



# LEAVING OFFICE BEHIND: THE NEW NORMAL

PP One of the secret benefits of using remote workers is that the work itself becomes the yardstick to judge someone's performance.

- Jason Fried

Published Author of Office Not Required

*Remote working is the new normal and adapting to it is the need of the hour. This Report is an insightful sneak peek about it's evolution, best ways of approach and where it is headed. It also includes top insights and data from one of the largest remote work providers in business.*

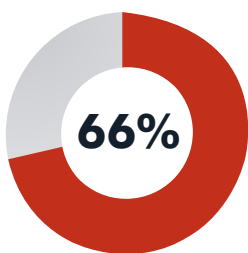
# REMOTE WORK IS HERE TO STAY

When we look at the future, we often envision a robot-driven environment. However, we miss identifying the simple looking flexible work culture - working from the comfort of parks, coffee shops, co-working spaces, etc. The real challenge remains in identifying the trends that are impacting its growth and how one can use it for its benefits. So, let's start by digging into the data.

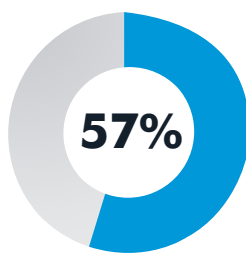
## Here's the trend

13.9 million U.S. employees or 2.9% of the total U.S workforce works remotely, up from 1.8 million in 2005 (159% increase in the last 12 years).

As of 2019, the number of companies with Remote Workforce is getting bigger.



of companies  
allow remote work



are fully remote.

## Where is it going?

Remote work comes in different forms. There are people who work remotely for a few days in a week. Others, whose companies or agencies are hundreds of miles away, do their entire work remotely.

While hundreds of companies are testing their best methods to identify the appropriate approach it has been unanimously accepted that remote working ensures.

- > Better work-life balance (91%)
- > Increased productivity/better focus (79%)
- > More access to quality resources (59%)

“

*Technology now allows people to connect anytime, anywhere & to anyone in the world from almost any device. This is dramatically changing the way people work, facilitating 24/7 collaboration with colleagues who are dispersed across time zones, countries and continents.*

*- Michael Dell,  
Chairman and CEO of Dell*



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# HOW COVID-19 IS SHAPING THE PRESENT & FUTURE OF REMOTE WORK

Remote work is the new form of social-distancing practice during the pandemic. It has helped in combating the novel coronavirus and kept millions of people safe in these troubling times.

However, it has also made numerous business leaders ask if they are ready for such kind of business transformation. It has created aspirations to adapt to this new normal and adjust towards creating new ways to engage with the ecosystem and deliver economic value.

In January this year at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting, a number of business leaders unanimously agreed that this is the best way forward. A special task force for COVID-19 at the World Economic Forum is working hard to identify the best ways to support businesses and build teams which need to travel less and get more done.

## REMOTE WORK WILL BE MADE TO STAY

A large section of experts think that even after the worst is over, employees who had hitherto moved into a remote work mode may not want to return to the office.

The ability to work from their comfort zone which elevates productivity & reduction in commute costs are factors that may affect the decision-making process of employees worldwide. When Twitter made it mandatory for all its employees to work from home, its HR Head Jennifer Christie made arrangements to reimburse the employees commensurately. This included expenses incurred while setting up home offices, buying ergonomic chairs, desks & computer hardware. With similar investments being made by organizations across the board, companies will prefer that their employees continue to work from home even after the virus has been brought under control. Prudent organizations are leveraging their business opportunities by taking this opportunity to boost their brand loyalty. By offering their remote work tools for free now, these organizations are looking to build their customer base for a post-Coronavirus world when they can capitalize on the equity created.

Microsoft is offering its cloud productivity suite free of cost to small businesses for 6 months. This includes the tool Teams, Microsoft's answer to Slack.

Zoom has done away with the limitations on its free video conferencing service. Users can now carry on conversations for more than 40 minutes.

These tools are leveraging the impact to ensure that there is an office like atmosphere always. This is the new normal!

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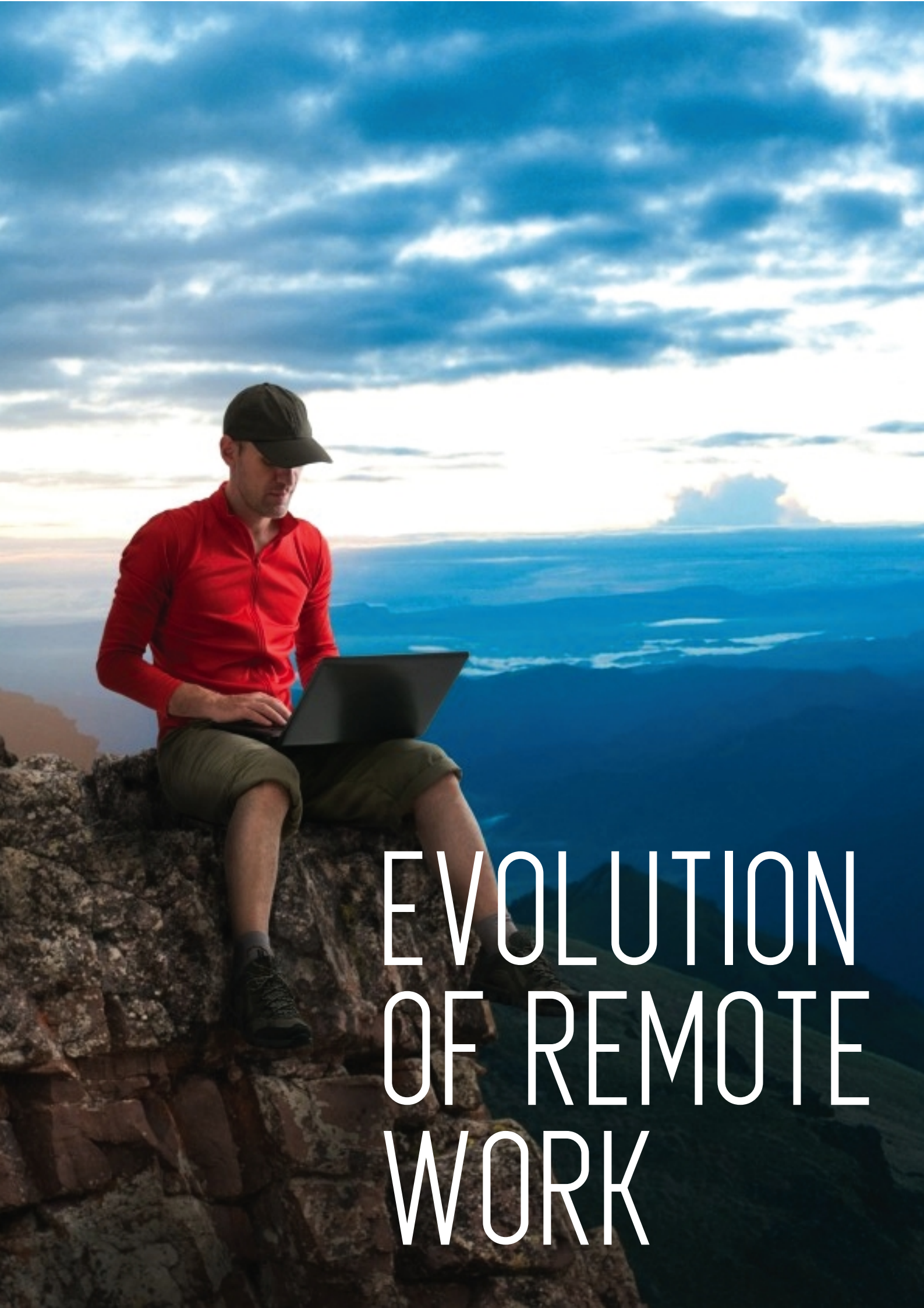
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# EVOLUTION OF REMOTE WORK

# Timeline

## The Hunter-Gatherers

Somewhere between 1.9 to 1.4 million years ago, the Homo Ergaster of the hominid species inhabited large sections of southern and eastern Africa. Homo Ergaster stands for “working man”, a term coined because of their use of sophisticated tools. Fossil evidence suggests that the Homo Ergaster developed these tools close to their places where they dwelled.

## The Longhouse

In medieval England, peasants often lived in homes known as Longhouses. They would live on one end of the building while their livestock inhabited the other end. In the middle of the house was the kitchen. It was also the place where all forms of other trade and mercantile activities such as tanning, butchering, dairy, dressmaking, weaving and spinning took place. Besides the Longhouses, 17th and 18th century English watchmakers and silk weavers practiced their tradecraft from their homes. The large windows in their homes that stand to this day are proof of the abundance of sunshine required for their handicraft.

