Work and containment measures for **COVID-19**

Contributions from Work and Organizational Psychology in the pandemic context

VOLUME 1

Home office guidelines in the COVID-19 pandemic

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Presentation

Concerning the crisis caused by the pandemic COVID-19, several measures adopted by the authorities have affected people in general, but we have seen special impacts in the work context. Among them is the social distancing that has resulted in compulsory teleworking.

As an action to support workers, the Brazilian Association of Organizational and Work Psychology (SBPOT) developed guidance material which relied on the preparation of short and purposeful texts, prepared by professional researchers who are recognized experts in their field. The material produced by SBPOT involves three volumes that address themes and guidelines in the light of the categories of Organizational and Work Psychology.

Volume 1 is dedicated to the guidelines for the mandatory home office (distance work done at home), that is, the one that is being compulsorily carried out due to the pandemic COVID-19. The content covered in the texts comes from the results of long years of scientific research. Produced by 17 researchers, the objectives of the seven topics are presented below.

1. Home Office: The role of science, medical guidelines, and environmental precautions. Discusses the importance of scientific knowledge production for the analysis of critical situations such as those occurring during the pandemic of COVID-19; indicates the main care regarding the work environment seeking to protect the family, oneself and also to act responsibly and safely in the context of the pandemic.

2. Work Design and Learning in the Context of the Pandemic. Analyzes how the design of work can affect learning in the face of the new context of telework which emerges in an imposing way for many workers; indicates how previous research results could be useful for acquiring new skills in the pandemic context.

3. Job Performance: Challenges for Workers and Managers. Discusses the concept of performance in the context of compulsory teleworking, as well as the importance of managers in supporting and monitoring workers; analyzes the role of (self) control mechanisms and the establishment of a trust relationship to obtain positive results in the teleworking method.

4. Well-being and Occupational Stress in the context of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Analyzes compulsory teleworking as an element that affects occupational health; indicates, based on empirically tested theoretical models, strategies that can both positively affect well-being at work and provide support, in order for the individual to manage stress and avoid burnout.

5. Meaningfulness and meanings of home-office work: challenges for emotional regulation. Analyzes the meaning that work can assume in the telework situation imposed on the worker; proposes actions of emotional regulation to workers who are

dealing not only with sudden changes at work, but also with the social disruption imposed due to the pandemic.

6. Work-family reconciliation in compulsory teleworking. Analyzes compulsory teleworking as an element that interferes in family dynamics and, consequently, in the balance of the relationship between the worker and their family; proposes actions towards contributing to the reestablishment of a positive relationship in the telework environment, considering the overload inherent to the changes that were imposed.

7. Organizational adjustments and changes in times of the COVID-19 pandemic. Discusses the need for sudden adjustments caused by compulsory teleworking, including the interdependent activities carried out by the work teams and also the role of the organizational psychologist; proposes actions to positively contribute to support the adjustment between worker and organization.

Themes and authors

1. Home Office: The role of science, medical guidelines, and environmental precautions

Thaís Zerbini & Talita Zerbini

2. Work Design and Learning in the Context of the Pandemic

Jairo E. Borges-Andrade & Nara Sampaio

3. Job Performance: Challenges for Workers and Managers

Hugo Sandall & Luciana Mourão

4. Well-being and Occupational Stress in the context of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Amalia R. Perez-Nebra, Mary Sandra Carlotto & Marina Greghi Sticca

5. Meaningfulness and meanings of home-office work: challenges for emotional regulation

Sonia M. G. Gondim & Lívia Borges

6. Work-family reconciliation in compulsory teleworking

Lara Martins, Carolina Vila Nova Aguiar & A. Virgílio B. Bastos

7. Organizational adjustments and changes in times of the COVID-19 pandemic

Juliana Porto, Katia Puente-Palácios & Elaine Neiva

Home Office: The role of science, medical guidelines, and environmental precautions

Thaís Zerbini
Talita Zerbini

Contextualization and origin of teleworking

In extreme moments like the one we are experiencing with the pandemic caused by COVID-19, the role of science assumes greater prominence among the general public, since the technical and scientific principles are more widely disseminated and are being discussed by groups that may be unfamiliar with the subject. It is inevitable that the current context is fraught with doubts, since we are facing something that was unknown until recently. As the disease progressed, the *home office* became an inevitable issue in the context of organizations and work (O&W). The present text, therefore, aims to define the *home office* concept, briefly discuss its characteristics, and highlight what the environmental precautions and the main medical guidelines should be in this work modality, given the pandemic we are going through.

The concept of teleworking had its start in the 1970s, a decade in which American researchers, fearful about the effects produced by pollution resulting from the movement of individuals in their commutes between home and work, began to search more actively for possible solutions to the problem in question (Singh, 2017). The scholar Jack Nilles is credited with formulating and proposing the concept, since through his professional work involving the creation of space transport and the coordination of research programs for the US government, he suggested the inversion of the traditional relationship between the contexts of professional practice and workers (Alves, 2008; Rodrigues, 2011). As a result, and, associated with the advent of digital information and communication technologies (DICTs), a large number of workers were freed from the restrictions imposed by fixed and central work scenarios, allowing routine tasks to be carried out instead in remote locations (Leung & Zhang, 2017).

While for Fincato (2016), the origin of this work modality goes back to an older past, with the emergence of more rudimentary technological resources, specifically, with the creation of the optical telegraph in 1791 in France, by the inventor Claude Chappe. In any case, it is known that the term *telecommuting* was coined by Jack Nilles, in 1976, in *The Telecommunications Transportation Trade Off*. In this case, the word *commuting* was used by the author in order to portray the path between the home environment and the workplace. According to Nilles (1997), *telecommuting* would consist of any periodic professional activity conducted outside the traditional workplace, using any of the telecommunication techniques.

According to the definition proposed by the International Labor Organization (ILO), Teleworking can be defined as activities carried out in spaces other than the central offices, in which professionals remain connected with some of their co-workers through new technologies (Aderaldo, Aderaldo & Lima, 2017). Such a proposal for action can also be understood as the flexible arrangement of occupational tasks, generally subsidized

by DICTs, which allows workers to carry out their tasks in different places, mainly in the home environment (Bailey & Kurland, 2002).

According to Rosenfield and Alves (2011), teleworking, taken from a restrictive perspective, can be defined as work that is carried out at a distance with the aid of DICTs. From an extensive perspective, such as that of the ILO, remote work should be characterized on the basis of the following variables: place / work space; working hours / time (full- or part-); type of contract (salaried or independent contractor); required skills (job content).

In view of this brief characterization, it is possible to see that teleworking is an event that is difficult to conceptualize, since it is not known how many professionals work under this modality and under what conditions. However, Fincato (2016) highlights that, in line with the conceptual diversification presented, US researchers are adopting the use of the term *telecommuting*, while European scholars express a preference for the concept *telework*. Such terminologies would reflect the plural focus of attention that the different proposed meanings would include: when using the term *telecommuting*, interest would be focused on the location of the work activity (work developed outside the traditional company environment); and in the preference for the expression *teleworking*, concern would be centered on the processes of working (due to the use of information and communication technologies).

The different conceptualizations regarding remote work suggest that different work situations are being treated as similar. For example, the term teleworking can be used to characterize: individuals who, with the endorsement of their employer, work at home in order to avoid travelling; people who carry out their professional activities independently, whether at home or in other locations; teleworkers who feel they are exploited, underpaid, and not organizationally valued; remote professionals who see themselves as highly qualified individuals whose work is recognized; teleworkers who work in public or private institutions; among others (Rosenfield & Alves, 2011).

Thus we arrive at the part of the text in which it is important to highlight that the expressions *telework*, *home office*, *virtual work*, *telecommuting*, and *remote work* are indiscriminately used to refer to work practices developed outside the traditional work scenario. The area literature establishes that, since it is carried out on the basis of different configurations, teleworking can be analyzed based on several classes proposed in view of the location where it is performed (Nohara, Acevedo, Ribeiro & Silva, 2010; Rosenfield & Alves, 2011; Singh, 2017; Sobratt, 2016); so, the literature mentions four types of teleworking, namely: teleworking at home, also identified as work in the home environment or *home office*; community or local telecenters; satellite telecenters; mobile telecenters; *telecottages*. In this text, we will highlight the environmental precautions for coping with the pandemic caused by COVID-19, for work in a domestic environment or *home office*.

Distinction of terms frequently used in the pandemic

First, let's clarify why the disease is called COVID-19. The term refers to the "Corona Virus Disease", with the number "19" being an allusion to the year of the virus' emergence (2019) (Phua et al., 2020). In addition, it is understood that an epidemic is a disease that *"is characterized by the incidence in a short period of time of a large number of cases"* (Rezende, 1998), and a pandemic is characterized as being an epidemic of *"major proportions, which spreads to various countries and more than one continent"* (Rezende, 1998).

During a pandemic, the most effective method for slowing the transmission of the virus is social distancing. Here it is worth highlighting the differences between the terms that are being used more frequently. "Isolation", in the medical context, refers to the confinement of people undergoing health treatment (Health and Hospital Quality Surveillance Unit, Hospital de Clínicas, Universidade Federal do Triângulo Mineiro, 2017), but for this, very specific measures are needed that we cannot do at home. In other words, isolation is only possible in health institutions with an adequate structure. "Quarantine" is the period of confinement imposed on individuals who are sick or suspected of having infectious diseases, regardless of where the individual is confined (Santos & Nascimento, 2014). It is a public health measure that aims to contain an epidemic, with the period being variable according to the disease. "Social distancing" is a set of actions that seeks to limit social interaction in order to control the spread of contagious diseases (Brasil, 2020).

