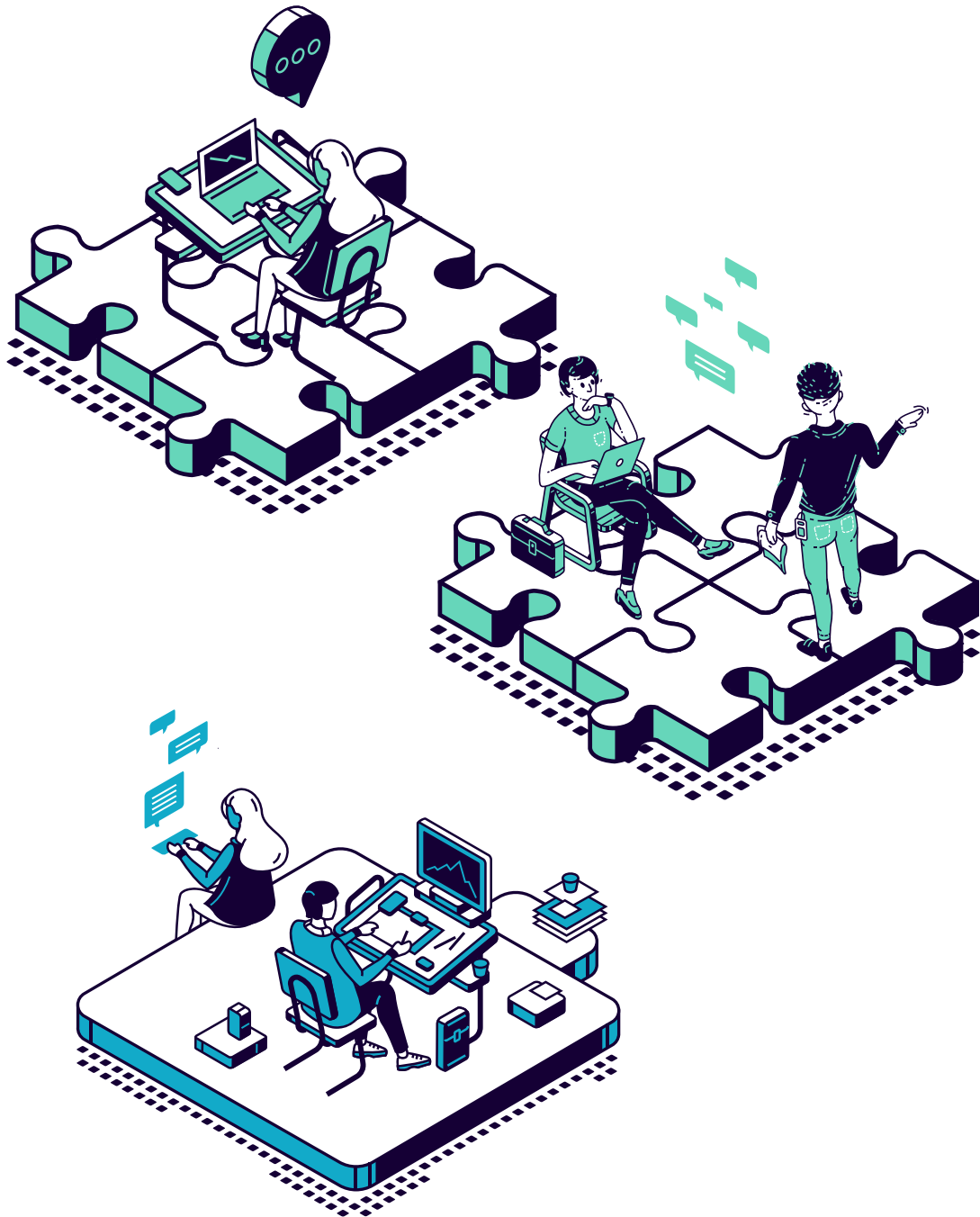


A Sustainable Work Model: Towards Remote and in the Office Work

Myths and realities



PART ONE

Myths About Remote and Office-Based Work

M

Myth #1: Everyone Wants to Work Remotely All the Time

One common belief is that everyone wants to work remotely. And that they want to do so full time. However, this is not true (Las Heras & Barraza, July 2020). Not everyone wants to work remotely all the time.

Full-time remote work comes with many social costs for the person doing it. It fosters a sedentary lifestyle, as they don't have to commute to work, and it can lead to social isolation, perhaps the biggest drawback of 100% online work.

In our surveys, we found that employees rate the "quality of their interactions with their colleagues" as 10% less "satisfactory" on the days they work from home than when they work at the office. This is not because there are misunderstandings but because of the lack of face-to-face interaction. They are missing the cues that we all give via our expressions, gestures, and tone of voice. We don't run into people in the hallway or at the coffee machine. There's no lunch-table conversation. If remote work is done sporadically, just a few days a week, it's not such a big deal; in fact, workers even like it. They appreciate less interaction, a bit of silence, more possibilities for inner dialogue. But when it's done full time, every day of the week, it can be very negative for the workers' mood and for psychological and social health.

Full-time remote work can lead to the tedium that's natural in someone who is always in the same physical location. It can be viewed as a type of internment dictated not by laws but by job requirements.

A 100% remote job can lead to conditions in which the worker disconnects from the work environment and lacks commitment and alignment with the brand and its values. Although it is true that culture is not only conveyed in person, being there in person does facilitate it. People notice how employees and customers are treated, who is given a bigger budget, a fringe benefit, or a larger or smaller office. And all of this ultimately conveys underlying values of integrity, commitment, quality, etc.—or, conversely, of detachment, sloppiness, and carelessness; of greed, because not all cultures are positive, and when they aren't, it's probably best not to convey them.

Working remotely full-time can bring a host of disadvantages. First, commuting to work offers employees the chance to move their bodies, and while this may seem disadvantageous if they have to do it every day, if they never have to, that can have a negative effect on their physical and psychological health. The time spent on commutes serves as a transition when they can think, read, listen to music or audiobooks, disconnect, talk on the phone, and the like. Eliminating these transitional times completely can have effects counter to those desired and expected.

In turn, a completely remote job with a great deal of pressure could make it difficult to disconnect and integrate work and family in a healthy way. This is particularly true in intellectual jobs that require concentration, where time "flies." Workers could end up isolating themselves

from their social and family milieu, leading to problems of workaholism and burnout, precisely the opposite of what is desired.

Furthermore, according to Nacho Coller (see the interview below), people who want to work remotely all the time are perhaps those who most need interaction, social learning, sharing, listening, and developing shared work competencies .

R

Reality #1: Only 12% of Workers Want to Work Remotely Every Day

The reality is that just 12% of people would like to work remotely all five days in the workweek. According to our figures:

What is the profile of the employees who prefer to work remotely every day?



- most are women (64%) with a mean age of 39
- 70% are married or have a steady partner
- 58% have children
- 56% have been working at their company for four years or more

Of all the reasons cited, the most important one is the ability to take better care of their families. The most common arguments for working at home every day are:

The most common arguments for working at home everyday:

**“To be able to take care of my family better”
(61%).**

**“To save money on transportation”
(48%).**

**“To have the chance to do a sport or a hobby”
(48%).**

In our analysis, we found that 7% of respondents want to work remotely only one day a week, 32% want to two days a week, 36% want to three days, and 9% want to work remotely four days a week. Only 12% want to work remotely every day. And a much smaller percentage, a mere 4%, never want to work remotely.

Working partially, or some days, from an alternative location is what makes the most sense to get the job done smoothly, maintain social contact, create relationships, learn what other colleagues are doing, and exchange knowledge, while also having a private space.

