

FUTURE OF WORK

Building a new work experience together at
Societe Generale

July 2020



FOREWORD.....	4
Background.....	4
Initiative	4
Acknowledgements	8
FORCED TELECOMMUTING FOR ALL	9
A very mixed start	9
Lockdown: defining and revealing an uneven playing field	10
A popular organisation method	11
STRONG ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF TELECOMMUTING.....	13
Advantages for employees	13
Advantages for the company	14
Positive impact on society and the environment.....	17
UNIQUE CHALLENGES FOR EMPLOYEES WITH CUSTOMER CONTACT	18
Telecommuting and the digitalisation of customer relations	18
Focus on the BDDF network	19
ESTABLISHING A COMMON, OPEN AND FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK	20
Ensuring equal access to telecommuting.....	20
No to full-time remote work, yes to the hybrid model!.....	22
Making telecommuting flexible.....	23
Allow the business lines to organise telecommuting for their scope	25
MAKING TELECOMMUTING A RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATIONAL CHOICE	26
Not all remote work situations are created equal.....	26
Taking care of the health of our employees	27
Watching out for new issues.....	28
IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT	30
Consolidate the technical infrastructure, especially for branch networks	30
Enabling remote access to the main business-line applications.....	33
Improving the availability, performance and use of collaborative tools	34
Taking the transformation of our processes further	35
SUPPORTING CULTURAL AND MANAGERIAL TRANSFORMATION	37
Reassessing the content of work and how to evaluate it.....	37
Building a relationship based on trust and proximity with each employee.....	38
Ensuring upskilling and the transfer of knowledge.....	40
Communicate more directly, regularly and genuinely.....	42

Changing the way we hold meetings	43
Restoring value to time spent on site	45
A friendly atmosphere to strengthen ties and encourage casual interaction!.....	46
ADAPTING OUR PREMISES: A NECESSARY TASK.....	47
Challenges for head offices	47
Challenges for branch networks	50
CONCLUSION	51

FOREWORD

Background

Like all companies in France and abroad, Societe Generale has relied on telecommuting more than ever in recent months as a protective measure during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Western Europe, the increase in the overall capacity of remote access via virtual private network (VPN) platforms enabled 50,000 employees – mainly in the Group SUs and the Global Banking and Investor Solutions businesses – to switch to telecommuting during the first weeks of the lockdown. VPN capacity is also being expanded in the US, Asia, India, Eastern Europe and Africa, offering nearly 100,000 employees remote access simultaneously.

This switch to telecommuting in such a unique context¹ has turned our organisation, professional practices and habits upside down. However, it appears that it is not so much a disruption as it is an acceleration of our digital transformation, enabling us to catch up to the transformation already largely underway outside the company in terms of internal digitalisation. It also highlights the systemic vulnerability that individuals and businesses are now facing (including individual, democratic, social, economic and environmental risks).

This raised a number of questions:

- How can we expand telecommuting in a sustainable and beneficial way?
- More broadly, how can we redefine the relationship between Societe Generale employees and their work, capitalising more, where plausible, on customer-relations principles²?
- How can we take care of both employees and the company? How can we reconcile each person's aspirations and constraints?
- How can workspaces (both physical and digital) evolve to accommodate new uses?
- How can we take advantage of this transformation to generate a broader positive impact on society and the environment?
- How can we sustain this sense of improvement “in the arena” and make it a shared skill even outside of an acute crisis?
- How can we use the overall outcome of these lessons to benefit our customers?

Expectations are high, as are the risks and challenges to anchor this new relationship to the company in an expanded approach where the boundaries between our professional and personal lives have been made permeable and where each organisation must question its contribution to society more than ever.

Initiative

¹ Rather than being elected or limited to certain days of the week, full-time telecommuting was imposed on all teams without a specific end date and took place at home alongside employees' families and other individuals in their entourage.

² Customer relations is based on two concepts: transaction banking for transactions that can be processed remotely and relationship banking for sensitive situations requiring empathy in the relationship.

Origins

In order to lay the groundwork for this new working relationship, Societe Generale's Group Head of HR Caroline Guillaumin decided to start an internal dialogue on the future of work at the end of May 2020. The initiative was guided by a strong principle: to get employees involved in the process by asking them about their experiences during the lockdown period, their aspirations and their fears to better understand the challenges of the transformation underway and to identify best practices, good ideas and things to pay attention to in the future.

A working group of 13 people was set up on 18 May 2020 to implement and manage this initiative across the entire Group scope.

MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP

Maha Balafrej Tunesi, HRCO/TAL, Head of Employee Surveys
Adrien Cencig, MARK/FIC, Financial Markets Vendor
Sebastien de Cagny, COMM/MAR, Advertising Officer
Yaël Dehaese, RESG/TPS, Head of Diversity and Inclusion for the IT function
Emilie Graffeuil, BDDF, Customer Relations Centre Team Lead
Guilhem Grand, RESG/BSC, IS Architecture Team Lead
Vanessa Honvo, DGLE/INO, Innovation Leader
Clémence Le Rhun, HRCO/DIR, Chief of Staff to the Group Head of HR
Karine Lemaire, BDDF, DCL UC Ain Calade
Hiba Messioui, DFIN/DTO, Communications Officer
Julien Noel, RESG/GTS, Head of Cybersecurity Solutions Development
Jean-Marc Ouvre, COMM/AMP, Head of Social Media
Juliette Schulz, RESG/SGC, Internal Consultant

This working group received the support of Frédéric Oudéa, Chief Executive Officer of Societe Generale, at a kick-off meeting that he attended on 29 May 2020.

Progress

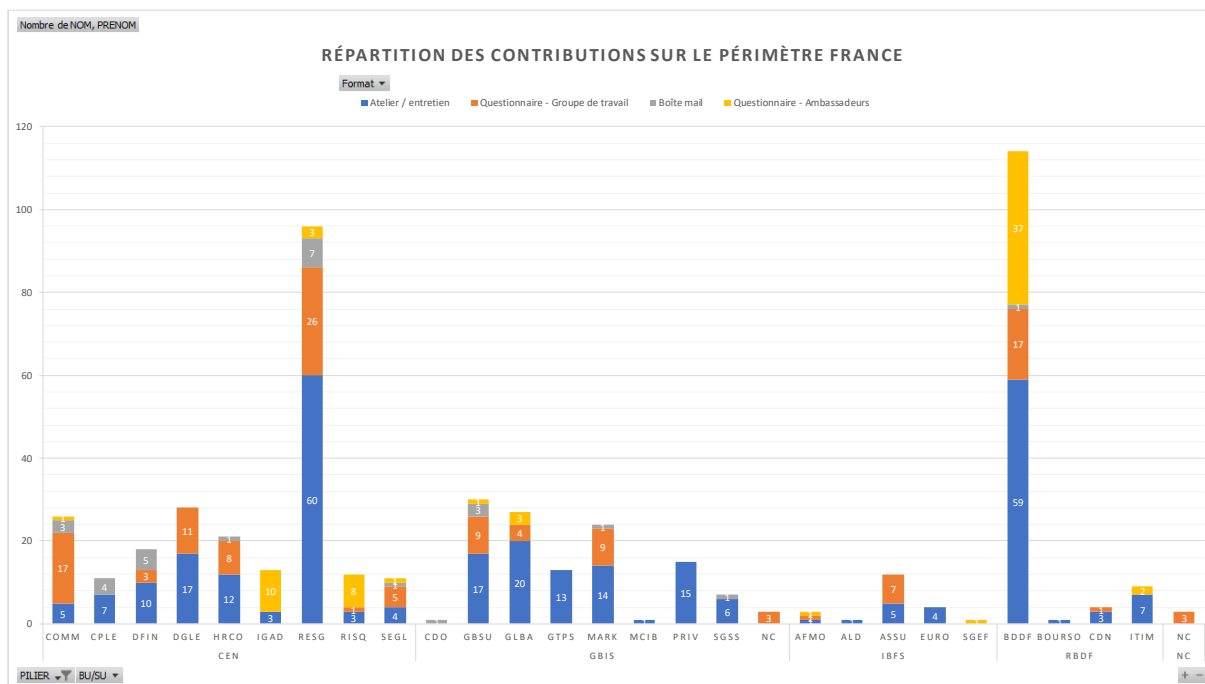
From 1 June to 30 June 2020, the working group focused on listening to employees and reporting their input in an open and flexible way to enable everyone to express their feelings freely.

In France, several options were provided for this dialogue:

- Discussions through one-on-one interviews and workshops, which were attended by 288 employees across the various Group business lines (121 from the Corporate Divisions; 86 from Global Banking and Investor Solutions; 11 from the central teams of International Retail Banking, Corporate Financial Services and Insurance; and 70 from French Retail Banking).

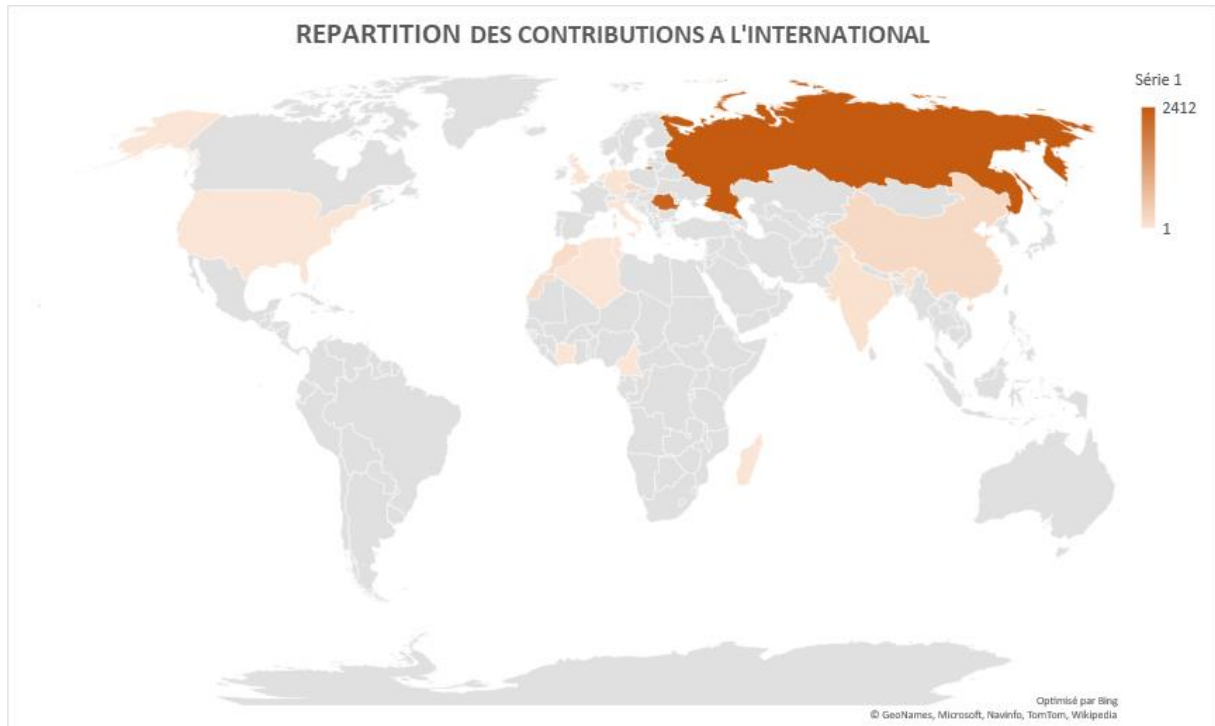
- Free-form contributions via e-mail to FR-futureofwork@socgen.com, which was the chosen method for 28 employees contributing in France³.
- An anonymous, open and qualitative online questionnaire, which was completed by 125 employees.

