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News Ways of Working

A Toolbox for Public Workers

11 june 2021

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Adapted from the *Collaborative Work Plan in Public Administration*.

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1. Introduction

In light of the Informal Meeting of EU Public Administration Ministers in Lisbon on June 22, the Presidency presents a **Toolbox on New Ways of Working for Public Workers**.

This document comprises **three guides**:

- **Guide for Leading Teams in a Digital Environment,**

This Guide aims to support Public Administration managers in leading their teams in a digital environment, quickly adapting to new forms of organization and effectively pursuing objectives of public service.

- **Guide for Experimentation and Collaboration in the Context of Remote Working**

This Guide is intended to be a support tool for experimentation and collaboration in remote work, in times that demand an "alternative present", so that public institutions continue to actively support citizens and businesses in this particularly demanding context.

- **Guide to Health and Safety in Teleworking in Public Administration**

This Guide to Health and Safety in Teleworking in Public Administration is intended to act as an aggregator of guidelines issued by the national entities competent for health and safety at (tele)work for the Public Administration.

CONTEXT

Developed by the Portuguese Public Administration, the guides were initially intended to define guidelines for public services during the lockdown resulting from the sanitary crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The development of these support tools and innovative practices results from the workers participation and collaborative work between March and April 2020. These instruments were after disseminated, contributing to the maintenance of service activity in these new work environments.

About a year after the beginning of the practical effects of confinement and the massive adoption of remote work, it was found that the Public Administration has shown a distinctive capacity to ensure the continuity of work and public service. **Digital work environments have resulted in spaces of transformation and modernization of the Public Administration** with guaranteed delivery of public service value.

The accumulated experience allows foreseeing the evolution of the future of work, with the expected adoption of hybrid ways of working, simultaneously, in a face-to-face and remote regime.

It is precisely these **challenges of the future of work that make the tools developed up-to-date and cross-cutting to help ensure public responses to society's current and anticipated needs**.

The Presidency wishes that the above-described experience can inspire Member States in **fostering collaborative work between Public Administrations at European level** and that this **Toolbox can be used and improved by public workers and managers in all Member States and EU Institutions**.

THE NEW NORMAL

Public organisations have inevitably transformed remote work into a new normal, characterized by a set of circumstances that influence the focus of management and leadership approaches.

Within this new paradigm, new organisational and management priorities and new activities are established.

ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES OF REMOTE WORK

	Potential Advantages	Emerging challenges
Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility of schedules; • Freedom to work from home, having the necessary conditions: work space, computer, electricity, internet connection, headphones with microphone and VPN (if necessary); • Fewer interruptions; • More time for family and leisure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to separate personal from professional life; • Loneliness; • Different treatment compared to other colleagues who are in the office; • Mental health and ensuring an active social life.
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers stay longer in organizations; • Flexibility of conditions is highly appreciated by workers; • Reduction in office costs; • Greater recognition and institutional loyalty from workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productivity measurement for workers and managers; • Articulate communication between different departments, teams and workers; • Alignment of collective efforts; Creating and maintaining a positive and healthy organizational culture.

2. Guide for leading teams in a digital environment

The Guide for Leading Teams in a Digital Environment has been produced to support public administration managers adapt to a new way of working, and to develop their competencies towards leading teams in a digital environment.

The guide provides guidance and support on various aspects of leading people and teams remotely to achieve effective results and to create value for citizens and businesses. It addresses the use of digital technologies and resources, work organisation, creating stimulating work environments, communication, conducting meetings, and fostering trust, collaboration, initiative and innovation.

Leaders of public organisations live in exceptional times, we learn from them and these are the lessons and guidelines for the future for the new ways of working. The challenges lie in maintaining continuity of public service and taking advantage of opportunities to optimise and modernise processes through dematerialisation and to bring the public administration closer to the citizens.

Is it possible to lead teams in a disruptive environment while maintaining or increasing their productive capacity, even with a physical distance, in different locations?

We believe the answer is yes.

