Research conducted prior to the creation of new protocol for virtual operation

**Virtual communication fundamentals**

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# Abstract

In this report, we have been trying to develop various strategies for enhancing cyber safety and communication practices within the virtual environments of our organization, which we have been recently moved on it. Discover secure and effective protocols for virtual collaboration and to establish a framework for their implementation are our primary goals. The research findings will cover critical areas those require our employees’ attention while securing their virtual accounts, handling sensitive data, performing network connections, and running web conferences. Furthermore, we are aiming to enrich our organizational policies by these findings after updating our practices and protocols accordingly.

## Introduction

Virtual environments have recently become as pivotal platforms for conducting our organization’s operations. Simultaneously, there has been a similar trend in the other companies, with every company dedicating more attention to remote work and digital collaboration. These environments are characterized by unique challenges along with their features, particularly in maintaining secure communication channels and safeguarding sensitive information. Our organization, planning to become increasingly dependent on virtual tools for team collaboration, where it needs to prioritize the quality and compliance of our cyber safety and communication protocols.

## Research Methodology

I do believe we need to use a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research strategies based on the given scenario and outlined objectives. To find an understanding of practices and techniques, sometimes interviews (as an example) can enable us with in-depth insights into industry cyber safety practices and communication techniques used by experienced staff, those sometimes cannot be found in other resources. These interviews will further lead us to identification of trends, such as challenges we may face in virtual collaboration and the needs for implementing extra addons or features to operate in more efficient manner. Moreover, employees from different companies we may affiliate with can also share valuable experiences and suggestions on virtual communication and collaboration those gained based on their experience in their company operations or those gained during operations between our company and their company, ensuring that our protocols are user friendly and will meet our users’ needs. For quantitative research methods, we can collect information by surveys and data analysis, which can provide us with measurable outcomes and statistical evidence requested.

## Analysis

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| Analysing and Synthesising Research Data  Virtual communication fundamentals | |
| Steps | Analysis and Synthesis |
| 1. Review research objectives | We are tasked with researching cyber safety and communication usual tips to identify the latest of them for virtual environments. Our aim is to find an understanding of effective communication methods between teams in these settings in virtual environment. Therefore, our objectives must adhere to several defined criteria, including currency, reliability, measurable outcomes, and compliance with accepted industry standards. Throughout our research and data collection, we will compile our findings to establish both a Cyber Safety Protocol and a Virtual Meeting Protocol. |
| 1. Review research data organisation (e.g., themes, categories) | I have been developing a template to organize the data collected. Using this template, I believe I can utilize it to enhance our efficiency for categorization where we will be enabled to perform analysis on our data. My template is featuring two tables, each one containing different topic of our research, each containing 10 columns: Source Title, Author(s), Publication Date, Publisher/Journal Name, Link, Type of Source, Relevance to Research, Notes/Observations, and Citation. I do believe that this structured approach is going to be helpful when dealing with the fundamental principles of virtual communication found in our data, ensuring about their clarity. |
| 1. Discover patterns, themes, trends and practices | When we had all of the data collected analysed, we had some expected patterns revealed. After observing these patterns, we can realize that they offer that there is a potential to contribute to enhancing of our virtual communication practices’ theme. Throughout this analysis, we also were able to identify trends. Below I have listed summary:  **Key Patterns and Themes**   1. Emphasis on Hybrid Work Models**:** There has been a trend towards hybrid work arrangements, which is evident, with a notable preference among employees (47%) for a blend of remote and in-office settings even after pandemic. Organizations are encouraged to work on the flexible work policies they have got to again allow talent to show up and enhance employee satisfaction along with their efficiency. When we provide them a secure area and the way they securely access devices and accounts for virtual communication, there will be no concerns anymore. 2. Importance of Technology in Communication: As mentioned before, when a company rely on digital tools, it is obvious that their communication methods will be transformed, making them operate in more efficient and convenient manner. It is not only their communication skilled which will be benefited, but they will also learn about keeping themselves, employees, employers and clients safe in a way which has just enabled by virtual communication. I do believe that our employees will have more safe mental environment when they learn how to handle their usual concerns about passwords creation and maintenance with password management tools, giving their mind more peace for allocating time on higher priority stuffs. 3. Need for Relationship Building**:** In our data, we found that we need to systemically import teamwork culture to operations as a vital component of successful virtual collaboration. As we found, there should have social events being held outside of work hours, in order to get staff engaged and built working relations. In this way, we can foster a sense of belonging among them. This may need more psychological research to integrate it with our practices. 4. Balancing Tasks and Relationships**:** After analysis, we found that reaching a point where we have efficient virtual collaboration, is only possible by adjusting a balance between managing tasks and fostering interpersonal connections. So, we know that, the company is always encouraged to concentrate on both, maintaining best practices and also keep environment a place for employees growth. 5. Enhancement of Communication Skills**:** In patterns, we found that strong communication skills employees may have had in in person, may come handy for effective virtual teamwork. But, it is easy to understand that when employees communicate behind the their devices, they may face their own communicational barriers, and this can be different based on age and other similar factors. I think we can allocate on-going training based on a model found called LACE model standing for Listen, Ask, Challenge and Establish Accountability. This will help us having better interactions, and observations we have usually on surroundings, which will further possibly lead to prevention of social engineering during virtual communication ( if training being provided in appropriate way. 6. **Challenges in Virtual Collaboration:** Key challenges like building trust and managing time zones still persist in remote environments. Structured check-ins, project management tools for transparency, and regular data backups are essential strategies to mitigate these challenges, ensuring effective collaboration while maintaining device security. 7. **Focus on Engagement and Participation:** There’s a growing trend towards making virtual meetings more engaging. Utilizing polling, breakout rooms, and interactive content can enhance involvement, reinforcing our guidelines on secure web conferencing practices that prioritize user privacy and legal requirements. 8. **Best Practices for Virtual Meetings:** Effective meetings in remote settings are crucial. Following set agendas, minimizing attendees, and utilizing reliable technology are essential strategies that echo our findings on safeguarding communication channels, particularly during web conferencing. 9. **Tracking Results Rather Than Time:** The movement towards focusing on deliverables rather than traditional time-tracking is evident. Managers should set clear goals, emphasizing outcomes over hours worked while aligning this approach with our established guidelines on securing access and data integrity in remote communications. 10. **Creating Structured Communication Plans:** Clarity in virtual communication processes helps prevent misunderstandings. Developing a structured communication plan that designates appropriate tools for specific scenarios complements the recommendations for network security, including secure connection practices to mitigate risks in remote work scenarios. |
| 1. Summarise findings and recommendations | We were able to make key decisions regarding enhancement of virtual communication, based on the data we collected. Communication was highlighted as an element which can affect account security also. As a result, we decided not only focusing on multi-factor authentication but also make employees being able to safeguard their security while communicating. We also recognized the importance of importing best communications into our practices by using collected industry standards in our data, assuring that employees adhere to essential guidelines for safe communication.  The data also highlighted the need to holding ongoing training sessions to learn about these practices.  These practices will help us having a framework for our communication, ensuring that all communication between employees or stakeholders will remains safe. |
| 1. Share and distribute findings | In order to share it within the organization, I do believe that we first need to review the if there are existing conversation policies or code of practices in this organization, using which we can ensure compliant of our new one with any specific requirements or protocols we may have missed. Based on the discoveries, I can now establish a communication plan as a foundation for all of future communication among employees where they can find clear guidelines and best practices for communication. This hopefully can be presented along with ongoing training sessions during their work and learning materials in learning models. I need to discover internal channels such as email, the company intranet or the company’s Model learning platform. Additionally, we may need some daily or weekly basis reminders along with updates which are necessary to be sent to them ( in order to keep them updated), and lastly a feedback mechanism will be necessary when it comes to addressing future questions and concerns. Using mentioned process, I can assure that all employees are aware of these practises while operating remotely and obey to the updated communication protocols. |
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## Discussion

