



The HR Manager's **Remote Working Checklist**

103 Considerations For Transitioning Colleagues And Their Line
Management To Working From Home

Coronavirus Update

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Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update March 2020

In just a few short weeks the Coronavirus situation has evolved from a small news item about a new illness affecting a previously unheard of city in China, to an international pandemic with thousands of deaths, a complete shutdown of Italy and the US government banning all inbound travel from Europe. New cases are being reported every day, the death toll is rising and governments and international health organisations are putting in place radical measures to halt the spread of the virus and contain its impact.

The impact on society and indeed the world economy has been already been significant. Stock markets have plunged, there's been panic buying of toilet rolls and hand wash, sports fixtures have been played behind closed doors and are now being cancelled. People are being actively encouraged to avoid large gatherings to reduce the risk of infection and spreading the virus even further. This of course also means the workplace.

Employers of all sizes may face large scale and perhaps prolonged staff absences for one of these reasons:

- Individuals who contract the virus will need to take time off from work to recover.
- Colleagues who are known to have come into contact with someone infected will voluntarily (or otherwise) need to self isolate for up to 14 days.
- Enforced school closures may require parents to be at home with their children.
- Authorities may recommend (or even force) much of the population to stay at home to limit their potential exposure and reduce opportunities for the virus to spread.

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For organisations with staff who are not ill with the virus but still find themselves restricted in their movements and perhaps forced to stay at home, remote working is one way round these limitations.

This checklist has been updated to reflect the impact Coronavirus (COVID-19) will have on the implementation of remote working in an organisation.

Remote Working Solutions

Editorial Team

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Introduction

The purpose of the HR Manager's Remote Working Checklist is to provide a simple, clear and easy to access reference to help you identify and keep track of what needs to be done to enable and develop an effective work from home culture in your organisation.

This checklist is a comprehensive collection of action points that will help migrate staff from a workplace based culture to a remote working culture. Not every step will be required so the checklist should be used for guidance only.

How To Use This Checklist

There are a number of ways you could use this checklist:

- As a prompt to help you develop your remote working own strategy.
- As an audit checklist to review your existing remote working strategy and arrangements.
- As discussions points to help brief your colleagues, staff and line management on the practicalities of implementing a remote working culture in your organisation.

A small space has been left between each checklist item to allow you to make your own brief notes on the status of each item.

Business Case



Advantages of Remote Working

- Cost savings by potentially reducing office space and operational costs.
- Talent attraction and acquisition with the availability of flexible working.
- Remote working encourages a more diverse workforce into the employment pool.
- Research has shown remote working can actually increase the productivity of employees.
- Reduction in the company's carbon footprint.

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- Business continuity in the event of major disruptions (e.g. Coronavirus COVID-19).
- Remote working is less stressful, gives workers a greater sense of control and is good for mental health.

Disadvantages Of Remote Working

- Workers have the potential to feel isolated and potentially disconnected from the company's mission.
- Ambitious workers may feel a lack of visibility may adversely affect their chances of promotion.
- Some workers may struggle to keep a balance between work and personal life and let work dominate resulting in stress, overwhelm and potential mental health challenges.
- Remote workers contributions to the company may become transactional rather than relational and reduce the collective impact of working in teams.
- Working at home may present distractions that some might find difficult to shut out (children, pets, spouses etc).

Your Notes

Remote Working Challenges & Hurdles To Overcome



- Line managers' potentially negative attitudes towards remote working ('out of sight...')
- Gaining buy in from senior management.
- Overcoming concerns about meeting operational and/or customer requirements from home.
- Issues of perceived unfairness from colleagues whose work can't be done remotely.
- Performance measures and management doctrine that focuses on hours worked rather than output.

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- Developing protocols for dealing with time-zone differences.
- Ensuring on-site workers and remote workers are treated the same to avoid discrimination.

Your Notes

What Roles Are Suitable For Remote Working?



The choice of which roles in your organisation are suitable for remote working is a blend of these factors:

- The nature of the role itself.
- In-house resources already in place to facilitate remote working.
- The investment willing to be made to enable remote working to take place.

Low Hanging Fruit

Prime candidates for remote working are roles that are:

- "Siloed" and require little, if any, cross functional working. Examples include:

- Web design and coding.
- Data analysis.
- Social media marketing.
- Copywriting.
- Sales.
- Some knowledge work

Factors That Might Prevent Remote Working

Any of the following factors may be a barrier to for a role to be carried out remotely:

- The more senior a person is, the more present in the workplace they usually need to be.
- Roles whose routine physical presence is critical to the day to day running of the company and not just a nice to have.
- Roles whose physical presence is the only way their tasks can be fulfilled.
- The use of equipment, tools or environments that can't easily, safely or cost effectively replicated in the home.
- Concerns about the physical or digital security of information being processed.