Practical conduct guidelines

The current guideline is to stay at home as long as possible, with going out recommended only for engaging in essential activities. If it is strictly necessary to leave the house, it is important to avoid as much as possible touching any surface with our hands. If we touch anything with our hands, it is essential not to touch the face (mainly eyes, nose, and mouth), and not touch the objects that we will use later. If it is impossible to avoid letting our hands touch some surface, a good tip is to use the non-dominant hand, because the tendency we have is to touch our faces with the dominant hand. Remembering that whenever we finish the trip, it is essential we clean our hands, preferably with soap and water, or with alcohol gel. Currently, there we are also advised to use a mask in an attempt to reduce the spread of the virus.

When we get home, the first thing we do should be to remove the shoes we have been wearing, and they should be left next to the door so they don't contaminate the rest of the house. In addition, it is important to leave the objects that were used in a box placed next to the door and sanitize those that we are going to use indoors (cell phone, for example). It is essential that clothes used outside the house are put in the wash, and to always wash our hands with soap and water for more than twenty seconds before touching anything inside the house (the virus is eliminated with the combination of the soap, water, and the friction that we make with our hands), even before touching pets. To date, there is no significant evidence that pets can become ill. However, if we are infected, when we sneeze or cough, we can spread our secretions with viruses on the animal's coat, and if the hair is contaminated and someone else touches it, there is no

guarantee that there will be no transmission (Federal Council of Veterinary Medicine, 2020).

The pandemic also brought other medical problems, not directly related to COVID-19, but just as important. According to the guidance from the Federal Council of Medicine (*CFM - Conselho Federal de Medicina*), elective medical consultations should preferably be postponed. However, on an exceptional basis, the *CFM* has authorized the use of tele-guidance, telemonitoring, and tele-consultation, thus allowing patients not to lose out on the treatments that were already underway (Conselho Federal de Medicina, 2020).

Another point, worthy of note, is to always remember that, even working at home, we need to have the habit of washing our hands with soap and water. If we wash our hands, it is not necessary to use alcohol gel, this being an alternative measure only for when we are unable to wash our hands with soap and water. The equipment we use at home, in the *home office*, should be cleaned preferably before we start our work shift and at the end of the shift. Thus, we reduce the possibility of reinfection or transmission of the virus to someone who eventually comes into contact with the equipment.

As a final warning, in addition to the medical precautions, it is worth highlighting the spread of the distance work modality, given the current moment in which we live. The areas of people management at work institutions, as well as the scholars on the subject, need to be aware of the environmental conditions necessary for the set of behavioral skills considered basic to teleworkers, in order to ensure that this professional activity is not improperly used as a tool endangering work.

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Work Design and Learning in the Context of the Pandemic

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Contextualization and origin of teleworking

We will begin by contextualizing the effects, in the labor world[1], of the pandemic caused by COVID-19[2]. Then, we will describe the study design[3] and discuss its possible transformations in this context. We will conclude by addressing informal workplace learning[4] associated with this work design.

As a result of the pandemic, almost half of the global workforce, 1.6 million active people in the informal economy, would be at imminent risk of losing or would have already lost their means of subsistence, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2020). More than 436 million companies could interrupt or already interrupted their activities, according to the ILO. This interruption would lead to the unemployment of millions of other workers who work in the formal economy. The worst effects would be felt earlier by those in the most vulnerable segments of the economy, whether informal or formal.

Those who were able to continue their work activities needed to reinvent themselves or were forced to do this without necessarily maintaining the quality of their performance[5], monetary compensation, or personal or family well-being. Public transportation drivers donned masks. Dentists scheduled appointments further apart to intensify the cleaning of their offices between patient visits and avoid then meeting in waiting rooms. Glass windows were installed between supermarket cashiers and consumers. Restaurants created or expanded strategies for home deliveries. Teleworking was adopted[6]. This led to changes in work design.

Work design

Studies on work design had their findings synthesized and organized into a measure that enabled the integrated diagnosis of work design (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Evidence of validity was confirmed in Brazil (Borges-Andrade et al., 2019). The dimensions of this measure of work design can be divided into task, knowledge, social, and contextual characteristics.

The **task characteristics** represent the way the work is performed, and the scope and nature of the tasks associated with it. They include autonomy and feedback from the

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[1] We focus on this world, as it is one of Psychology's objects of interest and fields of work.
[2] We understand that other effects occur and will occur, for example, in health, politics, economics, culture and in social and public relations. Many of them may have come to stay.
[3] We use this term to refer to the composition, content and structure of tasks and knowledge necessary to perform one's work. The term also refers to the characteristics of the social and physical contexts under which work takes place.
[4] This term refers to spontaneous learning, without prior planning, which occurs naturally in the workplace.
[5] Examples: a service provided (caring for a sick person, teaching a child, or running a hospital or school); manufacture of a product (assembling an appliance, creating a mobile application, or making a wooden bookcase); making a commodity (raising chickens, planting a vegetable garden or extracting cassava flour).
[6] See, in this volume, two other chapters that address the issue of teleworking.

job and task variety, significance, and identity. Autonomy reflects the extent to which work allows freedom, independence, and discretion to plan it. It also includes the freedom to make decisions and choose the methods to perform tasks. The feedback from the job reflects the degree to which these tasks provide direct and clear information about their execution. The task variety refers to the requirement of a wide range of tasks at work. The task significance reflects the degree to which work influences life, physical and psychological well-being, or the work of others, within or outside the organization. The task identity reflects how much the results of the task can be easily identified by who does it. Under circumstances of social isolation or distancing, autonomy may potentially increase, but task variety would possibly decrease, although task identity and feedback from them could increase. Regarding the significance of these tasks, we could speculate that they would occupy a wider space in people's lives (considering their other spheres of life, such as family, community and leisure), but would not necessarily promote an increase in well-being.

The **knowledge characteristics** include complexity, information processing, problem solving, skill variety and specialization. The complexity of the work refers to the difficulty of performing tasks that require the use of numerous high-level skills, in addition to being more mentally demanding and challenging tasks. Information processing concerns the amount of information transformations required to perform a task. Problem solving describes how much a task requires unique ideas or solutions. The skill variety considers the degree to which work requires a variety of different skills to be completed. Specialization refers to the execution of tasks that require specialized knowledge and skills. We assume that the pandemic would have brought great challenges to the dimension knowledge characteristics. The work would have become more complex, difficult to execute, challenging, and demanding of new skills under different technological circumstances. They would require more information processing and more problem solving until new cognitive processing routines had already been established and the problems requiring new solutions would decrease. However, the variety of skills required to complete the work and the specialization involved to accomplish it could have remained the same, considering that many organizations chose to reduce their investments in innovations until the situation became slightly clearer. However, others were forced to face new challenges, such as transforming their production lines (for example, to manufacture hospital equipment and materials) or to provide other services (for example, delivering food to homes or serving patients with a new type of disease). This would imply the intensification of the variety of skills and specialization required.

The third dimension of the work design is the **social characteristics** of the context. They involve social support, initiated, and received interdependence, interaction outside the organization and feedback from others. Social support includes the opportunities available at work to receive advice and assistance from others. The interdependence encompasses how much the worker depends on others, and how much they depend on him/her to complete his/her work. The initiated interdependence concerns what flows from one area or section to another, and received interdependence refers to the extent to which a task is affected by the service performed in other areas or sections. The interaction outside the organization represents communication with individuals

external to the organization. Feedback from others considers the information received from other people about a specific performance. We predict that the dimension social characteristics would also have been much changed due to the isolation and distancing resulting from the pandemic. This would include decreases in social support and feedback from others. Assuming these occurrences combined with the fact that there would be more autonomy of tasks, as we argued previously, organizations would be forced to reduce the initiated and received interdependence, even if this implies a drop in the quality of services or of production. It would be likely that such services or production would become more standardized to prevent this loss of quality. The interaction outside the organization could increase for organizations that provide services or decrease for those that manufacture products.

Other **contextual** characteristics would involve **physical and environmental** (nonsocial) aspects, which include ergonomics, physical demands, work conditions and equipment use. Here, ergonomics reflects the degree to which a task allows a correct or proper posture and movement. Physical demands relate to physical requirements and the level of physical activity or effort required. Work conditions reflect the presence of risks to health and noise, temperature, and cleaning of the work environment. The equipment use reflects the variety and complexity of the technology and equipment used. This use of equipment would most likely be kept constant or would decrease, with the transition to remote work, since the more complex equipment would likely not be available in the workers' homes. However, ergonomic aspects related to movement and posture would possibly be worsened, as would the physical demands, with the performance of the work under remote circumstances. Under this circumstance, work conditions could improve but would worsen if the work involved mobility for rapid delivery of products previously available in stores or if the work involved caring for people contaminated by COVID-19.

In the previous paragraphs, we have made several reflections on the changes that would occur in the various characteristics inherent to the four dimensions of work design in the context of the pandemic. The hypothesized changes could be different, depending on the nature of the occupations and professions of the people who perform the work. If, on the one hand, we are going through a challenging crisis, on the other hand, it gives as the opportunity to research and confirm or reject our hypotheses and suggestions. Fortunately, we already have more scientific knowledge on telework design, produced by various studies published just over two decades ago.