## The Top-Shops

Some weavers in medieval England even made use of steam-engines that they attached to one end of their houses to drive the power-looms. Essentially, they were in direct competition with the mechanized factories from their own homes.

## The Sweatshops

In the 1800s and the 1900s, the immigrants arriving at New York City would often work

out of their tenement apartments. These places lacked fresh air and were hot, thus earning the name “sweatshops” for themselves.

## The Clean Air Act Of 1970

In 1970, the US Federal government passed the clean air act (CAA). Simultaneously, the clean air movement provided a huge boost to the idea of remote work. Without directly espousing the attributes of remote-work, it highlighted one of its biggest benefits—the concept of zero commute time.

In April of 1980, Sam Schwartz and Roy Cottam, 2 transport engineers for the New York Traffic Department, coined the term “gridlock”.





## Telecommuting

In 1973, NASA Physicist Jack Nilles, who had remotely worked on a communication system, published the Telecommunications-Transportation Tradeoff. Universally acknowledged as the father of remote-work, he coined both the terms “telecommuting” and “telework”.

## Working At Home Can Save Gasoline

In 1979, the OPEC oil embargo was in its 6th year. The Washington Post published an article with the title, “Working At Home Can Save Gasoline”.

## The Big Blue

In 1979, IBM allowed 5 of its employees to remote-work as an experiment. By 1983, that number had increased to 2000.

## J.C. Penny

In the 1980s, J.C. Penny allowed its call-center workers to remote-work.

## 1987

According to the Christian Science Monitor, 1.5 million Americans telecommute in 1987.

## Flexiplace

In 1995, the US Congress approved permanent funding for equipment that is work-related in the homes of federal employees.

## The DOT Appropriations Act

In 2000, the DOT Appropriations Act was put in place. It mandated all executive agencies to establish policies for

telecommuting. By 2004, all federal employees, as long as they did so without any loss in performance, were allowed to telecommute.

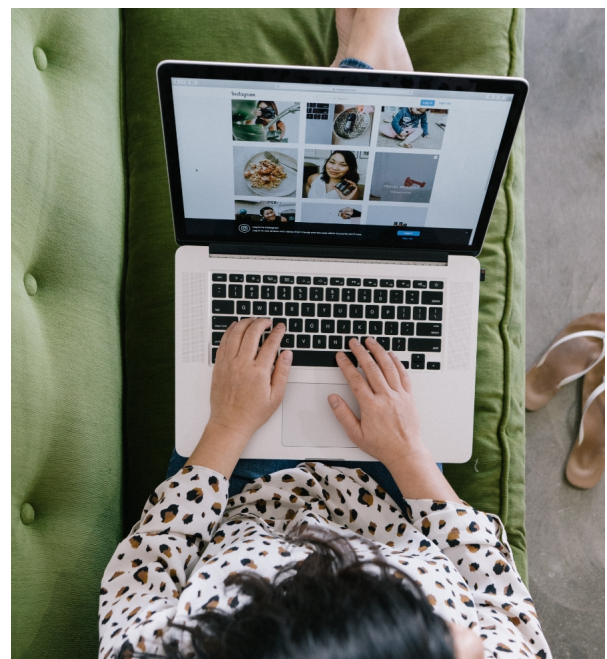
## Yammer

In 2008, the enterprise social networking tool Yammer was launched. Through this, employees within an organization can freely communicate and collaborate. In 2012, Microsoft acquired Yammer for USD 1.2 billion.

## 2010

According to the US Census Bureau in 2010, the number of remote workers who worked for private companies exceeded those that are freelancing.

In 2010, President Barack Obama signed the Telework Enhancement Act. It mandates all federal agencies to implement policies that will enable eligible employees to remote work.



## Slack

Slack, the enterprise chatroom service designed to replace email, reaches 4 million active users daily in 2016. Only 3 years before, in 2013, it had zero users.

## 2018

According to Flexjobs, the number of US companies that are fully remote rises to 170 in 2018 –up from just 26 in 2014.

IWG reports that 53% of the world's population remote-works for at least half of the week. As many as 70% of the world's population works remotely at least once a week.

## Zoom

With around 10 employees, Zoom boasted of 50,800 customers in 2019 –a 5 times increase from its numbers in 2017.

## Covid-19

A global pandemic forces the hands of international public and private institutions alike. Hundreds of millions of professionals around the world are forced to shift to remote work.



# It isn't the future. It's the present

- *Remote working is gradually picking up among the global workforce. This trend can be attributed to the emergence of companies that prefer to put work as the yardstick to judge performance and promoting work life balance.*
- *Organizations consider access to a diverse global talent pool can enable business continuity irrespective of time zone constraints*
- *Additionally, this also contributes UN's goal of reducing carbon emissions.*

<sup>3</sup>52% of global employees work remotely at least once per week.

- *Organizations in Finland, Spain and the UK look for remote workers in external service providers more often than other countries.*
- *The highest percentage of remote working is seen in IT services, such as application development, IT helpdesk, infrastructure and*



<sup>4</sup>**Amazon is hiring 3000** remote workers in 18 **states**, which makes traditional companies go the remote way.



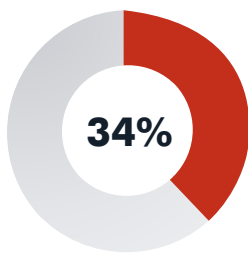
Dell is working on creating a more engaged and productive workforce. With flexjobs, Dell is leveraging flexible work options, increasing global participation to **50%**



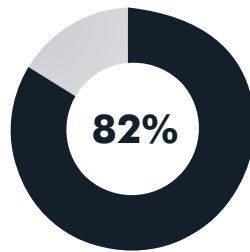
Well Fargo is coming up with remote jobs in the fields of Accounting & Finance, Consulting, Operations, Risk Management, Customer Service And Sales.



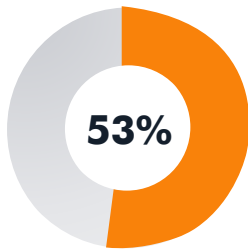
## Stats to Ponder



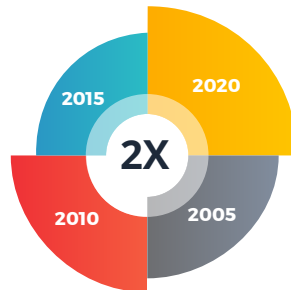
of global companies use remote-work-outsourcing to gain access to IT resources<sup>5</sup>



of small and medium-sized enterprises view remote-work-outsourcing as important to the growth of their business<sup>7</sup>



of manufacturing companies globally take advantage of remote-work-outsourcing in order to improve efficiency while cutting costs<sup>6</sup>



Small companies more likely to hire full-time remote employees to keep themselves lean

**Hiring from multiple locations allows entrepreneurs to access high-quality talent at a lower cost**



*Many of my clients recruited me because my hourly rate is lower than comparable marketing consultants in their own cities.*