Sixty-eight contributions also came to us via the questionnaire sent to the Ambassadors.



Outside of France, the initiative was supported by the entities’ HR and Communications correspondents. Where possible, the working group capitalised on pre-existing and ongoing local initiatives, as was the case for Rosbank (Low Touch Readiness Programme, 2,380 contributors), KB (Smart Office Programme, 220 contributors), Asia (Work From Home 2.0, 200 contributors), SG GSC (58 contributors) and the African entities (11 contributors). Other entities set up ad-hoc consultations, such as BRD (2,235 contributors), SGMA (134 contributors) and SGSS GmbH (25 contributors). In addition, we received 30 contributions from the United Kingdom, the United States, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands through other channels (direct contact, via e-mail at FR-futureofwork@socgen.com, Ambassadors questionnaire, etc.).

³ Employees were notified about the launch of the initiative and the creation of the e-mail address in an article published on 12 June 2020 in SG News: <https://mysocietegenerale-news.safe.socgen/fr/accueil/-/sgnews/display/detail/66221>



In total, 5,832 employees (509 in France and 5,323 abroad) contributed to share how they see the future of work.

Meanwhile, the working group also analysed the most recent employee surveys (and in particular the BVA PULSE survey on telecommuting carried out between 25 May 2020 and 2 June 2020) to ensure that the findings and needs expressed by the employees included in the sample were echoed throughout the Group. BVA was asked to conduct an analysis of the 39,970 verbatim comments collected as part of the PULSE survey carried out during the crisis. This analysis corroborates the observations and recommendations of our working group and therefore suggests that our sample is accurate and representative.

We also collected and analysed the surveys and feedback collected in recent weeks for certain scopes (e.g. the 2025 GTPS survey, DFIN/DOM feedback, DFIN/BDF feedback, GBSU POC assessment, feedback from the RESG/GTS agile teams, etc.);

Finally, with the support of DGLE/INO and BPI France Le Hub, the working group established an external working group in June involving large companies such as Accor, CNP, Hachette, L'Oréal, PSA, SFR, Spie Batignolles, Total and VVY Group to see how the subject was being addressed elsewhere (independent of the sector) and what solutions were currently under consideration. We also reached out to Orange, Engie and EDF for the same purpose.

From 1 July to 23 July 2020, the working group focused on summarising contributions, refining the study by applying a 'proof of care' methodology with the support of Les Sismo⁴ studio teams, and preparing the materials to distribute, including this white paper.

⁴ "Les Sismo" is a design studio specialising in Design with Care. It works closely with the Research Chair in Philosophy at the Hospital led by Cynthia Fleury, a philosopher and psychoanalyst.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all those who have made this possible:

- **Frédéric Oudéa and Caroline Guillaumin**, who trusted us and accepted the challenge for openness, togetherness and transparency surrounding this important theme for Societe Generale;
- **Our employees**, many of whom got involved and agreed to share their experiences and visions with a great deal of sincerity, goodwill and a true desire to help the company evolve;
- **The Human Resources, Communications and Innovation teams**, which facilitated networking and exchanges, as needed, both in France and abroad;
- **Our external partners (BPI, Les Sismo, Manageris)** who helped us clarify certain issues and take our considerations to the next level.

All of these fine contributions enabled us to draw some initial conclusions on the future of work at Societe Generale and to propose the following in this document:

- a long-term and multi-faceted vision incorporating business lines, HR, IT, Real Estate, CSR, etc.;
- very concrete measures to expand telecommuting at our company.

We must ensure that we act quickly to keep from stalling the present momentum and to make sure all the lessons and developments drawn from the crisis are not lost. *“During the lockdown, we made the impossible possible”*. It would not make sense to employees to bring this momentum to a halt or to backtrack.

FORCED TELECOMMUTING FOR ALL

A very mixed start

Prior to the lockdown, the practice of telecommuting was rather unevenly developed at our company.

At SGPM, telecommuting was governed by an agreement signed on 19 October 2016 with the trade unions. SGPM gave each BU/SU head the opportunity to implement a telecommuting initiative for all or part of their business lines and activities and specified the terms of eligibility, as well as the guidelines for organising (request, validation, place and pace of work, environment, legal framework) and supporting telecommuting (raising awareness and training). The agreement provided for a minimum of one day every two weeks and a maximum of two days a week.

In practice:

- Employees with customer contact such as the French Retail Banking (BDDF) Network, Private Banking (PRIV) and Global Markets (MARK) were generally excluded from this telecommuting initiative;
- Employees with no customer contact were offered more telecommuting opportunities.

Before the crisis, the SUs (and the IT function in particular) were therefore ahead of the BUs in terms of telecommuting. However, more than one day of telecommuting per week was rare.

Based on the results of the BVA PULSE survey at the end of May 2020, telecommuting was also a function of age (41% of those under 35 years of age said they were telecommuting prior to the lockdown versus 55% of those aged 35-54 years) and managerial level (46% of non-managers said they were telecommuting prior to the lockdown versus 63% of managers), with some expressing their impression that it was therefore an “earned privilege”.

Finally, it should be noted that women telecommuted less than men (47% of women said they were telecommuting prior to the lockdown versus 57% of men), likely due to a combination of the various factors mentioned above (business line, managerial level, etc.).

At the subsidiaries in France (Boursorama, CDN, CGI, etc.) **and abroad** (KB, BRD, Rosbank, etc.), the situation was comparable to that of SGPM, with employees whose work entailed customer contact generally being excluded from the telecommuting initiative while those without customer contact participated more in the process.

Lockdown: defining and revealing an uneven playing field

BUs/SUs and locations that had introduced telecommuting before the crisis were less destabilised by the lockdown measures than those that had not, as their technical infrastructures and their business-line processes and applications had already started being modified to incorporate it.

“I had a very good experience during this period. It was ideal for me. If I had to rank this work method, I would give it a five out of five” – IT Manager

They were not completely immune to disturbances, however, since the lockdown was sudden and total. As a result, they had to learn how to deal with 100% of their staff telecommuting, including employees who had remained ineligible or had not asked to telecommute.

BUs/SUs and locations that had not introduced telecommuting before the crisis (e.g. BDDF) were very destabilised, mainly due to the inadequacy of their technical infrastructures and their business-line processes and applications.

This was brought up extensively in the interviews and workshops. In most cases, employees agreed that the company acted quickly and effectively, but the response was often unable to re-establish a sense of normalcy.

In the BVA PULSE survey at the end of May, there was a major difference between BDDF and the rest of the BUs/SUs in France, with 27.5% of BDDF employees reporting that they were able to work remotely under normal conditions during the lockdown versus more than 75% in other BUs/SUs, including those with customer contact (MARK, GLBA). Internationally, over 80% reported that they were able to work under normal conditions in the United States, the United Kingdom, India, Luxembourg, etc.

It should be noted that a number of teams in which telecommuting had not or had only somewhat been introduced told us that they switched to more widespread telecommuting with no trouble, as their work was already largely carried out remotely.

These were mainly:

- teams that work regularly with other French locations (e.g. SGSS in Nantes, BDDF regional delegations, etc.);
- teams required to work regularly with other international locations (e.g. SG EBS, SG GSC, and the GBIS and IBFS subsidiaries);
- teams required to serve customers across large geographical regions (largely mobile).

The broad range of backgrounds and experience is reflected in the employee categories we established as a result of the interviews and workshops. It also influences aspirations including pace of work and working environment.

A popular organisation method

Although there was no choice in the matter and it caused myriad issues, the lockdown was a catalyst for a new model. *“The desire to increase telecommuting is now unstoppable”*, said one of the people we interviewed.

According to the results of the BVA PULSE survey at the end of May, a vast majority of employees (83%) wanted to start working remotely (80% of those who never had before the lockdown) or telecommute more often (87% of those who were already doing so).

For employees, the ideal number of remote-working days would be 10 per month (based on four weeks of five days a week, i.e. 20 working days per month), which is equivalent to the amount a part-time employee would work.

The average ideal number of remote-working days varies significantly between countries: from seven to eight days (in Luxembourg, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and Hong Kong) to 12 days (in India and Romania). In France, the average ideal number of remote-working days is nine, with differences between the BUs/SUs.

AVERAGE IDEAL NUMBER OF REMOTE-WORKING DAYS *(source: BVA PULSE survey)*

Results by country	
Overall	10
India	12
Romania	12
United States	11
Russia	11
United Kingdom	11
Italy	11
Morocco	10
Czech Republic	10
France	9
Luxembourg	8
Germany	8
Spain	8
Switzerland	8
Hong Kong	7

Results by BU/SU in France	
Overall	10
SEGL France	10
RESG France	10
CPLÉ France	10
GBSU France	10
ITIM	10
HRCO/COMM France	10
DFIN France	10
IGAD France	10
LYXR France	10
SGSS France	9
RISQ France	9
GTPS France	9
BOURSO	9
ASSU France	9
GLBA France	8
PRIV France	8
BDDF	8
MARK France	8

In the workshops and interviews we conducted, employees confirmed the desire to telecommute more.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

- Develop telecommuting for all:
 - by allowing employees who already telecommuted to increase the share of work done remotely;
 - by enabling employees who did not telecommute before (particularly employees in the BDDF network) to start working remotely.

STRONG ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF TELECOMMUTING

Advantages for employees

For the employees we met:

- **Telecommuting is a sign of the trust, consideration and goodwill of management.** It also meets the prevailing desire for autonomy and responsibility.
- **Telecommuting boosts efficiency.** It enables employees to save the time they would spend commuting, better organise their working time and make efficient progress on important tasks which require concentration.
- **Telecommuting fosters a good work-life balance.** It enables employees to free up time to spend with family and friends and to engage in sport, cultural and humanitarian activities. Most employees save one to two hours on the commute every day.
- **Telecommuting improves health and well-being.** It enables employees to sleep more; reduce stress, discomfort and fatigue related to commuting to and from work; take a step back from their usual working environment; and gain peace of mind.
- **Telecommuting promotes professional equality.** It leaves little room for physical appearances and therefore puts everyone on equal footing. Many employees noted that it increased proximity to our international teams, and particularly the back offices in Bucharest and Bangalore.
- **Telecommuting fosters inclusion.** It facilitates employment access, maintenance and reintegration for at-risk employees (those recovering from a serious illness or suffering from chronic diseases, disabled persons with limited mobility, etc.). It is also an attractive option for seniors, who are often subject to greater fatigue from commuting.

