LIBRARY LINK
Post COVID-19 Workplace

Post Covid-19 Workplace Newsletter

This biweekly newsletter brings together ideas and opinions from multiple sources on relevant post-Covid topics. This issue features the effectiveness of teleworking, how companies and institutions are enforcing health and safety for employees returning to the workplace, and new temperature checking technologies. We hope you find it useful.

Contents

Effectiveness of Telework

1. COVID-19 and the Virtualization of Government (Deloitte, April 28, 2020)

The disruption over the past month has been real, and in many cases, the response has been fast. But once the pandemic is over, the transition from remote back to the physical office won't be easy either— and not just because of the potential for ongoing social distancing measures in the months to come. In March, when the US Social Security Administration enacted the second phase of a program to close a decades-old telework program and reintegrate employees into full-time, office-based work, employees resisted the change more than expected. They had simply grown comfortable, and happy, working from home. Read more...

2. Do People Really Get More Work Done at Home? (The Boston Globe via Factiva, May 20, 2020)

The work-from-home lifestyle eliminates the need for a necktie, uncomfortable shoes, and a stressful commute. It nixes those meetings that you get dragged into because you happened to be looking un-busy at the wrong moment. For companies, it could save millions of dollars on office rents. But is it the future for every white-collar company? I wanted to understand what the latest research says about the merits — and the challenges — of working from home. (Full report requires a Factiva login, please go to http://Factiva for access instructions.) Read more...

3. Employee Productivity Proves Remarkably Resilient in the Face of COVID-19, Willis Towers Watson Survey Finds (Willis Towers Watson, May 5, 2020)

A surge in remote working, supported by innovative technology, means many companies have maintained employee productivity, despite the pandemic's profound impact on the workplace. Read more...

4. The Productivity Pitfalls of Working from Home in the Age of COVID-19 (Stanford News, March 30, 2020)

The global work-from-home movement intended to maintain output and efficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic could actually generate a worldwide productivity slump and threaten economic growth for many years, says Stanford economist Nicholas Bloom. Read more...

5. Does Working from Home Work? Evidence from a Chinese Experiment (Quarterly Journal of Economics, February 2015)
A rising share of employees now regularly engage in working from home (WFH), but there are concerns this can lead to "shirking from home." We report the results of a WFH experiment at Ctrip, a 16,000-employee, NASDAQ-listed Chinese travel agency. Call center employees who volunteered to WFH were randomly assigned either to work from home or in the office for nine months. Home working led to a 13% performance increase, of which 9% was from working more minutes per shift (fewer breaks and sick days) and 4% from more calls per minute (attributed to a quieter and more convenient working environment). Home workers also reported improved work satisfaction, and their attrition rate halved, but their promotion rate conditional on performance fell. Due to the success of the experiment, Ctrip rolled out the option to WFH to the whole firm and allowed the experimental employees to reselect between the home and office. Interestingly, over half of them switched, which led to the gains from WFH almost doubling to 22%. This highlights the benefits of learning and selection effects when adopting modern management practices like WFH. Read more...

Health and Safety Enforcement

1. As States Reopen, the Boss Wants to Know What You're Up To This Weekend (Wall Street Journal, May 28, 2020)
Companies have a new question for employees: Any plans this weekend? Some companies are concerned that the many safeguards put in place at work to limit the spread of the coronavirus—from policies requiring masks on the job to separated desks—could be undone if workers are taking risks off the job. (Full report requires a WSJ login, please go to http://Factiva for access instructions.) Read more...

2. The CEO's Guide to Safely Reopening the Workplace (MIT Technology Review, May 28, 2020)
Until there's a treatment or vaccine for Covid-19, public health will depend heavily on decisions by business leaders. Technology and systematic thinking can help. Read more...

3. Don't Stand So Close to Me: AI Cameras Police Social Distancing at Work (Wall Street Journal, May 15, 2020)
People-counting cameras, also known as artificial-intelligence-powered sensors, have become a niche tool in recent years to help companies better use their office space, and in some cases trim real-estate costs. They are now being repurposed to meet a surge in demand from employers eager to comply with government guidelines on social distancing because of the coronavirus pandemic. However, that versatility is also a concern for privacy advocates, who worry the technology could be changed again to track individuals and monitor productivity. (Full report requires a WSJ login, please go to http://Factiva for access instructions.) Read more...

4. A Guide to Employee Temperature Checks (Society for Human Resource Management, April 30, 2020)
The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) gave employers the green light to take employees' temperatures to try and ward off the spread of the coronavirus in guidance updated March 18. But will taking temperatures really work? Read more...

Temperature Checking Technology

1. Ergotron's New Thermal Imaging Cart Supports a Healthier, Safer Return to Work (Business Wire, May 28, 2020)

Ergotron, a global movement company that builds environments that help people thrive, announced the launch of its Thermal Imaging Cart with Onboard Power designed to quickly detect a temperature in spaces where groups of people gather. As employers slowly start to bring their teams back to work, businesses gradually begin to reopen, and educators weigh their options for the upcoming school year, safeguarding public health is a top priority. Thermal imaging technology brings body temperature measurement wherever it's needed to support efforts to maintain healthy communities. Read more...

2. Temperature Checks and Desk Shields: C.D.C. Suggests Big Changes to Offices (New York Times via Factiva, May 28, 2020)

If followed, the guidelines would transform the everyday experience of employees across the country, from executives to clerical workers. Upon arriving at work, employees should get a temperature and symptom check. Inside the office, desks should be six feet apart. If that isn't possible, employers should consider erecting plastic shields around desks. Seating should be barred in common areas. And face coverings should be worn at all times.

These are among sweeping new recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the safest way for American employers to reopen their offices to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. (Full report requires a Factiva login, please go to http://Factiva for access instructions.) Read more...

3. Temperature Check Kiosks Ready to Tackle COVID-19 (Kiosk Marketplace via Factiva, May 27, 2020)

Necessity, according to the proverb, is the mother of invention. And while it may be an overstatement to say that COVID-19 created the need for temperature detection kiosks, it certainly fostered the fastest demand for temperature detection in combination with biometric identity verification as organizations scramble for ways to protect guests and employees from airborne pathogens and bacteria. (Full report requires a Factiva login, please go to http://Factiva for access instructions.) Read more...

4. Siemens Body Temperature Solution Minimizes Infection Risk in Buildings (Siemens, May 6, 2020

Siemens Smart Infrastructure announced the launch of Siveillance Thermal Shield. This solution package quickly measures the body temperature of a person seeking to access a building and enables the results to be integrated into the video and access systems of corporations. Thermal imaging cameras are used to measure, in a contactless way, the body temperature at a distance of up to two meters, ensuring the safety of monitoring staff. If the camera screening indicates an elevated body temperature, a second reading must be taken using a medical thermometer to confirm the finding. Read more...

Newsletter compiled by the Client Services Team of the IMF Library
For questions regarding the content and coverage please contact Sai Chinnaswamy or Thierry Kpehor

COPYRIGHT

LIBRARY
Corporate Services and Facilities

Visit the COVID-19 Research Guide for up-to-date analyses and data resources on the pandemic