

As you contemplate how to best protect your team during these unprecedented times, you might be wondering what happens to your business should you make the radical choice to close ALL your global offices, and have your entire global team work from home. As a company with offices in every corner of the globe, including countries that don't have a work-from-home culture, I was concerned about the impact of closing all our global offices. Do our vital finance team members have Wi-Fi and proper workspaces to work from home? How can we collaborate and keep our team spirits high? Despite these concerns, closing our offices early seemed the right thing to do to get ahead of the pandemic. We've been remote working for over a week now and I'm inspired to say it's going surprisingly well.

It was a difficult decision, but a necessary one, so I'd like to share with you what we're doing at Globalization Partners, in hopes that our best practices can help our friends, clients, and business partners think through their own options around the globe:

**Making the Shift to Remote Working:** Globalization Partners has temporarily put in place a global remote work policy. To provide some insight, our team members represent a wide variety of white collar workers located globally, from Brazil to Mexico, UAE to Italy, UK to Ireland, Singapore to Australia, China and everywhere in between—with internal team members in several dozen countries. We had our HR team speak with each team member to ensure that they had access to Wi-Fi at home, particularly in locations where work-from-home is unusual and against local cultural norms. We were able to ultimately affirm that while not ideal, each team member did indeed have the [ability to work from home](#). As a contingency plan, we also prepared mobile hotspots for employees to take home should they have connectivity issues. We made the decision to have all offices work from home even where there wasn't yet evidence of coronavirus, simply because early testing strategies vary from country to country, and it seemed smarter to protect our team, rather than rely on what may be insufficient data.

**Contingency Planning for Spikes in Unwell Workers, or Lack of Connectivity:** Like many businesses, we must carefully consider how to keep our business operational regardless of whether people in a given country or location *can* actually make it to work. Smart businesses ensure workflow continuity no matter what happens. At Globalization Partners, our plans are carefully thought out and we are highly confident in our ability to maintain

business continuity even if people are unable to work.

**Limiting Social Contact:** Besides limiting office access, we encouraged our team members to limit social contact, and hold business meetings by video rather than in-person, whenever possible. I also asked that our team take government issued guidelines seriously and limit social contact as it is currently the best way we presently know to diminish the spread of the virus.

**Keeping a Positive Outlook:** To keep up team spirit, build community and learn more about each other, we are including some virtual social events including:

- Virtual Happy Hour, a “Meet & Greet” with global colleagues
- Global Talent Show, following the example of the indomitable Italian Spirit ([check this out](#)) if you haven’t already!
- On Slack, we’re implementing “Donut”- an integration that pairs colleagues with a new colleague every three weeks so our team can continue to connect, and even have a virtual coffee chat together.

We know that these are very stressful times, but I believe that taking care of each other as a community will lessen the burden for us all. While this global pandemic is incredibly challenging, we know we’re capable of rising as a global community together.