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How Technology Has Changed the Workplace

Every decade for the last century, a new technology has been introduced into the workplace that has fundamentally changed how workplaces function. Learning how technological advancements have impacted the workplace can provide valuable insights for all employees and create better understanding and collaboration between coworkers of all ages. Following are some considerations which may be helpful.



Efficiency is Less Personal - All businesses strive for efficiency. With technology, one of the easiest places to create efficiency is with communication.

In many cases, face to face meetings are replaced with phone calls, emails, and now text or instant message, but consider the distance created with each technological advance. This has made the workplace much more efficient, but coworkers don't interact as much on a personal level. Technology-facilitated communication may serve to isolate workers as it takes the place of face-to-face interactions. Coworkers do not spend as much time together, so team work and interpersonal skills may deteriorate. Coworkers with personal connections to each other often understand each other better. Conflicts are less likely to escalate when there is personal understanding. Having the ability to engage with facial and verbal expression are essential to this as well.

Bringing the Personal to the Office - Efficiency of communication can also blur the lines between work and personal. Before cell phones if a person got a call from their child at work it was considered disruptive, today parents regularly text their children during the workday. These tools now make it easier for individuals to effectively and happily balance work and life.

Bringing the Office to the Personal - technology has changed the physical location of work. Rather than commuting to an office or work site, employees may work at home. Many companies find telecommuting is efficient but it also blurs the line between work time and personal time, making it more difficult to "leave work" because work is also home.

Information is easily accessible - Technological advancements have allowed businesses to compile, analyze, and now share information like never before. These advancements have also changed how employees seek out education. Where previously an employee seeking knowledge would need to take a class or find a subject matter expert, they can now find most of the information they need in digital archives or on the internet. This is a huge advantage to those familiar with technology, but can place those who are not at a disadvantage.