





## President's view

Since writing the President's View for the Spring issue the world has drastically changed. In the space of a few months the whole world has gone into lockdown as we try to tackle the spread of Covid-19. It is frightening to see how quickly this virus has spread and how much it has affected everyone in some way. Not only are people losing loved ones, but they are unable to say goodbye to them, to hold them one last time, or even give them the funeral that they wished for. Every day, I read or hear a news report that brings me to tears.

Writing this article in April, midway through the UK lockdown, it's difficult to see when this will end and more importantly what the world will look like once it does. I believe it will be a different world and we will have to get used to a new normal. But the question is, what will that new normal be?

Will there be a change in the perception towards remote working and working from home? Remote working is a hot topic in most organisations and the attitude towards it does vary. Where it is possible to work remotely, some organisations really do frown upon it unless absolutely necessary while others are happy for staff to work remotely once they follow the organisation's guidelines. Even if your organisation allows remote working, in a lot of cases it can come down to whether your line manager or even your work colleagues are on-board with it. There are pros and cons for remotely working, some feel that you won't be as productive if you are not in the office as you will be easily distracted by a home environment. Whereas others feel you are less distracted in a home office because work colleagues cannot just

pop over to your desk to ask you a question that takes 20 minutes to answer. As someone who works from home regularly I can honestly say I'm much more productive at home as I can focus more easily on the task at hand without the office distractions.

Since the UK lockdown started, anyone who has the ability to work remotely has been forced to do this. For a lot of my work colleagues, this is the first time they have tried it. There have been some glitches along the way, but on the whole our working life hasn't changed that much.

The biggest change I have seen is an increase the amount of time I have spent talking to my colleagues via the phone, email and instant messenger! This is down to the fact that with everyone working from home, isolation and cabin fever is a big fear. The more you interact with your colleagues, and keep working as normal, the easier it will be to adapt to isolation.

*“The more you interact with your colleagues, and keep working as normal, the easier it will be to adapt to isolation.”*

Will family time and self-care become more common and acceptable in this new normality? Before Covid-19, in our household, as soon as the alarm went off we were up and getting ready to do the nursery drop and get ourselves to work. We barely had a chance to say good morning and we only ate meals together on a Sunday. Contrast that with now; I'm working from home with no commute. For the first time in what feels like forever, we are eating every meal together. There is no pressure to catch a train or drop the little one at nursery.

We have found a new routine that works for us in this situation. It has given my family a chance to slow down and appreciate what we have. While the circumstances that have forced us into this situation are not great, the silver lining has been this extra time we get to spend together as a family.

With no commute, it has become a lot easier for me to grab 10 or 15 minutes during the day to meditate. This is something that I have been trying to do for a long time. I actually have it in my calendar and every day when my reminder goes off, I used to

switch the reminder off and go back to work saying oh I don't have time for that today. Nowadays, I pay attention to that reminder. As soon as it goes off, I move away from the computer and just take the time to breathe and be grateful for what I have.

### ISTC news

During this time of lockdown, it has been so lovely to see members and non-members reaching out to each other on the ISTC Facebook group. Liz Gregory, one of our Council members, set up an ISTC virtual quiz night which was well attended and enjoyed by all. The ISTC are also running virtual area group meetings to keep members of the community in contact with each other. If you want to know more about these virtual meetings then contact your local area group leader or the ISTC office.

### Call for volunteers

The ISTC is always looking for members to volunteer to help run this organisation. There are lots of things we would love to do for our members, but we need volunteers to step forward and help out in various areas. If you are interested, then please get in touch with the ISTC office.



### TCUK Metro

As most of you are aware, this year is the first year of the TCUK Metro, a one day conference to be held in the Hallam Conference Centre in London on September 29th 2020. The day will consist of talks from those within our profession, a possible workshop as well as the ISTC AGM and the UKTC Awards presentation. At the time this journal goes to press, we still intend to go ahead with the event as planned. Given the current global situation with Covid-19, this of course may change. We are keeping an eye on government advice and if this changes, we will relook at our plans for the conference.

Like everyone, we hope a form of normality will return by September and we will be able to go ahead with TCUK Metro as planned. We are

“ It has given my family a chance to slow down and appreciate what we have. ”

entering uncharted waters with TCUK Metro and while we cannot guarantee it will be a success, we are very excited about trialling the format this year. I hope that it will give those that have been unable to attend TCUK in the past, a chance to experience it. For more information about the speakers, and the format of the day, please see the TCUK website and various social media channels.



#### UKTC awards

A reminder that the UKTC Awards process is now open for entries. These awards recognise the value of clear, concise and effective information products. The quality of the entries we receive increases 10-fold every year and I for one am looking forward to seeing what entries we will receive this year. For more information on how to

enter, see the UKTC Awards website. The closing date is 31st July 2020.

Stay safe  
Carol

#### References

TCUK website  
<http://technicalcommunicationuk.com>.

UKTC Awards  
<https://uktcawards.com>.

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The Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators (ISTC) is the largest UK professional body for people engaged in technical communication. The ISTC encourages professional development and standards, provides research resources and networking opportunities, and promotes technical and scientific communication as a profession. To join the ISTC, change your grade, or get involved in what we do, contact the ISTC office by email [istc@istc.org.uk](mailto:istc@istc.org.uk) or phone +44 (0) 20 8253 4506.



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