PRIORITIES AND ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN

<i>Priorities</i>	<i>Activities</i>
<i>People and teams</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement health and safety rules. • Protect and support people and restore levels of trust. • Mobilise and improve the morale of people and teams in a context of realigned human priorities (where health and safety stand out). • Strengthen everyone's autonomy and accountability. • Ensure work monitoring mechanisms and organisational alignment.
<i>Public services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess impacts and relationships with key stakeholders, citizens and businesses, service users, suppliers and partners. • Ensure continuity of services and compliance with legal requirements and even increase service delivery capacity in view of the mission or mandate. • Assess new needs and opportunities for improvement. • Adapt resources. • Ensure close management and monitoring of the change process.
<i>Operations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish coordination centres with emphasis on responsiveness and agility; • Secure the supply chain; • Carefully control the use of goods and resources; • Ensure the security of goods and information.
<i>Financial management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise budgets, projects and liquidity management; • Ensure cost management discipline; • Review and update management tools.

ORGANISATIONAL MATURITY

The leadership process to be established depends on the objectives pursued in the different organisations and will have to respond to their levels of maturity.

Maturity level	Scope	Goal
<p>Level 1</p> <p><i>Remote work in a context of contingency</i></p> <p><i>A context with few and difficult changes, mainly related to the use of technical resources</i></p>	<p>Development of essential functionalities only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtualisation of equipment, applications and the functions in the essential services only move to remote work; • Suspension of multiple activities for later reactivation; • Maintaining as much as possible the previous operating model; • Security concerns; • Point-to-point management with people or teams; • Limited transversal or peer-to-peer coordination. 	<p>Return to the traditional model, re-establishing the previous organisational systems.</p>
<p>Level 2</p> <p><i>Remote working incorporated in the new management model</i></p> <p><i>A context in which changes and the analysis carried out made it possible to establish new processes that will be maintained</i></p>	<p>Incorporation of change into the existing organisational model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New applications, processes and systems; • Elimination of low value activities in the new context; • Accountability of teams; • Control of work based on priorities and results; • More flexible and agile leadership; • Coordination of transversal teams and more advanced articulation mechanisms. 	<p>Evolve the management model, incorporating new new, digitalised and modernised processes, make distance working an additional tool for the organisation.</p>

LEADERSHIP

On the path of transformation towards the new leadership model, fundamental principles in the organisation of work will have to be identified.

- ✓ **Flexible and agile leadership:** Communicating frequently in a focused and organised way assumes relevance in a digital and remote context.
- ✓ **Involvement of all:** The collective performance in the context of remote work depends strongly on the level of involvement of each member and the relationship he/she establishes with the hierarchy and his/her colleagues. There must be concern about the quality of interaction in remote working.
- ✓ **Working periods balance:** Leadership has to create a balance between operational execution obligations and sharing quality time. Remote work requires high degrees of discipline and responsibility and therefore practices and rules should be established to facilitate this goal, marking not only moments and meetings for work and follow-up, but also meetings and interactions for personal sharing and professional development.
- ✓ **Planning and organisation:** Working at a distance requires more planning and greater anticipation of needs to increase productivity. Interactions and decisions should be supported by well-structured and prepared information and analysis.

NEW ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES

To fulfil the purposes of the new leadership models, organisations may establish new practices.

- ✓ **Definition of priorities:** Creation of a sequence of activities and projects to be developed by each organizational area, allowing a regular and constant flow of work to be maintained, reviewing its execution on a daily basis, and allowing people and teams to focus on the activities and projects of greatest value.
- ✓ **Organisation of smaller multidisciplinary work teams:** Creation of teams with a smaller dimension, definition of expected results with a smaller scope and shorter horizons and enabling product or service clear control.
- ✓ **Regular coordination and follow-up schedule:** Creation of routines of regular teleconference meetings that promote communication between people and teams, leading to organizational cohesion.
- ✓ **Results-orientation:** Focusing on specific objectives and results in pursuit of the mission and leadership styles that reinforce autonomy and accountability based on values, principles and behaviours.

ACCELERATORS FOR REMOTE-WORK LEADERSHIP

There is a set of management tools that, used correctly, can be accelerators for leadership in the context of remote working. We leave you some reflections on their use and their contribution.

