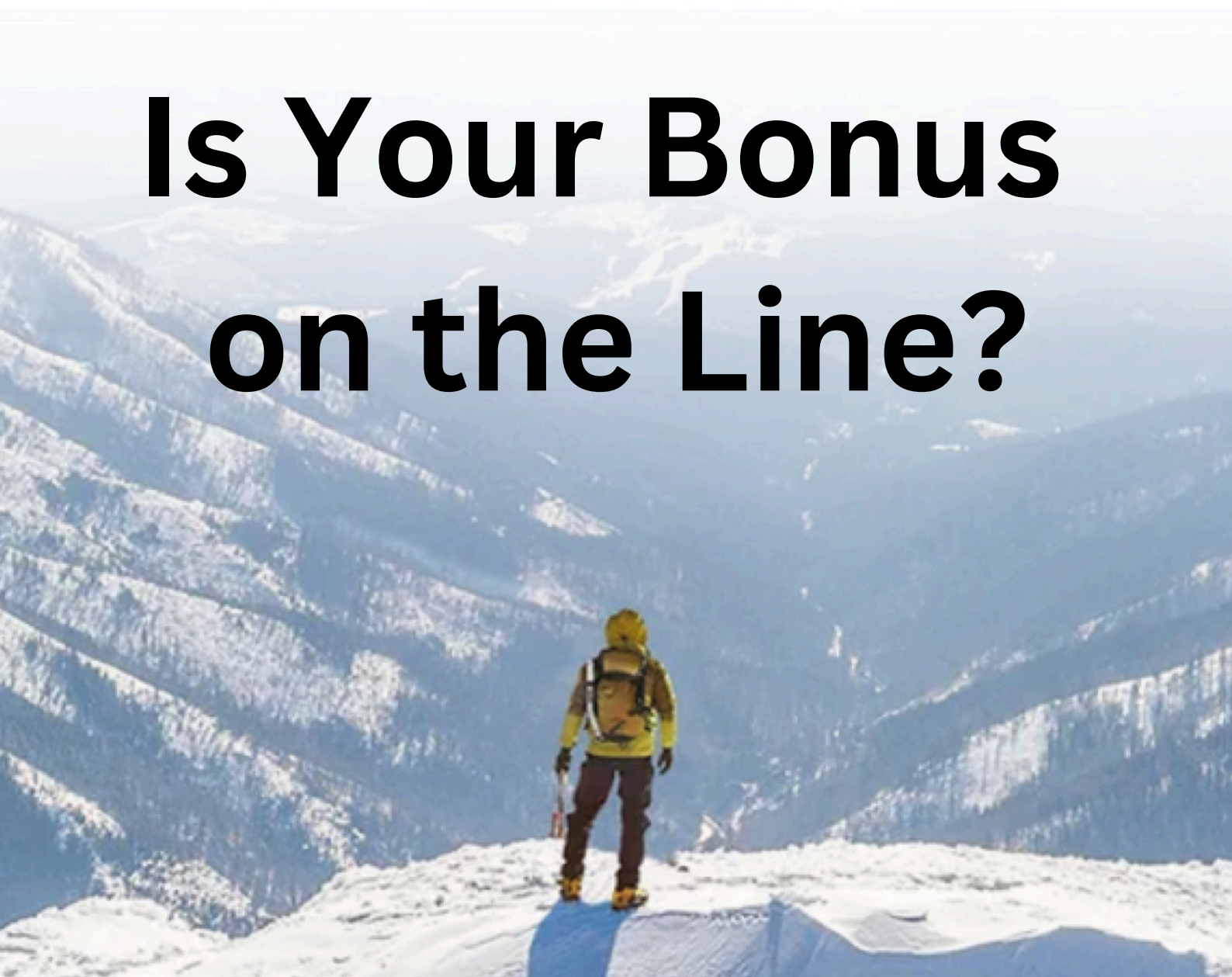




Is Your Bonus on the Line?



Corporate heavyweights are tightening the reins on remote work and threatening remuneration.

HSBC has made waves by hinting at cuts to staff bonuses for excessive time spent working from home. JP Morgan has drawn a hard line, insisting employees return to the office five days a week.

Even Manchester United has joined the movement, ordering non-playing staff back to their desks.

The remote work revolution, once seen as an unstoppable force, is now facing resistance. Concerns over productivity, collaboration, and company culture are driving employers to reconsider the flexibility they once embraced.

But with hybrid work models now the norm, many employees expect to be in the office no more than three days a week.

FatGreen Executive asks the pivotal question: **Can businesses reclaim traditional office culture, or now the proverbial genie is now out of the bottle, is remote work here to stay?**



A Workplace Revolution Rooted in an Epoch

Historians often define epochs as moments of seismic societal change. COVID-19 may well be one such epoch, reshaping how we live and work.

I started my career in Financial Services Executive Search in the mid-nineties in the City.

The 1990's was the era of rigid corporate culture. Dark suits, white shirts, and polished shoes were the norm. Leaving the office before 7 p.m.? That would raise eyebrows and jokes questioning if someone was going on holiday.



Fast-forward to today, and the picture is wildly different, casual clothes, home offices filled with pets, and music quietly playing in the background.

While this revolution has benefits, it raises a question: What have we lost in the transition?

Osmosis Learning : The Soft Skills Gap

FatGreen Executive specializes in executive search for professional services sectors, including Tax, Corporate Finance, Transaction Services, Restructuring, and Private Equity.

In such professions, soft skills are not taught in classrooms, they are absorbed by watching and listening to experienced professionals navigating complex client interactions. Often, ***“it’s not what we say, but how we say it”*** which determines a deal outcome.

Remote working has stripped away many informal interactions and discussions that enrich company culture such as spirited debates, spontaneous jokes, and mentorship that flourished in office spaces.



And this presents a challenge for professional services firms.

How do our next generation of leaders develop critical soft skills such as negotiation, message delivery, and client management without observing them firsthand from senior colleagues?

In a world of virtual meetings and Slack messages, can young professionals truly master the subtle nuances of business communication?

The Pushback Begins

As remote work embeds itself in professional culture, many leaders are starting to question its long-term impact.

A senior partner at a top financial services firm recently summed up the frustration: ***"Try contacting my colleagues by phone on Friday—good luck!"*** Manchester United's decision to recall its non-playing staff has underscored the growing skepticism.

Former Crystal Palace Chairman Simon Jordan weighed in: ***"You get more effectiveness, more development of culture, more work ethic, more diversity of thinking, more diversity of experience if people are in a workplace."***

The Conversation We Need to Have

Opinions on remote work remain divided. If work-from-home policies are eroding junior professionals' development and diminishing firms' competitive edge, can employers continue to embrace remote working?

FatGreen Executive has a front-row seat to this debate, advising senior leaders across the UK's financial and professional services sectors.

One question keeps surfacing: How do firms strike the right balance between flexibility, productivity, and leadership development?

As we navigate the future of professional services, now is the time for candid conversations. If you have insights, join the discussion so we can shape the next era together.

nick@fatgreen.co.uk

07985 219 763 | 0333 366 0988

www.fatgreenexecutive.co.uk