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Study of the Impact of Working at Home and the Fears of Returning to Work Among Managers and Professionals Who Are In Virtual Congruent Jobs and Who Are High Growth/Achievement Oriented

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STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF WORKING AT HOME AND THE FEARS OF RETURNING TO WORK AMONG MANAGERS AND PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE IN VIRTUAL CONGRUENT JOBS AND WHO ARE HIGH GROWTH/ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTED

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ABSTRACT

Using two surveys, this article examines employee opinions on working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. In March 2020 we chronicled the experience and reactions of 478 managers and professionals to the mandate they work at home. We found that a large portion of the respondents felt no significant loss in productivity and no reduction in job satisfaction. Most of the challenges they faced had involved efforts required to establish a facilitating home working environment and disruptions in the ease of collaboration with others. The opportunities overwhelmingly focused on the benefits of having more time to rebalance their work and home life coupled with enhanced autonomy. Eighty percent of the respondents feel that their organizations should continue to offer the work at home alternative and 50% of our sample prefer to return to the workplace. In a second survey in March 2021, 178 managers and professionals responded to questions regarding their fears about returning to work. Not only did many fear the consequences of catching the virus for themselves and their loved ones but the impact on their career, mistrust of management's ability to ensure safety in the workplace, and the price they may have to pay for their career aspirations were important issues. We conclude that this growth/achievement-oriented segment of the working population have been significantly humanized by their Covid experience and that a hybrid working model, appropriately designed, could offer important psychological benefits that would be mutually beneficial to the individual and the organization.

INTRODUCTION

The past three years of social distancing have brought to light the possibilities of significant contextual change in American work life after Covid. The interpersonal, structural, and physical dimensions of any job are the context factors (O*Net OnLine, n.d.) that determine how amenable the work is to being performed virtually. Thirty six percent of the jobs in America are such that they can be performed entirely off site. This is the major finding of a study conducted by the National Bureau of Economic Research (Dingel & Neiman, 2020). These jobs account for 46% of the

wages paid in America, and account for 36% to 51% of the jobs in the major metropolitan areas of the United States such as New York, Boston, Washington DC, San Francisco, Hartford, and Atlanta.

ON SITE VS WORKING AT HOME (WAH)

McKinsey consulting (Alexander et al., 2021, April 1) surveyed 5,043 Americans in business and government in December 2020. People expressed a strong need for more certainty about their post pandemic work environment. Forty seven percent of the respondents reported that

inadequate communication was a significant source of their anxiety regarding the future. They want their concerns to be heard. They want to know what the organization planners are doing to ensure their health and safety and what the plans are regarding a move toward a hybrid work model. Fifty two percent would prefer a more flexible working model when the pandemic is over. Thirty percent of the respondents said that they are likely to switch jobs if their organization goes back to a fully onsite model. The authors suggest that this could result in a severe loss of talent. Fears and hopes were expressed regarding at home and on-site working alternatives. At home advantages included safety, better work life balance and increased feelings of control and wellbeing. The opposite of each of these accrued to the onsite alternative. This survey also showed that, without a fully realized vaccination protocol there remains in the minds of many, at all levels of the organization, a significant threat to health and wellbeing. Those engaged in knowledge and information processing jobs such as professors, managers, researchers, and advisors of all types were in a better position for a relatively seamless transition from their office to their home with no loss in productivity. The post-pandemic organization will include a significant number of people who strongly desire the advantages of at home working, but whose job descriptions do not yet fit that mode.

In March 2021, Envoy consulting in England (Envoy, 2021) surveyed one thousand part-time and full-time employed adults. The results mirror what McKinsey found and more. Sixty six percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that they feared that their organization leadership will not adequately protect the health of the employees. Forty eight percent said that they would like to work some days remotely and 41% agreed with the statement that they would be willing to take a job with a lower salary if their company would offer a hybrid work model. Forty percent of these respondents said they would likely leave their job if it did not offer a hybrid work model once the

pandemic ends. Fifty six percent of the employees believe a hybrid work model would impact them in positive ways including less time and money spent on their travel to and from work (38%), better work life balance (30%) and improved work performance (21%). What a person needs to get done and who is going to be at work is an important factor in thirty seven percent of the respondents' preference for at home or on-site work. For office workers in this survey, 23% percent said that they would work at the office to see friends while 18% would do so in order to have contact with their supervisor.

