**JUST Training Fiche: Smart working (SW) characteristics, tools and good practices**

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| **Title** | Smart working characteristics, tools and good practices | |
| **Keywords** | Smart working; Hybrid working; Virtual world; Wellbeing; Flexibility; Management; Workstyle; Technology | |
| **Provided by** | FUDŠ | |
| **Language** | English | |
| **Objectives** | The objectives of this module are to **define smart working** and differentiate it from other work types and to get acquainted with **SW principles and good practices**. The participant will be able to manage setting **SW place** and choose proper **SW tools** and technology. They will get familiar with the relevance and specifics of SW in relation to **wellbeing** and a **well-balanced work**. | |
| **Learning outcomes** | * Understanding smart working and its advantages and disadvantages * Learning smart working good practices * Knowing to choose proper tools and technology for SW * Being able to establish a well-balanced work/private lifestyle * Being able to manage SW environment | |
| **Training Area** | **Business Etiquette** |  |
| **Digital Skills** |  |
| **Soft Skills** |  |
| **Smart Working** | **X** |
| **Content index** | **Smart working characteristics, tools and good practices**  **Unit 1: Smart working (SW) definition**  Section 1: Defining smart working  Section 2: SW principles  **Unit 2: Smart working tools and technologies**  Section 1: Setting up a smart working place  Section 2: Tools and technologies for SW  **Unit 3: Smart working good practices**  Section 1: Identification of good practices  Section 2: Balance between smart working and personal life  Section 3: Smart working and wellbeing | |
| **Training content** | **Smart working characteristics, tools and good practices**  **Unit 1: Smart working definition**  **Defining smart working**  The 4th industrial revolution (4IR) brought new trends, rapid change in technology, industries and societal patterns and processes in the 21st century due to increasing interconnectivity and smart automation.  Due to new trends and the COVID-19 pandemic new ways of working became more common.  Over the last decades the prefix “SMART” has been recognized as a term to qualify the innovative use of digital technologies in various business areas.  Alternative ways of working as opposed to **classical working**:   * **Teleworking/remote working** is referring to the ability to work in a place other than company office (home, coworking areas, another office etc.) * **Flexible working** refers to flexibility in locations, time, contracts (it may include teleworking, compressed weeks, part time, hybrid working, project work etc.) * **Hybrid working** refers to flexibility with the place/location of work – i.e., hybrid workers work partly from an office and partly from home. * **Agile working** refers to practices that allow the optimization of work (proactivity, agility in managing activities, coordination with others) * **Smart working** refers to a new approach for designing work to address the efficiency and effectiveness of activities utilizing a combination of flexibility, autonomy, agile collaboration and coordination, optimization of work tools.   *Source: Exploring Digital Resilience*  **What is Smart Working?**  Smart Working is a business-focused approach to flexible working that delivers more efficiency and effectiveness in work organisation, service delivery and organisational agility, as well as benefits for working people.  Key features are management by results, a trust-based culture, high levels of autonomy, flexibility in the time and location of work, new tools and work environments, reduced reliance on physical resources and openness to continuing change.  *Source: Flexibility.co.uk*  **SW principles**  The smart worker is a provider of a service, located in a non-predefined place, delivered at intervals that change over time, and who operates continuously evolving relationships with the organization.  Principles of SW:   * Work takes place at **the most effective locations** and at the **most effective times** * **Flexibility becomes the norm** rather than the exception * Everyone is in principle considered eligible for flexible working, without assumptions being made about people or roles * Employees have **more choice** about where and when they work, subject to business considerations * **Space is allocated to activities**, not to individuals and not on the basis of seniority * The **costs of doing work are reduced** * There is effective and appropriate use of technology * Simplified **collaboration** and connectivity virtually everywhere means sharing information and working with others regardless of location * The processes people are asked to work with are **continuously challenged** to make sure they are fit for purpose * Managing performance **focuses on results** rather than presence * Smart Working underpins and adds **new dimensions to diversity and equality** principles * Employees have the opportunity to lead **balanced and healthy lives** * Work has **less impact on the environment.