In the interview we held with Jordi Llargués, strategic facility manager at Bayer (see below), he explains that his company has decided to let employees choose how they work, with the possibility of going to the corporate office a certain number of days per week. As of this writing, the company is forecasting that 20% will choose full-time at the office, but that this percentage will gradually drop over time.

Table 2 shows the data collected from all the participants surveyed.

Table 2. Desired Number of Days of Remote Work



Days	Percentage
0	4%
1	7%
2	32%
3	36%
4	9%
5	12%

Just as 20% of the Bayer employees have chosen to work at the office five days a week, in our study we found that only 4% of the participants surveyed said that they wanted to go back to working 100% of the time at the office, citing the following reasons³:

Reasons for never wanting (4%) to work from home:

“At home I don’t have the means I need to do my job remotely” (61%) .

“I lead a team and it’s better if I’m there” (54%)

³ Logically, these percentages do not total 100, since a person can prefer remote work for more than one reason, and there were other options on the questionnaire that were seldom chosen.

With regard to the preference for working in the office with the argument that “I have my team there,” we should note that this will gradually diminish in the new reality. Team members will often be working both in-person and remotely. Likewise, even those working in-person will not necessarily be physically together.

At Metro de Madrid, Teresa Sancho, the head of Internal Communication (see interview below), explains that in her company, the pandemic has accelerated the change in mindset. Before, the goal was for most employees in the same job category and department and with the same responsibilities to be near each other. Now they have seen that this isn’t necessary, that another way of working is possible, and that many employees are no longer willing to work under the old model that was inflexible with regard to times and spaces and that fostered neither autonomy nor empowerment.

Did You Know...



...The desire to work remotely does not depend on age?

Sometimes we think that not wanting to work remotely is associated with certain age groups, but this is false. As shown in **Table 3**, which illustrates the data collected from the participants in our study, on average all age groups want to work remotely the same number of days. Interesting but true!

Table 3. Desired Number of Days of Remote Work By Age Group

Days	20-30 years	30-40 years	40-50 years	50-60 years
0	0%	5%	3%	5%
1	7%	3%	7%	14%
2	42%	31%	34%	24%
3	35%	34%	34%	40%
4	7%	10%	9%	6%
5	9%	17%	13%	11%



Isabella Meneghel

PhD in occupational psychology, and psychology professor at the International University of Catalonia (Barcelona)

The Psychology of In-Person and Remote Work

Why do so many of us want to return to in-person work? What are we missing in online interactions?

There are different reasons we need in-person work, and the main one is the fact that we are undeniably social creatures. Interpersonal relationships are essential to our well-being, and this includes at work as well. The field of positive psychology has extensively studied interpersonal relationships and shown that people are much happier when they have good relationships with others. Micro moments of happiness when we feel meaningfully connected to others, not only personally but also at work, are part of that well-being, and this is very difficult to maintain online, where contact, spontaneity, and nonverbal communication are missing.

What do in-person (vs. online) meetings and work contribute to communication and well-being?

In-person meetings feature a series of components in the sphere of nonverbal communication that are more difficult to manage in an online format. In face-to-face communication, even silences and pauses are normal, while in the virtual environment such otherwise natural occurrences can make people question whether there are technical issues. On the other hand, the way you approach a day you're going to work in person is different than a day you're going to work remotely. In person there are plenty of informal moments, like when workers are on their way to a meeting or going to get a

coffee and running into a colleague from another department. Likewise, changing environments and physical spaces, and moving around in general, contribute to greater creativity than if we're in the same place all day long attending one meeting after another, or if we just don't have time to mentally disconnect between tasks.

What role do generational differences play (more junior vs. senior workers) in adapting to remote communication?

Generally speaking, the more junior workers adapt better to remote interactions simply because they may be more familiar with the technology than their senior counterparts. However, this doesn't mean that they don't need social contact. In fact, the younger they are, the more important peer groups are.

However, it is also important to note that this greater ease in adapting to digital communication has its downside for younger workers in that they spend much more time connected online, which can have a negative effect on their mental health.

“Interpersonal relationships are essential to our well-being, and this includes at work as well”

“In person there are plenty of informal moments, changing environments and physical spaces, and moving around in general, contribute to greater creativity than if we’re in the same place all day long ”

In your opinion, can too much remote work, remote studying, and remote interactions lead to social problems?

Technology allows us to be accessible 24/7. However, disconnecting is essential. Hyperconnectivity leads to cognitive overload and causes stress and even disorders or difficulties setting boundaries with colleagues, bosses, and friends.

It can also lead to a kind of dissonance because on the one hand we’re super connected, or so it seems, yet on the other we may get a sense of isolation or loneliness, because exclusively virtual relationships do not have the physical contact needed for empathy and trust to develop.

What risks does 100% remote online work pose to people compared to in-person work? What about 100% in-person compared to online?

It’s tricky to talk about risks because each person’s adaptation experiences when coping with a situation always depends on how they manage to adjust to the demands they perceive in that situation and the resources they are equipped with to deal with it. This is why we all react differently when faced with the same circumstance. It changes according to the personal, psychological, mental, and social capabilities and resources we have to deal with the demands of situations and contexts.

In work done 100% online, the most obvious risk is the sense of isolation—a loss in the quality of interpersonal relationships, disconnection, or not feeling part of the

organization. It is also important to keep in mind that work environments are closely related to the organization’s culture. That’s why there has to be trust for people to be able to work remotely; company leaders have to be ready for it, so human resources management mechanisms are needed that do not rely solely on working in person .

In terms of people who work in person 100% of the time, perhaps we should highlight the sense of a lack of flexibility, the difficulty balancing work and personal life, and the stress that commutes between work and home (such as traffic jams) can cause.

“There has to be trust for people to be able to work remotely; company leaders have to be ready for it, so human resources management mechanisms are needed that do not rely solely on working in person ”

M

Myth #2: Everyone Can Work Remotely

Given that working remotely means that the job does not require an in-person presence, there are many jobs that simply cannot be done this way, or which lose too much of their added value if they are done remotely.

Occupations that cannot be done remotely



- personal care jobs, like hairdressers, massage therapists, dentists, caregivers for the elderly or dependents, surgeons, etc.; and
- jobs that require physical manipulation, like car mechanics, crop or livestock farmers, assemblers, cleaners, maintenance workers, gardeners, builders, etc.

Jobs that lose part of their added value



- those in which the affective-social component is extremely important, such as consultants, therapists, and teachers at nursery schools, elementary schools, and universities; and
- those that require immediate cooperation, such as team sports.

R

Reality #2

Support from a Worker's Boss, Colleagues, and Partner at Home Facilitate Effective Remote Work

There are other factors that help people effectively work remotely. They include personal characteristics like the ability to manage themselves, their supervisor's leadership style, and their boss's support to work remotely. In our data, we have found that the benefits of working from home increase when these conditions are met.

Our studies reveal that the support workers receive from their boss, their partner, and their colleagues is crucial to effective remote working.

Below we outline these independently.

Support from the Boss

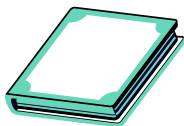
Support from a worker's boss means the supervisor's willingness to support remote work and the assistance they provide in solving any problems that arise. In our data, we see that workers who have strong support from their supervisor can increase the benefits of remote work.

