



# Managing remote workers

Preventing People Problems

# Keep the communication flowing when managing remote workers

There are many benefits for both employers and employees in allowing staff to work from home. But there are also some unique challenges to overcome when managing remote workers.

For example, a strong company culture is something many businesses will strive for. How can this be maintained with staff in different places? Then there is the lack of visibility on productivity and the chance of unusual interruptions from the kids or family pet.

## Stay in touch

We are often presented with the saying “communication is key”. When it comes to home working, communication is vital to allow remote workers to contribute efficiently to the progression of a business.

Getting the method and frequency of contact right from the start is important to ensure employees have everything they need to work well. It also helps you to plan better by understanding when they are available for collaboration, training, and meetings.

## Keep things moving with tech

We recommend using the latest tech to keep things running smoothly. For example, video conferencing software, so that remote employees can feel connected with the wider team.

Face-to-face contact, albeit virtual, can help to keep employees engaged. It can also help managers to understand how employees are doing by seeing their facial expressions and mannerisms during a conversation.

## Encourage transparency

A stigma of home working is that if you are not seen to be working, you can be perceived to not be working. This assumption can damage working relationships between co-workers and the morale of some homeworkers, who may feel a need to overcompensate.

To overcome this, consider online solutions for tracking workflow and productivity. Having all employees update their progress, regardless of their location, via the same system, can improve transparency and productivity.

## Promote inclusivity

Working remotely can sometimes be an isolating experience. It's important that managers and co-workers remain mindful of this and include all remote workers whenever possible.

Along with regular updates or virtual meetings, this could also involve arranging meetups between homeworkers who live near each other or days when they can come to the office, if suitable.



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## Protect employees and your data

Before anyone works from home, a health and safety risk assessment must be undertaken – but other risks need evaluating too.

It is safer to provide IT equipment. This is to ensure that virus protection software is reliable and that you know your data is protected from others in the household.

Be sure to communicate your terms of use when lending hardware to employees for homeworking.

## Help is at hand

You may be a little anxious about having remote employees, due to their potential to push the boundaries of their freedom. But having a clear plan set in place, and keeping in touch regularly, allows you to identify if any changes are needed. It will also keep them feeling part of the team!

Happy and productive remote workers can be a real asset to your workforce when they are managed well.

If you need advice on how to manage remote employees or want to make sure they are 100% engaged with the business, contact The HR Dept – we are only ever a phone call away.



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