



## Electronic Human Resource (E-HRM) in Pandemic Situation COVID-19

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### ABSTRACT

Since the end of 2019, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has affected people all over the world. Online working was favoured by all types of workplaces over offline working utilizing the most prevalent technology. The purpose of this study was to look into the impact of COVID-19 on HRM practices in a developing country. This study looks at the impact of the COVID-19 on payroll activity, employee recruitment, training, and performance and compensation management, as well as manpower and promotion panels. In this study, the in complexity semi structured interview approach was used. The goal of the study was to interview E-human resources practitioners who gathered data via interactive online interviews. The researchers used video and voice calls to ask open-ended questions because of the COVID-19 instructions. COVID-19 seemed to lower the amount of employee recruiting efforts, according to the research.

Because of a shortage of facilities, some businesses were able to employ online training, which was the greatest option. Participants were asked whether e-learning would be as effective as traditional face-to-face training. Management of performance has gotten increasingly difficult. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, supervisors were unable to meet primary objectives in the study. Employee performance has been difficult for many organizations that have chosen to work from home, and this practice has raised concerns about work-life balance issues. Some of COVID-19's financial responsibilities had not been met by participating organizations. E-HRM was recommended in the study to reduce physical interactions between individuals and to engage employees in crisis-management technology.

Keywords: E-HRM, Electronic Human Resource Management, Covid-19, Pandemic, online Employment, work-life balance, actives, work from home

### Introduction

Allowing HR employees to work from home on a full-time or part-time basis can result in a variety of corporate benefits, ranging from increased productivity and employee motivation to more efficient use of your facilities. Working from home can help you retain employees and expand the pool of candidates from which to recruit, increasing your chances of success. Following the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), which forced offices and commercial premises to close to protect the health of employees and other members of the public, HR employees working from home has become the new normal for many businesses.

#### 1.1 Work from Home with Covid-19:

The COVID-19 pandemic has effectively served as a trial period, with the government advising businesses to allow employees to work from home whenever possible. Employers and employees have had the opportunity to experience the reality of working from home as a result of the pandemic, which would not have been considered otherwise. Without a trial period, neither the employer nor the employee should dismiss the possibility of working from home. Allowing and allowing employees to work from home can result in both positive and negative outcomes for both employees and employers. This information will assist you as a business in making the most of your employees working from home, whether as a short-term reaction to the coronavirus pandemic or as part of a long-term strategy. In this epidemic, e-technology is the most effective instrument. In this epidemic, all organizations are adopting an E-HRM system to continue HR operations. This paper will assist you in determining if home working is a viable option for your company and will outline major concerns and considerations for all types of businesses when introducing and managing employees who work from home. These concerns include health and safety duties, as well as how to guarantee that workers have the tools they need to do their jobs well. Because HR is at the core of any organization, all E-HRM tools are utilized to keep things running smoothly.

#### 2. Benefits and drawbacks of workers working from home

Working from home expands the number of options available to organizations in terms of how they operate and organize themselves. With the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, some employers have found that working from home has given them the flexibility they need to continue their business and operations while also arranging staff and customer health and wellbeing as part of their public health management responsibilities.

Working from home was on the rise prior to the coronavirus epidemic, as many companies recognized the advantages it may provide to their businesses and their workers' work-life balance. Even if you don't believe working from home will benefit your firm, workers with 26 weeks of service have a fundamental right to seek flexible working arrangements such as home working, which you, as an employer, must carefully consider.

### ***2.1 Employees who work from home have a number of advantages***

With a rising number of workers working from home - or utilizing home as a work base for at least part of the week - it's evident that there are many advantages for businesses:

