



Retaining and Attracting Remote and Hybrid Workers

**Alexandra Mpofu, Michelle Leong
and Frank Igou, Ph.D.**

Department of Psychology
and Behavioral Sciences
Louisiana Tech University





Overview

Impact of Remote

Work for:

1. Employees
2. Leadership
3. Organizations



Overview

Recommendations for improving:

1. Employee Well-Being
2. Work-Life Balance
3. Disability & Resource Accommodations
4. Organizational Culture
5. Organizational Support
6. Leadership
7. Hybrid Work
8. Organizational Factors based on Company Size

Remote Work Impact



Prevalence

83%

of employees in the United States preferred some degree of remote work, with 35% preferring to work remotely full-time (Owl Labs, 2020)

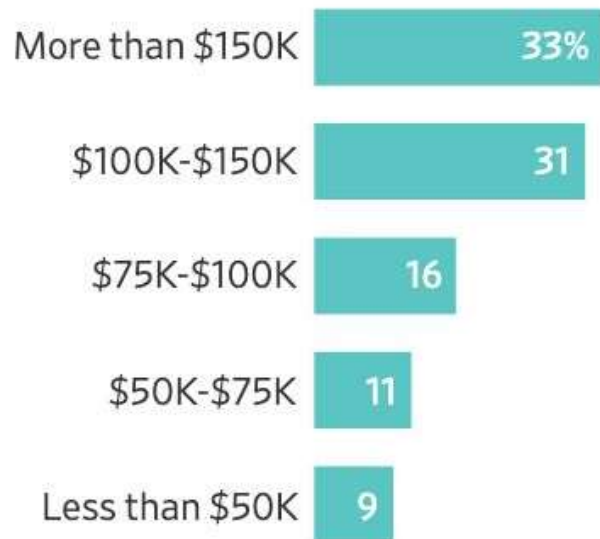
73%

of workers surveyed expressed a desire for flexible remote work options to continue, while 66% preferred a hybrid model that combined remote and in-person work (Microsoft, 2021)

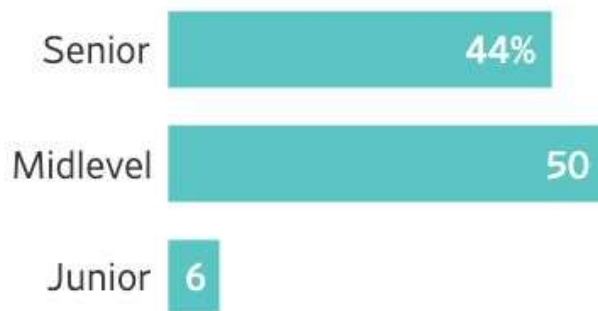


Employees who strongly prefer to work from home vs. the office*

BY INCOME



BY JOB SENIORITY†



Recent statistic from McKinsey & Company on desire for remote work

*Defined as respondents who said that they were both likely to quit their jobs if required to work at the office every day and willing to trade more than 20 percent of their compensation to work their preferred number of days from home. †Junior roles include associates and analysts; midlevel roles include directors, managers, and team leaders; senior roles include C-suite executives and vice presidents. Source: McKinsey Global Institute analysis

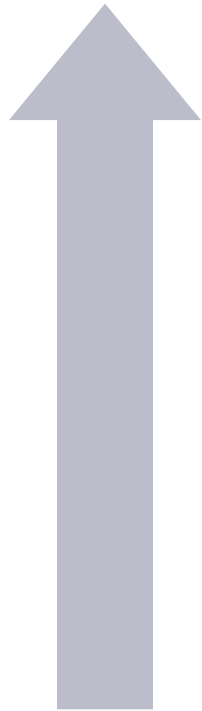


Employee Impact





Employee Impact

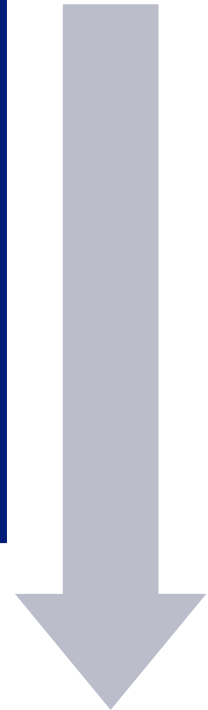


Advantages

- Flexibility and work-life balance
- Reduced commuting stress and costs
- Increased autonomy and productivity

