

EIGHTEEN NINETY-THREE



BRAND STUDIO

STORYTELLING
STRATEGIES FROM

The Daily Tar Heel

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Carolina Coworking

At the root of all the partnership between Carolina Coworking and 1893 Brand Studio is this: What do students and entrepreneurs in Chapel Hill need and want from a coworking space? To answer this, 1893 Brand Studio embarked on a market research project that will guide the Carolina Coworking marketing strategy for the next three to 6 months, at a minimum.

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RESEARCH PROJECT DETAILS

We gathered our research by surveying **103** individuals and interviewing **22** people in their working or studying environment. This work was done between August 23 and September 11.

BUYER PERSONAS

Serious Students

94% of our survey respondents do not operate a business as their main source of revenue (Figure 1) and 69% of our survey respondents are doing their university-affiliated work in a library 2-3 times a week or more frequently (Figure 4). That leads us to identify **Serious Students**, undergraduate or graduate students, as a buyer persona for Carolina Coworking.

Both in surveys and individual interviews, the Serious Students are identifying quiet atmospheres and a lack of distractions as crucial for their work. They also appreciate the background noise and not being completely isolated, while having access to food and snacks if necessary.

The Serious Students are people who we feel are willing to pay a small fee for the quiet and distraction-free workplace that they crave, especially during finals, midterms and big project seasons of their life.

The Side Hustler

25% of our respondents operate a “side hustle” or additional project on top of their main job or schoolwork (Figure 2). These are our **Side Hustlers**. These people also appreciate quiet and minimal distractions, but they express that they feel most inspired when surrounded by other people who are also working.

Additionally, 26% of these Side Hustlers responded that they feel lonely or somewhat lonely at work (Figure 53), while only 30% of Side Hustlers say they have access to personal development and business coaching (Figure 52).

The Side Hustlers are people who are ready to grow their business and take it to the next level, but do not feel they can continue to do that in their home-based office. These people may still work from home a majority of the time but need additional options.

The Flexible Worker

Whether a student or a “side hustler,” flexibility is a large factor in choosing a workplace – which makes the **Flexible Worker** a buyer persona for Carolina Coworking. Forty percent of Side Hustlers identified a flexible workspace as very desirable, while another 13% identified it as somewhat desirable (Figure 42).

In our short answer responses, we saw flexibility, personalization and mixing workspaces up from day to day as top reasons why someone chooses their primary workspace.

The Flexible Worker appreciates more than one seating option – standing desks, private rooms, couches, comfortable chairs – as well as more than one way to work – places for laptop working, dual monitors, whiteboards for brainstorming, outdoor options, etc.

COMPETITION

The main competitors identified in this survey and our interviews are:

- Home offices (87% of university-affiliated respondents and 80% of “Side Hustlers” say they are working from home 2-3 times a week or more often) (Figure 3 and Figure 16, respectively)
- Cafes like Starbucks, Panera, Perennial, etc. (43% of “Side Hustlers” and 39% of university-affiliated respondents 2-3 times a week or more often). (Figure 21 and Figure 8, respectively).

Other coworking spaces do not appear to be the competition here. While there are other places like PERCH, etc., students are not aware of any coworking spaces at all, meaning that Carolina Coworking has a great opportunity to enter the market at the pre-awareness stage.

INTERNAL POSITIONING

SWOT Analysis	
Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carolina Coworking’s already existing personal development and business coaching components will be well-received by those who are looking to grow their side projects. • Carolina Coworking has a great private office option and conference room space. 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget is always a concern with small startups, side hustle entrepreneurs and students. If there is a free option (like an on-campus library or your couch at home), that will be more desirable than a paid option. • Spaces like the Union, empty classrooms, study spaces in apartment complexes, etc. offer students more flexible study and work space without a cost. • Flexibility will be an issue if students and side hustlers cannot enter and work 24/7, based on their personal schedules.
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overwhelmingly, subjects that were interviewed by our strategists did not know there was a coworking space in Chapel Hill and were interested in learning more. Awareness is part of the battle. • “Quiet,” “minimal distractions” and “privacy” were listed as top things people would like to change about their current workspace. • 45% of university-affiliated respondents said they would consider using a coworking space for studying or work in the future; 45% said maybe. 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness is an opportunity but also a threat. There is a higher barrier for Carolina Coworking to overcome, because so few students and side hustlers identified that they knew there were coworking spaces in Chapel Hill.

AUDIENCE PREFERENCES

Our individual, in-depth interviews show that our respondents want to work somewhere quiet – but don’t want to feel completely isolated from the world. They want to have some soft background noise like other people talking or working, as well as access to food and natural light, but also don’t want to work somewhere distracting or “rowdy.”

Reasons the respondents liked their current workplace include:

- Being able to observe people.
- Quiet, but background and ambient noise.
- Access to food and drink.
- Working around other people is motivating.
- It’s easy to get distracted when you’re completely alone.

AUDIENCE PAIN POINTS

Our audience struggled with finding a place to work that had room for them – not just to stretch out with their devices and supplies, but just to find a seat, whether they’re working at a cafe, in a library or somewhere else on or off campus. There is also a happy medium on quiet and distractions; no one we talked to want to work in complete silence, but they also don’t want to work anywhere too loud.

It all comes down to friction – our respondents want access to the workspace they want, when they want it. A frictionless experience is worth paying for them.

Things the respondents would change about their current workplace include:

- Too many distractions.
- Too busy and too full.
- Hard to find an empty seat or table to work.
- Inflexible or restrictive hours.

INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Insight #1: Our respondents do not know Carolina Coworking exists or what it is for.

We interviewed 22 people who were working on or around campus in the last two weeks. Even though Carolina Coworking has been open for more than 9 months now, eight of the people we interviewed didn’t know there were any coworking spaces in Chapel Hill.

Our recommendations:

- Use all advertising dollars to *educate* and *raise brand awareness*. We are starting at the pre-awareness stage in the buyer funnel.

- Tell stories of successful coworking on the Carolina Coworking blog, that we can then use to begin social media campaigns and email marketing.
- Work with professors on campus to bring classes into Carolina Coworking more often, broadening the reach.
- Advertise events at Carolina Coworking and encourage others to host their events at Carolina Coworking, so that the name becomes a bigger part of the day-to-day.
- Invest some advertising budget into Facebook Ads and Google AdWords.

Note: Brand awareness is a long-term game. It may not pay off in the first week or month.

Insight #2: Students are willing to pay to minimize friction.

In general, students want their workplace exactly the way they want it, when they want it. Friction is the No. 1 reason a student will not do something, whether it's taking the bus or paying for parking. If we minimize friction, we will make it more likely for students to pay a fee for a desk at Carolina Coworking.