- Agility and flexibility in working arrangements – working from home allows for greater agility and flexibility in working arrangements. Employees may be better positioned and more ready to work flexible hours, such as earlier or later in the day, or even on weekends, if they are no longer tethered to an office. This might help you satisfy specific company demands, such as dealing with consumers in various time zones.
- Improved employee retention - Employees may choose to work from home since the flexibility allows them to meet childcare obligations, minimize commuting time, and fit their work around their personal lives. Allowing employees to work from home increases their faith in their company, which may lead to higher levels of employee loyalty.
- Attract new talent – offering home working as an incentive to come work for you may help you attract fresh talent to your company. Even just allowing employees to work from home can provide you a competitive edge over rivals that do not allow employees to work from home.
- Increased productivity - since there are fewer interruptions than in an office setting. Working from home, on the other hand, provides a calmer setting that allows for more concentrated work. Employees may also work longer hours since they may utilize the time saved from traveling to begin work sooner, later, or both.
- Increased employee motivation - workers will feel more trusted by their employer if they work from home since the working relationship isn't as tightly watched and employees are given more latitude to get on with their task. Staff will also be happier if they can build a home working pattern that fits them better, which will help them feel more driven to do their best job.
- Improved employee health and happiness - working from home reduces the need for your workers to travel to work, which may be stressful. Staff may also benefit from other health advantages like getting better sleep, spending more time with family, exercising, or preparing healthier meals as a result of time savings like these.
- Financial advantages include cost savings on office space, supplies, electricity expenses, and other amenities. Working from home may be eligible for tax relief from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) - see seek tax relief for your employment costs - working from home in low book lines for more information.
- Convenience - you may have employees that make frequent trips to client sites and hence are not in the office on a regular basis. Allowing them to work from home might be more convenient and result in further time and expense savings.
- Improved work-life balance - working from home may help workers improve their work-life balance by allowing employees who would otherwise have to travel to utilize that time for themselves, resulting in a better work-life balance. Staff may also incorporate domestic duties into their workday, allowing them more free time in the evenings, such as loading or unloading the dishwasher or cooking supper during their lunch break.
- Technology makes it simpler - the internet allows employees to stay linked to the business at all times. Communication between coworkers and teams has become more simpler thanks to tools like Skype, which may sometimes lead to more efficient and successful meetings.
- Fewer sick days - employees who work from home are more likely to be happy and energized, which means their immune systems are less likely to be harmed by burnout. Additionally, since staff work in isolation, there is a lower risk of infection spreading than there would be in an office setting.
- No need for regular vacations - even if employees are continuously working, working from home might seem like a break from the workplace. Working from home employees will feel more energized and will be able to spend more time with their families, reducing the need for vacation time. It is, nevertheless, your responsibility as an employer to guarantee that employees take their vacations.

### ***2.2 Working from home has a number of drawbacks***

Though there are certain drawbacks to working from home, the most of them apply to individuals who work from home full-time rather than part-time:

- Working from home isn't for everyone - working from home isn't for everyone's personality or abilities. Some workers may appreciate the regularity and structure that comes with working in an office setting. Some employees prefer face-to-face interaction with coworkers and find that face-to-face guidance from their manager is extremely beneficial in assisting them in completing tasks and achieving their objectives. You must also consider personnel with disabilities. Working from home may have an adverse effect on the assistance they need to do their duties. Working from home may not be suitable for everyone's lifestyle, for example, some individuals may have small children who are oblivious to limits and create disruptions throughout the working day. Others may not have the necessary physical space to set up a distinct work place.
- Employees feeling alone - employees working from home may experience the natural detachment from their coworkers and the organization as a whole that an office setting provides. To overcome these issues, businesses should make communication more consistent. Staff are given additional opportunities to feel active and part of the team by organizing brief catch-ups via phone or regular team meetings using other technologies like Skype. More casual and sociable get-togethers might also assist to alleviate any feelings of loneliness.
- Difficulty controlling and monitoring performance – supervising and monitoring home workers may be tough. Different personalities may react to monitoring in a positive or negative way. You can consider defining measurable objectives and targets for your employees so that if they don't meet them, you can see and address any performance concerns early on.
- Household distractions - while working from home eliminates the distractions that can arise in the office, if a worker does not have a sufficiently quiet dedicated working space at home, they may be easily distracted by household noises or other members of their household.
- Potential burnout - where an office provides a clear physical distinction between work and home life, working from home can cause employees to lose sight of the distinction. Employees may find it difficult to know when to leave work, resulting in longer hours, increased stress, and, eventually, burnout. Employers should encourage their employees to take regular breaks and emphasize the importance of taking vacation time.
- The initial expenses of training and supplying appropriate equipment, such as laptops, cell phones, and other IT equipment, are part of the cost of working from home. You'll also need to think about making changes to fulfill health and safety regulations.

