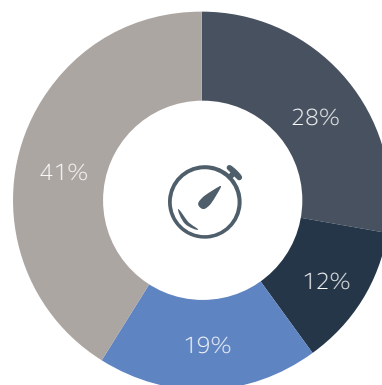


Figure 13: The Guardian



- a. In well planned face-to-face meetings
 - b. Through e-mail communication
 - c. In 1:1 dialogues (phone/instant messaging/video conferencing)
 - d. Focused in front of the compute
-

What is the relation between “When do you prefer to concentrate?” and “Archetypes”?

In figures 14-17 we see the following: besides preferring to concentrate in the morning (47%), more **Gurus** [Figure 14] than any other archetypes are able to distribute concentration throughout the whole day (23%), while afternoons (16%) and evenings (14%) are not high on the agenda. **Game Changers** [Figure 15] prefer mornings (52%), but are also able to concentrate at other times (21%) while evenings (15%) and afternoons are less preferred (12%). **Geniuses** [Figure 16] also favor mornings (49%), but prefer afternoons (21%) over all-day (17%) and evenings (13%). While also fond of the morning (49%), **Guardians** [Figure 17] prefer afternoons the most (24%) compared to all-day (13%) and evenings (14%). Gurus and Game Changers seem more flexible, while Guardians and Geniuses appear to be more structured.

When do you prefer to concentrate?

Figure 14: The Guru

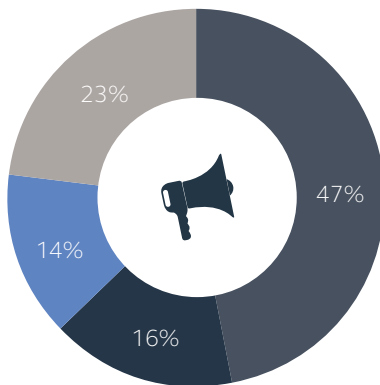


Figure 15: The Game Changer

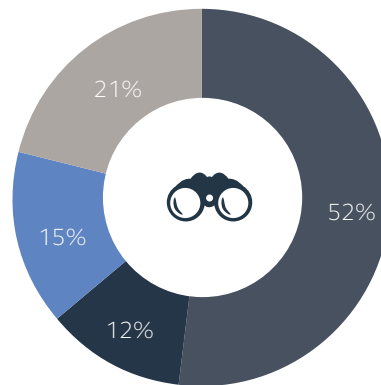


Figure 16: The Genius

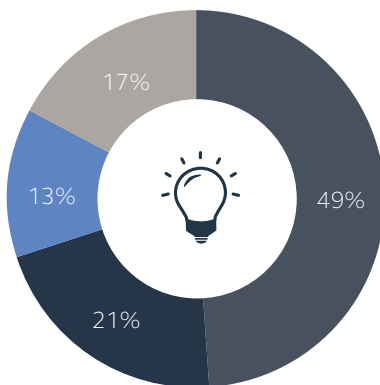
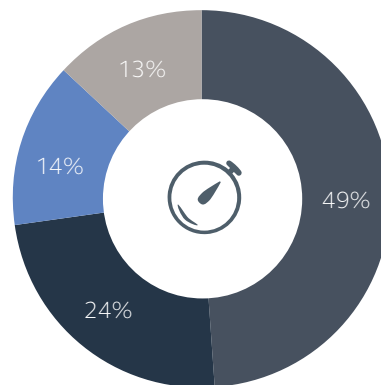


Figure 17: The Guardian



- a. Morning
- b. Afternoon
- c. Evening
- d. All day

What is the relation between "Where do you do your best work?" and "Archetypes"?