Table 4. Supervisor Support



Level	Low	High	Diff.
Flow at work	5.86	6.65	13%
Job crafting	5.7	6.6	16%
Playful work design	6.55	7.56	15%
Energy accumulation at work	7.55	8.26	9%
Positive emotions at work	6.55	7.62	16%

Furthermore, in the studies cited at the beginning of this report, we at the ICWF know that:









- the performance of an employee working remotely increases an average of 19% when they have strong support from their supervisor;
- an employee working at the office with little support shows 18% lower job quality than someone working remotely with strong support;
- an employee's energy increases 23% when they work remotely and have strong support from their supervisor (compared to someone working at the office without their supervisor's support).

Support from People in the Remote Worker's Social Milieu

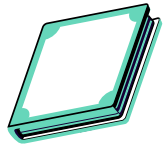
Within the role of the people in the online worker's social milieu, support from their partner stands out. This support translates as their partner's sensitivity to the fact that they need to tend to their work and family needs. In the latest study conducted by the ICWF, cited above, we measured partners' willingness to help the worker take care of their personal and work responsibilities. The results show that anyone who has strong backing from their partner also finds more advantages to working remotely.

Table 5. Partner Support



Level	Low	High	Diff.
Flow at work	6.09	6.43	5% 
Job crafting	6.04	6.51	8% 
Playful work design	6.66	7.51	13% 
Energy accumulation at work	7.7	8.22	7% 
Positive emotions at work	6.61	7.64	16% 


One of the aforementioned ICWF studies found that:






- 
- an employee working at an office who has a low level of support from their partner shows 18% lower performance than someone working remotely with strong partner support;
 - partner support increases the quality of employees' work, especially when they work remotely—An employee working at the office with low partner support shows 15% lower quality work than someone working remotely with strong support;

Support from Colleagues

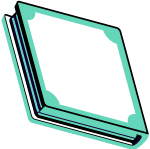
Support from colleagues measures the team’s support to facilitate remote work and solve any problems that arise. That is, it evaluates behaviors and attitudes toward those who choose to work from an alternative location. Just as with supervisor support, we have observed that people with a higher level of support from their colleagues are those who benefit the most from the positive results of remote working.

Table 6. Support From Colleagues



Level	Low	High	Diff.
Flow at work (Fluir en el trabajo)	5.76	6.64	15% 
Job crafting (Adaptación al puesto de trabajo)	5.33	6.41	20% 
Playful work design (Ludificación del puesto de trabajo)	6.48	7.3	13% 
Acumulación de energía en el trabajo	7.7	8.04	4% 
Emociones positivas en el trabajo	6.6	7.27	10% 

In one of the aforementioned studies conducted by the ICWF, we found that:

- 
- an employee working at the office with a low level of colleague support performs 16% less than one working remotely with a high level of support;
 - the quality of work of people working remotely increases 11% when they have strong support from their colleagues (compared to those who do not have that support);

Did You Know...



...The preference for compartmentalizing is found in males and females of all age brackets except ages 40 to 50?

Generally speaking, women have a lower desire or preference for compartmentalizing; that is, for setting boundaries between work and family life. Women feel more comfortable than men playing several different active roles simultaneously, especially mother and professional. However, men don't. They prefer to compartmentalize their roles and keep them separate. The exception is the age bracket from 40 to 50, where both men and women feel fairly comfortable playing more than one active role. In this case, 63% of men and women say that they prefer not to compartmentalize their lives.

When evaluating this preference for compartmentalizing, we find that it drops in women as they get older, as shown in the table below:

Table 7. Preference for Segmenting By Age and Gender

Men			Women		
Age group	Yes	No	Age group	Yes	No
20-30 years	63%	37%	20-30 years	54%	46%
30-40 years	44%	56%	30-40 years	40%	60%
40-50 years	37%	63%	40-50 years	37%	63%
50-60 years	52%	48%	50-60 years	38%	62%
60 or above	39%	61%	60 or above	25%	75%

Generally speaking, people who prefer to compartmentalize their lives feel less comfortable working remotely, especially if they are working from home. Curiously, men and women aged 20 to 30 have the strongest preference for compartmentalizing their lives, that is, for separating their work life from other areas. This has become clear during the COVID-19 pandemic, when universities were forced to continue classes remotely for months, with the consequent demoralization which oftentimes translated into drop-outs (Ibáñez, November 29, 2020; Silió, November 2, 2020).



Esther Jiménez

Vice chancellor and dean of the faculty of education at the International University of Catalonia

Remote Learning vs. In-Person Learning

What are the risks to learning of going 100% remote?

It's clear that remote work brings major advantages in working and being able to integrate family and personal life, in addition to the many positive effects it has for society as a whole and especially for the environment. However, along with its many benefits, a 100% remote job can also have drawbacks. The absence of interpersonal relationships may limit the capacity to innovate, creativity, and learning that come from communication and the exchange of ideas. Direct contact with colleagues can also enhance emotional health.

How do people learn, and how are competencies developed?

People learn by being curious, by developing the ability to acquire new knowledge. To do so, it is essential to have initiative, self-control, determination, etc. Developing these competencies requires us to be open to change, to acquiring or changing habits, to getting out of our comfort zone, and to learning about our strengths and limitations.

What qualities in leaders help others develop competencies?

Leaders develop their workers' competencies when they know how and to whom to delegate. To do so, they have to know their employees well and to know what, when, and how to communicate; to manage time well so that the team reaches its objectives; and to create a sense of trust, which means that they have to anticipate the consequences of making decisions and behave with integrity, responsibility, and fairness in any situation.

Might there be characteristics in the physical environment that facilitate or hinder someone's ability to learn and develop competencies?

Whether we like it or not, the physical environment conditions our behavior. For over a century we have known that the physical conditions of work have psychological effects. The light, space, or colors can create an atmosphere of harmony which stimulates attention and concentration, or conversely, they can hinder the full development of our talent. The great contemporary pedagogues and architects have repeatedly stressed the importance of integrating the space as yet another learning tool.

Do you think there are characteristics that lead some people to learn better in person and others online?

Temperament influences us when we work either in-person or remotely. Some people are more introverted and systematic, and they may feel more comfortable working remotely. As I said before, learning involves flexibility and the capacity to adapt in order to learn new habits. In this sense, combining these two forms of work helps us develop a wider range of competencies because they force us to call our different types of talent into play.

Do you have any recommendations for companies thinking about how to design the "work of the future"?

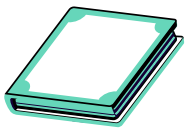
I think that the hybrid model is the future. In-person work brings a sense of community and belonging, which helps solve difficult problems and create new things, while remote work allows for greater flexibility and management capacity. Without a doubt, this is a revolution that will change the shape of our cities.

M

Myth #3 Performance Is Lower with Remote Work

One of the most widespread myths about remote work is that people work less and perform worse when the boss isn't there, that is, when they work remotely. However, a study conducted by the IWCF (Las Heras et al., February 2020) found that when people work remotely two to three days a week, performance improves on those days (up to 19%), and so does the quality of work (up to 18%).

Conditions for efficient remote work:



- having the support of a supervisor, colleagues, and family;
- being able to work remotely under optimal conditions: not having dependents to care for at home, having a good Internet connection, etc.;
- working remotely because it is feasible;

There are other studies that have analyzed this topic, such as the one by professors Hunton & Norman (2010), who found that when working remotely in combination with in-person work done at the office, performance is better than when working exclusively at the office. They also found that working remotely the entire week is less productive than working entirely at the office. Likewise, they detected that remote work increases productivity because it increases commitment to the company. That is, it improves commitment because the desires to continue working with the company and to contribute both grow, as does a sense of belonging.

Our data also show that flexible remote work schemes can have positive consequences for the company, such as:

Consequences of efficient remote work:



- an increase of up to 10% in the pride of belonging to the company, and
- an increase of up to 9% in the willingness to do what the company or customers need.
- an increase in productivity (19%) and quality of work (18%) on days when working remotely if this is done two or three days per week.

