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Center for  
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THE TEST OF EXCELLENCE

# CEM NEWSLETTER

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## WHAT'S INSIDE?

Alternative Work Arrangements

5 Tips for Teachers working from home

Community Corner:  
*Among Kwentong WFH mo?*



Cancelled trips and work from home? Closed malls and streets almost empty?

This was certainly not the summer we expected. In the blink of an eye, the country, the world, seems to have changed.

Suddenly, we must learn new ways of working and relating to each other as physical distancing has become the primary means of controlling this pandemic.

This summer may not have been a season for travel and beach parties.... but it has become a season for health awareness and more family time.

We may have not gone home sun-kissed; but at least, we are home, safe and sound – and that's all that really matters.

Our nation needs to be united more than ever; so everyone must do their part, government and the public alike. Let us all work together to keep each other safe and healthy.



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**CEM** O N L I N E  
**NEWSLETTER**

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## Alternate Working Arrangements

The COVID-19 global crisis has taken its toll on almost every aspect of our lives. For the meantime, we have to live in the new normal and this includes adopting alternative work arrangements, in order to continue our livelihood that sustains our needs. With the declaration of the Enhance Community Quarantine (ECQ) in Luzon and in most parts of the country, government and private institutions established guidelines on alternative or flexible work arrangements for the employees, until the situation improves.

On 7 May 2020, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) through CSC Memorandum Circular No. 10, s. 2020, has made available multiple alternative work arrangements (AWA) that government agencies can adopt while the entire country is placed under a State of Public Health Emergency. This includes:

**Work-from-Home** refers to an output-oriented work arrangement that authorizes the worker to produce outputs/results and accomplishments outside of the office.

**Skeleton (Skeletal) Workforce** refers to a work arrangement where a minimum number of employees is required to man the office to render service when full staffing is not possible.

**Four-day (Compressed) Work week** refers to a work arrangement whereby the employees' workweek is compressed to four (4) days each week.

**Staggered Working Hours** refers to a work arrangement applicable to offices/agencies that observe work shifting or flexible working time.

Other Alternative Work Arrangements refer to work arrangements consisting of a combination of the above enumerated work arrangements or other work arrangements appropriate/applicable to the agency subject to the prevailing community quarantine in the area where the agency is located and the nature of work/job performed by the employee/s.

*(<http://www.csc.gov.ph/phocadownload/MC2020/MC%20No.%2010,%20s.%202020.pdf>)*

The Department of Education, through D.O. No. 43, s.2020 advises Telecommuting as an alternative work arrangement that allows DepEd employees to work from home or other off-site locations; provided that personnel must be readily accessible during working hours and must be able to respond to directives, requests, and queries through agreed modes of communication with their immediate supervisor.

*([https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/DM\\_s2020\\_043.pdf](https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/DM_s2020_043.pdf))*

Additionally, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) through Labor Advisory No. 09 Series of 2020 advises employers to consider the following flexible work arrangements, subject to the prevailing conditions of the company:

**Reduction of Workhours and/or Workdays** refers to one where the normal workhours or workdays per week are reduced.

**Rotation of Workers** refers to one where the employees are rotated or alternately provided work within the week.

**Forced Leave** refers to one where the employees are required to go on leave for several days or weeks utilizing their leave credits, if there are any.

*(<https://www.dole.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Labor-Advisory-No.-09-20-Guidelines-on-the-Implementation-of-Flexible-Work-Arrangements-as-Remedial-Measure-due-to-the-Ongoing-Outbreak-of-Coronavirus-Disease-2019-COVID-19.pdf>)*

These work arrangements are recommended in order to reduce physical contact and prevent further spread of the virus. These, together with various forms of support, administrative and engineering control measures, as well as, personal protective equipment, should help make workplaces safer.

# COMMUNITY CORNER

## Ano'ng kwentong WFH mo?

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of enhanced community quarantine, all CEM staff were forced to work from home, an arrangement that was fairly new to the company. Here are three standout stories of how our employees power through and deliver their service in these times of crisis while at the safety of their own homes.