Several studies have been conducted to understand the characteristics of telework design and how they differ from the characteristics of the in-person work model (Humphrey et al. 2007). Telework is positively associated with autonomy and flexibility. The autonomy provided by telework can, in turn, predict higher levels of responsibility of the worker with the results of his/her work. That is, despite the supervisor not being physically present in the telework environment, the commitment to meeting the goals may be greater. This responsibility for the work performed autonomously depends on a previous relationship of trust and intimacy between the worker and his/her team and immediate manager. If this closeness is not built, autonomy may represent a risk of decline in quality and commitment to execution. Thus, if managers want to ensure the

efficiency and effectiveness of workers, even if they are socially distant, they must invest in contact with the members of their teams to establish intimacy and trust.

The task significance is another characteristic of the task that can be improved in a remote environment (Gibson et al, 2011). One possible explanation is that the importance of the task is more strongly associated with the lack of face-to-face communication. In the absence of social interaction, the task itself takes on greater significance. That is, we often perceive the hours dedicated to personal interaction within the work environment as unproductive. With telework, dedication to the task becomes the center, not being affected by social contact, and workers perceive more significance in this task. However, this may also prevent the satisfaction of the need for affiliation of individuals. Workers generally appreciate the autonomy and efficiency of working outside the main office but may lose the social context of traditional work. The loss of social contact can create barriers to communication if there is physical distance. Thus, the feeling of being out of the loop may emerge due to the lack of clarity on the relationship between individual performance and macro-organizational goals. We can also associate telework with a difficulty for the worker to perceive the result of the activity performed by his/her team. Given the distancing from the other members and management, there may be a splitting of the tasks that would be taken on by different members, hindering a holistic view of the work. This change would impact the task identity. To adapt to the new reality of teleworking in which people are displaced from their usual work environments, there would be a strong impact on the pace, routines, and frequency of media use.

The variety of skills and complexity of the work may suffer variations in teleworking. This variation would be because workers must master the use of various technological tools. For example, several physicians are adhering to telemedicine. This type of care requires the use of a system specifically design for telemedicine and the use of digital signatures to enable virtual prescriptions. All this requires mastery of technological tools. Another example is the routine of informal workers who deliver in response to orders placed on applications, which requires the mastery of how those applications work.

In general, we understand that these expected changes in the dimensions of work design will have an impact on worker motivation, performance, and well-being. Moreover, they could be associated with informal workplace learning.

Informal learning in (and design of) work

Workplace learning includes two processes, according to the theoretical model proposed by Illeris (2011):

1. **internal** (psychological acquisition of content associated with motivational factors, attitudes and use of learning strategies), represented by the horizontal arrow in opposite directions, at the base of the upper inverted triangle of Figure 1, and

2. **external** (social interaction between the individual and his/her workplace environment), represented by the vertical arrow in opposite directions in Figure 1.

This vertical arrow links the psychological acquisition of the individual (represented by the horizontal arrow) to the workplace practice environment, represented at the base of the lower triangle of the Figure.
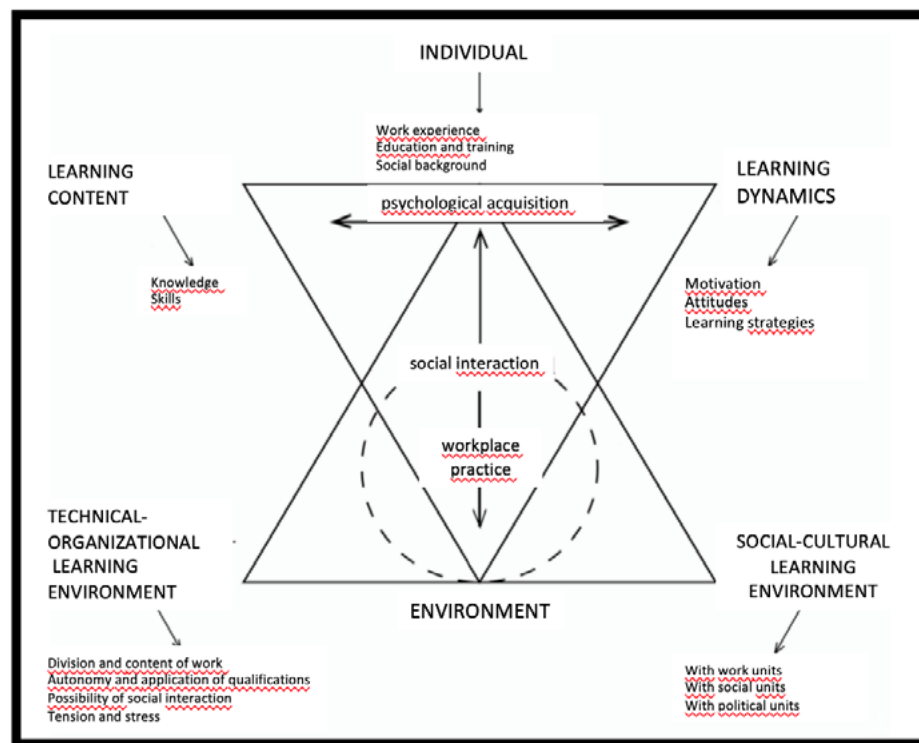

Figure 1

Schematic representation of the theoretical model of workplace learning proposed by Illeris (2011). Source: Sampaio (2018)

This environment, or workplace, includes attributes that correspond, in large part, to three of the four dimensions of work design: task and knowledge characteristics (**technical-organizational attributes**) and social characteristics (**social-cultural attributes**). The theoretical model represented in Figure 1 would include formal and informal workplace learning[7]. Informal workplace learning is driven (searched, proceeded) by the individual and not by the organization in which he/she works (through training and development activities) or by some educational institution. Therefore, it essentially depends on the strategies that workers use to learn, which may include the following:

- **behavioral** (search for interpersonal support or support from written material and practical application or trial and error) and
- **cognitive** (mental repetition, active reflection, including intrinsic and extrinsic reflections).

The characteristics of work design appear to be major influencers of informal learning in the review of scientific studies conducted by Noe, Clarke, and Klein (2014). Regarding the task characteristics, greater responsibility and autonomy and large challenges or

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[7] In this text, we will only address informal workplace learning.

demands facilitate informal learning. The lack of assumed responsibilities was identified as one of the most frequent barriers to managerial learning. As teleworking promotes an environment of greater autonomy and flexibility, we assume that informal learning will be benefited.

The specialization and formalization characteristics were positively related to learning, and this relationship was intensified by the psychological safety perceived in the work. Restrictions on autonomy in the tasks intensified the negative relationship between organizational structure and workplace learning. These results reinforce the importance of autonomy and the use of skills to allow workers to use additional work resources seeking to promote engagement, well-being, and learning (Noe, Clarke & Klein, 2014).

Social support from supervisors and managers has been recognized as important for learning (Sluss & Thompson; 2012). They were also found to be major influencers of informal learning: work tools and resources, access to contact and communication facilitation, and access to colleagues and partners (Doornbos et al. 2008). At the team level, informal learning is influenced by the shared beliefs of members about psychological safety within the organization (Bresman & Zellmer-Bruhn, 2013).

Three workplace learning strategies (active reflection, practical application and seeking interpersonal support) emerged as being associated with work design characteristics in the study by Borges-Andrade & Sampaio (2019). Their findings suggest that the use of strategies of practical application and active reflection would be associated with a combination of work design that may include autonomies of decision and use of methods in various tasks that provide feedback and require problem solving with the use of diversified skills.

The theoretical model of workplace learning previously presented proposes that the development of competencies[8] results from the interaction of individuals with technical-organizational and social-cultural attributes of their work environment. In general, we can assume that changes in task and knowledge characteristics would most likely affect the acquisition of knowledge and skills (KSs). On the other hand, changes in the social characteristics of the work design would most likely affect the development of attitudes (As). Thus, in the context of the pandemic, the promotion of an environment that fosters the development of competencies (synergistic combinations of KSAs) must be preceded by an analysis of the changes related to the task, knowledge and social dimensions that have occurred in work design.

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[8] Competencies are synergistic combinations of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) that can support job performance.

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Job Performance: Challenges for Workers and Managers

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Contextualization

In this text, we will address job performance and the challenges imposed on those who, all of a sudden, had to learn to work from home (in some cases, managing other people in the same situation). Anyone who has found themselves at this point of involuntary adaptation to telework certainly has company. There is a huge contingency of workers going through the same transition. If, mid-March, one third of the respondents that participated in a survey by Datafolha (2020) considered that they could work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, two weeks after this number dropped by 13 percentage points. This reduction suggests that people may be having trouble transitioning to telework and reconciling it with family matters and household chores.

Thus, it is worth discussing the job performance theme and seeking feasible ways to an adaptation to the context in which we are currently living. The first step to this is in the very understanding of the concept and of the main approaches to individual job performance. It is understood as a key dimension in Organizational and Labor Psychology, as well as in People Management (Bendassolli, 2012), and is associated with productivity, competitiveness and job wellbeing indicators (Malvezzi, 2016). Besides being a theme that covers a variety of elements, job performance is strongly linked to several other topics, such as, for instance, meaning of work, emotional regulation, wellbeing and stress, learning, and work-family balance (we suggest referring to specific texts on this theme in the Work and measures for coping with COVID-19 published by the Brazilian Association of Organizational and Labor Psychology [Associação Brasileira de Psicologia Organizacional e do Trabalho]

It is worth making room herein for explaining what we mean when it comes down to job performance. Authors present different concepts but tend to agree as to it encompassing everything that a worker can do for the organization to achieve its goals. Thus, it represents a set of objective, dynamic actions under the worker's control and with directed purpose, whose effects are observable and measurable (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015; Motowidlo & Kell, 2012; Sonnentag & Frese, 2005). It is therefore a consensus that performance is a behavioral construct (Bendassolli, 2012) and, as such, goes beyond what workers intend to do. To perform their activities satisfactorily, they need to have the means that allow them to carry out their tasks. And this challenge becomes more intense in these uncertain times of pandemic, which impose major changes to routine and work processes.

