

In the Future World of Work, Flexibility and Remote-Readiness are Crucial



Remote work steamrolled over the world in 2020.

No longer just about working from a beach or coffee shop, or confined to creatives and programmers, a heady mix of collaboration platform readiness, enforcement through regulations, financial and environmental pressures, and a wake-up call regarding individual quality of living, all combine to drive the ongoing “normalisation” of remote work.

One billion people were expected to be working remotely by 2020 in earlier studies; the true number may well dwarf this.

People from all over the world are attracted to flexible work arrangements for a number of reasons. The freedom to work from anywhere, reduce expenses, manage health better, positively impact the environment and, the cherry on top, allows to get more done. Centralized offices are a leading cause of traffic congestion as millions of people use the same routes to get to and from offices.

With a shift in the way we perceive work, from somewhere we go, to something we do (and enjoy), more companies, cities, and countries are embracing remote work and encouraging flexible set-ups. The drivers behind this differ but the results are the same - flexible and remote work is no longer a fad, but a very real and sensible alternative to traditional work.

Countries and cities leading the way include New Zealand, where it is considered from a productivity perspective, Malaysia, where the Deputy Prime Minister is championing a political endorsement for flexible working hours as a way to enable women to balance professional and parental responsibilities,

and Japan, where negative population growth rate coupled with an ageing population and an overworking office culture are leading the government's legislative innovations to address future societal and economic stability. (These are just three selected examples, in addition to the general Scandinavian move towards new ways of working.)

In Japan, flexible work is being led by government as a mechanism to help both young and old people with employability. Japanese workers are reaping the fruits of public-private partnerships to remove obstacles for both young and old workers. In a twist to the "robots vs humans" scenario, robotics allows older workers to do physically demanding tasks at the same level of output as younger, stronger colleagues, keeping them in gainful employment.

In the years to come, more and more organisations will embrace flexible working practices to reduce overheads, drive productivity, attract and retain the brightest talent, and help positively impact the environment.

People generally look for more balance and purpose in life. Especially with the impact of 2020, reduced carbon footprints and living more in harmony with the natural environment becomes more important than ever, thus leading more and more people towards remote and flexible work arrangements. The potential to positively impact levels of happiness, health, stress is self-evident, and remote work can also impact the people we love and world we live in.

The flexibility offered by technology solutions to enable work from home (or anywhere else), should reduce the number of daily commutes, reduce energy needs and therefore help reduce carbon emissions, eventually positively improving air quality.

Those hours spent snarling on the roads have also been linked with higher stress, bad lifestyle choices (such as dietary habits) and a general decline in quality of lifestyle. Removing the grind of this from people's lives can be a powerful positive contributor.

Remote or flexible work and freelancing are disruptors to the traditional workplace. People are bearing witness to the improvements in well-being, health, lifestyle, and productivity on their own terms, offered through remote work.

With a business case as compelling as this, the future of work may very well be difficult to predict, but one thing is clear, will very clearly incorporate flexibility and remote-readiness.

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Her vision is to be an active member in combatting few of the major societal issues in society in general and in South Africa in particular, being unemployment, gender and age bias, and the retention of

experienced workers in the economy post-retirement. Today, she helps companies grow smart through providing them with access to a globally available pool of seasoned HR consultants working on-demand; and gives HR Consultants access to projects without having to pitch, hard-sell, or develop a business.

ABOUT ONE CIRCLE

One Circle is a smart collaboration workspace where businesses hire HR consultants on-demand over a technology enabled ecosystem. Completely virtual, giving you access to quality HR consultants, from around the world and across the employee life cycle, all in one place.



Let us help you work, lead, and thrive in a remote environment