## At the end of the research, we have got findings those are emphasizing the critical role of a cyber policy and procedure in order to securing communications prior to implementing a virtual area. We also learned how these protocols need to be written and followed later. Cybersecurity needs to be considered before starting operations in virtual environments, especially where personal and professional data are exchanged regularly. This research enables us with some basic security measures those can aid us in reducing risks while supporting a safe communication system.

## Additionally, the findings highlight how mentioned standard security can help us in boosting the overall virtual system. These practices are found to be simple but proved to be effective when implemented in regular practices. I do believe that, if we provide excellent training and clear instructions both before work and ongoing, organizations can assure about employees understanding and performances.

## Moreover, we also placed emphasis on the role of awareness, particularly in discovering cyber threats like phishing and scams during operations by employees. Having employees educated regarding these dangers, risks of being affected will be reduced. While in this study focused mostly on establishing basic security practices while implementing and operating virtual environments, it also enabled us with a new opened door for further research. This productive research can potentially lead to future works where we explore on needs of implementing new technologies.

Our study is concluding that a series of effective cyber safety protocols in addition to secure operational policies are required to implemented, prior to starting safe operations in virtual environments. By implementing these practices, raising awareness, and using reliable technologies, organizations can then begin moving to virtual environment.

## Recommendation

* **Formalize Security Protocols:** Establish clear, documented guidelines focusing on securing accounts, devices, and networks while operating on virtual environments configured based on the cybersecurity frameworks we found.
* **Training and Awareness:** Provide regular training sessions to enhance understanding of cybersecurity practices. After a while, we can see that this will become more like a culture.
* **Leverage Technology:** Use tools like password managers and secure web conferencing platforms for added protection. We need to find the trusted ones and perform real time monitoring on their performances and usage of employees.
* Enhance Employee Engagement and Participation
* Inviting employees to have social engagement through events and feedbacks for practices or policies associated to their department.
* **Communication Plan:** Utilize internal channels such as email or intranet for updates and feedback to address any concerns.
* **Periodic Reviews:** Regularly evaluate and update protocols to ensure they remain aligned with industry developments. Don’t forget to perform further research if no more compliant found, in this way we can assure about innovation also as it needs to be updated based on the new trends.