NEW NORMAL: THE EMERGENCE OF THE WORK-FROM-HOME SETUP

by:
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No one has ever expected that the year 2020 would be drastically affected by a global pandemic. The economy, education, health and well-being, the jobs, the market, and all aspects have been tarnished with a dirty color and pessimism while all of us had to adjust during the crisis. The schools and universities closed their doors and decided to find alternative ways on how to deliver the lessons to the learners without being infected by the virus. The administrators and office workers were also told to stay at home, although in some areas where there is very low risk of infection, these people were called to report back to office four days a week as long as the safety and health protocols are obeyed. Meanwhile, the health workers and other frontliners stepped forward to do an amazing job; they are now the reluctant heroes of the community and of the people. Despite of a conspicuous harm that the COVID-19 brings to anyone, these people are still standing on their posts and performing their duties and responsibilities.

We cannot erase the fact that there are citizens, workers specifically, who were afflicted by this worldly disease and had passed away. They all just wanted to earn money and make a living for their families. Without these jobs, many would be submerged with hunger and it is a big problem to face. The new normal is also a new term that refers to the change in all local and global perspectives and movements. One of the provisions of this era is to embrace the work-from-home setup. Working from home is simply doing your job, but in an environment where you can stay alone yet connected to your colleagues and supervisors. However, this setup is seen by others as something impossible and overrated. In what ways can we consider that this is impossible in various situations? Blue- and pink-collar jobs involve manual labor, say, working in
manufacturing companies, drug stores, and grocery stores makes it impossible in a work-from-home scheme. In fact, these jobs are responsible for physical customer interaction and service-oriented work. Working from home is now ideal with white-collar jobs like office and clerical works. Documentations and reports are easily saved in archives before being submitted to the authorities or the bosses. On the other hand, there are internal and external factors that must be understood in the implementation of the work-from-home setup.

The internal factors are subjective and talk about the honesty, credibility, effectiveness, and efficiency of the employees. Since they are advised to stay at home, they have control over their time frame. In fact, they may have more rest and more flexible working hours. The external factors indicate the needed equipment like computer, mobile phones, internet, and charts for monitoring of the tasks assigned. The great good thing about this work-from-home concept is that most laborers who do not own cars or other vehicles are less likely to commute going to the office or to the company. Imagine how the air pollution decreased in the past few months. Another thing is that, being overly stressed from the heavy traffic and dangers of the road has stooped down, though in the present, workers are gradually being called back to the offices. Positively, there are a fewer people outside and there is a lower risk of virus spreading. One question that matters is how honest is an employee to accomplish the tasks promptly?

Despite of the imperfection of the work-from-home modality, the advantages are waving at us, assisting us to be more independent, punctual, and resourceful. Someone might complain that the internet connection is a problem and working from home elevates the electric bill. It has no difference with spending money for a taxi fare and buying something to eat for lunch and snacks. By being able to stay at home, there is also a lower probability that a worker visits a mall to go window shopping (which increases the spending of money). The government, companies, and other public and private institutions are planning for more alternatives to help their employees acquire additional
allowances to pay for the internet and other bills as long as the efficiency of their jobs is consistent and improving rather than depreciating.

Another reality is that people are still on the process of adjusting since adapting to the new work policies does not happen overnight. There are certain measures to oversee and to assess and evaluate the productivity of every laborer in every organization. There are also situations when an employee is called by his or her boss to come up with a report hastily even if the working hours are finally over. Some would say it is not reasonable. However, the fact that someone can finish one task within several minutes is not absurd with being called to work suddenly. Everyone is experiencing hardships and challenges in this new setup. Indeed, the new normal has surprised the world with a lot of interventions, but if there are still predicaments arising, leap away from the pure trial-and-error strategy. Instead, analyze the problem before showcasing a suitable solution.

This is not about compromising the habits or routines that we know. The new normal and the work-from home modes are created to respond to the trials of this COVID-19 pandemic. Once this plague stopped bugging and bothering all of us, everything will gradually and smoothly go back to the way it was. At least we know that we can shift into the newly invented ways when another crisis hits us with its whips.

References:

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