

Library Research

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Introduction

More and more people prefer working from home. Remote work has become increasingly popular in recent years due to advancements in technology and communication tools that make it possible for employees to remain connected and productive while working from a remote location. Home working opens up a new range of possibilities for the way businesses can work and structure themselves. The outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in March 2020, gave employers and employees a practical insight into home working.

With remote employment percentages rising, it leaves people wondering whether it is generally beneficial, or just a workaround for people to stay within the comfort of their homes. Different people seem to report different things, which could possibly lead to the verdict that personality and work ethics play a significant role. If a person is new to the work-from-home lifestyle, whether due to the coronavirus or because they managed to find a remote job, they may have found they need to change their habits and routines to make working from home a success.

The aim of this document is to highlight different statistics and answer these questions:

- What are the cons and pros of working from home?
- Is there an emotional impact of working from home?
- Can gamification keep employees more engaged in working?
- Are there positive aspects of games during working hours?
- Are there apps that encourage employees to work together in a more flexible way?

Pros and cons

Pros on remote working

Focus and productivity: remote workers report feeling increased productivity, better focus, and less stress. When people work from home, they're less likely to lose focus due to in-office distractions like background noise or interruptions from coworkers. This way a lot more work is done within a shorter time span

No commute: Whether a person is taking public transportation or stuck in traffic, their mind most of the time wanders about all the other things they could be doing during their commute time. Studies have shown that commuting negatively impacts health and happiness. When one works from home, not only do they have more free time in the day, but it is more likely to see an improvement in their well-being too.

Flexible schedule: Since a remote job does not require a person to be present at an office, this leaves the opportunity to have a more flexible schedule. It is way easier for people working remote to manage daily routines in their lives, such as going to a doctor's appointment, picking up their children from school or accepting a delivery at home.

Work-life balance: The 2019 State of Remote Work report found that one of the top reasons survey respondents gave for working remotely is work-life balance. Working online helps people better manage their personal obligations, whether work-related or not. Remote workers report that for example, taking a short walk, going to the gym, having the time to cook healthy foods, meditating, and other health-related benefits become easier to do.

Less stress: Going to the office builds up commuting stress, followed by stress at work working for non-stop eight hours. Working from home causes less stress, since a person does not have to follow office politics and ego clashes, instead, they can take a break anytime by having a nap, eating food, taking a walk around, or spending time with family or on the phone. Working in parts helps a remote employee to feel refreshed. This makes work more of a fun-filled job using a remote work tool rather than a stressful job.

Pros and cons

Cons of remote working

Loneliness: When a person work from home, they're likely going solo most of the time. This can create feelings of isolation and loneliness, and can often have a hurt the health and productivity. It's important to build in time for social interaction, even if it isn't in-person. Otherwise one might feel left behind and miss working in a tight-knit team or community.

Hard communication: Miscommunication is a very often phenomenon when working from a remote place, as there are gaps in ideas being conveyed and the things being grasped. In an office setting, it is much easier to approach someone in person, than to try to connect with them through the social media. One has to rely heavily on such technology - video calling or instant messaging tools to get in touch with their colleagues. Of course, there are a lot of other remote work tools available but nothing works quite like speaking in person.

Lower quality deliverables: Although some people report increased focus and productivity while working remotely, others report that they easily get distracted when no one watches over their work. An employee might tend to take things easy which could result in delays or lack of quality deliverables.

Without supervision, it is easy to get carried off, and hence diverting from the focus is something that can occur at any time. Without supervision and colleagues, it is tough to stick to targets while staying inspired with a remote work tool. Motivation takes a back seat, while laid back attitude takes a front seat.

Challenging coordination: In a remote work environment, when having a team to manage, or a part of one or more teams, it is often hard to coordinate with colleagues or be a bridge of communication between teammates.

It is quite a hurdle to keep things organized and coordinated. This is even harder when dealing with people across hierarchies that cannot be met and make discussions with in person.

Gamification

1

Games help remote teams socialize.

Gamification can bring remote teams together by allowing them to compete against each other and interact in a fun and lighthearted way.

2

Games relieve stress in a troubling time.

Studies show that games can help manage and reduce stress. They can take the mind away from everyday worries. Instead of growing anxious about all the uncertainty around, we can escape through a game.

3

Games can improve productivity.

Gamification can make learning and skill-building activities more enjoyable by turning them into a game or competition.

4

Rewards and recognition.

Games often have reward systems built into them, and gamifying work tasks can give employees a sense of achievement and recognition for their efforts.

67%

stated that since working remotely, they have found it harder to make friends and maintain relationships with work colleagues.

71%

felt that their work colleagues had become distant

54%

attributed remote working as the main cause for drifting apart.

Overall, gamification can add a sense of fun and excitement to remote work, which can boost morale, increase motivation, and improve the overall remote work experience.

Statistics

8 IN 10

people are working hybrid or remote,
while only 2 in 10 are entirely on-site

40 MINUTES

on average are saved by each remote employee
when they do not have to commute to work
each day

62%

of workers aged 22 to 65 claim to work
remotely at least occasionally, while **59%** of
workers say they would be more likely to
choose an employer who offered remote
work compared to those who didn't.

96%

of 800 employers state the work productivity
was the same or higher since employees
started working from home. Employees have
reported a higher level of job satisfaction and a
better work-life balance as a result of remote
work.