Our recommendations:

- Create a student-focused package that advertises the minimal friction of using Carolina Coworking for studying, class work, etc.
- Offer students "Free Days" to try Carolina Coworking instead of a library, campus space, etc.
- Pass out flyers on and off campus to students working in cafes, libraries, etc. offering the "frictionless" aspects of Carolina Coworking.

Insight #3: Our respondents value comfort and natural light.

Overwhelmingly, when we gave our respondents the opportunity to answer us in short answer or interview form, they told us that they wanted more comfortable spaces and more natural light in their workplace. Many of our respondents are working from home and are most comfortable working from home, because that's where they can sit on their bed or couch, open a window or step out on the patio for fresh air.

Our recommendations:

- Consider adding more flexible furniture like chairs with ottomans, couches, etc. in future iterations of Carolina Coworking.
- Explore lighting options. Carolina Coworking is in the basement level of a building, but are there ways to minimize the artificial lighting or make it feel more natural?

APPENDIX

Survey Questions

Section	Question	Response Options
Demographics	Would you like to receive marketing and news updates from The Daily Tar Heel and Carolina Coworking?	Yes. No.
	Do you currently own or operate a business as your main form of income?	Yes. No.
	Do you currently own or operate a business or "side hustle" as an additional form of income?	Yes. No.
University-Affiliated Work	Where do you do the majority of your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose (i.e. office hours, grading, research, etc.)? Rate your frequency of use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home or in a home-based office • In a library • In an office on or off campus • In a coworking space • In another on-campus space • In a coffee shop, restaurant or cafe • In a studio 	Every day. 1-2 times a week. 2-3 times a week. Once a month or less. Never.
	Where do you feel the most comfortable studying or doing university-affiliated work?	At home or in a home-based office In a library In an office on or off campus In a coworking space In another on-campus space In a coffee shop, restaurant or cafe In a studio
	Is it beneficial to your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose to have access to the UNC wi-fi network?	Yes. No. Sometimes.
	Have you reserved a conference room or meeting space for a group project or another collaborative	Yes. No.

	experience?	
	Have you used or would you in the future consider using a coworking space for your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose?	Yes. No. Maybe.
	Have you used or would you in the future consider using a furnished private office on a month-to-month basis for your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose?	Yes. No. Maybe.
	Do you feel like there is currently enough space for you on UNC's campus to study or perform work for a university-affiliated purpose?	Yes. No. Sometimes.
Entrepreneurs, Side Hustles & Business Owners	<p>Where do you do the majority of work for your profession, business or "side hustle"? Rate your frequency of use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home or in a home-based office • In a library • In an office on or off campus • In a coworking space • In another on-campus space • In a coffee shop, restaurant or cafe • In a studio 	Every day. 1-2 times a week. 2-3 times a week. Once a month or less. Never.
	Where do you feel the most comfortable doing work for your profession, business or "side hustle"?	At home or in a home-based office In a library In an office on or off campus In a coworking space In another on-campus space In a coffee shop, restaurant or cafe In a studio
	<p>Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - strongly agree, 5 - strongly disagree)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have access to a flexible 	Strongly agree. Somewhat agree. Neither agree or disagree. Somewhat disagree. Disagree.

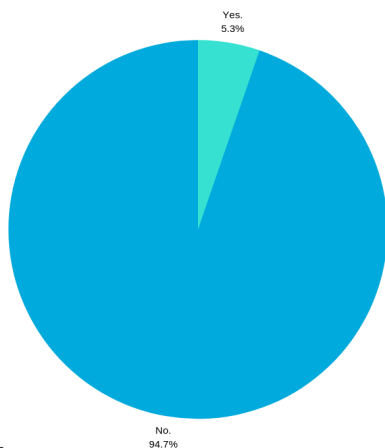
	<p>work space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have access to meeting space. • I have access to quiet space to make a phone call or focus on a project. • If I need a room for a meeting or event, I can book it easily, and there is plenty of space available. • I have a break room or kitchen. • I can print documents I need for free. • I can print documents I need using my own printer and supplies. • I can print documents I need for a fee. • I work in a collaborative environment for my business. • I never feel lonely at work. • My current working situation gives me access to coaching and personal development. • I feel like my business is better because of my current working situation. • I have access to parking. • I have access to a convenient bus line. • I can walk to restaurants and shops. • I have access to locked or secure storage space for my belongings. • I have access to events and networking. 	
	<p>Rate these potential benefits of a workspace on a scale of 1 (very desirable) to 5 (not desirable).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to restaurants and retail spaces. • Free printing. • Flexible month-to-month contracts for furnished 	<p>Very desirable. Somewhat desirable. Neither desirable nor undesirable. Somewhat not desirable. Not desirable.</p>

	private office space. • Flexible coworking spaces. • Break room / kitchen. • Collaborative environment. • Personal development and business coaching. • Events and networking. • Parking. • Proximity to a bus line. • Quiet meeting space. • Private offices. • Opportunity for growth.	
Workspace Pros & Cons	What do you love about your current workspace?	(short answer)
	What would you change about your current workspace?	(short answer)
	Are there any needs that your current workspace is not meeting?	(short answer)

Figures from Survey

Figure 1

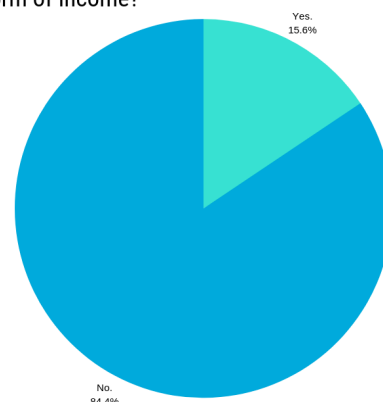
Do you currently own or operate a business as your main form of income?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 2

Do you currently own or operate a business or "side hustle" as an additional form of income?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 3

How often do you do university-affiliated work... at home or a home-based office?

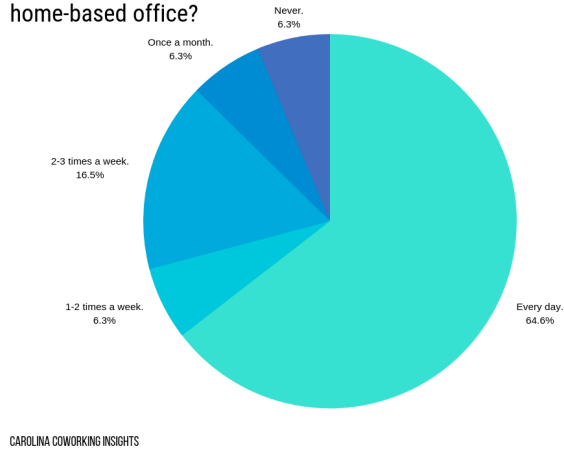


Figure 4

How often do you do university-affiliated work... in a library?