- ✓ **Meeting's coordination and organisation:** The coordination and organisation of meetings are basic and indispensable essential activities to ensure efficiency and performance. They should be scheduled in advance, and contacts and technical requirements for each meeting should be sent in advance. The materials that will support the meeting (for example, presentations, files, documents or videos) should also be sent in advance. The meetings should be prepared, the schedule should be respected, and the concern with their efficiency and decision-making should prevail.
- ✓ **Training:** Training is a relevant component for the empowerment and valorisation of people, so it is important that training plans are maintained as much as possible and adapted to remote context.
- ✓ **Work environment:** The work environment and its positive management is of utmost relevance. The leadership of virtual teams should be able to create a balance between the concentration required by the operational execution and the sharing quality in contact with teams and collaborators. It is important to respect the working hours, balancing and separating professional from personal and family life.
- ✓ **Information and communication technologies:** The collaboration and communication tools will allow a permanent and direct connection with people and teams. Security and access requirements are critical components in the remote working model and must be carefully applied.

LIST OF REQUIREMENTS TO OPERATE IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Listed below is a set of requirements that allow organizations to support the adoption of remote work.

- 1) **Autonomy.** Prepare people to work with greater autonomy and greater risk management; greater autonomy implies that objectives are presented and discussed in great detail.
- 2) **Evaluation.** Training to work in result-oriented evaluation models, focusing more on objectives achievement and less on tasks or processes execution.
- 3) **Organisational culture change management.** Preparing people for new challenges, motivating them and offering them time to discover new ways of working effectively.
- 4) **Collaboration.** Mobilise teams to work more intensively in smaller but higher impact multidisciplinary groups; manage interdepartmental collaboration.
- 5) **People inclusion.** Support people who are not familiar with new working tools.
- 6) **Technological infrastructure.** Investing in technologies and their management.

- 7) **Flexibility.** To become a flexible leader, with the ability to adapt and to deal with VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) scenarios.
- 8) **Information management and definition of objectives.** Planning, defining objectives, distributing tasks, organising and sharing information in a digital context.
- 9) **Digital skills.** Promote training in digital competencies so that everyone is properly oriented and understands the digital environment.
- 10) **Emotional intelligence.** Provide psychological security, avoiding unnecessary and excessive pressure on people
- 11) **Networking.** Facilitate collaboration and cooperation in digital environments, as a facilitator of communication and knowledge sharing.
- 12) **Planning.** Plan and coordinate activities in a sequential and integrated manner.
- 13) **Strategic vision.** Capitalise on all opportunities for collaboration to improve the functioning of the organisation, using technology.

LIST OF KEY LEADERSHIP ISSUES

- 1) Immediate **objectives and timelines are clear** and take into account the need for adjustment according to priorities; instruments are available and shared.
- 2) Leaders and teams are aware of and **focused on priorities**.
- 3) Procedures are in place to regularly listen to individuals and teams to **detect difficulties, quickly identify and address challenges and maintain personal feedback** (e.g. through meetings).
- 4) There are ways of **assessing the level of service delivery** of teams and organisation; this information is disseminated.
- 5) There is a generalised policy of **sharing technical information internally** within the organization.
- 6) Leadership perceives and understands **people's working conditions, situation and personal environment** and acts by providing support; Leadership takes **specific actions that help people** to maintain balance and creates conditions to improve their performance.
- 7) **People's concerns about the organisation are responded** to in a timely manner, notably with regard to new rules or procedures to be followed, the fulfilment of obligations, the exercise of labour rights and the safeguarding of health and safety; there are consultations mechanisms and documents with answers to "frequently asked questions".
- 8) **Motivation and recognition mechanisms are ensured** and communicated internally; people are informed and aware.
- 9) People recognise that they are **professionally and personally supported by their leaders**, at the various levels of the organisation when working remotely.

