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Supporting remote employees

Keep employees engaged and productive – no matter where they work

Depending on a company's culture, strategic goals, and industry, hybrid or remote work may be ideal for promoting productivity. Data from surveys back up the effectiveness of this type of flexible schedule:

One study found that **40%** of employees work longer hours at home than when at the office.[1]

40%
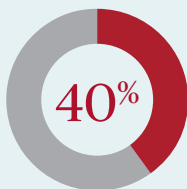
Data from the National Bureau of Economic Research found that these extended workdays are an average of **48.5** minutes longer.[1]

48.5 min. longer day

Despite working longer hours, **75%** of remote workers say they have an improved work-life balance since they started working from home.[1]

75%
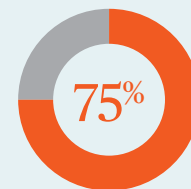
Not every job can be done remotely, and not every employee wants to work remotely. But many jobs are now remote or hybrid, and it's essential to consider the ways that employers can keep their workforces engaged and productive, no matter where their employees' desks happen to be located.

[1] Waltower, Shayna, "Working From Home Increases Productivity," Business News Daily, May 26, 2023, https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/15259-working-from-home-more-productive.html.

Onboarding: Encouraging connections

Onboarding isn't just where employees learn about their daily job responsibilities. It's also where they get to know their co-workers and learn about their company's culture. With in-person orientation sessions, much of that may happen organically. But with remote employees, a bit of extra thought and planning can provide just as much opportunity to connect and interact. Remote employees could attend virtual training sessions in groups rather than individually, when possible. This creates a cohort of employees beginning their work journey at the company, who can support each other and perhaps use their varied experiences to informally mentor each other as well. As helpful as it is to interact with colleagues who have the same job and similar backgrounds, it's also valuable to break out of that bubble and get to know those with different skills, perspectives, and years of experience.

More than 2.6x
That's how much a good onboarding experience improves long-term job satisfaction.[2]

Providing remote mentors

Mentorship can help employees chart their career course and feel connected and valued at their current position. Here are a few tips to ensure that it can be a valuable tool for both onsite and remote employees:

Be intentional with the time you have together. Sometimes you may have a specific topic to discuss. Other times you may just want to chat or even have an online, remote lunch, as a way to get to know each other, build trust, and develop a comfortable relationship.

Mentors can set up regular times for meetings, but also keep their virtual door open for times when their mentee may have a quick question.
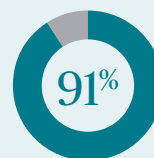
Accept that the remote nature of the mentorship may mean it takes a little longer to build a relationship. Even though you can turn on the camera for video calls, it can still be challenging to read body language.

Half of survey respondents say they have a mentor at their workplace.[3]

50%

And **91%** say this makes them more satisfied with their job.[3]

91%

[2] Wani, Saurabh, "50 Essential Remote Employee Onboarding Statistics in 2023," Scribe, May 9, 2022, https://scribehow.com/library/onboarding-statistics.

[3] Place, Alyssa, "Four Ways to Make Mentorship Part of Your Company Culture," Employee Benefit News, June 2, 2023, https://www.benefitnews.com/list/4-ways-to-make-mentorship-part-of-your-company-culture?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=V3_EBN_AdviserFirstLook_2023%2B%27-%27%2B06052023&bt_ee=EsAdulcgk0ygpnOJ9oDWsvwwSW4VoUFs2fgiE5nZWDcM0JE8PJc5%2BsuZbXg2vFrU&bt_ts=1685959617000.

Keeping remote workers in the loop

Even though remote work looks to be a trend that will last, many companies still may – often unintentionally – not fully include remote employees in both day-to-day and long-term activities and strategies. Here are some things both managers and their organizations need to keep in mind:

When a high-profile project is available, do remote employees get the same consideration as those that are onsite?

Do you recognize effort on an equal basis? It's easy to stroll down the hall and say, "good job," or congratulate an onsite employee in front of their peers, but do you do the same for the remote employee who just had a big accomplishment?

When you supply onsite workers with ergonomic office equipment, larger monitors, headsets, speakers, wireless mice, etc., do you also make sure remote employees have access to these items that help them work more comfortably and efficiently?

During open enrollment for benefits, do remote employees have access to remote group and 1-on-1 meetings?

When you have in-person social events – whether at the office or at another location, don't assume remote employees can't attend. Regardless of whether an event is for training or team building, remote workers need to be treated as full members of the team, and periodic in-person contact may help them feel more connected to their colleagues and their company.

Remote workers returning from leave

Some things are easier for employees returning to remote work after being on leave – like being able to continue recuperation at home without having to commute. But other aspects may be more challenging. Employers need to consider that those returning from childbirth, for example, are figuring out how to balance many roles, including caregiver, household manager, and employee – without any of the physical boundaries an office provides. As they build a schedule that works for them, employers need to be able to accommodate some flexibility – working different hours than they used to, or going to an appointment in the afternoon but making up that work later in the day. Keeping the lines of communication open is essential as an employee readjusts to work.

87%
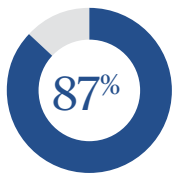
Highly engaged employees are **87%** less likely to leave their employer[4]

Meeting essential needs of remote employees

Whether an employee works onsite or remotely, they're usually motivated by the same essentials – a feeling of commitment toward their job, a sense of belonging within the company culture, and anticipation of new career opportunities. Successful employers meet these needs – and retain valuable employees -- by finding ways to connect, engage, communicate, and recognize individuals in their remote workforce.

And that's beneficial not just for employees, but for their employer as well -- research shows that highly engaged employees are 87% less likely to leave their employer — and companies with a highly engaged workforce are more likely to be profitable and productive.[4]

[4]"9 Employee Engagement Statistics You Should Know For 2023," Wellable, December 22, 2022, https://www.wellable.co/blog/employee-engagement-statistics-you-should-know/#:~:text=Employees%20are%2087%25%20less%20likely%20to%20quit%20a%20job%20if,disconnected%20from%20their%20company's%20purpose.