In figures 18-21 we see the following: The **Guru** [Figure 18] has a clear preference for being in the office (48%), but also likes to work from home (33%) when they want to do their best work. The **Game Changer** [Figure 19] mainly favors the office (49%), making home seem less attractive (25%). An interesting finding is that the Game Changer indicates less reliance than the other archetypes on a physical location, as 15% state 'working virtually', and 11% say 'work from other places', is where they do their best work. The **Genius** [Figure 20] does - by far - his or her best work in the office (63%) while the home base only accounts for 16% and 'working virtually' is preferred by 12%. The **Guardian** [Figure 21] prefers the office (55%) with 'working at home' coming second (28%).

Where do you do your best work?

Figure 18: The Guru

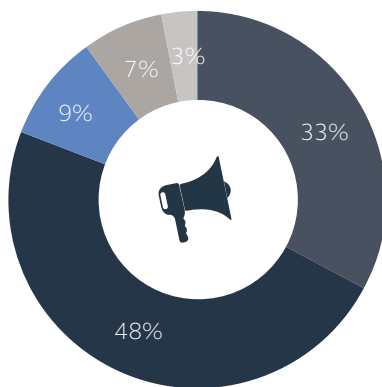


Figure 19: The Gamechanger

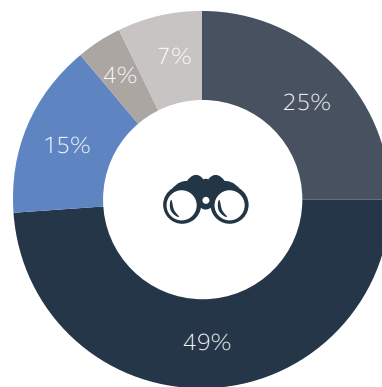


Figure 20: The Genius

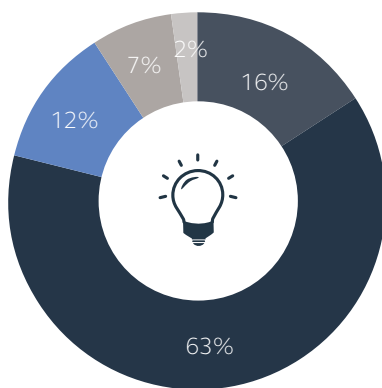
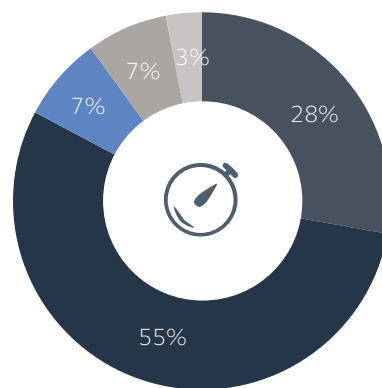


Figure 21: The Guardian



- a. At home
- b. At the office
- c. Virtually
- e. Public places
- e. Other places

Key takeaways

Knowledge workers are proactive; productivity comes mainly from focus-time in front of the computer; mornings are the preferred time for concentration; and the office is still where people do their best work. Gurus are the largest group in the workplace, followed by the Geniuses, Guardians and Game Changers.

...the office is where
54% people do their
best work

Whichever description best defines your most productive working preferences, having choice and displaying unique behavior is important in value creation.

When we explore the patterns underneath these findings and relate them to an archetype, the simple picture loses its explainable power. When people - as autonomous beings - are free to choose how to conduct their work, interesting dynamics emerge. Exploring how mindsets, measures of productivity, and preference of location and time differ from archetype to archetype, and the impact this has on organizational life, reveals a much more complex world of work.

“When people - as autonomous beings - are free to choose how to conduct their work, interesting dynamics emerge.”

Mindset at work

Understanding mindsets enhances our knowledge of dynamics in the workplace. People’s mindset is causative, thus affecting choices and behaviors: Do people define work as being standardized? Do they feel that it is ‘enough’ to show up in the office, doing what they are told to do? Do they see work as a process in which they proactively apply new knowledge and experience, while collaborating with others? Being one or the other has a major impact on how we recruit, organize teams and coordinate work, but most importantly it affects how we interpret productivity and how we deliver value. In our analysis, the majority have a proactive mindset (71%), while the reactive mindset is represented by 29%. When related to archetypes, we now know that the reactive mindset comes from Guardians and Geniuses, while Gurus and Game Changers are much more proactive.

