

Part-time and freelance vs. full-time work: who is going to win?

Even before the pandemic, remote work, part-time work, and freelance have been gaining popularity. Global lockdowns have turned the option of remote work into a requirement. Large and small businesses had to adjust their operations to accommodate the new reality. It became apparent that remote work is a sustainable option for the majority of businesses. At the same time, remote work or freelance cannot replace full-time work on-site completely. Let's delve into the topic and understand why.

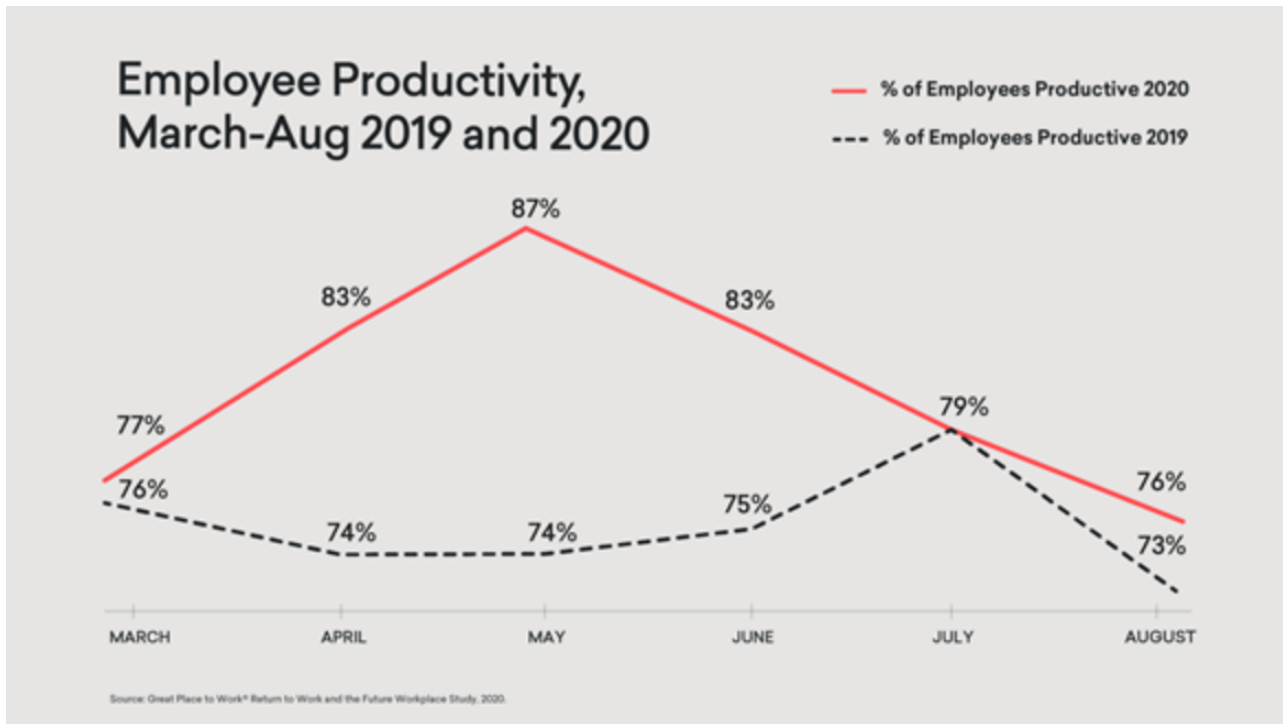
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The lockdown test drive of a remote culture

Remote work or freelance has its clear benefits. The primary one is that it allows for a better work-life balance with an increase in productivity. Removing commute from the working routine means adding back 2-3 hours daily to an employee's life. It is a considerable amount of time that is available for family, rest, and entertainment. The cost savings from removing the commute are also a significant factor contributing to the benefits of remote work.

It is no wonder that multiple studies indicated that remote work has increased productivity. For instance, the productivity rate *increased* from 74% in May 2019 to 87% in May 2020. A similar difference was observable during the subsequent months of the pandemic.



Employees reported lower degrees of absenteeism because of the reduced micromanagement factor. A large share of workers improved their attitude towards their organisation because of the larger degree of freedom. The flexibility combined with new technology solutions contributed to improved working conditions. These benefits led to a massive turnover after the pandemic when many companies decided to require an in-office presence.

Just as almost any other good thing, remote work and freelance have their drawbacks. A share of employees reported the negative effects of distractions in the home working environment. These could range from the location of the home premises to family members and roommates also working remotely. In addition, the isolation aspect of remote work was limiting interactions with other people, which could negatively affect certain workers. While the work-life balance improved for the majority of employees, some reported pressures to work during their time off. These requests were blurring the line between personal life and work.

The technology aspect remained a major issue for many companies and employees. It was particularly valid for those working with sensitive data and information. The need to preserve security and confidentiality for the home office was becoming a responsibility of an employee without the actual accountability in case of a major breach. Some minor issues, such as internet connectivity could also impair the working process. Managing new employees was a complexity, especially during the onboarding phases.

“Freelancing was my first commercial design experience. Many people advised me to start from there and get my first orders. It is a useful tip since a beginner can’t just get into a big company right away. The main advantages of freelancing are higher earnings, complete freedom, and interaction with clients. On the other hand, you get quick burnout, ruthless rating systems, and fierce competition.

Now I am generally more conscious of balancing my life and work, so I decided to switch to the office, working with the global financial ecosystem Kyrrex. And I really have no regrets. As a freelancer before, I faced a lack of communication.

So, I am delighted with the atmosphere in our team, and I really appreciate the people I work every day with. All of them, designers, developers, marketers, communications specialists, are strong professionals, who set high standards and always are ‘raising the bar’. When you are learning from the best and trying to catch up, you will develop yourself and definitely succeed in a workplace” — commented by Illya Lototskiy, UI/UX Designer at [Kyrrex](#).

Why part-time and freelance will never

replace full-time work?

So far, it has been quite clear that the benefits of remote work outweigh the drawbacks. Nevertheless, some professions require in-person presence. These include doctors, nurses, engineers, technicians, public transportation drivers, retail workers, and others. In fact, their on-site presence is essential for the functioning of society, which gave them the status of “critical workers” during the pandemic. Making these positions remote is impossible at the moment, even with the existing technology.

The advances in technology and automation support the trend of moving from traditional in-office work to remote, freelance, and part-time. Thus, companies see clear financial benefits from automating the processes and eliminating the need to purchase, rent, and maintain large office spaces.

At the same time, physical presence remains a “must” condition for critical positions. Automating these positions or making them remote does not seem feasible or possible in the foreseeable future. This again brings us to the conclusion that part-time and freelance will not replace full-time work, despite all the benefits.

However, with the new trend for remote work, it became apparent that asking an employee to remain on-site during working hours will require a certain premium. It can be the additional compensation, insurance benefits, workplace amenities, or all of the above.

The technology companies were amongst the first ones to capture this trend and design their offices in the most employee-friendly manner possible. It seems that the businesses in the other industries will have to follow their example in case they want to hire and retain a full-time workforce. Even though we will not see the extinction of offices, they will definitely undergo a big change.

Article by Maddyneess UK