*– Matt Keener, President of Keener Marketing Solutions*



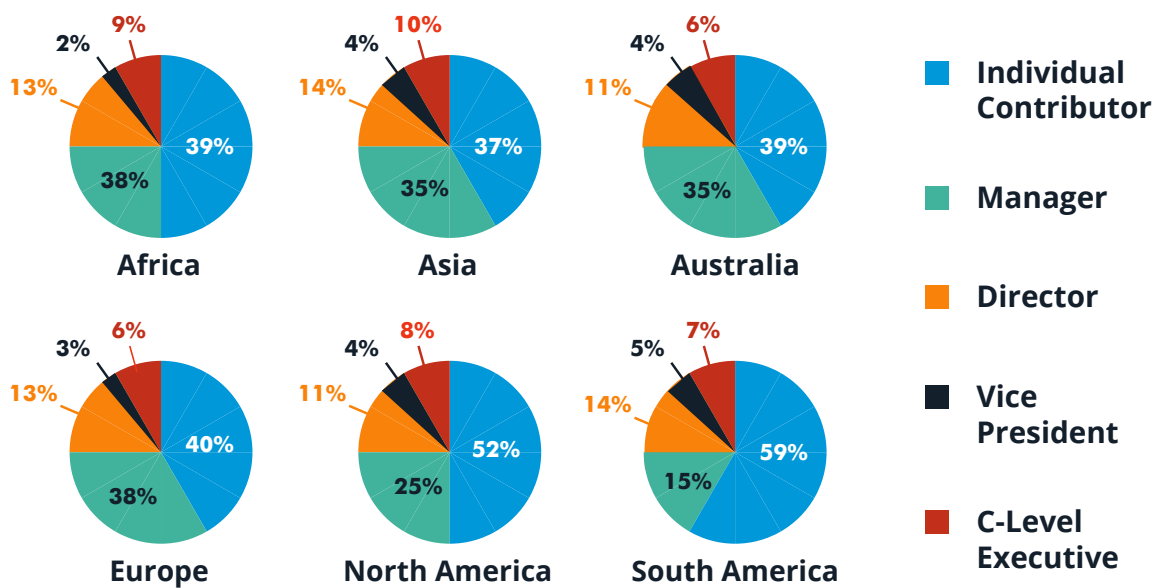


# GLOBAL REMOTE WORK STATISTICS

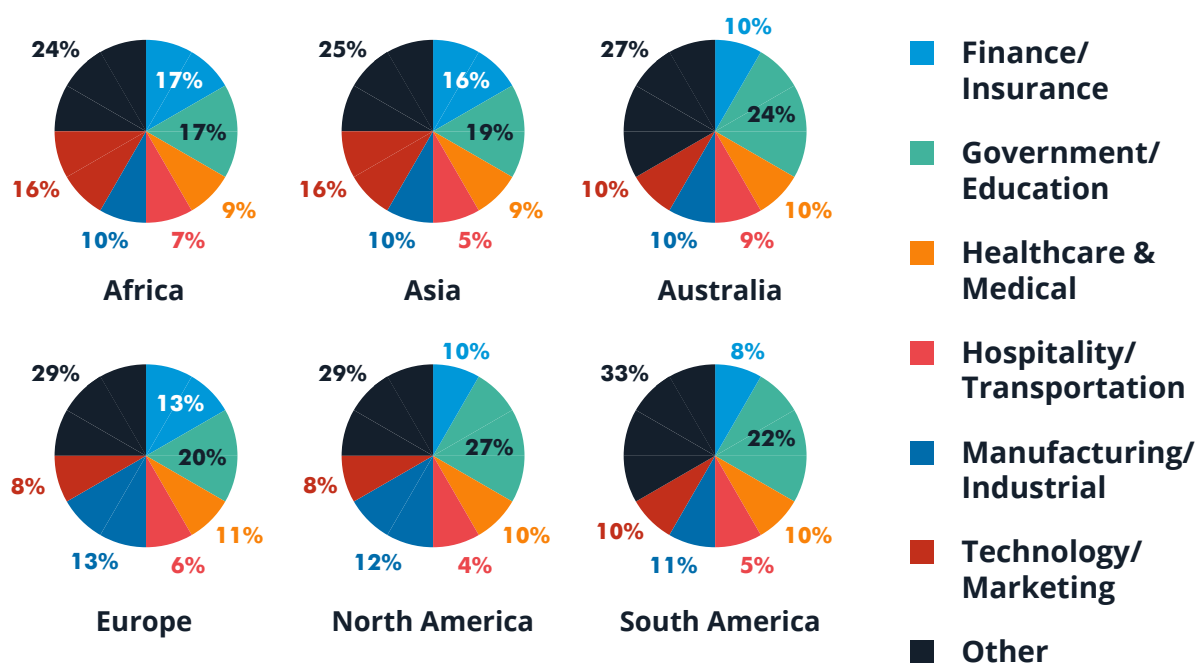
Do you work remotely at least once in a month?

- Individual contributors are the major segment of the workforce seeking remote work -
- Managers and C-level executives, though prevalent, but less in number.
- Education seems to be the most demanding industry opting for remote work across the globe

Respondents by Role



Respondents Industry by Continent



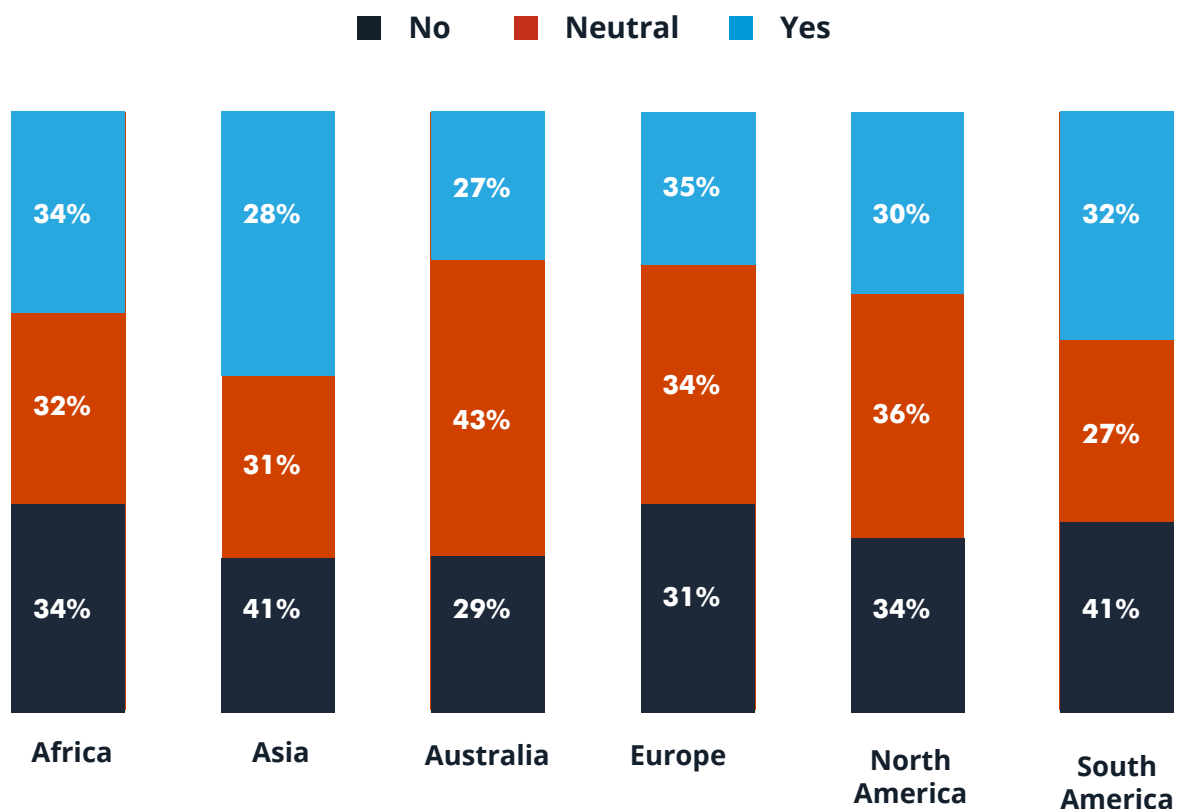
## PRODUCTIVITY 🥰 REMOTE

9 out of 10 employees of a global survey accept that remote work drives productivity. South America is the most inclined country towards remote work, Australia being neutral and Asia being the least inclined. Furthermore, individual contributors seem to dominate when it comes to remote work by designations.

**44%** of the respondents work for companies that don't allow remote work. 16% work for companies that are fully remote. In 2017, in the United States, only 15% of companies did not allow remote work.

**40%** of companies are offering both remote and in-office options.

### Do remote jobs provide more opportunities for quality employment



On average, 35% of respondents agree that remote work provides more opportunities for quality employment.

## How often respondents work remote by role?

- <sup>10</sup>South American respondents are 67% more likely than average to work remotely
- Men across the globe are 8% more likely to work Remotely than women



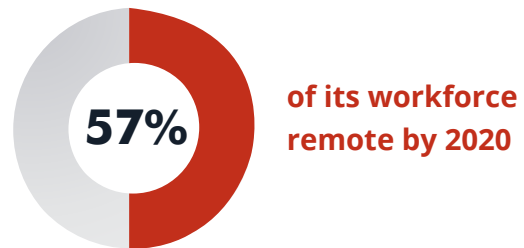
## MAJOR INDUSTRIES WITH HIGHEST RATE OF ADOPTION

<sup>18</sup>"More than two-thirds of people around the world work away from the office at least once every week."