TELECOMMUTING FOR DISABLED PERSONS

By eliminating travel, remote work helps alleviate mobility constraints – and therefore fatigue – for persons with motor impairment or difficulty travelling unassisted. Telecommuting also makes it possible to reconcile healthcare requirements with professional requirements by arranging working hours around medical necessities (doctor appointments, nurse assistance, physiotherapy sessions, rest, etc.).

For certain disabled persons, however, telecommuting may be difficult to set up, especially if the company is unaware of the disability. The main drawback involves remote communication: for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, for example – 6% of those aged 15-24, 9% of those aged 25-34, 18% of those aged 35-44 and up to 65% of those over 65 in France (Source: INSERM) – it is difficult to attend video-conference meetings with more than three participants. Similarly, autism affects communication and those effects are accentuated by distance, as those on the spectrum have difficulty holding a conversation by instant messaging or by phone.

Like most other instances of discrimination, the crisis has amplified the situation, revealing circumstantial differences that would normally be hidden or smoothed over. The company and its employees must pay special attention to these risks.

Advantages for the company

Employees also pointed out that telecommuting generated benefits for the company.

Productivity

Despite the exceptional lockdown conditions, 84.7% of employees who responded to the BVA PULSE survey were as effective or more effective remotely as they were in the office. The sources of productivity identified by employees are numerous:

- **Reallocation of part of the commute time to work.** Employees start working earlier in the morning and finish later in the evening.
- **Less noise and fewer interruptions throughout the day.** Employees work in peace and are therefore more focused on their tasks.
- **More efficient remote meetings:** no time wasted on logistics (finding a room, making sure everyone attends on D-day, repairing equipment in the room, etc.), meetings that start on time, better objectives, greater listening capacity, shorter time slots, etc.
- **More inclusive remote communication, which helps put employees on the same page:** brief daily or bi-weekly meetings to update priorities, share significant information, etc.

- **Less absenteeism** in the event of one-off logistical issues (e.g. a doctor/school appointment) or mild illnesses (e.g. a cold).

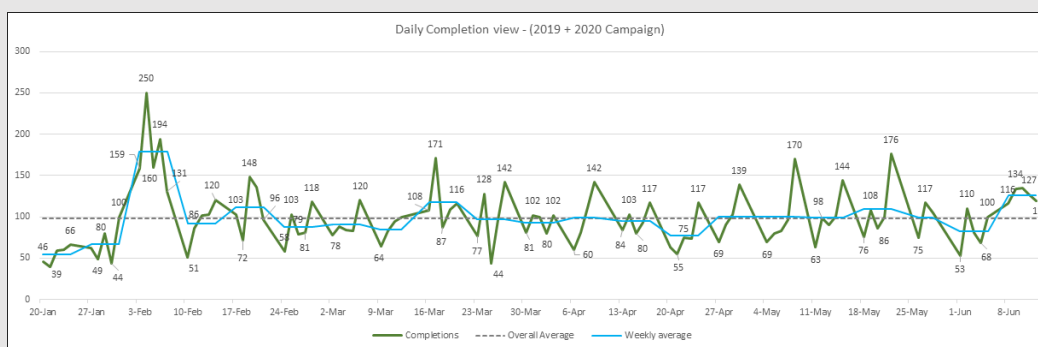
This feeling of efficiency is shared by all employees in France, Asia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Romania, the Czech Republic, etc., whether or not they have contact with customers.

However, the perspective is somewhat more mixed in France, where 21.3% of employees found themselves less effective while telecommuting (over 20% for BDDF, ASSU, IGAD and MARK). For BDDF, ASSU and MARK, this score is primarily due to issues regarding equipment and tools encountered during the lockdown.

SOME EXAMPLES IN FIGURES

At RESG/GTS, the program increment (PI) – which began just after the lockdown and involved nearly 200 people – delivered 75% of its targets, compared to 65% for the previous PI and 65% for the PI before that.

At RESG/SGSC/KYU, the number of KYC files processed was maintained during the lockdown, and even saw peaks above the multi-day average.



Savings

Employees also pointed out that telecommuting can reduce costs—particularly those arising from real estate and associated services (insurance, installations, cleaning, maintenance, surveillance, etc.).

There is currently no market consensus on the impact of telecommuting on office space. Corporate strategies have not yet been clearly defined or communicated, and the first cost savings estimates are very mixed (ranging from 10% to 90%!).

However, we believe that the most plausible range is 25% to 35%.

Real-estate savings, however, depends on the end dates and conditions of the current leases (ability to leave buildings or sublet spaces) and the ability to switch to a flex-office model (to optimise the occupancy of workstations on site).

Resilience

After a particularly turbulent 2020, there is no longer any doubt that telecommuting is a pillar of business continuity which makes it possible to mitigate many risks (pandemics, climate events, smog alerts, strikes, demonstrations, oil crises, terrorism, nuclear accidents, etc.). In addition to enabling employees to

telecommute part of the time on a regular basis, the company must therefore be prepared for employees to telecommute on an exceptional basis in the event of a force majeure or crisis.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

- Establish a two-tier system including regular telecommuting and exceptional telecommuting (in the event of a force majeure or crisis)

Attractiveness

Telecommuting – and moreover the new, more horizontal and flexible organisation and working methods – provide significant leverage for attracting and retaining talent at a company. Recently still seen as mere signs of modernity, they influence the corporate culture and experience of employees and are thus becoming important criteria for candidates.

Expectations are especially high among young people, and particularly young graduates in IT and digital fields. For them, the bar is set by GAFAM and startups. Welcome to the Jungle, a key player in the recruitment of these profiles, even features a “remote work” filter when searching for job vacancies.

For the banking sector – whose organisation and working methods are generally perceived as outdated – the extension of telecommuting is a genuine game changer.

“Supporting an increase in telecommuting could change Societe Generale's image. The Group would become much more attractive!”

In light of the scarcity of rare talents, expanding telecommuting would also make it possible to access other job pools and more easily hire candidates with the ideal profile who live far away and may only be prepared to travel occasionally.

The same goes for employee retention. Employees who have been with the company for several years are experiencing a changing world and expect their employer to support them through this transformation.

Telecommuting – a more flexible and suitable way of working – enables them to stay at the company while adjusting their living situation, thereby reinforcing the feeling that they belong to a company that listens to them and adapts to their needs.

Conversely, the status quo (or what would be perceived as such) would be highly disappointing and could prompt some employees, including senior and expert profiles, to leave the company to find another job which fulfils their need for flexibility and autonomy.

“I would not understand it if Societe Generale went against the grain by stifling this new form of organisation. Among other things, my desire to be part of the Group will depend on its ability to offer this flexibility”.

Positive impact on society and the environment

Beyond the direct impact on employees and the company, telecommuting can be designed to have a positive impact on the environment and society as a whole.

As a measure to limit the spread of COVID-19, telecommuting has a direct impact on the health of individuals and the spread of viruses, including those that are the most commonplace: allowing employees to work from home when they have the flu, for example, enables them to recover faster and above all prevents them from contaminating colleagues and other passengers in public transportation.

Facilitating and relaxing the methods of telecommuting also strengthens intergenerational social ties (for example, by giving an employee the opportunity to stay with a parent, sick child or spouse, or their family when a child is born) and to save time for activities whose merit extends well beyond the family or the company (e.g. local humanitarian or environmental initiatives, etc.). *“Telecommuting is food for the soul”*, said one person we interviewed.

Telecommuting also has a positive impact on the environment because working from home helps limit pollution and reduce traffic for individual and collective transportation infrastructures. With 35% of the workforce telecommuting, ADEME estimates that 3.3 million trips would be avoided in France each week, which would reduce weekly greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 3,200 tonnes.

Working remotely also reduces printing and therefore the consumption of paper and the energy associated with it.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

- Provide employees with a tool to calculate their carbon consumption for commutes between home and the office, enabling them to quantify the actual savings generated by telecommuting or “soft” modes of transportation.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES FOR EMPLOYEES WITH CUSTOMER CONTACT

Telecommuting and the digitalisation of customer relations

During the crisis period, sales teams (in retail banking, private banking, corporate and investment banking and financial services) developed much more digital and informal exchanges with customers. These teams organised regular phone calls with customers to understand the impact of the crisis on their activities, update the vision of Societe Generale's strategists and offer relevant solutions to the issues they encountered (e.g. liquidity, state-backed loans, etc.).

In the future, it is likely that a larger portion of customer relations will be manageable remotely (by phone or video conference). This would make sense for existing customers—especially multi-bank customers (who are over-solicited and therefore not as available for appointments with our experts), young professionals (who are comfortable with new technologies and seeking an efficient and non-demanding banking relationship) and customers who don't want to travel or are too far away from our premises.

As such, extending telecommuting to our front-office employees is a viable option. It may even enhance customer relations (e.g. extended hours for appointments, optimised time with the customer, no interruptions during appointments, greater ease with digital tools for the advisor, etc.).

However, the front-office employees we interviewed pointed out that remote contact will not be able to completely replace physical meetings with customers and therefore that telecommuting will necessarily be limited to fewer days for these business lines.

REMOTE WORK FOR FRONT OFFICE EMPLOYEES? YES! BUT WITHIN REASON...

Meetings in person (on-site meetings or visits) are a sign of consideration and interest that is still in high demand for many of our customers.

For certain customer segments (e.g. corporates), meetings in person and particularly visits also serve to provide a precise idea of what we finance, reassure us that the counterparties are financially sound and identify potential risks to be mitigated, among others.

Equally, physical proximity promotes communication about more complex and sensitive topics that the customer will not necessarily address by phone or video conference. Furthermore, it makes it possible to gather information shared more casually regarding their market and their projects.

Prospecting is also one aspect of customer relations that requires meetings in person. Customers are looking for a service and a price, but they are also looking for a trusted relationship. This is more easily achieved face-to-face through non-verbal communication.

Focus on the BDDF network

In the BDDF network, interviewees expressed that expanding telecommuting would raise important structural issues, including:

- the limited means of contact;
- the range of working hours and respecting the opening hours of the branches;
- the preservation of customer service considering the staff shortages at certain branches;
- the preservation or even the increase of advisors' effectiveness in sales.

These questions are particularly important for small branches (two to three employees).