There are many reasons why people work. One is extrinsic motivation: we are motivated by what we are going to receive in exchange. This leads us to invest effort, time, and energy to receive money, recognition, or fringe benefits in return. But we also work for many other reasons, such as to gain intrinsic benefits from the work itself: the satisfaction of learning, of meeting and interacting with people we like to be in touch with, of developing skills and seeing new places. And there's the transcendental motivation—to have a positive impact on others, to make their lives better, to improve their health (especially for healthcare professionals), to help others learn and have opportunities to improve their lives, to give them something that makes their lives more pleasant and happier, etc. Therefore, bosses, managers, and companies have to make sure that the people working on their teams and in their organizations are fairly compensated for their work (salary, recognition) and have opportunities to learn and interact, and that they are aware of the impact of their work on others—those who receive the goods or service that the company provides.

Thus, we could assemble a list of habits that drive discouragement and demotivation, which bosses and companies should seek to eradicate, and another that they should encourage, in order to boost motivation levels.



What increases extrinsic, intrinsic and transcendental motivation:

- **Extrinsic**
 - salary in line with responsibilities
 - recognition of the work done

- **Intrinsic**
 - opportunities to learn at work (e.g., via tasks, projects, rotation)
 - positive interactions with other people at work, customers, etc.

- **Transcendental:**
 - communicating the impact of the goods and services on the people who receive them
 - opportunities to participate in decision-making processes on work issues that affect workers and the company in general
 - chances to interact with beneficiaries



What demotivates:

- inefficient policies (obsolete, antiquated, and cumbersome systems)

- lack of communication and feedback

- lack of familiarity and trust with employees

- lack of ergonomics (light, noise, cleanliness, etc.) at work

- insecurity

- lack of flexibility in approaches to work

R

Reality #3: Partial Remote Work Increases the Commitment to the Job, Dedication, and Job Absorption



Below are some of the good practices for leaders which mix remote and office work

Be approachable:

- Offer suggestions to make the mix more effective. Ask employees to exchange ideas and suggestions: what works well, what doesn't, and why.
- Ask employees what you can do to make this kind of work as efficient and effective as possible for everyone.
- Try to make sure that no one overuses remote work because social interaction is difficult for them; this may be the person who needs this interaction the most.

Clarify what you expect of your employees' work:

- Communicate the objectives and how to reach them. Do not try to reach these goals at any price; quality, ethical, and other standards also have to be set. It is essential to ask and find out what difficulties employees are encountering and what opportunities they are detecting.
- When delegating, define the what, why, and who of each task.
- Listen to your team: create spaces of real communication, not just one-way transmission.
- Prevent your employees from becoming burned out.

Encourage frequent contact:

- Create a climate of mutual support among colleagues—those working remotely and those at the office.
- Try to organize projects according to the need to work in person during some phases. Communicate what these phases or times when everyone will have to meet in person are. Encourage people to be willing to go to the workplace because they see the advantages of doing so.
- Try to detect whether some employees are working long days without interruptions to rest, take a walk, eat, and relax.
- Avoid constant connection: clarify how and when employees are expected to communicate, so that those working remotely do not feel obligated to be connected 24/7.
- Celebrate milestones, victories, important events—personal, of the team members, or of the company. Having an in-person/remote mix does not mean that there is no need to celebrate; on the contrary, celebrating becomes even more important as a way to strengthen bonds and create a sense of belonging.

Brummelhuis et al. (2012) found in their studies that jobs that are flexible in terms of times and places help boost employees' commitment to their jobs. Their analysis resulted in an increase in vigor, dedication, and absorption at work.

Did You Know...



...The results of remote work depend on whether a worker is a compartmentalizer or an integrator?

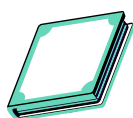
Numerous studies (including Kreiner [2006]) have found that there are individual preferences for compartmentalizing or integrating work life and non-work life, such as family life.

- The preference for compartmentalizing refers to the inclination to play only one role or express one identity in a given time or space. People who have this preference often choose not to play their family role, or their role as a partner, parent, in-law, etc., while at work. Likewise, they prefer not to have anything to do with their role at work when they are doing physical exercise or participating as a member of an organization or club they belong to, for example. For these people, the transitions between these roles and the differentiation of the spaces where each role is performed are essential.
- The preference for integrating refers to the inclination to play different roles and express different identities simultaneously. For example, the role of mother and manager. Or athlete and business owner. Integrators don't mind changing from one role to another without a transition, such as the commute time from one place to another, or the change in the place where they play two different roles.

Therefore, people with a preference for compartmentalizing (placing heavy barriers between work and non-work) tend to prefer to keep a distance between their family and work activities. In contrast, those who prefer integrating (with weak barriers between work and non-work) tend to prefer interaction between both spheres. Therefore, working from the office is more beneficial for compartmentalizers, while working remotely from home is better for integrators.

According to a study conducted by the ICWF (Las Heras et al., April 2020), those with a preference for compartmentalizing their roles at work and at home are single women. No significant differences were found among men, as shown in the table below.

Table 8. Preference for Segmenting By Marital Status



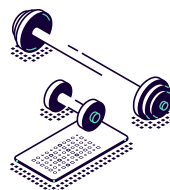
	Men	Women
Married / in a relationship	44%	35%
Single / without a partner	40%	47%



Tips for the days when you work remotely

Regardless of whether your profile is integrative or compartmentalized, below are several tips for the days when you work remotely.

- 1. Set boundaries.** Set boundaries. These can be psychological or physical, although it's much better if there are both. A physical boundary may be "now my kitchen is my office," so if there is anyone at home with you, leave a pitcher of water and any other necessary items out so that no one interrupts you during a given time frame (psychological boundary). No one. This is better for both you and them.
- 2. Communicate these boundaries to others.** Communicate them to your partner or anyone else you live with, your work colleagues, your team, and even your boss, so they know when they can reach you by telephone, how long you'll take to answer emails if they reach you during times/days when you're off, and so on.
- 3. Come up with routines.** Make lists of what you have to achieve every day, whom you should speak with (colleagues, customers, partners, etc.), what your goals on the following days will be, when you are going to take a break to eat (and make sure you only do so then), when you're going to walk a bit (remember that there are no long hallways to the printer, bathroom, or water cooler at home, so you have to offset this to avoid being sedentary). If these little walks are outdoors, such as ten minutes every two hours, they will also make you change the distance your eyes are focusing on, which helps relax them; it will also allow you to have the wind in your face, which is very healthy; and you'll absorb some vitamin D, which is essential.
- 4. To the extent possible, adapt your work timetable to your own biorhythms and needs.** If you do this, communicate it, and even formalize it, if needed. While some people work best very early in the morning, others work better at night; some people have to care for children or the elderly, which requires them to perform some tasks midafternoon or midmorning, or whenever. Of course, this should be based on mutual agreement, and it should be beneficial for everyone: you, your loved ones, and your company/work team.
- 5. Keep up direct, frequent communication.** Especially if you work remotely several days in a row, don't be left dealing with tasks on your own. Communicate. Perhaps the days that you go to the office you don't even run into your boss, so let them know about your progress, the difficulties you're encountering on a specific task, possible delays (and the causes), and possible improvements (and how to make them happen). That is, offer specific, feasible ideas and suggestions, be proactive, and constructively respond to others' needs.
- 6. Properly prepare for meetings.** The fact that your meetings are held remotely is no excuse for not preparing for them. Humanize the contact: turn on your camera during videoconferences (at least for the first few minutes). Be clear about the status of your tasks, both those underway and those already delivered. Try to stick to the agenda, but don't miss out on a few minutes of more personal contact.





