

STATE OF THE WORKPLACE

Part 1: Gender



Introduction

by Pooja Hoffman, Director of Marketing, Hive

The tide has begun to turn for gender equality in 2018, but the pay gap remains wide and a glass ceiling looms large above our heads. We have a long way to go — estimates put us over 150 years away from gender parity as women continue to pay pink taxes with lower salaries, grapple with emotional labor, and lack representation in leadership roles.

But for the first time, we have objective data from our productivity analytics that we can use to tackle key gender issues and myths in the workplace.

Using an anonymized data sampling of more than 3,000 women and men in Hive's workspaces, the data reveals insights into how we behave, work, and communicate in the office.

We took a look at some of the biggest questions about gender and the way we work:

- *Does chatting at work make you less productive?*
- *Do women need to stop using passive language?*
- *Have our workplaces become more gender integrated?*
- *Do men and women complete the same amount of work?*
- *Does working on weekends make you more productive?*

The answers might surprise you.

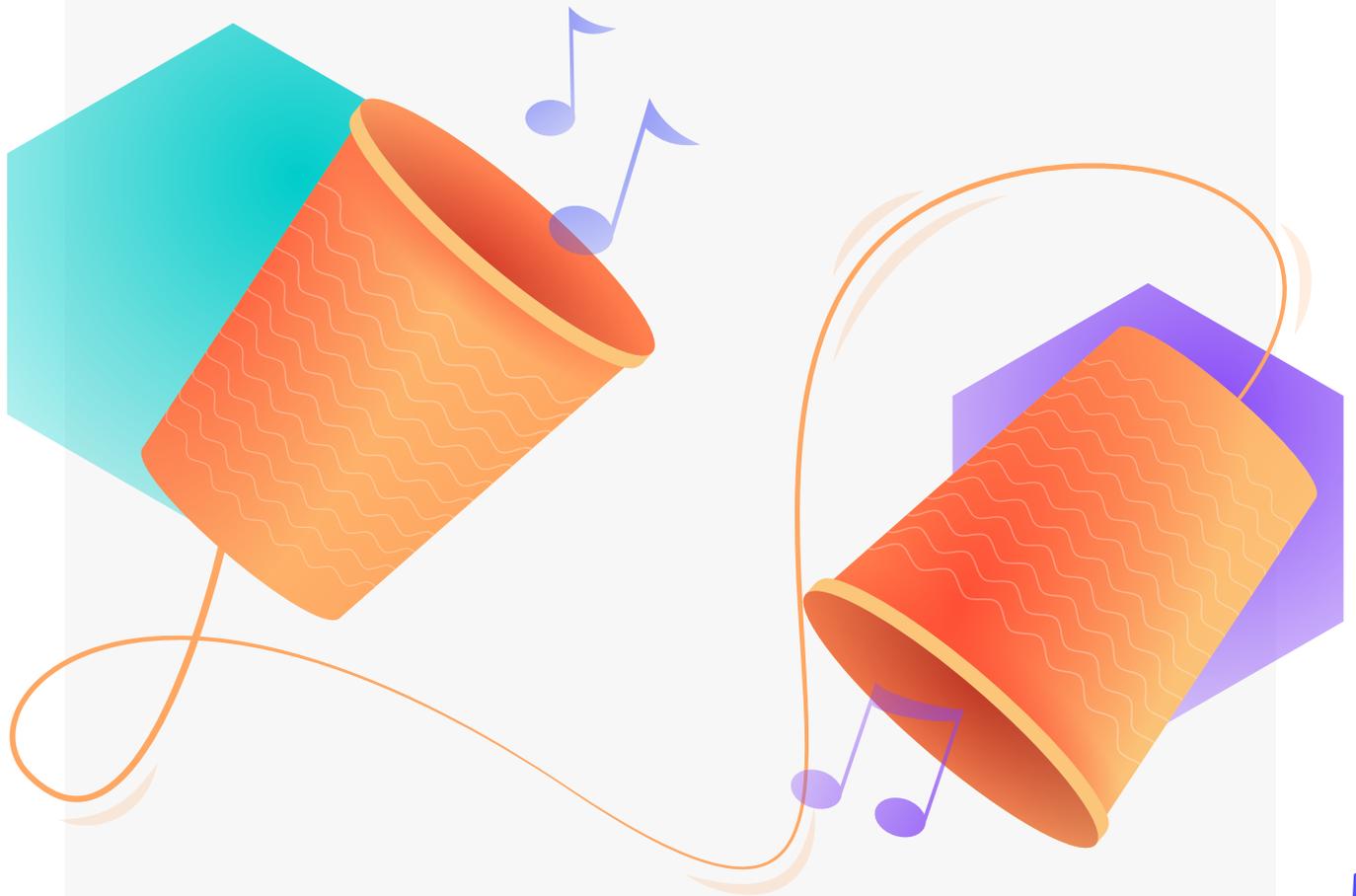
Many thanks to our hard-working team for assembling these insights. We hope that they contribute to healthy discussion and a better workplace for everyone.