Another European based study (Bolisani et al., 2020) surveyed five thousand seven hundred forty-eight people they identified as Knowledge Workers from seven countries between March and May 2020 whose jobs fit the profile of the types of positions that are most amenable to work at home (WAH). Peter Drucker (1959) described the Knowledge Worker as, "High Level workers who apply theoretical and analytical knowledge acquired by formal training to develop a product or service" (p. 67). They are managers and professionals in finance, education, law, medicine, science, and consulting. This study found that the three main advantages of working at home were:

1. Improved work-life balance: Instead of going to work and wasting commute time, you can enjoy the atmosphere at home and have more time for your social life.
2. Work efficiency: Instead of spending time on meetings and wasting time on meaningless tasks at work you can focus on your task without interruption.
3. Work control: Instead of being controlled, you can take a break when you want and have more control over your day.

The three disadvantages were:

1. Home office constraints: little contact with people and exercise, get out of home less often, and you are fixed in front of the computer and get disturbed by others at home.

2. Work uncertainties: Instead of finding meaning in work, the work situation is unclear as there is not enough to do, the remaining tasks are uninteresting, financial problems may occur and you can't focus on your work.
3. Inadequate tools: Instead of having easy access to what you need to perform your work you lose the valuable tools, work data and documents required to do your work adequately.

GROWTH NEED/ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION

The McKinsey and Envoy surveys demonstrate that a substantial proportion of their respondents in the general working population want the safety that working at home provides. Digital and Teleworking technologies that they have mastered during the lockdown offer more free time and self-determination. For many, this is a watershed where the prospect of much more working at home could become a post-Covid reality. But this might not be an attractive prospect for all. A cohort drawn from the general work population that this study is focusing on include those who aspire or belong to our culture's upper tier. This is the striving, achievement motivated, core of American business, who lead or are hoping to lead the rest of us; expecting everyone to embrace the character formed values of organization commitment and achievement. We are interested in finding out their response to the challenge of working at home. They are the people who have strong growth and achievement needs and for whom career success is an important element in their identity.

Growth need strength (GNS) refers to a person's desire to be challenged and grow in their job. Hackman and Oldham (1975) believe that individuals with a high growth need will respond more positively to jobs that are high on the core job dimensions of meaningfulness, autonomy, and feedback because such jobs provide opportunities for professional advancement. Tosi, Rizzo and Carroll (1986) define GNS as the extent to which a person desires to advance, to be in a challenging position and generally achieve.

Achievers believe that work and ability produce success while luck and social connections much less so (Rotter, 1989). They seek challenge and are willing to delay short term gratification in order to accomplish their goals (McClelland et al. 1953). They want to be challenged in their work, and love the competitive arenas that organizations provide. While for some, the growth need takes on the self-related enhancement of competence and mastery (White, 1959), for the achiever, growth leads to an enhancement of one's social esteem.

METHOD

Eleven weeks after the shutdown, twenty-five managers and professionals agreed to participate in a survey of what working from home felt like. They were attending an online Executive Development Program at a prestigious graduate business school. It was an excellent opportunity to survey samples of high achieving business managers and professionals to get their descriptions of how their day-to-day work has been affected by the shutdown and their preference for virtual vs. on-site alternatives. Because of our access to this population each semester we were able to conduct two surveys. The first survey took place in March 2020 and the second took place in March 2021.

The questionnaire was developed after a class discussion of the students' at home working experience during the lockdown. The result was a questionnaire that touched on six themes. They were: Job satisfaction, productivity, connection with coworkers, collaboration, attitude toward working at home and virtual vs. on site preference. Statements utilized a five-point Likert scale with an additional "Does Not Apply" category. Each person in the class was asked to send the questionnaire to individuals on their mailing list whose age, occupational status, and work values were like their own. In this study, gender was not identified because of an institutional restriction.

