

Editorial

Javier Bajer

Presence

/ˈprez.əns/ 'the fact that someone or something is in a place' (Cambridge Dictionary)

Most of our world is debating whether people can truly work, learn or relate virtually, given we now have the technology to make it happen.

Businesses, hospitals and schools alike are being confronted by a plethora of clashing perspectives which range from the most radical work-from-anywhere position to those desperate to go back to some sort of normal. Both sides of the argument are strong and reasonable, which poses a new problem because, whatever we do, someone is not going to be happy.

And here is me, adding yet another perspective to an already overcrowded conversation.

At some point, most pen pals and virtual daters begin to plan their physical encounter. In fact, meeting in person becomes a big purpose for them.

What do we get when we are in the same place and at the same time with other human beings? Why cannot we just continue to exist from the comfort of our homes and forget about it all? Why are restaurants packed and roads jammed again? Is not food delivered to your front door good enough for you? What is wrong with clicking on a link and immediately joining 20 other people in a "room" where, for the first time ever, everyone shows up on time, does not interrupt and raise their hands when they want to politely express their opinions?

We get a much better image of a footballer kicking a ball in our 80-inch smart TV screen. We can pause, replay, save and even share with our mates. So why do people still pay a lot of money to join thousands of others, queueing for hours to sit next to a very loud and smelly person they do not even know, missing all the details of the game they came to watch?

I think it is all down to presence. Being in a place, perhaps, after all, is an essential part of what makes us human beings.

Enjoy this amazing issue of Strategic HR Review.

Best,

Javier Bajer, Cultural Architect

Editor-in-Chief, Strategic HR Review

@javierbajer