

## **Suddenly the home office is here: Trial run for future working models?**

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**Drinking a cup of coffee by yourself, going to the office in your pyjamas and taking a shower during your lunch break. Most of us imagine the home office to be simpler than it actually is. You suddenly find yourself sitting alone in the kitchen with your laptop, and missing a comfortable office chair to sit on and a chat with colleagues at the very least.**

The current corona crisis doesn't tolerate excuses anymore and is confronting many companies with the task of making mobile working possible. A large number of organisations still have a lot of catching up to do in terms of digitalisation. But many employees are now sitting at home on the couch with their work laptop on their knees, despairing of an overloaded cloud or a server that is much too slow.

**Virus protection: for people and PCs**

For this reason, many companies have sent their employees to their home office without further ado. Cyber criminals are having a field day, though, because the home network rarely offers the same security standards as the corporate system. To protect your PC as well as your company from virus attacks, installing a VPN - a Virtual Private Network - is imperative. To ensure an optimum workflow, the appropriate hardware and software must be available in addition to the VPN. The motivation to work will be extremely dampened if, for example, loading times are too long or files cannot be opened.

This of course creates an additional workload for the IT department, especially in a period of crisis of the kind we're currently experiencing. But although the time and effort involved is immense at the start, it definitely pays off in day-to-day operations.

### **Team meetings in pyjamas**

In the office, we're always exchanging information as we go about our business. This natural flow of information is missing in the home office. The best way to keep all employees up to date is to arrange feedback rounds via video conference. You should also make it clear which channels are to be used for communication. This way you avoid misunderstandings in communication and strengthen internal interaction despite physical distance. And as far as the pyjamas are concerned, though, they may go down well with colleagues, but they have no place in meetings with customers via video chat.

### **A home office trial run for the future?**

Alongside all the obstacles and fears that have overwhelmed us due to exit restrictions and health regulations, the sudden switch to a home office can also be seen as a trial run for future working models and crises. Draw up a checklist that answers questions such as the following:

- Which measures have proved successful?
- Where does technology still have room for improvement?
- What do you need as an employee to be able to work productively from home?
- How can communication be improved internally and with customers?

A feedback form for home office employees can also be helpful in optimising flexible working practices within the company and preparing for the future.

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Until then, stay at home and keep healthy.