The result was a sample of 448 participants. One hundred eighty-six (42%) were managers and 262 (58%) were professionals. They were from 17 states and six foreign countries and had an

age distribution from 20 to 73. Two hundred fifty-nine (58%) were 20 to 39 years old and 189 (42%) were 40 to 73 years old. Sixty-six job titles were represented. A partial list of the categories includes Marketing, Research, Operations, Human Resources, Engineering, IT, Non-Profit, Teaching and Higher Education, Dentistry, Health Care, Art Administration, Finance, Accounting, Consulting, and Real Estate.

A subsample of 78 respondents completed an eleven-item achievement questionnaire (Smith & Karaman, 2019). The appendix provides the results that support the description of this cohort being homogeneous on the need for achievement. Seventy to 100% of the respondents answered agree or strongly agree to eight of the eleven achievement descriptors. This level of response homogeneity suggests that the achievement need is equally dominant in all of this sample's demographic categories.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out what this segment of the work population feels are the positive and negative aspects of their work at home experience?
2. How has working at home affected their productivity and job satisfaction?
3. What do they believe should be the future of the Work at Home alternative?
4. What fears are connected to going back to working on site?

RESULTS

The average number of weeks that the respondents had been working at home when these data were collected was six. The range was from 1 to 14 weeks and the standard deviation was 2.4 weeks. Table 1 presents the respondents experience of feeling productive and satisfied working virtually.

Table 1

Job Satisfaction and Productivity

Number	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Job Satisfaction						
1	I was satisfied with my job prior to covid	132 .29	196 .43	73 .16	18 .04	25 .06
3	I currently feel satisfied with my job	110 .25	205 .46	76 .17	37 .08	16 .03
Productivity						
8	I feel that my company is as productive working virtually as it has been.	95 .21	173 .39	76 .17	74 .17	22 .05
4	I am more productive working virtually than when I'm at the office	88 .20	86 .20	128 .29	107 .24	32 .07
6	I currently feel productive working virtually	133 .30	193 .43	52 .12	46 .10	21 .04

When a person is asked, "Are you satisfied with your job?" it is the sum of what it "feels like" that determines his or her answer. If what he or she does suits them, strains them at a level they can handle; if they are able to meet their standards of "personal good enough"; if they have a sense of permanence in their position and congenial relationships with others then their answer will be yes, and it is likely that they'll be productive members of the community.

Seventy three percent (73%) of the respondents reported that they were satisfied in their job before Covid and 71% reported being satisfied when they switched to working at home. The overall percentages for satisfaction remained the same, but when we looked at what each person said was their pre-covid and covid level of satisfaction, 30% reported an increase in satisfaction; 22% reported a decrease, and 40% felt that there was no change. These statistics suggest that offering the hybrid alternative could increase satisfaction by offering context alternatives that are congenial to individuals' preference.

Having people reporting to them is an important factor in the respondents' preference for the at home vs. on site alternative. Forty nine percent (49%) of the respondents who are managers felt more satisfied working from home and only 17% of the professionals felt the same.

Seventy three percent of all the respondents indicate that they are productive working virtually. Forty three percent of the managers feel more productive at home while 32% of the professionals feel the same.

If these people are achievers, then being less encumbered by social and administrative

distractions and having more self-determination and control could explain their enhanced productivity. Perhaps there are greater efficiencies available to managers in the virtual work setting because they can better control the constant interruption that Henry Mintzberg (2011) identified as one of the more baneful hallmarks of the manager's job.

Two hundred fifty-nine respondents were 20 to 39 years old which approximates the millennial generation. The remainder (142) are 40 to 60+ years old. The latter are the desktop and personal computer generation. The Millennials learned to use the computer to master virtual life space on the internet. We expected that the frequency of their reported satisfaction would be greater than the earlier generation because of their greater facility using the technology that at-home work requires. This was not the case. Seventy one percent of the millennials were satisfied before Covid and then 68% reported being satisfied working from home. Seventy-six percent of the Gen X respondents were satisfied before Covid and then 78% were satisfied working from home. This massive level of internet competence no doubt saved us.