### WFH: Kaya ko ba ito?

**By Marinita Alano, Clients Relations Section**

*Hindi na ako nagulat sa balitang magkakaroon ng community quarantine dahil sinusubaybayan ko ang tungkol sa COVID-19. Ang CEM on Air ay dalawang episodes din ang inilaan upang talakayin ang COVID-19 at ang mga hakbang upang maiwasan at maprotektahan ang ating mamamayan.*

*Naglabas ang CEM ng guidelines para sa Work from Home, bagong moda ng pagtatrabaho ng mga empleyado. Nakakapanibago ang WFH lalo na at maraming inaalala ang mga maybahay na tulad ko. Kailangang tiyakin ko muna na may sapat na pagkain ang aking pamilya, malinis at madisinfekt ang buong bahay para hindi kapitan ng mikrobyo, at i-monitor ang kalusugan ng aking pamilya. Sa pagsasama-sama sa bahay, nagkaroon din ng pagkakataong magbonding at makapagusap ang pamilya tungkol sa kalagayan ng bawat isa. Malungkot nga lang at no work, no pay ang isa kong anak na nagtatrabaho. Inaalala ko rin ang kanyang self-esteem at morale sa panahong ito ng krisis. Ang aking anak na PWD dahil may sakit sa puso at ako na senior citizen ay parehong vulnerable sa COVID-19 kaya't naglagi kami sa kuwarto at lumalabas lamang kung kinakailangan.*

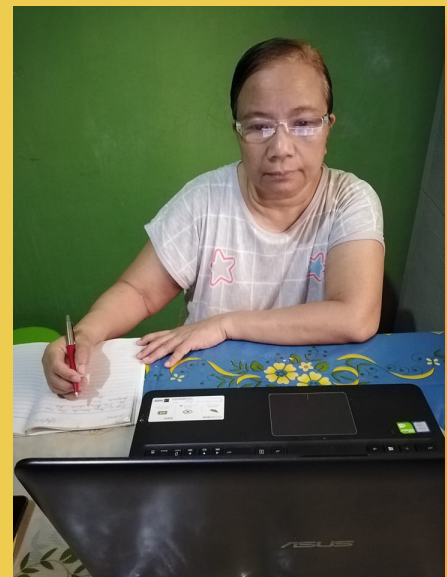
*Nakakapanibago ang WFH lalo na at may iba pang humahatak ng aking atensyon sa bahay. Mabuti na lang at kasama ko ang Client Relations Section (CRS) team para maisagawa at mapagaan ang WFH. Madalas ang aming meeting para kumustahin ang kalagayan di lamang ng trabaho kung hindi pati na ang kalagayang personal ng bawat isa. Nakatutulong ito upang malaman mong hindi ka nag-iisa sa pakikibakang ito. Madalas din ang paalala sa bawat isa sa mga gawaing dapat gampanan, at nagbibigay din ng thumbs up sa mga*

*naaacomplish ng bawat isa. Ang sarap sa feeling pag ang iyong team ay buo at supportive sa isa't isa.*

*Ang isa sa valuable accomplishments ko ngayong Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) ay ang 6-day training para sa mga Facilitators ng Test Interpretation seminars. Bilang project leader, isa itong bagong hamon. Paano ko gagawing effective at interactive ang isang online training with 30 participants? Anong programa ang pwede kong gawin para matalakay ang iba't ibang tests ng CEM?*

*Sa tulong ng CRS team, nabuo ang programa, naisaayos ang preparasyon, at napaghatian ang presentasyon ng CEM tests. Naging matagumpay ang seminar at malaki ang pasasalamat ng mga participants dahil naliwanagan sila sa mga tanong at concerns nila. Malaking tulong din ang mga panelists na tumugon sa mga teknikal na tanong. Nakatulong din ang seminar upang maitaas ang tiwala sa sarili ng mga participants sa pagbibigay ng seminar.*

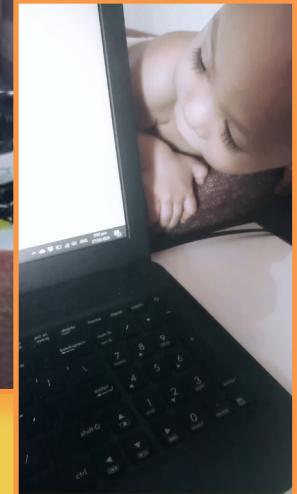
*Sulit ang mga pagpupuyat at paghahandang ginawa ko upang maihanda ng mga kinakailangan para sa training. Naharap ko ang bagong hamon sa pagbibigay ng online seminar. Napagtanto ko na kayang kaya ko pala ang magtrabaho ng produktibo kahit na Work from Home ang kaayusan. At higit sa lahat, kayang kaya natin ang WFH kung ang bawat team ay nagsusuportahan tulad ng CRS team. Teamwork is the key!*



