



## Finally, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Office

By Monica Cain, CIP, ICP

The need to have so many people working from home and, the “not surprising to me” that, for the most part, has been so successful is a lesson that can provide great strides to the way we work. Allow me to expound on this theme.

Some of us (even boomers of which I am one) started proposing this distance working to promote both work/life balance as well as the economics for both the employee and the company as far back as the mid 1980's. Too many of the "old guard" were incapable of realizing that workers would actually work well and better from a home office so the value in this was never properly realized.

Now we are here, and employers are beginning to see the economic value in not paying for expensive space for employees. Having said that, there are, as always, more than one side to any coin. I started my own business in 2009 and have worked from home since then. I also, at various times during my corporate career convinced employers to allow work from home for short periods.

Production is great at home with fewer interruptions and the comfort of not needing to commute. Almost any business can gauge the production of an employee using technology and simply by measuring the work completed against expectations. There is no reason to visually watch employees. The minor cost of assisting staff to set up productive home offices is much lower than rent in most office spaces. Hours of work can also be arranged considering the lack of travel time. Once we get beyond the Covid 19 "lockdown" people may return to offices but, I will suggest that any minor cold or sniffles in these offices will be frowned on. This means that a cold that we used to just go to work with, will not be the new normal hence, more sick time. If workers are working from home, this sick time will be greatly reduced.

One of the issues that can be affected by a work-at-home office is the lack of teamwork and the feeling of belonging to a bigger working group. Some offices could operate with one day per week when a working group go to the office. It can be a different day for various work groups so that the amount of office space required is still reduced. I would recommend an excellent communication avenue to employees to keep in touch. Training can be live online with some small amount as in office requirements. There are many ways to keep employees connected and engaged. First step, employers, ask your employees what they need. They are the ones who will know.

This virus has given us the perfect opportunity to get into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There is great value here for both employers and employees. It is time to grab this opportunity and use it out everyone's advantage.

Although Insured Success is best known for insurance technical training I have almost half a century of knowledge on efficiencies in offices and on providing extraordinary customer service. Need help? Just drop me a not at [Monica@InsuredSuccess.com](mailto:Monica@InsuredSuccess.com) or feel free to call at 416-412-7336. I would be only too happy to help.



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