

'Childish and misunderstood': PwC hits back at Lord Sugar's 'lazy gits' hybrid working tweet

PwC has hit back at Lord Sugar after he said the company's decision to let staff take Friday afternoons off was a "bloody joke".

The Apprentice boss tweeted that employees who work from home aren't as productive as those who go into a place of work.

"The lazy gits make me sick," he said in response to a story about the accountancy firm letting workers clock off at lunchtime on Fridays.

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Writing on LinkedIn, a senior executive reward manager at PwC said his view was incorrect and "at best childish and misunderstood".

Richard Osborne posted: "Lord Sugar, your post shows how out of touch you are with the modern working world and your lack of knowledge about what PwC are doing.

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"This isn't about taking time off to be lazy – it is about flexibility to work effectively as and when we work our best. 'Work from home BS' has meant that many of us have been far more productive than we were pre-pandemic and your response is at best childish and misunderstood."

In reply to another comment, he said the peer showed "a total lack of awareness of the way we work has evolved. Bums on

seats does not equal productivity or a 'better' workforce in my opinion."

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The pandemic led to a surge in working from home, and many companies are trying to establish the best way of running a 'hybrid' system to allow staff flexibility in their hours and location.

Mr Osborne's response has so far sparked nearly 700 comments on LinkedIn, with the vast majority supporting the benefits of working from home and some calling Lord Sugar a "dinosaur" – and worse.

"The House of Lords is packed with these entitled slugs. The day it's abolished is a good one," wrote marketing agency director Christopher-Robin Lamont.

"Working from home can be a great gateway into work for people at a huge disadvantage; those caring for relatives, with disabilities and neurodevelopmental 'disorders', trauma and related illness...it's a long list of long forgotten people."

Writer and speaker Chris Croft said that treating staff well "is the best way to keep them, not treating them like lazy people who will do the minimum work if they can".

Some comments took a more nuanced view and said the viability of working from home debate depends on the specific business.

"I hate this argument. Just as I hate the argument that says all employers should allow home working. The situation is far too specific towards the individual context to generalise like this," said Rob McKay, from Sherrington Associates.

"When it comes to home working, not everyone needs it or wants it but for those that do, sure, there are some who will take the p***, but there'll be an equal percentage of employers who needlessly mandate presenteeism, thereby also taking the p***."