**84% OF
WORKERS**

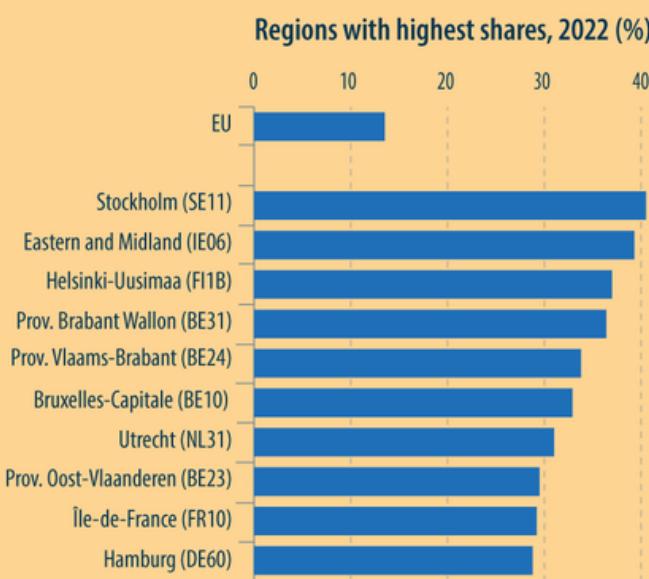
state that a remote or hybrid job would make them a
happier person. And for those living with mental health
issues, 77% stated remote or hybrid working arrangements
would help them with managing their mental health better.

Overall, remote working is statistically more beneficial than just on-site. Not only do people feel happier, they also tend to be more productive and spend less time commuting, which leads to them better structuring their every day life and having more time to take care of themselves. Surveys indicate that ever since COVID-19 remote jobs have seen a very sharp spike in popularity. At this point both employers and employees realized that remote work, for most people, tends to have more positives than negatives, given that there is a strong leader to keep everything coordinated. Even though the days of covid are mostly over, remote working seems to be staying for good, with experts predicting that it is going to keep rising in employment percentages over time.

Statistics

Employed people usually working from home, 2022

(people aged 20–64, selected NUTS 2 regions)



Based on available data, some regions are not available (too many to document). Includes earlier reference years for some regions (too many to document).

ec.europa.eu/eurostat

The photo above shows the percentage of people that usually work from home, separated by regions. Around and after covid, a large proportion of employed people was faced with changing patterns of work – including working from home. In 2019, approximately 1 in 20 (5.5%) employed people aged 20–64 years in the EU usually worked from home.

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis was apparent as this share more than doubled in 2020 to 12.3% (+6.8 percentage points). To everyone's surprise, even after covid stopped being an issue, people remained working hybrid or remote, with key capital cities throughout Europe reaching up to 40% of employees working from home

Competitor Analysis

TODOIST KARMA

A free app both for iOS and Android. Rating 4.9/5. An app for adding tasks and reminders. Progressively unlock new levels. Everyone starts as a beginner and with gaining points they can advance through eight different Karma levels, ending at Enlightened.

Pros

- Customize to-do lists with filters, labels, priorities, and more.
- Personal productivity recommendations based on unique traits and strengths.
- Setting daily goals and earning points when completed

Cons

- Sometimes gives overdue tasks
- Sometimes there are no reminders sent to the users
- Collaboration not included
- No competing with others

Conclusion: the app is a powerful tool for remote working. It helps people with managing time and tasks quickly. The gamification is not oriented towards team-building but rather self-monitoring

CLASSCRAFT

A gamified learning platform that allows educators to turn their lessons into an adventure game for students. Creates personal avatars for students, track progress and play together with classmates

Pros

- Track the progress of students
- Learn in the form of a game
- Teach the students that collaboration is better than competition

Cons

- Mostly oriented for students
- Works only with schools and not companies
- Paid

Conclusion: Students immediately feel motivated and engaged, with opportunities to collaborate on teams, and develop custom avatars they relate to, all while sharing and getting feedback from their peers and teachers. It is not oriented towards businesses and engaging employees to socialize more.

Competitor Analysis

TRELLO

Project management tool. Great for collaboration and dividing tasks. Empowers teams to manage any type of project, workflow, or task tracking. The tasks are divided into boards and people can add tasks by priority. Suitable for schools, businesses, self-time management.

Pros

- Adding members is straightforward, easy collaboration
- Customise UI
- Free to use

Cons

- Cannot access it when there is no data access
- Can get overload with tasks
- No rewarding system to keep the users engaged

Conclusion: the idea behind the app is good and people can easily collaborate with each other. The downside is that the social aspect is missing. People do not get the chance to track their progress and get to know better their colleagues. The team building aspect is missing.

TRIVIA HUDDLE

Team-building questions. It encourages collaboration and helps employees adapt better.

Pros

- Encourages collaboration
- Increases communication
- Provides a break from work

Cons

- No app available
- There are no rewards when an answer is correct

Conclusion: Trivia Huddle is a great tool for trivia questions but there is not app that employees can download. They do not get rewards, so the questions can become easily boring and they won't feel engaged in the whole experience.

Conclusion



Having everything in mind, there seem to be a lot of benefits to working from home. Employees tend to feel more productive and have more free time since they do not have to commute to their offices. They are also less prone to stress since they can take breaks whenever they want to.

Doing activities like yoga, cooking, eating, and other hobbies is also possible. There are also quite a lot of employees going either hybrid or fully remote ever since COVID-19, with figures staying taking a lot of the market share.

The main reason for this is that both employers and employees appreciate the advantages that remote work offers. Working from home is here to stay, with experts predicting that remote jobs are going to rise in the future years.

But while working remotely has its pros, it certainly comes with plenty of drawbacks that most people suffer from. Employees that work remotely tend to have a hard time dealing with loneliness and team building, stating that they feel distant from their work environment and have fewer opportunities to talk to their colleagues.

Social Interactions also typically suffer, since one is alone at home during the time that they would normally be surrounded by their colleagues and work environment. Meeting new people becomes harder and for extroverts, this can generally be considered a dealbreaker, since they enjoy social games and activities.



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