**With files and data readily accessible, Cloud based technology has made working** from home easier than ever before.

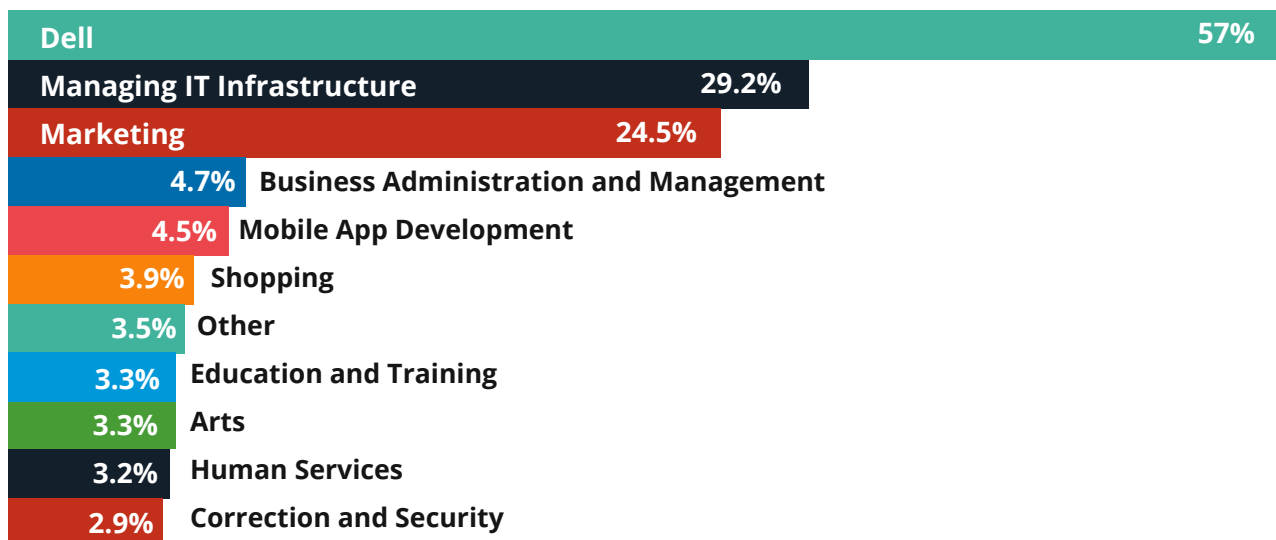
<sup>19</sup>Software or technology roles are the most popular, with **29.2%** of remote jobs posted by companies from the field of Information Technology.

<sup>20</sup>Dell plans to get



After technology, marketing is the second-best industry for remote workers, with 24.5% of remote jobs posted from this field. The reason for its popularity is that numerous roles can be covered online including content writers, social media managers, SEO strategists and digital marketers.

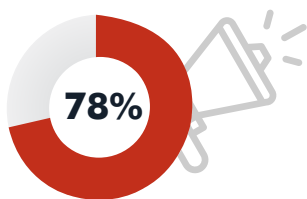
## TOP 10 FIELDS FOR REMOTE WORKING:



## DRIVERS

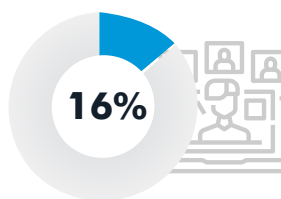
### Availability of specialized skill set:

Technological innovations are continuously happening. Skill set in cutting edge technologies like AI, Machine Learning, Data Engineering and Internet of Things (IoT) are not abundant. Also, since these technologies are dynamic specialization is becoming important. In order to retain and attract talent, companies need to train their employees. In order to get immediate results, 78% of HR managers believe companies no longer need to see location as a bar and should be ready to recruit employees globally.



78% of HR said we are open to remote hire due to limited talent pool locally

Companies rely on asynchronous e-learning processes when it comes to training remote employees. This includes technologies like AR/VR (Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality) which some of the companies can afford and are aiming to grow. Although companies spend a fortune creating a virtual audio-visual environment, they save a lot on infrastructure, training and various other L&D procedures. According to a press release from UpWork, most skills will become even more niche in the next 10 years. Possessing those coveted skills will make a worker remain in high-demand and have a lever during salary negotiations. Whenever they cannot find resources locally, employers are ready to pay top dollar to hire and retain a

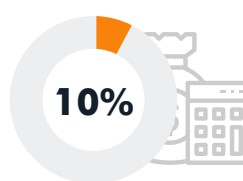


16% are remote companies which are born 100% remote from the onset

### Collaboration tools and technologies:

Remote working is becoming a new norm because of which a high-functioning remote environment is required. Tools like huddle-room technology, project visibility, management software, messaging apps and document sharing software are seeing a lot of usage among startups and various SMEs. These solutions are present across business ecosystems, providing end-to-end solutions and making remote work feasible.

<sup>22</sup>“choose-your-own-work-style” decisions do not just lead to operational savings. They boost employee rates by more than



10% CXOs see this as a cost optimization opportunity and plan to switch on remote basis for new hires

### Learning and development technologies:

There is a considerable difference between training a regular employee who is coming to office daily and a remote employee. Companies rely on asynchronous e-

## CHALLENGES

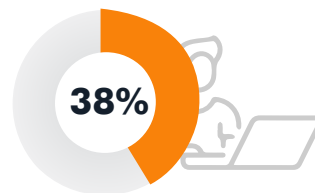
25% of deskless workers say that their reporting manager or team communicates with them once in a month or less. Around 80% of the remote workforce depends on communication apps like Skype, Facebook, WhatsApp, Google Hangouts, etc. Lack of information from management (38%) and timeliness of information (39%) are the most commonly reported obstacles to job efficiency for deskless workers. Hence, we see that communication is something employers struggle with when it comes to remote working. With Financial Accounting Standards Board/International Accounting Standards Board) accounting changes coming to effect on 1 January 2019 in the US has affected every company that leases commercial real estate. Many are now forced to seek alternative solutions for their offices, making remote work a beneficial option.

<sup>23</sup>Most of the higher authorities in a company find remote work challenging. This is due to the fact that they have access to critical parts of a company which cannot be maintained without a proper digital workplace. On the other hand, entry level workers don't find it that challenging.

When a centralized set of tools is not present, unsanctioned apps and software can lead to information being shared on unsecured systems and cause

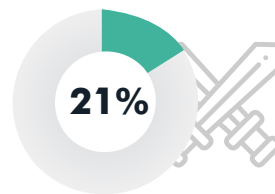
approved by their companies. 55% of these employees said that they did so because it could not be monitored by their companies and 62% said they use unsanctioned apps because of their ease of use.

A new survey says that



of remote workers don't have technological support or expertise to work remotely

A major challenge came out was the fact that unfair employee compensation, unequal opportunity for pay and promotion, lack of leadership, a work environment that does not promote collaboration are the key reasons for low trust among remote workers.



of remote workers

Fighting these challenges remains a big battle for all the remote workers.

Another challenge remains is the security. It is important that remote workers take a good of the data which is being shared and is never comprised. Auto back ups, high level of encryption can be a good way for organizations to get started.



## EVOLVING TRENDS

### Demand for specialized digital and English on the rise

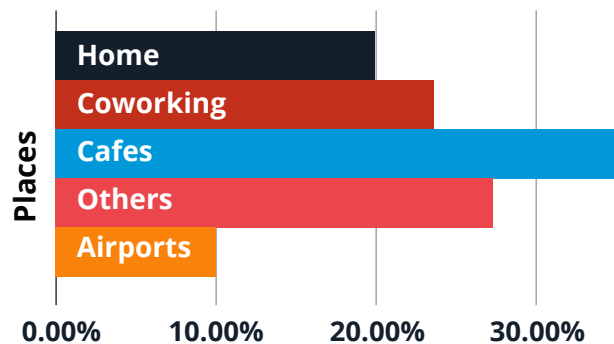
Expectation of basic knowledge in technology and digital tools are present in every working business model. The need for digital proficiency is much higher for remote workers because of the geographical factors.

Additionally, if someone is working remotely for some US or Europe based company, being able to speak in their tongue is an added advantage.

### Cafes and co-working spaces will become "remote work" friendly with more services inclined towards it:

Cafes are some of the most popular work destinations when it comes to remote working. With passing time, cafes are becoming more "remote ready". Plans like day passes and other such flexible measures are coming up for digital nomads.

### Places to Work Remotely

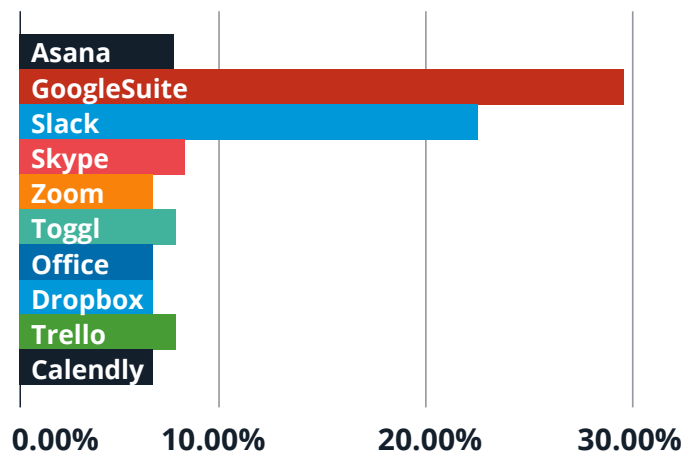


Source: remoters

### New tools and protocols facilitating remote work will continue to rise

Project management and communication tools such as Google Suite, Slack or Trello, which are already popular, yet there arises the need for a new set of tools with better support and additional functionalities targeted towards remote working professionals. Some of them are Loom to easily share video recordings, Timely for fully automated time tracking, Focusmate for a virtual co-working to avoid procrastination, or Pukkateam for virtual communication with video rooms.