Table 2

Connection and Collaboration

Number	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	I currently feel connected to my coworkers	52 .12	158 .35	95 .21	100 .22	32 .07
2	Working virtually has made it easier to work collaboratively	41 .09	54 .12	144 .32	120 .27	51 .11

Human connection in the workplace is the glue that holds the impersonal, formal structure together (Goffee & Jones, 1996). Being together at work with colleagues and feeling part of small informal groups is a source of support and positive emotion that enhances our resilience and day to day wellbeing (Frederickson, 1998; Warr, 2007). With separation comes the experience of being alone. For some people it's not an issue but for others it presents a problem it's bleak. These individuals lack the emotional supplies they find at work in terms of human interaction: sharing life stories, 'schmoozing', and chance encounters; in other words, all the casual, memorable times that make "a life" at work.

Ninety five percent of the respondents were no longer working in the company of others when these data were collected. Forty seven percent of the respondents were able to separate and make the necessary adjustments to remain connected. But this hasn't been the case for 29% of the sample. The remaining 21% were neutral on the question of their connection with their coworkers. Their disposition or the nature of the work may account for this.

While the computer facilitates personal connection for many and more as time goes on, collaboration is not as well served. Thirty eight percent of the

respondents do not feel that working virtually has made it easier for them to work collaboratively. To consider the impact that social and collaborative disconnection may have in the virtual work environment we correlated coworker connection and ease of collaboration with current job satisfaction and productivity. We then computed the coefficient of determination for each correlation to get an estimate of the proportion of variance in satisfaction and productivity that is explained by connection to coworkers and then to ease of collaboration in this sample. Table 3 provides these results.

Table 3

Connection to Coworkers and Ease of Collaboration Correlates of Job Satisfaction and Productivity

	Satisfaction		Productivity	
	Correlation	Coefficient of determination	Correlation	Coefficient of determination
Connection to coworkers	.53	28% of the variance in job satisfaction is explained by connection to coworkers	.39	15% of the variance in productivity is explained by connection to coworkers
Ease of collaboration	.42	18% of the variance in job satisfaction is explained by ease of collaboration	.46	21% of the variance in productivity is explained by ease of collaboration

When redesigning a work system this type of insight could be quite fruitful. These two correlates

should be central to work redesign in the virtual space.

Table 4

Attitude and Preference

Number	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7	Working virtually should be allowed more often after covid	204 .46	157 .35	56 .13	19 .04	9 .02
9	If given the option, I'd continue to work virtually		Yes	No	No response	
			224 .50	143 .32	81 .18	

The attitude of the respondents toward the virtual alternative is quite positive. Eighty one percent want the decision makers to allow people to continue working from home more often after Covid ends while only 50% want to continue working virtually after Covid. Twenty one

percent of the respondents who are managers prefer to continue working at home while 28% of professionals feel the same. From what we have seen so far, even though there is significant social and collaborative disconnection there is no loss in job satisfaction and productivity at home

when compared to pre-Covid levels. As we see in the data that follows, autonomy is a very important factor that inclines the majority of people to an appreciation for the “whole life” advantages of the hybrid form. Given that 32% of the respondents would not choose the option of working virtually for themselves; it is probably the case that they are endorsing a hybrid alternative for others. The question remains why these 32% prefer to be back in their office. Is it a manifestation of the task focus of the achiever, or the pain of social isolation felt by an extraverted temperament or perhaps their age or type of work? When we parsed this result by age and the type of work that the respondents perform we didn’t find that either variable explains

any of the variance in the preference to return. The need for attachment is one of four instinctual drives (Lawrence & Nohira, 2001) and stimulating as well as supportive social interaction has been part of our lives since early childhood.

OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGES

The respondents were asked to describe the opportunities and challenges that they have encountered working from home. We received responses from 321 respondents. We then did a theme analysis to identify the factor reflected in each statement. Table 4 lists the frequency percentages for each of thirteen opportunities and Table 6 lists the percentages for challenges.

Table 4

Percentages of Respondents’ Opportunity Responses N= 321

	N	Percent
Collaboration communication improvement.	46	.14
Increased productivity and efficiency.	44	.14
Reduced travel and meals expense.	17	.05
More self-directed in my work and daily activities.	48	.15
Better focus and concentration.	28	.09
Skilled enhancement	11	.03
More opportunity for flexibility in my work.	32	.10
More time for family and significant others.	25	.08
Health benefits and less stress.	35	.11
More self-available time.	70	.22
Enhanced work relationships.	15	.05
More time for work.	9	.03
Better work life balance.	8	.02
Total	388	

Taken by themselves, each statement is an interesting item for inclusion in a survey to determine its degree of impact within a sample such as ours.

