

WORKPLACE STRATEGY IN A POSSIBLE CRISIS

In theory, there are many ways for us to successfully work remotely, but there is no time more important than now to really consider the best ways to work, should the coronavirus (COVID-19) make its way to South Africa

Words Hassan Shaikh

With all the attention around the coronavirus and the impact it is having worldwide, I started to consider what this meant for the workplace in South Africa should/when it reaches us. This article is not meant to create panic, but rather awareness as these are definitely things, we need to start considering should we have any confirmed cases in South Africa.

Here are some points to consider:

Options for remote working

Companies can identify their employees' requirements to work remotely i.e. connectivity, information access, meeting attendance, etc. and start with trial runs to ensure that these are achievable and reliable and that there is continuity with the success of the implementation for the remote working.

Desk sharing or communal/co-working workplaces

If your organisations has such a workspace or you work at a co-working workplace, ensure sanitising products are readily available and that there are clear instructions/policies on of how and when to utilise the products. Ask the management of these spaces the relevant questions on their policies and the implementation thereof

Consideration for others

Heard of the Ebola handshake? Even though handshakes are the most socially acceptable form of acknowledgement and greeting individuals, companies should consider alternative forms of greeting and openly communicate these internally and even with suppliers and clients.

It's not ideal that a potential worldwide health catastrophe will force companies to embrace remote working, but this is an opportunity to extend thinking to the benefits of a company's bottom line and the value to employees by reduced travel time to the office which can increase productivity and utilising the additional time on things that matter most.

Safety tips by the World Health Organisation:

- Wash your hand frequently
- Avoid touching eyes, nose & mouth
- Avoid close contact with people that have flu like symptoms that have been travelling to effected areas