### Remote Work Tools



Source: remoters

## BENEFITS YOU MUST KNOW

### Getting access to skilled expertise

**Hiring an overseas workforce** to outsource certain business functions can lead to:

- *Lower overheads*
- *Increased growth*
- *Greater focus and service quality*
- *Clarity on who's is performing*

One of the primary reasons why a business may want to outsource a task is when it requires skilled expertise. To allow you to focus on your core mission in providing a high-quality product or service to your customer, offshoring the task to people who can perform it better makes sense.

Workload increases with additional non-core functions and the quality of your core activities suffers as your business grows. Outsourcing in such a scenario plays an important role by allowing your key resources to focus on primary business tasks.

### Running business 24\*7

Remote work outsourcing to a country like India, which is in a different time zone, gives the added advantage of making full use of your 24-hour day. The remote work partner can take over and continue your work even after your employees go home. They can complete critical tasks and send it back for your review the next day.



### Know who is performing

Everyone while working remotely is expected to meet certain targets at the end of the fixed cycle. Remote working allows us to know who is performing and who is not without the obscuring fog of in-person charisma. With modern tools which monitor expectations can be a great way to know the employees which are in sync with the organizational goals.

### Gives “the pick of the world”

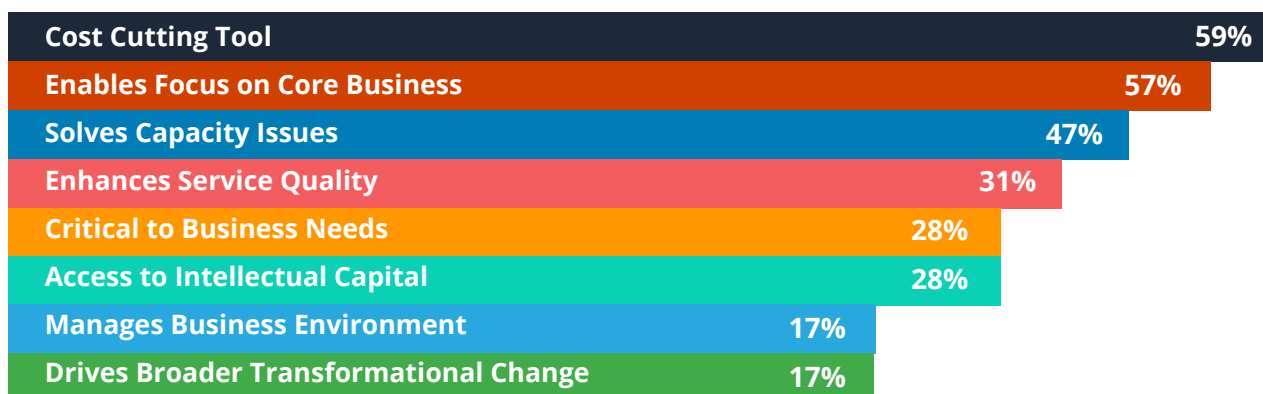
With remote work as highlighted earlier in the report you get to access the best of the talent from the remotest corner of the world. It allows organizations to build niche offerings and look at scaling up or down the solution with time as it progresses. In the book Remote, Jason Fried has highlighted that this benefit makes remote work a must have for everyone.



### Cost cutting tool but that's not the threshold

Investing in remote working acts as a cost cutting tool, 1159% of the surveyed companies are using remote working as a cost-cutting measure.

Yet it is more than just a money-saving exercise. If we look closely at all of the responses, they suggest that outsourcing improves business performance and therefore results in better user experience.



## Environmental impact

The existing telecommuting population (3.9 million employees) reduces greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of taking 600,000 cars off the road for a year, according to the “State of Telecommuting in the U.S. Employee Workforce” report. A whole 7.8 billion vehicle miles are saved each year by those who work remotely from home sometimes, **3 million tons of greenhouse gases (GHG) are avoided and oil savings reach \$980 million.**

Remote workers use less paper, control their air conditioning, heating and lighting, thus reducing the environmental impact.

## Effects on productivity

1266% of professionals think they would be more productive working remotely than in a traditional office. 52% said that they go to their home or home office when they really need to buckle down and get work done. Working from home typically leads to lesser distractions, office politics, noise level and more efficient meetings. It also affords the ability to dress more comfortably.

## Employee loyalty

Remote workers say they are likely to stay in their current job for the next 5 years 13% more than onsite workers. In fact 55% are looking for a new job if they are not allowed to work remotely.

## Work life balance

Around 91% of responders have voiced that remote working habits allow them to ensure a much better life with time to look after their families, children and less stress. In fact additional benefits and savings allow them to travel and plan better.



## CHALLENGES TO SOLVE

<sup>15</sup>According to a survey where 486 people were interviewed, following are some of the potent challenges faced by remote workers-

Communication	27%
Social opportunities	16%
Loneliness and Isolation	13%
Setting boundaries	9%
Organic interaction	9%
Visibility	9%
Time zones	9%
Meetings	9%

Apart from solving the challenge of smarter communication methods, we still have some humane issues to be solved. Due to no face-to-face interaction, the temptation to procrastinate is higher, and family members can be distracting often and has become a good challenge for remote employers to address.

Finally, employers do come with excuses like it doesn't work for our industry, managers will lose control, and the office cost a lot of money. The gains in productivity from remote work across many industries are self-explanatory though.



***Need a smarter technology frame work to ensure transparency and collaboration.***

<sup>16</sup>Employers do not have the technology in place to support employees working remotely, with a minority offering collaboration tools that allow workers to stay connected such as cloud-based file management (offered by just 36 percent) and instant messaging (34percent).



*The open-plan office might have gone too far and now ultimately risks to get in the way of itself, While office workers in open spaces are more likely to think of their office culture and environment as transparent, distractions - like regularly overhearing co-workers' personal conversations - have turned unavoidable. These distractions obviously have the potential to decrease productivity, increase stress, and drive employees away from the same offices that were designed to generate collaboration.*

**- Modupe Akinola**  
*Ph.D. associate professor of leadership & ethics at Columbia Business School.*

## Remote work often leads to loss of productivity due to:

### 1. Reduced human connection

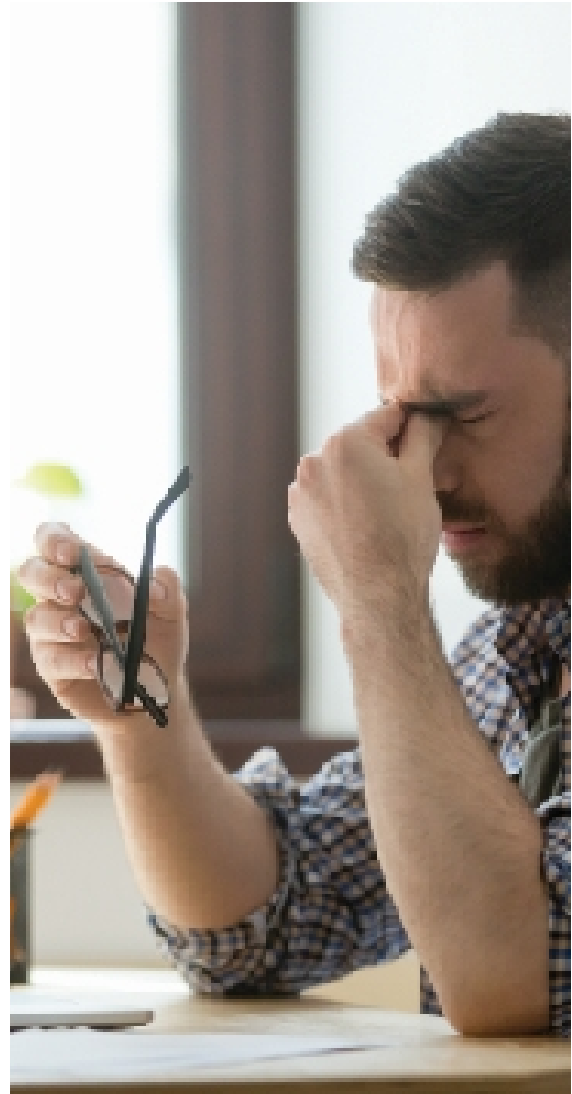
In case of an extrovert remote worker who feeds off interactions with others, working from home may feel isolating. Some remote workers find that working from a library or a public space such as a coffee shop satisfies their need to interact with others. However, some prefer an office setting over solitude. Others consider working from a co-working space which will allow one to still work remotely while achieving the benefits of working in an office environment.