- Staff development issues - you may discover that not having employees in close proximity makes it harder to sustain staff development and upgrade skills. You might, however, encourage employees to participate in online events and courses to gain new skills.
- Information security risk - issues with information security are more likely to emerge when employees work from home. With laptops being carried home and the requirement for personnel to access servers remotely, there is an increased danger. Employers should verify that encryption software and remote-wipe programs are installed to secure corporate data if mobile devices supplied by them go missing. Virtual private networks encrypt your data and provide you safe internet access to a distant machine. This keeps your files and data safe while yet allowing your employees to access them.
- Detrimental effect on mental health - If your employees are unable to establish a schedule that works for them, are having difficulty separating work and home life, or are feeling lonely, the transition to working from home may have a negative impact on their mental health. Encourage your workers to form a work habit, set up a designated work location, and establish limits for other family members to assist you. Increase the number of chances for employees to remain engaged by holding frequent conversations and team catch-ups. Eating well and exercising regularly may also assist to promote mental health, particularly if they are incorporated into a regular pattern.
- Lowered employee morale - when workers work from home on their own, it may be difficult to sustain team spirit.
- Not all occupations are suited to working from home; certain jobs are better suited to working from home than others. Working from home also appeals to certain personality types but not to others. Some individuals prefer face-to-face communication with their coworkers.
- Sluggish internet speeds - depending on where your employees reside, they may not be able to get broadband speeds that allow them to perform their jobs properly, for example, rural broadband is typically quite slow.

2.3 The coronavirus pandemic has provided some companies with a realistic understanding of how it impacts their company and workers, who may not have previously viewed working from home as a viable alternative for their personnel. It has given employers firsthand knowledge with the benefits and drawbacks of working from home. This experience may be quite useful in determining the future direction of workers' working habits.

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### 3. Managing workers that work from home effectively

Working from home has many advantages for both organizations and people, but it must be handled correctly to be effective. The most major management problem is monitoring and evaluating the performance of those who work from home. It may be more useful to assess their effectiveness in terms of production than than hours worked. Set specific objectives and timeframes for each activity. Keep a careful check on how effectively the goals are being reached, and provide timely and empathetic criticism if anything goes wrong. Employee training may help workers prepare and acquire the skills they need. This might involve the following:

Self-management abilities in time management: in the epidemic, every employee worked hard on his own to resolve difficulties or prepare sheets, and he did not rely on any other subordinate. General skills, such as how to use technology more successfully or write reports, and job-specific abilities, which are usually the same. Encourage contact among employees who work alone. A feeling of isolation is one of the most common reasons for home working failure. As a consequence, it's critical to establish formal protocols to guarantee that everyone feels like they're a member of the team. For instance, frequent two-way feedback, discussions about work and job-related concerns, regular planned visits to the workplace, participation in social events, and clear processes to follow and individuals to contact if things go wrong are all examples. If an employee's employment requires them to work from home from the beginning, it's a good idea to do their induction on your premises.

If home employees have a clear picture of the people and business with whom they're working, they're more likely to be focused and productive. Employees do not have to work exclusively from home as a result of the transition to home working. Splitting time between home and work is often the most effective answer, and you may want the homemaker to attend meetings to ensure that they are completely engaged and informed.

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### 4. Managing employees working from home tips:

Allowing employees to work from home on a full or part-time basis may result in a variety of business advantages, including enhanced employee engagement and productivity. The following five suggestions highlight crucial difficulties to be aware of if you're contemplating working from home as a business option.

1. Assess the job and talents of the employee: When determining whether or not to allow an employee to work from home, you should consider if the job is suited to working from home. Telemarketing and writing, for example, may be especially well suited to working from home. A variety of critical abilities, such as communication and time management, are likely to be required of the individual. See what kinds of jobs and talents are most suited for working from home.
2. Be aware of legal requirements: If an employee begins working from home, their formal statement of terms and conditions of employment may need to be amended. See also working from home or from a remote location. You'll almost certainly need to expand your company insurance to include equipment utilized at workers' residences. Consider supplying equipment to those who work from home.
3. Provide proper equipment: Unless an employee brings their own, you'll most likely be responsible for providing, installing, and maintaining all equipment as an employer. A desk and chair, as well as a PC or laptop and printer, may be required. Consider supplying equipment to those who work from home.
4. Encourage communication: One of the reasons why home working fails is a feeling of isolation among employees who work from home. As a consequence, it's critical to establish formal protocols to guarantee that everyone feels like they're a member of the team. Manage workers who work from home successfully.
5. Train and supervise employees: Employees who work from home might benefit from training in areas like as time management and report writing. Monitoring staff performance is also necessary to guarantee that objectives are reached. Manage workers who work from home successfully.

6. Understand your health and safety responsibilities: You are just as responsible for the health and safety of home workers as you are for employees who work on your premises. Among your responsibilities will most likely be to ensure that equipment is suitable for purpose and that lighting levels are acceptable. Examine your responsibilities to home workers in terms of health and safety.

