

The Changing Nature of the Workplace

The workplace as it was once known has undergone several changes with recent years. This transformation has seen fundamental differences to the operations and standards that existed within the traditional workplace. Notwithstanding the differences that have emerged in these two key aspects of the day to day functioning of the workplace, it must be established that the transformation has seen the change out of the workplace from the accustomed dedicated office space. By no stretch of imagination should this be taken to mean that the traditional dedicated office space has become obsolete.

In the modern workplace, the office operations are not necessarily based in a single location. In some instances the employees in a company may not engage in person to person contact, but only communicate remotely. The workplace now loses much of the social interaction that once existed between employees. One would accept that the beauty of the traditional workplace, was that it brought people together. This laid the platform for teamwork and cooperation. For the trade union, it promoted the concept of collectivism over that of individualism. Where the modern day workplace operates in the realm of cyber space, this can negatively impact on efforts aimed at promoting collectivism, unity and solidarity amongst workers. For starters, it threatens the practice of collective bargaining which would normally exist within the workplace, where there is a 50+1 percent of the workers become unionized, so as to establish a collective bargaining unit.

There are some interesting things that are to be noted about the modern workplace. It brings together employees who may be working in various geographically locations. These employees are engaged as teams. They are required to work efficiently and to reach rigorous deadlines and timelines. The positive about this, is that productivity is high. These demands certainly remove the problems associated with malingering, time and wasting. From an employer's stand point, this is ideally what is required. On top of this, they enjoy the being in a position to easily replace workers who are not meeting the standards. Employers are able to exercise immense control. They have the luxury of engaging workers on short term contracts of employment. Whereby the pay and benefits to employees may initially appear attractive to employees, the long and short of the story, there are no longer guaranteed a job for life.

As has been established that modern day operates virtually. This means that there is the engagement of digitization, social media platforms and even robotics in the daily process. What stands out here is the bringing into existence the paperless operations. With the use of the technologies, the extensive use of filing systems stand to be replaced that of electronic filing. The overall significant change to the workplace is that it is more technologically driven than in the past where manual work was the order of the day. There is the school of thought that technology hasn't changed the end-goal as collaboration and communication still remain at the very heart of business. The view is that technology just allows us to do it differently in an effort to deliver on and to achieve the objectives set.

There is a downside to the coming on stream of the virtual office. The loss of some jobs is a number one issue. Looking at this in some detail, the change to a virtual office will have implications for the need for a number of services. Suppliers of office equipment and stationery, cleaning firms, security services providers, catering and utility services amongst others, all stand to lose or to have reduced business activities. When the analysis is completed, the biggest implication is the extent of the lost employment.

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that is a derivative of this development. For the most part, those who are at the lower income levels are the ones to be impacted. Those who have highly trained professionals are less likely to be impacted, as these people are marketable and can be easily reabsorb in the job market.

In the changeover from the traditional to the modern workplace, what remains a constant feature in that the success of the operations of the workplace, would be the part to be played by people as workers.