

Guide to Remote-First Hiring

In this guide you'll find practical ideas and advice on how to evolve company culture and processes to transition to the remote-first future of work.

Table of contents

01 Executive Summary

02 The Remote Work Life Before

03 Research shows remote workers have higher job satisfaction and higher levels of productivity

04 Creating effective processes to improve your team's productivity

05 Organizing your remote recruitment in 2020

06 Conclusion

Executive Summary

2020 has seen companies of all sizes and industries with no option other than requesting employees work from home. The world is now facing a challenging time but it does present an opportunity to establish remote work infrastructures within organizations. Research already shows that remote teams can increase productivity and employee engagement; to see those benefits company culture, HR policies and many other processes will need to be implemented correctly.

Establishing communication and availability protocols is necessary for virtual teams, seamless communication improves workflow and collaboration. In-house teams struggled with miscommunication in office spaces, the introduction of new communication policies and tools can address problems that teams already faced.

The evolution of technology has helped to address the earlier problems that remote workers faced. Communication is the keystone of a strong remote team network, information has to flow freely between departments for the employees to build bonds of trust. Implementing the right solutions such as project management platforms, communicators or pair programming tools is a tech stack essential to ensure smooth remote work.

Switching to remote teams presents an opportunity to evaluate processes to improve diversity and inclusion. Furthermore, conducting virtual interviews with organized structures and automated scoring systems can be included to provide standardized, transparent and fair results across all locations.

The remote work life before

Teleworking is not a new concept; it's actually been steadily on the rise for the past 20 years.

In the United States, more than 16 percent of the country's population (26 million Americans) work remotely at least part of the time, according to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

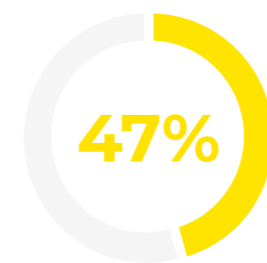
(BLS). Between 2005 and 2015, the number of U.S. employees who telecommute increased by 115%. Those workers tend to be older, more educated, full time and nonunion.

Having workplace flexibility plays a big part in a thriving, agile organization. Employees will often choose to work remotely full-time over going to the office to avoid commuting and staying on-site. Companies that offer remote work as an option tend to attract more candidates during the recruitment phase.

According to a report by Indeed, 47 percent of employees stated that the possibility of remote work as an important factor when choosing a potential employer.

According to IBM, the data from [Modern Myths of Remote Work](#) shows that senior leaders are

more likely to work remotely. The research also shows men are more likely to work from home than women.



Of employees say that whether or not a company has a remote work policy is important to them when looking for a job

Source: indeed.com

Remote work is dependent on industry, the highest number of regular remote workers are employees within tech companies — followed by sales, professionals, crafts and skilled trade workers.

Research shows remote workers have higher job satisfaction and higher levels of productivity

The common misconception about remote work is that engagement drops if employees aren't constantly watched. Furthermore, leaders assume that communication isn't as effective as in-house.

Research disproves those misconceptions, showing that remote employees show greater job satisfaction and higher engagement levels while maintaining trust in their employers and coworkers.

Introducing remote working into your company's culture is a great way to develop employee loyalty. According to our report [Engaging Developers at Work!](#), the majority of remote workers would like to continue doing so. This presents a lucrative opportunity to identify potential leaders that are currently not in leadership positions.

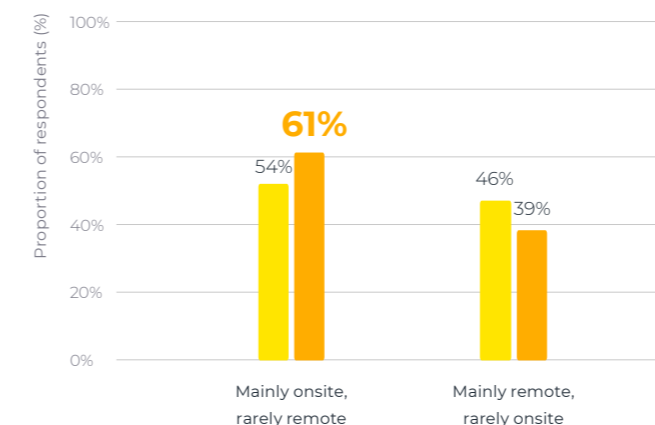
Developers that work remotely have displayed higher levels of job satisfaction and gratification more frequently than those working in an office. This could indicate that it's easier to focus when working from home because there are fewer distractions and more motivation to show progress in their tasks.

