

Digital Skills and Research Method (Assignment 2)

Does Working from Home Harm Your Career

Abstract

This report is created using a workplace topic called 'does working from home harm your career' along with evidence of range of research methodology e.g. secondary and primary. This report is created to show an understanding of effective and ethical data collection and interpretation.

Introduction

This report contains some of the pros and cons of working from home to establish whether working from home really harms individuals career or does it provide with opportunity. Using the findings of pros, cons along with some secondary and primary resources I will highlight whether the idea of working from home is supported or not. When working from home there are many pros and cons individuals need to consider before going forward with the idea. Being able to accurately identify the pro and cons of working from home is a vital step, before setting up an office at home in order to see which way the scale weighs more. Lastly within this report I will also include my own opinion about working from home.

Pros of working from home

No commute: working from home means you don't have to take a long commute to and from work. This will allow an individual to save some time and money, as well as help minimise individuals daily stress level. No commute will help the environment by "going green" (Cambridge Network, 2017) and avoid problems associated with bad weather.

Better flexibility: working from home allows individuals to work at their own pace and chosen times when they are most productive, as well as being able to create workflow which works best for them. It also means you have more flexibility and freedom of choice when it comes to dressing up, as you are free to wear what ever you like e.g. short and T-shirt or just stay in your pyjamas.

Reduced distractions: distractions at home can be easily managed and kept under control. On the other hand distractions at work place is quite hard to manage and keep under control, as coworkers, employers and other office based noise may disturb individuals very easily, which can lead to delay or time consumption.

Less stressful day: stress can be managed more effectively when working from home, as you are able to take breaks and walk away for sometimes when it gets too stressful or tiring. This allows individuals to manage stress better or avoid it altogether.

Save money: Working from home allows you to avoid long commute expenses and save some money from there. Working from home also means you don't have to worry about money for meal time which can be quite expensive depending on the area or how remote the work place is. "You can also write off a portion of your home office expenses on your taxes when you work from home" (Gregory, A., 2016).

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Improved work and personal life balance: we all find our self struggling to juggle between work, personal or family life. By working from home we can provide some flexibility or improve and be able to better manage by finding an balance between the two.

Opportunity: majority of us wouldn't agree or opt for the option of working from home but, working from home maybe the only option or choice which some individuals are left with. The individuals who may have struggling situation like being an single parent or individuals with minor disabilities and young careers will consider working from home as an opportunity to be more self dependent. Opportunity's like working from home can provide struggling individuals with extra confidence, financial stability and security. overall all of this can provide better living and feelings of success.

Reduce overhead: "Reduced overheads: Lower rent, business rates and utility bills when office space is decreased after staff move out to work from home. Or, if a business is running out or short of office space, it might negotiate an arrangement where certain categories of staff can work from home" (Cambridge Network,2017).

Cons of working from home

Before going forward with the idea of working from home potential individuals should most certainly consider the cons of working from home and make the judgment of whether it's worth the risk or not. Choosing to work from home is like taking a big risk as it can go either way good or bad.

Self discipline: working from home means there is a great chance in lack of motivations or lack of discipline in regards to getting up on time e.g. 7-8am. Lack of self discipline can lead to poor effectiveness and delay. The negative affects of lack of self discipline can be avoided if self discipline is strictly followed and applied accordingly/ correctly.

Loneliness: working from home can lead to isolation and loneliness. This is because you want have access to fellow colleagues and coworkers. Loneliness can lead to poor motivation and very little progress or effectivity.

Overwork: you may find yourself overworking as "there can be less distraction between work and personal life when you work from home" (Gregory.A,2016). You may find yourself getting back to work after sending kids to bed and working through the night to meet deadlines. This is sign of overworking and poor self-discipline. To avoid overworking have your day scheduled, fit in time for work and make sure your up to date with work.

Lose of space: working from home means finding office space at home which can take up quite a lot of space or sometimes the full room depending on your job type or how much paper and filling work is associated with it. Office space at home will lead to reduced living space and overcrowding if the space isn't managed properly and kept tidy.

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Poor relationships: it can be quite tough to develop trustworthy relationships with colleagues, employer and clients when there is a lack of face-to-face communication. Face-to-face communication is vital as non verbal communication can convey a huge amount of message to others or individuals. For example your facial expression can portray what you are saying to others e.g. happy, sad or nervous facial expression will send of an message to whom your communicating with. "We actually communicate far more information using non-verbal communication. This includes non-verbal signals, gestures, facial expressions, body language, tone of voice and even our appearance" (SkillsYouNeed, 2011-2018).

Less ad hoc learning: working from home will mean you cannot gain knowledge and understanding from your peers. This means you will need to try harder and put in "extra efforts to seek out networking and learning opportunities on your own" (Gregory.A,2016). Working from home will also mean you cannot be reassured or cross check with fellow coworkers of what you have produced.

Equipments: when you considering working from home, one of the factor to consider is whether there is any need of equipments associated with your job role and if the equipments are available to you. It could be simple equipments like a PC, the question is are you happy to use your personal PC for work purposes and is it capable of running on high performance.