7. Think about information security: Make sure your personnel follow data protection guidelines. For example, if employees who work from home use their business computer for personal activities, data security may be jeopardized. Make it clear that the computer you give is strictly for business use. Install anti-virus and firewall software, use passwords to manage network access, and make sure your employees are familiar with your IT procedures. Examine how technology may make working from home more convenient.

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## **5. Employees who work from home have the following responsibilities:**

### **Employees that work from home are responsible for a variety of tasks**

Check whether their lease, mortgage, or tenancy agreement for the property has any restrictions on home working, keep their insurance company informed about the new use of their home, check if planning permission is required and apply for it if necessary, though this is unlikely to be the case for a home office, check if business rates are payable on the part of the property used for work, and ensure their own and their family's health and safety. Employees should also be aware that if they set aside a room for work that is not used for domestic purposes, they may be subject to business rates or capital gains tax if the property is sold.

### **Employees are primarily responsible for telecommunications and e-mails.**

Telecommuting enables individuals to work for all or part of their workweek from home, on the road, or at a satellite site. Telecommuting is a realistic, flexible work choice when both the person and the job are suited to it. Some workers and occupations may benefit from telecommuting, while others may not. Telecommuting is not a right, it is not a company-wide benefit, and it has no bearing on an organization's terms and conditions of employment.

Telecommuting may be casual, such as working from home on a short-term project or while traveling for business, or formal, such as working from home on a regular basis, as mentioned below. Telecommuting as a viable work arrangement might be suggested by either an employee or a supervisor.

Any telecommuting agreement formed will be on a trial basis for the first three months and may be terminated at any time by either the telecommuter or the organization. To accommodate commuting, child care, and other concerns that may emerge from the termination of a telecommuting agreement, every effort will be taken to offer 30 days' notice of such change. However, there may be times when no notice is available.

Individuals seeking official telecommuting arrangements must have been engaged with the organization for a minimum of 12 months and have a sufficient performance record. Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and manager will assess the suitability of the arrangement with the help of the human resource department, looking at the following factors:

Employee appropriateness is an important factor to consider. The employee's demands and work habits will be compared to attributes that are often regarded as acceptable for successful telecommuters by the employee and management.

**Responsibilities in the workplace.** The employee and management will go through the work obligations and see whether the position is suitable for telecommuting.

Equipment necessitates considerations for workstation design and scheduling concerns. The employee and management will discuss the physical workplace requirements as well as the best location for telework.

Implications in terms of taxation and other legal issues. Any tax or legal ramifications under IRS, state and local government rules, and/or limits of working from a home-based office must be determined by the individual. The employee is exclusively responsible for completing all duties in this area.

A draft telecommuting agreement will be produced and signed by all parties, and a three-month trial period will begin if the employee and manager agree, as well as the human resource department. Regular phone and e-mail communication between the employee and the management, as well as weekly face-to-face meetings to discuss work progress and difficulties, will be used to evaluate telecommuter performance throughout the trial period.

The employee and manager will each complete an assessment of the arrangement at the conclusion of the trial period and provide suggestions for its continuation or change. Beyond the trial period, telecommuter performance will be evaluated in the same way that office workers are evaluated in terms of content and frequency, but with an emphasis on work production and goal fulfillment rather than time-based performance.

Over the discussion phase, a suitable degree of communication between the telecommuter and supervisor will be decided upon, and it will become more official during the trial time. Following the trial period, the manager and telecommuter will interact at a level comparable to that of office personnel, or in a manner and frequency suited for the task and the persons involved.

Company will assess the required equipment requirements (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines, and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement on a case-by-case basis, based on information provided by the employee and supervisor. In this case, the human resource and information systems departments will be of assistance. The organization's equipment will be maintained by the organization. Employee-supplied equipment will be maintained by the employee provided it is judged suitable by the organization. Damage to or repairs to employee-owned equipment are not covered by the employer. [Company Name] maintains the right to make equipment decisions, which are subject to change at any moment. The organization's equipment is only to be utilized for commercial reasons.

The telecommuter must sign an inventory of any company property received and agree to take reasonable precautions to prevent damage or theft. Unless alternative agreements have been established, all corporate property shall be returned to the business upon cessation of employment. As needed, the company will provide the employee with relevant office supplies (pens, paper, etc.). The company will also compensate the employee for business-related expenditures spent in carrying out the employee's task, such as phone calls and shipping fees.

