# Concerns rise over unprofessional behaviour during remote work video calls



An etiquette expert has raised concerns about the impact of remote working on professional standards, highlighting a rise in unprofessional behaviour among workers participating in video calls from home. Jo Hayes, founder of EtiquetteExpert.Org, expressed her view that many employees have become “far too comfortable” with lax habits, which she believes is contributing to a decline in workplace decorum across the UK.

Her comments follow recent research conducted by Riot Labs, which examined the habits of workers during virtual meetings. The study found that 62% of people who vape admit to doing so while on work Zoom calls, even when clients, colleagues, or bosses are present. Additionally, 45% of respondents confessed to neglecting basic hygiene, such as brushing their teeth, before joining work calls. Other behaviours identified include 14% taking calls while on the toilet, 11% admitting to burping during meetings, and 42% shouting at household members while on calls.

Jo Hayes noted the perceived unprofessional nature of some of these behaviours. She said: “Even if the boss can’t see, vaping on a work call is slobbish, unprofessional behaviour. Working from home lulls workers into a false sense of security as to what is, and is not, ok, in a professional setting. Vaping in full view of colleagues on video calls pushes the limit and bosses or clients could put a red strike through your professional name.”

More than half of those surveyed considered vaping during calls to be “unprofessional,” “distracting,” and potentially grounds for disciplinary action. Commenting on the findings, David Donaghy, a spokesperson for Riot Labs, explained the impetus behind the research: “The appropriateness of vaping on a work Zoom call came up in a recent meeting so we wanted to delve a little deeper into people’s work from home habits. Vaping is the most effective tool for quitting smoking and while it’s tempting to vape in the home office, we recommend adopting a ‘vape break’ in the fresh air, which is far more appropriate.”

The context for these developments is the significant increase in home-based work in the UK. Official figures indicate that the number of people working from home more than doubled from 4.7 million in December 2019, shortly before the pandemic, to 9.9 million by March 2022. Currently, almost half of UK workers engage in remote work at least part of the week, with 28% following a hybrid model and 13% working entirely from home.

The research highlights a range of behaviours that have become more commonplace in the remote working environment and underscores the evolving challenges faced in maintaining professional conduct outside traditional office settings.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.npsa.gov.uk/system/files/documents/npsa-remote-working-guidance_0.pdf> - This source discusses challenges faced by remote workers, including feelings of isolation and disconnection from company culture, which can influence professional behavior.
2. <https://cms.law/en/int/expert-guides/cms-expert-guide-to-remote-working/united-kingdom> - The guide provides insights into the legal responsibilities of employers in remote work settings, highlighting the need for appropriate working conditions and potential impacts on workplace etiquette.
3. <https://post.parliament.uk/research-briefings/post-pb-0049/> - This briefing focuses on the broader impacts of remote and hybrid working in the UK, touching on organizational and individual challenges that could affect professional standards.
4. <https://culture-shift.co.uk/resources/workplace/uk-workforce-say-remote-working-has-positively-impacted-culture/> - The article discusses the mixed impact of remote working on company culture and employee wellbeing, which can influence behaviors in virtual work settings.
5. <https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/remote-working-policy> - This remote working policy outlines considerations for maintaining ethical standards outside traditional office environments, relevant to maintaining professional conduct.
6. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/working-from-home-statistics> - This source provides data on the rise of remote work in the UK, setting the context for the increased prevalence of remote work behaviors discussed in the article.
7. <https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/news/health/rules-vaping-work-call-tendendo-10131967> - Please view link - unable to able to access data