



HORIZONS

Work Ethics for a Post Pandemic World



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C

ovid-19 has clearly upended some established norms and lifestyles of the society. In fact, this pandemic in the past 18 months has forced us into a novel social experiment. Many of us have been witnessing such an experiment on a massive global scale; none like anything before. While aspects like physical distancing, mass vaccination, face masks, etc. are important aspects as countermeasures to this pandemic, these are leading to important social changes.

An important social change which may be accepted and will get to stay here is “work from home”, at least in some sections of the workplace.

Covid-19 and Work Ethic

Covid-19 has clearly put greater emphasis on work ethic, efficiency, productivity, and the recognition of work as a vocation. While there are so many ill effects of Covid-19, emphasis on society, strong feeling for contribution for greater good, and more importantly a willingness to listen and follow good directives are some positive highlights. All these good attributes will lead to the betterment of the society.

"Work ethic in an organization may be as basic as having a personal value system with characteristics such as integrity, honesty, fairness, while for others it may be an intrinsic commitment to delivering work product with the highest standard of excellence. Employees with these characteristics are the backbone of an organization providing a strong foundation to maintain and grow a productive and successful organization," stated Ms. Grace Hernandez, Vice President for Administration, Texas Tech University, USA.

The pandemic has shined the spotlight on strong work ethic. Frontline warriors who are exhibiting bravery and saving lives are role models of work ethic and sincerity. In the beginning of the pandemic during December 2019-February 2020 timeframe when the mode of the spreading of virus, and curing strategies were unclear, medical professionals over worked despite so many odds. We have seen many stories of how doctors, nurses, and medical professionals gave their lives and/or have had near death experience. These are true professionals who have exhibited a great way of life—important lesson for us given by Covid-19.

Good work ethic will build confidence in dealing with complex situations. Ms. Tammy Henricks of The Institute of Environmental



Team Spirit

In addition to individual work aptitude, the most valuable characteristic that is shining is team spirit, be it at a housing society level, or at city level, or at country and global levels. Virologists, epidemiologists, pulmonologists, public health experts are working collaboratively to save lives. Interestingly, experts in fields that are outside specialty live saving disciplines and unassuming areas such as textile materials and communication science are lending able and necessary support. In speaking about teamwork and leadership, Ms. Lori Gibler, Assistant Director at The Institute of Environmental and Human Health at Texas Tech University stated, "Team will make the organization successful knowing that their leader respects their team and their work. A leader needs to communicate the organization's mission to their team to make the workplace successful and be a facilitator."





Virtual Workplace

While there are surely positive outcomes in virtual workplace, such a work scenario may not be applicable for all manufacturing activities and fields. Information technology and events sector are major beneficiaries of the virtual workplace scenario. Although telemedicine has been practiced in a limited way before the pandemic this field has been growing. However, as this field involves physical examination, intense physician-patient interaction, face-to-face interaction will rightly have prominent place.

Other fields such as academia is benefitting due to virtual workplace. Over the past 18 months, world over academia from elementary school to university levels have utilized virtual environment efficiently. Sentiments



Lori Gibler



Tammy Henricks

from stakeholders have been mixed in the universal acceptance of virtual and hybrid modes of teaching in academia. Education is not a mere learning, rather it is a joyful experience and journey. After prolonged absence from being in academic campuses, interaction with real people, colleagues, and friends, there is a clear longing for face-to-face educational experience. While virtual teaching has a place, when safety can be achieved at full level, face-to-face academic experience will be again getting its preferred position.

Future academia will surely integrate and involve virtual platform enabling international collaborations, while in-person academic experience will have its prominence.

Future Workplace

In-person workplace cannot be avoided depending on the fields particularly in manufacturing, medicine, etc. Greater contribution of virtual workplace will be in fields such as IT, service sector and some aspects of the events sector. The developments in IT tools and familiarity with IT will lead to more open sourcing and sharing of information and knowledge. One important aspect that has evolved is the understanding on the importance of teamwork in daily workplace activities. Future workplace will demand not only field specific expertise, but also interdisciplinary and interpersonal skills.

“Employees should understand that as we navigate living in a time when there are global changes occurring at a much faster pace a successful organization must always be ready to evolve to remain relevant in the marketplace,” emphasized Grace Hernandez.