For work reasons, the employee will create an adequate work environment in his or her home. [The company will not be liable for expenditures related to the employee's home office setup, such as remodeling, furniture, or lighting, or for repairs or adjustments to the home office space.]

Workers will be required to secure sensitive business and customer information accessible from their home office in accordance with the organization's information security requirements for employees working at the office. Use of lockable file cabinets and workstations, password maintenance on a regular basis, and any additional safeguards suited for the task and the setting are all recommended.

Employees are obliged to keep their home workplace in a safe, hazard-free condition. Each telecommuter will get a safety checklist that must be completed at least twice a year. Employee injuries incurred at a home office location while doing regular job activities are usually covered by the company's workers' compensation coverage. Telecommuting personnel are responsible for reporting any injuries to their employers as soon as possible. Visitors to the employee's home workplace are responsible for any accidents they receive.

Telecommuting is not intended to be a substitute for proper child care. The emphasis of the arrangement must stay on work performance and satisfying corporate expectations, even if an individual employee's schedule is adjusted to suit child care requirements. Before starting a trial period, prospective telecommuters should talk to their families about their expectations for telecommuting.

#### Worked Time

Telecommuting workers who are not excluded from the Fair Labor Standards Act's overtime obligations must use [Company Name's] timekeeping system to correctly record all hours worked. Telecommuter supervisor clearance is required for hours worked in excess of those specified per day and per workweek. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the telecommuting agreement being immediately terminated.

#### Impromptu arrangements

For reasons such as poor weather, special projects, or business travel, temporary telecommuting arrangements may be granted. These agreements are only permitted on a case-by-case basis, with no prospect of continued use.

Other informal, short-term arrangements for employees on family or medical leave may be made to the extent that it is practical for the employee and the organization, and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if necessary. All informal telecommuting agreements are arranged on a case-by-case basis, with a primary emphasis on the organization's business requirements.

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## 6. How Technology Is Changing People's Work At Home Habits:

The computer, more than any other piece of technology, has altered not just how individuals work, but also how companies are set up. Work is no longer a destination that entails a tumultuous commute and eight hours in the office. Technology aids organizations in being more efficient and competitive in a global market, but it also blurs the barrier between our personal and professional life. As the employment market becomes more competitive, prospective workers will be able to demand a more dynamic work environment. This includes the ability to work from home and a more flexible schedule. In fact, when it comes to accepting a job offer, "one in three prioritizes device flexibility, social media freedom, and work mobility over salary." For modern employees, autonomy and freedom are paramount. Working from home looked quite different before high-speed internet connections and inexpensive personal computers. Previously, only people in higher management were allowed to work from home since they were considered to be highly motivated. They weren't held to the same accountability requirements as lower-level workers. According to a Reuters-sponsored study from 2012, around 17% of all employees telecommuted for at least part of their work week. In 2016, some estimates put the figure closer to 37%, demonstrating that telecommuting is no longer limited to managerial roles.

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## 7. Culture of E-HRM and work from Home:

Since technology has enabled individuals to connect their computers and operate remotely, working from home has become a common occurrence. Most worldwide corporations, particularly in the United States, encouraged workers to work from home in order to assist them balance their professional and personal lives. Work from home was, however, confined to personnel in the technology business, and only for a limited number of hours and for a limited number of people.

Work from home remained popular largely in the United States and Europe, where employee and employer maturity has typically been strong. However, work from home (WFH) flexibility has been abused by a small number of people, casting doubt on its widespread acceptance. Many senior executives have been outspoken in their opposition to the practice of working from home. It has been seen as a benefit to the employee at the expense of the organization's productivity. Prior to COVID, WFH was permitted on a case-by-case basis, mostly to meet the needs of workers and to keep them engaged.

Everything altered after the COVID epidemic. Employers and workers were able to rethink working from home as a result of the epidemic. The largest roadblock to the WFH working paradigm was a lack of trust between workers and employers. COVID mandated that everyone work from home for an extended period of time. The WFH model looks to be performing well enough this time to persuade businesses that it can become the regular working paradigm. Technology, which is here to stay and develop, has been the driving force behind this successful transformation.

Over the previous decade, the internet has permeated the majority of the population, which has been the foundation for this achievement. Another advantage that facilitated quick acceptance of work from home was the replacement of desktops with laptops in most workplaces. Finally, improved telecom infrastructure, digital platforms, security measures, and more awareness have opened up new dimensions, potentially allowing more and more individuals to work from home on a permanent basis.

