

Remote Work Performance Versus Presential in Lockdown Times

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Abstract

At this time, remote work schema is the most valued and acclaimed by companies in times of lockdown, since it is that faced the sanitary measures taken by governments to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic that takes place. This has generated a quick transformation and adaptation to the new demands in labor matters, since the economic activity of a country cannot be stopped. For all the above, it is prime importance that the work activity develops from a different place through technology use, where the results can be noticeable when combining presential work against remote work and vice versa while keeping an eye on the impact it promotes on its operation and growth of these, to identify and analyze what is being done wrong and fix it as soon as possible, in order to reduce the negative impacts that affect their detriment.

Keywords: remote work, presential work, confinement, pandemic, technological skills

I. Introduction

The adoption of a new work schema forced by the Covid-19 pandemic, has led workers to adapt these forms of work, conditioning and adjusting a space in their homes to convert it into the closest thing to the company office environment, where the lack of privacy along with the family members sharing the space and the constant distractions produced both internally and externally tend to affect both health and work productivity, since it is necessary to be more disciplined, dividing the work from the personal in order to create an adequate professional image. The importance of technology handling assumes an essential consideration that depends on connection quality where the services like internet are always in fact reliable and free of signal interruptions, since sometimes it is necessary to deliver reports or advances of urgent labor matters and to get rid of the uncertainty of a bad internet service connection. For people to be more productive while working from home, they must have: the needed labor competences that allow them to get work activities done as if they were in their company workplaces; as well as the environment and technological tools that contribute to the achievement of the proposed labor goals and objectives. As for the performance of presential work, the best advantage is that they are in their physical workplace, where they have at their disposal consumables, technological tools, and all the condiments that are needed to fulfill their work obligations, since if a problem arises, they have the support and customized advice of any following kind to solve the problem given and that affects the breach of their goals.

II. Scenario of presential work and remote work

The implication of combining and practicing a hybrid work schema, involves many factors to consider with those being the basis to be analyzed. At first sight, the employer is obligated to incur on the expenses involved on a home working scenario such as: network providers payment, electricity consumption derived from work activities; furthermore, to provide the tools and necessary equipment for a correct performance of their work online [1].

II.1 Home office: from optional to mandatory

Before the lockdown, teleworking was practiced in small quantities or indexes by Mexican companies. There are several reasons pointed out by the following: lack of equipment and technological tools, poor collaboration with their work teams, thus lowering the internal relationships with their colleagues. Presential work stimulates interpersonal relationships between work teams, since ideas and information exchange happens physically on their meetings allowing to an understandable work flow, and so preventing information from circulating erroneously and the bias free achievement of the objectives set, moreover it is

motivating, especially when gratifications or awards await for the good performance involved in goal achievement, that is why it is said that the staff is more productive while on a presential work schema, according to subject matter specialist: “under new operational ways where workforce and their professional skills are combined this will trace success or failure on the coming months”, says Carlos Zegarra, lead partner of Management Consulting at PwC Mexico [2].

Currently hybrid work schema (presential and remote) makes those companies objectives and strategies are both guided in the same direction, where a clearer comprehension of what tasks can be done online and which are priorities that must be done in person takes place, so that it does not affect the flow of certain processes that can affect the results against the plans and goals set. The new changes that are being experienced have a psychological impact on workers performance, since they don't fit completely into this new shift consisting of working few weeks from home and some others while being presential, sometimes showing demotivation and loss in the dynamics that involve delivering the most of themselves within their work duties, added to the different activities they used to do with their families before the resurgence of the pandemic [3].

One of the problems arising with this form of remote work performance is the so called "technological stress" that surges from new technologies proper handling along with the lack of skills and capabilities by those who are exposed to information technologies for prolonged periods (Bondanini, Giorgi, Ariza-Montes, Vega-Muñoz and Andreucci-Annunziata, 2020). The conditions that generate success in remote work are illustrated in table number 1 (below) [4].

Means to obtain success in the remote job

Conditions of success	Characteristics
Comfortable space	Comfort is essential, as well as lighting and work privacy, avoid getting hooked on home issues.
Technological tools	Success or failure of the work goals are dependent on technology access and correct equipment, being mandao to have: a PC, adequate software to perform work activities, email, telephony and a good network connection and quality.
Goal path	Worker evaluation will be based on the results of the objectives achieved.
Proactivity	Action is essential, waiting for the green light is not, this prevents problems from worsening, making themselves accountable for taking the right decisions based on doing so.
Importance of time management	Increasing productivity success lies on making the most of work shift.

Self-motivation	Have your own driving force, which allows you to overcome difficult moments and achieve your goals.
Social Contact	Look for contact with colleagues, keep the social bond with the team.

Table 1. Means to succeed in remote work

Source: Suárez Barrios (2015) and adapted by Toselli (2011).

