**Work After Lockdown**

**Depositor: University of Southampton**

**Wave 1 topic guide: organisational leaders**

*The core question the interviews with organisational leaders engages with is the extent to which mass working-from-home under COVID permanently disrupts organisational ways of working.*

*Priority questions are marked in red.*

*Examples of leaders:*

* Chief Executive/Managing Partner (or delegated other)
* HR Director/Chief People Officer
* Head of/Organisational lead for Agile/Flexible Working Policy (pre-COVID) e.g. Head of/Director of Inclusion/Responsible Business/Workforce
* Estates / Technology (Chief Information Officer/Head of..)
* And/or another senior manager involved in directing working-from-home pandemic response
* Introduction
* Run through Information Sheet
* Establish consent
* Record Audio

Interview Questions:

1. **Would you please tell me a little bit about your role [prior to the crisis] and as it relates to delivering your organisational response to the COVID crisis?**

**[NOTE: FOR GLOBAL ROLES, MAY NEED TO ORIENTATE RESPONDENT TO CONSIDER IMPACT ON UK OPERATIONS]**

1. **How significant has the ability to move some/all your workforce to working-from-home been for business continuity?**

PROBE: in what ways/specific areas of your business e.g. service delivery *(What services? In what ways? Get examples); employee retention (which roles/segments?)*

1. **Prior to March 2020 lockdown, what was the organisation’s position on WfH? And on flexible/agile/smart working more broadly?**

PROBE: significance/importance of WfH (or agile/flexible working) in corporate and people strategies? *Identify the pre-COVID prime drivers e.g. talent attraction, retention, improved productivity, collaboration/innovation, costs. And broad implementation approach (e.g. by exception/request? universal? informal/ad hoc?)*

1. **In what ways did your organisation need to adjust to working from home on this scale?** What did you need to put in place that you did/didn’t have?

[ORIENTATE THIS QUESTION TO THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEADER e.g. estates, technology, people]

PROBE: extent of adjustment in relation to:

* technology (hardware, wifi, software, security)
* processes and ways of working (client/customer contact; team work and collaboration; meetings)
* policies (employee flexible working arrangements; equality and inclusion; performance and reward; health and safety)
* culture and behaviour: skills and capability (tech know-how; team leadership and management); employee supports for well-being; work-life balance; managing workload

1. **What kinds of factors are unique to your organisation in adapting to WfH? [and to your industry sector?]**

PROBE: around demographics of workforce (e.g. proportion women/parents/globally distributed/local workers); pre-existing experience of WfH; client/customer contact expectations; aspects of the business model

1. **How did you cope with managing the different needs of employees around WfH** e.g. parents/carers; clinically vulnerable?
2. **What have been the main organisational challenges of the shift to WfH under lockdown?**

PROBE: around client/customer relationships, quality, measuring productivity, efficiency, communicating with staff, managing absence and working hours, costs and financial

1. **What have been the most positive aspects to have come out for WfH under lockdown? What are the major gains for the organisation?**

THE BIG QUESTIONS TO BE RETURNED TO IN SUBSEQUENT WAVES

1. **To what extent has the COVID crisis permanently disrupted your business model (i.e. what you do, how you cost/price and resource delivery of it)**

Disruption can of course be positive or negative. It is always material.

PROBE: in what ways? e.g. areas likely to be affected by wfh/remote working:

* Resourcing service delivery (e.g. how many people you need, which skills you need, redundancies, where you recruit from and on what basis)
* Designing roles/jobs (e.g. more/less multi-skilling?)
* Leadership and managerial practice (e.g. how you lead teams; how you measure performance?)
* Estates planning and management
* Innovation, collaboration and growth

1. **What positive, practical interventions have you made to retain ‘what works’ and eliminate what hasn’t, during this period?**

PROBE: Get specific examples

1. **Thinking specifically about flexible/agile working policy and practices, are there permanent changes that you think could be made in relation to location (where) and schedule (when) people work?**

PROBE: Get specific examples

PROBE: How confident do you feel right now that these will be implemented? Why?