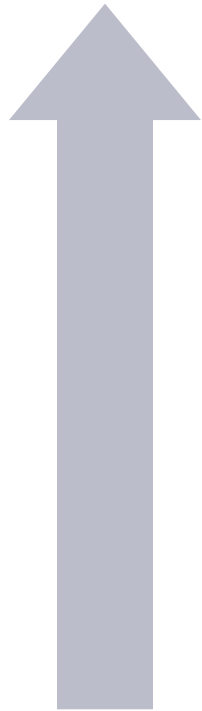
Disadvantages

- Blurred boundaries between work and personal life
- Social isolation and reduced social interaction
- Communication and collaboration challenges





Leadership Impact

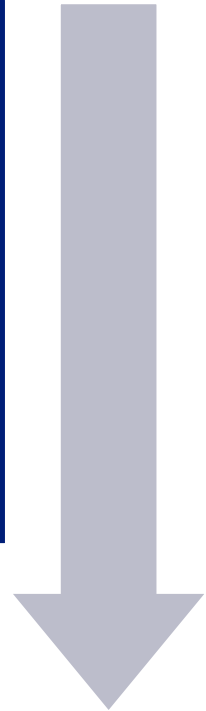


Advantages

- Flexibility and work-life balance
- Access to diverse talent
- Reduced office costs

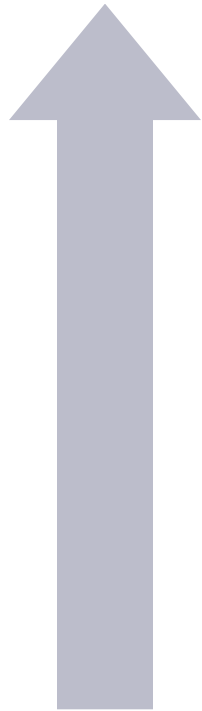
Disadvantages

- Communication and collaboration challenges
- Supervision and monitoring difficulties
- Social isolation and reduced cohesion





Organizational Impact

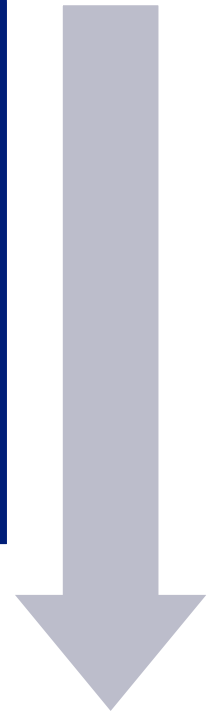


Advantages

- Increased productivity and performance
- Access to a broader talent pool
- Cost savings

Disadvantages

- Communication and collaboration challenges
- Maintaining team cohesion
- Data security and privacy concerns



Employee Well-Being



Employee Well-Being

- **Establish clear communication channels**
 - Maintain regular and transparent communication with remote employees to foster a sense of belonging and minimize feelings of isolation
 - Use both synchronous and asynchronous channels
- **Promote work-life balance**
 - Provide resources and guidelines to help them create a structured schedule, prioritize tasks, and take regular breaks to prevent burnout
- **Offer virtual wellness programs**
 - Offer virtual fitness classes, mindfulness sessions, online counseling services, and resources related to nutrition and stress management



Employee Well-Being

- **Foster social connections**
 - Encourage virtual team-building activities, online social events, and platforms for informal conversations to enhance camaraderie and mitigate feelings of isolation
- **Provide ergonomic support**
 - Support remote employees in setting up an ergonomic home office to prevent physical discomfort and musculoskeletal issues
 - Offer guidelines for proper workstation setup, provide equipment such as ergonomic chairs or standing desks, and encourage regular posture breaks and exercises
- **Prioritize professional development**
 - Provide access to online training programs, webinars, and virtual conferences
 - Encourage self-directed learning and support remote employees' career aspirations

Work-Life Balance



Work-Life Balance

- **Encourage setting boundaries**
 - Encourage remote workers to define set working hours, create a dedicated workspace, and disconnect from work-related communication outside of those hours
- **Foster flexible schedules**
 - Flexibility can help them accommodate personal obligations and preferences, promoting a better work-life balance
- **Promote self-care and well-being**
 - Provide resources and information on stress management, mindfulness techniques, physical activity, and healthy habits to support their overall well-being



Work-Life Balance

- **Implement time management strategies**
 - Provide training or resources on setting priorities, managing tasks, and optimizing productivity to help remote workers better balance their workload and personal life
- **Encourage regular breaks and downtime**
 - Encourage them to step away from work, engage in activities they enjoy, and recharge, which can contribute to a healthier work-life balance
- **Lead by example**
 - Encourage them to maintain their own work-life balance and demonstrate practices such as taking breaks, setting boundaries, and promoting a healthy work-life integration

