

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC

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‘Grounded and connected’

The new work life

We have been working continuously through the lockdown. I could focus more on work in the quietude of my room at home: No disturbances, like visitors and office aids coming in or going out – just me and my scheduled meetings over video conferencing.

Ours is a projects, manufacturing and services conglomerate that necessitates work from specific sites or factories. The pandemic put several restrictions on the work, but we have become accustomed to the new ways of working by wearing masks, maintaining social distance, frequently sanitising all buildings and so on.

Homebound, and how

I have managed to catch up on a lot of reading and am watching some interesting TV shows and old movies, which I had put on the back burner. I also managed to find time to tune into some classics of my all-time favourite musicians, and spent more quality time with my family.

My daily morning jogs had to be cut down because of the lockdown but I found some fitness regimes on YouTube that could be done at home.

Professionally, no one ever thought of working from home after joining L&T. I had never stayed at one place for more than a week or so in my entire professional life due to the extensive work-related travel. This lockdown has made me sit in one place – my home office – for more than five weeks at a stretch and allowed me to function quietly.

I have been also communicating more intensely with all the stakeholders. I interacted with 50,000-plus employees and over 2,000 clients across various businesses through a series of webinars. Under normal circumstances, this would have been difficult to accomplish, but the lockdown gave me this opportunity.

The lesson

As a human being, the pandemic has made me more grounded and look at things differently. As a CEO and MD, this Black Swan event has offered many learnings in terms of business continuity measures and welfare for staff, vendors and partners.

(As told to T E Narasimhan)