



The six key business benefits of remote working

What started as a minor workplace trend has recently picked up pace and now shows no sign of slowing down. The amount of professionals working remotely has increased by over a third in the last three years¹ and some 60% of office-based employees are expected to do so regularly by 2022, according to a recent survey of UK business owners².

Employees fed up with strenuous commutes will undoubtedly welcome a future where they can work from the comfort of their own couch but business owners also stand to gain from enabling their workforce to conduct business anytime, anywhere.

In addition to happier, more relaxed staff, remote-working initiatives can also deliver a host of tangible benefits for the business. In the checklist below, we've summarised the six we believe to be the most important and outline the key considerations for managers looking to implement a remote working initiative.

1. Cut costs

Remote working can significantly contribute to a reduction in office overheads and expenditure, with 46% of businesses citing office cost reduction as the main benefit.³ This can prove a significant advantage for growing organisations in particular as it allows them to increase their workforce without expanding their office space.

2. Recruit and retain the best staff

It's unlikely that the talent your organisation requires lives in the immediate vicinity of your offices. With a remote working initiative in place you can advertise job opportunities across the globe if needs be, safe in the knowledge that the location of your organisation won't discourage the most talented candidates from applying.

By the same token, enabling remote working can help your organisation retain staff. If a valuable employee is forced to relocate, you can keep them on the books by enabling them to work from their new home. This way their skills and expertise stay and you save on the cost of replacing a key member of staff, which can amount to over £30,000.⁴

3. Boost productivity

Tube strikes, train delays and everyday traffic can make commuting to work and between meetings a slow and painful grind that consumes time and erodes staff productivity. By contrast, enabling your staff to work offsite at times that suit them can have the opposite effect: 60% of HR directors believe giving employees greater autonomy over working

1. Roberthalf.co.uk, 2015
2. theguardian.com
3. Glasscubes.com, 2015
4. HRReview.co.uk, 2014

practices, with initiatives such as flexi-time, results in an increase in productivity.⁵

4. Remote workers are less stressed

Allowing staff to work in a way that suits both them and your organisation can contribute to increased job satisfaction, motivation and engagement according to inc.com⁶. A change is as good as a rest as the saying goes, so giving staff the choice to change location can help them get a better grip on their work-life balance and makes for an altogether happier workforce.

5. Improved business continuity

Adverse weather conditions, national events, rail strikes... There are numerous factors outside of your organisation's control that can impact your staff's ability to commute to the office. To take rail strikes as an example, The Centre for Economics and Business Research estimates that upcoming action will see 10 per cent of the national workforce missing a day's work.⁷

With a remote working infrastructure in place, organisations can spread the risk of uncontrollable events, ensuring business as usual if disaster strikes.

6. Reduce your organisation's carbon footprint

Organisations are under constant pressure to reduce their carbon footprint. Enabling remote working can be a simple and cost-effective means of doing so. Running fewer devices onsite

can significantly reduce your organisation's electricity consumption and with less people commuting into your office, you can limit the amount of greenhouse gases you're producing as a business.

An example of this approach in action is Dell's "2020 Legacy of Good Plan". In 2012 Dell pledged to make 50 per cent of its workforce remote by 2020 to reduce its emissions. By 2014, this program had reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 6,700 metric tons, the equivalent of not driving 16 million miles.⁸

Our top tips for an effective remote working culture

- > **Avoid social isolation**
Communicate regularly and effectively to avoid staff feeling disconnected
- > **Maximise security**
Provide secure access to all data and IT systems
- > **Encourage trust & loyalty**
Ensure policies are documented and accessible to align expectations
- > **Assign tasks with timelines**
Clearly define objectives so that productivity and quality of work can be measured
- > **Invest in tech**
Maximise team performance by ensuring teams have the tools they need

5. Roberthalf.co.uk, 2015

6. inc.com, 2015

7. Cityam.com, 2015

8. entrepreneur.com, 2015

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