For this reason, what performance is will depend on the role and the organization for each worker to fully contribute to the company's results, as well as on available resources, knowledge, skills, personal characteristics, infrastructure and support at work. With the aggravation of changes having been imposed abruptly by mandatory

social isolation, workers often need to decipher which essential contributions they could offer for the organization where they work to keep achieving its goals. Moreover, compulsory telework can also mean further pressure for performance, since many controls in the work environment focus on indicators such as attendance and timeliness. Without control over such elements, there may be a greater pressure for performance, with the requirement, not rarely, of levels above those demanded prior to telework.

The first necessary remark in this text is that the reflections herein presented do not apply to all workers. Many activities allow the core of performance to remain unchanged in on-site jobs, especially when it comes to activities of a more intellectual nature. However, many other activities require resources to be exclusively available in person – as it is in the case of industries and some services. In this situation, job performance is compromised or even made impossible because not all labor activities suit telework. In this sense, the present text refers to the performance of workers that do activities which, somehow, can be done at home.

Performance Components

To many workers, the core of the tasks in their professional routine has more similarities than differences comparing the work done at home with that done in their organizational environment. However, beyond technical tasks, work also involves cooperation, communication, persistence, which are elements that need to be carefully considered in this context of compulsory telework. This broader reflection on job performance can be therefore conducted in the light of the theoretical model proposed by Campbell (2012), which suggests eight performance dimensions, namely: (1) Technical; (2) Communication; (3) Initiative, persistence, and effort; (4) Counterproductive; (5) Hierarchical leadership; (6) Peer leadership; (7) Hierarchical management; and (8) Peer management.

Figure 1 describes each one of these dimensions that compose performance, along with some reflections on how they can be affected by telework.

Figure 1
Job performance dimensions and respective impacts on compulsory telework

Dimension	Reflections for performing compulsory telework
① *Technical* Central job-specific behaviors that define what a person does. They are directly related to the purpose of the position. They produce the most typical results for that job and tend to be the object of performance reviews.	One planning their own tasks and redesigning their work can contribute to the completion of key activities during compulsory telework. Redefining procedures may be necessary in the new work environment. Check if you have all available resources for performing your technical activities. Schedule flexibility also allows you to find out about at what time you perform better and how your job can better fit the routine of your household and of the people around you.

Dimension	Reflections for performing compulsory telework
② *Communication* Information transmission, both in verbal and written forms, directly or indirectly. These messages will be successful when clear, comprehensible, convincing, attractive and properly organized.	Telework restricts the advantages of being around coworkers and requires an extra effort as to properly using communication means. The choice for the most adequate resource needs to take into account the situation; for instance, a team meeting can benefit from an application with audio and video, but a quick consultation is well served by a chat or audio application. In a telework context, checking the understanding of what has been agreed upon becomes even more important. Routine notices can be passed on using other communication channels. Behaviors in this dimension represent an opportunity for one to stand out in these telework times with the adoption of habits such as frequently using meetings to assign tasks and share the progress of projects and need for support.
③ *Initiative, persistence, and effort* Behaviors that evidence voluntary additional commitment. It is about working more by taking on tasks beyond those expected, with extra effort towards ensuring the quality of deliveries under extreme or adverse conditions.	Typically, telework demands extra activities in the sense of seeking conditions that allow the performance of tasks in the domestic environment. But, if on the one hand, there is an effort in developing these work conditions, on the other hand, the change in the environment also creates opportunities for finding more productive ways of doing things. Testing ideas and seeking strategies for a better organization of the labor routine are examples of behaviors that show initiative, persistence and effort, which can positively impact work results.
④ *Counterproductive* It comprehends intentional actions that distance the organization from its goals. Unlike the other dimensions, it involves undesired behaviors. They can be geared towards the organization (e.g.: stealing office supplies), towards individuals (e.g.: moral harassment), or even towards oneself (e.g.: alcohol abuse).	Self-sabotage can be a form of counterproductive behavior. Paying attention to your own feelings and to the type of task to be performed at different moments during the day can be a way to avoid behaviors that harm your work. Identifying the situations that act as triggers for behaviors that prevent you from achieving your labor goals is important as well. Proper rest, frustration management, and assertive administration of conflicts can prevent counterproductive behaviors.

Dimension	Reflections for performing compulsory telework
⑤ *Hierarchical leadership* ⑥ *Peer leadership*	Because these dimensions depend on the result of behaviors of other people, they gain special importance in telework. In this moment of compulsory telework, leadership behaviors in the sense of inspiring people through examples (emotional contagion), as well as the development of strategies for cooperation and the fight against the feeling of loneliness, can contribute to performance. Remote events that allow putting people in contact with each other, providing some time for a casual talk, before a meeting or during a group coffee break, are examples of resources that could be used by leaders.
Actions that favorably influence the behavior of others towards the organization's goals, such as encouragement, direct guidance, personal support, recognition or feedback. The behaviors that compose these two dimensions vary according to their addressee, if subordinates (when the professional holds a leading position) or peers.	
⑦ *Hierarchical management* ⑧ *Peer management*	These two dimensions can be significantly affected by compulsory telework. Because they involve, for instance, availability and control of resources, one needs to identify the activities that require adjustments in telework. Identifying the resource demands of each subordinate or peer can be decisive for their work to be developed satisfactorily. For example, have they been provided with equipment and remote access to the systems in order to carry out their tasks? Which support routines need to be developed in this compulsory telework period? How to look after people so that they keep their health and wellbeing conditions in this period? Which are the priority resources to be managed in this context?
These dimensions concern behaviors that favorably influence the way that subordinates or peers use the organization's resources. For example: setting goals, monitoring resource consumption, anticipating potential problems, tracking work progress. Subordinates management obviously applies only to those in leadership positions.	

However, it is not enough to understand the performance dimensions only in these times of compulsory telework; it is also interesting to ponder elements that, despite not composing performance, are related to it. Because performance is about what the worker does, that is, their behavior (Bendassolli, 2012; Campbell, 2013; Sonnentag et al., 2008), results achieved at work are not necessarily synonymous with performance. They would be its effects, and are usually not under the worker's full control (Campbell, 2012). In the case of telework resulting from the social isolation imposed by the pandemic, a set of situational aspects can influence work results, such as internet connection errors, or the remote operation of systems provided by the organization. In this sense, it is very important to define, carefully, the performance indicators that will be adopted during the compulsory telework period, since not everything depends on the behaviors of workers. Inadequate performance behaviors can render reviews biased in the sense of not properly representing the performance expected from the worker.

Here lies a practical implication of compulsory telework, especially for managers. In a situation like this, it is fundamental to carefully choose the indicators that better suit the management of your teams' performance. The more the indicators represent the

worker's contributions, without interference of aspects out of their control, the more adequate they will be (Campbell, 2012). Thus, in a moment of jobs being done in the household environment, there is a need to avoid setting organizational goals that mix the worker's elements with other factors that this person does not control. A good practice for leaders and managers – not only during this compulsory telework period, but especially in it – is to distinguish clearly what depends on the worker and what depends on systems and extra resources. This distinction of what performance actually is and what refers to work demands and resources, in addition to the constant exercise of a frank and empathetic dialogue, will provide clues for managers to define where to intervene, if by giving workers additional support, or if by seeking resources for them to properly perform their tasks.

On the opposite side of results are performance determinants, that is, preceding factors that produce, directly or indirectly, individual differences in the performance of workers (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015). Determinants can be directly related to the role that a worker performs, which involves knowledge of procedures, technical knowledge of systems, specific skills, as well as willingness and commitment to pursue the organization's goals. In the case of compulsory telework, determinants are given new outlines. For instance, someone who was already regularly using or already had some level of experience with online meeting systems has a greater chance to adapt to this increased demand. Likewise, those who already had remote access mechanisms installed on their computers (Virtual Private Network – VPN) or logins for file sharing systems (Dropbox, OneDrive, Google Drive, etc.) start a few steps ahead compared to those with no knowledge of how these resources work.

Furthermore, it is also necessary to consider other determinants related to the characteristics of the workers themselves, such as familiarity with technology, personality, belief in their own ability to perform tasks and overcome obstacles (self-efficacy), favorite rewards, physical and mental health, and others. In the same way, environmental factors can also act as performance determinants, such as having a space in the house dedicated to telework, the organization's human resources policies, etc.

Mapping Job Performance

For workers to reflect on their own performance in this compulsory telework period, we suggest them to use a tool that allows mapping and better understanding of their own performance. Considering that there are no rules that suit all workers, instead of following a "cake recipe", the ideal is that you can map the components of your performance (and revisit this mapping from time to time, given the dynamic aspect of performance). To design it, you must answer questions about your contributions to the goals of the organization at which you work, bearing in mind the position you hold; which behaviors you could prioritize in each one of the performance dimensions; which main direct and indirect determinants affect your performance; as well as reflections on the activities in which you stand out, and in which ones you could do better.

