

Paolo Mangahas

Lesson 2

17 August 2019

Exercise 1 (5 mins): Write your truth claim

Flexible working arrangements

I believe that many industries and sectors should start moving into more flexible working arrangements, allowing employees more options to deliver their work built around and in consideration of their personal life.

I believe that this is one of the most important steps to achieving work-life balance.

This type of arrangement is in fact being implemented in a number of developed countries in Europe and North America, where employees are given the option to choose their working hours and days as well as the option to work remotely.

I believe that in order for this to be successful, there should be systems in place that promote trust and productivity. Monitoring employees based on deliverables is one way of doing this. There are also numerous technologies and platforms now available to allow for a more flexible working arrangement without sacrificing targets and objectives.

I believe that having a more flexible working arrangement can actually help increase productivity because employees will be happier and will be justly rewarded based on their outputs.

Exercise 2 (5 mins): Write from the opposite stance

Flexible working arrangements

I believe that the decision of some industries and sectors to move toward more flexible working arrangements is a step in the wrong direction and will impact productivity.

I believe that more flexible working arrangements don't necessarily promote work-life balance because people are naturally prone to abuse such a system and will always, given a choice, choose their personal life over work when no one is watching. It can't achieve true work-life balance.

This type of arrangement can't work everywhere, especially in societies whose work culture isn't as mature as those in Europe and North America. Some countries, industries or sectors are simply not ready for it. And not all roles lend themselves well to such an arrangement. This system is bound to be abused and in the end, employers will suffer.

I believe that employees are obliged to deliver and perform according to their employers' expectations.

I believe that those who want more time freedom can choose to be freelancers or consultants and shouldn't expect to enjoy the same perks when they are salaried employees with full benefits. Something's got to give.

Exercise 3 (5 mins): Write a monologue in such a way that the arguments you wrote in exercises 1 and 2 seem to be debating against each other

So I heard today that the new Chief Operating Officer will start implementing stricter regulations against working remotely. Such bullshit. What kind of archaic thinking is this? Doesn't he realize that we aren't factory workers chained to our seats in front of a conveyor belt? Sitting in the office for eight hours straight doesn't necessarily equate to productivity. I'm personally more productive

working remotely because I'm self-motivated and results oriented. I just need to understand what's expected of me and I can certainly deliver regardless of where I am. Senior management shouldn't care whether I'm doing my work in my pyjamas, upside down as long as I deliver.

I understand though that not everyone works like me. There are certainly those who need to be surrounded by people, to get instant feedback, and to be supervised. It's not for everyone. There are also those who will abuse flexible working arrangements. I think this is what the new COO is concerned about. He wants to ensure that no one is taking advantage of the system.

But there are many ways to address his concerns. If line managers and staff have clear deliverables, key performance indicators, and rigorous policies and guidelines, where or how the staff works is irrelevant. System abuse can happen in any set up. Even staff who come to the office every single day can easily abuse company time, costing the company even more resources. So it's really not a problem of the working arrangements, but how staff are indoctrinated into the company's culture.

It's important for companies to focus on employee welfare and look into ways to nurture a healthy working environment. Because happy employees mean better productivity.

In the end, I think there should be different options for employees because there's no one-size-fits-all solution to this issue. But options should be given nonetheless.

Exercise 4 (5 mins): Write a two-character scene. Put an object that the two characters will talk about in the scene.

EXT. SIDEWALK. DAY.

The scene opens to a sidewalk where two women, RICA and NANCY are sharing one stick of CIGARETTE.

Nancy takes the first puff.

RICA

Nabasa mo ba yung announcement ng bagong COO? Lecheng tukmol na yun.

Nancy exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Rica who in turn takes a puff.

NANCY

Nabasa ko kanina, parang naghihigpit na talaga sila sa flexi time.

Rica exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Nancy.

RICA

Bwisit diba? Bakit naman niya naisip yon eh sales naman tayo. Di tayo factory workers noh! Tanga ba siya?

Nancy exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Rica.

NANCY

Baka naman kasi madami nang umaabuso sa flexi time – as if working pero naglalakwatsa lang pala sa mall.

Rica exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Nancy.

RICA

Ganon? Ano, lahat nalang ng galaw natin dapat i-report sa kanya? Ulol ba siya?

Nancy exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Rica.

NANCY

Eh kasi naman, aminin mo, marami din sa team natin ang missing in action – di naman nagtatrabaho talaga.

Rica exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Nancy.

RICA

Well, iba ako, dedicated yata ako sa trabaho! Dapat output natin ang basehan, hindi attendance! Diyos ko, parang back to school naman tayo nito! Shet talaga.

Nancy exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Rica.

NANCY

I agree, dapat nga output based talaga. Pero di kasi lahat ng tao katulad natin na masipag. Yung iba diyan abusado talaga. Siguro may mga nahuli na yung bagong COO na yun.

Rica exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Nancy.

RICA

So dahil sa mga tamad na yon pati tayo damay? Shet sila!

Nancy exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Rica.

NANCY

Ganun na nga siguro. Well, that's corporate life for you.

Rica exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Nancy.

RICA

Mga abusado kasi! Ang oras ng trabaho ay para sa trabaho lang!

Nancy exhales smoke then passes on the cigarette to Rica.

NANCY

Tama ka dyan. Anyway, tara baka ma late tayo sa sine.

Rica exhales smoke then throws the cigarette butt on the pavement and crushes it with her foot.

RICA

Tara girl. Baka may mahuli pa tayo dito ng mga taga opisina natin.

END SCENE