Marta Sánchez Serrano

Head of digital transformation at Vodafone (London), and
MBA from IESE Business School

Trends: Digitalization and Presence

From your perspective, what are the main global trends that will affect the future of work worldwide in the coming months/years?

In just a few weeks, we discovered that with the right tools, technology, and the right processes, working remotely we can be as productive as or even more productive than working in person. This experience accelerated the changes that were already trending before this pandemic. Specifically, the trends are as follows:

- **Remote and in-person work are going to coexist**, which means alternative workspaces. Employees will adapt the place to the needs of their jobs, and the fit between the office and remote work will become more fluid.
- **Hyperflexible schedules** are those adapted to the needs of the company, the individual, and their family, and they're also molded to remote teams, perhaps in different time zones.
- **Expansion of the pool of resources and hiring models, including more diverse and intergenerational teams.** Project work will be used more, and therefore marketplaces for finding professionals with the right knowledge and experience will become more important.
- **"Third places" will come to the fore.** These are spaces that are neither in a corporate office nor at home, that are adapted to the needs of the individual and the job they have to do, while also leading to shorter commutes, that allow for living in rural areas (or small cities), etc.

How are these trends going to affect employees and their careers? How can they prepare themselves to be more employable in the future?

Even before the pandemic we were talking about disruption in many sectors. Today more than ever, companies need to reinvent themselves to stay competitive, and this means that each of us as an employee has to foster that attitude of constant change and learning. We have to actively seek a kind of uncomfortable tension, and actively leaving our comfort zone is the only way to keep learning and increasing our employability.

Organizations are becoming less hierarchical and more horizontal, and this means that linear, up-the-ladder career opportunities are diminishing. We have to change our way of thinking.

You work in the field of digitalization. Do you think that face-to-face interactions are important in the future of work? If so, why?

Absolutely! I have been working remotely for many years, and although I defend the value of this model, I also believe that we cannot do away with human contact. In a

**"Being close to others
boosts our optimism,
makes us more resilient,
and helps us better
deal with everyday
challenges"**

“The digitalization of companies, more flexible hours, and remote work open up many possibilities to improve the balance with family and personal lives”

virtual relationship, we can't capture a lot of the nonverbal communication, which is very important in understanding others' motives and thus avoiding conflicts that could have a negative impact on our job.

We are social beings; emotionally, we need human contact in all facets of life, and work is no exception. Being close to others boosts our optimism, makes us more resilient, and helps us better deal with everyday challenges. To me, the best option is the mix, a hybrid world, the sum of working both virtually and in person.

Will there be offices, stores, and headquarters in the future? How will they be used? What will they look like?

They will exist, and they will be much more suitable for their purpose. They will better adapt to the role they are expected to play, enhancing the advantages that can only be found in the physical world and being redefined to maximize the experience of remote connection.

Take stores, for example. In a world in which product supply is managed much more efficiently via e-commerce, brick-and-mortar stores have to be transformed and cover more emotional and social needs, which the online world cannot offer. Online sales are more efficient, and therefore stores have to be reinvented. They will end up being more places of leisure and learning, where you can share experiences with others.

If we are going to continue working from home a high percentage of our time, each office space should be accessible remotely to facilitate collaboration. All the spaces should be technologically advanced and defined to be coherent with the comfort of home; less clinical—albeit hygienically safe—and more similar to the living rooms in our homes, which generate interaction, psychoemotional connection, etc. They should be spaces with

natural light, ventilation, and access to the outdoors.

Working from the office will be used for increasingly specific purposes: certain kinds of meetings, actions that can be carried out only at the office for a variety of reasons (safety, access to systems and people, etc.), which will require better adaptation of the space to fit a specific need. Even though there will continue to be open-plan workspaces, they should be much more flexible and able to be personalized, with modular panels that allow them to be divided according to the daily capacity; spaces especially designed for brief yet large team meetings; rooms for collaborative work, etc.

How do you lead people you don't see? What competencies are going to become more important?

I think that soft skills are becoming increasingly important, such as empathy, communication and active listening skills, and the ability to anticipate and understand other's needs.

When working remotely, there is no opportunity for informal chats or mere observation, so direct communication and active mood management become even more conscious, continuous goals in order to guarantee that the team remains committed.

Looking toward the future of work, is there any good news?

The digitalization of companies, more flexible hours, and remote work open up many possibilities to improve the balance with family and personal lives. Plus, changes toward more horizontal and agile structures in large companies are also opening up new opportunities for development. Professional growth can no longer be understood in just one sense; development policies are going to become much more personalized to adapt to the individual.

M

Myth #4: Remote Work Hinders Innovation

Innovation and creativity are key factors in dealing with the constant challenges facing organizations. The belief that remote work hinders innovation has particularly spread with the publication of several articles. It has specifically been propagated with some articles published in such popular periodicals as Harvard Business Review (Hodari, April 27, 2015) and The New York Times (Koehn, September 4, 2010). They contain claims like “... creativity in professional life requires social relations and fortuitous encounters. It needs people who disagree. It requires getting up and moving.” And while this is certainly true, remote work doesn’t preclude these relationships nor does the office per se foster them.

For example, Dutcher (September 2012) found that remote work has negative effects on productivity in boring, monotonous tasks, yet positive effects on creative tasks. In another study, researchers Kim & Zhong (January 2017) found that the very structure of an office and a corporate environment kills creativity, and that, in contrast, the lack of structure and autonomous capacity for organization foster it. They were obviously talking about classic, siloed offices with compartmentalized spaces, not with added-value spaces, that is, designed for collaboration, co-creation, and joint work.

Let’s think of incredibly creative minds like the artists Picasso, Dalí, and Miró. The first was the harbinger of cubism; the second of surrealism, Dadaism, and pop art; and the third a painter, engraver, and potter who was regarded as one of the top representatives of surrealism. Most of the time, they had their own places where they could work alone and cultivate their artistic genius, but they also often frequented the same sites, where they shared conversation and entertainment. Their face-to-face encounters were a chance to talk, learn, and praise or criticize each other’s works. In fact, they all went through different creative periods where the influence of the others’ works is apparent.

Meeting with colleagues, talking at a café, or sitting down to share a meal together can be ways of increasing interaction and creativity, although they’re not the only ways. Plus, these encounters can be encouraged occasionally, with a set frequency. Likewise, they can be organized to be creative in themselves.

R

Reality #4: Remote Work, Combined with In-Person Work, Facilitates Innovation

Countless studies prove that remote work can help improve innovation. For example, data collected by the ICWF (Las Heras & Barraza, July 2020) have shown that employees' sense of newness or interest in their work can increase up to 31% in people who combine at-home and office work. Therefore, neither remote nor office work per se facilitate creativity. It is essential to look more closely at which work conditions encourage it.

As Xavi Escales says (see interview below), "The majority of jobs can be done remotely, even those related to innovation or collaboration, but the problem is the lack of training in leading innovative teams remotely."

Dutcher (September 2012) finds that when some team members are remote and others are at the office, the key to productivity is for those in the office to "have the perception" that working remotely does not mean putting in less effort, working less, or being less committed.

In conclusion, studies conducted at the ICWF have found that at first glance innovation seems to be slightly higher when working at the office. However, we divided the participants into two groups:

- those who are generally highly creative
- those who are not so creative

The data show that for the group of people who are generally highly creative, working from home helps them be a bit more innovative than being at the office. However, the opposite effect occurs in people who are usually not so creative: being at the office helps them be a bit more innovative. Therefore, counter to popular belief, remote work itself does not facilitate or hinder creativity. However, appropriately managing office versus remote work does help develop creativity in human teams.