LIST OF KEY ISSUES FOR ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- 1) **Calendars** on a daily, weekly and monthly schedule are defined and communicated; Calendars are appropriate to needs and work conditions.
- 2) The **organisation and size of teams** and the assignment of activities and projects are adjusted according to the circumstances.
- 3) There are moments and instruments to **collect contributions in the teams** with the aim of planning ongoing activities or projects, included or not in the activity plan;
- 4) There are moments of **involvement of teams and leadership** to launch activities or projects.
- 5) There are moments to **evaluate progress**, with bilateral or multilateral discussions.
- 6) Regular and widespread **communication of planning, progress and relevant information** is ensured.
- 7) **Work status** files are adopted and shared as a common reference (worklists).
- 8) **Shared files and work areas** are used, allowing each team member to access and provide inputs.
- 9) **Decisions are supported by information** gathered and organised timely for meetings or decision-making moments.
- 10) Activities and information gathering are foreseen to ensure **frequent monitoring, evaluation and communication** focused on the outcome or service.
- 11) Technical documentation is available to carry out remote work and to **ensure support** at all times.
- 12) It is ensured that **support areas remain active and available** act upon needs of the teams and the organisation.

LIST OF KEY QUESTIONS FOR THE COORDINATION AND ORGANISATION OF MEETINGS

- 1) **Regular meetings are scheduled** at all levels of the organisation with the necessary regularity depending on the nature of the teams, the participants and the circumstances.
- 2) **Timely scheduling of meetings** is ensured, allowing for adequate planning and conciliation between professional and personal working time.
- 3) The **definition and distribution of meeting agendas is ensured** timely; Individual presentations at meetings and **speaking times are clearly established**.
- 4) The **materials that will support the meeting are sent out in advance** (presentations, files, documents, videos); the meetings are prepared and time schedules are respected in order to ensure efficiency and objectivity of the meetings.

- 5) During the meeting, the **participation of all is guaranteed** in a focused and efficient manner; the coordinator must manage time.
- 6) **Notes of the meeting are made** and shared, with a list of participants and a summary of conclusions; it is defined who takes the minutes and shares it.
- 7) **Rules and recommendations have been created regarding the careful use of tools**, such as videoconferencing, telephone calls or email or chat; depending on the number of participants, the degree of formality and the urgency of the communication.

FINAL COMMENTS

To adapt to new ways of organising and working and to effectively lead teams in a digital context, organisations and their leaders need to foster a culture that reinforces three areas of values.

- ✓ **Understanding and empathy:** Leaders who create empathy and are aware of the constraints of their teams will gain the ability to overcome adversity.
- ✓ **Transparency:** In times of uncertainty and doubt, it is critical that leaders communicate clearly and engage the organisation, sharing responsibilities and risks.
- ✓ **Accountability and mission spirit:** Leaders should promote accountability of people and teams, manage for results, monitor performance and create new models to ensure better use of public resources.

3. Guide for remote experimentation and collaboration in the context of remote working

Remote working has become an inevitability that poses challenges to Public Administration, such as the difficulty of communication and collaboration in teams, the feeling of isolation, the inability to disconnect and the conciliation between personal, family and professional life. This guide contributes to making remote working collaborative and to ensure that the experimental approach remains a strategic option in the transformation of the Public Administration.

COMMUNICATION

FORMS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is one of the main components of successful teams. The reality of teleworking presents communication challenges for all stakeholders, which require balanced solutions. Teleworking workers can feel disconnected, so it is very important to understand the gaps in remote communication in order to bridge them.

The communication channels used in remote work are, as a rule, environmentally and sensorial "poorer" when compared to face-to-face work. Some problems can be reduced in a more sensorial "rich" environment, where additional communication signals, such as body language or facial expression are processed - as in a video conference. This avoids ambiguities that sometimes occur in channels such as chats, emails or phone calls and is also a way to create redundancy and ensure clarity. In a delocalised team, creating guidelines and guidance on how to communicate, which tools or channels to use and its purpose, helps to increase effectiveness in communication. By defining common rules that everyone must follow, it increases accountability and transparency among the team.

FORMS OF EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

In a context of remote collaboration with external teams, whether from other entities or even other teams from the same organisation, keeping the development of activities as smooth as possible can be a challenge.

Collaborative activities are designed according to the context in which they take place, the players who take part and their specific objectives and planning needs to be adapted, starting by **stabilising communication channels and routines between teams**.

