Flexible Working – Enabling IT To Support Your Business

If you are thinking about more permanently moving people to work from home or in more locations:

# Home networks come with some challenges:

## Support

* ISP is whoever your employee signed up with for the cheapest price and consumer support is worse.
* Firewall, network equipment, WiFi – it’s all great until it isn't! Who is going to fix it and how?
* Personal devices - who supports it? Difficult to control and impose standards. How will you do this?
* Who will go onsite to resolve issues? Is this possible? Lots of trying “talk people thought it”?
* Spare device. Often in the office there was a spare, or someone would be on holiday. What is the plan?

## Security

* Working on an insecure network - rogue operators are connecting insecure devices on your corporate network. I.e. your kids!
* Working on home computers that aren't locked down and protected?
* By-passing your web filtering and network protection systems
* VPN from a personal device is a big no

# Shadow IT

Business IT is the tools and systems we give to our staff to use to get their work done. If you don’t give people systems that work well for them, they will go and find their own systems. E.g. Dropbox, Google Drive. We call this Shadow IT. The danger is that:

* Where is your data? Can you control it now? If you don’t know where it is, you can’t protect it
* The more systems, the more complexity, the harder it is to manage
* What security is in place on it? Multi factor authentication? Password policy
* How is it being backed up?
* Getting it all back in the box is harder once it is out. Give people tools early. Feedback from your teams is essential

# Productivity

## Metrics and Accountability

What are the metrics you can use to manage the business? Do your previous methods work when you see people less? One of the many benefits of lockdown that it really makes us focus on how we measure success in terms or leading indicators, and how we maintain accountability.

## Manual Dashboards

Shared Excel sheets in Office 365 or G-Suite can be opened by many people simultaneously. This makes them great for accountability dashboards which people can keep open and update regularly. There is something powerful about doing this manually vs just using automated dashboards. It is the conscious use of the numbers to guide us that is important

## Getting at the Data – Automated Dashboards

Can you get the data out of your systems in a useful and timely way? A big weakness in many CRM, ERP type tools is in how easy it is to do this. Systems like PowerBI can help to generate dashboards of information automatically from your systems.

# Collaboration

## Tools and Culture

This is an easy one for us in IT to tell you all about. Just install Microsoft Teams and you are all set! But the reality is that can cause as many problems as it solved. So we need to line up your IT tools with your corporate culture and expectations for team members are clients.

## Availability and Boundaries

Easy for people to be "always available" now as always online, and a quick instant message or chat can derail a whole morning. There are less boundaries than ever on what is the start and end of the day.

* Make sure our calendars are up to date and shared with the right people inside our organisation
* Agree rules of engagement with you teams on when interrupts are allowed and when they are not.
* Use regular huddles each day where everyone can interrupt everyone else (and accountability). If you want to get someone's time outside of that, then you should ask via instant message before launching in
* Use scheduling tools like Microsoft Bookings, Calendly are great for allow someone outside your organisation to book time with you
* Find Time is great for when trying to find time with multiple people outside your organisation