In order to enable telecommuting throughout the network and at the same time satisfy the high demands of customer relations, it appears we must accelerate the transformation of the branch network (mergers, networking, portfolio consolidation) and create larger branches.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

A few ideas to work around customer relations demands in the BDDF network:

- Make all branches MSBs (multi-site branches) with three satellite branches;
- Pool customers across MSBs;
- Increase the customer contact window to six out of seven days a week like CRC/SCS for head CUs or the main MSB location;
- Adjust the opening hours for customers at satellite branches (physical closure of the site one day/week enabling employees to telecommute);
- Set up two teams of employees telecommuting one day a week;
- Make opening hours by appointment only in the afternoon (provided that productivity gains are confirmed, no hindsight on this) across all branches;
- Update the relationship model for essential customers:
 - Pool Essential customers (no more dedicated advisors; this would allow to have a service in adequacy with the profitability of the market segment and solve the shortage of Essential Advisors);
 - Outsource Essential digital customers (CRC or other).

ESTABLISHING A COMMON, OPEN AND FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK

The findings and proposals set out below are applicable to the SGPM scope; however, some proposals may be applied or adapted to other subsidiaries.

Ensuring equal access to telecommuting

REMINDER OF THE FRAMEWORK SET OUT IN THE TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT OF 19 OCTOBER 2016

Regarding access to telecommuting, the Telecommuting Agreement of 19 October 2016 stipulated that:

- each BU/SU division examine the opportunity to develop a telecommuting initiative;
- employees on permanent contracts with the business lines, activities or departments defined by the BU/SU division as being eligible for telecommuting may ask their manager if they can telecommute part of the time;
- the manager’s decision to authorise telecommuting or not and the number of days or half-days of telecommuting depend on technical and operational feasibility conditions.

During the interviews and workshops, employees expressed that access to telecommuting was unfair for two main reasons: an unequal desire on the part of the BUs/SUs to develop the telecommuting initiative, and a lack of transparency regarding the eligibility criteria for business lines, activities and departments.

Employees therefore want the new framework to ensure fair access to telecommuting, meaning they want it to offer more open access (no collective or assumed restrictions based on the BU/SU, business line, activity or department) and clear and transparent rules to govern how requests are assessed.

In addition, some employees lamented that telecommuting was reserved for those with permanent contracts and indicated that the employment category (permanent or fixed-term employees, interns, students on work-study programmes, international volunteers (VIE), temporary staff or service providers) should not be an eligibility criterion. This is particularly important for the IT teams, where service providers can represent up to 50% of the work force and where team operations may suffer from the difference in how employees are treated.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop new organisations and working methods (including telecommuting) as a corporate objective—not merely an option for each BU/SU;
- Lift collective and assumed restrictions (based on the BU/SU, business line, activity or department). All employees may request to telecommute for part of their working hours;
- Establish objective, specific and transparent eligibility criteria to govern how requests are assessed, capitalising on existing criteria (criteria contained in the 2016 agreement and criteria established during the crisis):
 - **Criteria related to the position:**
 - **Impact of telecommuting on quality of service**, particularly with regard to customers:
 - Physical presence not required on site every day, tasks that can be carried out remotely, potential for remote access to the business line's IT applications and for documents required for the activity to be digitised, no special equipment that must be used on SG premises, etc.
 - **Level of operational risk caused by telecommuting:**
 - Level of data security or confidentiality of data/operations compatible with telecommuting, etc.
 - **Impact of telecommuting on the team's organisation:**
 - On-site staff requirements, management and organisation of the team's work (e.g. establishing a day without telecommuting for team meetings)
 - **Criteria for individual situations:**
 - **Level of employee autonomy:**
 - Autonomy with regard to work organisation and time management, in-depth knowledge of the position and the business line's IT applications, responsibility, etc.
 - **Quality of the remote-working environment:**
 - Suitable workspace, compatibility of telecommuting with the provisions of the lease and/or insurance, electrical installation up to standards, sufficiently fast internet access, etc.
- Harmonise access to telecommuting for all employment categories. Only the above criteria should determine access to telecommuting and the eligible portion of working time.

No to full-time remote work, yes to the hybrid model!

Nearly 90% of employees want to telecommute more. However, only 5.2% of employees around the world and 2.1% in France would want to telecommute 100% of the time. The majority of employees want to work on site from time to time to maintain social ties and, by extension, ties to Societe Generale.

Most employees indicated that social interaction is a major factor motivating them to return to the office after the crisis. Despite reluctance related to the health environment, the time spent commuting and noise in the cafeterias and open spaces, seeing colleagues again is the number-one argument for coming back to the office.

“A company is not a group of individuals who work at home. Being part of a company also means being able to see each other in person”.

Employees almost unanimously stressed the importance of casual interaction (running into each other at the canteen, restaurant, café, etc.). This enables employees to pick up information, detect weak signals, resolve problems on the fly, share new ideas, take a stance on issues, identify career opportunities and more.

“When you telecommute, all the casual moments you have with your outer circle disappear. It greatly limits what you know”.

As we distinguished transaction banking (for transactions that can be processed remotely) from relationship banking (for more complex or sensitive situations), the future of the employment relationship must therefore be designed as a two-tier system with:

- activities that are suitable for telecommuting (individual tasks and existing projects, hierarchies and social ties); and
- activities that are not suitable for telecommuting (group work and new projects, hierarchies and social ties).

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

For regular telecommuting:

- Adopt a hybrid model with a mix of work at home and at the office;
- Require employees come into the office two days a week (or eight days a month) to maintain the cohesiveness of the teams and sustain social ties (except in exceptional cases and for a limited time, subject to authorisation from the manager);
- Establish a range for the number of days or half-days they can telecommute: between one half-day and a maximum of three days per week (i.e. between two and 12 days a month);
- Figure out how to create casual interaction remotely and outside of employees’ usual teams (block 30 minutes in their calendars to chat without any specific objective in mind).

Making telecommuting flexible

REMINDER OF THE FRAMEWORK SET OUT IN THE TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT OF 19 OCTOBER 2016

Telecommuting base: the principle laid down in the Telecommuting Agreement of 19 October 2016 was to have a set location (home or any other regular and sustainable place declared by employees). It was nevertheless stipulated that, as an exception, employees may telecommute from a place other than the declared location if they inform their manager in advance. In any case, telecommuting is restricted within national boundaries (mainly for insurance and tax reasons).

Pace of work while telecommuting: this was not defined in the agreement. The agreement simply stated that telecommuting should be carried out according to the terms and conditions adopted in the addendum to the employment contract, it being understood that the principle adopted to draft these addenda was to establish one or more fixed days for telecommuting, with the ability to adjust the day(s) in exceptional cases (with a two-day notice period).

As such, the 2016 agreement did not offer a completely rigid framework (as some employees pointed out). Nevertheless, it clearly included the principle of fixed days. As a result, employees, managers and HR did not feel authorized to waive this principle, contributing to the sentiment that the framework is inflexible.

In the interviews and workshops we conducted, an overwhelming number of employees asked for telecommuting to become more flexible. They want to have more freedom to choose their telecommuting base and days. They claimed that the rigidity of the current system (fixed base/day) reduces its real efficiency. It is also very limiting for certain employees—especially those with customer contact whose schedule depends on that of their customers, and who would therefore have trouble designating a specific day or anticipating scheduling changes with two days' notice.

“What I want to keep is the ability to organise my work more freely—to be able to start working from home and then come to the office for a team meeting. I would like to be able to organise my work based on the task at hand rather than a contract”.

This raised several questions:

- How could we create a flexible framework?
- What was the common denominator for our business lines?
- How much room for manoeuvre would there be for managers and employees?
- How could this need for flexibility be reconciled with occupancy limits in the buildings?

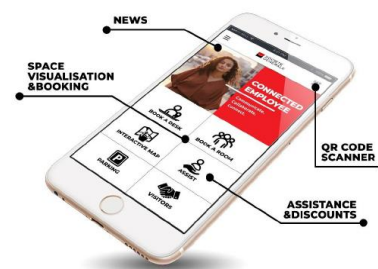
OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Allow employees to choose their telecommuting base: home or somewhere else within national borders (due to insurance and tax requirements);
- Introduce a flexible pace by offering different telecommuting options:
 - Fixed telecommuting days for employees whose work is consistent and who have the visibility to set the days in advance;
 - Flexible telecommuting days (determined by employees as they go and authorised by their managers) for employees whose work is unpredictable and/or does not lend itself to setting the days in advance;
 - A mixed approach with a fixed portion and a variable portion for employees with several days of telecommuting who are not always able to set the days they telecommute.
- For flexible telecommuting days:
 - Offer a monthly limit (rather than weekly) to provide more flexibility;
 - Reduce the notice period (the manager and the employee can agree the day before the telecommuting day).
- For positions that are not restricted to specific time frames, allow employees to have personal time during the day and organise their working time freely.

The terms outlined above seem to be consistent with both the context of our organisation and the needs expressed by employees and managers. They also seem to us to be feasible since equivalent approaches exist in certain major CAC 40 groups such as Orange and PSA.

Note, however, that a more disruptive, fully-flexible model is possible. However, this would require radically different management of our organisation and, above all, of our work spaces: Full flex office, work-space reservations in advance via an application, ability to come into the office depending on occupant capacity (no space, no on-site work).

We do not believe a full flex office could be rolled out company-wide in the short term.



Visuel de l'application en cours de développement au Royaume-Uni

Allow the business lines to organise telecommuting for their scope

After solidifying the principles mentioned above, the employees and managers we met recommended leaving the business lines room for manoeuvre. In concrete terms, this means letting the business lines (managers and employees) freely determine:

- the most appropriate option (fixed, flexible or mixed);
- the share of work achievable while telecommuting (number of half-days or days).

These two points cannot be “one size fits all”.

Each business line has different circumstances and constraints. In IT, for example, telecommuting is already a popular practice. Therefore, ambitious arrangements can be considered (up to three days of telecommuting a week, or 12 days a month). However, certain business lines have major constraints: physical presence required with customers in the branch network; heavy infrastructure requirements and high operational risks in global markets and in payments. In these business lines, the share of the work that can be accomplished while telecommuting is therefore currently limited and it is likely that it will not be possible to exceed one or two days a month.

Employees also have different circumstances and constraints. Certain categories of staff require more instruction and supervision (new arrivals, interns, students on work-study programmes, summer employees, international volunteers (VIEs), temporary staff and service providers). For these categories, the arrangement must therefore be adapted to ensure effective upskilling and a satisfactory performance level. Some employees may also not be able or not want to telecommute. This also has to be taken into account.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Allow the business lines to determine the most appropriate arrangement (fixed/flexible/mixed option, number of days or half-days), in compliance with the established framework;
- For business lines with major constraints (e.g. global markets, payments, branches), do not deny access to telecommuting. Instead, focus on how much telecommuting is feasible (reduced number of days, restricted to specific tasks – e.g. one day a month to do mandatory training, manage specific files, etc.);
- For newcomers, trainees, students on work-study programmes, summer employees, VIEs, temporary staff and service providers: establish a minimum period of three months without telecommuting to enable them to effectively integrate; then sync the rate of telecommuting with that of the person in charge of instruction and supervision;
- Plan for a safety net: the first request cannot exceed one year, with the first three months serving as an adaptation period during which employee and manager both confirm that the organisational choice works for them.
- Mutual agreement is key: telecommuting may be requested by the employee or proposed by the manager, but it cannot be imposed on either.