In this context, **it is important to choose simple tools that are accessible to everyone**.

Depending on the type of project, **moments of regular contact with external partners may also be established**, as this will help maintain the work dynamic and also build collective knowledge and consolidate results.

The systematisation of **written status reports after collaborative and decision-making moments can help to establish clarity** between the parties.

PROJECT ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

REMOTE MEETINGS

Remote meetings, for reasons inherent to technological dependence or to the very usage experience, present several recurring challenges. This translate into loss of time and focus by the participants. Situations such as the technical difficulties that participants have in accessing the meetings, equipment that may not be adequate, interruptions, due to breaks in the internet signal, unexpected environmental noises that arise, are **problems that can be anticipated, avoided and solved**.

Participants should be encouraged to **enter the meetings a few minutes before the start time** so that they can test the equipment (headset, microphone and camera).

To avoid environmental noise and disconnections, **participants should also be in a quiet space with good internet access**.

To bring more efficiency to the meetings, **etiquette rules should be defined**, such as:

1. Silencing the microphone whenever you are not speaking;
2. Always keeping the camera on so that everyone can be seen;
3. Raising the hand to ask for the floor;
4. Raising the thumb or lowering it if you agree or disagree.

One way to increase the involvement and focus of participants is to **give everyone a chance to speak on a particular topic**, or to encourage participation at the end of meetings by asking questions or asking for suggestions.

To get everyone familiar with the features of the tools used during remote meetings, such as screen sharing or organising content in collaborative software, **promote rotating facilitation** of these types of activities.

TEAM OR PROJECT MANAGEMENT

In remote working, there are challenges to managing teams and projects. Among the most **common problems** are:

- the **multiplication of accountability tasks**, where a simple informal exchange between colleagues has to be converted into a planned follow-up call or a written message,
- **the monitoring of the involvement of partners** and the execution of planned tasks, aggravated when opportunities for autonomy are non-existent or limited;
- **the decentralisation of team members**, especially when they are on different schedules, which requires finding viable alternatives for meeting spaces and modes of team consultation.

Teams must find the **balance between autonomy and accountability** that is most appropriate for their work logic.

However, there are **3 principles of action** that can be considered:

1. **Support the performance of colleagues through self-validation tools.** Depending on the routines and skills of the teams, the range of options goes from a simple task list that colleagues update daily to the use of more complex project control tools.
2. **Introduce or generalise the use of reporting tools that are automated** - triggering automatic alerts, for example - and with visual components that promote (self-)awareness of the status of tasks (for example, highlighting risk situations).
3. **Define and create meeting spaces for the team**, which allow scheduling meetings – ideally with a predictable frequency that creates a virtuous routine - and which ensure a human contact that tends to be scarce in remote work. A common platform should be chosen for all colleagues and, if possible, a common channel should be kept permanently open to all of them.

Instead of maintaining routine means of control, the focus should be on **accountability and self-validation** as vectors to support the change of the work culture in the organisation.

The **creation of task lists** - daily or otherwise - serves both to support one's own personal work and to ensure a monitoring of teams oriented towards the creation of value for the organisation. These lists must be:

1. **Clear and unambiguous**, being broken down into sub-tasks as necessary and clearly indicating deadlines.
2. **Accessible to those who execute and those who control**, ideally allowing real-time access.
3. **Agreed in due time**, taking into account the required efforts and the most reasonable forecasts.
4. **Oriented towards the achievement of objectives through results.**

COLLABORATIVE WAY OF WORKING

There are **three types of distance in remote collaboration**: **physical** (location and time), **operational** (team size, conditions and technical skills) and **affinity** (values, trust and interdependence).

Each of these types of distance affects, sometimes decisively, the performance of remote teams. Moreover, when remote work plans are implemented, there is a **tendency to focus efforts only on the**

technical side of the work, providing support to team members in order to mitigate mainly the physical and operational distances.

Boosting the collaborative performance of a team is to **reduce the affinity distance by promoting communication** through regular videoconferences, as this is an effective way of getting closer.