Table 9. Level of Creativity



Working at home		Working in the office	
Very creative			
Men	82%	Men	79%
Women	82%	Women	81%
Not very creative			
Men	38%	Men	43%
Women	42%	Women	44%

Did You Know...



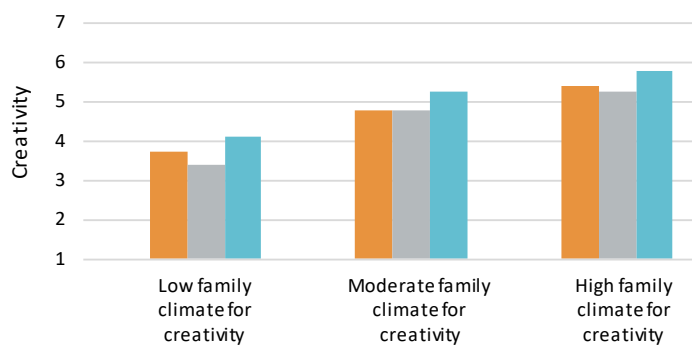
...Creative Behaviors at Work Depend on the Climate of Creativity at Home?

In 2019, the ICWF conducted a study in the United States in which dozens of stable couples (living together for more than three years) participated. It sought to find the at-home source of different at-work behaviors. To do so, one partner was asked about some characteristics of their life with their partner at home, while the other partner, in the following weeks, was asked about some of their own behaviors at work.

The results revealed that the climate of creativity at home (measured by couple member (A)—sometimes the man and sometimes the woman) resulted in creative behaviors by the other partner (B) in the ensuing weeks. That is, the climate of creativity at home influences people's creative behaviors. This finding is very important, since we tend to think that what we experience at work (stress, learning, etc.) affects our personal and family life, but that the opposite seldom happens (see **Figure 1**).

In terms of what a climate of creativity at home means, the answer would be an environment in which each person contributes what they believe is the most suitable without being constrained by the norms set by others, or by customs or social conventions.

Figure 1. Family Climate for Creativity





Xavi Escales

Former CEO of Asics Iberia. Founder and CEO of AlwaysPeopleFirst and AlwaysPeopleFirstTechnologies

Working Remotely and Leadership

Many managers fear remote work because of the “I won’t see them” factor. Does this affect performance? Will changes be needed to measure performance when integrating remote work?

If you have to physically see your employees to make sure they’re doing their jobs, you already have a problem. Your work as a manager is not to micromanage but to be there when your team needs you and to think about where the company should be heading to be successful in the future. As managers, we have to be demanding in what we ask of our teams (both in-person and remote workers) and more flexible with them when it comes to the way they organize their workdays.

The optimal working conditions are those that maximize the balance between employees’ productivity and well-being. Therefore, companies that choose hybrid models should develop plans to boost employees’ productivity and well-being, bearing in mind the differences in working remotely and at the office.

For what kinds of tasks is in-person work better than remote?

There are jobs whose nature makes them difficult to do remotely. One example is working in an industrial plant, where machinery that cannot be moved is needed. But generally speaking, the majority of jobs can be done remotely, even those related to innovation or collaboration. The problem is the lack of training in leading innovative teams remotely.

What would be the risk of an “officeless” company?

Human beings are primarily emotional and social creatures. We may be able to do away with offices, but not social gatherings. It is important to make an effort to create strong bonds among employees, because this will make teams more resilient.

Do employees work more when they work remotely? Is there a stronger risk of addiction?

Studies on this issue say that during the initial phase of the pandemic, we worked a few more hours per day on average and productivity rose. Just like all models, it has advantages and disadvantages, the latter associated with the ability to disconnect and the impact on well-being. What is clear is that the majority of employees prefer to keep working remotely at least a few days a week when we’re back to life as usual. Many people have already reasonably adapted to creating their work environment at home and are reluctant to go back to the previous model because this one gives them clear advantages (flexibility, less time spent commuting, etc.).

“The optimal working conditions are those that maximize the balance between employees’ productivity and well-being.”

M

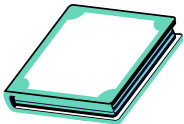
Myth #5: There's No Point to Meeting in Person. Everything Can Be Done Remotely

The development of information and communication technologies (ICT) has allowed work teams to stay in touch remotely through videoconferences, email, chats, and other tools. Therefore, some people have come to believe that all communication can be done remotely and find no benefit to meeting in person.

Data studied by the ICWF have shown that spending more time interacting face-to-face with work colleagues increases the quality of and satisfaction with relationships with team members by 17%.

What's more, some studies have found that one of the advantages of working at the office is that workers' risk of social isolation is lower.

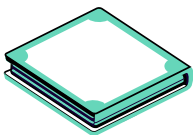
Workers with high levels of isolation



- increased detachment among team members
- decrease in trust among team members
- disappearance of team coherence

In this regard, the study conducted by Stanko & Gibson (2009) found results that suggest that remote communication is perceived as less effective than face-to-face interactions. In fact, as the psychologist Nacho Coller says (see interview below), communication mediated by a screen:

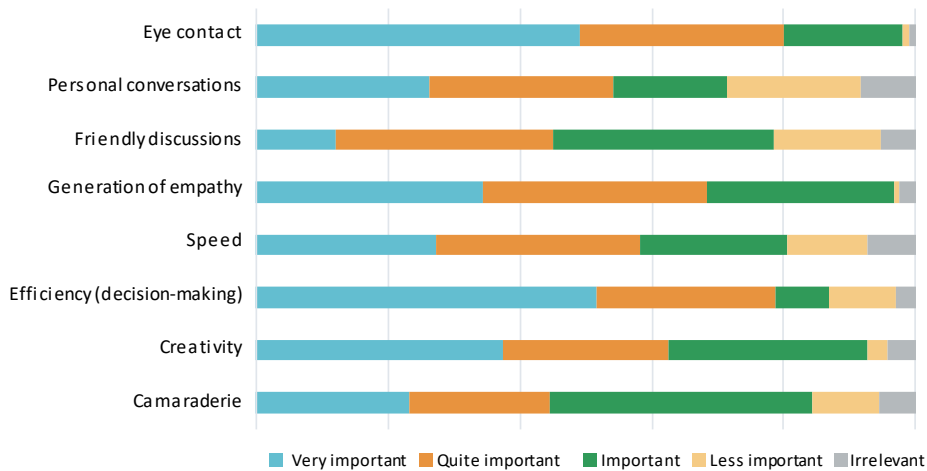
Communication mediated by a screen



- makes it harder to capture nonverbal communication, such as posture, subtle gestures, breathing pace, etc.;
- prevents us from making eye contact, because in order for others to have the sensation we are looking into their eyes, we actually have to look at the camera, so we're not really making eye contact and can't see what others are expressing;
- hampers natural interactions, since speakers constantly see themselves, at times to such an extent that they appear to be the main thing on the screen.