The 4 Characteristics Of Ideal Remote Work

- Can be done away from a physical team.
- Can be done away from a physical office.
- Actions can be completed using software.
- Work can happen regardless of time zone.

Your Notes

Policies & Procedures - Considerations For Remote Working



- Employees right to request to work from home at <https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working> reviewed.
- Existing company remote working policy reviewed.
- Company remote working policy written/re-written as required.
- Remote working clearly defined for each role with the following possible variations:
 - The main place of work being the home.
 - Time split between home and the office - a form of flexible remote working.
 - Using home as a base with travel to different company sites and/or clients premises.
 - Working remotely at home occasionally with office premises as the main place of work.

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- Existing employment contracts reviewed for remote working.
- Existing employment contracts re-written to accommodate remote working where applicable.
- Remote working application process for employees defined and promulgated.
- Jobholder eligibility criteria established and agreed (eg length of service, satisfactory performance or even completion of training).
- Business case guidelines established for consideration when processing applications.
- Contract templates for future employment re-written to include remote working policy.
- In-home health and safety risk assessment requirement audited.
- Company liability insurance policy reviewed for remote working.
- Company liability insurance policy updated to include remote working if required.
- International employment and payroll laws reviewed for remote workers located in another country.

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- Data protection and GDPR policies and procedures reviewed for remote working.

- Data protection and GDPR policies and procedures updated for remote working practices if required.

- Resources to be provided, supplied and funded by employer identified and agreed. These might include:
 - Furniture (desk, chair, document storage facilities).
 - Telephone equipment and/or telephone line.
 - IT Equipment (computer, tablet, printer, scanner and/or broadband connection).
 - Fire extinguisher and/or other safety equipment.
 - Stationery (paper, folders etc).

- Ownership and or maintenance/removal obligations for remote worker facilities and resources established and agreed.

- Funding for company provided facilities agreed and made available.

- Scope of what constitutes "reasonable" personal use (if allowed at all) of company supplied resources and facilities for remote working established and agreed.

- Resources to be provided, supplied and funded by remote worker identified and agreed.

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Consideration given to whether the employer will contribute towards costs for working at home. These might include:

- Heating
- Lighting
- Telephone line
- Additional insurance premiums

Claims process and tax implications for any allowances identified and established.

Frequency and circumstances of employer access to the remote worker's home established, agreed and promulgated. These might include:

- Initial set up of remote work facilities.
- Delivery of resources and equipment.
- Ongoing maintenance and repair of equipment (including electrical testing).
- Health and safety assessments.
- One to one meetings with managers, colleagues or clients.

Implications of a remote worker wishing to move house considered and established.

Your Notes

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- IT/Commercial Security requirements for remote working established.
- IT/Commercial security requirements for remote working implemented.
- Insurance requirements for use of company equipment at home audited.
- Relevant insurance requirements/provisions for use of company equipment in the home in place.
- IT support arrangements requirements for remote workers identified.
- IT support arrangements for remote workers made available
- Remote workers provided with relevant hardware to allow work from home.

Your Notes

Setting Up The Employee For Remote Working At Home



- Suitability of employees home for remote work established.
- In-home health and safety risk assessment (where necessary) carried out and reported.
 - Plan in place to correct any deficiencies identified during risk assessment.
 - Funding source identified and agreed to pay for risk assessment deficiency corrections.
- Employee issued with company provided resources and facilities to enable remote working.
- Remote worker has confirmed they have provided resources and facilities they are responsible for sourcing.
- IT/Commercial Security briefing given to remote workers including storage and transit.

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- Remote worker briefed on IT support arrangements
- Remote worker briefed on tax implications of working remotely (from home).
- Remote worker to be briefed on the need to inform their mortgage provider or landlord of their intention to work from home.
- Remote worker briefed on the need to inform their home insurer of their intention to work from home.
- Remote worker has confirmed there is nothing in their mortgage, lease, rental agreement or insurance that prevents them from working at home.
- Remote worker has confirmed their home insurance covers them for a third party claim and/or damage caused by work equipment.
- Remote worker to check if business rates will need to be paid if working from home.
- Remote worker to check if planning permission is necessary to work from home.
- Remote worker briefed on the hours they are expected to work and the core hours to be "at work".

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- Remote worker briefed on how frequently and for how long they are required to be present at the employers premises.

- Employer to consider use of a trial period to establish suitability of the role and job holder to the demands of remote work.

- Performance management criteria and principles agreed with the remote worker and/or their line management.

- Remote working agreement document between the employer and the remote worker produced and signed by all parties concerned.

Your Notes

Remote Working Best Practice - Management



- Ensure the availability of effective online collaboration and communication facilities to all remote team members.
- Ensure remotely accessible information is easily accessed, well structured and organised.
- Create regular opportunities for remote workers to personally connect with colleagues where possible.
- Encourage remote team managers to have at least one live team meeting (video or teleconference) per week.