MAKING TELECOMMUTING A RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATIONAL CHOICE

Not all remote work situations are created equal

During the lockdown, new disparities appeared resulting from very different work scenarios: while some employees were isolated in a house in the countryside where everyone had a dedicated work space, others were confined to tiny apartments, challenged to work in their kitchen or on their dining-room table while home schooling their children and handling an increase in domestic tasks.

While one can hope that certain difficulties will fade with the end of the crisis (as children of school age return to in-person learning), there will still be inequality in work situations. Factors such as family status, gender and housing conditions are crucial.

GENDER EQUALITY, TELECOMMUTING AND LOCKDOWN

While COVID-19 affects men more often and more seriously than women, women suffered the most psychologically from the impacts of the lockdown and telecommuting: 28% of female French employees experienced high psychological distress—1.4 times more than men (Opinion Way survey on the psychological state of French employees after five to six weeks of lockdown).

In fact, conditions have worsened for women who usually handle most care-related tasks (child education, household tasks, meals, etc.), which they have had to take on while working remotely (according to a Harris interactive survey for the French Secretary of State for Equality and the Fight against Discrimination on the impact of lockdown on gender inequality). The historical role of women as caregivers and this role being made invisible (as though women had a natural capacity to care for others, free of charge) thus appears highlighted by the crisis.

This imbalance in the distribution of domestic and educational tasks within households has had a direct impact on the representation of women in the working world. One figure illustrates this well: the number of scientific articles submitted by women for publication fell sharply during the lockdown, while that of male researchers increased by 50%!

In the longer term, we need to be particularly vigilant when dealing with certain situations that employees might be experiencing – particularly mothers of large families or single parents – in order to prevent the risk of professional burnout while facing an increased workload at home.

The most common difficulties expressed by interviewees in the study were:

- The presence of other people at home (spouse or housemate also telecommuting, children, other dependants for family caregivers, etc.)
- The absence of personal space or a dedicated room to work in;

- No or poor internet access or access at varied connection speeds (with blatant inequalities between the city and the countryside).

Although this was not brought up, some more basic homes may also have problems with electrical compliance, as well as sound proofing and thermal insulation.

Based on this, the question is no longer what percentage of employees will be allowed to work remotely, but rather under what conditions can telecommuting be an inclusive organisational option and a tool for independence, rather than a means of exacerbating inequality.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Allow employees to refuse telecommuting (without judgement); we do not know their family or housing situation;
- Contribute to connection costs (heating, electricity, internet), particularly for low-income employees;
- Give employees access to preferential offers for the inspection of electrical and internet installations and for sound proofing and thermal insulation at home;
- Provide support to the most at-risk individuals on a voluntary basis (e.g. advice available for women and isolated parents);
- Provide access to third-party spaces between home and the office. Several options could be considered to do this:
 - Partner with a coworking-space operator (e.g. Kwerk, WeWork or Wojo);
 - Create coworking spaces in SG buildings (e.g. Les Dunes, SG Towers, etc.);
 - In large cities, convert some branches close to city centres and/or high-speed rail stations into SG coworking spaces.

Taking care of the health of our employees

While the company generally supplies ergonomic equipment to each of its employees (comfortable and adjustable office chairs, work stations that are sometimes adjustable in height, large screens, binaural headsets, etc.), employees at home have to work on a laptop and use the furniture available.

Many employees suffered from the poor ergonomics of their home workstations during the lockdown. Some purchased equipment at their own expense and some did not, causing risks and cases of neck and low-back pain, tendinitis in their shoulders and elbows, knee pain or recurring eye strain.

In addition, the company is proud to offer its employees meals planned by dieticians and nutritionists using fresh and inexpensive products. During the lockdown, some employees ate less-nutritious food, gained weight, or didn't have the time or the ability to eat a balanced and varied diet on a daily basis.

In one way or another, it is the company's responsibility to prevent physical health problems that may arise from expanding telecommuting.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Offer or facilitate the acquisition of the furniture and IT equipment required for telecommuting, opting if possible for recycled and inexpensive equipment (borrowed or co-financed).

The equipment that was requested most often included desks, ergonomic chairs and larger screens. Next (depending on business-line requirements), employees requested keyboards with numeric keypads, a second screen, bluetooth headsets, audio-conference phones, printers and scanners.

For IT hardware, an alternative could be to allow those who already have the equipment to connect it to SG PCs via bluetooth.

- Ensuring the convenience of the home-office commute

The company could make comfortable backpacks available to employees who do not yet have one so that they can carry their laptops. It could also provide a second headset, mouse and charger to those who request it in order to minimise what employees have to carry every day.

- Provide new meal choices

At the end of the day, the company could offer food baskets at cost for employees to take, meal tickets by default, partnerships with local producers or restaurants, etc.

Watching out for new issues

Changing the workplace means the very concept of work has to be transformed. For some, the threshold between one's professional and personal life – which was already blurred with the arrival of tools like the BlackBerry, professional smartphones and laptops – is becoming harder to identify... or may even be disappearing. You get up to work and you turn off your computer to go to sleep. The risk of no longer having a personal life is high!

Telecommuting can help reduce stress and promote a work-life balance, but in a worst-case scenario, it can invade the private sphere, increasing conflicts with those around you and leading to burnout.

Some pro-telecommuting employees said they miss having the chance to decompress between home and the office, as well as breaks between meetings. Some also admitted it felt like “bending space-time”.

“I’m no longer interrupted, so I work continuously until a late hour. This pace that I work at in spite of myself—I also impose it on others indirectly, and then a whole team ends up in a meeting from morning until evening with no break!”

The risk of presenteeism also exists with telecommuting and, for fear that computer systems could objectively reveal a break that ran a little long, the employee may be inclined to live in a permanent state of stress because they feel watched all the time.

“The risk with telecommuting is to feel obliged to be extra productive all day, attached to your screen and phone for fear of looking like you’re not working when you’re at home. You have to be reasonable—yes, you can leave your seat to have some coffee or hang your laundry!”

For some people, telecommuting makes them feel isolated and disengaged, which can increase psycho-social risks. Some people need to be in the office with their colleagues in a work atmosphere to be efficient. We have to accept the fact that each employee has a unique employment relationship and even the ideal conditions for telecommuting do not guarantee that they will be able to work properly.

Finally, as a reminder, being on site makes it possible to maintain essential ties between people on the same team or in the same open space, and some people can express themselves more easily in the presence of their colleagues or their manager. For them, working remotely and not being seen is synonymous with being ostracised; they need to be around people.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Emphasise the right to disconnect;
- Establish and communicate best practices: do not start too early, do not finish too late, take the time to eat lunch, take breaks, no meetings before 9am or after 6pm, avoid emails outside working hours, set up personal routines, etc. This applies to employees AND managers;
- Set up tools to indicate inappropriate hours (pop-up windows) for meetings before 9am or after 6pm, and for e-mails before 8am or after 7pm.

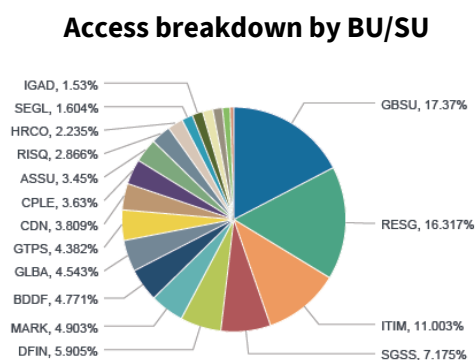
IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Despite a massive and successful switch to telecommuting welcomed by many employees, there are obstacles that remain, with significant differences between countries and within BUs/SUs. Remote work cannot be expanded without making access to mobile IT tools equal and available to everyone (laptops, smartphones, widespread remote access, access to office tools and business-line applications), without changing habits or without speeding up the digitisation of certain business processes. In fact, this heightens expectations for the information system (IS) both in terms of availability, with a high level of resilience for access infrastructures ensuring a smooth and seamless user experience, and security, to ensure optimal protection and not to compromise the overall level of IS security.

Consolidate the technical infrastructure, especially for branch networks

Very early in the crisis, remote access infrastructures were in high demand. In a few weeks, capacity was significantly increased to provide a maximum number of employees with remote connections by providing over 5,000 laptops to unequipped employees and increasing the remote access capacity (from 12,000 connections pre-crisis to 50,000 in Western Europe, with peak access nearing 35,000 simultaneous connections in France and a total capacity of 100,000 simultaneous connections worldwide).

Significant disparities were observed which were mainly linked to the level of digitisation of the business lines prior to the COVID-19 crisis. The usage analysis by business line illustrates this, with very little access for the BDDF teams in particular.



For the head-office functions, it appears that after a potentially complicated start, particularly to establish the connection in the morning between 8:30am and 10am, the situation quickly improved. Nevertheless, poor connections – starting with the employee’s internet access – could be a major hindrance for access to communication tools, business-line applications and documents hosted in the cloud.

For the BDDF network, a feeling of “digital insecurity” was reported and can be explained by how new telecommuting was within the network. Faced with the emergency situation, employees were given tablets that had to be reconfigured (ClicComm or ConnectIM) to enable nearly 8,000 people to access the business-line applications. On an exceptional basis, others managed to connect via a shared platform using their

personal devices. Also on an exceptional basis, in order to acknowledge the severity of the crisis, the ability to access all applications via remote access was granted until the end of the year. Nevertheless, for reasons primarily related to operational risks, certain applications were restricted (limits for certain operations, read-only customer data, etc.). For these groups, the current IT equipment is deemed to be unsuitable and inefficient overall. The same is true of the tele-advisor business-line phone equipment, which should be made virtual with softphones or mobile phones to make it available outside the branches and CRCs.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen and secure existing infrastructures while ensuring the proper end-to-end user experience, from the employee's internet access through to application use;
- Expand remote access tools and make them available to all Group employees with a specific focus on BDDF;
- Consider remote-by-design applications so that apps can be adapted for remote use both in terms of performance and interface;
- Study old applications on a case-by-case basis, focusing on those identified by employees as pain points;
- Ensure digital accessibility for persons with disabilities (visual, hearing, motor, etc.).