The supporting questionnaire can be answered through the link bit.ly/QcanvasDT and will promote reflections that could help you build your Performance Canvas (

Figure 2), which is available at bit.ly/canvasDT both for printing and post-it application, and in PowerPoint. There you will find additional instructions for completing the canvas, besides a Q&A channel. Good luck and good telework!

Figure 2
Schematic view of the Canvas according to the theoretical model of job performance by Campbell (2012)
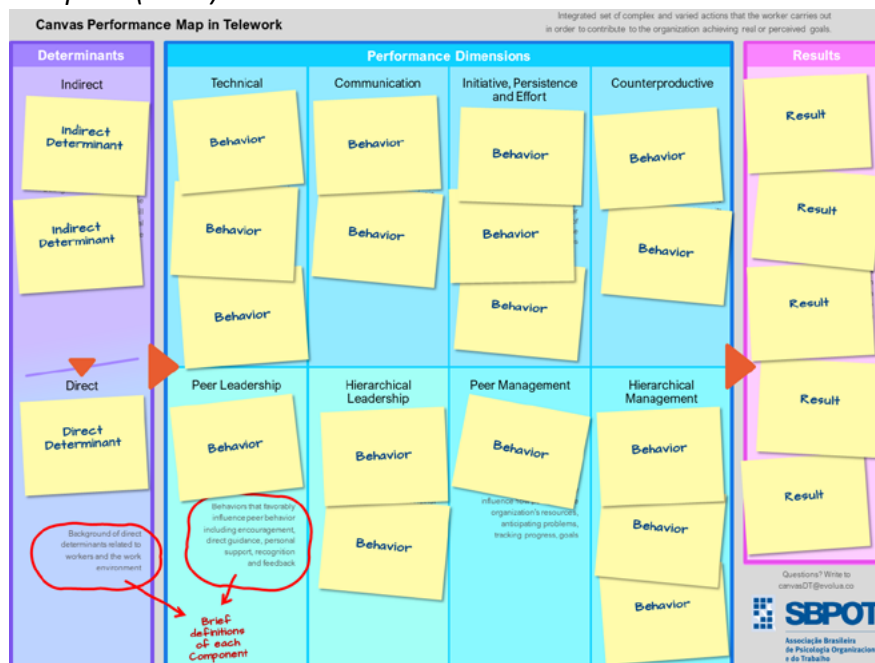
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Well-being and Occupational Stress in the context of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic

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Context

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, many organizations and workers were compelled to teleworking. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), telework is defined as a labor activity remotely performed, including at home (home-office), using computers and mobile communication devices such as phones, cells and applications. It is worth mentioning that, although working remotely, these professionals face different situations. What may vary among them?

Professional categories: Some professionals, like health and security professionals, are directly exposed to the COVID-19, while others are not working and others are teleworkers working remotely. Reality also varies for this last category. Some are perceiving the changes resulting from the pandemic, such as reduced exposure to stressors (e.g., displacement time, need for frequent travels, control of office time) as positive. However, others perceive upsurge in volume of work and overload that could lead to stress. Our focus is on this last group.

Work and task characteristics: Telework demands knowledge and high concentration. The work for some professional categories (e.g., journalists) was intensified in this period. Moreover, it also demanded the use of digital information and communications technologies (DICTs), increased autonomy and work management. Exposure to these factors may lead to increased or decreased levels of occupational stress.

Moreover, context-related variables such as space to perform the work, or accommodating work and home chores, and individual variables such as caregiving (children or elderly) may affect the level of stress perceived by the individual. Individuals were impelled to adopt different roles and take on many services that are not being offered on-site, like education, and that could result in overload.

Performance: Besides being hard to self in relation to work, which could lead to upsurge in workload and longer hours of work, some professionals report to have extended their working hours and perceived that "work is endless". Specificities such as managers style, flexibility in relation to goals and volume of work, in addition to differentiated policies of appraisal to each labor context, should be considered.

Key concepts

Psychological well-being: positive psychological functioning that unveils our capacity of coping with life's challenges. It is made up by six dimensions: 1) self-acceptance (having a positive attitude in relation to the self and accept multiple aspects of one's own personality) ; 2) positive relations with others (cultivate relationships of trust, affection and empathy); 3) autonomy (capacity of making decisions on what to do); 4) environmental mastery (feel capable of controlling and mastering the surroundings); 5) purpose in life (feel capable of setting personal objectives and goals associated to the feeling that life is meaningful); and, 6) personal growth (feel in continuous process of growth and improvement in different stages of life) (Ryff, & Keyes, 1995).

Occupational stress: stressor-response process that involves from work factors exceeding the individual's capacity of coping (organizational stressors) to physiological, psychological and behavioral reactions to events assessed as stressors. Therefore, it is a process in which the individual perceives the work demands as stressing and that, by exceeding their coping skills, give rise to negative reactions (Paschoal & Tamayo, 2004).

Burnout Syndrome: Chronic response to psychosocial stressors found in the work context characterized by high demands and low resources (Leiter, Bakker, & Maslach, 2014). It is marked by feelings of lack of energy and enthusiasm and feeling of exhaustion of personal resources, insensitivity towards other persons the individual should serve at work, and reduced feeling of professional fulfillment.

Important: 1. Stress and burnout are not differentiated based on symptoms, but on the process (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993); 2. Stress does not necessarily lead to or ends in burnout, considering the countless moderator variables to the environmental stressing conditions and the subjective perception of stressors. 3. Professionals should be monitored over time, since one of the Burnout Syndrome symptoms is the prolonged exposure to a chronic work-related stress level.

Strategies to manage Occupational Stress

What can be done? Novel situations that demand adaptations, like the situation we are experiencing now, will surely carry stressors. One should identify stressors and learn to manage them.

In the individual light (Sonnentag & Frese, 2013)**:**
1. **What is the source of occupational stress?** Some sources are more manageable than others, and we can control some sources better than others. Suggestion: Set clear goals with your direct leadership.
2. **Can we reduce or eliminate this stress?** The best solution is to reduce or eliminate the source of stress. However, many times stress is not a result of one single source, but of a constellation of sources. Here, difficulty rests on solving what is urgent, as sometimes we do not have time to think over solutions that are sustainable in the medium term.

3. **Increase own resources**. Eventually, stress may come up due to the lack of resources to handle with a given situation. For example: If you are not very familiar to computer resources, watch tutorials that could help you in solving specific problems.

4. **Changes of life style**. Minor changes on the everyday life can help, such as empower children and teach them to take on responsibility for some home chores. We know that sometimes teaching is harder than doing, but keep in mind the sustainability of the action. In about one month, the child will know how to do that task.

5. **Distress reduction (Recovery)**. There is a wide range of restorative experiences (Kaplan, 1995; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007):

   a. **Psychological detachment**. Keeping work away may be a strategy to be adopted. However, regardless how connected it is to well-being, studies show this is the less effective strategy.

   b. **Relaxation**. Try resting and relaxing activities, such as meditating before sleeping. Relaxation is one of the most efficacious strategies. The challenge is to establish a routine of relaxation. Try different strategies and don't blame yourself if cannot follow all suggestions posted on the social networks.

   c. **Mastery**. It seems nonsense, but learning a different activity, something new to master, drastically reduces stress. It opens a new range of possibilities.

   d. **Control during leisure time.** Decide when you can do your tasks and/or what you want to do.

   e. **Natural environment**. Natural environments compatible with the individual needs allow experiencing detachment, extension (comprising amplitude and connection) and fascination, allowing the individual to relax and think about broader issues.

In the light of the organization (Giga, Fletcher, Sgourakis, Mulvaney, & Vrkljan, 2018):

1. **Set clear goals with each worker**. Each work is experiencing compelled work in a different way. Setting clear goals and review these is crucial in this moment.

2. **Reduce work demands**. There are some options to do that, including sharing the task among more individuals, reducing the number of hours devoted to tasks, and extending the deadline to deliver the task.

3. **Increase control over the task**. Increase the autonomy of employees regarding how, when and what they can do.

4. **Enhance social support at work**. Increase work in pairs that usually work well. Consider the concrete difficulties of each employee; generic solutions do better with large groups. Manager should identify the specificities.

5. **Make tasks, roles and the organization clearer**. Having clear idea about roles and responsibilities of each one, in addition to clearly defining importance hierarchy to each task, make easier for workers to establish where they should devote time and effort.

6. **Enhance organizational communication.** This includes positive feedback targeted to each individual in their tasks. In other words, what is needed to keep on doing well. Foster openness or develop a shared view on values, mission and the organization's or team's vision. As physical contact is reduced, on-line contact (e.g., make a call or promote weekly meetings with small teams) can be a nice strategy.

Main Actions

Considering the uncertainty about when the social distancing period will end and on-site job will be resumed, the organizations should identify factors of psychosocial risks that could lead to stress and diseasing during the pandemic. Moreover, organizations should adopt actions oriented to maximize protective factors. Likewise, public policies should be adopted to monitor the psychological impacts and mental health of the distinct groups of workers, such as teleworkers, during and post-pandemic.