The temporary solution to work from home may become a permanent solution in the future. According to Buffer's [State of Remote Work Report](#), 95 percent of workers encourage others to work remotely. This could indicate a shift in how employees work after the COVID-19 pandemic. When companies begin to work from their offices again, developers' may favor organizations that are remote-first due to their agile, flexible and productive nature.

Remote teams enjoy working this way

In the future, how would you like to work?

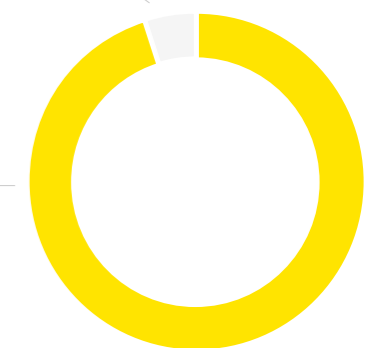
● Onsite teams ● Remote teams



Do you encourage others to work remotely?!

5% No

95% Yes



Source: State of remote report / 2019
buffer.com/state-of-remote-2019

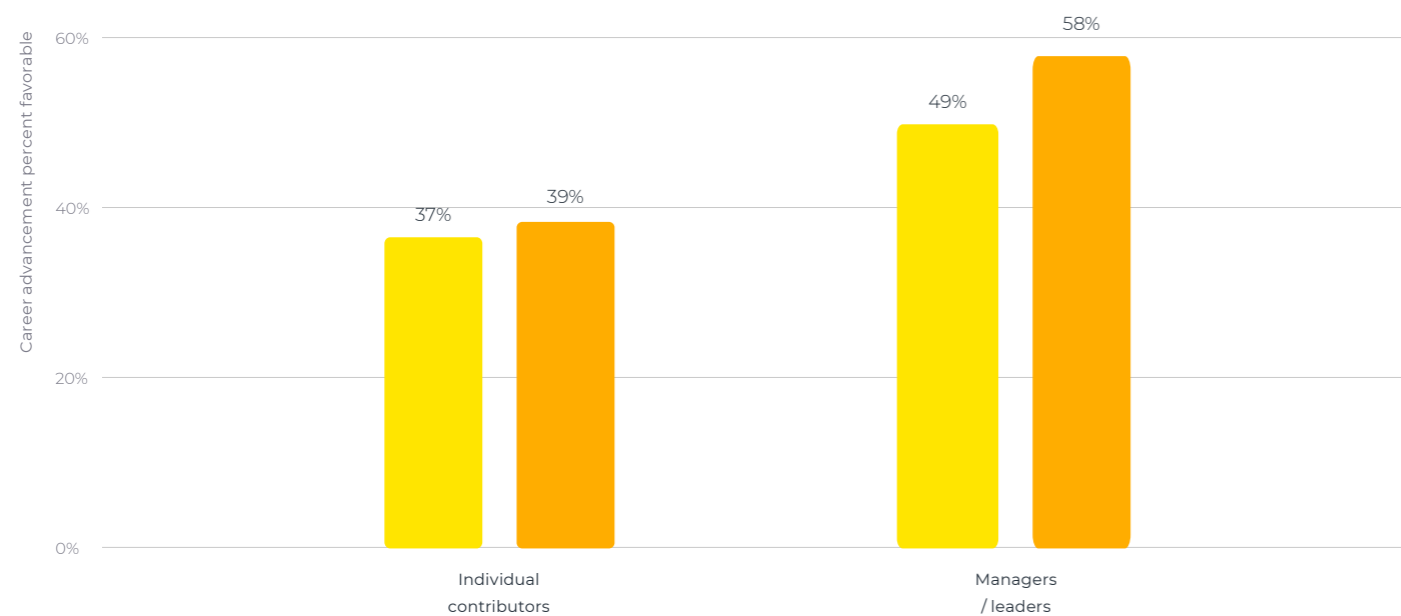
Employees and employers that had experienced working remotely speak universally about the benefits of a virtual workforce approach. According to IBM's [Challenging the modern myths of remote work report](#) teleworkers are:

- ✓ More productive
- ✓ Believe that their workplace is more innovative
- ✓ Happier about performance management
- ✓ Happier about job prospects
- ✓ Feel well informed
- ✓ Collaborate more
- ✓ Less stressed

Satisfaction with career advancement among teleworkers

(managers and individual contributors)

● Does not telework ● Teleworks at least one day per week



Creating effective processes to improve your team's productivity

Adapting company culture to implement remote strategies can seem like a big undertaking that requires evaluation on all levels. This presents a great opportunity to identify areas of improvement to strengthen the company's footing in the market.

