

# Managing Hybrid Teams

A presentation of the  
Twin Cities Telework  
webinar series

Thursday, Sept. 29, 2022



# About Twin Cities Telework



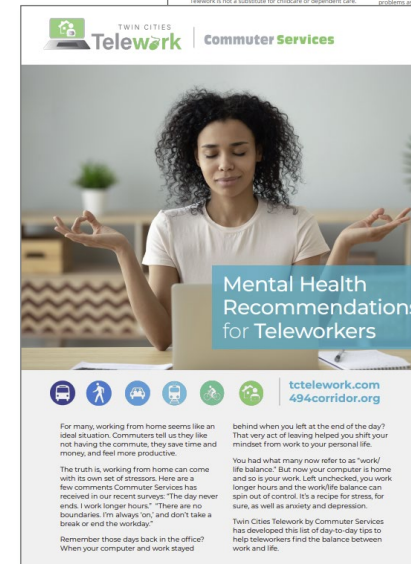
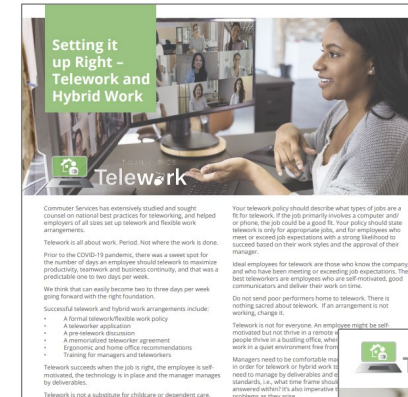
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- Employer resources
- Manager resources
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- Twin Cities Telework webinar series
- Twin Cities Telework newsletter
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# Free resources through Twin Cities Telework

Twin Cities Telework website: [www.tctelework.com](http://www.tctelework.com)

- Sample telework and hybrid policies and employee agreements
- Mental health recommendations for working from home
- Tips for manager and teleworker success
- Employer guides for setting up telework and hybrid work arrangements



# Your questions, our answers

- A recording of this training and the slide presentation will be provided to all attendees within a week
- Questions will be answered at the end of the webinar
- To submit questions:
  - We prefer you to use the Q&A tool in the webinar
  - If you think of a question after the webinar use the Ask An Expert feature on [www.tctelework.com](http://www.tctelework.com)
  - Or email questions after the webinar to Melissa Madison [melissa@494corridor.org](mailto:melissa@494corridor.org) and we will get back to you.

# Meet our presenter, Elham Shirazi



e-planning Principal Elham Shirazi is a nationally-recognized telework expert who has more than 30 years of experience in the field of telework.

Nationally, she has advised the White House and US Congressional leaders in the interest of telework policy development.

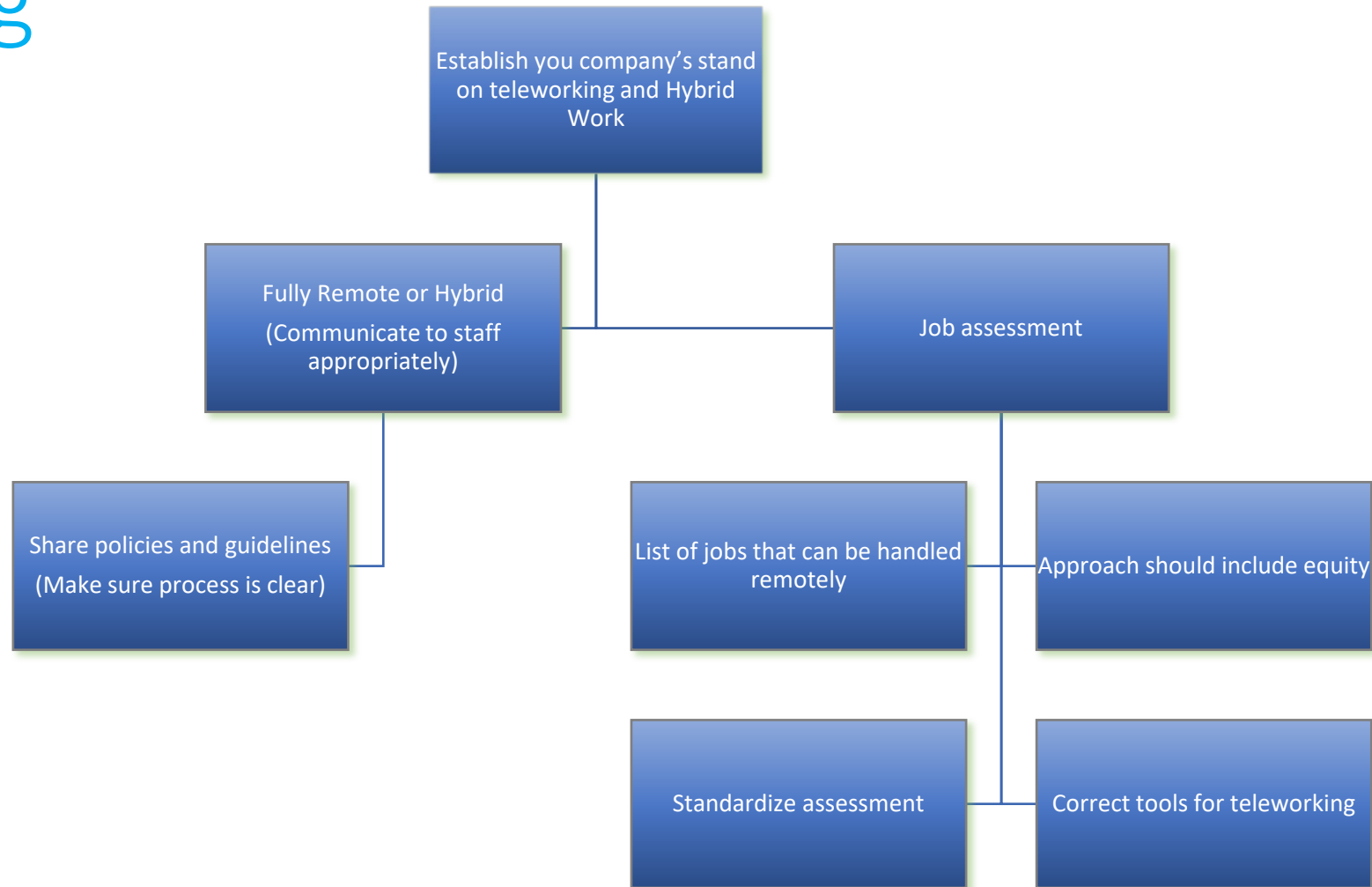
She is a frequent consultant for Commuter Services. She has also consulted with hundreds of companies, including Minnesota's Best Buy, SuperValu, Welsh Companies and the City of Bloomington.