### 2. Blurred work and personal life

Creating a separate workspace from the rest of the home can help, but some remote workers find it challenging to stop working when they know it's within reach.

### 3. Finding the balance

Businesses see outsourcing as a great opportunity to reduce costs, free up resources, gain access to talented professionals in a variety of fields and become a global player. On the other hand, jobs are lost and people are directly affected by this practice.



*Set up calendar blocks or update your Slack status to let people know when you will be available, or that you might be slow to respond due to another priority*

*– Suzanne Holloway  
Director of Growth and Acquisition  
at Miro*



# BEST PRACTICES FOR HIRING REMOTE WORKERS



## Sort through applicants in a project management tool

DoSomething drives hiring through Trello. Launchpad LA uses Asana so that everyone on the hiring team can see the candidates, comment on their application and feel involved in the process. Companies use tools such as Greenhouse Talent acquisition suite to manage the hiring process. Trello boards are also used for each open role with a Zapier integration that automatically creates a Trello card for candidates in the "Applied" column.



## Inviting top candidates to a video call interview

The hiring manager and other teammates who review applications select candidates for the next step, a recruiter interview. If the candidates pass that, they are called to the job-fit interview. Zapier uses a rubric to execute the aforementioned process. When hiring for a Customer Champion, candidates are evaluated using a 1-3 scale for qualities such as persistence, knowledge, empathy, attention to detail and Zapier usage. In the job-fit interview, candidates are asked questions to see if they would succeed in a remote environment.



## Putting top candidates to the test with a project

After the video call interviews, the top performers emerge as the strongest applicants. They are asked to take a test. Depending on the role, a task is devised that is of moderate difficulty and indicative of the types of activities they'll do on a day-to-day basis. For engineers, that might be using the Zapier Developer Platform to add a new service. For marketing, that may be writing a blog post in collaboration with someone on the team. More often than not, the task requires the candidate to interact with people on the team. This way, one can get a sense of how they communicate and collaborate. To save both the recruiter & candidate's time, the test should not take more than a few hours.



## Check references and make an offer

Anonymous reference checks are conducted using SkillSurvey. This helps to get honest feedback on the candidates. Throughout this process, which takes on average 29 days to hire or 3.5 days to reject, applicants should be updated on the status of their candidature before making the final hiring call and closing the job opening.



## Having new teammates meet the whole team

New teammates should be introduced to the team in their first weekly hangout, sharing where they're from, their background and anything fun they want to mention.

# BEST PRACTICES FOR MANAGING REMOTE WORKERS

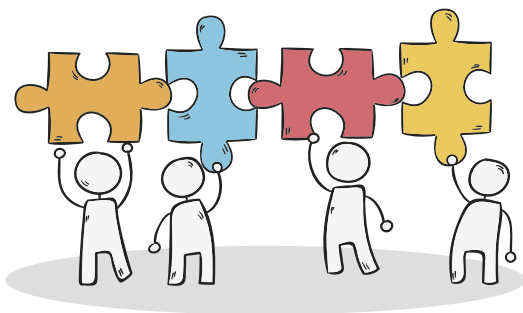
## Setting up boundaries with remote workers

Remote teams often need some kind of boundaries to separate their work from their personal life. As the teammates are working across different time zones, any notifications, chat messages or emails can disrupt someone's sleep or family time. It is important to discuss work schedules with each team member by respecting their time and showing them that you care.

## Encouraging and embracing diversity

Unfortunately, working with multicultural teams sometimes lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. Managing people from diverse backgrounds may pose a challenge. Embracing cultural diversity leads to constructive team building.

A simple way is to find out how different people from different areas are open to receiving feedback, promote a mindset of celebrating diversity, be respectful about national holidays for the global team and respect every culture.



## Setting expectations early and clearly

Every business has expectations, especially when working remotely. Being candid with employees will keep them focused and working towards the common goals. Clear expectations should be set for:

- **Work hours**
- **Availability**
- **Communication system**
- **Timely meetings**
- **Key projects and deadlines**
- **Scheduled meetings**
- **Respond to email**

## Brushing up online communication skills

Sometimes, remote working teams suffer setbacks in communication when working on projects. It is always going to be difficult to connect with teams in different areas without having good communication skills. Developing one's writing skills, talking purposefully and using the right collaboration tools effectively are all vital in the remote workplace.

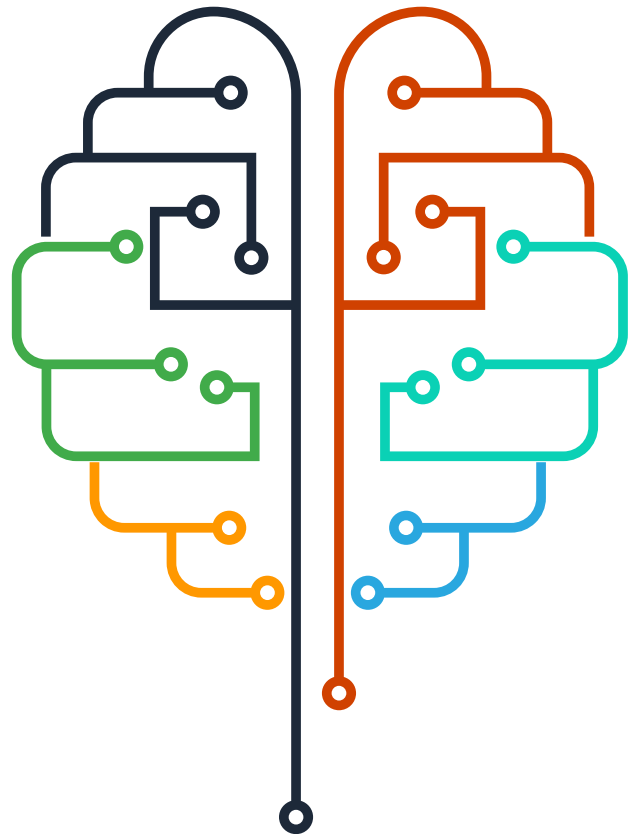
## Help is an utmost necessity

Being out of sight, one might struggle to address the needs of every employee. Though out of sight, team members should never be out of mind. Unexpected problems related to a project, a teammate or how the work is being done are common in every business. If something is really bothering the employees or they're feeling under the weather, understanding the clues they might be giving enables management to give them a helping hand.

## Investing in the right remote project management software

Your remote team working culture will flourish when you have everything under one roof. This can be made possible when you rely on remote team management software to plan tasks, projects and even people. Here's what you can do on a project management software:

- **Communicate with your remote team**
- **Keep a track of project evolution**
- **Track productivity**
- **Maintain and manage timesheets**
- **Share information in real time**
- **Have discussions**
- **Manage the tasks on a task list**
- **Interact across different time zones**



## Ways to encourage team morale

Apart from rewards and recognitions, it is advisable to celebrate when someone does something well.

Make it part of your team culture to celebrate successes often, even if it's via a shout-out on the team Slack channel.



## Getting to know people as individuals

Team members who feel appreciated as an individual will also tend to “go the extra mile” and be more open to constructive feedback, if needed.

Zapier introduced “pair buddies” to help team members get to know each other better.

For each team member you bring onboard, spend some time getting to know them. Find out their goals, personalities, beliefs, work habits and even their preferences. If someone has told you, “I prefer not to do X, as I don't have the skills”, don't be surprised when you go ahead and assign it to them anyway, they struggle!

### Be completely in (or out)

If you're going to deal with team issues, be fully present in doing so. Talk to team members directly and hear the issues in their own words. Take the time to formulate a response that acknowledges the team member and where they're coming from.

This can be done if you're able to work your own schedule efficiently. Some find that "getting things done", gets in the way and resolving team issues often get neglected.

### Be open to feedback

The key is to practice what you preach. Unfortunately, there are plenty of workplaces that say that they're open to feedback but the reality is quite different. If you react defensively or ignore the feedback, you'll find team members stop giving you any feedback altogether.



### Monitor communication effectiveness

Teams who use an app like Slack divide channels, often projectwise, for more effective communication. Communicating within your project management app may also be an option.

The key is to keep monitoring. For example, in Slack you can create conversation threads so that people aren't searching through comments on different topics to get what they need.



### Make objectives very clear

Depending on your project type, you might have objectives set out on a weekly basis, such as for an agile sprint. The key is to have everyone on the same page and in-sync with the common objectives.