“...the majority have a proactive mindset (**71%**), while the reactive mindset is represented **29%**”

Measures of productivity in knowledge work

Creating a rise in productivity is vital to organizations and society. While productivity is usually a matter of input-output ratio, productivity in knowledge work is about making good decisions and coming up with good solutions. This means that productivity is no longer just a management issue; it matters to individual workers too.

“...productivity in knowledge work is a matter of making good decisions and coming up with good solutions.”

Issues of too many meetings and e-mails, time wasted searching for up-to-date versions of documents, and interruptions from colleagues, are all recognized impediments to productivity in knowledge work. While we know a lot about what hinders productivity, we seem to lack more concrete evidence as to what facilitates it besides autonomy.

“...we seem to lack some more concrete evidence as to what facilitates productivity, besides autonomy.”

Our findings give a picture of a workforce that sees their primary contribution stemming from novel contextualized knowledge. All archetypes feel most productive in front of the computer and while this could signal an excluding behavior, the computer (or any other device) gives access to expertise networks where they can search, capture, conceptualize and codify new insights and information – key in knowledge work. Game Changers and Geniuses also rely on 1:1 dialogues, thus showing a preference for a more personalized and fast-paced way of creating knowledge. Guardians and Gurus favor well-planned meetings, preferring more formal and perhaps slower decision making which also secures a more democratic knowledge creation process.

Autonomy: Time

Workers are increasingly supported by mobile, social and cloud technologies which free them of the constraints of location, time zones and even scarcity of talented co-workers. Work in global organizations is therefore a mix between distributed and co-located work. Concentration time is a central and important part of people’s work so we need to know more about when they prefer to concentrate in these new settings.

51% of the people focus on carrying out work, structured and well planned, preferably during office hours.

Most research finds that mornings are good for concentration, while we need energy from others in the afternoon. While all archetypes prefer mornings, Gurus are the most flexible and able to concentrate during the whole day. Game Changers are also flexible but prefer evenings to afternoons. Guardians and Geniuses represent a more structured preference, mostly favoring mornings with afternoons coming a close second. This shows the following pattern: 51% of people (Guardians and Geniuses) inhabiting the workplace focus on carrying out work in a structured and well planned manner, preferably during office hours, but the other 49% of the workforce (Gurus and Game Changers) are more dynamic and flexible, concentrating when they see fit.

49% of the workforce are more dynamic and flexible, concentrating when they see fit.

“...more than three out of ten Gurus prefer to stay home to do their best work.”

Autonomy: Location

In many organizations, open plan offices with designated activity areas are used as a method to increase productivity and knowledge sharing. At the same time, mobile, cloud and social technologies have increased the flexibility of location. When we relate these measures to the established preference of being focused in front of the computer as an important element in knowledge work it is interesting to then investigate precisely where people say they do their best work- does physical location still matter? Our analysis shows that the office is the preferred place but only just at 54%. This means that almost half of the workforce produce their best work outside of the office with the home being the preferred alternative at 26%.

There is a wide variety of responses when it comes to the archetypes. Geniuses prefer the office (63%) while more than three out of ten Gurus feel they do their best work at home (33%). Game Changers and Guardians also prefer the office, share a second preference of working from home, and appear more open towards working virtually than the other archetypes.

Unlocking productivity

The below pattern reveals the differences between the archetypes and shows why productivity enhancement policies often have little or negative impact.

Table 1

Aspects of productivity/Archetype	Gurus	Guardians	Genius	Game Changers
Mindset	Proactive	Reactive	Reactive	Proactive
Productivity	Concentration & Collaboration	Concentration & Collaboration	Concentration & Conversations	Concentration & Conversations
Time	Flexible	Structured	Structured	Flexible
Location	Office & Home	Office, Home, Virtual	Office	Office & Virtual

If Game Changers or Geniuses feel inhibited in carrying out knowledge sharing in 1:1 dialogues (conversations), their productivity will decrease, while establishing policies for fewer meetings (collaboration), will decrease the productivity of Gurus and Guardians. If working from home represents a challenge in the workplace, Gurus and Guardians will feel a loss of autonomy, while large (and often noisy) open offices are a challenge to Geniuses, Guardians and Game Changers. If concentration time in the morning becomes a company policy, then the afternoon will probably be filled with meetings. This will inhibit Gurus and Game Changers because they don't have a preference for planning concentration time.

