



## **Alternate Work Arrangements A Manager's Guide**

Alternate work arrangements include alternate work locations (telecommuting) and flexible work schedules. For alternate work arrangements to be effective, employees must be evaluated by what they do, not where or how they do it. Further, you should challenge any assumptions about specific jobs you may have thought could not be done remotely as studies have shown that most job duties can be efficiently performed outside of the typical office setting.

### **Benefits of Alternate Work Arrangements**

- ◆ Enhances employee morale and satisfaction
- ◆ Improves retention of employees
- ◆ Boosts productivity
- ◆ Assists in recruiting efforts
- ◆ Creates a better work/life balance for employees
- ◆ Improves environmental factors and impact on global ecology
- ◆ Allows for business continuity during emergency circumstances

### **Managing Remote Employees**

#### **Establish Performance Criteria**

Clearly communicate your expectations of your employees because employees who are aware of your expectations will be more motivated to meet those expectations. Goal setting and performance measurement are important to successful management of telecommuting employees. Some of the questions to be answered are: What is the required product (report, study, budget, outline, or forms to be processed)? Is there a quantity that is reasonable to expect? And if so, what is the expected time frame (when, how often) for completing the assigned product? Whatever the functions/tasks, you should use the same standards for determining the telecommuting employee's work performance that you would use if the employee was working in the primary work location.

### **Prioritize Communication**

Communicate often and consider scheduling check-ins (daily, weekly, or whenever agreed upon) to discuss progress and address any problems. Be sure to communicate any relevant news or information. Collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams, Skype, & Slack are helpful in maintaining virtual communication via meetings, calls, and chats, and allows users to interact “face-to-face” to enrich the experience.

### **Recognize Good Work**

Recognizing and rewarding employees for their hard work is a key factor in boosting engagement among telecommuting employees. The main goal of employee recognition is to incentivize productivity and dedication from your employees. Recognition does not need to be formal or elaborate for it to be effective.

### **Encourage Work/Life Balance**

Communicate to your employee the importance of creating boundaries to prevent burnout. Suggest that they work their normal hours and then step away from the computer and other work-related items until it's time to start working the next day.

SHRM. (2020). *How to engage remote employees during the Coronavirus pandemic*. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/how-to-guides/pages/how-to-engage-remote-employees-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic.aspx>

SHRM. (2020). *Managing Flexible Work Arrangements*. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/managingflexibleworkarrangements.aspx>

Yost,C. (2020, March 10). *Viewpoint: What's your company's emergency remote-work plan?* <https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/employee-relations/Pages/Viewpoint-Whats-Your-Companys-Emergency-Remote-Work-Plan.aspx>