

Covid-19: Is working from home really the new normal?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxDVucUZCnc>

WARM-UP DISCUSSION How did the Covid-19 pandemic affect your life at the time of its peak in your country? Have any of those changes and influences stretched beyond the period of the first wave or even turned out to be permanent?

VOCABULARY All of the words and expressions listed below appear in the video you're going to watch. Match the items from column A that are synonymous, or at least similar, to those in column B.

A

to make connections (with people at work)

a change

to emerge

to take advantage of sth

to lose a job

working from home

to mirror

(to happen) in the wake of sth

a role

to commute to work

a pronounced effect

B

remote working

to gather together in the office

a shift

to get benefit from sth

to rise

to reflect

profound/disproportionate impact

a position

to be laid off

to be caused by something

to network

COMPREHENSION Watch the video and prepare your answers to the following questions:

How has the proportion of American workers working from home changed due to the outbreak of Covid-19?

What kind of questions has the lockdown raised regarding the workplace?

When did the modern workplace emerge in the shape as we know it today?

Has the traditional office design changed much since the dawn of the Internet and email?

How do you understand the following term used in the video: "*an expensive artefact*" to describe the traditional office space?

What attitude towards remote working have tech companies developed in light of the current pandemic?

What kind of impact would a potential relocation of so-called 'knowledge jobs' to the home office have on the wider economy?

What's the relationship between a country's GDP (*gross domestic product*) and a the proportion of people working from home in that country?

Which group of workers has been most affected by the recession triggered by Covid-19? Who suffered the most in previous recessions?

How might women eventually benefit if working remotely becomes the norm for everyone?

What would we be likely to lose if we shut down all offices and switched to teleworking full-time instead?

WRITING

What's your take on the impact of Covid-19 on the workplace and company culture? How has it affected your own workplace? Do you think they will be long-lasting changes? Which of the changes would you like to stay for good in your organisation?