Equally important, in remote working, is to **evaluate and redesign all personal interactions and activities** involving team members so that they translate into a digital experience that promotes efficient collaboration between those involved.

Increasing the performance of remote teams requires the **use of collaborative platforms for the exchange of information and co-creation of knowledge** by team members, through the **creation of collaborative documents or whiteboard simulators**.

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

DECENTRALISED NETWORKS AND VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

In the need to promote models and formats of remote interaction, whether working sessions or training sessions, some **compromise in the degree of involvement**, on the part of the remote participants, should be considered and ensure that the **activities developed are always (re)thought out in the light of their context**, so as to ensure the greatest possible efficiency.

Virtual communities are interactive communication networks, organised around a common interest or purpose shared by all its members, assuming an essential and decisively important space to respond to the challenges we are facing today. Their relevance is usually proportional to the more organised these communities are around the identity and particular needs of the participants, their **sharing of common interests and the fulfilment of specific objectives**.

In fulfilling their purpose, the activities of virtual communities are usually materialised through the **use of a set of communication tools and channels and collaborative work platforms**, namely, **document sharing and repository, discussion forums, instant messaging and videoconferencing**. In networks with heterogeneous experiences and profiles, it may make sense to create **thematic sub-groups within the communities**, enhancing the participation of their members according to their specific affinities.

CITIZENS AND COMPANIES

The principles of Open Administration are the essence of a democratic State committed to citizen participation and mutual trust in the provision of public services. Faced with the need to **organise virtual meeting sessions with citizens**, there are several models of citizen participation through digital channels:

1. **The holding of interactive votes or the asking of questions in real time** during a webinar;
2. The creation of digital platforms for the submission and **voting on proposals**;
3. The **opening of public consultation** processes for action plans;
4. The **creation of idea banks** or to concentrate citizens' proposals for improvement.

PROMOTION OF EXPERIMENTATION

RESEARCH

Correct problem definition implies research that provides structured and relevant data for decision-making and, at the same time, eradicates the temptation of hunches, ready-made ideas and crystallised routines. **Remote research has been a feasible and advantageous option.** An experimental project can thus continue to rely on the advantages of research, choosing from the available methodological arsenal the most appropriate instruments and techniques to respond to the impossibility of direct contact with other people.

To obtain data on large samples of individuals, ensuring a structured accumulation of up-to-date information on their characteristics and allowing for extensive analysis, **questionnaire surveys can be created from digital platforms.** These surveys have the advantage of allowing a longer and deferred response time, which adapts to the needs of the respondents.

To achieve insights of a **"qualitative" nature, remote interviews can be conducted,** taking advantage of the access created by audio-visual channels to adapt the application of interview scripts.

Using the relationships between the "real" world and the "virtual" world, **three methodological approaches can be adopted** on the interactions between digital technologies and human behaviours:

1. **Setting up virtual environments** to simulate "real" behaviours,
2. **Introducing technology directly in people's everyday contexts** through controlled experiences, using sensors or technological devices with the collaboration of their users or using probes of technological nature to map or gather data on real practices,
3. **Studying the contact membrane or the interface between machines and humans,** being able to carry out qualitative and detailed analyses of the user's experience to a digital platform.

CO-CREATION

Co-creation moments boost the quantity of ideas and also their qualities, by **holding remote collaborative sessions,** either to discuss ideas or to prioritise them.

It is possible to create a collaborative online platform where challenges are shared and participants are invited to submit solution proposals. Additionally, the platform can allow **voting** on the proposals with the greatest potential and thus **inform the decision-making** of the team responsible for the project. To develop a remote collaborative session with the **purpose of generating and prioritising ideas,** it is necessary to consider the following:

1. **Prepare the communication channel** where the session will be conducted;
2. **Prepare the collaborative platform,** sharing information or support manuals, if necessary;
3. **Invite participants to the session,** considering the following aspects:
 - i. Describe the objectives for the session, expected outcomes and agenda;

- ii. Time, duration and platform(s) to be used and extra resources (if additional consultations are required);
 - iii. Identify the facilitator(s) - it may be necessary to have more than one person leading the work;
 - iv. Recipients (if it makes sense, share the list of participants).
4. **Ask participants to test the communication channel and platform** before the session;
 5. **Ensure that the necessary equipment and platforms are in place**;
 6. **Demonstrate examples of what is asked of participants** during the exercises, giving clear instructions to ensure proper outcomes;
 7. After the session (could also be at the end of the session), **ask for feedback from participants** by completing an online survey;
 8. **Share all artefacts and documents** related to the session to participants after the session is completed.