Preparing managers

Identifying and preparing employees to lead the charge in your remote-first approach is essential. Helping your managers transition is important, ensuring that they're able to delegate and communicate with their remote team from home while being able to do the same tasks as in the office.

Leadership is about trust, showing remote employees that you trust them to complete delegated tasks is essential. For a successful remote-first approach to be implemented successfully, managers need to decrease their urge to control staff. Research shows that in-house staff is less engaged with managers breathing down their necks and employees that work from home are more engaged than those who work in the office.

Progressive company culture

Communication is key for progressive company culture and has to be placed in the center of all remote team processes. Communication in person is always easier to ensure that body language, tone and nuances are visible.

Text-based communication

For remote-first teams, written communication is a keystone to success. It's not like your employees can stroll over to a colleague's desk to talk about a task. Establishing communication standards across the company will set the tone for your teams.

It's important for your team to communicate clearly, frequently and to know exactly what's expected of them. A great example of managing a company's communication is [an internal Tesla email to its employees](#) by Elon Musk. It condemns the usage of unnecessary acronyms which can be detrimental to communication.

Creating a social space for colleagues within office hours

Human interaction and social time are important for remote employees that often work in solitude.

Scheduling time for voluntary virtual lunch every day is a great way to create a space where your employees can have "watercooler conversations" and talk with their colleagues. This enables your employees to make small-talk while not feeling like they should be working on something.

Another idea that Codility introduced is a happy hour bingo to create a fun atmosphere that builds trust and rapport within the team. Employees still need social interaction to generate trust with each other, an effective leader is able to bring the entire team together, even if they're located around the world.



Managing employee anxiety

Allowing your employees to communicate clearly by setting standards and adding a social space should partly help to tackle workplace anxiety. Newly recruited employees are often the most anxious, feeling like they're not doing enough work or are performing their tasks incorrectly. A way to get around that is to introduce them to the whole team so they can be welcomed in.

Another way to manage employee anxiety is to organize employee reviews that don't factor in performance. The review is a way of "checking-in" on the remote employee to gauge their mental health and if adjustments can be made to alleviate their anxiety and stress.

Rethink company benefits

Company benefits need to be revised to account for remote staff, showing your virtual teams that you care about them and their well-being. Working remotely provides a new set of challenges and to earn the trust of your remote teams, you need to provide a solution for those problems.

Identify the areas that your remote employees need help with and then provide benefits that will be the most relevant. For example, parents with young children often face the challenge of remaining productive while working from home. A tailored solution such as help with grocery shopping, food catering or child care can significantly improve your employee's engagement.