The takeaways

Key findings:

- 1 Does **chatting at work** make you less productive?**
It appears to have the opposite effect. Women send 20% more messages via chat yet complete 10% more work.
- 2 Do women need to **stop using passive language**?**
Arguments for or against passive language aside, this should not be a gendered issue. Men use “thanks” more than women and say “sorry” nearly the same amount.
- 3 Have our workplaces **become more gender integrated**?**
It probably doesn't help that both men and women assign 20% more tasks to someone of the same gender.
- 4 Do men and women complete **the same amount of work**?**
Not only do women complete more work on average, but they are assigned 55% of all work, compared to 45% assigned to men.
- 5 Does **working on weekends** make you more productive?**
You're better off saving it for a weekday. Men work more on weekends than women, yet complete less work each week.

How we communicate



Whether it's Men Are from Mars or an email extension that eliminates the word "sorry" from our vocabularies, the discussion around different communication styles (and what's most effective) is one for the ages. **Communication is the crucial element of teamwork and how we get things done.**

Sometimes you have to talk the talk, to walk the walk

The ability to chat quickly with coworkers has exploded in recent years with the arrival of messaging apps like Slack and Microsoft Teams, but these also come with a flood of notifications. According to researchers at the University of California, Irvine, it can take 25 minutes just to get back on task after an interruption. Even more troubling, another study found that disruptions can lead to a 20% decrease in performance.

So how does gender play into this? In this growing world of messaging apps, we found a **significant** difference in the number of messages sent by each gender.

Women sent **20%** more messages than their male counterparts:



But there's a twist...

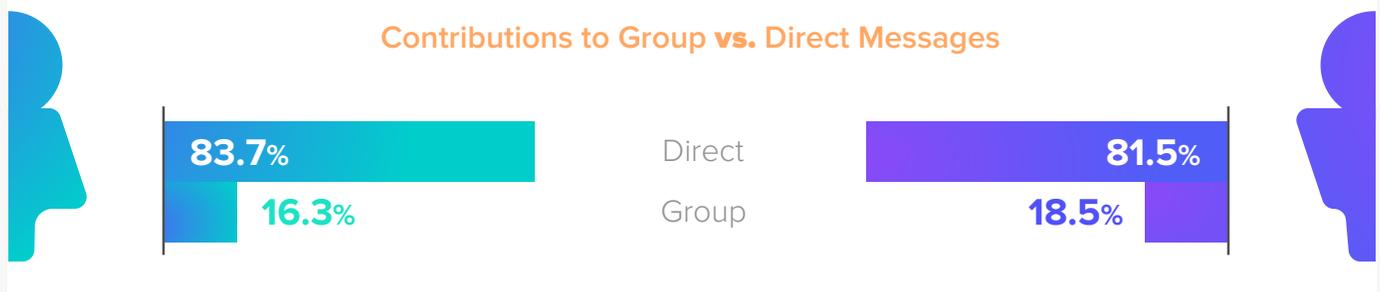
Although women send significantly more messages, they complete **10%** more work than men do.