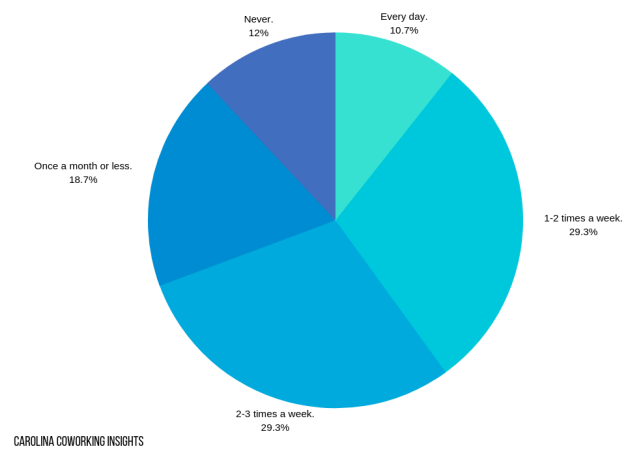


Figure 5

How often do you do university-affiliated work... in an office on- or off-campus?

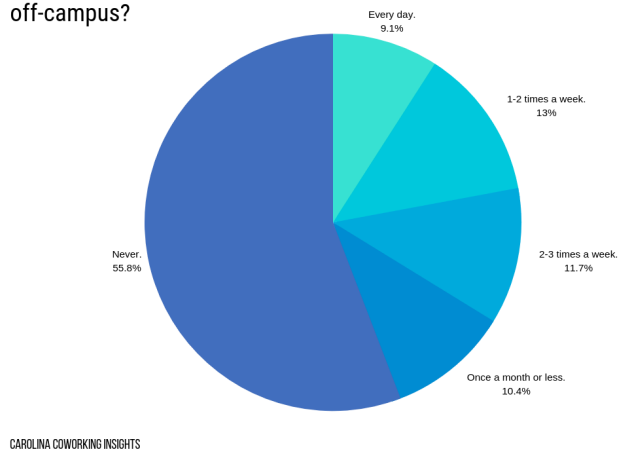


Figure 6

How often do you do university-affiliated work... in a coworking space?

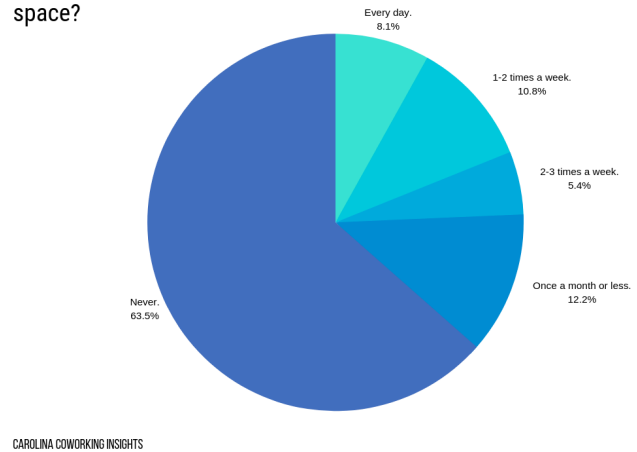
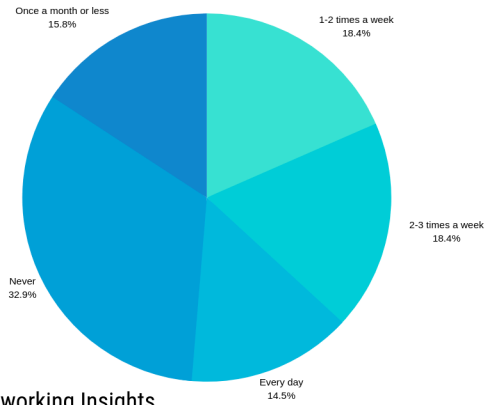


Figure 7

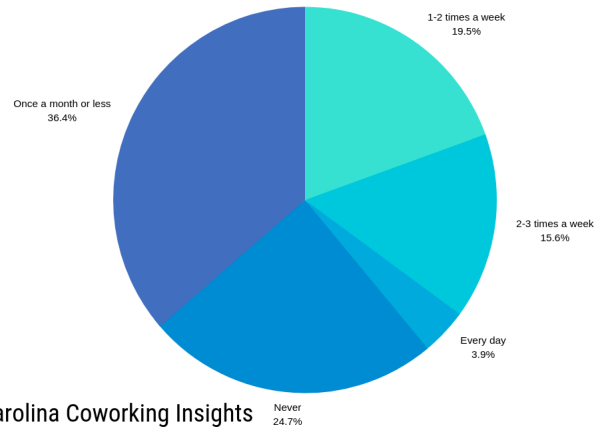
Figure 8

Where do you do the majority of your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose ... >> In another on-campus space



Carolina Coworking Insights

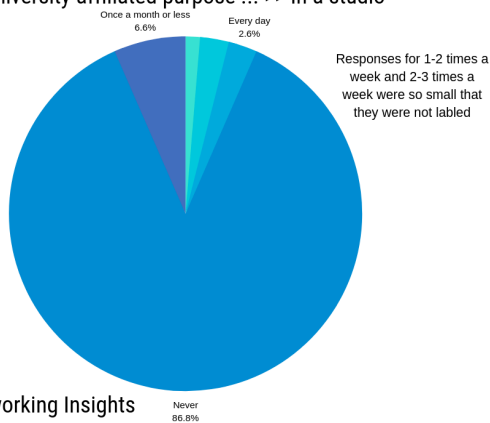
Where do you do the majority of your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose ... >> In a coffee shop, restaurant or cafe



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 9

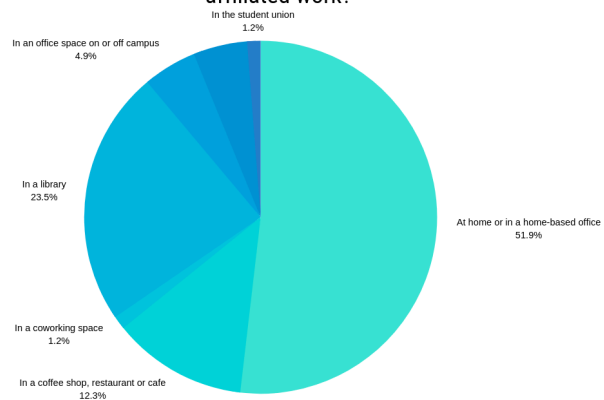
Where do you do the majority of your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose ... >> In a studio



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 10

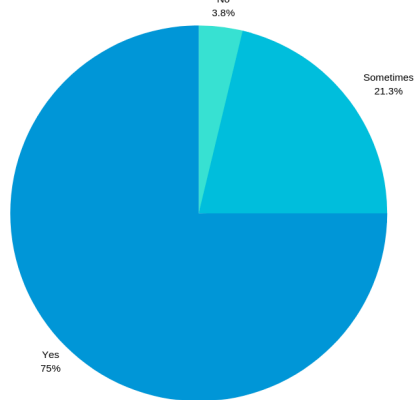
Where do you feel the most comfortable studying or doing university-affiliated work?