Disability & Resource Accommodations



Accommodations

- **Conduct individualized assessments to understand specific accommodation needs**
 - This may involve dialogue with the employees, reviewing medical documentation, and collaborating with disability accommodation specialists
- **Provide assistive technology and tools**
 - This may include screen readers, speech recognition software, ergonomic keyboards, or specialized software tailored to their needs
- **Implement flexible work arrangements**
 - This may involve adjusting work hours, providing part-time or reduced workload options, or allowing for breaks or rest periods as needed



Accommodations

- **Ensure accessible communication**
 - Provide captioning or transcripts for video conferences, use accessible document formats, and ensure that communication platforms and tools are compatible with assistive technologies
- **Offer training and awareness programs**
 - Conduct training programs to raise awareness and educate employees about disability inclusion and accommodations in remote work settings
- **Maintain ongoing communication and support**
 - Establish an open-door policy where employees can express concerns, ask for accommodations, and receive assistance when necessary

Organizational Culture



Organizational Culture

- **Foster a sense of belonging**
 - Encourage virtual team-building activities, establish online communities or forums for remote employees to interact and share experiences, and recognize and celebrate their contributions
- **Promote open and transparent communication**
 - Ensure that remote workers have access to information, updates, and decision-making processes
- **Provide opportunities for professional development**
 - Offer remote workers opportunities for skill development, career advancement, and growth
 - Provide access to virtual training programs, mentorship, and online learning resources to support their professional development



Organizational Culture

- **Emphasize work-life balance**
 - Promote flexible work schedules, encourage time off and breaks, and discourage overwork to support their well-being and prevent burnout
- **Recognize and appreciate remote contributions**
 - Implement recognition programs, highlight achievements publicly, and provide feedback and positive reinforcement foster a culture of recognition
- **Support work autonomy and trust**
 - Allow flexibility in decision-making, empower them to take ownership of their projects, and trust them to deliver results
 - Leading to increased motivation and job satisfaction

Organizational Support



Organizational Support

- **Establish clear policies and guidelines**
 - Develop comprehensive policies and guidelines specifically tailored to remote work
 - They should address expectations, communication protocols, performance evaluations, and work-life balance to provide clarity and guidance
- **Provide remote work resources and technology**
 - This may include providing laptops or computers, high-speed internet access, collaboration tools, and secure remote access to company systems
- **Offer training and professional development opportunities**
 - Offer virtual training programs, webinars, online courses, and mentoring opportunities to support their professional growth



Organizational Support

- **Implement regular check-ins and feedback mechanisms**
- **Foster a supportive virtual community**
 - Foster a supportive virtual community through online collaboration platforms, social channels, and virtual team-building activities to enhance engagement and a sense of belonging
- **Offer mental health and well-being resources**
 - Provide access to resources such as employee assistance programs, online counseling services, and wellness initiatives to support their overall well-being

Leadership



Leadership

- **Provide training on remote leadership skills**
 - Topics can include communication in virtual environments, fostering trust and collaboration, setting clear expectations, and motivating remote employees
- **Emphasize effective communication**
 - This includes using various communication channels, active listening, providing feedback, and adapting communication styles to meet the needs of remote workers
- **Develop remote team building skills**
 - Focus on developing skills in team dynamics, fostering collaboration, resolving conflicts, and creating a sense of belonging among remote team members



Leadership

- **Promote autonomy and trust**
 - Implement an appropriate level of transparency about decision-making
 - Empower employees to make decisions and problem-solve
- **Train in remote performance management**
 - Incorporate goal setting, performance tracking, providing regular feedback, and conducting virtual performance reviews
- **Encourage self-reflection and development**
 - Offer training that encourages self-awareness, empathy, and adaptability to lead remote teams effectively



Leadership

- **Emphasis on clear and frequent communication and virtual collaboration**
- **Trust-building and empowerment**
 - Leaders need to establish trust with remote employees through consistent support, transparent communication, and delegating responsibilities
- **Focus on outcomes and performance management**
 - For example, leaders often shift their focus from monitoring inputs (e.g., hours worked) to outcomes and results
- **Inclusion and virtual team dynamics**
 - Actively address issues of social isolation, facilitate virtual team-building activities, and ensure equal participation and engagement of remote employees in decision-making processes

Hybrid Work



Hybrid Work

- **Assess and customize hybrid work arrangements**
 - Determine which roles and tasks are suitable for remote work
 - Identify the optimal balance between remote and in-person work
 - Customize based on the nature of the work, employee preferences, and organizational goals
- **Prioritize flexibility and autonomy**
 - Trust employees to manage their work effectively
 - Create a supportive environment that values autonomy and work-life balance
- **Enhance communication and collaboration**
 - Invest in technology and platforms that facilitate seamless communication and collaboration between remote and in-person employees



