How Remote Work Creates New Challenges for Businesses

We take a look at what gets lost when we can't meet face-to-face and why many businesses want to bring their employees back to the office.

AUSTIN, TX, UNITED STATES, August 31, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Is working from home forever?

Many business leaders have been surprised by the ability of their workers to work from home due to what might be termed as extenuating circumstances.

But is it a sustainable solution over the long term?

Will you be able to grow your business this way, or is it time to return to the office as soon as it's practicable?

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We take a look at some of the issues facing managers as they cope with the downsides of working from home.

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>
> *Formaspace*

Working From Home Can Derail Team Building Efforts

What's the outlook for team building when working from home?

The answer is, "We're about to find out."

Thanks to an unprecedented number of employees

working from home, managers are struggling to keep up with the changing social dynamics in "the office."

Many are finding it's much more difficult to use telecommunications tools (such as Zoom) to build the kind of cohesive, high-performing teams necessary to help the business grow and prosper.

Time-tested team building approaches, such as the famous Forming Storming Norming Performing group development model first identified by Bruce Tuckman in the mid-sixties, don't seem to translate well to the small screen.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFE8IaoInQU

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(Some wags have compared Zoom teleconferences to episodes of the Hollywood Squares TV game show, with each worker occupying their own little box, doing their own thing, rather than working together as a team.)

Indeed, there's a reason we always want to communicate important information face-to-face when at all possible.

Face-to-face communication imparts crucial, nonverbal cues that don't translate well over Zoom video conferences meetings. Without these important nonverbal cues to guide us, we are much more prone to serious misunderstandings, hurt feelings, or other unhelpful outcomes — any of which can become a roadblock to management's efforts to build a nimble, high-performing team at work.

Employee Mentoring And Career Development Difficulties

Another well-regarded management methodology is the HP Way, created by Bill Hewlett and David Packard, eponymous founders of Hewlett-Packard.

The HP Way recognizes the need to both celebrate individual contributions as well as those of

the entire team.

But when everyone is working from home, it becomes more difficult for managers to accomplish these goals.

Why?

Working from home not only makes it more difficult to work as a team, it also becomes more challenging for individuals to gain recognition for their contributions to the group.

Evaluating worker performance objectively has always been a challenge, but in many cases, working from home has revealed an uncomfortable truth: even before the Coronavirus pandemic, many managers lacked sufficient awareness of what their employees were up to.

Instead, many managers have been relying on indirect "proxy" information, such as how many hours an employee worked, if an employee was staying late (showing their diligence), or even relying on what we might euphemistically call "self-promotion" on the part of employees themselves to form an opinion of whether the worker was performing well on the job.

Misplaced as this proxy approach may have been in the past, this assessment technique is completely unsuitable for evaluating employees working from home — unless you decided to use some kind of invasive productivity / time tracking software (which most employees considered to be creepy anyway).

Mentorship and employee development is another challenge that's made more difficult by working from home.

This has an outsized effect on younger workers.

For younger workers to develop their professional skills and advance in their careers (which helps the company grow and profit along the way), older, more experienced employees have traditionally offered important guidance to younger workers in the office.

And, in a [traditional office environment](), this type of informal mentorship can happen casually and informally, something that does not occur naturally when working from home.

Issues Due To Unequal Access For Remote Workers

This brings us to our next concern about working from home: it creates an unequal playing field for many workers.

[Read more](...)...

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