

He said/She said: Should dogs be allowed at work?

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THE HIT100.9 FM team of Paul Hogan and Esther Woodhams answers the question, should dogs be allowed at work?

HE SAID: PET PEEVE IS HARD WORK

THE Tasmanian Pharmacy Authority has sought out Crown law advice after several complaints regarding pharmacists taking their dogs to work.

Apparently some members of the public have been concerned about hygiene issues.

And you know what? I don't blame them.

It's not as if I dislike "man's best friend". I have a hound. I don't want to talk myself up, but I adopted him. He was mature-aged and had been continually looked over by prospective dog owners. But please don't call me a hero.

Speaking from experience, when it comes to dogs in the workplace, forget it.

Now don't go confusing this with me beating up on guide dogs and other assistance animals. Give those little champs free rein.

Seizure alert dogs are far more honourable than us two-legged folk.

But these are not the canines in question.

A couple of months back a work colleague (it was Woody) drew my attention to some tin-pot study claiming that having pets in the workplace increases productivity.

I'm nothing if not a bit of a science geek, so I thought I'd play along. And how did our little dogs at work experiment go? Well, that one day turned out to be like a mainland music festival: loud, smelly and urine everywhere.

The tipping point was probably when Woody's dog lifted its leg on our boss's desk.

Now I'm not going to deny that I have considered doing the same occasionally (sorry Mr Bradley), but I managed to exercise some restraint.

There are just certain workplaces where having a pet dog present is not appropriate.

A Ma and Pa Main Street business? Go for it!

The day clinic set to perform my next colonoscopy? Not so much.

The doctor's little camera is the only thing I want peering up at me, not a little pug or Pekingese!

SHE SAID: A JOB WELL DONE, ROVER

IT'S a common misconception that dogs are more unhygienic than us two-legged folk.

Take, for instance, Fido's mouth. Dogs have roughly equal proportions of bacteria in their gobs to ours. Neither of them could realistically be described as particularly clean. Bacteria is species-specific. This means that copping a

wet one on the kisser from your four-legged friend can't give you dog germs. You're much more likely to pick up a lurgy from Darren in accounts.

Experts have proven time and time again that workers become far less stressed and more trusting with each other after playing with a canine. Bosses have a huge opportunity to improve profits and productivity by letting staff bring their furry friend to work.

Studies have found that employees with a solid history of pet ownership are even likely to release a "love hormone", that makes people nice and relaxed, resulting in a more positive work environment.

British employers Blue Cross and Pets at Home already allow staff to bring dogs to work, and both businesses have labelled it a success.

Professor Paul Zak, an American neuro-economist, is a proponent of neuro-economics, the study of human decision-making.

Zak's study on dogs in the workplace found that: "It is not just 'nice' or 'fun' to have dogs at work, it is an effective way to improve productivity and profits."

Not really a "tin-pot" study after all.

I say let the dogs run free. It can't be any worse than usual office behaviour.

There was my former boss who resembled (and smelt like) a bulldog.

And who could forget the colleague who had a penchant for car park spitting? He was more slobbery than a bullmastiff.

And then there is my current workmate whose behaviour could only be described as that of a "female dog". Here's looking at you Paul.