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 11

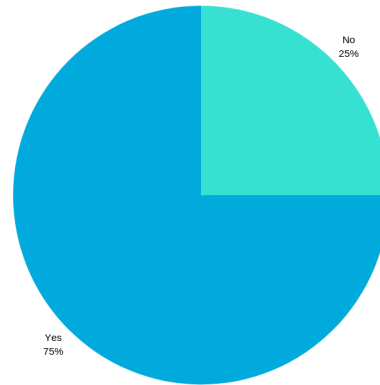
Is it beneficial to your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose to have access to the UNC wi-fi network?



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 12

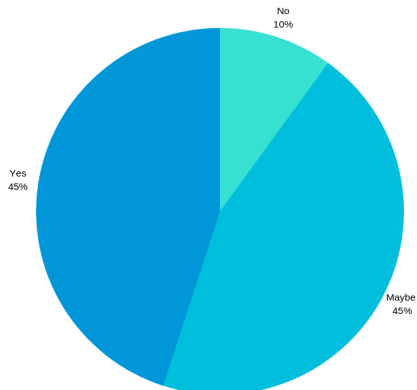
Have you reserved a conference room or meeting space for a group project or another collaborative experience?



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 13

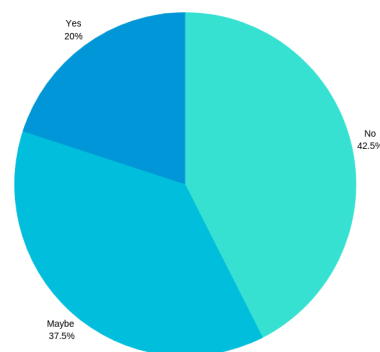
Have you used or would you in the future consider using a coworking space for your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose?



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 14

Have you used or would you in the future consider using a furnished private office on a month-to-month basis for your studying or work for a university-affiliated purpose?

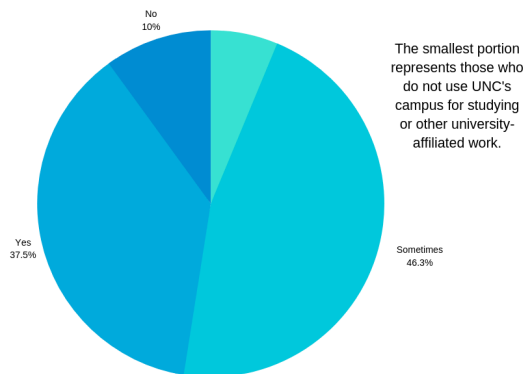


Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 15

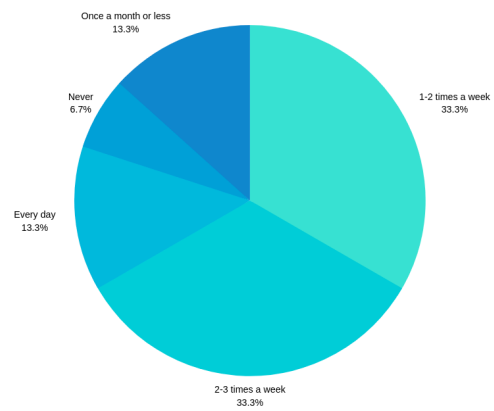
Figure 16

Do you feel like there is currently enough space for you on UNC's campus to study or perform work for a university-affiliated purpose?



Carolina Coworking Insights

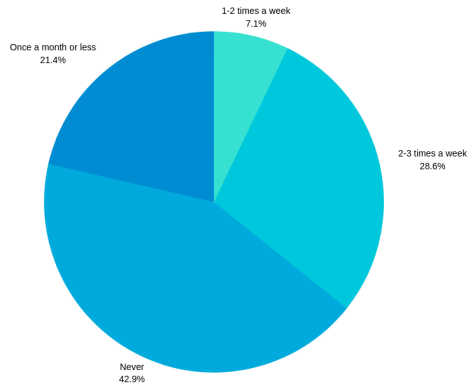
Where do you do the majority of work for your profession, business or "side hustle"? Rate ... >> At home or in a home-based office



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 17

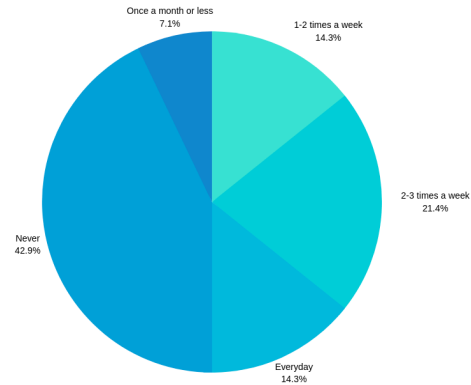
Where do you do the majority of work for your profession, business or "side hustle"? Rate ... >> In a library



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 18

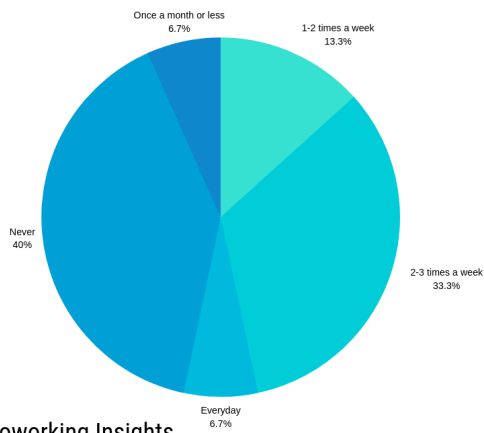
Where do you do the majority of work for your profession, business or "side hustle"? Rate ... >> In an office on or off campus



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 19

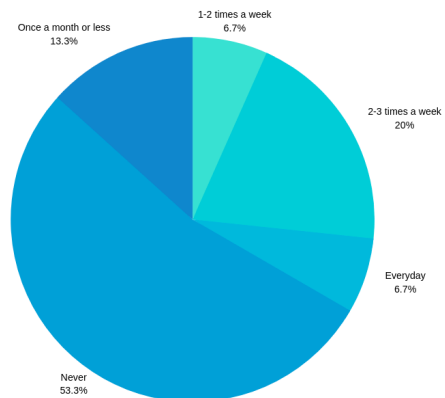
Where do you do the majority of work for your profession, business or "side hustle"? Rate ... >> In a coworking space