Autonomy is a meaningful discovery in the data. In Table 5, we clustered three items from the list of

opportunities that we believe point to autonomy as a significant factor in the respondents’ at home working experience.

Table 5

Frequencies of Autonomy Related Opportunity themes N = 321

Item	Frequency	Percent
Flexibility	32	.09
Self-Direction	48	.15
Time/self	70	.22
Total	150	.46

Autonomy is a frequently discussed correlate of both job satisfaction and productivity in the management literature (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Ryan & Deci, 2000). It refers to freedom from constraint in our choice and action. It is fundamental to the self which takes its direction from within rather than from external influencers. There are three factors that the respondents mentioned that reflect this freedom. These factors are:

- **Flexibility**, which means that, in balancing their social and work activities, the extra time available in the at-home mode affords the opportunity for more scheduling discretion and better time management.
- **Self-directed** means the respondents feel less external influence and more freedom of choice.

- **Time/ Self** means additional time which the respondents have not specified for family involvement or as additional time available for their work.

No questions about autonomy were asked in our survey. Instead, 46% of the 321 respondents who commented on opportunities offered statements that indicate these three autonomy related items. We cannot calculate the correlation between these three factors and satisfaction and productivity, but because of the very large number of respondents who mentioned them, we have no hesitation in stating that autonomy is a major opportunity and its contribution to explaining the variance in satisfaction and productivity related to working at home will be an interesting question for further study. Table 6 presents the challenges that respondents experienced working at home.

Table 6

Percentages of Respondents' Challenge Responses N =369

Item	N	Percent
Communication.	28	.07
Coordination and collaboration.	15	.04
Focus add engagement.	32	.08
Work process change.	58	.15
Disconnection from coworkers.	5	.01
Increased workload and work life challenges.	37	.09
Domestic distractions	16	.04
Social disconnection.	44	.13
Technology difficulties.	21	.05
Disconnection from support and resources.	68	.17
Adjusting to new time demands and workplace adjustments.	45	.11
Total	369	

STUDY TWO: MARCH, 2021

The same method was used to develop our second survey as our first and the sample was drawn from the Spring 2021 Organization behavior class contacts. As in the previous study the class members were asked to select persons in their social network who had similar vocational values.

In this study, we focused on the impact of the fears that our one hundred seventy-eight respondents

experience when they contemplate and actually returned to their offices. The results were categorized into four categories: mistrust, personal vulnerability, family vulnerability, and career/job insecurity. These are presented in Tables 7-10.

Eighty-nine of the respondents in this survey were female and 88 were male. No statistically significant gender difference was found for any item in the survey.

Table 7

Fear Impact of Mistrust

Ques.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Does not apply
6	I do not believe our leaders and managers will keep our workplace safe.	28 15%	51 27%	51 27%	46 24%	9 5%
7	My colleagues will not follow mitigation rules.	51 27%	55 29%	48 25%	21 11%	8 4%
13	Some parts of the country do not know how to handle the virus.	98 52%	42 22%	20 11%	20 11%	5 3%

Mistrust always accompanies anxiety. Managers and leaders do not have a play book or track record that their employees can rely on for assurance that proper steps are taken to ensure work environment safety. So, home of course, is a “better place to be” as sung by Harry Chapin (1973). Coupled with this is the need for assurance that their managers and leaders will monitor the accommodation of all employees to ensure environmental safety. These results indicate that safety regulation and monitoring is now an important management role at every level of the organization. In a study of fear in the workplace (Gibaldi & Cusack, 2019) 68% of a sample of 740 managers and professionals drawn from the same research cohort reported that they feared what their managers thought of them and

an overwhelming majority, 98%, did not see their manager as someone they could rely on to provide support under challenging circumstances. These results seem to support that concern.