Not only that, there's a strong correlation between communication and work completed. Tuesdays are the most productive day for both genders, and it's also the day when women send the most messages.

So does the type of messaging matter? Some argue that group messages can prevent women from participating. We found that men do participate more in group messaging.

Contributions to Group vs. Direct Messages



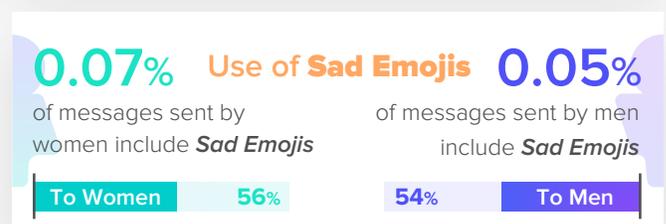
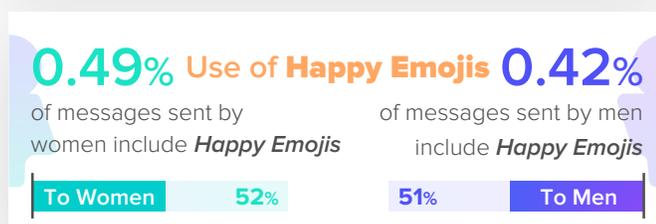
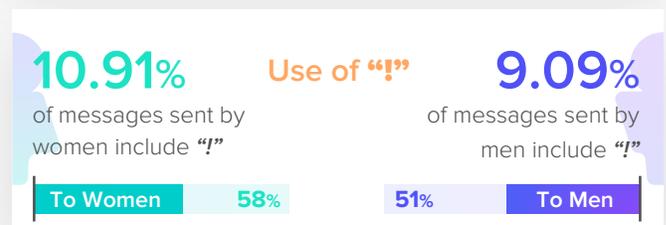
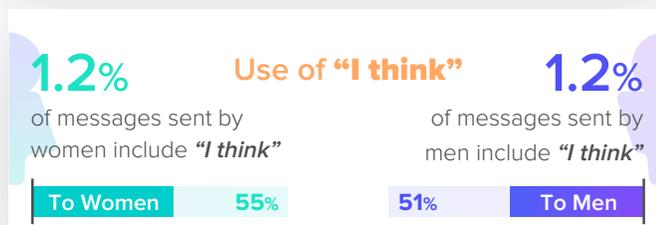
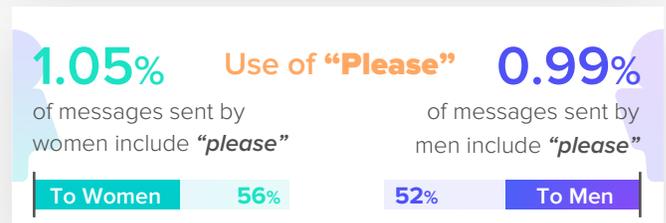
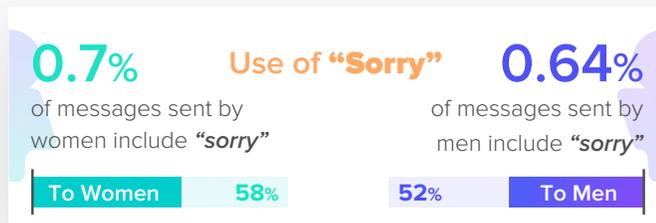
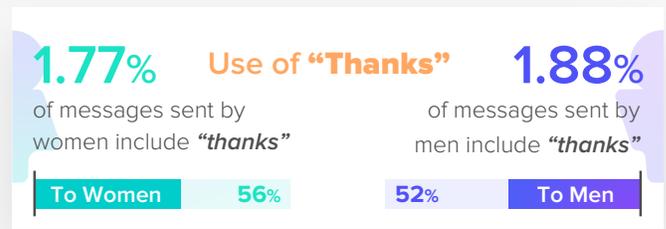
Sorry, not sorry

There's been a recent backlash against words like "sorry" or "I think", and women in particular are encouraged not to use them. There's even a Gmail plugin, Just Not Sorry, that underlines "passive" words that may undermine a woman's message. From countless articles to Sheryl Sandberg's "Lean In," women have been told they need to use more assertive language (or at least cut out "weak" language). Surprisingly, the data doesn't support this.