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 20

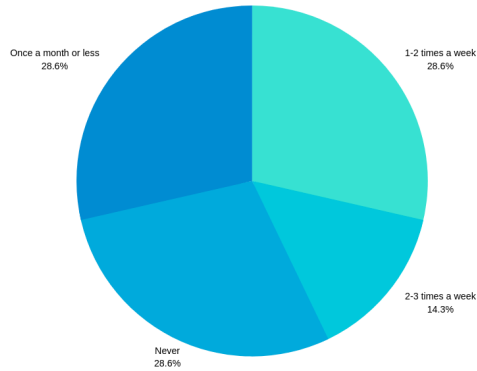
Where do you do the majority of work for your profession, business or "side hustle"? Rate ... >> In another on-campus space



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 21

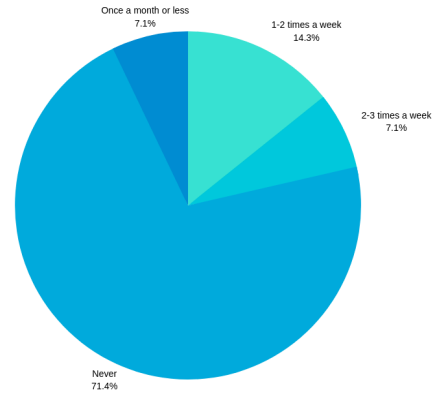
Where do you do the majority of work for your profession, business or "side hustle"? Rate ... >> In a coffee shop, restaurant or cafe



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 22

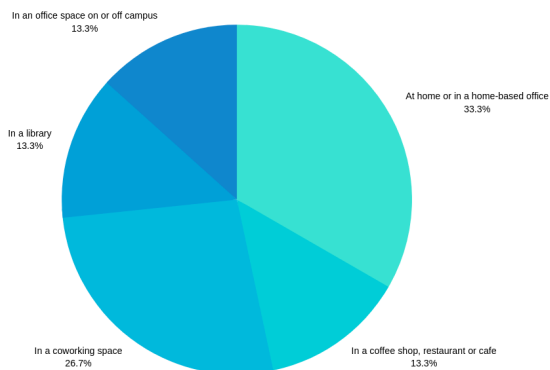
Where do you do the majority of work for your profession, business or "side hustle"? Rate ... >> In a studio



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 23

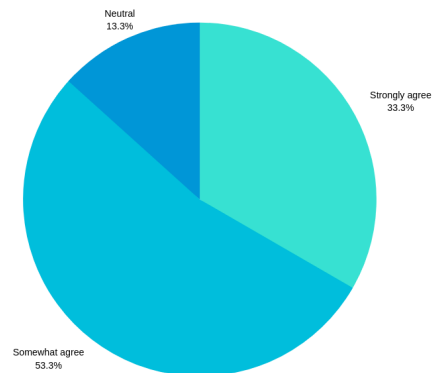
Where do you feel the most comfortable doing work for your profession, business or "side hustle"?



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 24

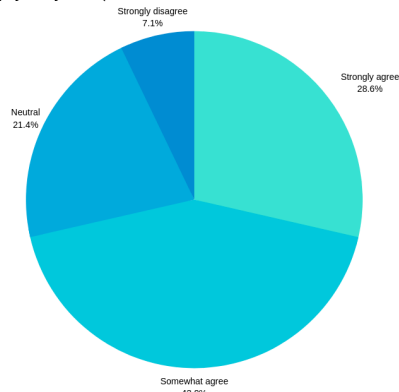
Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> I have access to a flexible work space.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 25

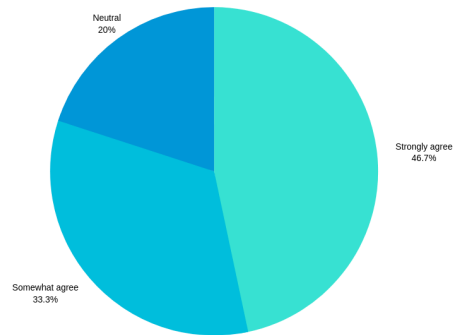
Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> I have access to meeting space.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 26

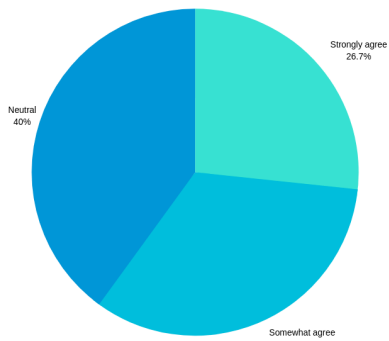
Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> I have access to quiet space to make a phone call or focus on a project.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 27

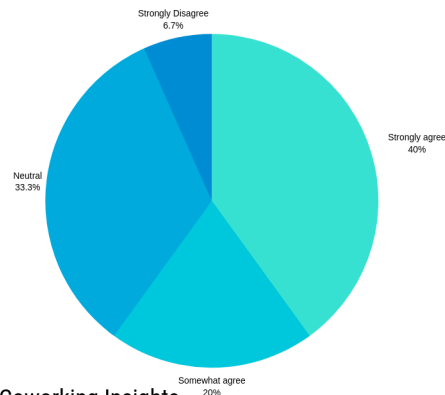
Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> If I need a room for a meeting or event, I can book it easily, and there is plenty of space.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 28

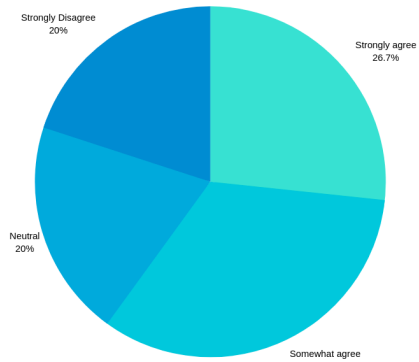
Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> I have a break room or kitchen.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 29

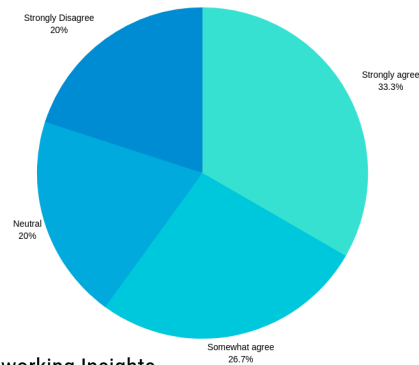
Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> I can print documents I need for free.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 30

