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Human contact vital to worksites

Getting to know people is getting tough.

The more technology takes over our lives, the more difficult it is to have meaningful conversations.

Employees are communicating through e-mails, conference calls, voicemail and text, even within the same office, rather than walking right next door or down the hall.

Employers are starting to monitor employee activities via social media sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and even job posting boards to see who is applying for what, who is dating whom, and what they are doing on work time and personal time.

Information on everyone and everything is so readily available so quickly, that privacy is now out the window.

Privacy laws and legislation are becoming more of an issue, with more policies being written, more enforcement required and fewer and fewer important conversations happening in person.

People are getting so used to finding information in some virtual way, that real human contact and communication is becoming obsolete, especially in the workplace.

One-on-one interest is becoming more difficult.

Coffee breaks, lunch breaks and water cooler chat is just not taking place anymore.

Instead, people are choosing to text, or post to Facebook what they used to talk about. Feelings, warmth, desires and hopes cannot be clearly defined in a text.

Bosses and co-workers will have a tough time understanding each other if they don't talk, shake hands, share a smile or a laugh.

Employers are hiring people based on a resumé and what the social media sites are showing about them.

Hiring is increasingly taking place without face-to-face interviews.

Companies are saving a buck by having employees work remotely. Employees get to work in pyjamas and never need to leave their house or be with anyone.

But is this really a good thing?

I think there are huge advantages to working remotely, part-time, as long as there is still some plan to be



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with other people and be social.

There is an innate need to have human contact, to be able to talk with other people, not just text them. Actual social skills, manners, thoughtfulness, senses of humour, guilt, tingles, goose bumps, embarrassments and humility are all part of

being human and are best shared in person. Many people need the workplace to meet other people and be social. We may have to learn to adapt to the changing world of work, to include spending time with others, with short breaks away from technology, so that human contact does not become obsolete.

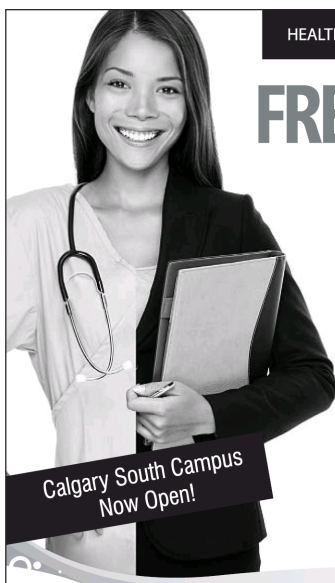
We may need to make an actual effort to be connected to our coworkers, get up and walk over to a person, rather than just sending a one-way message. We may have to relearn how to have a two-way conversation, but no matter what, I think we need to maintain some balance between

human contact and technology.

Sharlene Massie is the CEO of About Staffing

Ltd., a dynamic personnel agency specializing in direct-hire and temporary placements. Questions for Sharlene? Visit the About Staffing website at www.aboutstaffing.com, and click on the link under the Sun logo. This article may be reproduced or

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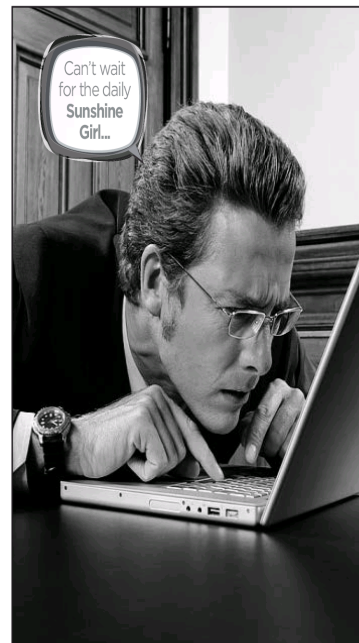
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