Now that the technology is in place, it's time to focus on the man behind the machine. Let's look at how human factors, in conjunction with technological enablement, can address the following difficulties in order to develop the next generation of highly productive remote employees for global businesses.

**1. Communication:** Having a communication tool is a must, but without efficient communication, remote team participation becomes a difficulty. Employees who work alone are constantly unaware of any information that is communicated to them in the workplace through formal talks and casual conversations. An good communication plan that addresses the demands of workers in terms of clarity of work requirements, evaluations of completed tasks, and resolving complaints is required to promote efficient work from home. Managers should schedule some casual meetings at regular intervals

to encourage everyone to express their ideas. According to studies, just listening to individuals may significantly lower their stress levels. A solid communication strategy for any firm requires engaging workers via video conferencing and making them feel welcomed.

**2. Productivity Tracking:** The office setting has always made it simple to watch individuals and their output. It's simple for any team to become a low-performing team with WFH if they don't have the right tools to measure productivity. The concept of measuring remote productivity was just recently introduced to most firms. Currently, most tracking is done manually, but there is a lot of room for automation. Because task allocation determines productivity, these monitoring solutions must work in tandem with remote collaboration, team discussions, and meetings. Popular remote collaboration and productivity measurement tools may be able to assist organizations in overcoming this challenge. Slack, Trello, Mural, Proofhub, Bitrix, ActivTrak, and other collaboration platforms can help improve remote productivity. Scrum teams are another method that has been shown to be highly effective in remote working, but they are primarily used by technology workers.

**3. Learning:** Businesses expect their employees to learn and adapt to changing industry requirements. Learning agility and flexibility are among the desirable behavioral attributes for future leaders, according to research published by the World Economic Forum. According to another study, some people learn faster when they are faced with challenges and have no one to help them. WFH ends up physically creating such a situation for employees who work alone, pushing them to find solutions on their own before escalating or reaching out to their coworkers for assistance. As a result, WFH could be a catalyst for professionals to become self-learners. Organizations may be able to identify future leaders and change agents as a result of the crisis.

Managers must also work closely with employees on a digital level and provide learning support to those who require it.

**4. Work-life balance:** COVID has demonstrated a different side to working from home. It is a case of overworking. Employees who have little choice but to work from home tend to spend more time on their computers, resulting in overworking. Remote working, like any new phenomenon, will become more organized over time. Organizations need to devise policies and practices that enable a balanced work regime that doesn't encroach on personal space.

**5. Self-evaluation:** Working in an office environment guarantees that workers be visible and collaborate as a team. Individuals were kept motivated by regular assessments, feedback, and participation. With the WFH model, it's critical for businesses to provide dashboards or digital reports that allow workers to track their progress against goals. Employees may feel lonely, left out, and unsure about their performance if the WFH model does not have such a framework in place.

6. Cyber and data security are two major issues that come with remote employment. According to Techradar, hackers send approximately a trillion phishing emails each year throughout the world. Companies must adopt and implement stringent data management policies to combat the ever-increasing dangers. Cross-platform Data Loss Prevention (DLP) systems, strong password standards, two-factor authentication for enterprise accounts, and VPN solutions from reputable industry vendors are just a few examples. Companies must use modern encryption standards to manage sensitive data such as payment information, customer personal information, and audits on a regular basis. Most essential, businesses must continually educate their staff about the most recent cyber security dangers, using examples to assist disseminate knowledge.

WFH is here to stay, and it's past time for businesses to devise methods to maximize this potential. While WFH may help firms save money on real estate and related expenditures, it can also help workers save money, decrease pollution, alleviate stress from office commutes, and promote work-life balance. Technology has already laid the groundwork for us. To build a sustainable remote work culture, we must develop stronger controls and methods.

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## 8. The distinction between working from home and working in an office:

What are the advantages and disadvantages of working from home vs. working in an office? Let's evaluate them side by side to see what each has to offer in terms of benefits and drawbacks. According to Owl Labs research, around half of workers work from home at least once a week, and a third have full-time remote employment.

Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, several businesses have altered their tools and processes for remote teams for the first time. This is a significant change for both workers and businesses.

**Commute time:** The typical American worker spends at least 27 minutes commuting to work each day, and the problem is becoming worse. According to NPR, "more than 14 million individuals spend an hour or more getting to work." By becoming a telecommuter, you may save a significant amount of time. Working remotely or from home while using the internet, email, and phone is referred to as telecommuting. Some people, on the other hand, prefer getting up early, getting dressed, and having the separation of home and work. This is why many remote workers still choose to work in a coffee shop or coworking space.