II.2 How to achieve success in the return to presential work

Working under this new normal demands a constantly new adaptation of work methods and procedures for the right work activity performance, so that both employees and employer are integrated into a modern implementation that involves their workforce combined with a new hybrid work model. Some tips for a successful work return can be: avoid crowds by planning and organizing work shifts in spaces that lack ventilation; apply motivational methods so that work activities are activated through the agenda and meeting organization; promote more knowledge among team workers by encouraging freedom, so that they become more dynamic and creative while getting used to the new normal [5].

II.3 The return to presential work activities

Return to presential work activities performing requires the monitoring of certain strategies where both provider and taker are responsible for all the pertinent measures to be taken as well as health measures are strengthened for the right performance of their work functions, as illustrated in table 2.

1. Consider the workers feedback	Keep an ear out for improvement proposals, as well as employees demands and needs, so it reinforces loyalty and ownership to the company, so it creates a harmonic environment that allows them to perform better on their duties, thus avoiding them feeling as a simple work tool.
2. Workplace refurbish	The employee must have a comfortable physical workspace, where concentration and reflection come easy, allowing his ideas to flow faster.
3. Strengthen trust	The discomfort produced by closed spaces causes insecurity on this pandemic for workers, so it is topmost importance that they are provided with security with a higher ventilation and disinfection, where safe distancing is kept, and a calming and confident environment is felt for the best performance of their functions.

4. Company achievements belong to everyone	To promote the positive mental attitude in workers derives a great motivation to face their work challenges in favor of the company goals while on this new return. To recognize the participation of employees in the company achievements.
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Table 2. Follow-up of strategies in the return to presential work activities

Vanguard is necessary to continue the fight for competitiveness and therefore to offer services to adapt business processes to the new digital era [5].

II.4 Hybrid, presential or remote

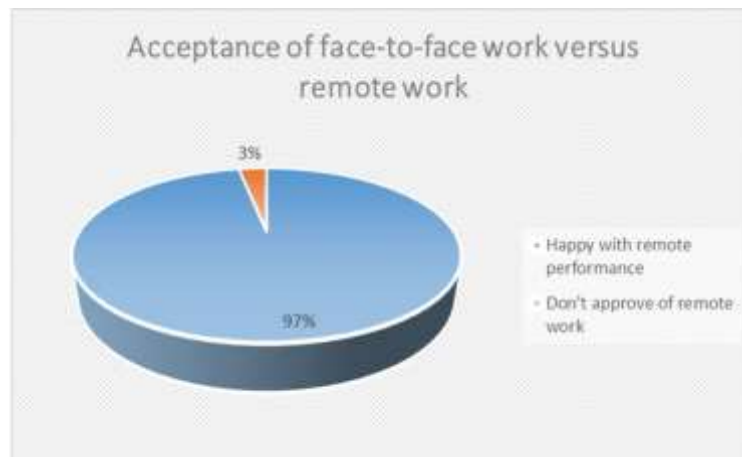
Towards which work model should companies move?

Work schemes evaluation such as: hybrid or presential, force companies to think first about the care of their workers and their operations.

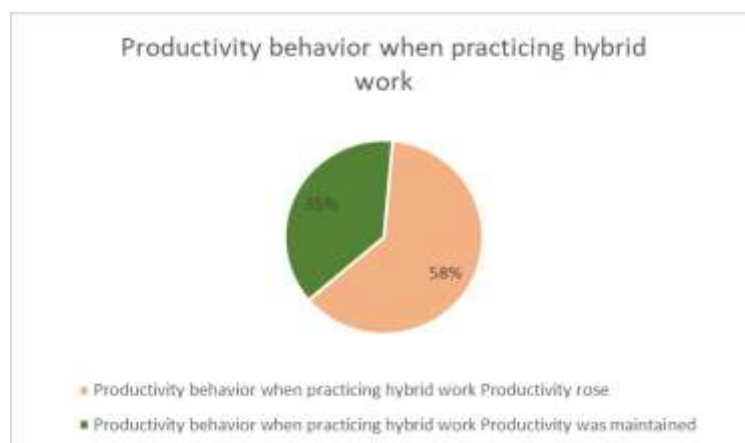
Despite being vaccinated more than half of the population, most workers continue to show some insecurity to return to their presential workplaces, those who show a greater willingness to do so are people between 18 and 34 years of age. To resume activities in the workplace, companies must explore different paths or options that guarantee the safety and integrity of their employees, as well as promoting collaborative work, which is where workers acquire new skills through ideas exchange, encouraging discussion and learning that reinforces communication, that does not occur with remote work [6].