**   *Source: Flexibility.co.uk*  **Unit 2: Smart working tools and technologies**  **Setting up a smart working place**   * Presenting smart working as a way to offer **new working environments** i.e. attractive and inspiring work environments to support **new work styles**. * Traditional offices (ranks of personally allocated desks) vs. smart office environments (a mix of work positions and meeting spaces). * Benefits of creating a smart working place (more efficient utilization of space, eliminating wasted space, an increase of business performance, achieving significant savings and efficiency gains). * **Desk-based tasks**: the need for offices is less for ranks of workstations, and more for a **mix of other functional spaces** (e.g. flexible meeting spaces – small meeting rooms, breakout spaces and café areas, space for quiet and concentrated working, special project areas, team tables, spaces for confidential work and phone calls). * Relevance of understanding the amount of space needed in the office and the mix of different kinds of spaces (provision should be based on actual need rather than an average figure). * Protocols for ensuring that **space-sharing** works effectively. * Creating **activity-based work settings** (bookable meeting room; ad hoc meeting room with a limited time to use; two-person confidential meeting rooms or pods; breakout areas for informal ad hoc collaboration; non-bookable quiet work spaces; resource areas; project areas etc.). * Considering the needs of **staff with disabilities**. * **Clear desk policy** (threshold of one or two hours). * **Booking system** (primarily for meeting rooms; control of the length of the space bookings). * Moving from paper-dependency to **electronic-based working**. * Office space should be prioritised for **human interaction**, not storage. As much storage as possible should be moved off the office floor. * The relevance of **ergonomics** of smart working (portable technologies, new furniture, height adjustable screens, desks and chairs etc.). * Managing **noise** impact and considering ‘**soundscaping’** as a necessary feature of the smart working environment (an optimal acoustic environment by means of physical features in the workplace, such as sound-absorbing panels and furnishings, and technological solutions such as good headsets and adjustable background noise to counter-balance disruptive noise etc.). * Managing the needs and challenges of **working outside the office.** * **Workhubs.**   **Tools and technologies for SW**   1. *Explaining why do we need SW tools and technologies.* SW tools and technologies can help workers to work smarter. They assist workers to collaborate and communicate with team members while simultaneously scheduling work and accomplishing tasks. 2. P*resenting different tools and technologies* according to the worker’s needs: 3. Keeping **team communication and collaboration** on the track as well as to reducing communication/collaboration problems and delays at work, e.g. *Zoom, Slack, Cisco Webex, Microsoft Teams, Join.me, Loom, TeamViewer.* 4. **Work management:** scheduling work, organizing work environment, managing time and meeting work deadlines, while potentially maintaining transparency at work as well, e.g. *Basecamp, Trello, Asana, Accelo, Calendly, Toggl, ProofHub, Calendar, Every Time Zone, Harvest GitHub, Facto HR, Doodle.* 5. **Storing, tracking and sharing** a large amount of data: *Google Drive, Dropbox, OneDrive* 6. **Managing the team’s passwords**: *1Password* 7. **Making your notes**: *Evernote, Notion* 8. **Improving focus on the work** and **boosting work productivity**: *Brain.fm, Shift*   **Unit 3: Smart working good practices**  **Identification of good practices**  Presenting smart working as a **normal way of working**.  Acquainting with the relevance of **finding a proper balance** between face-face interaction and virtual interaction, depending on the field and type of organization and other working circumstances.  Making awareness that **constant training** of employees should be a norm since smart working principles, tools and technologies are changing quickly.  **Considering the age groups** of employees when implementing smart working. Younger generations' employees are more familiar with smart working and can accept it faster.  Encouraging employees to create a **dedicated workspace** free of distractions, allowing employees to concentrate on work tasks and be creative.  Letting employees know that **achieving expected work results** is more relevant than place, time and manner of working. The importance of setting a KPI (key performance indicator).  Stimulating employees to become **knowledgeable workers** able to **search for relevant information** and **select/use proper technology** in order to solve problems/challenges independently.  Keeping **regular interaction** with employees to check their needs and challenges.  Stimulating employees as well as managers **to react quickly** and **be concise** as much as possible.  **Managing the risk in security challenges**. Providing the protection of sensitive information as well as quick access to relevant information to all relevant employees.  **Promoting/creating a healthy workplace.**   1. Note: We advice the lecturer to present some good practices of SW from companies/organizations from local environment.   **Balance between smart working and personal life**  A good work-life balance means a harmonisation between the different aspects of life. Many people are learning to blend their work and personal lives successfully (work-life integration). Maintaining a healthy work-life balance can also improve employee’s productivity.  