EXPERIMENTATION

Experimentation must be among the most efficient approaches to successfully innovate. There is ample evidence that few approaches will be as quick and cheap to generate learning and to test ideas or hypotheses as experimentation. **Digital technologies**, due to their inherent characteristics, have **made the possibilities of experimentation exponential**, allowing to **validate a solution before implementing it at scale**, accumulating valuable lessons that allow **decreasing risks and learning from the improvement** attempts.

There are **five dimensions where experimentation may be developed**:

1. **At the level of public policies:** the creation of legislative sandboxes that allow conducting pilot tests to a certain public policy; or creating platforms so that the public participation and consultation of legislative processes is more widely scrutinised and participated.
2. **At the level of organisations:** testing new models of structuring teams and/or departments; exploring new ways of working, including tools, procedures, processes and internal policies.
3. **At the service level:** to learn whether a service, or part of a service proposal, is viable, efficient and meets the needs of those who use it, as well as the existing resources of the organisation which is responsible for providing and maintaining that service. It studies how the people involved in the service relate to and interact with the touch points arranged throughout the experience of the service itself.
4. **At the product level:** testing the experience and flows of use with a given contact point or channel. Issues related to sensory and cognitive experience are analysed, such as the usability and accessibility of the user interfaces.
5. **At the content level:** Experiment with different approaches to communication artefacts, such as words, images and messages that make up the interactions of services and products.

4. Guide to health and safety in teleworking in public administration

The need of adjusting to new workplaces different from the usual ones, especially home, new schedules and new work rhythms has risen a set of questions related to health and safety at remote work.

This Guide intends to **raise awareness on potential risks of remote working**, providing guidance towards **safety and health in teleworking in public administration**.

CYBERSECURITY

The services allowing the connection to servers, as well as users' own devices or organizations', are in a vulnerable situation when connected online. Therefore, **safe connections are required**.

The majority of **firewalls** in the market offers the possibility of **access configuration**, so that users can **connect their devices remotely and safely** to the entities' resources.

Whether it is through SSL or IPSEC protocols, remote access online connections allow that users' communication is done through a safe channel and do no harm to the entities' resources.

But there is more than safe communications: it is also **necessary to make teleworking happening in a private and safe environment** as possible, taking into account that workers often use devices and equipment from the organization and/or their own personal devices.

Then, it is highly recommended to:

- ✓ **Change frequently WI-FI and router passwords;**
- ✓ Use **updated devices** and applications;
- ✓ Use **safe passwords** and **block devices** when not being used;
- ✓ **Use a code** for accessing your devices;
- ✓ **Beware with your USB devices;**
- ✓ Do a **backup copy**;
- ✓ **Do not use devices without any antimalware protection;**
- ✓ Be vigilant to your inbox and **avoid phishing**.

WELL-BEING

ANXIETY

Telework may tend to **blur the boundaries** between work, leisure and other activities, which can **increase stress levels**. Loneliness and difficulties in time management, when working from home, present **risks to psychosocial health**.

It is important to **focus on the "here and now"** and learn to identify the disturbing thoughts.

It is important to **invest efforts in what is possible to control** and share feelings and emotions with those who are close, such as friends and family.

At the end of the day, **it is helpful to take stock of the positives that have taken place throughout the day and make a plan for the next day**. It's also good to **create space and a daily moment of relaxation**.

A **good working environment and competent leadership** are crucial for the well-being and productivity of workers.

Managers must **reinforce communication and reveal concern** for the well-being of their employees. **Motivation is a key factor** in mobilizing remote workers for a **collective mission**, involving them in the process of adapting and planning solutions. **Planning can help reduce anxiety at work**, therefore, short and medium-term goals should be promoted, as well as promoting contact and collaboration among workers.