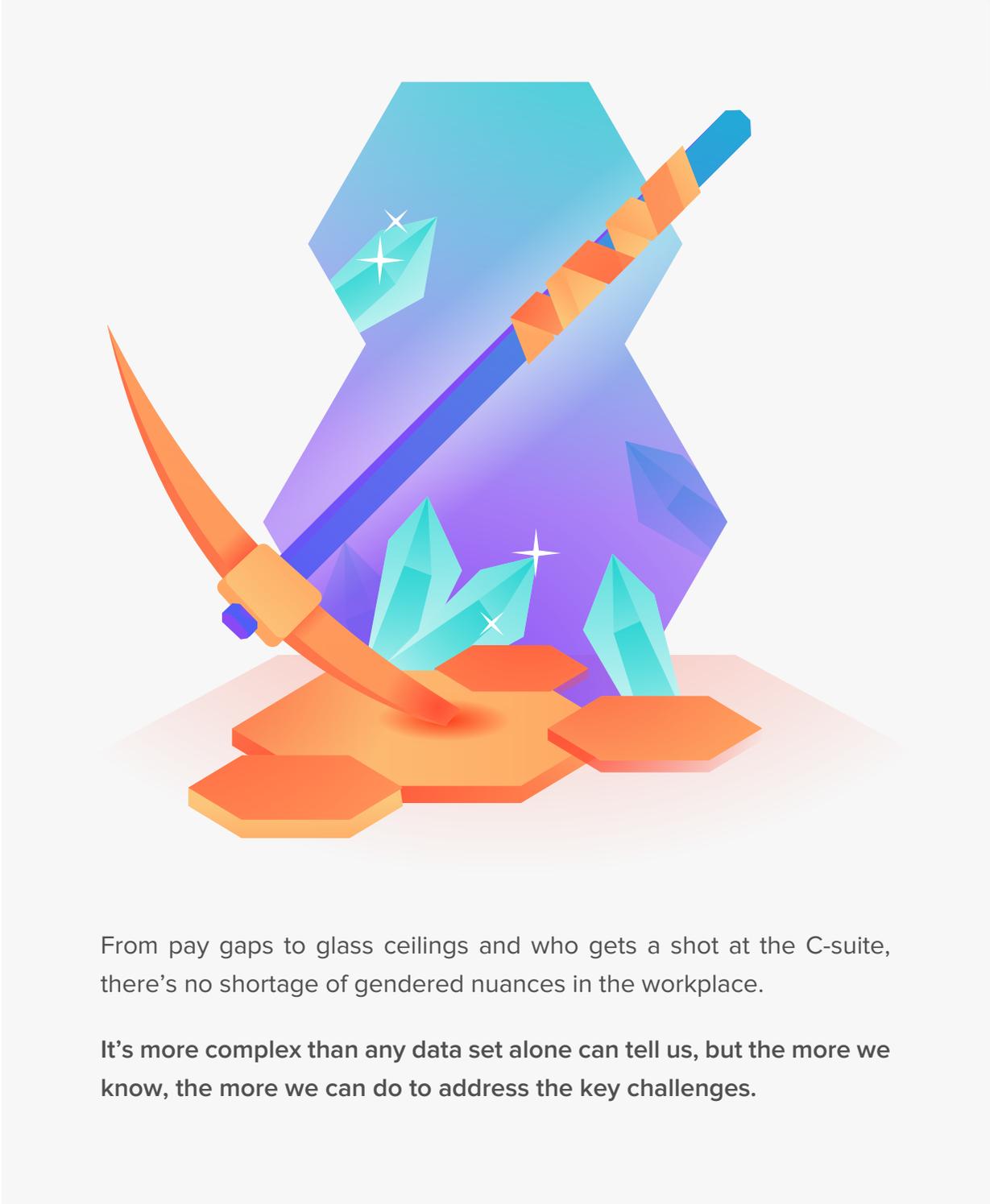
There are almost no differences between the use of these words by each gender.