Positively disrupt your engineering culture - pair programming

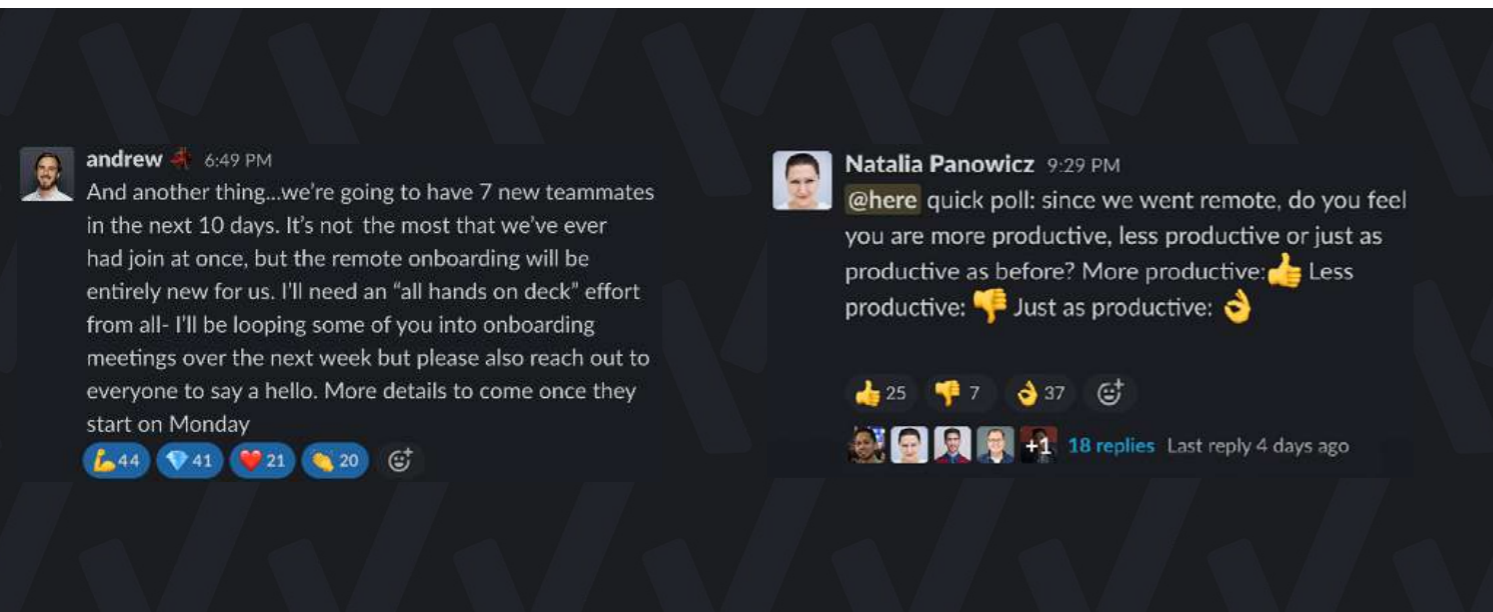
As an engineering manager, there are multiple ways to ensure your team stays satisfied with their job.

If you're an engineering manager, you can think of ways that will help your team stay satisfied with their job. Research has shown that pair programming can have a positive impact on your engineering teams.

Pair programming is rarely used by developers, in fact, only 15 percent of developers use it at least once a week. Teams that pair program show they can implement ideas faster, with 60 percent of users stating that they move to the implementation phase within a week. Developers that don't pair program are amongst those that admitted to not testing their code most often (73 percent).

The engineers that pair program at least once a week show more cases of test-driven, as opposed to test after development. This seems intuitive since these modes of work were introduced at a similar time and often turn out to be complementary to one another.

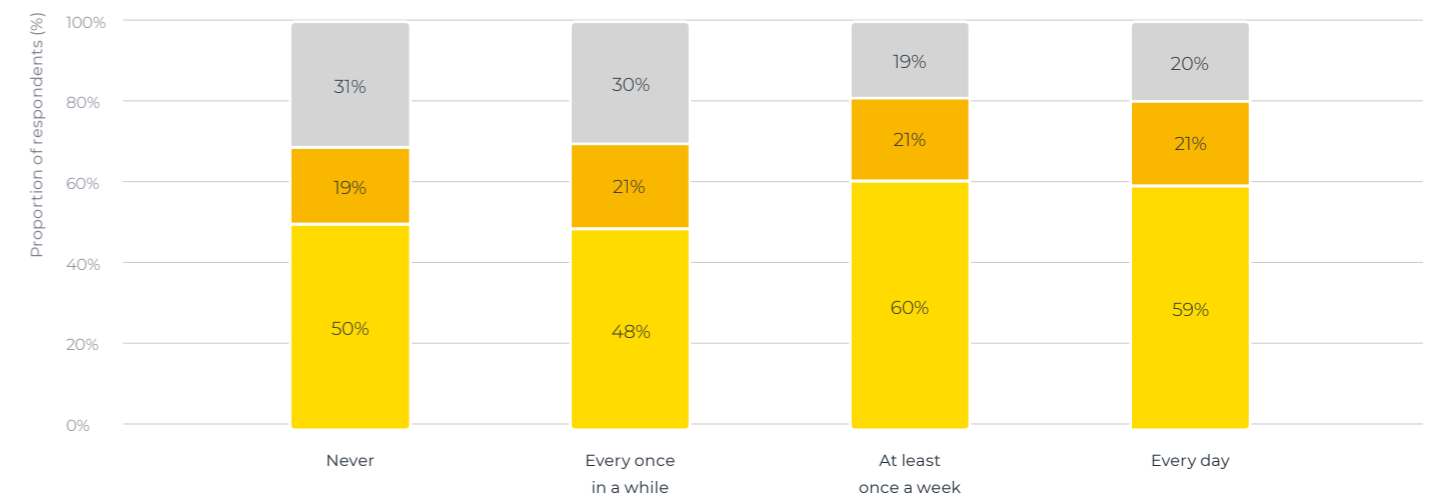
Gratification in the workplace: 45 percent of users that pair program often feel a sense of success at work and only 17% of non-users feel the same sense of success. This highlights the effectiveness of collaboration by sharing skill sets and knowledge when working on code together with team members. Collaboration can also allow employees to work together to problem-solve.