In the end, they despise commuting. Work-life balance continues to rise in relevance among today's workforce. Companies who are unaware of this are losing out on a tremendous potential to implement work-from-home initiatives that will benefit their employees. According to a research conducted by Ryan Hoover, CEO of Product Hunt, most individuals would accept a wage decrease in exchange for the chance to work remotely. When compared to the advantages of working remotely, perks like unlimited vacation time, free meals, and a 401k weren't as relevant.

Face-to-face contact is the most favored communication channel for workers, according to findings from our 2020 State of Business Communication Report. Face-to-face communication, with the exception of video conferencing, is something that can only be had in an office setting. It not only helps with business planning, but it also improves connections and rapport with coworkers. When you sit next to someone or run into each other at the coffee shop, there's something about relationship-building that occurs.

When you operate remotely, communication is still possible; it's just different. Video calls replace face-to-face communication. Slack messages are created from short discussions. Emails, on the other hand, remain emails. Nobody is safe from them! Working from home has the benefit of allowing you to work from anywhere. You don't even need a laptop to get started. Employees may use their iPhone or Android to make and receive calls, attend conference calls, message colleagues, and remain online with a full-featured business phone app.

Many firms now demand video conferencing over regular phone conversations when engaging with coworkers to enhance communication for distant staff. To align themselves with corporate objectives, teams should have conference calls. Employees may also hold online gaming evenings for fun to get to know one another outside of the workplace.

Some teams even use social media as a means of communication. Close.com, for example, claims to employ Snapchat for internal team development. It's a smart and innovative method to remain connected while working remotely via social media.

**Flexibility:** When you work from an office, you probably have a defined schedule. Every day, your alarm goes off at the same time, you have your morning coffee at 7:05 a.m., and you're at your desk ready to work by 9 a.m. It's a bit different when it comes to working from home. You may now select when you want to get up and how you want to spend your day. If your organization is new to remote work, it's likely that all workers will continue to work regular 9-to-5 hours. With remote work, you can now sleep in (a bit), choose a lunch time, and shut your laptop whenever you want — for some, that's 4 p.m., for others, it's 7 p.m.

Working hours will adjust to meet the employee's schedule as more organizations embrace a remote-first approach. This change gives you greater freedom in terms of when you start and conclude your day, as well as where you work. You should be able to operate from any location with a reliable internet connection!

When working from home, many workers find it difficult to disengage. When working remotely, up to a third of workers believe it's difficult to strike a balance between work and family life. When you're at work, it's simple to turn off your computer when you see your coworkers begin to leave for the night, but when you're at home, those signs are absent.

Another significant advantage of working from home is the ability to freelance and take on side jobs. You may use the time you spend commuting to work on side projects or freelancing. It's a lot more profitable than waiting in traffic!

### **8.1 Benefits of WFH-Work From Home**

There are several instances in which working from home benefits both the company and the employee:

1. **No/Lower Commute** The absence of a commute is one of the key advantages of working from home. People in India spend at least 2 hours a day going to and from work on average. This not only wastes time that might be spent more efficiently, but it also makes it difficult to maintain a healthy work-life balance. It's normal for someone who works a conventional 9-to-5 (or 6) job and spends 7% of their day stuck in traffic to feel like they don't have a life outside of work. However, when you can accomplish your job from the comfort of your own sofa, it doesn't feel as burdensome.
2. **Achieving a better work-life balance** It is important to recognize that work is not the be-all and end-all of life. You have a life outside of work, but sitting in an office for almost half of the day makes it feel false. Furthermore, a strict timetable jam-packed with work may soon burn out staff. Most firms that allow their employees to work from home also allow them to choose their own working hours, which means that employees may start and stop their days whenever they like, as long as their job is completed and produces positive results. When it comes to catering to the requirements of your personal life, having control over your work schedule is crucial.
3. **Saves money by lowering carbon emissions** Working from home saves money for both parties: the employee saves money on travel, food, and other miscellaneous costs that arise during the course of a working day; meanwhile, corporations save money on energy costs and other related expenses that would have been unavoidable in a fully operational office. While these methods are good for your pocketbook, they're also good for the environment: a shorter commute means less automobiles on the road, which accidentally helps to clean up our environment, which is a pressing issue.

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## **9. HR repercussions**

### **Hiring Difficulties**

Because of the lockdown, one of HR's most important functions, hiring, has been impacted. It can be used on video conversations as well, although it lacks the precision of face-to-face interviews. Identifying an individual's personality qualities during a video interview becomes tough for HR. It's also tough to tell if an employee generated anything during the online examinations used to map their expertise. It's also possible that a lack of internet connection will cause the interview process to be disrupted. Aside from recruiting, joining procedures may be influenced, but only to a limited extent.