Summary of missing hardware and software in the BDDF network

Entity	Type of position	Available resources	Missing hardware resources	Missing software resources
CLICOM	DCC/CCP ME	ClicComm tablet	2nd larger screen	Skype
		Pro telephone	Printer/headset	
CRCM	CC	ClicComm tablet	2nd larger screen	Tool for recording calls when making sales without digital tools and calling customers back
			Pro/Integrated phone equipment	The usual flows, particularly WebCallBack and RTR
CRCM	RE	None/no telecommuting	ClicComm tablet	Citrix Workspace
CDS	RT	ClicComm tablet + screen		Softphone
CDS	CCM	ClicComm tablet + screen (four people on a team of 20)	Pro phone and scanner	Softphone
Branch	DCL	ConnectIM tablet + pro phone and Boxer	Workspace tablet, pro phone or phone tool	Full access to Workspace
Branch	RC PRO	Only Boxer and pro phone	Tablet with access to Workspace	Client database and pro credit tool (not URTA)
Branch	CC PRO	Only Boxer and pro phone	Tablet with access to Workspace	Client database and pro credit tool (not URTA)
Branch	DA/ADA/R CL	Boxer on personal phone + SG mail	Tablet or access on personal computer	Workspace and contact database, URTA not mandatory (everyday transactions handled in-branch)
			Pro phone/soft phone/headset	Skype
Branch	CGP	Boxer on personal phone + SG mail	Tablet or access on personal computer	Full access to Workspace
Branch	CC	Learning	Tablet or access on personal computer	Workspace and contact database, URTA not mandatory (everyday transactions handled in-branch)
		Partial access to SG mail (access issues)	Pro phone/softphone	Skype

Enabling remote access to the main business-line applications

In nominal situations, many applications identified as critical for the Group were not available via remote access for obvious reasons, including confidentiality, risk of fraud and, more generally, operational risk. In order to deal with the unique crisis situation and enable the business lines to ensure business continuity, sweeping exemptions have been granted.

However, the IS security level has been maintained with a focus on:

- raising employee awareness (use of PCs in secure spaces, such as at home, and prohibited in open spaces);
- monitoring and ongoing surveillance of access to detect abnormal behaviours;
- lowering thresholds for certain transactions;
- limiting certain application features (e.g. read-only access to GRC Contact).

Over time, permanent access to certain sensitive applications could be limited remotely due to the nature of the information handled, as well as the fact that some employees may perceive a risk related to accessibility outside SG premises (some employees cited the risk of physical harm or the non-repudiation of actions, since the home is less protected than SG premises).

The exemptions in force until the end of the year will therefore have to evolve towards a sustainable system while maintaining a high level of security and maximum mitigation of operational risks. RISQ/OPE and RESG/TPS are currently studying the matter and considering a modular and gradual approach to take the various business environments into account and, for the most critical applications, having different access approaches to account for the context of the connection in particular.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Map critical applications: identify those that will not be eligible for remote access by maximising restrictions (remote access being the rule and the restriction being the exception). For these applications, assess the impact on the business activities concerned and adapt the team's work accordingly.
- For other applications, adjust the security while keeping the criticality of the application and the context of use in mind. Remote access authentication requirements could be stricter and certain features/transactions could be restricted.
- Protect sensitive applications by implementing systems to detect and block access to data in the event of an intrusion, for example.
- Issue a reminder of the rules to be followed and raise awareness of best practices to adopt while working remotely for all employees.

Improving the availability, performance and use of collaborative tools

Adopting new working methods means relying on a suite of suitable collaborative tools deployed across the Group. Preserving remote working time requires technological resources that enable business continuity, maintenance of individual performance levels and collaboration without disruption from the office, home or any other place, with each team being able to spread itself out across all or part of these sites all throughout the week.

The Group possesses a vast range of collaborative tools, and some teams are particularly experienced using them—particularly in departments accustomed to mobility between sites (international presence, regular telecommuting throughout the department). The widespread remote-working period and the future expansion of telecommuting mean new requirements:

- The deployment of collaborative tools remains uneven within the BUs/SUs, limiting intra- and inter-entity collaboration within the Group particularly with the network and subsidiaries. Skype has become a vital communication tool for everyday work, particularly when telecommuting. Deploying it universally and in an interconnected way (with the network, subsidiaries, etc.) would be an asset for inter-entity collaboration.
- Employees have widely varying levels of familiarity and expertise with the features of the various tools available. The rapid change in tools and uses, such as OneDrive or the ability to co-edit documents, tends to increase the divide with employees who do not use those tools or share those uses. This gap also exists within the managerial lines.
- The range of tools available sometimes appears excessively vast, making it daunting to choose a solution: “One Drive, SharePoint, SBC... When should you use which?”
- The risk of using external solutions appears when internal tools are not available, or their performance remains significantly inferior to that of solutions for the general public to which employees are accustomed. For example, Wekan’s internal, digitalised visual management offering is much less popular than its external counterpart, Trello.
- The lockdown period led to uncertainty about the rights and terms of use for external chats, audio-conferencing and video-conferencing tools. The principles for using Zoom, Citadel, WhatsApp, Slack, etc. for communication between employees and with outside parties (e.g. suppliers) remain insufficiently precise.
- Intra-team communication suffers because there is no common solution rolled out groupwide and companies use Teams to a large extent. This results in the increased use of email, bilateral exchanges and sometimes third-party solutions.
- Brainstorms will be increasingly carried out with staff distributed across several locations, and must be equipped. Although Klaxoon appears to be a possible solution and is well-liked by those familiar with it, the overall impression of the employees is more mixed, often because they lack familiarity and

experience with the tool. It is therefore necessary to choose an internal solution and make it familiar, regularly used and available to everyone.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enhance the Group's collaborative offering available from the employee's workstation, notably by stepping up the implementation of collaborative team tools (e.g. Teams), visual management (e.g. Trello) and brainstorming tools (e.g. Klaxoon);
- Clarify the collaborative offering of internal and external communication tools and their terms of use (Zoom, Citadel, WhatsApp, Slack, etc.);
- Harmonise and interconnect employee workstation tools for all BUs/SUs, with particular attention to the branch networks and subsidiaries;
- Encourage the use of collaborative tools. Offer training, mentoring or shadowing to facilitate the choice of which tools to use, adopt best practices and ensure security rules are followed: #alldigital programme!

Taking the transformation of our processes further

In workshops and interviews, employees indicated that paper was one of the main obstacles to remote work in many entities (e.g. RBDF, PRIV). Many processes require a series of prints or scans, and sending mail to customers or for the Group's internal purposes. Mandatory remote work during the crisis highlighted the processes to be digitised urgently.

These processes were identified:

- by customers themselves, who demand dematerialised processes end-to-end at a time when competition is positioning itself on new technologies (speed, ease of use, less paper consumption);
- by employees, who see new digital solutions being rolled out quickly, such as electronic signatures, and think of how they could facilitate several processes, including the delegation of powers, disbursement authorisations, partnership agreements (philanthropy), the signature of purchase agreements and contracts between internal entities, etc.

In most cases, processes that were digitised prior to the lockdown remained digitised thereafter.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Speed up the dematerialisation of existing processes requiring paper by considering them in their entirety, from the customer experience to exchanges with suppliers to internal processes—challenging the need for originals, in particular;
- Challenge any new processes that may use paper;
- Enhance the digital aspect of customer relations (paperless contracts, on-screen documents that are more ergonomic and readable, electronic signatures, exchanging digital documents, etc.);
- Standardise the use of electronic signatures and paperless solutions available (document management, archiving) for internal purposes.

At the beginning of the crisis, often because of the need to focus on the essential, but also due to an inability to carry out certain standard processes (dematerialisation, lack of resources), there was a decrease in bureaucracy. The decision-making circuits were spared from secondary controls. The availability of managers streamlined processes and enabled faster and more direct authorisations on the same day. Mandatory remote work during the crisis also highlighted the processes to be streamlined urgently.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

- Work on simplifying processes: identify the actual risks to be covered, reduce the number of validators by eliminating intermediate controls and decision-making levels without proven added value, make the employee or manager closest to the requester responsible and check afterwards.

SUPPORTING CULTURAL AND MANAGERIAL TRANSFORMATION

Reassessing the content of work and how to evaluate it

Many assumptions about telecommuting are explained by the fact that managers can no longer quantify the working time of their employees. When employees are on-site, evaluations can be influenced by the time they are present, their energy or their appearance. When employees work remotely, these elements are difficult to see and can no longer be taken into account. That is why it is necessary to focus on a results-based evaluation (expected and achieved).

During the lockdown, many managers spontaneously adopted highly agile practices that were well received and deemed effective. Fake emergencies were dismissed; priorities were set; everyone's objectives were clear, deadlines were established and the state of progress was shared on a very regular basis. The impact of the crisis, the urgency to demonstrate some kind of resilience, and also the fact that many of us were caught up with personal responsibilities, were drivers for some managers who were more easily able to delegate certain responsibilities and adjust their management and supervision.

In the future, employees would like to maintain this system, which leaves them more autonomy in performing their duties, but emphasised that it implies a solid understanding of the team and Group strategies, as well as a precise definition and frequent review of the roles, responsibilities and objectives of each person. In an environment lacking structure and discipline, the shortcomings of telecommuting could quickly surface and some managers' concerns would be justified.

THE BALANCE BETWEEN TRUST AND SUPERVISION

There is an increasing need for a system based on the trust and responsibility of each person. *"If I'm going to be policed when telecommuting, I might as well come to the office"*, said one person we interviewed. The question of monitoring the achievement of objectives and consistent employee engagement was nevertheless raised from a managerial point of view. Some managers expressed the need for real-time management and communication tools to be able to intervene quickly in the event that employees are late on their objectives. Concerns are particularly high in certain high-risk activities or those involving customer contact. For these scopes, some managers remained sceptical and raised the question of reversal and the possibility of raising alerts and not/no longer granting autonomy to employees who do not show enough maturity. The RISQ/OPE teams are currently working on identifying activities with major operational risks for the company, which should therefore receive particular attention. In these activities even more than elsewhere, the challenge will be to find the right balance between trust and supervision.

In order to reassure managers and empower employees without restricting them, a framework has to be established for the managerial relationship: without being prescriptive, it is essential to raise management's awareness when it comes to defining clear objectives and managing based on the quality of deliverables. It is also essential that employees voluntarily adopt the approach and that they are able to prove that they are

worthy of the trust placed in them by the Group; we need to adjust our priorities and how we report on a daily basis to highlight their work and the value that they add. In an environment where one's personal and professional lives overlap, a flexible relationship as well as a balance between work assessments and an understanding of the constraints of each person are essential. This requires an atmosphere of goodwill and honesty between the two parties.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Raise awareness among managers that they must explain how they operate, their expectations, their management needs, the rules for raising alerts, etc.
- Train managers to manage an activity remotely (setting goals, monitoring achievements and evaluating performance), capitalising on the principles of agility: daily standups to share priorities and retrospectives to take stock of the period, etc;

A STEP FURTHER

The need for flexibility and autonomy led some employees to suggest the elimination of job descriptions. The ability for them to function as a set of skills available to the Group as a whole (like SG Consulting), with one-off and short-term objectives, seems more compatible with new working methods. It would enable willing employees to be made available to a team with a heavy workload, or a team with a specific need or project. It would also make for greater flexibility in resource management.