It is essential to respect the **time for breaks and rest, whether you are a worker or a manager**.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

A healthy management of the family environment requires the **organization of a daily routine that meets everyone's needs** and that balances moments of work and leisure, interaction and autonomy, and time for one's own.

The possibility of balancing professional life with personal and family lives is crucial when working remotely. The way one delimits the professional space from the personal and family space influences the dimensions of the life of those who work remotely. Identifying the routines that are most productive and that cause well-being is the first step towards finding that balance.

Establishing physical, relational and scheduling limits between personal, family and professional life and readjusting them is a way to improve the conditions of remote work, especially if it is done from home. **There is no magic formula** and it is advisable to **plan ahead all the activities of the day** - including personal life activities - in order to complete all the necessary tasks and avoid the anxiety of not foreseeing what is going to happen.

MANAGE AND RESOLVE CONFLICTS POSITIVELY

“As a rule, teleworking requires more intense levels of work and increases the likelihood of work-family conflicts” (cf. ILO report of Apr-2019).

Reconciling multiple roles in the same physical space (for example, working remotely, taking care of the house, taking care of minor or major dependents full-time) is very **demanding and can make us suddenly feel overwhelmed and worn out**. The appearance of some conflicts is understandable and practically inevitable.

Maintain serenity and a calm attitude, maintain usual routines and schedules, exercise, respect each other's space, reinforce positive communication, actively listen, increase tolerance and withdraw when you feel that "you can't take it anymore" or that the conflict will worsen.

Conflict is part of life. **Conflicts are not always negative events.** Depending on how we deal with and manage them, **they can also have positive consequences, enable positive change for everyone,** and strengthen bonds and relationships with those we care about.

Avoid accusations and value judgments, **show yourself available to dialogue and resolve the conflict,** put yourself in the other's shoes, clarify thoughts and/or feelings, negotiate rather than compete, focus on your behaviour, apologize and accept excuses without resentment, intervene when conflict between children starts to escalate and cooperate for the common good.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Alternate work, with a **few minutes of physical exercise,** to keep yourself physically and mentally active. It is important to keep active while at home, **avoiding sitting for more than 30 minutes and, whenever possible, alternating sitting and standing positions while working at the computer.**

Substantially reducing your physical activity and/or increasing your sedentary behaviour (i.e., more time sitting, reclining or lying down) can damage health, well-being and quality of life.

POSTURE

The worker must create a **safe and healthy work environment,** obeying a set of basic rules, at the level of reorganization of the work environment regarding the chair and table, monitor, keyboard and mouse and with **a set of organizational measures, highlighting the breaks and gymnastics.**

Solitary work in a remote regime often takes **many hours at a time in front of the computer,** **contributing to the adoption of incorrect postures** and the appearance of musculoskeletal injuries.

ROUTINE AND TIME MANAGEMENT

Adapting to new routines can be slow, create instability and decrease productivity.

Keep up your routines and activities. Get up, get dressed and eat on time. When working remotely, **choose a quiet place and ask not to be disturbed.** As much as possible, **keep other routines intact, such as work schedules, meals and sleep.**

SLEEP

Teleworking may mean no strict working schedules and **sleep is often of the aspects to be neglected** when time management gets more difficult. Considering the importance of sleep to ensure the well-being, quality of life and physical and mental health of workers, it is important to adopt behaviours that **promote quality sleep:**

- ✓ **Keep regular bedtime and wake up times.**
- ✓ **Sleep as long as you need** (no more and no less).

- ✓ **Be reasonable in the exceptions to the rule** (including the ones regarding leisure times, such as parties and anything that involves changes in schedules).
- ✓ **Keep a balanced daily routine** (work, leisure, sport, food).
- ✓ **Have a good sleep environment** (calm, no technologies and a comfortable temperature).
- ✓ **Learn to have a good relationship with sleep** (nobody does well what they don't like!)
- ✓ **Be aware of symptoms and don't let sleep problems get worse.** Asking for help at the right time is essential to prevent sleep disturbances and ensure a good quality of life.



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