### **Communication that is ineffective**

Communication breakdowns are a prevalent issue for all businesses during a lockdown. It is a huge setback when introducing work from home since the human resources department finds it difficult to monitor the personnel. Communication failure may be caused by a variety of circumstances, including local network troubles and a lack of appropriate equipment for distant work. Inadequate communication might cause an employee to miss critical meetings or announcements, causing confusion among team members. It also has an adverse effect on team cohesiveness, resulting in lower production.

### **Employee Engagement Has Dropped**

Following the lockdown, HR is also concerned about employee engagement. After such a lengthy time apart, it's normal for an employee to feel alienated from the organization. There are three categories of workers: actively involved employees who put in more effort than is necessary, somewhat engaged employees who work just for the appropriate amount of time without putting in further effort, and disengaged employees who are uninterested in the organization. The lockdown will increase the number of workers who are uninterested in the firm, which will be a big problem.

### **Problems with Reorganization**

Reorganizing the workplace once the lockdown ends will be a difficult assignment for an HR. To rekindle lost enthusiasm, HR will be obliged to put in place comprehensive measures to stimulate employee involvement and increase morale after the lockdown. Following the lockdown, HR must offer a variety of events for workers to build team cohesion. Lockdown may cause a recession, which would need HR taking decisive action and being well-organized to cope with.

## 10. Economic Impact

### Recession

COVID-19 has aided in the onset of the economic crisis, which would inevitably lead to recession and worldwide unemployment. Several people have lost their jobs as a consequence of the epidemic, while others have been denied pay as a result of workplace closures. It has also led in the closure of several businesses as a consequence of the losses, resulting in job losses. People who have lost their employment are finding it more difficult to handle even the most basic demands of life. The crisis has impacted practically every area of the global economy, resulting in a long-term recession that will take a long time to recover from.

### Unemployment across the world

Due to the COVID-19 problem, global unemployment is on the increase and will continue to climb over time. Many start-ups, as well as some of the pioneering industries, are feeling the effects of the present economic downturn. Many businesses are shutting down due to a lack of business, which is a cause for worry. Despite the fact that many organizations have embraced a work-from-home approach, the crisis has resulted in reduced customer participation in the company, which means that workers have no job. If the current situation persists, a large number of people will lose their jobs, culminating in worldwide unemployment.

### GDP has dropped

GDP (Gross Domestic Product) is an important component in the country's economic progress. A lower GDP might have a negative impact on a country's economic situation. GDP defines a country's pace of growth and advancement, and if it is harmed, major concerns must exist, culminating in devastating effects. The problem will be exacerbated by rising unemployment and fast company closures. The nation has just recovered from a drop in GDP, but the epidemic has exacerbated the downward trend.

HR must be well-prepared to deal with difficulties that arise after the lockdown, while also being quick to address the present economic situation. HR should also take the steps required to address the issue of staff management. The declining economy will result in unemployment and poverty, making this a top priority for the government to address. Neural IT's E-HRMS is a cloud-based program that makes everyday HR duties easier. Let E-HRMS allow HRs to seamlessly onboard new recruits, manage employee progress, and analyze data to enhance employee growth and organization by digitizing your HR operation.

## 11. Conclusion:

This investigation led me to the conclusion that the epidemic has placed our world into an unknown territory. Covid-19, according to experts, has the potential to have a big influence on India's USD 180 billion IT business. The bright lining is that the IT sector is only projected to face a short-term struggle. Though IT spending would initially decline in 2020, IT firms, particularly product companies, will progressively witness a surge in market opportunity. It is critical to keep personnel engaged and excited in order to reach this shared future. Human resources (HR) departments are entrusted with maintaining proper team enablement and engagement while also preparing for some difficult choices in these times.

Organizations that were prepared for work from home were better able to cope with the countrywide scenario without affecting production significantly. Every company's HR department has been on the front lines, spearheading initiatives to make workers' lives easier. HR is responsible for addressing concern in instances like this, in addition to resolving business responsibilities. As the initial pandemonium subsides, HR must step in to help and organize their workers' mental and emotional well-being. These unusual pandemic times in Covid-19 may increase a person's anxiety and stress levels, and it is up to employers to channel these feelings in order to keep their staff safe, engaged, and productive.

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