“Bottom-line is that one size does not fit all, neither does the command-and-control paradigm.”

The majority of people viewing work as a continual learning process means that change, exploration and innovation are a fact of organizational life. At the same time, exploitation and augmentation of organizational knowledge are vital, which means that complying with standards and processes is equally important. The bottom line is that one size does not fit all, neither does the command-and-control paradigm. Organizations are realizing that new ways of structuring are important to increase productivity and so new concepts arise:

- Ambidextrous Organizations - driving exploitation and exploration simultaneously
- The Networked Enterprise - in which the individual is the locus of value creation
- The Exponential Organization - where autonomy is a key element

When confronted with organizational complexity many people try to take measures that simplify matters into causal relationships and linearity, but this is not the right approach as these steps only worsen the productivity agenda. Instead, we need to raise awareness of people's differences so that individuals can take measures towards configuring and creating productive work settings and relationships.

Your next move!

If you want to take a first step toward creating a more productive and agile organization, use the **Jabra Work Potential Tool**. It will help you get to know more about yourself, your preferences and your potential.

Jabra's New Ways of Working philosophy

Many organizations have employees that are using non-productive ways of working, yet initiatives designed to improve productivity often achieve the opposite. New technology and office designs are introduced as a positive influence, but can instead detract from productivity. The real challenge is in overcoming this paradox, and the answer lies in understanding human behavior.

Businesses need a better understanding of human behavior – offering elements of autonomy at the individual level and transparency at the collective level – and an acute awareness of when communication methods or a way of working are not delivering the intended benefits.

Jabra's philosophy of "New Ways of Working" is designed to deliver on this by organizing work towards realizing people's full potential.

Jabra wants to encourage managers and employees alike to make a conscious choice of work-modes depending on the task: collaboration, concentration, conversation or communication: ww

- **Concentration** is about making good decisions by turning information into knowledge
- **Communication** is transference of knowledge independent of time and location
- **Collaboration** is the most powerful tool to turn complex problems into valuable solutions. Bring new knowledge into play with colleagues or business partners
- **Conversations** between two people who genuinely listen, understand and talk to impact behavior, is the most effective tool to elevate the value of human interactions

Organizations should continually ask themselves: Who is responsible for productivity in the modern workplace? How do we enable better productivity? How do we measure the impact of better productivity?

Join the "New Ways of Working" initiative

Jabra's "New Ways of Working" is an initiative for everybody who is struggling with changes in how we work, how we organize work, and how we motivate employees and colleagues to be part of the journey.

It advocates reflection on how to best design work that improves the four Cs: concentration, conversation, communication and collaboration, which in turn helps employees and organizations become more innovative, productive, and successful.

Follow our blog and join us in the discussion at blog.jabra.com

How Jabra meets these challenges

A lot of issues with today's working environment are about two common factors: sound and technology. Jabra works specifically with audio and unified communications solutions that improve the modern work space and enable individuals to hear more, do more and be more. The modern challenges are reflected in the products that we take to market.

If you are interested in learning more, please go to: www.jabra.com/business/

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About Jabra

We are part of the GN Group, the only company in the world to have consumer, professional and medical sound capabilities and expertise under one roof. Our purpose is to make life sound better.

With almost 150 years of scientific heritage behind us, we've pioneered revolutionary sound solutions in many areas of life. Ever since we started out in 1869, we've been overcoming impossible barriers, laying the world's first submarine cable and putting in place the first telegraph line linking East to West. Today, our spirit still drives us on to make life sound better.

At Jabra, we build on the scientific heritage, the expertise and capabilities of GN to offer intelligent sound solutions. We transform the lives of everyone. We inspire athletes to push past their personal best, with voice coaches and heart-rate monitors spurring them on. We help businesses, large and small, reach their full potential and outperform the competition by helping drive productivity.

We're constantly listening to our users, spotting opportunities and challenging conventions. This, along with our heavy annual investment in research, has led to a stream of innovations. Among our many firsts, we can number ultra-noise cancelling microphones. And the first Bluetooth® enabled headsets, which are setting the world free from cords and cables.

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