

The Ways to Maintain Productive at Workplace after Pandemic Covid 19

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Abstract

The global outbreak of COVID-19, declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, reshaped how we work, pushing a surge in remote work or working from home (WFH). This global spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has led many employees to work from home and rely on remote working tools to maintain their work. This research paper explores the ways on maintaining or staying productive while working after pandemic Covid 19. This research method is qualitative by using case studies. Sample of six respondent was taken among employees who were productive at work after the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the study showed that three themes were formed, namely how to stay productive, obstacles and challenges to work, and pandemic implications. It has been noted that pandemic Covid 19 allows flexibility in completing tasks, reducing commuting stress and increasing job satisfaction. Employers have to provide support, foster clear communication channels, and encourage a balance between work and personal life to alleviate stress and enhance productivity.

Keywords: Maintain, Productive, Workplace, After Pandemic Covid 19.

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. WHO works worldwide to promote health, keep the world safe, and serve the vulnerable. Their goal is to ensure that billions more people have universal health coverage, protect a billion more people from health emergencies, and provide a further billion people with better health and well-being; as we know, in March 2020, the world is currently dealing with a global outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Coronavirus disease COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with COVID-19 will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and

recover without special treatment. Moreover, older people and those with underlying medical problems are more likely to develop severe illness. The best way to prevent or slow the transmission is by wearing a mask, cleaning your hands, and keeping a safe distance.

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) advised that this disease has the characteristics of a pandemic. Many governments have now restricted free movement and placed populations under lockdown to limit the spread of the pandemic. Thus, many of us were bored, missed our daily routines, and frustrated about staying indoors all the time. However, people must face these new realities of working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends, and colleagues. We must look after our mental health, as well.

This global spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has led many employees to work from home and rely on remote working tools to maintain their businesses. In line with the Movement Control Order announced by the government to contain the COVID-19 outbreak, all offices must be closed. During this period, offices need to operate entirely on a work-from-home basis. However, "Work from Home" is not a new term nowadays. It has been around for longer than ten years. The COVID-19 pandemic has made the most significant number of representatives comprehensively bound to work remotely. The idea has been called numerous things, including Telecommuting and Remote Working. The COVID-19 pandemic out of nowhere made this an impulse instead of a choice.

Many kinds of work can be done just as effectively, like doing your job at the office by working at home. Thus, working from home can give flexible working hours to the employees, help deliver work-life balance, and also help ensure a proper organization or business can still function well. Some people will fantasize about working from the comfort of their home, preceding their commute, in favor of more sleep, family, or exercise time. But to stay productive while working from home can be pretty challenging for some people. The isolation can quickly become a downer for those used to socializing at work. However, some employees would prefer to stay and work in the office. Thus, getting some good tips about working might help employees to stay productive while doing their job.

Methodology

The design of the study is qualitative and a form of case study where the respondent is interviewed. The data and information needed to meet the objectives of the study are collected through the interview method. The interview was conducted to better understand the experience of the respondent. However, these questions are not too binding and need to be flexible based on the responses given by the respondents and their willingness to continue the conversation. Among the interview guides that the researchers have prepared prior to the interview with the respondents are:

1. How To Stay Productive?
 - i. What motivates you to stay productive?
 - ii. How are you emotionally, mentally, and physically to stay productive?
 - iii. What steps do you take to improve/motivate yourself to stay productive?
 - iv. How do you deal with negative situations?
 - v. Is the allowance worth the workload?
 - vi. Does a salary increase increase your motivation?

2. What are the obstacles and challenges that arise during your work?
3. What are the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on your life?

However, this question guide is not too binding and needs to be flexible based on the responses given by the respondents and their willingness to continue the conversation (Md Ali, Mohd Yusof & Shaffie, 2018). According to Lebar (2015) interviews are conducted in conducting a study not to answer the question of a study, or make an assessment but to understand deeply the experience in life or an event that has been passed. Written consent from the respondent is required to record the interview. If the respondent does not allow the interview to be recorded or feels uncomfortable using the recorder, a note will be done during the interview session. In fact, the benefits of making a note compared to using a recorder, the researchers will focus more on what the respondents tell us than relying on the recorder alone. Apart from understanding through verbal communication, the respondent's feelings should also be understood through the non-verbal communication shown.

Data Analysis

Respondent Background

Respondent 1

The respondent's name is Salmah (not her real name). The respondent is a lecturer at an IPTS. He is 47 years old and has worked for 22 years. The respondent is married and has four children. The highest academic background of the respondent is a Master's.

Respondent 2

The respondent's name is Muhammad Fairuz (not his real name). The respondent's highest educational background is SPM. He is an administrative assistant who has served for 17 years at an IPTS. The respondent is 41 years old and is married with two children.

Respondent 3

The respondent's name is Salwa Abdullah (not her real name). The respondent is a clerk at an IPTS and has served for 10 years. He is 40 years old married and has 4 children. The respondent's highest education is a Bachelor's Degree.

