

How Remote Became the New Connected

As part of our TechCity Connect series, we delve into the world of remote working and learning. It's the hot topic of the moment, but how can firms approach it effectively? And how will it continue to shape your working and learning practices?

The current situation has changed the world of work. How will firms adapt?

With the world in lockdown, people are swapping their cubicles for spare bedrooms and logging on from home. For many, it's an extreme extension of a remote-working policy their employers had already implemented. For others, it's a shock to find the centre of their work universe suddenly out of bounds.

Either way, the crisis has created some major challenges for firms. Even the more technologically mature organisations will have been taken by surprise by the sheer speed of the change. However, firms still have to turn their attention to the longer term. In the same way it has changed mindsets around handwashing and hygiene, the ongoing crisis will likely see a huge impact on the way that businesses operate in future.

Will it even be possible to go back to the way they operated before? However long we need to stay at home, firms have some big questions to answer. For starters, how can they make the most of their remote working and learning processes? And how will this situation shape the future of business?

How the need for remote working is shaping the future face of business

The first major shift taking place is companies realising they need to move from business continuity planning (BCP) to business as usual (BAU). With no clear idea of when people will be able to leave their homes safely, firms have had to change the way they view the world of work. Managing remote teams is no longer seen as a short-term temporary obstacle to overcome; it's a new baseline for how people operate.



Those who saw remote working as a niche activity are likely playing catch-up as they work out how to scale-up their mobile processes in a way they can sustain for the foreseeable future.

Businesses are learning exactly what they can and can't achieve effectively away from the office. There's a good chance they'll discover a wide variety of functions they previously saw as office-bound that really don't need to take place on-premise. Conversely, they'll find out which processes are much more productive on-premise.

So, what will firms do with this insight? Will they try to get back to what used to be considered 'normal' or can they define new ways of working and learning?

Why firms need to start tackling the skills gap remotely

It's not just the world of work that's seeing a drastic shake-up. There's also a major impact on the future of learning and personal development.

Firms have identified what they see as 'talent gaps' preventing them from becoming more agile and delivering better outcomes. It doesn't help that technology is changing the nature of jobs and skills faster than organisations can keep up with.

In fact, an Open University survey found that nine out of ten UK businesses struggle with a shortage of digital skills (Code Institute, 2020). And the situation hasn't changed now people are based at home. If anything, it highlights the urgent need for new ways to deliver learning and development.

This is where an e-learning strategy becomes essential. Delivered correctly, it can provide better results and drive down costs. The big question is how businesses blend this with their current training and development processes. People are discovering the true power of online learning at a time when they're also realising how much they value in-person interactions.

Even when people return to their offices, we're likely to see online learning tools become a much bigger part of firms' personal development plans – especially if they see positive outcomes from the digital processes they're moving towards. It's all part of a wider change in our connection to work, learning and the world.

Discover more

Explore this topic further and discover how firms are adapting to the new digital workplace.

Join us for The Future of Working & Learning
6th May at 9:00 – 9:45 BST



Jane Gormley
Director of Employment Services



Shirley Finnerty
Modern Workplace & Devices Business Group Lead



Kelvin Prescott
Head of Enterprise Sales



Tom Kennedy
Head of Sales (Moderator)