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Meaningfulness and meanings of home-office work:

challenges for emotional regulation

Sonia Gondim
Lívia de Oliveira Borges

Work and home: two spaces and times that are blurred now

The actions adopted for physical social distancing that were taken to contain the spread of COVID-19 transmission are amplifying the reach of a new dimension of space and time, imposing new challenges for workers and companies. For many workers, their home has been transformed into a workplace. Certainly, this new dynamic is affecting each individual, to varying degrees, with respect to their routines and relationships with their families. It is also making workers re-evaluate the meaning and **meaningfulness** of their work, and that is putting their ability to regulate emotions to the test.

In 1924, Huizinga (a Dutch author) published a book about the Middle Ages (14th and 15th centuries) in the Low Countries (at the time, the coastal region of northwestern Europe). The author stated that the organization of time was established during the Middle Ages, when working hours and religious cults were controlled by the chimes of bells. The rhythmic sounds of those bells warned people about: the beginning and the ending of working hours; imminent danger and someone's death; and also, the moments of prayer and celebration of joyful events.

The Industrial Revolution made a subtle change in the demarcation of events and the times for doing certain activities. It also delimited the main workplace: the factory, which was detached from the home environment. The society of technological predominance that covers the Third and Fourth Industrial Revolutions (Antunes, 2018; Mattoso, 1995; Schwab, 2016; Susskind & Susskind, 2015), has been remodeling the space-time idea even more intensely. The new technologies of information and communication have enormously increased the capacity of producing and performing several activities, including work, sociability, and leisure in distinct spaces and times. A company can have its head office in a certain country, while its work could be distributed among workers in various countries. Working time is commonly extended beyond the working hours established in contracts, since today anyone who has an electronic device can be found anywhere at any time.

Even though remote work had emerged in the middle of the 19th century — when records were made of Edgard Thompson using the telegraph to manage and control the train lines — what differentiates that working modality from what's currently happening is that, back then, it was a strategy to improve management. In times of pandemic and physical social distancing, by contrast, many workers suddenly have found themselves in a home-office work system without actually being prepared for it. Neither their activities nor their work tasks have been designed to be performed

remotely. Certainly, in sectors where remote work and home-office were already in place in an advanced way, the adaptation process was way easier, with less visible and negative impacts on other spheres of the workers' lives (for example, family and religion). However, those who have never seen this scenario as a possibility in their lives are now facing different kinds of feelings – such as anguish and anxiety –, for being in constant adaptation to this new condition, even though it is temporary.

With those workers in mind, we present some reflections on the effects that the compulsory home-office dynamic – the ones that have not been planned – may have on the meanings and meaningfulness of their work, and on how their emotional regulation may contribute to improving their adaptation process.

Meanings and meaningfulness of work

Work may be defined as an intentional activity of transformation of reality and oneself. It is also understood as an important bond between the human being and nature. Work, especially that mediated by the use of fabricated instruments made by men, is part of the human condition and it differentiates us from other animals. We are capable of creating and using intellectual, physical, material, and symbolic resources to promote transformations. We search constantly for ways to make them more efficient. However, in most instances, the way the work is divided is not fair, since it establishes situations of exploitation based on the appropriation of surplus-value by the employers[1]. Furthermore, by being based on the tradition that divides intellectual work from physical work, our society values – economically and symbolically – in a distinct way, some activities to the detriment of others (Anthony, 1977). Some are considered more noble than others, with effects on social status, and on work conditions and remuneration.

The meanings and meaningfulness of work are interrelated concepts, and they help us to create connections with the activities that we carry out, mainly those we get paid for. Both of these concepts involve human subjectivity, which is understood as a way of bonding with the world. The meanings and meaningfulness also reveal themselves as singular manifestations (reflecting individual trajectories) and sociocultural manifestations (differentiated forms of social insertion). These concepts suppose human interaction mediated by multiple incorporated cultural symbols and distinct socialization processes. Thus they can express various contradictions. A job can mean dignity and humiliation, health and occupational diseases, pleasure and suffering, economic livelihood and harshness in coping, challenges and accident risks, a source of friendships and disagreements, etc. (Bendassoli, 2009; Borges & Barros, 2015; Borges & Tamayo, 2001).

Job meanings require individuals, public authorities, and organizations to manage our relationship with work so that pleasurable aspects prevail over unpleasant ones. After all, work is the main activity in our interaction with the world, and it has an important psychological function in our development as people (Clot, 2006). The meaningfulness

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[1] Surplus-value can be understood as the difference between the value received by the worker from the job that was done and the value paid by others to acquire the product made by this worker.

of work is necessarily positive and healthy, and connects the work to the meaningfulness of life. Therefore, meaningfulness can be the core of the meanings that we acquire throughout the socialization process to which we are submitted (Why should we work? What should work mean in our lives?). Meaningfulness justifies why we work, has a phenomenological and existential role in our lives (Barros, Álvaro, & Borges, 2018; Bendassolli, 2009). However, both of these concepts — meanings and meaningfulness — appear as (affective-cognitive) facets that express our personal experience in the daily performance of work. Applying these concepts to the current context, we can give an example of the sociability function. That is, if I learned throughout my life that work has an important function of sociability, that is what has given meaningfulness to my work so far. When I see myself withdrawing socially and becoming distant from my colleagues, that requires me to create new forms of sociability to preserve this sense of work. Unless I want to give my work another meaning. Accordingly, using regulatory processes of my ways of thinking, feeling, and acting become a necessity regarding my work, since it has gone through changes that have an impact on the way I used to think, feel, and act regarding this work, that is, how I gave it meaning and meaningfulness.

Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation is a part of self-regulation involving thought, emotion, and action. Self-regulation is a psychological process activated automatically (with little conscious control), and also consciously (meaning we can develop it), whenever we're facing emotionally relevant stimuli (Bandura, 1991). It contributes to physical and mental well-being.

Regulating an emotion means trying to alter it somehow, changing the emotion itself, when you feel it, how you feel it, or how intensely you feel it (Gondim, 2019; Gross, 2015). It is certainly not an easy task, since we are always more prepared to react impulsively to disturbances than to tolerate feelings that bother us. We have low tolerance for emotions and feelings like fear, anxiety, anguish, sadness, anger, and disgust. We want to get rid of them as soon as possible. Because of this, we use strategies to dodge them, which do not work very well. We can avoid talking about a frightening subject, or refrain from interacting with people who convey concerns, but we are not always successful. Hence, we need to adopt distinct strategies to ease undesirable effects (Bonfim & Gondim, 2010; Gondim, 2011). One of the models of emotional regulation described in the literature states that people regulate their emotions in two ways: potentializing the beneficial effects of emotions considered positive[2] (enjoying the moment, for example), and reducing the harmful effects of emotions perceived as negative (re-evaluating the situation from positive angles, for example) (Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, & Mikolajczak, 2011). You probably remember people close to you who look for negative aspects even in situations that usually bring joy, and that ends up being maladaptive, because the positive affective states are

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[2] The most recent discussions point out that the difference between positive and negative emotions depends on the context. For example, sometimes sadness can be positive by making someone critically reflect on their conduct. Happiness manifested because of the misfortune of a person we dislike will hardly be considered a positive emotion (Tamir, 2011).

diminished, even though they would be beneficial for well-being. You probably also know many others who try to learn something from bad situations, thus reducing the negative affective state in a realistic way.

One of the biggest challenges for people who are working from home is to admit that we do not react only to the home-office modality, but also to the conditions in which we are living at the moment. Many people do not have a space available to use only as a work spot that can be separated completely from other home activities. We are aware that the number of people living in smaller places is increasing, and that the distribution of spaces and rooms doesn't always make it easier to separate work from home, especially when there are other family members, including children and elderly people. Therefore, there are two types of demands for emotional regulation: work-related and home-related. If we cannot avoid either one at the moment, we have to find alternatives to better establish the space and the time dedicated to work, to household chores, and to our families.

What are the paths that we can adopt?

To look for alternatives seeking an adequate coping method for this new situation and especially the home-office dynamic, we could start with some questions such as: how did I experience my job before this pandemic? What meanings and **meaningfulness** did this work have for me before? Is working in this home-office dynamic something that I wished for and saw positively? What did I value the most in my job? For instance, this could be: receiving money for my survival, achieving personal fulfillment, interacting with other people, feeling useful, being recognized socially, having status, accomplishing my tasks? Is this home-office dynamic making me re-analyze those values, **meaningfulness,** and meanings? Does it introduce new values? Which emotions do I recognize from living this moment that are related to my reflections about what links me to the work before and now? Which aspects of reality and my personal history mobilize these feelings, emotions, and affects?

You might be wondering, why so many questions? After all, we are searching for answers. But, honestly, answers are not that easy to find and one alternative hardly suits everyone. Nevertheless, questioning will help us stay connected to reality, identifying the sources of discomfort, using our best cognitive, emotional, and behavioral resources, and better understanding the situation we are living through. So, identifying what is the biggest problem that anguishes and/or frightens us, exploring our possibilities of reflection, is the first step towards creative, or at least previously unimagined, alternatives.

We do not know for how long you might be working in this home-office dynamic. So thinking that this is temporary attenuates unwanted emotions or, at least, puts them at a lower level of intensity. Let's do an exercise of **mental flexibilization** that might help attenuate anxiety. In this way, we are using our thoughts in a way that allows us to change our point of view, and in this way, we will be able to change our feelings

towards the problems that afflict us (English, Lee, John, & Gross, 2017; Gondim et al., 2015; Leahy, Tirch, & Napolitano, 2013).