A strong and open collaboration method tends to be the answer. Get team members and stakeholders to clarify and to confirm that they understand and agree with the objectives.



# BEST PRACTICES FOR A REMOTE WORK

<sup>38</sup>2/3rds of global remote workers aren't engaged and over a third never get any face-time with their team — yet over 40% say it would help build deeper relationships.

The challenge requires remote workers to take a number of stands and ensure that they are involved with the team always.

## 1. Make time for face-to-face:

Remote working tools often fail to drive workforce engagement. One way to counter this is to have a face-to-face interaction between remote employees and their co-workers periodically.

Mike Maxwell, a senior category leader at Whirlpool, says: "Face-to-face meetings give you the proximity and presence that makes collaboration more effective. I am also better able to read the room and pick up on the body language. Reading the room is critical to know when things need further explaining or when to let go something that isn't going over well."

## 2. Small talk really matters

Daily greetings and daily check-ins over shared communication channels to acknowledge remote employees. Instead of relying on manual feedback only, a virtual feedback should also be implemented where participation and outcomes are assessed with objectivity. Infact, knowing

within the digital space. You can create a "virtual water cooler," a chat forum for fun and social stuff.

## 3. Create a separate office space with option to lock

It's just not any other rooms which should work on. It should be an office, with an option to convert into a private meeting space. It will foster a higher productivity. People often recommend to wear different clothes and not just the regular night dresses to remain productive.



## 4. Foster open communication

An open communication channel between employees and their managers is one of the easiest ways to improve engagement for remote teams. For instance, an in-house, hyper-secure intranet can help a mid-sized team stay connected. You must share information openly on work schedules, to-do's, calendars, and files and also share progress with each other to fuel that sense of achievement and momentum.

## 5. Avoiding public Wi-Fi and using personal hotspots

Public Wi-Fi introduces significant security risks and should be avoided at all costs. One good option is to use a personal hotspot from a dedicated device or your phone. For many remote access applications, you should use a VPN. VPNs provide a flexible connection to connect to different services (web pages, email, a SQL server, etc.) and can protect your traffic. Lastly, for some use cases, you can also set up encrypted remote connections into a remote desktop or other individual server. Many of these connection types (RDP, HTTPS, SSH) include encryption as part of their service direction and do not require an additional VPN or other encryption service to secure the data in-transit.

## 6. Be careful don't burn out

We often get caught in the trap of working too much, and then burn out. Since working remotely comes with an inherent characteristic of flexibility, the work day looks a lot different for remote workers. So, remember to keep your needs in mind and don't often get tempted to do a little extra here and there, and because of this, you can eventually burn out.

It's important to continue pursuit of your hobbies outside work and foster a healthier life.





## 5 CEOs REVEAL THEIR BEST REMOTE WORKING PRACTICES



*Hire people you trust and trust the people you hire.*

*2. Set expectations for what will be accomplished. Manage that and not based on hours worked.*

*3. Go all in. Half remote/half in office doesn't seem to be a good way to work.*

*– Wade Foster*

*CEO and co-founder of Zapier*



*We actually don't have many tools or processes. Our own tool solves the hardest problem, which is seeing team members' faces, building culture, and generally feeling less lonely. Time zones can still be a hurdle, but we do the best we can to have overlap. We also have several email aliases for things like marketing, product, and IT, which we use to keep the appropriate people in the loop on various topics. These have proven to be extremely helpful. We do have a standup on Mondays to review the previous week and discuss the week ahead. We also have a standup on Fridays but we actually just use this to hang out and goof around, it's a great team builder. Things like this are really important when you're not all together in an office.*

*– Wade Foster*

*CEO and co-founder of Zapier*



**Basecamp**



*The first step is coming up with a balanced approach. The other thing though is the culture you build should work extremely well for both remote and locals. One way to achieve this is for the locals to work as if they're remote. For example, every day in Basecamp, our Basecamp account automatically asks people what they're working on-and those answers are automatically published back to Basecamp for everybody else in the company to see.*

**i done this**

*The biggest thing is over-communication. You have to communicate much more proactively, better and more than you'd think is enough to make up for the physical and psychological distance between everyone. We use iDoneThis to stay in sync every day without having to schedule and stop to have more meetings, Hipchat and video hangouts for real-time discussions, and tools like Hackpad, Asana, and Trello, that are open to the whole team, for collaboration.*

**– Janet Choi**

*Chief Creative Officer at iDoneThis*

**Lullabot**

*We round out the types of communication with verbal in the form of a lot of audio (telephone) and video conference calls, and in-person communication at company and department retreats and client on-sites. In-person non-verbal communication precedes even the grunts of cavemen. It gives us a deeper understanding of people such as sense of humor, sense of style, body language, social structures, and (in the case of our clients) things like office politics. Better understanding builds better trust. And better trust builds a better culture.*

**– Jeff Robins**

*CEO and Founder of Lullabot*



## TOOL FOR REMOTE TEAMS



### Project management

This cloud-based tool is extremely simple to use, helping you to improve communication within your team and manage projects. Asana allows you to break down projects into specific tasks and assign them to your team members. The Premium version of the app also includes workflows that allow you to automatically move projects through the system without having to babysit them.



### Advanced project management

It allows you to monitor tasks, discussions, documents, schedules, collaboration and milestones directly through the dashboard. Basecamp is also surprisingly easy to use and does not require a lot of advanced training to get remote teams up to speed. Additionally, there is a lot of documentation and user-generated content that can help you familiarize yourself with Basecamp.



### Project and Time Tracking

Since remote workers can live around the world, you often have several people collaborating on projects across time zones. When I Work makes it easy to schedule work for employees and track their work times. This is especially useful for remote workers you are paying hourly. Employees login and punch the clock in a convenient interface.



### Online meetings

With remote teams, you don't have the ability to see them face-to-face as often as you would in an office setting. GoToMeeting can help you alleviate this issue. It's a well-known online meeting program.



### Communication and chat

With Slack, you can break your main chat down into multiple topic-specific chats to keep things organized. The platform also has a number of advanced features, including voice chat for simple communication.

If not properly monitored, communication is often one of the first aspects of remote team work to suffer. This can affect the work negatively.



### File sharing

When you work with remote teams, your team members will need to share a lot of files. Sending large files over email is a hassle. It is also impossible when the file is too large. A team Dropbox account can be a great way to ensure that you are sharing all of the files you need within your team and that they are easily accessible.



INT Engage

### Social Intra Portal

An organized knowledge & communication platform for easy access to documents and collaboration. A single source for idea sharing fostering innovation and creativity by drafting solutions towards one goal.

Idea->Collaborate->Create->Deliver



### Process management

Using automation, remote teams can use Pipefy to complete tasks in less time. A big part of the Pipefy value proposition comes from the templates that they offer, allowing you to quickly load different project types into your account. Even tasks like Product Roadmaps and Employee Onboarding templates are included with the software. Pipefy is a highly customizable solution that is completely free up to 10 users.



### All-in-one-management

From initial planning, assigning roles, creating workflows, quick discussions, time tracking, progress monitoring, work review to celebrating success—ProofHub is a platform for every situation. It has features like Gantt chart, chat, Kanban Board, timesheets, reports and calendar. It also offers other features like custom roles, announcements, online proofing and white labelling.



# SUCCESS STORIES







VIPKid has been able to scale up to 14,000 teachers in a couple of years globally. The entire process of recruiting a teacher is based online and it happens through their portals. The company claims that the main reason behind integrating remote work is because their students require education from American and Canadian teachers who cannot always travel overseas. With this model, even Chinese kids can get Western education from home.

that, Working Solutions had been one of the top 10 companies within the Forbes Top 100 list.

Working Solutions promotes this offering for their employees because they seek to diversify their talent pool which cannot happen when restricted to a single location. With the right resources, they can reach out to a wide array of clients which will eventually increase their value proposition



The e-commerce giant has been one of the biggest employers of remote workers ranking number 6 on the FlexJobs list of 100 companies with remote jobs. 36 Hiring a remote workforce will give Amazon flexibility to scale up when required. By keeping workers on a payroll year-round and adding hours during peak time, they can have a seasoned workforce ready to take on busier times with ease. Furthermore, by doing this, they can cut down on overhead expenses required for on-site employees.



Appen has been ranked number one on FlexJobs's list of Top 100 Companies to Watch for Remote Jobs in 2019. This list is based on the number of remote jobs requisitions on the companies' website.

"It's an honor to once again be recognized by FlexJobs as the leader in remote work opportunities," said Mark Brayan, Chief Executive Officer at Appen. "We are proud to offer a variety of flexible, work-from-home opportunities to thousands of people around the world, while supporting the rapidly growing machine learning and artificial intelligence markets."