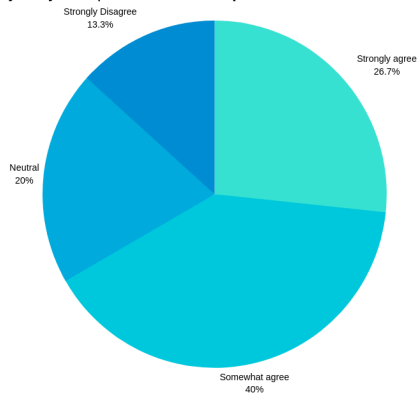
Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> I can print documents I need using my own printer and supplies.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 31

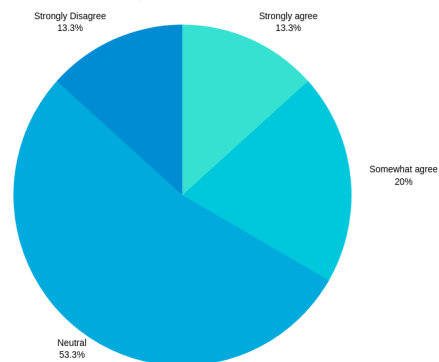
Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> I can print documents I need for a fee.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 32

Rate some of these benefits of your current working situation, as they apply to you. (1 - ... >> I work in a collaborative environment for my business.



Carolina Coworking Insights

Figure 33

How desirable is it to have "opportunity for growth" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?

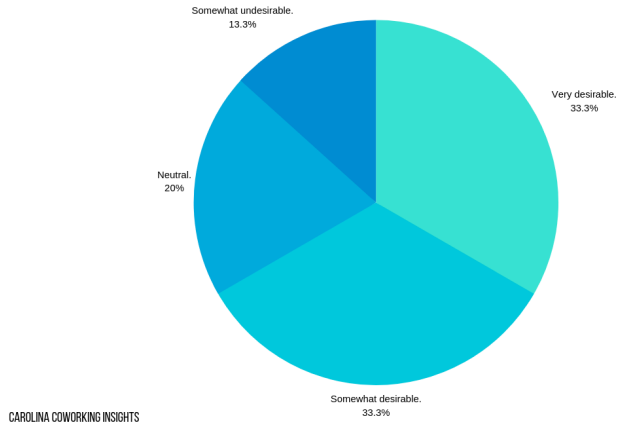


Figure 34

How desirable is it to have "private offices" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?

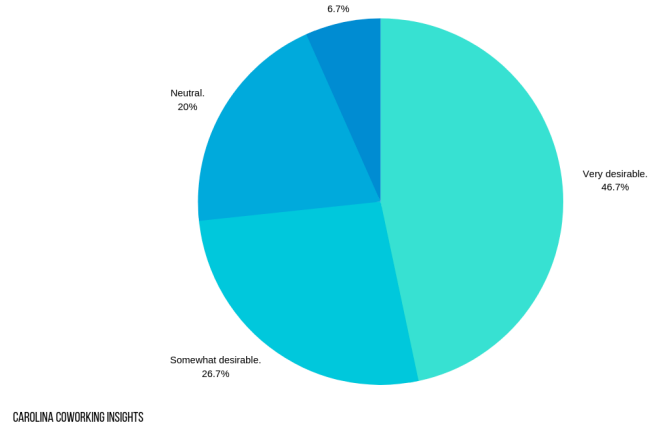


Figure 35

How desirable is it to have "quiet meeting spaces" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?

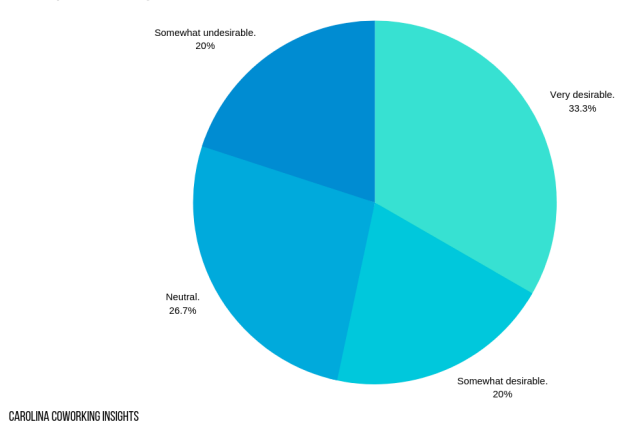


Figure 36

How desirable is it to have "proximity to a bus line" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?

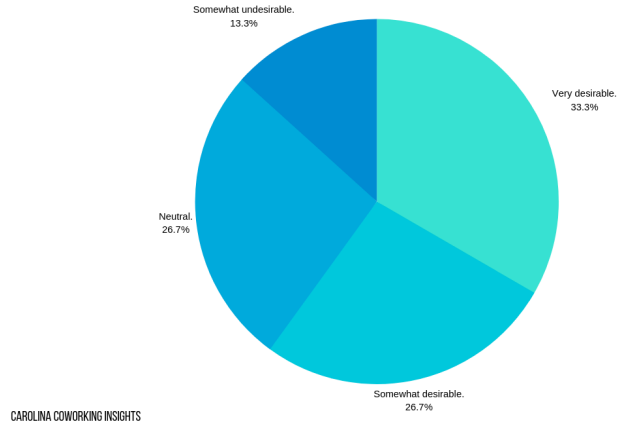
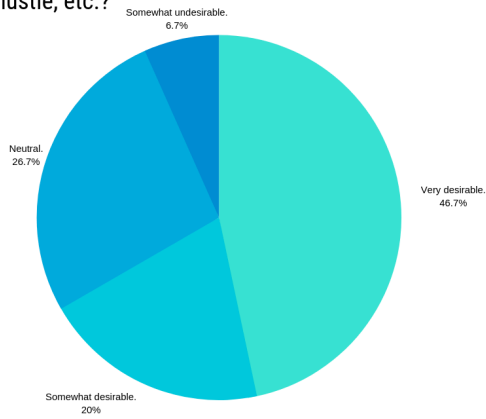


Figure 37

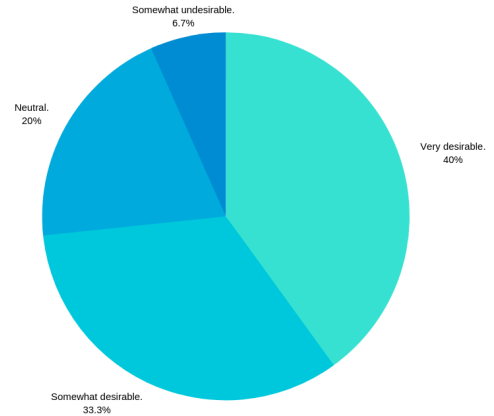
How desirable is it to have "parking" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 38

