Adapting business operations for a remote workforce

Businesses are having to make revolutionary changes. For some industries this means adapting to a remote workforce. Managing a remote workforce can be challenging, especially when forced to do so almost overnight. The list below provides ideas to consider and links to additional resources.

Gallup's Guide for Leaders provides additional thoughts for leadership as they prepare for an extended period of managing a remote workforce.

Employee communications

Regular communications are key to helping employees feel connected and motivated.
- Build a schedule for regular corporate-wide communications.
- Provide guidance to managers on how to communicate and how often.
- Explore technology options that will help teams collaborate and connect. Examples include Slack, Microsoft Teams or free collaboration tools.

Technology

Ensuring all employees have the equipment they need with limited time to coordinate can be challenging.
- Create a technology checklist to determine required hardware and software.
- Document receipt and expectations for use of equipment.
- Educate employees on proper use of technology to prevent interruptions.
- Educate employees on cyber risks.

Teleworker plan

Providing guidance to employees during this time of change can help employee adapt and excel.
- Set expectations to help employees stay motivated. Resource: Gallup’s How to Manage Remote Employees and a sample work from home agreement from ThinkHR.
- Proactively address issues and expectations around schedule, childcare, pets, etc. Remember to be flexible where possible.
• Provide information on home office safety setup.
• Encourage frequent stretch breaks, change in environment (e.g., walking outside), and separating work from personal time. For more ideas, click here.

Promote resources

• Social isolation: Help employees adapt to feelings of isolation. Resource: Gallup's How to manage loneliness and isolation for remote workers
• Telehealth: Continue to direct employees to use telemedicine. If you don’t currently offer this benefit, there are companies offering direct to consumer options to consider.
• Behavioral health: Consider extending telemedicine to behavioral health.
• EAP: Remind employees of the support their employee assistance programs can provide.
• Caregiver support services: Understand how vendors can support your workforce as schools and day cares close.
• Financial well-being support: Review your retirement vendor’s offering and direct employees to resources. Refer to these employee communication pieces from Lockton:
  o How to survive a volatile stock market
  o Your plan has an auto-defense against market volatility: Dollar cost averaging
  o Plan for the best, be ready for the worst

Workers’ compensation

• Workers’ compensation claims can arise from a remote workforce, even though the employer is not in control of the employee’s environment. Telecommuting guidelines can be a useful strategy for employers to proactively manage exposures. For more information, click here.
• The home safety checklist for telecommuters includes ideas to maintain a safe workspace at home.