Black Employees Will Thrive With Remote Work — It's Anti-Racist

February 23, 2022

It is 4 p.m. on a Monday and I am on a walk. I am also on the clock. Last Friday, I received a calendar invite for a meeting to discuss my workplace's ongoing efforts toward anti-racism. The notification made my heart skip a beat. I am a junior faculty member at an elite university, and one of only two Black tenure-track faculty members at my school. I could expect 90 minutes on the school's sluggish pace toward diversifying the faculty, student body and curriculum, with my mostly-white colleagues occasionally stealing glances to gauge my reaction.

Could I skip the meeting? No — my absence would be noted. Thank goodness for remote work. Instead of spending the meeting under fluorescent light, trying to will my face into a neutral mask, I spent it walking briskly around my neighborhood, which regulated my stress and left me feeling more energized than depleted.

Over the past 18 months, many organizations have scrambled to affirm that they value Black lives, Black employees, and the work of anti-racism. Black employees are asked to carry immense emotional [burdens](#) that their white colleagues are not. We are asked to ignore racial "[mega-threats](#)" — negative major news stories about racial violence. We are asked to teach our white colleagues about racism and take on ([often uncompensated](#)) anti-racism labor by leading workshops, taking part in committees, or providing a "Black perspective" in meetings. We are asked to quietly bear [microaggressions](#) to avoid being seen as troublemakers. We are [more scrutinized](#) than our white colleagues. All the while, we are under-resourced, under-mentored, isolated and ignored. Perhaps this is why a recent study by [Slack think tank Future Forum](#) found that 97 percent of Black American respondents preferred a fully remote or hybrid workplace.

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