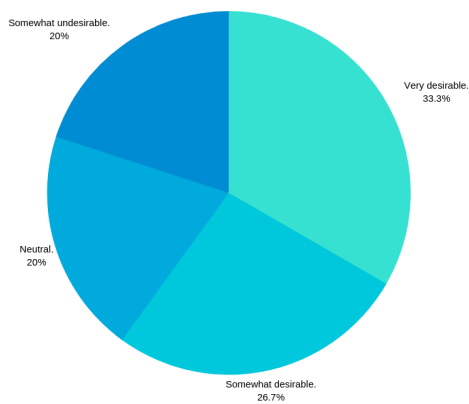
How desirable is it to have "events and networking" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 39

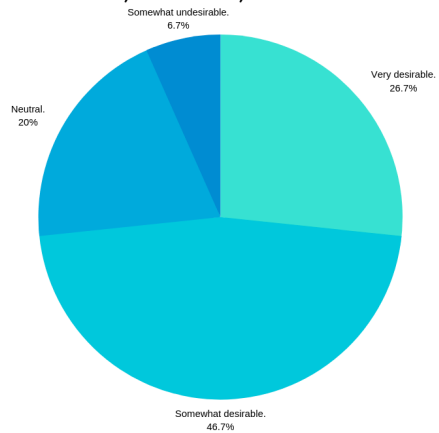
How desirable is it to have "personal development and business coaching" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 40

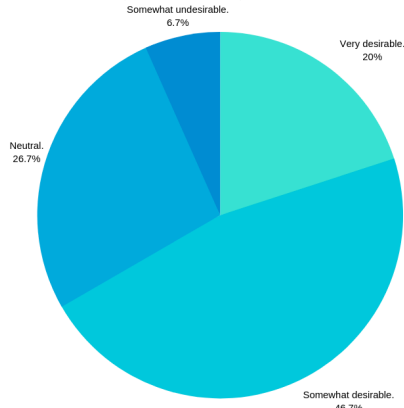
How desirable is it to have "collaborative environment" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 41

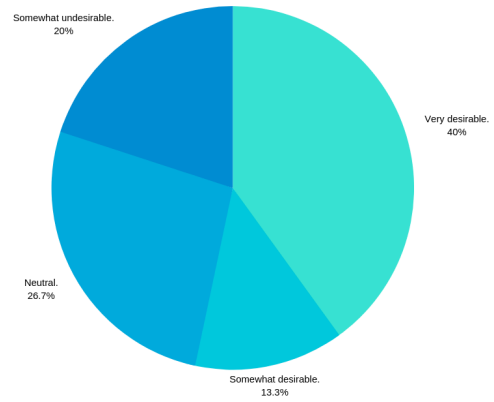
How desirable is it to have "break room or kitchen" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 42

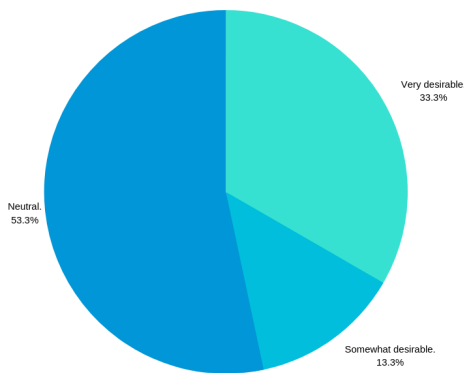
How desirable is it to have "flexible coworking spaces" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 43

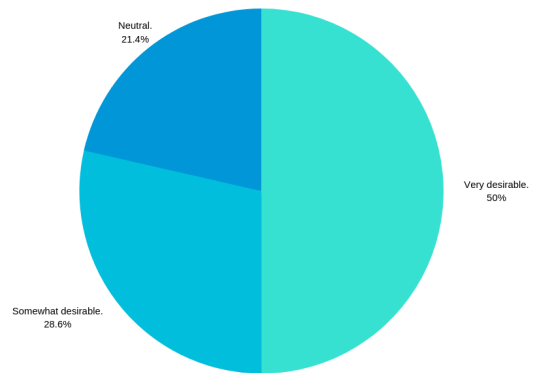
How desirable is it to have "flexible month-to-month leases for private office space" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 44

How desirable is it to have "free printing" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?



CAROLINA COWORKING INSIGHTS

Figure 45

How desirable is it to have "proximity to restaurants and retail" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?

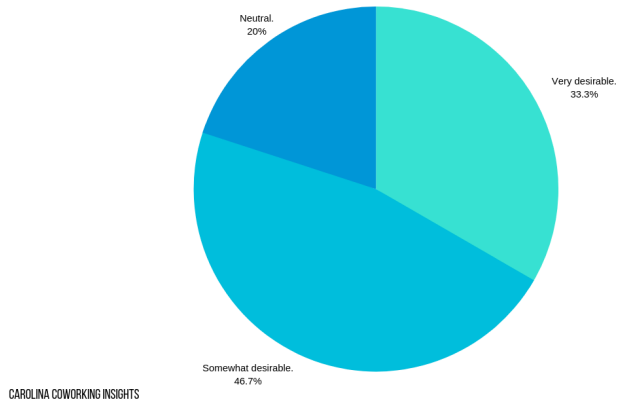


Figure 46

How desirable is it to have "proximity to restaurants and retail" in your workplace for your business, side hustle, etc.?

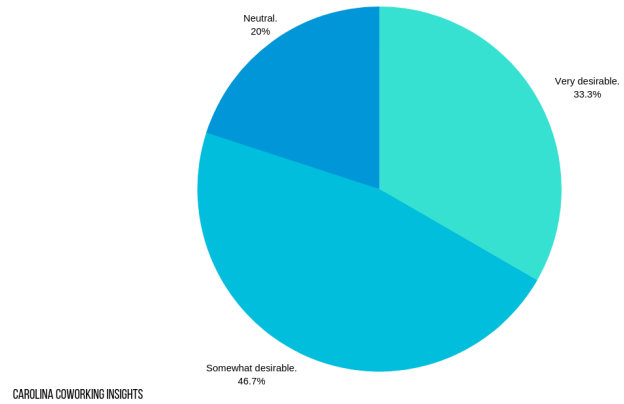


Figure 47

Rate this statement as it applies to your workspace for your business, profession, etc.: "I have access to events and networking."

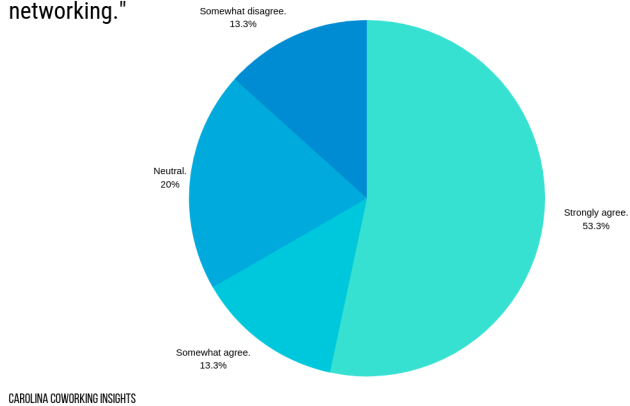


Figure 48

Rate this statement as it applies to your workspace for your business, profession, etc.: "I have access to locked or secure storage space for my belongings."