Miss opportunities: working from home may also mean missing out on "new project you might be interested in" (Richardson.B,2018). Missing out new projects can lead to being off track and lack of career development e.g. promotion etc. Your boss cannot monitor your efforts and inputs which makes it harder for you to creat an impression and develop your career.

Lack of career choice: working from home may limit your choice of jobs as there may not many jobs which can be carried out from home or away from the workplace environment. For example if you're an teacher or lecturer sometimes it may be considerable to work from home with the use of video call, but on the other hand not many institutions will agree with the idea as face-to-face communication is highly sought after.

Lack of understanding of background and belief etc: working from home will reduce or stop your knowledge and understanding of others beliefs, background or their cultural. This can lead to poor communication with the diverse community, as you may not feel confident enough to approach or communicate with individuals whom may have different religious beliefs or practice things accordingly to their culture and the background they come from.

BBC Report on Working from Home

According to the report carried out by Eric Barton for BBC " Working from home may actually harm your career" (Barton.E,2017). In this report Eric Barton had gathered information and statistics from number of people and institutions who may have experienced working from home or applied it to their work environment.

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Eric Barton's report states that a research carried out by the university of Arizona showed "40% of employees who were working from home feel disconnected from the company's strategic direction" (Barton.E,2017). This means if your working or considering to work from home one of the disadvantages is feeling of disconnection, therefore you should try to connect your self as much as possible to the company's strategic direction because it's very easy to feel disconnected.

On the other hand according to the same report carried out by Eric Barton, one of the benefits of working from home according to research is "it generally increases happiness and productivity" (Barton.E,2017). Although there are many disadvantages and advantages of working from home, it is important to find a balance between the two and see which one suits your needs more.

The Law of the UK allows workers to "ask for more flex time and companies across the globe are using work-at home policies as a way of recruit" (Barton.E,2017) this comes to show that working from home is supported by employers and government law is helping those ideas without completely ignoring or avoiding it.

Esther Canonico is a member with the London school of Economics Department of Management. Esther recently published study of 514 workers, who according to the study working from home or with flexibility "didn't receive any training or guidance in how to pull off the transition" (Barton.E,2017). This comes to show that working from home is still underdeveloped and not fully supported and there is not a proper structure present in order to fully support the transition.

Campbell the winner of 2005 BBC ONE show **The Apprentice** gave advice to other businesses on how to go through transition of flexible schedules or work from home. This was also one of his move for his own company 2 years ago. The firm Campbell work in has 3,500 employees and of those 10% work from home and this doesn't always go smoothly. Campbell also says " we talk about how much more productive worker can be, but we ignore the steps it takes to get there" (Barton.E,2017). This shows that Campbell and the company he works in is open to the idea of working from home but is lacking in some kind structured process which the company could have in order to make it a pleasant experience for both the employer and employees.

My findings about working from home

I had carried out a simple question to 15 members of my family and friends to gather their view points on working from home. According to the findings below were able to see that majority agree to the fact that career can be harmed by working from home and some of them disagree, while others think its an opportunity and not sure about it

Question: does working from home harm individuals career?

Possible answers: Agree, Disagree, Not Sure, Opportunity (for those who consider working from home as an good opportunity).

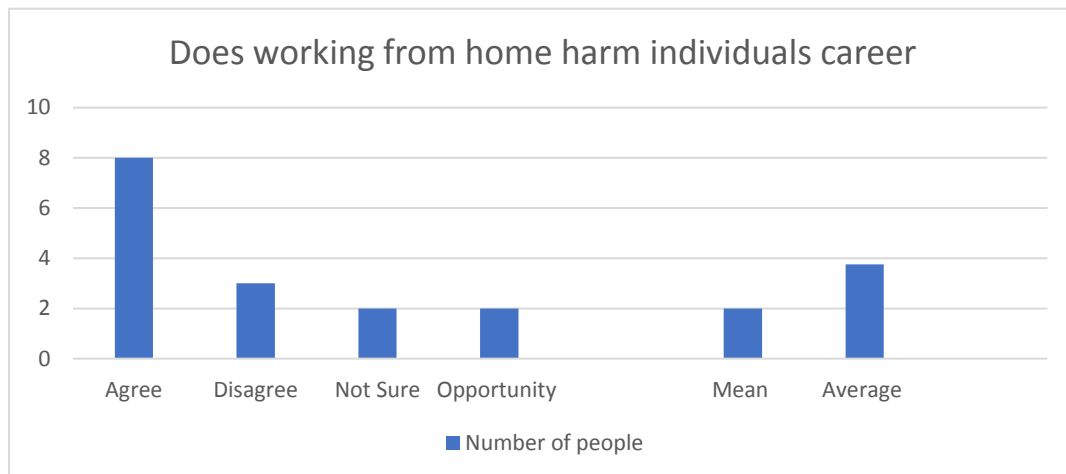
8 people: agree

3 people: disagree

2 people: opportunity

2 person: not sure

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Conclusion

I have come to the understanding that working from home has many advantages and disadvantages but it doesn't completely harm one's career. For many individuals working from home is an opportunity to be more independent and financially stable with flexibility. In my understanding working from home is a 50-50 chance of harming your career as it can go either way good or bad.

Reference

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