

Media Coverage

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Outlook India	2 Sep 2021	Online	https://www.outlookindia.com/outlookmoney/opinions-and-blogs/how-hr-organises-workplace-events-and-activities-during-the-pandemic-8548	How HR Organises Workplace Events and Activities During the Pandemic



The Covid-19 pandemic has brought in a sea of changes that has impacted nearly every aspect of our lives. In the last year alone, we have witnessed so many changes that one wouldn't expect to take place even in a decade. From the way we interact to the way we work; everything has shifted to a virtual platform. Even a year after, with lockdown restrictions in most places across the world, things continue to seemingly progress virtually.

As job roles have shifted remotely, taking place virtually, HR teams across organisations have been tasked with the challenge of ensuring this smooth transition of all functioning remotely. From hiring and induction to employee engagement activities, the team has to make sure that even in the absence of physical operations, alternative solutions are proposed and initiated.

Hiring and selecting new applicants virtually was a practice that many organisations followed before the pandemic, by using telephonic interviews and video calls as a tool to connect with candidates. However, organising employee engagement programs,

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review meets, training programs, performance evaluations, and so on was a fairly new field for them to tackle with, as most of these activities traditionally took place in an outdoor setting that demanded physical presence. HR teams had to think through innovative methods, logistical hurdles and adopt new platforms to make sure that the organisation functioned the way it was supposed to, even virtually.

Team-Building Activities

The organisation must take conscious efforts to initiate team building activities from time to time to create a sense of unity and community amongst employees. It is extremely important that employees get along with their fellow employees as they all have to work in tangent to achieve one common goal. Such activities can help lift employee's morale and improve group dynamics. It aids individual development, motivates employees to work together and helps in identifying group strength and weaknesses.

While in the normal setting these activities would be generally an outdoor activity set outside the office premises. The activities would have employees divided into groups, with various tasks assigned that they would have to complete collectively. Post Covid these activities due to restrictions and protocols have been shifted online with virtual games that are fostering team building. So, by conducting meetings on Zoom, Google meets, or Teams, employees are divided into groups and are assigned tasks, games, quizzes, and many more interactive games that will help break the ice and improve team relations. These interactive activities can range from a variety of options, all easily available on the internet.

Annual Meetings

In most organisations it is a norm to conduct annual meetings with shareholders, employees, and other stakeholders to address them about the decisions and plans in action to achieve organisation goals. In big organisations, with branches across cities, it is more of a cross-country affair where various employees attend these meetings. Depending on the organisation and meeting agenda, these conferences can be stretched over a couple of days.

Conducting such conferences to brief all stakeholders, the organisation must maintain transparency and should update them about the company's current standings, its future goals and plans underway. With pandemic restrictions, these conferences have seamlessly shifted on a virtual platform that allows the organisation to address the people of interest without any hassle.

Interactive Leadership Meetings

In uncertain times like these, it is important that HR organises initiatives that encourage trust in leadership. With employees working from home and the current volatile market, it is essential that leaders step up and take their employees in confidence.

In the absence of a physical workspace environment, there can be a sense of disconnect that can develop amongst employees. Such interactive sessions with senior management open up a space of conversation, make them feel involved, give them a chance to clear all their grievances and can also be a great platform to explore new opportunities for the organisation.

Fun Engagement Activities

Conducting fun activities and events that are not work-related is very important to increase the productivity of employees. It gives them a change of scenario, helps them unwind and boosts their morale. Organisations must remember that employees are humans and need to be motivated from time to time.

Given the pandemic, it is even more imperative that the organisation think of employee welfare. The current situation is grim, and most employees are tired of living this monotonous life out of their screens. Organising a series of engagement activities ranging from comic sessions, virtual parties, games, talent competitions, family days, and so on can really aid in fostering employee satisfaction.

Organisations must take conscious efforts to create a cheerful, compliant and stimulating workspace environment that encourages individual development and welfare. Creating such a dynamic ecosystem that thinks beyond just achieving organisation goals would not only improve employee satisfaction but would have a direct impact on productivity, staff turnover, innovation and would also help in creating a favourable brand image.

In the current situation, where virtual space continues to be the most conducive way to connect, HR teams must go out of their ways to think and curate innovate workplace activities and events that even in a virtual platform continue to motivate employees and create a feeling of oneness.

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