Gradually, we need to **distinguish which activities we are able to do in a long-distance form and which resources in terms of infrastructure and personal preparation we need for that.** Distinguish and wisely negotiate whose responsibility it is to provide those resources: is it yours? Is it your company's or your employer's? Is it the public authority's? And, consequently, evaluating how the current scenario of this pandemic favors such negotiation and whether it is just yours or an organized collective's, with legal representatives. With that being said, it will help us to understand that there are boundaries. We don't always have power over everything. Probably we will feel less guilty if our adaptation to this home-office dynamic proves to be more complex than we thought.

We also have to learn how to create a hierarchy of our necessities and our possibilities for response: some things will surely have to be flexible. We will hardly be able to continue with a schedule that would work if we were in a place that is exclusively for work. Your time will be redirected to the accomplishment of tasks. In most cases it may not be possible to keep the same level of productivity, especially in the beginning. But, certainly, you will still need to demarcate some spheres of your life.

The meaningfulness of your work will only be defined or redefined if you are able to delimit time or work space at some level. For each one of us in our homes, our demarcations and adaptive actions might be different. In your case, what could be a great marker of that limit? Could a physical work space in your home be improvised? Could you limit the time? Could you share the tasks and time with other adults? Would it be important for you to dress and get ready in a way that you want? Would it be OK if you used a little flag and/or other objects when you cannot be disturbed? Could you use headphones to neutralize the noise around you and help your concentration?

Another path for building alternatives is not hesitating to ask for help from the people who are close to you. Consider the age of your children and think about how each one of them can help with a small task or chore. You can identify what can be divided and shared with other adults that live with you and sometimes those in the neighborhood. Recognizing that you need help and asking for it is an important step to regulatory processes. By the way, recent empirical research suggests that not only is the perception of counting on other people's help (social support) fundamental, but also the active process of seeking help is equally relevant and beneficial regarding personal well-being and mental health (Menéndez-Espina et al., 2019). Sharing your troubles and alternatives with friends through social media, even if from a distance, can be a way to cope with emotions that disturb you, reduce the feeling of loneliness, and learn new alternatives. Stay virtually connected with your relatives by using the technological resources that we have today. They are many. We know many workers may not possess any of these resources, but those who are working from home definitely do to a certain extent.

We could talk way more, give you other examples, but we are content with just helping you awaken your potential and stimulate it to create your own strategies. In the end, we can all learn from this situation, and remember: even though people have the same recipe, the dish might not taste the same. The biggest challenge and equally gratifying thing is to find our own particular way of preparing our own dish and then enjoying it.

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Work-family reconciliation in compulsory teleworking

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Covid-19: its impacts on work-family relationships

From conflict to reconciliation. From reconciliation to coexistence. During the quarantine, work and family live together: in daily contact, in the here and now. Today, they not only coexist, but compete for the same space at the same time: the home.

A significant number of workers are carrying out their activities remotely, on a compulsory basis, due to current circumstances, to contain the impacts of the new coronavirus pandemic. Perhaps never before has the boundary between work and family life been so tenuous, faulty, practically non-existent.

The demands overlap or alternate in a different, unprecedented routine in which work activities and domestic tasks are interspersed. People are forced to meet the needs of work and of those close to them who need more attention, such as children and adolescents who are out of school and the elderly who demand more care, almost simultaneously. Dealing with the question: "since you are here at home ..." can carry a high emotional cost and be quite exhausting.

In this moment, when individuals divide and share the chores, and (re)connect with the people around them – family and co-workers – new contracts and limits have to be established so that this living together is as harmonious as possible and preserves their bonds (family) and their results (individual and organizational).

Given this context in which what is private and what is public are now closer, and work, family, relaxation, and leisure are practiced in the same place and compete for space, challenges abound. However, some proposals can be applied in order to minimize detrimental effects on the performance and well-being of these workers and their families.

Although, in this text, we focus on the situation in which work started being done at home, it is important to note that the Covid-19 pandemic also affects, and quite strongly, the relations between work and family among the millions of workers who remain on duty at their workplaces, either because they are essential services (such as health professionals) or because they do not have the support of public policies that recognize the importance of social isolation as a strategy to prevent the advance of the pandemic. The fear of the potential contagion and the resulting anxiety are certainly elements that should affect their performance and their relationships at work as well as their lives with their families.

Teleworking and family relationships: what does the research tell us?

The domains of work and family are interdependent and affect one another, intervening in the different roles played by people (Eby et al., 2010; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). The search for balance between these spheres is a complex task, as their demands are not always easily reconciled. However, this interaction can also result in positive effects on each other (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

In remote work, establishing the boundary between work and family life and the attempt to balance them has been a concern (Costa, 2007), because sometimes work-family reconciliation is indicated by teleworkers as an advantage, and sometimes as a disadvantage associated with this modality. Studies point out an ambiguity regarding the relationship established with the family and the benefits attributed to the work developed in the domestic environment: on the one hand, working at home brings them together and makes it possible to handle and manage professional responsibilities along with personal and family needs (Kanellopoulos, 2011; Raghuram & Wiesenfeld, 2004), increasing the capacity for work-family reconciliation (Barros & Silva, 2010; Gaspar et al., 2014; Pereira Junior & Caetano, 2009); on the other hand, it means the limits between working hours or leisure and family interruptions can be potential sources of conflict (Aderaldo et al., 2017). In addition to the already known sources of conflict inherent in telework, the current context brings some new conditions, such as the fact that all family members (including children and adolescents) are at home every day and all day, in addition to the climate of financial and emotional instability and vulnerability that has affected a major segment of the workforce.

The expectation of balance in the reconciliation between work and family demands appears as one of the reasons that leads workers to voluntarily choose this format in the public sector (Abbad et al., 2019). There is also evidence that the high intensity of teleworking can intensify work-family conflicts (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). As a result of doing work at home, there may be confusion among those who live together, placing an expectation on the teleworker to assume more responsibilities regarding domestic demands, disrespecting this existing threshold (Allen et al., 2015).

While in planned teleworking, which was happening before the health requirements and prophylaxis measures for Covid-19, the issue of work-family reconciliation was already perceived and reported by teleworkers in a paradoxical way, being both desired and complicated (Nohara et al., 2010; Rafalski & Andrade, 2015), compulsory teleworking will demand more from the new teleworker. Perhaps this worker was not trained to work remotely, has not mastered all the technologies and tools required to deliver results at a distance, performs tasks incompatible with the format (either by the nature of the work or his/her characteristics), and even, in most of the cases, cannot rely on organizational policies to support this reconciliation.

Family and work demands: challenges to their reconciliation for workers and managers

As the teleworker assumes an important role in reconciling personal and professional demands, and there is an inevitable physical proximity of the family, accompanied by interruptions resulting from the family members' difficulty in understanding the configuration of this abruptly adopted modality, some guidelines may be useful in training workers to manage and reconcile the work-family interface.

Before this, however, two warnings are necessary: first, we must not exclusively task the worker with the responsibility for efficiency in reconciling the demands of work and family. It is essential, at this point, to also call on managers to think and act together, since at least in part, the success of compulsory teleworking will depend on the way in which such organizational agents direct the process; second, the alternatives presented must not be seen as magical, universal solutions. So, before proposing and implementing any type of action, one must take into consideration the characteristics of the organization, the nature of the work carried out, and mainly, the specific needs indicated by the new teleworkers.

Clark (2000) show us a theoretical model - which she calls border theory - aimed at explaining the relationships established between the occupational and family domains. In this model, workers are seen as "border crossers" between these two spheres that are, at the same time, so distinct and so close. The model also includes some organizational and individual tools that show the potential to help in finding a balance between work and family. Among the individual strategies pointed out by the author, the most notable are **active participation** in both domains (that is, making occupational and family roles important parts of the individual's identity) and **communication**, which involves sharing the events and challenges of one domain with members of the other domain (which will likely lead to gaining greater support and understanding). Another individual strategy that has been identified in the literature as a facilitator of work-family reconciliation is **coping**, which refers to the adoption of cognitive (such as routine planning), emotional (how to try to maintain a positive attitude), and behavioral (how to actively seek help when necessary) strategies in response to the difficulties encountered (Mendonça & Matos, 2015).

With regard to organizational tools and policies, Clark (2000) alerts us to the fact that their development necessarily involves the creation and strengthening of an organizational culture that is receptive to the family issues of its employees. Otherwise, the actions will be planned aiming exclusively at organizational interests, generating future frustrations. As far as organizational policies go, it is important to emphasize the need to monitor their effects in the medium and long term, and modify them based on the results obtained. Flexible working hours, for example, although being a policy at first sight highly desired and valued by workers, does not always contribute to minimizing work-family conflict. On the contrary, it can often encourage the professional to take on work tasks at atypical times (nights, weekends, etc.), intensifying the negative effects on the relationship between work and family (Oliveira et al., 2013). To minimize this negative effect, some organizations have promoted courses and training aimed at

equipping their employees to better manage their own time, in addition to developing coping strategies that help them deal with conflicts between work and family (Goulart-Junior et al., 2013).

Outcome and some referrals

Work and family are central to the lives of the largest portion of the Brazilian population and have always competed for time, dedication, and attention from its workers, especially from female workers. This competition often results, even in normal situations, in conflicts with a heavy burden for the people involved. From the moment that these domains, compulsorily, have to share the same space and time, it is necessary to ensure that such conflicts do not intensify, which would increase costs (of various natures) for all involved: individual, family, and organizations. It is also known that this relationship becomes much more complex when considering the different family arrangements (for example, having small children, having elderly people to care for, having support from the extended family, having the resources to count on support for home services), and the differences in support offered by organizations for such a change.