Working Solutions moved to rank 9 in 2019 from rank 13 in 2015 on the FlexJobs list of Top 100 Companies to Watch for Telecommuting and Remote Jobs. Prior to

37 Appen hires across a wide spectrum of job responsibilities with remote working options like internet analysis, social media evaluators and transcribers.



# ANNEXURE





# PESTEL



## Political

In 2010, Congress passed the Telework Enhancement Act that required every U.S. government agency to establish a policy under which eligible Federal employees could telework. Each year, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issues a report detailing the status of Federal teleworkers.

Cost savings were a key goal of the Federal government's effort to promote remote work, as is true at many corporations.



## Technological

1. In countries such as Japan, Korea, China and Singapore, fibres have largely replaced DSL as a broadband Internet service. Fiber based internet and communications are certainly more effective in today's Information Age, where the demand to receive information faster and in a variety of digital mediums is in high demand. This is what is making remote working as a potential option in many countries.

### 2. Enterprise mobility and Byod trends:

The 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) policies, which are filtering through corporate environments, have obvious cost reduction benefits. Allowing people to use their own devices means that everyone wins. People get to keep the products that they are comfortable with, and you save a small fortune on hardware and phone bills each month.

<sup>26</sup>9 out of 10 organizations in the legal sector will use cloud solutions by 2018.



## Legal

1. <sup>27</sup>Telecommuters need to know their privacy rights. "For example, just because work is being performed on a home computer doesn't mean that it's not susceptible to being monitored or inspected by the employer,"

2. The Champlain College states that the ADA considers remote working to be a "reasonable accommodation" for employees with disabilities. However, a company and a worker might disagree on whether telecommuting is possible for certain positions.

3. <sup>28</sup>"*The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) challenged that Ford Motor Company failed to provide disabled accommodation by refusing to allow an employee to telecommute up to 4 days a week,*"



## Economic

1. <sup>29</sup>In some professions, the salaries of home-based workers can be commensurate with the pay of in-office workers—or even more. For example, one study found that developers who work remotely can earn as much as 40% more than their office-based peers.

2. <sup>30</sup>The average annual income for most telecommuters is \$4,000 higher than that of non-telecommuters.

## Social

While the benefits of working from home include no commute and a comfortable environment, one is likely to spend the majority of the day alone without access to the office. To counter this, it is important to make an effort to keep in touch with colleagues. This can be in the form of coffee or lunch meetings, a phone call or FaceTime/Skype.



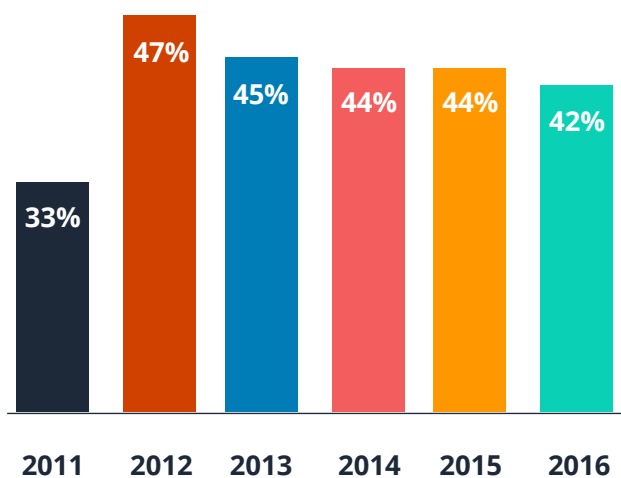
3. In 2015, Xerox reported that its teleworkers drove 92 million fewer miles, saved 4.6 million gallons of gas, reduced carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 41,000 metric tons and saved the company over \$10 million.



Remote work's environmental impact is clearly seen in a number of direct and indirect ways.

**Figure1. Telework Eligibility, FY 2011-2016**

**42%** of Federal employees were eligible to telework in 2016



## Environmental

1. <sup>31</sup>Vehicles used to commute to work are the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States.

2. <sup>32</sup>People who are working remotely in the US right now avoid emitting 3.6 million tons of commute-related greenhouse gasses annually.

# INDIA AS A REMOTE WORKING HUB

## + Strengths

1. India has established itself on the global remote working map by catering to almost 70% of the global intellectual outsourcing industry
2. Availability of talented, experienced and skilled professionals in almost every working domain capable of handling complex projects
3. Reduction in costs and increase in savings as costs incurred in India are comparatively lower than that of US or UK
4. Majority of Indian market research professionals are known to have sound technical, scientific and analytic expertise including the ability to conduct high-end research

## — Weakness

The internet connectivity in India still leaves a lot to be desired. This is because optical fibres are yet to spread throughout the country. <sup>33</sup>For instance, India has recorded the slowest 4G LTE speed in the world at an average speed of 6.13 Mbps. The country was ranked last out of 77 countries on the list.



## Opportunities

1. <sup>34</sup>India will emerge as a hub for knowledge services in the future because it continues to excel in services that require advanced English skills like KPO, Content and Medicine. This is why many companies are opting for remote workers from India.
2. <sup>36</sup>India will become a dominant player in the Engineering R&D market, expected to expand to \$1.4 trillion by 2020. India's domestic market is expected to contribute 10-15% to the global R&D services market.



## Threats

1. Due to rise in labor costs in Indian metro cities, companies are looking opting to hire remote resources from smaller Tier II cities.
2. India's competitiveness is being challenged by countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Philippines. They offer cheap labor in IT and business process skills while India is experiencing increased labor costs and high attrition. This is of concern and needs to be addressed.
3. Political crises in markets like the US and UK might result in outsourcing restrictions being put in place.

# PHILIPPINES AS A REMOTE WORKING HUB

## + Strengths

1. Filipinos are well-versed in the English language, owing to an education system with a strong focus on the English language. English is one of the two official languages of the country and it is widely used across all forms of media. The Philippines' strong American ties has also influenced the country, giving Filipinos a better understanding of the western culture.
2. Multiple established internet service providers are able to deliver high-speed fiber optic connection across the country.
3. The top outsourcing companies in the Philippines only hire candidates with college degrees. Philippine universities produce thousands of highly capable workers yearly, adding to an already large and diverse talent pool.

## Weakness

1. The Philippine labor code requires organizations in the Philippines to pay employees an additional 13th month pay annually. This incremental month of payment is paid in December as a mandatory bonus to employees.
2. Compared to the US (11 official holidays), the Philippines has a total of 18 official non-working government and religious holidays. With the Philippine population

being predominantly Christian, days with religious significance are officially deemed as holidays by the government.



## Opportunities

1. The Philippines' IT infrastructure is at par with that of Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong. Tech conglomerates like Cisco & Avaya have local offices in Manila, offering expert data and networking solutions for outsourcing companies.
2. The Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development (PCIEERD) has been working towards providing training programs to BPO workers since 2013.
3. Currently, the US Dollar to PHP exchange rate is \$1.00 to P52.45, the weakest it has been in 12 years. This makes the salaries lower than other developing countries.



## Threats

Annually, an average of 20 tropical cyclones pass through the Philippines, causing floods and cancelation of school and work.

# UKRAINE AS A REMOTE WORKING HUB

## + Strengths

1. The Ukrainian time zone is GMT+2. That means if you are in Europe, your business hours will be practically the same as the working hours of your remote team in Ukraine. Even if your company is located in America, Ukraine is still a better time zone option than Russia, India or China.
2. Ukrainian culture is more closely aligned with Western European and American cultures than the Asian cultures. It is easier to communicate with Ukrainians than Asians.
3. Ukraine is situated on stable plain land, far away from oceans, volcanoes and other risky natural phenomena. It has never experienced a tsunami or an earthquake.
4. The largest share of outsourcing market in Central and Eastern Europe, 16,000 IT graduates per year, pro-Western orientation, membership in the WTO and the highest level of democracy among all post-Soviet countries outside the EU - all of the above makes Ukraine an attractive destination for IT outsourcing projects.



## Opportunities

1. The country produces thousands of engineering graduates each year, 16,000 of them being IT specialists. At the end of 2015, there were 90,000 IT professionals in Ukraine, 20% more than 2014. Almost 60% of them work as outsourcers. By 2020, the IT workforce is expected to double to over 200,000 specialists.
2. The Euromaidan Revolution of 2014 brought a new government to Ukraine. All the problems with corruption haven't been resolved yet. However, authorities claim reforms that make it easier for Ukrainian companies to work with overseas partners.



## Threats

The current situation in Ukraine is comparable to Israel. The latter is engaged in constant conflict with the Palestinians but is also one of the leading global technology hubs. Although some military activity is still observed in Ukraine, it involves only about 10% of the country.

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