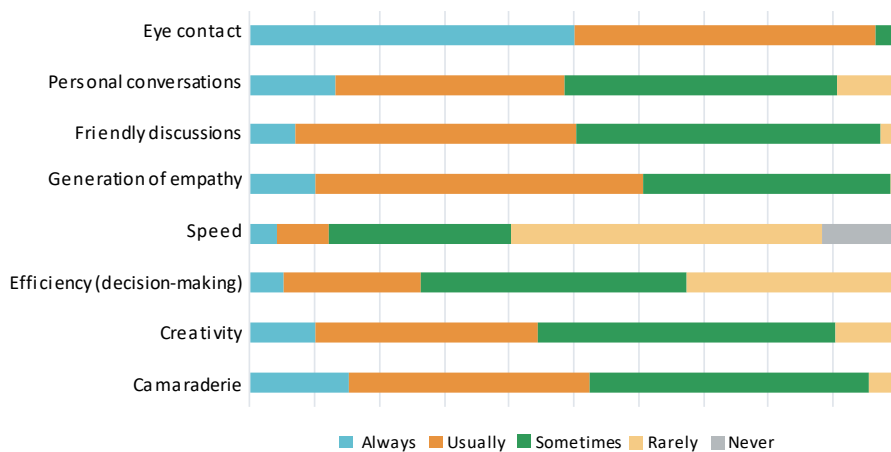
Figure 2 shows the importance that people attach to certain events or aspects of a meeting, according to information collected from the participants in our study.

Figure 2. Importance of Certain Events in Meetings



Likewise, **Figure 3** reflects the participants' perceptions of to what extent these events happen in face-to-face meetings.

Figure 3. Frequency of Certain Events in Face-to-Face Meetings



And in **Figure 4** we see to what extent participants believe that these events happen in virtual meetings, in light of their responses.

Figure 4. Frequency of Certain Events in Online Meetings

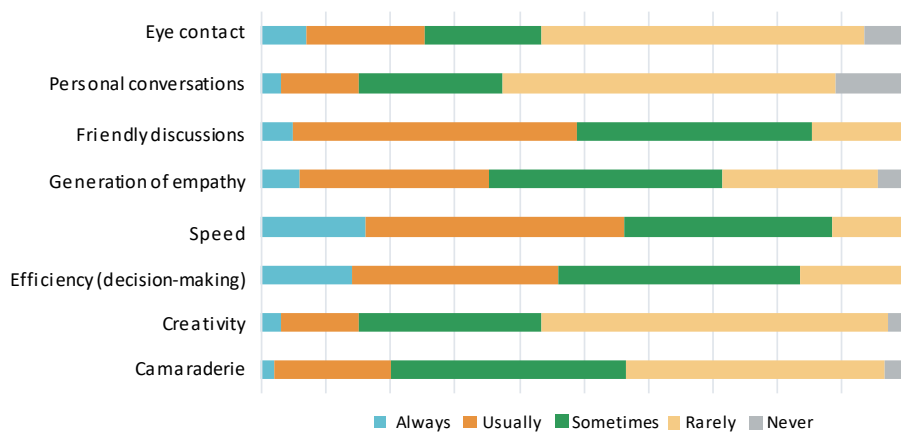


Table 10. Importance and Frequency of Events in Face-to-face Meetings vs. Online

	Importance	Frequency in face-to-face meetings	Frequency in online meetings
Eye contact	86%	89%	54%
Personal conversations	68%	70%	49%
Friendly discussions	66%	71%	67%
Generation of empathy	79%	74%	61%
Speed	71%	49%	72%
Efficacy (decision-making)	83%	59%	68%
Creativity	77%	69%	52%
Camaraderie	69%	72%	55%

As illustrated, there are aspects which are considered very important (speed and efficacy) that seem to be achieved better in online meetings, and yet other equally important ones (eye contact and personal conversations) that are better achieved in face-to-face meetings.

Table 11. Face-to-face vs. Online Meetings

Percentage of meetings you would like to attend face-to-face vs. online	Responses
No face-to-face	5%
1-25% of meetings face-to-face	46%
26-50% of meetings face-to-face	29%
51-75% of meetings face-to-face	13%
76-99% of meetings face-to-face	4%
All face-to-face	2%

R

Reality #5: The Face-to-Face Communication That Occurs at Offices Has Advantages for Work Teams That Cannot Be Replaced by Remote Communication

According to data collected by the IWCF, having the chance to be surrounded by colleagues and a change of scenery by going from home to work was mentioned by 65% of the participants as the main advantage of working at the office. We found that what people miss the most, in addition to the physical space, is interaction with their colleagues.

The aspects of working at the office that employees miss the most when they work remotely for a long period of time are:



informal conversations with colleagues	68%
face-to-face meetings	46%
physical space (office or workplace)	39%

Face-to-face communication brings a series of benefits that virtual communication cannot replace (Heller, 2010):



- It helps people forge personal bonds which are extremely important in generating information exchanges, affect, and assistance.
- It lowers conflicts and misunderstandings because the subtleties of tone of voice or gestures can be captured better, so people seem to be able to better resolve any issues if they detect that their message has been met with rejection or disagreement. It is also easier to ask or request clarifications if you don't agree with or understand something.
- It brings into play tacit knowledge, that is, the knowledge acquired by the team spontaneously as the outcome of continuous work, and it captures subtleties.
- It generates greater loyalty among team members.

Did You Know...



...The types of meetings where face-to-face contact is the most important are sales meetings with customers?

This should come as no surprise, because these are situations when the sales team wants to capture all the subtleties and clearly understand customer requirements, not only their technical specifications but also their preferences and socio-affective needs. Salespeople want to know about the customers' past experiences, both positive and negative, and this means that all interactions are better done in person, face-to-face.

Conversely, jobs like drawing up reports, making follow-up calls to customers, or studying issues in-depth are perceived by the participants in our studies as those that do not have to be done at the office because being there brings no added value.

Table 12. Completion of Tasks Remotely and In The Office

	Best done in office	Either office or remotely	Best done remotely
Sales meetings with customers	80%	17%	3%
Project follow-up meetings with customers	46%	37%	17%
Informative meetings with employees	23%	55%	22%
Innovation/co-creation meetings with employees	75%	16%	9%
Telephone calls (e.g., to customers)	4%	29%	67%
Routine (essential) work	8%	18%	74%
Studying issues in-depth	17%	16%	67%
Working on high-value strategic issues	48%	20%	32%
Drawing up reports (presentations, etc.)	9%	14%	77%
Feedback meetings with employees	52%	38%	10%
Informal meetings	38%	30%	32%



Yasin Rofcanin

Profesor de la Bath School of Management (University of Bath)
y director del Future of Work Research Centre - Bath

How COVID-19 Has Changed the Scene

Can you tell us what you think are the big trends that will impact the future of work, internationally speaking?

- **Growth in alternative and flexible ways of working.** As COVID has taken a toll on all of us, organizations have started to realize the value of adopting flexible work practices, including remote work, job sharing, and part-time work arrangements. However, the new model is likely to be a blended-flexible work practice, in that on some days we will see the use of offices and face-to-face interactions, and on other days employees will be allowed to work remotely.
- **Virtual teamwork.** With the aid of rapidly developing technologies, virtual teams have become a reality. A key disadvantage is that virtual teams do not have the rich and effective communication channels that teams located in the same place can offer. My view is that with the growth of virtual teams, the culture of helping and pro-social behaviors might grow.
- **Flexible and family-oriented leadership.** As employees have started working remotely, the need for a new type of leadership has emerged. As most of our research, and other recent research, has shown, demonstrating support for employees' family lives and being flexible in terms of employees' work-family balance have become the new benchmarks

of leadership. In my opinion, more informal leaders—who demonstrate the value of work-life integration and who are flexible in their adaptation to new trends—will be valued in the future.

How has COVID affected employees' careers?