Men say **"thanks"** more often, and women use more emojis and exclamation points, but both say **"sorry"**, **"please"**, and **"I think"** almost equally.

With language patterns so similar across genders, should we be shifting our focus away from policing how women communicate in the workplace and start worrying more about how women's words and contributions are perceived?



How we work



From pay gaps to glass ceilings and who gets a shot at the C-suite, there's no shortage of gendered nuances in the workplace.

It's more complex than any data set alone can tell us, but the more we know, the more we can do to address the key challenges.

Mind the gender gap

It's been proven by Gallup that there are business benefits to a more gender-balanced workforce, but the raw numbers of employees can hide some interesting dynamics. We've seen research that indicates resumes with male names have higher success rates, can remember what an experiment in name-swapping meant for a woman and her male coworker, and learned from Beth Comstock how women can thrive in the emergent era.

One line of thought around gender gaps in the workplace is that maybe men and women are just different. Former Googler James Damore was not the first to tout biology as a key factor in determining gendered career trajectories, but social science tends to paint a different picture.

So what does the data say?

Despite the progress made on more gender-balanced workplaces, there is a divide:

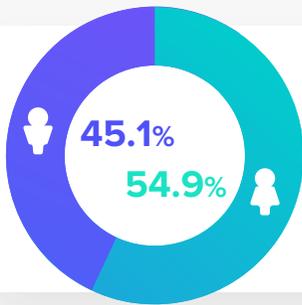


Both women and men are more likely to send direct messages to their own gender. What's perhaps most significant, however, is that **men assign 20% more tasks to men and women assign 20% more tasks to women**. We're also slightly more likely to complete work assigned to us by someone of the same gender.

There are gendered gaps in pay and title, as data from McKinsey shows that both the number and the percentage of women tapers off dramatically in leadership roles. If both men and women continue to assign more tasks to, and complete more tasks for, colleagues of the same gender, then this tendency could perpetuate the gender gap in higher-ranking positions and the C-suite.

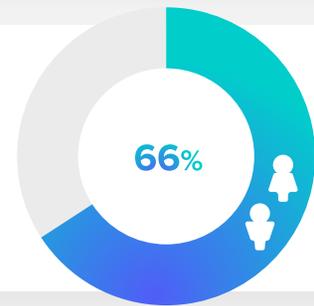
Getting things done

The data shows that women complete 10% more tasks than men. But are they assigned the same amount of work? It turns out that **54.9% of tasks are assigned to women, compared to 45.1% assigned to men.** Both genders complete tasks assigned to them at a similar rate (66%).



More tasks overall are assigned to women (**54.9%**), and women contributed to **10%** more completed actions across workspaces.

Both men and women complete approximately **66%** of the tasks assigned to them.