Remote teams enjoy working this way

In the future, how would you like to work?

Up to a week (Yellow) Around 2 weeks (Orange) A month or longer (Grey)



Use the right tech

Tech stacks should be evaluated often to ensure that they're performing optimally. For a remote team, tools and platforms should be used to simplify processes, bridge communication and project management. It's essential to focus on the most important tools first to avoid overwhelming your team.

Communication and collaboration

To simplify communication and ensure that your remote teams throughout different departments stay in the loop, you'll need tools such as Slack or Discord. Besides company email addresses or instant messaging tools, for asynchronous communication, you may need a project management tool such as Asana, Trello or Monday.com.

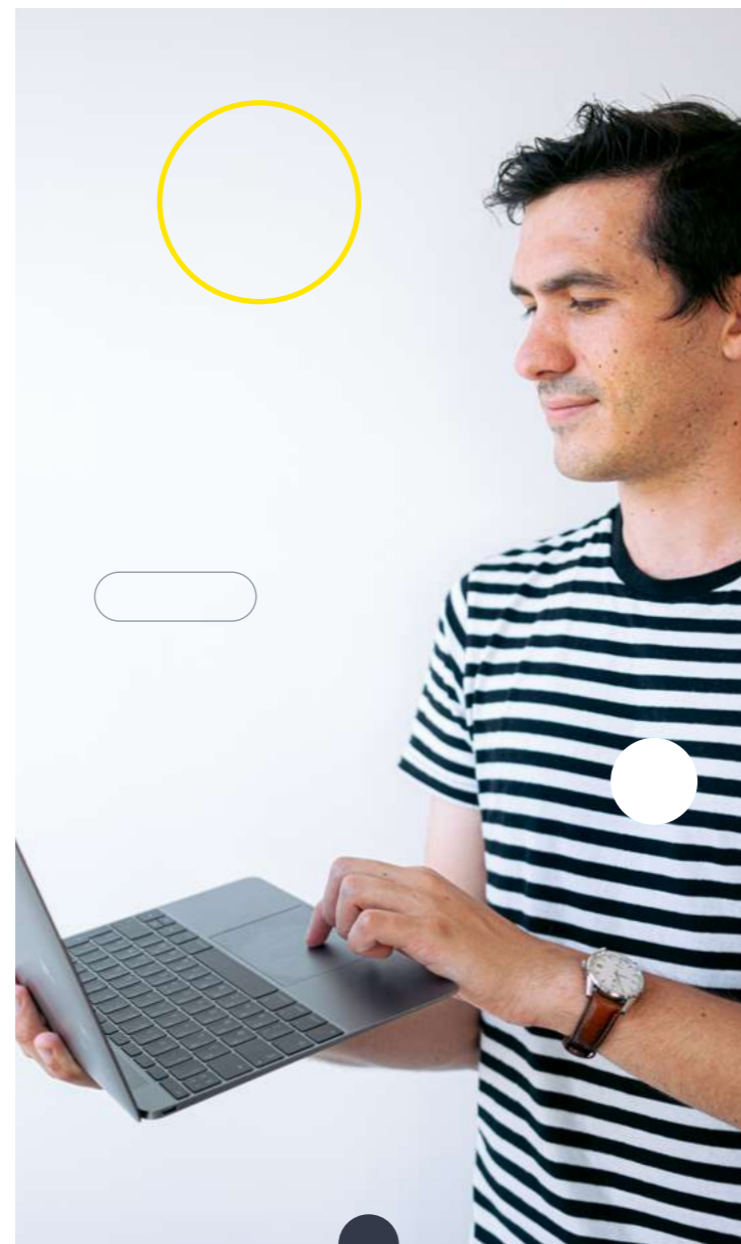
Project management tools help to keep track of tasks, deadlines, content and relay communication back and forth between remote employees.

Conducting remote interviews and pair programming

When recruiting employees remotely, it can be difficult to conduct interviews that are equivalent to face-to-face interviews.

