

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC

‘WFH means Do-It-All-Yourself’

The new work life

There are many positives – through video apps, we can call additional participants into a meeting in seconds. We can record meetings for posterity. Meetings can happen any time. Meetings start on time usually. I worked from home for a while, but now I’m back in office, full-time, every day. I got tired of WFH because it glues you to a screen. The in-person debate is always more effective – you can see the body language and the gestures. So I long for offices to be full again, but this time powered with video as a supplement for those who can’t be there.

Homebound, and how

During lockdown, with no house-help support, I was doing additional duties like cleaning dishes and mopping the floor. Some duties have spilled over even after lockdown was lifted. Yes, home and work get mixed up sometimes with

the odd errand and distractions. Specifically, I miss secretarial support. Things like printing an article, loading the printer that’s gone out of paper, loading cartridges, setting the Wi-Fi of the printer, stapling, filing, calling someone, prioritising.... WFH is not WFH, it is a Do-It-All-Yourself model. At the office, I just mumble something and an assistant gets it, so I move faster. Some habits have changed already. I don’t call colleagues on the phone any more, I video chat with them.

The lesson

You need discipline, a separate blocked-out area, while operating from home. At office, the ecosystem moves you with meetings after meetings. With WFH, you can get lazy if not careful, motivated and disciplined. With video, travel time is no longer a waste. We speak to large teams more often now, instead of hotel meetings once a quarter. We

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were stress-tested, which is a good thing – our VPN, BCP infra got put to test. I maintained my mental balance by being busy.

(As told to Pavan Lall)