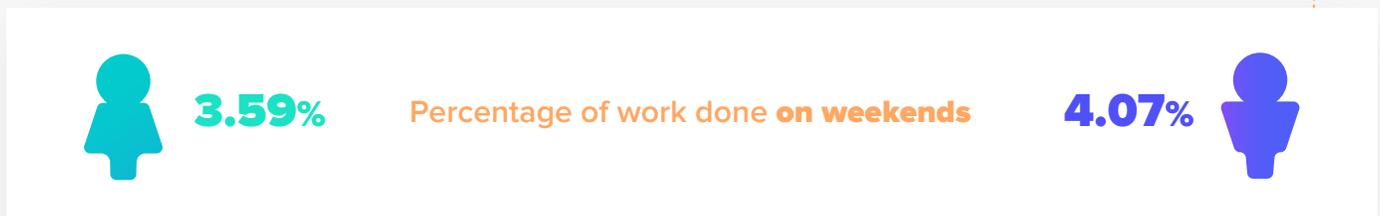


So if women are assigned more tasks and are getting more done overall, why isn't this translating into promotions and more equal career success? One reason could be the type of work women are asked to do. Studies have shown women are assigned and spend more time on non-promotable tasks than men. These non-promotable tasks are any activity that is beneficial to the organization, but does not contribute to career advancement. It's important for company leadership be mindful about how these tasks are distributed.

Working for the weekend

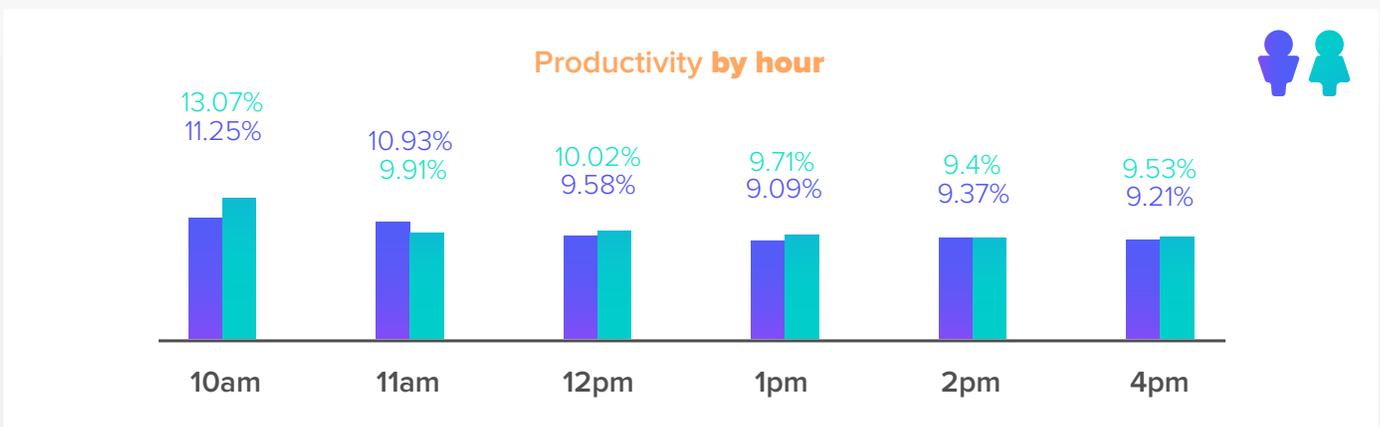
Researchers at the Royal Holloway University of London and the Paris School of Economics noted that one third of Americans work on the weekend. But do these extra hours translate into extra productivity?

The data shows that men are more likely to work on weekends than women.



But with women completing 10% more work on average, it's hard to make the argument that working on weekends increases productivity. One possible explanation could be more efficient working styles. When looking at productivity by hour, women tend to be more consistent throughout the day.

The findings also suggest that taking time to disconnect on weekends enables greater productivity overall. In a Stanford study on the relationship between working hours and productivity, it was found that employee output peaks at 50 hours and crashes hard after 55 hours. Although you may feel super productive logging in on the weekend, the reality is that you may not be doing your best work.



Closing Thoughts

While the question of gender's impact in the workplace is much bigger and more complex than this data set alone can tell us, these insights help us to better understand what underpins some of the most pressing issues we're contending with. This includes productivity gaps, the role of communication styles, and how we approach working relationships.

Gender equality in the workplace can only be achieved with education and action. We hope these insights help empower you and your team to make progressive change.

We are passionate about tackling the challenges of the workplace and building great teams. Our software enables teams to work together seamlessly, escaping emails and outdated project planning tools.

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