Building a relationship based on trust and proximity with each employee

The lockdown brought its share of new features into managerial relations: discussions about privacy, constraints and a means of being honest about one's workload, assignments and objectives. According to the BVA PULSE survey, 20% of employees sensed an improvement in relations with their management while 8% saw a decline (*see below*). At the same time, 8% of the verbatim comments collected during this period highlighted the management's capacity for listening, empathy and kindness. Some 7% went further by highlighting their manager's support for their personal situation (childcare, illness, isolation, etc.).

RELATIONS WITH MANAGEMENT DURING THE LOCKDOWN *(source: BVA PULSE survey)*

Results by BU/SU in France		
	Positive change	Negative change
Overall	20%	8%
LYXR France	20%	11%
BOURSO	17%	9%
GTPS France	17%	7%
BDDF	16%	14%
PRIV France	15%	10%
RISQ France	14%	10%
SEGL France	14%	7%
ASSU France	13%	13%
GBSU France	13%	9%
GLBA France	13%	9%
HRCO/COMM France	13%	11%
RESG France	12%	8%
CPLÉ France	11%	9%
ITIM	11%	8%
MARK France	10%	11%
SGSS France	10%	10%
DFIN France	9%	10%
IGAD France	9%	12%

This is the perspective with which management must now operate: it is no longer a question of maintaining cold and merely cordial relationships with their employees; employees are looking for genuine connections and relationships. This would make it possible to keep fostering the team spirit created during the lockdown, report alerts more easily, adjust goals using agile methods and focus on priorities, as mentioned above. The on-site presence of the teams will be essential in building these moments of closeness and friendliness: creating a connection and sharing with others is the number-one reason why employees want to come back to the office and it is an opportunity to create tight-knit teams that we should not waste. According to the BVA PULSE survey, 6% of open-ended responses revealed the desire to continue sharing and the need for contact with colleagues.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Set up regular one-on-ones;
- Sustainably shift the managerial attitude towards listening, goodwill and trust;
- Offer to use more spontaneous and informal communication tools such as WhatsApp or Citadel (no obligation for employees).

Ensuring upskilling and the transfer of knowledge

The integration and upskilling of new arrivals in a department is one of the concerns that managers have regarding the expansion of telecommuting. This is especially true for those coming from outside the Group.

The size of the Group and its complexity make it difficult to integrate a new arrival from the outset, even without the constraints related to remote work. New arrivals need specific oversight by the Group, especially when launching their career. At the managerial level, welcoming a new arrival from outside or within the Group requires availability, which means more work on-site during the integration period. The teams will also have to be flexible to accommodate the new member, even if it means rotating their telecommuting days to better support that person. The question also applies to interns and students on work-study programmes, who need personalised support. It is possible to make the entire team responsible for training and supporting new arrivals to make sure the whole team is able to telecommute. The pace of telecommuting must also be adjusted to welcome a new colleague from abroad (India, Romania, the United States, etc.).

To improve how interns, students on work-study programmes and new arrivals are received, one option would be to capitalise on innovative and efficient digital tools, which would take care of part of the new arrival's support.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Set an in-person training period with the newcomer for each team (e.g. three months) or fewer days telecommuting;
- Establish best practices for all positions: keep rituals (meeting all team members remotely via 30-minute calls);
- Build digital integration plans for employees and develop remote field training via video conference;
- Plan for the new arrival in advance and block out slots dedicated to training new employees in person to supplement e-learning;
- Organise the rotation of the team's remote working days to ensure that there are always experienced employees present;
- Implement tools to quantify and manage hard and soft skills groupwide;
- Set up a team instant-messaging tool to be more responsive to requests for help while keeping information secure.

Communicate more directly, regularly and genuinely

Overall communication is an area that needs improvement for both local and top management.

The health crisis as well as other crises (e.g. Kerviel, the liquidity crisis, etc.) taught Group Management to communicate transparently and in real time about decisions that are made and strategic orientations. Employees appreciated this new approach, which seems to be the antithesis of the less transparent and less responsive pre-crisis style of communication, particularly in France. Before the crisis, trade-union flyers were sometimes the main source of information for employees regarding sensitive topics.

“It’s important to say things and explain them even if they’re unpleasant. Employees are prepared to make the effort if they understand the reasons behind decisions”.

This authentic method of communication is seen as proof of consideration, or even as reciprocity in the relationship they have with the company. So they want to see it last.

Even when it comes from the top down, the information shared through speeches – such as Frédéric Oudéa’s statement during the lockdown – gives employees confidence and makes them feel that they are important to the Group.

“We have never had so much information about the Group’s strategy and its situation!”

For employees – especially those that are the furthest from the head office – this helped strengthen the Group’s position and establish Societe Generale’s image as a Group in the eyes of others. Typically, the majority of them are more systematically attached to their management or to their team, with the Group coordinating everything from behind the scenes. *“The crisis put the hierarchy in the right order”*, said one employee, and many of them have drawn a sense of pride in belonging to the Group from the presence of the Executive Management and its announcements.

Perception is the same regarding managers, with a noticeable desire to share information with their teams. *“For once, the obsession with confidentiality was not used as an excuse to withhold key information”*, explained another employee. Before the crisis, managers tended to keep the most strategic information to themselves instead of helping employees adopt the strategy.

In the future, it is essential that the direct links between top management and employees be maintained. That way, we can improve the way we disseminate key information and enable it to take root throughout the organisation. At the same time, it is important to raise the awareness of managers, and particularly those in the ambassador networks, so they continue to share the information required to understand the Group’s strategy, guidelines and challenges.

This overall vision, which employees were missing before the crisis and which they eagerly requested in the BVA PULSE survey, would help them better understand their roles and be more efficient at work.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain direct communication between top management and all employees:
 - From Frédéric Oudéa to all Group staff;
 - Create an SG Radio station with programmes or podcasts to listen to via an app, including interviews, open discussions and live broadcasts of non-confidential strategic meetings (in a similar way to the Annual General Meeting).
- Make top management more accessible through visits to teams, attendance at all-staff meetings, etc.;
- Get the ambassador network involved in their role to help disseminate information and make sure this information reaches its destination;
- Set up initiatives to enable employees to adopt and participate in the Group's strategy (workshops to contemplate issues such as the mission statement, CSR, etc.).

Changing the way we hold meetings

During the lockdown period, meetings were shorter, focused on an objective set at the beginning of the meeting, and more punctual than normal. Of the open-ended responses in the PULSE BVA survey, 5% cited the efficiency of meetings during the lockdown, underlining that this must be included in the best practices to maintain.

“Work meetings are shorter, less time is wasted on chatting or delays, and the time saved is used to answer emails and prepare for the next meetings”, explained one employee. In fact, the time savings compared to meetings in person is significant: moving between rooms, waiting for a busy room to become available, getting settled in the room and setting up the connection take about ten minutes which are instead used to deal with other tasks in greater depth or to end meetings faster. Overall, meetings via Skype are perceived as more efficient than those in the field due to time savings and inclusiveness, as participants are all on the same footing in a video conference.

Nevertheless, during the lockdown, non-stop remote meetings with no breaks throughout the day were a source of fatigue and stress. Remote meetings also complicate creativity processes, as the lack of contact with others and the lack of expertise in the tools available (such as Klaxoon) result in meetings that are not very productive for generating ideas.

In addition, remote meetings make it very difficult to have informal exchanges and detect weak signals. Since video-conferencing is not used groupwide, it is still hard to consider people working remotely in a natural way. For managers, some meetings are also difficult to manage remotely: everyone being properly visible on camera, evaluations, professional development or conflict.

For this reason, it is essential to distinguish meetings that are very effective remotely (e.g. for presentations, decision-making and information meetings) from those that need to be organised in person (coming up with ideas, sensitive/creative meetings and casual moments).

Everyone will have to learn if we are to make the most of working remotely; we will have to identify the meetings that are best-suited for it in order to maintain this efficiency and change our approach to meetings

in person to make them more efficient. This development is inherent in changing our tools for remote work and our premises for on-site work, in addition to exceptional organisation to reconcile both forms of work so as not to confuse the two, at the risk of having meetings that are not ideal for participants.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Draft and apply a meeting charter to all managerial levels, capitalising on the best practices identified by employees (see below);
- Change the methods for sharing information (to reduce the duration and number of meetings): sharing forums, team newsletters by the manager, etc.

FOR A SHORT AND EFFECTIVE MEETING...

BEFORE THE MEETING

- Be clear about the purpose of the meeting: sharing information, sharing best practices, brainstorming, decision-making, etc.;
- Be clear about the location/medium: on site or remote, video-conference mandatory or not; Book meetings in person for complex or sensitive subjects;
- Make meetings on site for everyone or remote for everyone where possible to promote fluidity and fairness;
- Adapt media to the purpose of the meeting: decision => Word, brainstorming => Klaxoon, etc.;
- Opt for short meetings where possible: 30 to 45 minutes maximum;
- Craft your Outlook invitations carefully: choose an explicit title and specify the purpose of the meeting, the location/medium, the context, and the tools that will be used in the body of the invitation;
- For decision-making, send the preparatory information in advance.

DURING THE MEETING

- Establish a meeting moderator to organise comments so that everyone is able to speak and to choose the person who will take the minutes;
- Promote video-conferencing for remote participants;
- Indicate the roles of the participants (why each person present is at this meeting) in the invitation email or at the beginning of the meeting;
- Ask participants to ask questions via chat (in order to avoid interruptions, prioritise the most important questions, etc.);
- Reserve five minutes for summarising decisions taken and establishing future actions.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Draft the meeting minutes and disseminate them the same day (in a simple format).

Restoring value to time spent on site

Although employees overwhelmingly approve of telecommuting, the BVA PULSE survey revealed that 95% hope to return to the office on a regular basis in order to maintain their professional relationships and accelerate progress on their projects. However, the vast majority indicated that it would have to be determined which tasks were the most efficient on site. *“After several weeks of telecommuting, going to the office to write emails and make Skype calls seems almost absurd to me”*, said one employee.

On-site days could be used to get to know each other differently and strengthen ties with the company by setting up in-person workshops on topics that are important to the whole Group (engagement, CSR, etc.) or team by reflecting on its roadmap, the priorities for the year and month or simply to increase cohesion. The manager and employees must always be aware of on-site days in advance to take advantage of them.

“It should be possible to organise on-site work as we do one-off visits to entities to maximise interaction and prepare individually upstream”.

This management must be organised and probably requires tools to support setting it up. Managers cited the need for tools and support to monitor the organisation of their employees’ schedules. They expressed that they do not want to spend their time trying to figure out where their employees are.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

- Give managers the means to organise their team’s work: information on where employees are working should be shared in calendars, on a mobile application or via HR tools;
- Make sure there are days where the employees work on site together;
- Create rituals for on-site days (e.g. eating lunch together, having a social meeting, brainstorming, etc.);
- Promote a new kind of team management:
 - Holding sync meetings, sharing progress and issues;
 - Training managers on collective management techniques and collaborative and creative tools;
 - Having regular and more frequent all-staff seminars (in person or remotely) to reinforce the downward flow of information.

A friendly atmosphere to strengthen ties and encourage casual interaction!