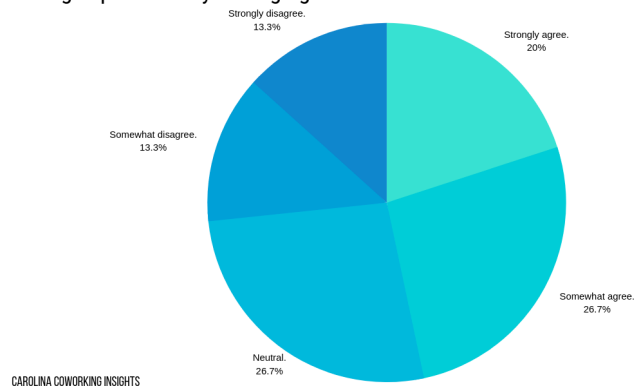


Figure 49

Rate this statement as it applies to your workspace for your business, profession, etc.: "I can walk to restaurants and shops."

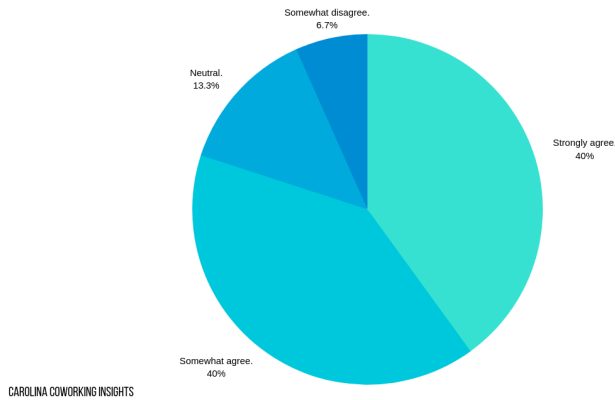


Figure 50

Rate this statement as it applies to your workspace for your business, profession, etc.: "I have access to parking."

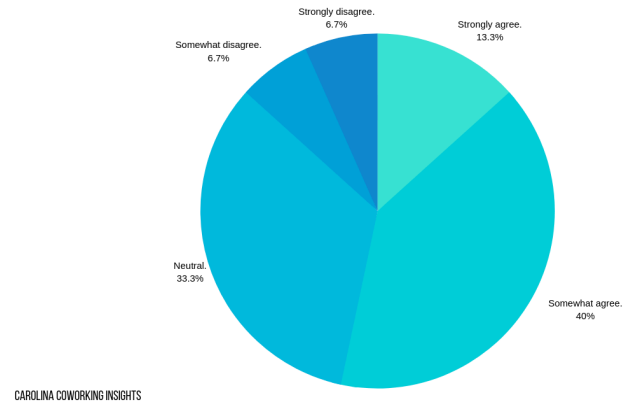


Figure 51

Rate this statement as it applies to your workspace for your business, profession, etc.: "I feel like my business is better because of my current working situation."

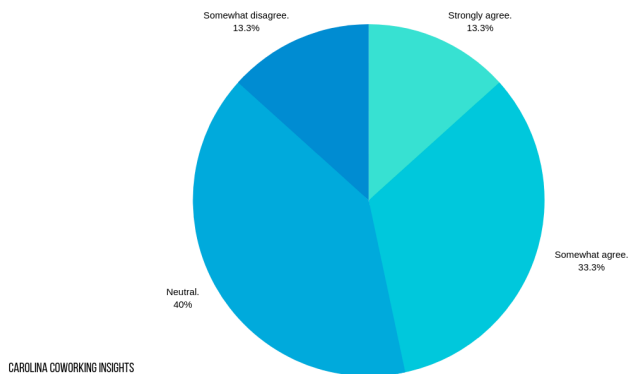


Figure 52

Rate this statement as it applies to your workspace for your business, profession, etc.: "My current working situation gives me access to coaching and personal development."

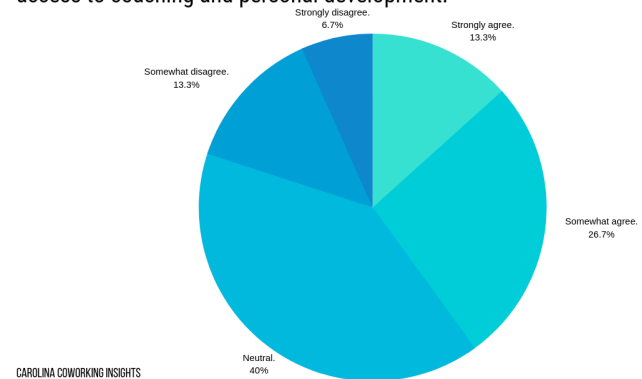
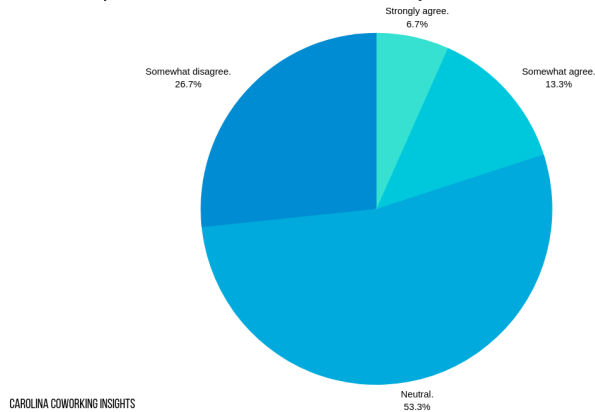


Figure 53

Rate this statement as it applies to your workspace for your business, profession, etc.: "I never feel lonely at work."



What do you love about your current workspace?

Response (often paraphrased)	Number of Responses
Quiet / minimal distractions.	21
Privacy and safety.	7
Access to food, amenities, supplies.	6
Natural light, access to the outdoors and fresh air.	3
Convenient location.	6
Comfort.	6
Flexibility.	7
Being able to store things at a desk and not having to pack everything you need every day.	3

What would you change about your current workspace?

Response (often paraphrased)	Number of Responses
More comfortable seating	6
Quieter workspace / less distractions	10
More space, more room to work	14

More space for group / team based work	6
Better amenities (printing, access to parking, drink/snack machines, standing desks, whiteboards)	8
More natural light, windows or access to the outdoors/fresh air; less artificial lighting	7

Note: These are paraphrased responses from the short-answer section of the survey. Full lists of responses will be made available through the CSV file with all data.