Given the diversity of regions of the country from which these data were collected it is remarkable that there should be such a high number of respondents who express fear that other parts of the country are less competent managers of the crisis. Given multiple locations in which many organizations do business, the movement of employees from one area to another could be a source of anxiety regarding their safety and therefore such organizations should be diligent in ensuring uniformity of mitigations throughout the organization.

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Table 8

Fear Impact of Personal Vulnerability

Ques.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Does not apply
1	I fear that I will contract the virus at my workplace.	47 25%	71 38%	33 18%	24 13%	11 6%
3	Commuting and using mass transit is a concern.	28 15%	44 23%	51 27%	37 20%	26 14%
5	Not being able to handle crowds on the street or in my office building.	50 27%	64 34%	29 15%	28 15%	11 6%

Feeling vulnerable to viral attack has been a constant for everyone. When we encounter a challenge that is more than we believe we can handle we are reassured when we have access to those who have the competence to help us. Throughout this crisis, given that it is something that we have never encountered before, there is plenty of room for stress creating doubt that the workplace is being properly monitored for safety as well as the means of travel to and from the workplace.

There are individual differences in one’s susceptibility to this kind of fear. Those who are sufficiently resilient, optimistic and risk tolerant are less prone to stress in this situation than others. It is important to consider the individual’s susceptibility to fear-related stress when assigning them to an at home or office work setting. Courage has now become a moderating variable in employees’ level of organization commitment and their perceptions of organization climate.

Table 9

Fear Impact of Family-Vulnerability

Ques.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Does not apply
12	I worry about bringing home the virus to my spouse or kids	76 40%	63 33%	22 12%	10 5%	15 8%
14	I'm concerned someone I love will get ill.	113 60%	54 29%	13 7%	5 3%	0 0%
2	I'm concerned with not having childcare for my children.	25 13%	16 9%	10 5%	12 6%	123 65%

Going back to work too soon increases the chances that others' health is jeopardized by our actions. This creates a form of work life role conflict that has not been encountered before in any white-collar occupation. More than any other factor in our list of 16, the avoidance of harming our family and loved ones stands head and shoulders above the self and career foci. It is reassuring to note the essential humanism in this result. Total dedication to work has found its upper limit.

It is surprising to find that so many responders chose "does not apply" regarding insufficient childcare. For 146 (78%) men and women in the sample, childcare concern is not an issue. It is worth noting how much more challenging it must be for high performing managers and professionals to negotiate the responsibilities of working at home and home schooling. The reason for this surprising result is an open question. It could be due to the delay of starting a family that is a common life choice for women and men with career-focused lifestyles.

Table 10

Fear Impact of Career/Job Insecurity

Ques.	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Does not apply
8	I fear losing my job because of the impact of the virus on my workplace.	25 13%	38 20%	59 31%	53 28%	10 5%
15	I am concerned about work-life conflicts and is my career worth the risks.	42 22%	52 28%	49 30%	34 18%	9 5%
16	I fear covid will interfere with my career advancement.	36 19%	51 27%	53 28%	41 22%	5 3%
9	I fear losing my job or other negative consequences because I expressed fears about returning.	19 10%	23 12%	52 28%	72 38%	20 11%
10	I am back at work, and I fear that the stress is having a negative impact on my job performance.	37 20%	53 28%	54 29%	35 19%	7 4%

These certainly could be the concerns of people with a high level of commitment to their work and for whom success is very important. They worry about their advancement; their ability to keep up their performance, whether the virus will cause them to lose their job and whether they are jeopardizing their status by raising questions about the way things are being handled. Given what we have just seen regarding the extremely high concern for their loved ones, it is not surprising that fifty percent of the respondents are wondering whether their commitment to their career is worth the risks. This is what happens when hard working people encounter interruptions and challenges that are beyond their control. It is unlikely that work life will go back to pre-Covid normal.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Concerns were reported regarding work process, home office setup, domestic interference, separation from coworkers and technological support. This could be evidence of the frustration of growth/achievement strivings that are caused by the work context changes, that made it more difficult initially to fulfill task goals. Forty-eight percent of these respondents had no experience working virtually and therefore there would be a period of adaptation where the need for support would be quite strong.