Setting up the balance between SW and personal life is important and should be fostered by the organization by:   * **Awareness-raising** sessions for all levels of staff. * **Specific training** in SW techniques for managers and teams. * The development of **team charters or protocols** to involve employees in designing and enforcing their own team arrangements for rolling out SW practices. * Incorporating SW techniques and principles in **leadership development programmes** and other relevant professional training. * Ensuring that **recruitment policies** support the development of a SW workforce and culture. * Ensuring that **performance management, reward and other people policies** support the development of SW. * Importance of **setting up a work schedule** in order to balance the working time and free time of an employee.   *Source: Flexibility.co.uk.*  **Smart working and wellbeing**  Building a SW environment that enables employees’ wellbeing:   1. Evidence of a **positive relationship** between work flexibility, health and wellbeing. 2. Relevance of good business sense to take care of **health and fitness** of employees. 3. Promoting flexible working practices that can **reduce absence** and in particular **reduce stress**. 4. Option of **remote working and online attendance** at meetings helps to support employees when suffering from minor ailments or during periods of recuperation from illness etc. 5. Two broad areas for **promoting health and wellbeing** through workplace facilities: 6. providing wellbeing centres, fitness facilities and areas for relaxation, and enabling the flexibility for employees to use them; to give employees the opportunity to break up periods of sedentary work with more active activities and stretching; 7. creating environments for everyday work that maximise wellbeing (e.g. sedentary work broken up with 2-4 hours of standing and light activity during working hours; use of standing desks; holding standing meetings etc.). 8. Relevance of paying attention to **acoustic** and **wider sensory environment.** 9. Both the fit-out of the workplace and the deployment of technologies can create more satisfying, less stressful and more productive working environments. 10. **Biophilia** - Incorporating or mimicking nature through acoustics, plantscapes and access to the outdoors can positively impact health and wellbeing. 11. Putting **noise** in the right place.   *Source: Flexibility.co.uk.*    Threats of SW:   * Normalisation of working long hours. * being under extreme stress, especially if we’ve been doing it for a long time.   How to help yourself:   1. Take a break. 2. Pay attention to your feelings. 3. Reprioritise. 4. Consider your alternatives. 5. Make changes.   *Source: mentalhealth.org.uk* | |
| **Glossary** | **SMART:** Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time.  **Workhub(s):** A digital space where you can organize, collaborate, communicate, and get work done.  **Good mental health at workplace:** Keeping a good balance between work and personal life.  **Wellbeing:** The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy.  **Classical working:** Working for a pre-determined time on a fixed location. | |
| **Self-evaluation (multiple choice queries and answers)** | 1. What is smart working?  1. Applying tricks and logic. 2. **Being creative and thinking differently.** 3. Cheating and fooling others. 4. **Getting the work done faster.** 5. **Helps learn the value of tolerance and patience.**   **2. How would you promote wellbeing at SW place?**   1. By reducing work obligations of employees. 2. **By setting a fitness center at SW place.** 3. **By mimicking nature through acoustics at SW place.** 4. By hiring a fortune-teller for employees. 5. By placing all the employees in one noisy space.   3. What would you advice to a manager willing to set a SW place?   1. **Implement standing desks.** 2. Pressure on employees is crucial for achieving good work results. 3. **Transfer paper processes to electronic processes.** 4. It is relevant to constantly control when and where the employees are working. 5. **Stimulate employees to search for relevant information to solve new challenges independently.** 6. **Do not neglect importance of space-sharing.** 7. Do not interact with employees regularly.   4. What are the basic principles of SW?   1. Working in an office 8-16. 2. **Working at the most effective location and most effective time.** 3. **Flexibility of working experience.** 4. Hight costs of work. 5. You have to be present, even if you don’t work all day.   5. What is teleworking?   1. Working for a TV. 2. **Working from home / another office / coworking space.** 3. Teleworking is same as smart working.   6. How do take care of your mental health?   1. Work over-time every day. 2. Spend your holidays working. 3. **Taking a brake**. 4. **Setting up a working schedule.** 5. Being under stress all the time. 6. **Reprioritise.** | |
| **Bibliography** | * Flexibility.co.uk. The Smart Working Handbook. 2nd Edition. <https://flexibility.co.uk/new-edition-of-the-smart-working-handbook-launche/> * Anne Marie McEwa. 2016. Smart Working. Creating the next Wave. Routledge. * Roberta Cuel, Diego Ponte, Francesco Virili (eds.). 2022. Exploring Digital Resilience: Challenges for People and Organization. Springer International Publishing. | |
| **Resources (videos, reference link)** | * <https://govisually.com/blog/remote-work-tools-in-2022/> * <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-UL_hoNtck> * <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUo06l8Zi-4> * <https://vimeo.com/731078395> * <https://diversityproject.com/dimensions/smart-working/> * <https://quizizz.com/admin/quiz/602b6d7c6c80b3001ba1d8da/hard-work-vs-smart-work> * <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth_Industrial_Revolution> * <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/work-life-balance> | |