# 1 Day. 2 Jobs

**By Lucille Borja-Javier, Test Development Section**

My work from home story is both hilarious and lonely. *Lumilipad na stuffed toy, nawawalang desktop mouse, umiiyak na baby sa background* while in the middle of zoom meeting, *baby sa ilalim ng work table ko*. Name all the horrors for a work from home parent with a 15-month old baby, I got it. But, I actually enjoy it, especially when I realize how lucky I am to be both working and be with my curious toddler at the same time. That's the hilarious part. Over the weeks to months that I've been working from home, I also felt lonely. There are times when my toddler tugs on my shirt while i am working but I cannot play with him. It's heartbreaking, *lalo na* I have to call out my husband to get my son so I could continue working. *Yung feeling na parang pinapili ka* between work and your baby. And after a while, I would hear my son's laughter while playing with his dad, *pero ako*, I have to stay on my work station to finish everything. *Mahirap pala*. But at the end of the day, *masaya na yung dating oras mo para bumiyaha, mabibigay agad sa pamilya*.



P.S. I am typing this at 5 in the afternoon, *habang karga ko* in one hand *yung baby ko*

# Communication is the team's bestfriend

**By, Laarni Bundoc, Client Relations Section**

With the work from home (WFH) arrangement, we at the Client Relations Section (CRS) learned new ways to communicate with our clients and as well as with our colleagues. Most of us do not know what to do with the WFH arrangement, but with the help and support of each other, we were able to go through it as a team.

As we go on with the WFH arrangement, we didn't forget to say our "*kamustahan*", we became more aware of each other's situations and challenges. Together as a team, we learned to utilize google apps like google docs, google sheets, google drive, zoom app, etc. Although, there are a lot of distractions & challenges when we do our zoom meetings like "*tumatahol na aso*" in the background, "time to do the groceries or do the cooking", or "unstable internet connection".

In this digital age, adaptability to change, collaboration, and good internet connection are some of the important requirements to have an effective, smooth, and productive WFH arrangement. Our situation is not easy, and it will continue to challenge us, but I believe in the saying, "today is hard, tomorrow will be worse, but tomorrow will be sunshine". Let us not lose hope and work as one team. I also want to share this quote that "Teamwork makes the dreams work".



# 5 TIPS FOR TEACHERS WORKING FROM HOME

**As teachers struggle to optimize their digital instruction during the COVID-19 crisis, an expert offers five tips to implement effective online instruction.**

Doing digital instruction properly is no piece of cake, says Helle Mathiasen, a professor at the natural sciences didactics department at the University of Copenhagen, and an expert in digital media and learning.

## 1. BE STRUCTURED

When using digital platforms like Zoom or Teams for instruction, it is essential that pupils and students understand what they're participating in, when to do what—and why. It is imperative that they experience a clear framework and teaching structure.

## 2. MEET EXPECTATIONS

In order for online instruction to be successful, it is important that everyone is included in the terms of instruction and accepts the premise of being taught in new ways via the internet. It is vital for pupils and students to feel that they have a say and are included.

Mathiasen points out that establishing mutual expectations is best achieved if you explain the purpose of your instruction.

## 3. CHECK IN

According to Mathiasen, when coronavirus-era students don't get "hello hugs" from their peers, it is crucial to begin lessons with everyone saying hello.

In addition, it is best if you turn on your webcam so that you can see everyone on video, or at least have a picture of yourself to amplify the feeling of a community.

## 4. VARY YOUR INSTRUCTION

The key to keeping pupils and students engaged during several hours of online instruction is variety, Mathiasen says. For example, lengthy monologues and lectures are a "no go."

"Lectures where the teacher simply talks should generally be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes—students cannot concentrate beyond that. Vary instruction by way of group work, where students are split up and discuss their assignments in another online forum," she suggests.

## 5. DROP QUIZZES WITHOUT FOLLOW-UP AND INVOLVE STUDENTS

As her final point, Mathiasen is keen to focus on the importance of involving pupils and students. In doing so, she questions the learning outcome of widely used digital quizzes such as Kahoot and Clickers, where students answer instructor-created questions about material.

"When using quizzes in the classroom, it is important that pupils and students have the opportunity to discuss their suggestions with the teacher. Without discussion, there is no rationale for students' answers, and without follow-up, we run the risk that the understanding of why an answer was right or wrong will be completely evaded.