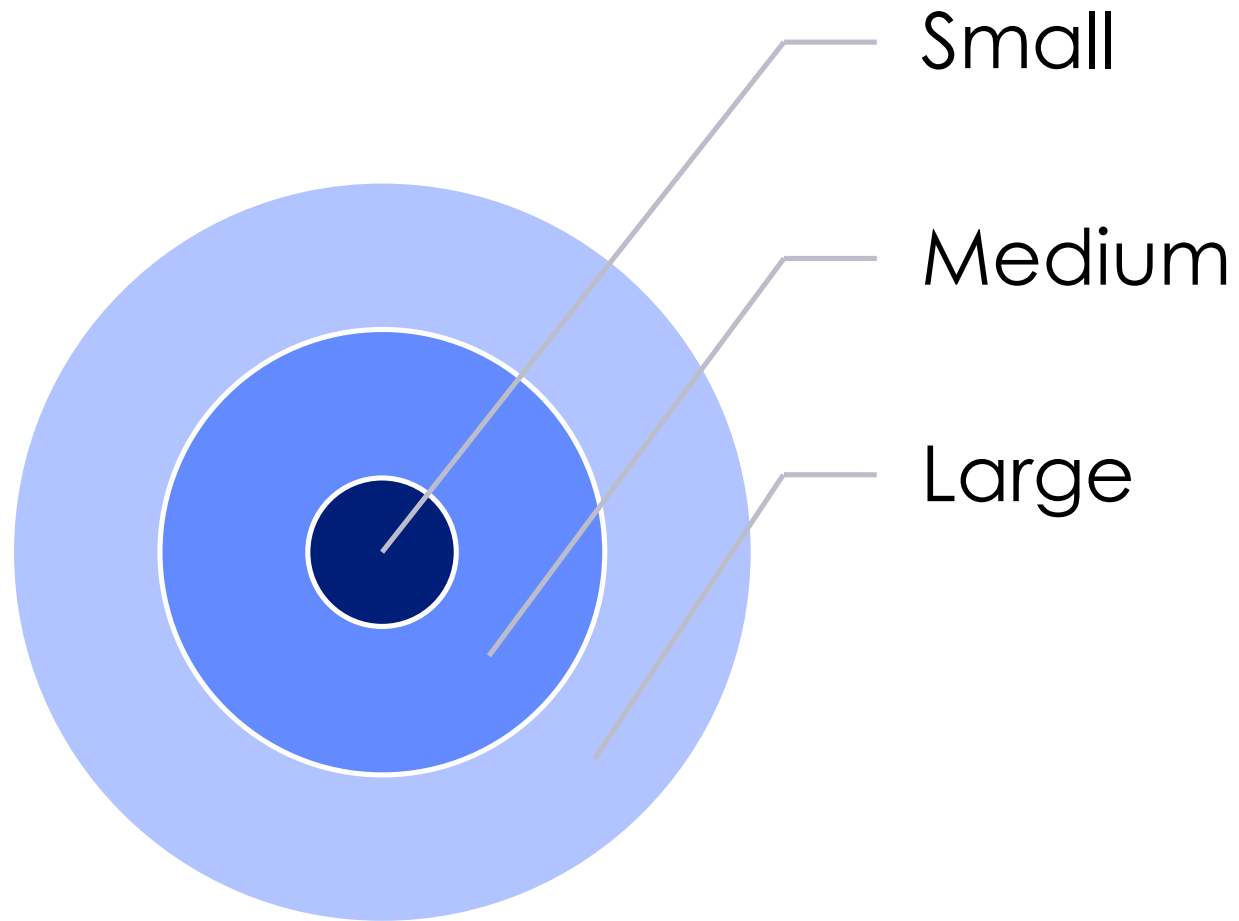
Hybrid Work

- **Provide resources for remote productivity**
 - Ensure that remote workers have access to the necessary resources and tools to perform their job
 - Consider conducting focus groups with job incumbents
- **Foster a hybrid work culture**
 - Train managers to effectively manage remote and in-person teams, promote inclusivity, and ensure equitable treatment of all employees regardless of their work location
- **Continuously evaluate and adapt**
 - Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the hybrid work model and gather feedback from remote workers

Recommendations for Different Company Sizes



— We're going to focus on...





Organization Size: Small



Cultivate a strong company culture

Provide opportunities for growth and development

Encourage regular communication and feedback



Organization Size: Medium



Offer work-life
balance initiatives

Provide recognition
and rewards

Foster a sense of
community



Organization Size: Large



Foster diversity and inclusion

Establish clear career paths

Support employee well-being

Thank You for Your Time!

Questions?



Presenters:

Michelle Leong – mcl041@latech.edu

Frank Igou – figou@latech.edu

Alexandra Mpofu – atm035@latech.edu