Preliminary frameworks and models for telework maturity within organisations

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Telemark, a feasible, productive and complementary solution in the competitive market? An exploratory study within local councils of the impact of teleworking in terms of maturity, transition and transformation of working practices.

Qualitative frame

Telemark is a binary model of non-ICT work. Telemark is a three-part framework: i) that work, process, product and of output of a digital form, created in digital environments; ii) and that work, process, product and of output of a digital form, created in digital environments; and iii) with resources that is, writing, audio and video applications of a digital form.

Telemark, thus, is a transformative work environment and one that is, a level of significance, equal to an enhancement of, or an improvement to, the pre-transitional state of that work. Telemark would be left behind and complexity to job function(s). Examples of process and output transformations include: writing, typing, paper reports to digital documents, data transferring to databases and human interaction within the physical framework to online interactions within digital frameworks such as emails, forums, bulletin boards, VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) and streaming videos. Compared to non-ICT related work forms, telework as a technological infrastructure is unique in terms of three concurrent, aspects: i) the capability to work at a relatively higher standards of continuity that is, at any time as per asynchronous communication, to connect, operate and interact with others, ii) the capability to work at any location of physical space, notably, at a distance from the designated or traditional, office place and space, and iii) at a minimum, akin to, or consistent with organisational standards of non-ICT process, product and of output.

Metrics and KPIs within qualitative frame

Qualitative units of telework as per above represent identifiable units of working practices within an organisational setting such that we have parameters within which to target our investigation. Councils would be representative of potential case studies for research owing in large part to metrics and KPIs that are established within this sector as per government protocol. Metrics and KPIs would provide a measure of our research in understanding the benefit of the impact of telework for an organisation. We would further posit data in a meaningful form in terms of themes and taxonomies.

Telemark maturity within organisations.

Telemark maturity

Whilst telemark is not a new concept or reality (World at Work, 2009; Cited In: Sener and Bhat, 2009, p.1) over many years it has not delivered widely in terms of modernisation of the workplace (Pyörälä, 2011, p.386). Expanding level of change in technology in terms of adoption rates and advancement has each contributed to and cemented the infrastructure layer (see figure 2) of the transformation process. Today, the infrastructure layer has materialised to the extent that it would now present a sustainable platform for telework to exist in terms of longevity. As the size of each macro level layer correlates to time, subsequent layers would be formed in decreasing time scales. To avoid being left behind, the focus for telework now switches to strategic and human resource capabilities within the organisation to adopt and implement telework sooner rather than later, in order to maintain position and continuity ahead. Early positioning may also be a potential tool for management. We do understand that in any type of change we may also be met with resistance or restraining forces to change. There can be a number of restraining forces that decelerate rates of growth. At a macro level, organisations may seek a level of governance in terms of employment contracts and agreements to establish telework as an official working practice. Governance (see Gruber, 2010) would form two functions: firstly, a protection mechanism that is, to make our teleworking infrastructure that is available to, and operating to the benefit of the organisation. Secondly, to promote and create an environment that is hospitable to telework that is, an alignment to a community of teleworking practice, namely, Layer 3. Thus, governance would be a driving force of change. The transformer model would be a key tool for an assessment of the maturity of an organisation to telework in terms of viability and feasibility.

Themes and taxonomy

Taxonomies of telework would add to existing literature as there is no common framework of terms other than three broad categories: namely, individual, (human resource), organisation and environment (see Daniels et al., 2001). Taxonomies (figure 1) are derived from a review of the alignment of these themes to the meta-model (figure 2 above) and substitution each of the three themes with the first three macro and micro level layers (figure 1 opposite) namely: i) infrastructure and education; ii) security and governance, and iii) teams and communities, respectively. Within each of these themes exist taxonomies at high and low levels. There are six high level taxonomies (figure 1) namely: individual, employment, culture, continuity, competence and regulation. For each of these taxonomies there are at least six low level forms. In this post, we posit one level example for each high level respectively in terms of telework barriers (Figure 2).

References