Remote Working Best Practice - Managers



- Review how often you will communicate with team members and how you will do that.
- Establish the frequency and protocol for remote team members to give and receive daily updates.
- Encourage remote team members to understand and share their individual communication preferences.
- Ensure your team are familiar with the communication and collaboration tools at their disposal.
- Think ahead about how you'll maintain relationships, hold people to account and positively reinforce the members of your remote team.

Remote Working Best Practice - Team Members



- If you are going to work remotely (at home) for prolonged periods, create a separate space for when you work.
- Create "at work" and "at home" routines and practices so you can differentiate between the two. For example, dress differently when you are "at work".
- Identify the core hours you work and when you can be contacted by fellow team members.
- Know when to "log off and shut down" from work.
- Communicate with your fellow team members and line management frequently to let them know how you are getting on.

Training Of Staff & Colleagues Impacted By Remote Working



- Collaboration and communication tool training needs identified.
- Collaboration and communication tool training made available to remote workers.
- Collaboration and communication tool training completed by remote workers.

Remote Working Best Practice Training

- Leaders trained on remote worker management and communications best practice.
- Staff trained on remote working best practice.

Your Notes

Recruiting Remote Workers



When recruiting remote workers, bear in mind you'll need to recruit people who'll be able to thrive in the distributed team environment that has the following challenges:

- A lack of direct supervision making it difficult to assess how engaged they are with their work.
- The potential for problems to escalate significantly due to poor communication.
- Culture fit challenges as workers may have limited if any opportunity to interact in person.

Look for the following skills and attributes when recruiting remote workers to add to your team:

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- Highly motivated with a solutions focused attitude to problem solving.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Well organised and self-disciplined and a self starter.
- Technologically literate with own equipment (if it is not to be supplied by your company)

When conducting interviews with potential remote workers, we recommend you include the following:

- Back and forth written assignments to check for clarity, brevity and speed of response.
- Conduct video interviews to assess quality of verbal communication.
- Include some form of critical thinking tests to see how they respond to problem solving.
- Assess their values and thinking style to ensure a fit with how your organisation works.

Your Notes

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Specific Measures For Remote Workers



- Guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19) prevention measures and how to reduce the risk of contracting it issued and/or promoted to remote workers.

- Guidance on self-isolation measures and employment related consequences of self-isolating issued.

- Remote workers issued information regarding updates on Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), SSP medical evidence requirements and company procedure for reporting sick if they become infected with Coronavirus.

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) internal communication strategy defined, agreed and implemented.

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Remote workers briefed on how to keep updated on the status of company Coronavirus measures.

Impact of the Working Time Regulations 1998 on remote working employees needing to work longer (hours to cover for colleagues off sick) reviewed and considered.

Your Notes



How Remote Working Solutions Can Help You

If you have a remote team and are facing these challenges:

- The transition to a remote working culture.
- Instilling the company culture and values in a remote working environment.
- Overcoming the difficulties of remote worker and team communication.
- Lack of team trust and cohesion across remote workers.
- Mis-management of remote team workers.
- Baselineing, tracking and improving remote worker performance.

We help our clients overcome these obstacles through:

1. Equipping managers to lead and develop high performing remote working teams.
2. Developing highly productive behaviours and mindset in your superstar remote workers

Developing Remote Worker Leadership

Our behavioural based leadership development methodology will guide managers to understand themselves and others better so they develop more quality relationships, communicate more effectively, hold people to account more often and get the best out of their team.

Developing Remote Worker Productivity

Our unique approach to the development of remote worker productivity will increase their focus and concentration, eradicate procrastination, inoculate them against distraction and help them get more done as they work remotely.

How It Works

- Step 1** We will consult with you to understand your challenges, establish their cause and identify relevant behaviours to develop in your staff.
- Step 2** If one of our existing products does not meet your needs, we will design and deliver an interactive half day virtual workshop to give you the result you're after.
- Step 3** Through a series of short 30 minute virtual coaching sessions, new behaviours will be developed, refined and conditioned as habit.

Contact Us

Get in touch now for a free strategy session to help you clarify what you need to do next.

- Option 1 - Call Michael Tipper on +44(0) 777 553 2612
- Option 2 - E Mail Michael at himself@michaeltipper.com
- Option 3 - Visit www.RemoteWorkingSolutions.co.uk and complete our contact form.

Remote working presents a great opportunity for progressive organisations.

A blended lifestyle with the ebb and flow of meeting the demands of work and fulfilling the responsibilities of home and family life is fast becoming the norm. Flexible working is now not only expected by those growing up in the internet age, but also necessary to allow people to function and flourish. Remote working, when done right, is one aspect of flexible working that will not only increase employee engagement, but will also improve productivity and increase organisational performance and efficiency.



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