Respondent 4

The respondent's name is Nurul Nathirah Ahmad (not her real name). He is an administrative assistant who has served for 13 years at an IPTS in Kedah. The respondent is 31 years old and is married with 3 children. The respondent's highest educational background is SPM.

Respondent 5

The respondent's name is Maimun Ismail (not her real name). He is a psychology officer at an IPTS and has served for 7 years. The respondent is 41 years old and is married with a son. His highest academic education background is a Master's.

Respondent 6

The respondent's full name is Mohd Sanusi Rodzi (not his real name). The respondent was a Deputy Registrar at an IPTS for 24 years. He is 50 years old and is married with 3 children. His highest academic background is BA Shariah from Al Azhar.

Theme 1: How to stay Productive

Subtheme 1.1: Motivation and Family Support to Remain Productive

Encouragement from the closest people to some extent has an effect on the productivity of a work. This is because the motivator is a close person who is able to influence someone at the same time as giving an impact to continue to remain productive (Suhaila Nadzri, Nor Ayuni Rosli, Nor Suhaily Bakar, & Nuzul Akhtar Baharudin, 2015).

Responsibilities (R 1)

On the basis of family (wife & children) and always having fun 'enjoying' the work done despite the pressure. do not reveal problems at work. (R 2)

Husband and children. (R 3)

Family (R 4)

Productive means being able to provide a lot of contributions/results without sacrificing quality in any work. To stay productive for me, first of all, is intention because it gives a signal to the heart and mind before doing a task. Next, the knowledge that gives motivation to continue to remain productive in every task that is entrusted. (R 5)

Think positive. Try to solve problems that arise as best as possible with available resources and a sense of responsibility. (R 6)

Subtheme 1.2: Emotional, Mental, And Physical Conditions To Remain Productive

Stress at work is a complex interaction between the environment at work, personality, and physical and mental reactions of a person. The work environment provides certain pressures and pressures that stimulate the individual's mental and physical responses. This pressure further has an impact on the psychological and physiological health of an individual if it is not administered and controlled with the right methodology as well as affecting the productivity of the work done.

Stay positive, follow instructions, and work in a group (R 1)

Sometimes pressure from another party causes a lack of work enthusiasm and disturbs emotions. physically weak and sometimes think of taking time off to not go to work. (R 2)

always think positive and active. (R 3)

Very struggle and always positive thinking. (R 4)

*Emotions: requires consistent emotional management and a good circle in ensuring a harmonious and productive work environment. Mental: positive thinking not thinking about problems and prioritizing focus on solving problems is the reason for us to remain productive. Physical: starting with good thoughts, and the next feeling will be expressed with behavioral behavior that makes us not feel tired in the task. Continue to remain **productive and also need***

to be smart in managing rest time that affects our body. Believing in Feeling affects the health of all of us. So physicality is ok if we take care of our feelings/emotions and thoughts. (R 5)

Have to be healthy. Have to work consistently. (R 6)

Subtheme 1.3: Self-Improving Steps To Stay Productive

Various steps need to be taken by employees to reach a productive level in the workplace in order to improve themselves. The following is the response of the respondents in giving some steps taken to improve themselves to continue to remain productive.

Working in a group with colleagues (R 1)

need to give space to be efficient in a job. consider a task as positive work. always consider this work/assignment as worship to God and get a reward from him. exposure from seminars, courses, etc. is also necessary. (R 2)

always think rationally and innovate. (R 3)

always think positively and stay away from the negative atmosphere (R 4)

Attend knowledge gatherings, with good friends or circles, don't overthink, and avoid doing useless things. (R 5)

Good thought. (R 6)

Subtheme 1.4: How to Face Negative Situations

An individual will usually be able to function better in a positive atmosphere that does not have negative elements. Here are the respondents' responses regarding actions and how to deal with negative situations:

Discuss with colleagues (R 1)

Calm down. be patient don't overthink the situation. face it with satisfaction. (R 2)

Open minded. (R 3)

Stay calm (R 4)

Among the ways I realize it is, to take a long breath, control our movements, feelings, and thoughts, express them to a reliable friend keep busy, and think good in everything that happens because believe in me God according to the prejudice of his servant. So keep thinking well. (R 5)

Be patient and calm. Find a way forward and try to solve it. (R 6)

Subtheme 1.5: Allowance Worthy of Duty

The payment of an allowance that is commensurate with the workload or effort and services provided makes employees happy to work and will work harder to improve their work productivity. The following are responses from respondents regarding the need for an allowance that is worth the workload given:

Do not receive an allowance. (R 1)

Not sure (R 2)

Nope. (R 3)

Yes. (R 4)

For now, I think it's worth it and I'm grateful for what I have. (R 5)

Yes. (R 6)

Subtheme 1.11: Salary Increase Increases Motivation

Salary increases or incentives also increase the productive level of employees to work well as well as increase employee motivation. The following is the feedback from respondents on the need to increase wages to increase the motivation of employees to work more productively:

Yes (R 1)

Definitely (R 2)

Yes. (R 3)

Yes. (R 4)

Definitely. (R 5)

Yes (R 6)

Theme 2: Obstacles And Challenges To Work

Subtheme 2.1: Household Problems

Based on the feedback from the respondents, it was found that there are no household problems that are an obstacle for the respondents to remain productive at work.

