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THE IMPACT OF REMOTE WORK ON ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

~ *Mimansa Pandey*

The rising culture of working from home and having a flexible work schedule has become the norm in society. The job portals have the criteria for remote and virtual jobs. The case is that this even attracts the one seeking the job, as who do not want to do the chores in a comfortable area. The scenario seems perfect, but it has flaws which are not visible now but will deepen their roots over time in future.

All social interaction was nearly completely done online during the pandemic. We not only had online meetings and workshops, but we also had online parties and quiz nights. People joined companies or teams without ever meeting their colleagues face to face. They needed to get used to a new company, new work methods, and new people simultaneously.

The standard 'bonding' and team activities did not take place, or at least they were restricted and virtual. Teamwork was impaired. ¹A study conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology of 61,000 Microsoft staff at the onset of the pandemic concluded that 'firmwide remote work caused the collaboration network of workers to become more static and siloed, with fewer bridges between disparate parts of the organisation. Despite this, and as the years went by, many noticed that working from home benefited their mental health and wellbeing. The commute time, expense, and stress were relieved for many. Individuals became independent and could utilise their time more efficiently. They acquired new skills while working from home. When the pandemic slowed, we were more acclimated to remote work. With the world opening up again, kids returning to school, and individuals being able to work in more suitable settings, we discovered that remote work was a useful asset.

¹ How remote work affects company culture

<https://klaxoon.com/insight/how-remote-work-affects-company-culture> (22 May 2025)

The working of people from home was an alternative which was used as it was difficult in those times to be present physically and interact . But now it has become a day-to-day life option . The policy should be used when needed . As time changes, things should change with time . The policy should also change as it is not serving the purpose or the need for our hour . It has so many flaws, which impact the real world . People used to have board meetings and presentations, which not only teach an individual how to present things in front of a group with similar interests and background but also help a lot in building a network and forming their own identity in the company through their presence . The kind of interaction that one has by face-to-face conversation with a bunch of people and a flow of ideas works under pressure . The formation of a team and an organisation happens, which teaches you how to behave in groups and be polite with people you don't like too . All these skills are important for an individual to sustain are not developed in those who are working remotely . The work-from-home or remote work culture is training people with a lack of workplace etiquette . It is a high time that the company identify the correct measure and makes a policy oriented with the agenda and era of today . Let us just have a look at the different aspects to understand the impact of remote culture or working from home . There are also certain challenges to working from home or a remote work culture . Some of the challenges are that after a certain amount of time, people tend to have a very monotonous life, and they are doing everything by themselves at home . There is almost zero interaction among the colleagues who are working together in the same office . The office culture is dead . This creates isolation for an individual and affects them mentally as their work lacks the traditional office setting . A person who has migrated to urban areas with the intention of building a network and is of an extroverted personality is forced to stay at a place because the company culture has a remote policy . A lot of times we have seen that face-to-face communication is better than to have mail and text messages which creates misunderstandings among the people working in the same team . ²The communication gets better when one has the idea and exposure of talking with lots of people, but a remote culture creates distance between the people working in the company, and this policy lacks the element of clarity and communication . When all the people are assigned their part of the work and they do it and present it further as teamwork, but was that project done as a team in reality? When in office, they were given the same work, the meetings were supposed to happen, ideas were shared, and they shared a conscious and sat in the office after office hours too, so that they

² The Impact of Remote Culture on Organization <https://www.ilms.academy/blog/impact-remote-work-org-culture> (22 May 2025)

could complete the project and submit it on the deadline . In that scenario, the company, the manager, and the HR were all aware of the hard work and knew that, yes, this work needed a lot of sweat and blood, and the contribution of every single person was seen and even felt . But in the present case, the work is divided, and the essence is not like the previous times . The difference is visible that no body knows that whether that work was done by the person assigned, so a lack of trusteeship tends to be present as being at home in your comfort zone in your flexible hours and then what are the chances that the person has not used the other platforms and gadgets to make his life more easier . The company are not aware of whether the person, or rather an employee, who is working is committed to their work . There is no surety of how many hours are the employees give to the company and who is really worthy of a promotion in the office . All these problems make the plot of remote culture very dicey to adopt totally, and are really affecting the traditional way of office working .

We have the plus points for remote working too .

It saves time from having countless meetings, and instead of that, the work can be completed by the group in just having one meeting and texts, and calls when needed . There is no time wasted . The person can do the work in their comfort space, and that too with the flexibility of time . As the remote culture gives them a work-life balance, and they are able to fulfil their personal commitments too . They have a hold of their own schedule and can even shuffle them according to their priority, which is the most beneficial part of the remote culture . The culture also breaks the barrier of being in the city and working, as not everyone who has the potential to work and talent to show will have the monetary support to move to the city. This allows people from anywhere to work wherever they want . It also saves the money that the employees and workers spend almost every day to visit their office and travel . But if employees are wanting to work from home but cannot, there is a good chance company culture will be impacted as well . Team members who are being required to report to the office when they want to be working from home will not be excellent team players . And if they are angered because they have spent hours of travel time and a significant amount of money to go to a meeting that could have been better conducted virtually, for instance, then they will be less likely to possess a positive attitude and to wish to engage and share . This also affects company culture .³ Employees also have a very

³ **IMPACT OF REMOTE WORK ON ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE... Challenges before the Human Resource Department!**

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/impact-remote-work-organisational-culture-fkl2c/> (23 May 2025)

significant influence and role in shaping and moulding the organisational culture. They also deeply impact organisational culture via their attitudes, values, behaviour, and interactions. Collectively, their actions form the culture and define the identity of the organisation and how it functions. Organisational leaders and HR practitioners also tend to utilise and direct this influence in order to produce a culture that reflects the values and ambitions of the organisation. Organisational culture in return creates the employee experience and drives different facets of their work life. A well-aligned and positive culture can result in engaged, motivated, and satisfied employees, whereas a conflicting culture with the employee values and expectations can cause dissatisfaction and disengagement. It is for this reason that organisations make constant efforts to build and sustain a culture that is aligned with their values and goals. One must remember that the problems that plague a desirable organisational culture plague only the remote work due to the recent pandemic. It may occur even in ordinary times when the workers are routed to other locations on long-duration jobs or those who are sent out on offshore assignments as part of their routine job. The effect of the parent organisation's culture should be of utmost interest to the employees. Employees assigned abroad, particularly international assignments, can have a great impact on the corporate culture of the parent company. It's worth mentioning that employees assigned on assignments can positively affect the corporate culture, but it needs a supportive and flexible corporate culture that appreciates the experience and work of the returning assignees. The organisation must also have internal systems to utilise these influences for the company's overall good. We believe that the leadership higher up in the hierarchy and the policies and decisions that they undertake, control the habits and priorities we employees have to adhere to. True though these assumptions may be, so too is it true that an excellent company culture is developed and sustained by the people who work there, by you, your colleagues, and your teammates.