III. Results

The new work schema normal, which surveyed 500 Mexican workers, revealed the expectations of the return of the worker to his workplace, given by PwC Mexico, where it emphasizes that: 97% of respondents are happy with their performance in this remote modality, shown in graph 1; 30% of them also endorse the preference to practice three days a week the home office. All out of the respondents, 58% commented that their productivity elevated during the confinement and only 35% consider that their productivity was maintained, as shown in graph 2 in relation to remote work collaboration 47% showed that increase and only 44% commented that it remained the same as shown in graph 3 [7].



Graph no. 1 Acceptance of presential work versus remote work

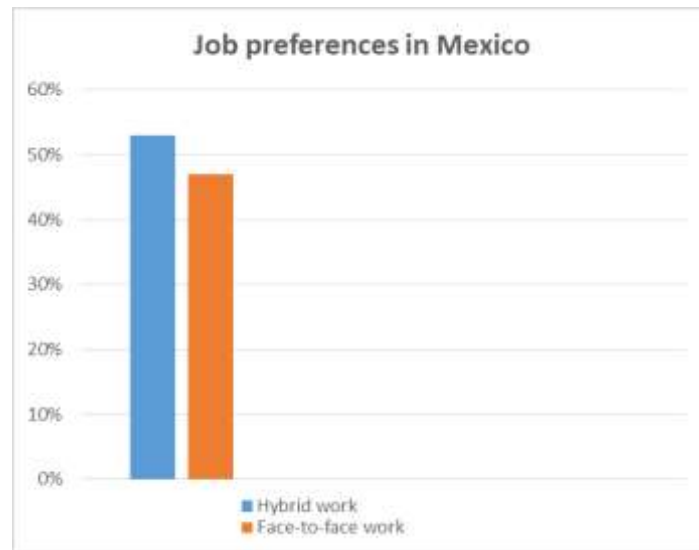


Graph no.2 Productivity behavior when practicing hybrid work



Graph no. 3 Remote work collaboration

The creation of remote work environments in homes, according to an Adecco survey, workers globally are claiming for work flexibility to continue. As far as workforce in Mexico is concerned, 53% want to continue with and hybrid work schema, as can be seen in graph number 4. Some results from this study showed that 72% of respondents suggest that the working day be reduced, since they argue most work activities can be done in less than 40 hours [8].



Graphic no.4 Job preferences in Mexico

This trend shows that the more worked remotely, workers feel every day more secure while their adaptability is polished, coming into play their productivity, being as good or keeping the same as if they were performing their presential tasks, as per the analysis [8]

To adopt hybrid work, it is topmost importance to promote a change in companies processes and organizational culture, so that little by little the new ways of performing presential work are reconsidered as indicated by senior executives, where they say that only 20% of companies have the infrastructure to perform this kind of work, according to statistics from the Mexican Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS) driven by the COVID-19 pandemic.

When the need to perform physical work is eliminated and can be done better or equally through teleworking, companies have opted for the promotion of a hybrid system, according to Noam Bizman, vice president of Service Now for Latin America during the panel "Towards the all-hybrid future".

According to data from Service Now's "Employee Experience Imperative", the balance between digital and presential interactions experienced by the hybrid approach, only 65% of employees in organizations expect to have better results [9].

The transformations in this stage that is being lived demand three changes are shown in diagram 1.



Diagram no. 1 Change staging in transformations

The CEO of Service Now Mexico added that: receiving more income, search and selection of better talent and the reduction of operating costs mainly are some of the benefits of hybrid work, coupled with the fact that the companies that redesigned their business model are the ones that are accessing these benefits the most [9].

IV. Conclusions

To assume the new challenges presented by the changes that prevail in the environment, opting for a hybrid, presential or virtual work schema, employers will always have to ensure the well-being of the workforce and then for the well-being of entire organizations, since the first are those who drive the organizational or business environment with their talent and responsibility in the realization of their work duties [10].

Between presential and remote

The work balance that is coming:

- Employers, considering the new normal, must develop hybrid work schemes that strengthen presential and remote work (an adequate combination between both schemes).
- Take advantage of the virtual environment, and harmonize it with the presential aspect, with activities that really demand more social contact.
- Balance between presential-virtual work schema: key element of the new normal. Changes in ways of working. Labor relations that took place in person can be taken out remotely [11].

According to the Bank of Mexico, only the largest companies opted for remote work, where most employees do not foresee themselves developing in a remote scheme due to the nature of the work activities that are developed in the country, that is why they want to continue with the model that was had before the pandemic combining it at least with a hybrid model where talent is exploited and expectations are expanded as far as professional growth is concerned. The positions that are generated by the return to presential activities, on firsthand, the bosses who identify more with the traditional work model, and on the other, the imminent resignation of employees against to lose the flexibility provided with

remote work, getting into middle ground the combination between presential and remote work.

New generations will be influenced by the factors provided by technological disruption along with labor flexibility, where the sought for a work model that provides a better quality of life, where they are allowed to grow professionally through remuneration for their work in the form of incentives [12].

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