Household problems become an obstacle to remaining productive but I try to overcome them. (R 1)

No (R 2)

No (R 3)

None (R 4)

Family commitments while also having to work (R 5)

Subtheme 2.2: Emotional instability

The emotional instability of respondents can sometimes interfere with work achievement and productivity. However, some will not affect his work. The following is the response from the respondents of this study:

Yes but try to overcome. (R 1)

Sometimes (R 2)

No (R 3)

None (R 4)

Subtheme 2.3: Excessive Workload

The workload that is increasingly challenging and many will certainly affect the productivity of employees which in turn will definitely also affect work efficiency. Now, the role of the employee is not only to perform essential tasks but also burdened with tasks that are not related to essential tasks (Arzizul Antin & Dg Norizah Ag Kiflee @ Dzulkifli, 2018). An overwhelming workload can be an obstacle to staying productive. However, there are respondents who are not affected by the heavy workload and are still able to remain productive.

Yes. very disturbing (R 1)

Sure (R 2)

No (R3)

None (R 4)

Subtheme 2.4: Internet Access Problems

Along with the rapid development of the economy and the progress of various industries, it is very important for an organization to have competence in managing tasks and services, whether internal or external. Advances in communication technology allow organizations to connect with customers, management, and employees more quickly and efficiently. In the current situation, high-speed internet access makes it easier to shape a more efficient career landscape that also covers the manufacturing sector, professional services, catering, real estate, construction, logistics, and traders and distributors. If previously everything was done manually and took a long time, now telecommunication companies offer various facilities that combine phone calls, internet browsing, document transfer, and so on (Laura Gloria Sidam, 2021). The problem of Internet access at work can be a hindrance to being productive if the work done involves a lot of work that requires Internet access. Respondents' feedback related to the need for internet access to increase more productive workers.

Yes. very annoying (R1)

Definitely (R2)

No (R 3)

None (R4)

Subtheme 2.5: Financial Problems

Financial problems can interfere with tasks to the point of being unproductive. The current situation after the COVID-19 pandemic has seen all costs increase and soar, causing financial problems to occur.

Yes, it's annoying, but Alhamdulillah, try to overcome it. (R 1)

Definitely (R 2)

No (R 3)

None (R 4)

Financial implications when a spouse is laid off. (R 5)

Subtheme 2.6: Atmosphere and Commitment in the Workplace

Relationships with bad colleagues, bosses who are unwilling to listen to problems, and an uncomfortable work environment are examples of work environments that give negative pressure and lead to the productivity or not of a job.

Negative workplace atmosphere, very bossy boss (R 4)

The case of a client who demands high commitment and a high profile and the will of the employer who changes and demands more time to complete the task. (R 5)

Theme 3: Pandemic Implications

The COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the whole world including Malaysia is a health and financial crisis that threatens the survival and well-being of society (Rabeatul Husna Abdul Rahman, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic also witnessed that human life is no longer the same as before. These changes involve many aspects of human life, especially in aspects of work, education, health, safety, welfare, religious activities, social relations, and other daily life. Undeniably, there are too many challenges and impacts that family members go through that cause the stability of the family institution to be undermined. The problems of losing sources of income, feelings of fatigue, depression, and burnout as a result of constant work and responsibilities make them always in a state of complaining (Khatijah Othman, 2021).

Affected family members' health and increasing costs. (R 1)

Increase & instability of goods prices, consumer & people's rights. (R 2)

Worried and worried (R 3)

*Health deteriorated after getting the vaccine and experiencing Covid 19 twice. (R 4)
Time with children and family doubles at that time, more taking care of self and family health with preventive measures and taking appropriate supplements for personal and family immunity and awareness of certain deaths that are getting closer because of various disease outbreaks and high risk for all of us. (R 5)*

Conclusion

Numerous studies have highlighted the dual nature of WFH its ability to enhance work-life balance and productivity while posing challenges in maintaining boundaries between professional and personal life. It has been noted that WFH allows flexibility in completing tasks, reducing commuting stress and increasing job satisfaction. However, the lack of separation between work and personal life, potential distractions, and employee costs are significant concerns. Moreover, the shift to remote work during the pandemic has highlighted the importance of technology, effective communication, and psychological well-being. Employers have been urged to provide support, foster clear communication channels, and encourage a balance between work and personal life to alleviate stress and enhance productivity. Boundaries between work and personal life need careful consideration, and employers must support employees in adapting to this new work environment. This entails providing the necessary infrastructure, acknowledging employee costs, and promoting mental health initiatives to mitigate the adverse effects of social isolation and stress. It calls for a balanced approach that leverages the benefits of remote work while addressing the associated challenges. Effective management practices, technological support, and a focus on employee well-being will be crucial in shaping the future of work in the post-pandemic era.

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