Having adapted to the change in a short period of time, there was no significant loss reported by the respondents in their overall perceived productivity and job satisfaction. However, the pre-Covid and Covid levels of satisfaction seemed to be dependent on one's personal preference for the on-site or WAH alternative. In addition, it was found that a substantial percentage of the respondents who have others reporting to them preferred the work at home alternative in comparison to professionals. This suggests that for modern day managers, the importance in face-to-face interaction (Mintzberg, 2011) is not as vital a component of the management job as it was in the past. Perhaps having gained greater facility with the social media aspect of the technology, the negative impact of the loss of personal contact is mitigated by the reduction

of interference. In addition to this, the movement toward employee self-reliance that has been described by Hirschhorn (1988) could very well be what is manifest in this result.

The results of the second survey underscore this self-reliance thesis and the human side of the covid pandemic becomes apparent. In a previous study (Gibaldi & Cusack, 2019) using the same protocol, 740 managers were surveyed on their fear at work. Among these managers and professionals, a very high level of mistrust of management was found that was replicated in the present study. In addition, it was found that very few saw their managers as persons who they would go to for emotional support. When dealing with the challenges that Covid threw at the respondents, many expressed doubt that their organization's senior management had the wherewithal to protect them from harm and that coming back was fraught with fear of the consequences that contracting the virus would have for themselves and their loved ones. Considering this, many question the price that they might have to pay for their career dedication. This theme plays out in the fact that half of these respondents seem to be convinced of the life enhancing value of the work from home alternative for themselves and, of the 50% whose choice is to work on site, 30% of them are among the 80% who endorse the proposal that their organizations continue to offer the work at home alternative to their employees.

A FINAL WORD

There are two polar opposites by Lawrence and Pirson (2015) that describe alternate views of the relationship between the organization and its employees which are economic and humanistic. In the economic approach, the employee is a depersonalized economic utility in the execution of the firm's functions. As agents of the stockholders' profit maximizing interests, managers and executive are overseers in their transactional relationships with their employees. Thus, when the median salary of a 'Knowledge Worker' is extraordinarily high as it is at Goldman Sacks or JP Morgan Chase, their CEOs can demand a 100% full time return to the office.

Thus, depending on level of salary received, an organization can disregard an employee's humanistic needs and personal life preferences and obligations.

It is our thesis in this paper that achievement is the dominant work value of the respondents in our sample; and prior to the Covid outbreak, they prioritized work and career challenge. As we have seen, the work at home experience has opened many of them up to a more humanistic view of their relationship with the firm. Their feeling of wellbeing brought about by the gift of time has opened them to expand their work life balance which reflects the "whole person" view of the Humanist Theory of the firm. When major investment firms encountered

the threat from their most talented people that they would quit if not permitted to have the work at home option, senior leadership gave in. Chase, Citibank, and Goldman head a long list of institutions that have accepted the hybrid alternative.

We are entering a new phase of the Postindustrial era. Hirschhorn (1988) describes Peter Drucker's Knowledge worker as a self-reliant service provider rather than an employee, a term that conjures a task performer rather than a critical thinker and problem solver. Add to this description the freedom of choice that hybrid allows and an era of increased freedom and maturity in work partnerships has begun.

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APPENDIX

A sub-sample of 78 respondents answered 11 items of the Context Achievement scale (Smith &

Karaman, 2019). Their level of agreement with each prompt indicates a high level of homogeneity of preference for descriptors that indicate the achievement motive.

Percentage of Respondents Who Agree or Strongly Agree

N=78

		Percent
1	I have a strong desire to be a success at the things that I do.	1.00
2	I try to follow the rule: Business before pleasure	.7
3	I can keep my mind on a task for a long period of time.	.77
4	How well I am performing in comparison to others is important to me.	.77
5	For me the enjoyment is more in the process of doing the task rather than savoring the success when the result when the task is done.	.42
6	In most projects I'd rather take responsibility for completion rather than be only a member	.73
7	I like to undertake projects that have some risk.	.65
8	I do not give up easily when faced with a difficult problem.	1.00
9	I prefer to have feedback on how I am doing when I'm working on a task	.76
10	I prefer things to be challenging	.76
11	I prefer projects that require intense effort for a long period of time	.26

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