Many studies have already shown the important benefits resulting from a good interrelation established between the occupational and family domains. Among them are: improved physical and subjective well-being and quality of sleep, reduced stress and emotional exhaustion (Jaga et al., 2013; Poelmans et al., 2006; Steenbergen et al., 2007), an increase in the quality of the marital relationship and satisfaction with the family (Carlson et al., 2006; Hanson et al., 2006), and also an increase in positive behaviors toward the organization, such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Aryee et al., 2005; McNall et al., 2010). Therefore, engaging in work-family reconciliation becomes an essential pillar for us to go through the new challenges imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic less turbulently.

Unquestionably, the work context resulting from the pandemic posed challenges for which people had little or no preparation to face. Crisis situations like the one we live in today are also opportunities for learning and growth, not only in the professional dimension. Whenever we face a crisis situation, we are called upon to react and come up with creative solutions, which generates new knowledge and important learning. It is believed, therefore, that the rearrangements required by the pandemic can and should be seen as a unique opportunity for workers to develop individual skills for a better balance in meeting occupational and family demands, seeking to preserve their psychological well-being, so fundamental in dealing with the additional tensions of a world that lives through an occasion of so much suffering. On the other hand, it is essential that human resource managers rethink organizational practices and actions aimed at finding a balance between these two important spheres of life, expanding their sensitivity to the emotional demands that the current moment poses for all people.

Finally, it is important to recognize that the context of the pandemic introduces exceptional cognitive and emotional demands; demands to monitor information about what is happening in the world and in our country; demands to deal with our own emotional overload or of those close to us; demands to deal with the feeling of loss and the suffering of thousands of people around the world. Thus, you cannot expect the

same level of performance at work that you had before. It should be borne in mind that a fall in productivity is understandable and this cannot be a source of self-punishment or demands from employers. On the other hand, work activity can also constitute an important anchor so that people are not taken over by the emotional burden that surrounds the situation we are living through, with harmful consequences for ourselves and the family members with whom we live.

Certainly, when all this is over, the lessons learned will remain, which can be maintained and/or adapted to the new "normal" work context.

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Organizational adjustments and changes in times of the

COVID-19 pandemic

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Work change during the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has created great challenges for everyone in the most diverse fields. In the sphere of work, the requirement of social isolation for non-core activities has transformed the reality of most employees. Telecommuting, once the desired option of many, has now become a part of everyday life. New and unexpected demands have been made on us without necessarily being prepared to face them. We have suddenly found ourselves at home, adapting rooms for work, buying equipment, resolving Internet issues, and adjusting our routines and tasks while trying our best to balance the school life of our children, domestic chores, and concerns with physical and mental health.

These sudden work changes have imposed demands on employees in all organizations beyond the most obvious like the ergonomic and physical space requirements to facilitating the proper completion of tasks at home. They are also related to technical needs, from the identification of effective forms of communication, which are now completely virtual, to strategic demands related to the coordination and organization of collective work. The new reality we face challenges scientific knowledge in psychology, which is now called upon to provide practical answers and help people manage this new situation as well as possible. From the perspective of organizational psychology, one line of study is the effect of context on the group and the behavior, health, and well-being of workers. We have known for some time that the organizational context is not formed only by its physical aspects but mainly by the social relationships established within it. Thus, although we have distanced ourselves physically from the organization, we maintain social relationships formed within it and experience their effects. But is the management style adopted so far still adequate after this change in the way we work? Do greater changes in the organization's methods also need to be established? How should managers work with their teams? How should employees deal with their colleagues and managers? This text is intended to make people reflect on the cultural changes necessary for the management of telecommuting and to offer practical directions based on scientific evidence. To do so, we start by briefly surveying the empirical evidence on the relationship between culture, teams, change, and telecommuting and conclude with practical suggestions for the professional.

Organizational culture and telecommuting

Telecommuting is characterized by work performed away from the conventional workplace while maintaining contact through communication technologies (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015). Research in the field shows that telecommuters have higher productivity and higher satisfaction (at moderate levels of telecommuting), for example. However, it can also cause professional isolation and a loss of connection with the organization (Beauregard, Basile, & Canonic, 2019). Thus, both managers and the human resources area need to be aware and adapt the organizational culture to obtain the best possible results in this newly imposed reality.

It should also be noted that telecommuting challenges the traditional attitudes of managers who believe that their employees must be closely monitored and controlled. These managers will find it difficult to deal with the current situation. The new scenario requires building a culture of openness, trust, and a results-based management system (Beauregard, Basile, & Canon, 2019). In the case of teams, the need for trust is even more necessary, as success will only be achieved when it characterizes the relationships stablished between members. Thus, by trusting each other, workers can take personnel responsibility but focusing on a common goal, while keeping in mind that each employee has a greater spectrum of autonomy.

For remote teamwork to be feasible, there must be collective agreements on the expected outcomes. However, these must be mutual agreements and not impositions. The more workers realize that missed deliveries affect not only themselves but their teammates, the less likely they are to be delayed. Teamwork scholars, when discussing the effects of the interdependence of results, have long demonstrated increased effort because of this perceived dependence (Van der Vegt & Janssen, 2003).

For these suggestions to work, keep in mind that changing the behavior of organization members is the essence of organizational change, and also that any successful change will persist overtime only if members change their behavior at work in response to changes in organizational characteristics (Porras & Robertson, 1992). Individuals need to explore new behaviors that can be adapted to the new context. They also need to understand the reasons for their current reactions and behaviors. Models such as Isabella's (1990) present the individual's need to explore and test adaptive behaviors allowing them to monitor what happens to them and choose behavioral responses that will enable them to cope and resolve the situation.

During the pandemic, special attention must be paid to the workers' well-being, since social isolation is a mechanism adopted to preserve their and their families' health, although it can also trigger stress. Thus, there is also a need for an organizational culture that genuinely cares about workers. Studies in this field reveal that autonomous and egalitarian organizational cultures favor well-being (Porto & Ferreira, 2016). As for managers' actions regarding their teams, it is worth mentioning that periodic virtual meetings are beneficial, as they mitigate employees' feelings of isolation. Also, we should note that the definition of tasks to be performed must consider the particulars of the present moment. As for the workers, they need to assume their role as co-responsible for the survival of the organization and remember

that if it fails, all will be affected. Lastly, the organization needs to consider the demands of the new context and set feasible goals within these circumstances. Therefore, building a climate of co-responsibility based on trust must become an ever-present task.

Organizational change

Managing change involves creating a sense of urgency around the intended change; establishing a state of crisis, problem or opportunity that justifies it; aligning a vision of the future to be achieved; establishing a coalition around leadership and purpose; empowering and encouraging people to make it happen and endure; and planning and promoting results throughout the process (Kotter, 2012). Now, the sense of urgency is in place along with the crisis. It is up to workers to manage the next steps and handle the resistance and confrontations that will arise. People resist because they have little tolerance for change and do not realize its benefits and reasons, they fear losing things dear to them, and they distrust people who proposed the change or simply disagree with what is being proposed. Regarding the complex challenge of change and its inherent difficulties, studies have demonstrated certain facilitators of the process, such as credible leadership, the trust of followers, the formation and empowerment of other leaderships, innovative culture, communication, and a culture of systematic monitoring and responsibility, the last of these characterized by the ability to manage resources responsibly so as to reach the intended goals.

Recommendations

Based on these notes, we provide some recommendations to managers at this time of the pandemic.

1) **The organization should emphasize autonomy and creativity and promote the independence of action and thinking.** Managers should trust on workers and believe they have a sense of responsibility and maturity to achieve group goals. In this way, control and obedience are replaced by trust.

2) **Organizational actions should focus on promoting the well-being of employees and the community.** In this time of crisis, when resources are scarce, well-being must be a guiding principle for decisions alongside support   strategies.

3) **Trust in the organization depends on the perceived competence, genuine benevolence, and integrity of senior management.** Thus, there must be continuing efforts to ensure these characteristics through succession and selection processes, in addition to the training of professionals. At this time, these characteristics should be emphasized, disseminated, and practiced reinforcing this cultural aspect. On the other hand, management also needs to identify these characteristics in employees   to establish reciprocal relationships based on trust.

4) **Managers need to create a vision of the future** and establish the coalitions necessary to make changes in the desired direction.

5) **The training needs assessment should be observed** and trainings promoted so that people acquire the necessary skills for the new required behaviors.

6) **Plan and promote the results of change throughout the process through communication and leadership**. Of the many forms of communication, there is evidence of the effectiveness of using metaphors and practical examples to understand the context and need for change (Jansson, 2014). To front change, the

leader must be credible to those he leads, demonstrate an effective commitment to objectives and goals, and participate actively and directly in the change process. It is up to these leaders to communicate clearly and precisely the sense of urgency and purpose of change.

7) **Managers need to redefine their work goals** with clear follow-up criteria that give due consideration to the timing of the pandemic and the constraints and opportunities it brings.

8) **Managers must give continuous feedback** so that workers may realize their progress in their tasks.

9) **Periodic virtual meetings should be held to establish work goals**, as these contribute to team integration, the transmission of values, and organizational culture, as well as work managing and reducing social isolation.

Although these recommendations are not infallible solution to the challenges of managing telecommuting created by current circumstances, they will certainly contribute effectively to constructing an environment favorable to protecting everyone's well-being and maintaining satisfactory performance standards.

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