- **Loss of hope and expectations about the future.** A significant negative impact of COVID has been in how it affects employees' expectations for the future as well as their hope and resilience. A variety of jobs have been lost across industries and countries, and employees and new graduates have realized that it is difficult to obtain and maintain jobs.
- **Shift to self-employed career paths.** As the COVID pandemic has unfolded—and with the growth of accessible and low-cost technological advances—there has been rapid growth in levels of freelance and self-employment opportunities.
- **Multiple jobs and flexible careers.** A third trend I have observed related to the impact of COVID is that, driven by necessity, employees may hold multiple jobs. It is now not unusual to see an Uber driver who works as a designer during the day, or a research assistant also doubling as a sales agent. The definition of a sustainable career trajectory has garnered a new and flexible meaning.

One key takeaway for employees is to continuously invest in their skills and abilities and also to craft their jobs—in the sense that they become owners of what they do. Ultimately, it is all about the resources given to employees; and organizations should be willing to extend any type of resource to their employees with the hope that they will grow and be better at the job they perform.

Do you think that face-to-face relationships will still be relevant in the future of work? If so, how and why?

Face-to-face communication will still be very important. We will have the opportunity to keep the best parts of office-centric work, such as meeting clients and establishing those first bonds. But we will also free ourselves from bad habits and inefficient processes, among them, ineffective meetings and unnecessary bureaucracy. As the work continues, potential problems related to online interactions can be avoided; precious and limited time will be used to form meaningful and sustainable interactions.

Which leadership characteristics do you think will be more relevant in such an environment?

The following three key features of leadership will be the most important: understanding the needs of employees (empathy); setting role models for work–life integration (role modeling); and being creative and flexible when it comes to everyday challenges. I refer to this type of leadership as flexible family-oriented leadership.

Is there any other good news about the future of work?

My hope is that it'll be business as usual and that mainly good habits of the old working style will remain.

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Myth #6: Lots of Time Is Wasted at the Office

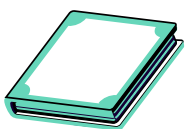
We run into coworkers at the office. We talk, discuss things, ask about each other's personal lives, solicit opinions, have coffee together, and so on. And all of that is time not spent working. Or it is? It's hard to measure. It's like pre-season games in sports, where perhaps teams don't practice tactics or general strategies, but there's room for them to be put into play later on a field, with a well-hardened, strong, resilient base. And the same holds true with organizations. The time spent socializing, talking, and discussing may be precisely what lays the fertile ground where tactics, technique, and strategy can later grow strong roots.

However, when those conversations, that walking around, those discussions are recurring, repetitive, and redundant, they may turn into sterile and even dangerous gossipmongering, criticisms, wasted time, cronyism, and nepotism.

So efficacy at the office versus in a remote location should not be measured the same. In remote work, efficacy is "production per unit of time." Performance at the office is this "production per unit of time" plus "building relationships." This is extremely important because, as we shall see below in one of the practical cases, it means that offices should be designed to encourage these relationships. There have to be added-value spaces, co-creation spaces, areas for informal meetings, etc. Spaces meant for individual concentration can be kept to a minimum because people should not primarily work individually at the office since they can do that remotely.

In our study, we analyzed the difference between the number of hours actually worked remotely and at the office, and we did not find significant differences. Specifically, the participants stated that:

Table 13. Effective Hours Worked Per Day



Office	Remote working
7.42	7.5

These results from the IWCF are backed by other international studies which find that working remotely does not affect the actual number of hours people work (Nijp et al., May 25, 2016).

R

Reality #6: Workers With Strong Performance Actually Work the Same Number of Hours at Home as at the Office

While working remotely, a person may get the sense that they worked more hours than if they had been at the office. This may be due to two main causes which are inherent to remote work:

1. The interaction time with colleagues decreases. Specifically, our studies found that this time, which is now mediated by a screen, is up to 40% lower than when working in person. Therefore, it is time “gained” to accomplish the tasks on employees’ to-do lists.
2. It lowers the need for multitasking and for shifting from one task to another because of interruptions, external information requests, or simply the offer of conversation, since remote interactions are usually planned. No one is coming up to you to ask you for anything or knocking on your door or stopping you in the hallway.

Did You Know...



...The Capacity for Self-Management Is the Key to Effective Remote Work ?

Working remotely requires people to have the capacity to manage themselves and organize themselves independently, that is, without having to constantly depend on supervision, encouragement, or direction from others.

As Dr. Pilar de Castro says (see interview below), “Remote work is a problem for people who are not very disciplined, and they need to be able to work in places and environments set aside for it, which helps them concentrate. Remote work also severely limits the contact, learning, and creation of social networking needed to improve individuals and companies.”

In our study, we found that people with a strong ability to manage themselves (measured by their supervisor¹) reported the greatest benefits of being able to work remotely two days a week. When working remotely fewer than 40% of the days in a month, the increase in certain variables depends on a person’s capacity for self-management.

Table 14. Self-management

	Low level of self-management	High level of self-management	Percentage change of those with a low level vs. high level
Quality of work	8%	12%	50%
Energy at work	8%	18%	120%
Willingness to do what the company requires	6%	12%	100%
Pride of belonging	2%	11%	500%

This table shows the increase in the results (on remote workdays) if people work remotely two days a work (on average), when they have a low versus a high level of self-management.

Therefore, remote work is beneficial for those with a low level of self-management as well those with a high level. However, remote work is much more useful when the person is able to organize their work autonomously, when they are aware of and take advantage of their strengths, when they are willing to explore and learn, etc.

The capacity for self-management requires the worker:



- to thoroughly plan their work
- to carry through on that planning
- to create flexible strategies
- to make decisions independently
- to take responsibility for their decisions
- to be in contact with key people to ensure that the process is effective

¹ It is important to note that in our study, the employee’s capacity for self-management is evaluated by their supervisor because people are generally biased when evaluating their own competencies and skills. In this way, we get a more objective measurement.



Jaume Aurell

Professor at the University of Navarra and director of the Center of Enterprise and Humanism

Values and Culture: Remote vs. In-Person Work

What are the risks to learning of going 100% remote?

I am skeptical about whether working 100% online can work because learning also occurs from meeting with colleagues, and having positive and not-so-positive experiences, and learning from them. In my opinion, it's a complement, not an absolute value.

What are values? Can they be learned? How?

Values are what help us set priorities in our lives. They are the criteria of what is good, and therefore what we want, encourage, and cultivate. Family, money, success, solidarity: all of these are values. As are respect, generosity, and altruism. They are criteria that help us discern between different alternatives.

In education in values, both family legacy and professional experience are essential. What we get from our families is extremely important because chronologically speaking it is the first lesson, and we learn it when we are the most receptive. It should be furthered with academic and professional training, because otherwise true training in values doesn't occur.

What characteristics of leaders foster the development of values?

Leaders, true leaders, may not perceive themselves as such. Leaders that convey values are those that foster teamwork. There are university professors who are true leaders and manage to assemble a team; they encourage everyone's harmonious growth.

Leaders consider and work with the people on their team without judging them only by their family or professional values.

Might there be characteristics in the physical environment that facilitate or hinder learning and developing values? If so, what are they?

The physical environment—one with pleasant workspaces—helps generate a team atmosphere and facilitates the transmission of the company's values, which I find difficult to achieve remotely.

At the office, you run into people in the hallway, you have informal conversations, while remotely your communication is limited to the duration of a video call.

Do you have any recommendations for companies thinking about how to design the "work of the future"?

I think it's very important for every institution and every company to govern with strategy and to strike the balance that they need, to think carefully about what should be done in person and what should be carried out remotely.

The company should make sure that technology serves people, not the other way round. A solely mechanistic or solely humanistic vision cannot dominate.

“Leaders that convey values are those that foster teamwork”

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