As part of your remote hiring process, consider implementing pair programming tools with a whiteboard, templates, a feedback system and

the possibility to follow up on previous stages assessments, allowing you to effectively assess developer's skills during the interview.



Organizing your remote recruitment in 2020

Going remote allows you to:

- ✓ Source from a wider pool of engineers
- ✓ Process candidates through your workflows faster
- ✓ Offer more flexible work environments for your employees
- ✓ Have global employees working around the clock

Creating a remote-first work environment requires agile processes, solid communication and stable platforms. The way you source, hire and manage your engineers will change and that also means alterations to your team's framework.

Source from a wider pool of engineers

Many companies report that finding the right candidates and filling their recruitment funnel at early stages with right talent is difficult. Sourcing from a global pool of engineers is a big advantage, allowing you to source qualified workers that are ideal for your team.

Hiring remote engineers:

- ✓ 61 percent of engineers have the ability to work remotely
- ✓ Of those working in traditional offices, 46 percent would like to try going remote
- ✓ 76 percent of females in tech said having remote work options are increasingly necessary to attract more female applicants
- ✓ Requires agile processes, great communication, and stable platforms
- ✓ Requires rethinking the way you source, hire, and manage your engineers
- ✓ Here at Codility, our customers use technology to trust, verify and enhance their abilities, making hiring more effective and efficient.

Campus recruitment changes

COVID-19 has significantly impacted the world, forcing the cancellation of events worldwide. Creating events where you can source candidates without a physical presence gives you a competitive edge. Instead of physically connecting with students and graduates via a physical event booth, you can create a digital space to encourage candidates to learn about job opportunities.

Students are spending more time online now than ever with classes being canceled, which can be of great benefit when creating online recruitment campaigns. Create a campaign where you ask potential candidates to engage in a coding challenge, social media giveaways or direct them towards a landing page and add them to email lists.

The purpose of this exercise is to collect data on your potential hires. You can start to shortlist the highest-scoring candidates, alongside contacting them frequently when you have employment opportunities that match their skillset.

Changing the rules for remote hiring

Transitioning to a remote-first organization will require you to hire candidates based on different attributes. It's essential to identify skills and qualities that are crucial for remote employees such as accountability, ownership, communication skills, time management and an ability to motivate themselves.

Define skillset needed for remote working

Start from the ground and work your way up, considering the best-suited employees for remote work in the organization. What qualities and skills do the employees possess and what would make them high performers in a remote team.

To identify key abilities, considering creating an internal survey to collect data on your employee's perception of remote work. With a survey, you can also collect data on why your employees want to work remotely, helping you to tailor a benefits package to potential employee's needs in the future.



Determine the soft skills candidates need to be successful in a remote team

Identifying the right fit for your company culture is going to be different from hiring employees to work on-site. Prior to COVID-19, you could invite candidates onsite or for a demo day but that's no longer possible. Instead, prioritize the assessment of soft skills that will be essential for remote work. For example, interpersonal skills and strong communication should be at the top of the list.

To assess candidates for soft skills, ask them to write a summary of the assessment they did in the previous stage of the process. That will help to give you a better understanding of their ability to explain what they did and how they did it. The importance of this exercise displays how well the candidate can take information and communicate it.

Asking the right questions

Interviewing candidates for positions in remote teams entails asking the right questions to ensure they will be a good fit. It's important to ask the candidates what their remote work experience is or tools that they're familiar with.

Some examples of remote worker questionnaire:

- ✓ How do you keep track of your tasks and manage projects?
- ✓ How do you prefer to communicate with your teammates and your manager?
- ✓ How do you communicate with your remote team?
- ✓ Do you prefer to communicate via text or video?
- ✓ How do one on one reviews make you feel?
- ✓ How do you manage your time?
- ✓ Are there any suitable tools you used prior to remote work that can be assimilated into a remote team?



Conclusion

Establishing remote teams is a challenging prospect but presents opportunities for innovation and improving company policies

It's now more important than ever for companies to consider creative new ways to reduce costs and increase their bottom line. Remote teams have proven themselves to be a game-changer when it comes to lowering company spend. They can also boost productivity and introduce highly skilled employees to the company from around the world.

The challenges of implementing remote teams can seem a little daunting for organizations that are underprepared. With sufficient planning, hiring the right candidates and evaluating company processes; telecommuting could be the future of engineering organizations.



Codility_
Remote tech hiring, everywhere.