

Working from home productivity statistics

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With the world discovering alternative ways to work without human contact, the work from home force is getting a makeover. Companies must cope with most non-essential workers completing their work at home. Amidst a pandemic, could your productivity working from home actually be better? This is the decision that executives need to make.

Several studies over the past few months show productivity while working remotely from home is better than working in an office setting. On average, those who work from home spend 10 minutes less a day being unproductive, work one more day a week, and are 47% more productive.

In a work week, those who work at home are more consistent, work more hours, and get more done. Right away, this doesn't sound right. How can you be more focused while working at home? Find out how professionals manage to get more done on flexible work arrangements, not in an office setting.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic

Letting employees work from home has been the fear of plenty of companies because they believe they will be less productive. This isn't entirely wrong. At home, it's easy to get distracted, procrastinate, or put in less work than those working in the office.

In 2019, a study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 24% of people that were employed did some or all of their work at home on days they worked, and 82% of people that were employed did some or all of their work at their workplace

A study conducted in 2012 shows those office workers who were assigned boring tasks performed better and faster in the regular office setting. Home-life distractions are more likely to prevent productive work when you don't enjoy the work.

But this study found more productive results when the work was more creative. In short, the fewer restraints put on a task, the quicker it will be completed.

The same study also shows an entire "office" will underperform if they each work from home. Each individual will put in the same amount of work as the next. Meaning, no individual wants to put in more work and let the others ride their coattails.

Another more recent study states that the more hours an individual works from home, the less productive they become. Those who worked full time (8 hours/day) at home are 70% less productive than those who don't work from home.

An analysis of the data issued by the US Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labour Statistics showed that 4.7 million people, which make about 3.4% of the US workforce, were already working remotely before the novel coronavirus took the world by storm. This was up by 1% or 0.8 million from 2015.

A global survey conducted by Gartner, Inc. found that 88% of business organization all over the world mandated or encouraged all their employees to work from home as the virus started to spread at exponential rates. Furthermore, about 97% of the organizations immediately cancelled all work-related travel.

In total, more people work from home at least occasionally than those who don't at all.

Generally, this will look different for different companies and roles. For some, it might mean working overtime on weekends or at night. In other cases, remote work might be a part of the weekly routine.

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Arguably, one of the most common concerns is remote worker productivity. And who can blame employers for worrying when distractions like Netflix and Youtube are just one click away?

Who would have thought that working from home can increase your productivity? Well, the proof is in the pudding, or in the numbers in this case. 77% of people working remotely claim to work more productively.

Participants in an Airtasker survey indicated that taking regular breaks was the most effective tool for productivity. So if you need to work from home, make sure that you incorporate time for a breather in your routine.

What are the benefits and shortfalls of remote working?

According to Statista, 53% of U.S. telecommuters view flexible scheduling as the top benefit. And it's difficult to argue with them. Remote workers in the UK, Canada, and Australia all agree that flexible schedules allow them to adapt their work to their family and home life. On top of this, it gives them the opportunity to work when they are feeling at their best.

According to Owl Labs, U.S. companies that allow remote working have a 25% lower employee turnover rate. All in all, these stats suggest that working remotely from home can significantly improve employee well-being and satisfaction. In the end, happy workers are better workers.

But productivity aside, offering remote work can be a great selling point for your company. Unsurprisingly, this also means that employees want to stick around for longer.

Yet, it can't all be a bed of roses. There must be some thorns hidden among the flowers, right?

Results by Think with Google, 2020 has seen a 9% increase in Google search interest related to "team-

building”. It seems that employees working from home are struggling to adapt to working in teams while working long distance. No surprise there. But this is something you need to be aware of if you want to make working from home your thing.

However, there is an upside to this, as well. It shows that businesses are taking the well-being of their teams to heart and are also gearing up to make remote work successful in the long run.

According to Buffer, 19% of remote employees report loneliness as their biggest challenge. Unfortunately, a lack of face-to-face communication seems to leave many remote workers dissatisfied. Loneliness appears to be one of the significant issues that they need to deal with.

If this goes on too long, it can cause a significant decrease in people’s psychological and emotional well-being. Luckily, there are hundreds of solutions out there to solve this issue. From virtual office parties to organizing face-to-face meetups, you can find a way to fulfil your team’s social needs.

OpenVPN suggests that, 54% of IT professionals think that remote workers are a greater security risk. As soon as workers are not on-site, it becomes much more difficult to have control over the organization’s security infrastructure. Companies need to take steps to prevent data leaks and similar issues.

According to Buffer, 20% of remote workers identify communication as an obstacle. Not having a centralized office can make simple communication between employees far more challenging. If this overlaps with the issues seen from the remote work isolation statistics above, there is cause for concern.

How can employers plan for remote working?

1. Stay connected digitally. Thankfully, several digital resources help in-house teams, and remote workers stay connected. This includes anything from communication and meeting software to chat programs. When teams can sync up quickly, even if they are in a different location, it fosters a sense of unity.
2. Invest in a productivity app. Investing in a productivity app goes hand-in-hand with hiring remote workers. This is especially true if you have remote workers all over the globe. A tool like Trello, Asana, or CoSchedule will help bring your teams together and keep everyone current on projects. It doesn’t matter who is working on a project, or where they are located, if you have one central platform for work, you’ll collaborate better.
3. Meet up in person. Some companies only hire remote workers, but that doesn’t mean they don’t get together. With all the money you are saving on real estate, consider bringing your team together once a year.

In a nutshell, remote work is on the rise, and it’s with good reason. From the statistics reported above, it’s clear that remote work is an excellent option for both employees and employers.

Employees save time from commuting, get more work done, feel happier with their employment situation, and improve their work-life balance.

Employers save money, have a happier workforce, and see increased productivity rates.

Remote work means everyone wins.

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