On-site work days must be organised around casual moments for employees. To do this, they have to feel that they are allowed to suggest initiatives outside of those suggested by the Group. Two examples are the Citizen Commitment Games held in 2014 – an extraordinary opportunity to share based on sport and solidarity which brought people closer together – and Playing for Philharmonie, which takes place every two years.

We believe that in order for employees to find this sense of belonging within the Group, we need to increase the opportunities to share social moments together “outside of work”, and ensure employees know they can get involved.

We have also just spent three months in lockdown in our respective cocoons (at home), and the workplace needs to be a place where we feel good and where we want to be. Changing the layout of the workplace with inviting spaces will improve the level of comfort at work. Like the Dunes model, more spaces for interaction and camaraderie are necessary for everyone's well-being.

It is therefore important to combine a pleasant working environment with regular moments outside of work that the majority of employees want to be a part of. These moments can be local initiatives (which need to be allowed) or carried out on a larger scale. The Plateau model at the Dunes is also an excellent example to be replicated as much as possible. It is essential to give employees more freedom, which will leave room for more initiatives to create fun moments (no more ideas lost to “But what would they say?” or the fear of being judged). Trust and camaraderie are the keywords.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Give each team the opportunity to have fun moments—a pair of people in each department could be in charge of fun management, a role which would change hands frequently (e.g. every six weeks);
- Create moments of camaraderie at the team level:
 - Arrange aperitifs, lunches, breakfasts;
 - Celebrate successes, birthdays and departures;
 - Organise picnics before holidays;
 - Schedule a team-building day once every month or two;
 - Plan an annual day dedicated to a department, division, etc.;
- Create moments of camaraderie on a larger scale:
 - Create Group-wide sports tournaments;
 - Create meet-up groups by hobby;
 - Organise internal challenges, enabling an entire department to win a prize taking up a full or half day (rugby, solidarity day, exhibition visit, concert, etc.);
 - Create a collaborative SG playlist, etc.

ADAPTING OUR PREMISES: A NECESSARY TASK

The findings and proposals set out below are applicable to the SGPM scope; however, some proposals may be applied or adapted to other subsidiaries.

Challenges for head offices

Mixed views

Discussions about the premises revealed contrasting views regarding locations in the Paris region, such as La Défense and the Dunes, among others.

For some, the towers in La Défense inspire a sense of pride by embodying the image of a historic, robust and resilient bank. The head office is seen as the core of our business—the hub for all decisions, top management and cultural events that strengthen the sense of belonging. For others, it is a place that represents frustration due to its location in an uninspiring corporate neighbourhood, the image it projects and its layout.

In fact, many contributors said they perceived La Défense as an overly ostentatious, cumbersome and stressful place with a cold business-hub image where the individual is merely one amidst the masses. In addition, the large number of employees in the towers also creates traffic throughout the day (canteen, lifts, moving from room to room, etc.) and employees lament the constant delays that affect their productivity and work. Furthermore, the lack of choice in common areas, whether to work as a group, create, or find some peace and quiet, and the lack of green spaces seem to accentuate the image of a company that is not in line with new work expectations.

On the other hand, the Dunes complex is seen as a more flexible place, reflecting the desire to increase communication between activities and leading to more collaboration between entities and people. It also seems to meet the challenges of well-being at work that employees are looking for, with areas conducive to working alone or as a team and to relaxation. Employees particularly appreciate arrangements in line with current trends that are flexible and confer more responsibility: *“We can sprawl out on a sofa or plug in at our desk— either way we are just as efficient”*. Common areas, kitchens on all floors that are friendlier and quieter than the cafeteria, outdoor spaces so you can breathe or be alone to work or have a discussion—these are all differentiating factors. The downside, according to the employees, is being distanced from the head office and top management, which may in some respect weaken ties to the company.

We asked interviewees via the online questionnaire if they were looking forward to returning to the office. Out of the 93 respondents located in La Défense, 38 answered “no”, whereas of those located in the Dunes, 100% said yes. The sample is limited, but the results clearly reflect what has been said to us more generally in the workshops and interviews.

Some employees also underlined the irrationality of assignment locations. Some live near the Dunes and work in La Défense, and others vice versa. As such, their workplace is far from home and they have to spend a great deal of commute time in overcrowded public transportation. Many of them would like to be able to shorten their commute time and work from the bank's different locations in the Paris region from time to time.

In short, employees need to find a place that adapts to them! A place where the experience is simple: moving around, ideation, access to services, resting times...

Why come to the office?

For employees, the crisis and lockdown have changed the relationship to on-site work. Today, more than 80% of them want to telecommute more often. They already see the locations in a completely different way than in the past. The concept of ‘workplace as a service’, which is required according to many of them, is both an attractive factor from the outside as well as a productivity and engagement driver for employees who have an improved experience as a result (in the sense of the user experience). In this concept of work, the locations meet specific needs and are no longer the place where everything happens. The mobility and partial presence of employees on site are a catalyst for transforming and repurposing these locations.

In concrete terms, we have identified three groups of employees who will be on site once telecommuting has been broadly rolled out, each with very specific needs.

The first category will be those who do not telecommute: those who have chosen not to or cannot telecommute due to a lack of resources, comfort or simply because they are not autonomous enough (new arrivals, etc.). During their work week, they will need peace and quiet, and to find moments to work on important tasks at the office. These people will need quiet zones—spaces where they can focus without being interrupted; open spaces are no longer possible for the entire time they are at the office. Here, workspaces are places to focus, with support and training for those who need it.

The second group will be on site to access services: proxim’IT, the shop and the services offered through the works council, etc. These services must be maintained or improved both for essential employees who ensure business continuity and for those who create a sense of hospitality and well-being at work. The current experience in these places is relatively disappointing: wait times are very long, especially during peak hours; there are sometimes random closing times and the range of services could be improved at a low cost by proposing more one-off initiatives or by simply granting better visibility to the existing offering.

The third category will be on site for social reasons, including people who come to network, have lunch or coffee with a colleague, or those who come to make headway on a project, take workshops, or meet a client or a project team. These people need dedicated spaces including friendly atmospheres, built-in cafeterias, creative spaces, and places that, in short, encourage social interaction, embody the values of team spirit and collaboration and enable employees to maintain professional relationships based on proximity and sharing, whether formal or casual.

Offices as places to bring people together

The ability to strengthen existing connections depends on the way the space is set up, as does the ability to establish connections with new arrivals. Employees’ post-crisis expectations are close to what one might expect from generation Y or even Z: the lockdown has largely accelerated their digital skills development and telecommuting has provided unprecedented comfort which is currently in high demand.



In order for the offices to remain attractive, they have to be as comfortable as the home is. It is the very strategy of Spaces, which, through the slogan “Welcome home—err, to the office”, illustrates the need to feel at home in a comfortable environment while working. This is what a competitive workspace looks like in 2020.

Modular and flexible workspaces are increasingly popular, and employees expect spaces to be rearranged so that they look like coworking spaces along the lines of Spaces or WeWork. In addition, many considered that they could work somewhere besides the Societe Generale premises if they saved commute time or gained flexibility. These spaces are also workplaces where employees feel more comfortable because their capacity is moderate or even limited to a few hundred people.

Making our premises attractive means rearranging part of the layout, making them more modular so that they can be optimised: larger meeting rooms, smaller canteens with a more friendly atmosphere, quiet work spaces and collaborative spaces were all requested by employees who find it difficult to handle extremely vertical architecture, especially after having telecommuted for an extended period of time. Making our premises attractive is synonymous with asserting the Group's presence everywhere by suggesting initiatives to take advantage of each space and take over that space. Making our premises attractive also means leaving them to visit and discover new perspectives from start-ups, other CAC 40 companies and young entrepreneurs.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Do not challenge the comforts of the home head on: the offices have to provide benefits that employees can only get by being on site;
- Think about office layouts that are built for new uses:
 - Quiet zones;
 - Reservable collaborative areas for work in groups;
 - Social areas for casual conversations;
 - Service areas;
 - Zen spaces (not for work).
- Improve on-site hospitality:
 - Introduce more welcoming and playful furniture;
 - Plant vertical gardens, potted plants, planters, collaborative gardens, etc.;
 - Improve temperature management on site;
 - Provide a basket of fruit on each floor;
 - Offer free coffee;
 - Have regular and visible activities (not necessarily expensive).

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS (continued)

- Adapt the equipment and services for all uses:
 - Quiet zones:
 - Install barriers and soundproof areas;
 - Make noise-cancelling headsets available;
 - Install soundproof phone booths.
 - Collaborative areas:
 - Have meeting rooms adapted to group work (ability to move around, table, markers, screen/audio-conference phone that works, etc.)
 - Service areas:
 - Ensure a smooth and pleasant experience for the basics: canteen, IT support, etc.;
 - Evaluate the opportunity to expand the service offering: a real concierge service, a package reception/delivery service, on-site childcare, a meal delivery service, snacks on the desks, etc.
 - Social areas:
 - Make sure the cafeterias are inviting;
 - Install small living rooms with sofas, bean bags, etc.;
 - Install game spaces: table football, chess, ping-pong, sport video games, etc.
 - Zen spaces:
 - Set up a room dedicated to relaxation (with massages at reduced prices, for example).
- Find a use for spaces that remain empty during the day: cafeterias, restaurants, halls, etc.;
- Move to free-address seating (hot desking) like the Dunes, with capacity management via an application: Bribe with COVID tool, EZ Workspace, etc.

Challenges for branch networks

In the branch networks, the real-estate problem is very different and quickly overlaps, as explained above, with issues related to branch-network coverage.

For branches, telecommuting can bring a fresh perspective to certain workstation issues and generate gains for future real-estate works. When experts (PRO, SME, PRIV, CGP, CBP) would like a workstation to receive customers, there are currently few dedicated offices in the branches. Telecommuting may free up workstations and create new spaces.

CONCLUSION

In the coming months and years, telecommuting will go from being an “acute” framework (crisis management) to becoming a “chronic” framework (long-term management). The company and its ecosystem must therefore continue to reinvent themselves in order to support this transition from “acute telecommuting” to “chronic telecommuting”.

In addition, although this crisis has taught us many lessons, the vulnerabilities it revealed were mostly “acute vulnerabilities”. Particular attention should therefore be paid to identifying “chronic vulnerabilities”.

For the company, the coexistence of telecommuting with other forms of work, both current and future, will continue to raise new challenges and reveal new vulnerabilities. According to economist and philosopher Amartya Sen and philosopher Cynthia Fleury, these vulnerabilities will constitute valuable drivers and even sources of creation for the future of work.

A study was conducted within the Group between June and July 2020 to understand the new expectations of employees and to channel them into concrete proposals for the Executive Management.

This white paper outlines a new employee experience at Societe Generale, specifying methods for expanding remote work and the arrangements needed to accelerate the cultural and managerial transformations, improve our digital environments and enhance the attractiveness of our offices.