Welcome, Elham!

# Planning



# Planning



# The hybrid workplace

- Virtually all projections anticipate the post-pandemic workforce will be relatively more remote
- Rather than simply shifting operations “back to normal,” leaders are urged to think about how they can leverage recent remote-work experiences to intentionally plan for a remote/hybrid workforce in the future
- Leaders must think strategically about their remote work policies and practices going forward





# Expectations

The people who went home to work in March 2020 aren't the same as those coming back to the office in 2022.

Today's employees have great expectations for what they want out of work, and flexibility and wellbeing have become non-negotiables.



# Variations of the hybrid model

## Remote-First

Some leaders are choosing to go remote-first, meaning that their operations will closely mirror those of a fully remote company, with a few exceptions.

Notably, most will keep their offices as space for employees to work from. Some also won't allow the same flexibility to every employee, meaning that they may require some employees to continue coming to the office if their job requires their physical presence.

VS.

## Office-Occasional

Employees come into the office a few times a week. This model uses the office to blend in-person collaboration and solo work.

Depending on the company's needs, this can be quite a loose policy (e.g., employees are instructed to come into the office two days a week of their choice), or there could be more firm guidelines (e.g., employees are expected to work from the office every Monday).

The key is, offer as much flexibility as you can



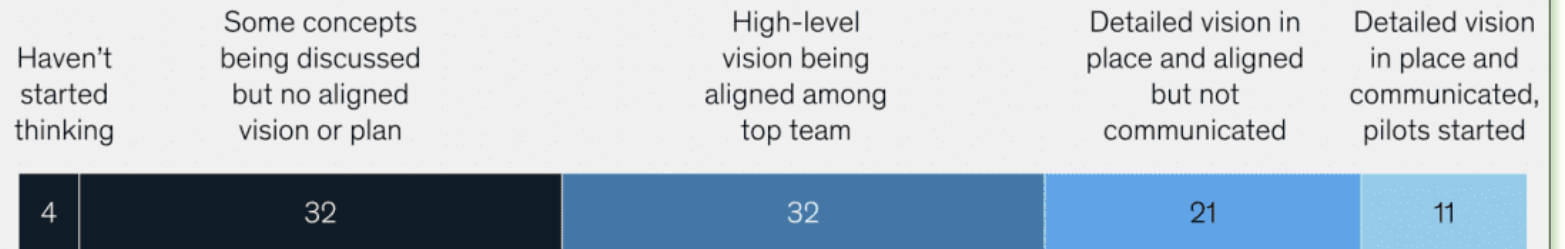
# Hybrid workplace

Although nine out of ten organizations don't yet have a detailed vision in place for hybrid work, executives envision a hybrid model going forward

Only one in ten organizations have begun communicating and piloting that vision

## Most organizations don't yet have a detailed vision in place for hybrid work.

State of post-COVID-19 return-to-office planning,<sup>1</sup> % respondents



68%

have no detailed plan communicated or in place

<sup>1</sup>Question: What is the state of your post-COVID-19 return-to-office planning?

McKinsey  
& Company

# Equity, Inclusion, Diversity strategies

- Develop list of jobs descriptions that are amenable to hybrid work
- All employees across a job description would be candidates for remote work, then assess job performance; if low, telework may not be a good fit
- Be fair in assessing employees based on prior assessments and performance. To deny an employee the opportunity to be a hybrid worker must be carefully written and communicated
- Be open to employee feedback. Create an environment that is based on collaboration and information exchange
- Consult with your HR department on diversity policies



# Flexibility - Microsoft

“At Microsoft, we are embracing flexibility as a principle to give our employees around the world greater choice in when, where, and how they work. Our flexible work policy gives employees the option to work from home up to 50 percent of the time (or more with manager approval), as well as flexibility in their work schedule and work location. It’s a big shift – and we’re leaning into our growth mindset culture and taking a ‘learn it all’ approach as we make hybrid work a reality at Microsoft.”



# Sample Policy

## Topics to include:

- Purpose
- Eligibility
- Location for remote work
- Schedules and hours
- Workspace
- Equipment and supplies
- Employee access and availability
- Security
- Liability
- Application process
- Income tax
- Evaluation

*This free sample policy is available from  
Twin Cities Telework by Commuter Services:  
[tctelework.com](http://tctelework.com)*



## EMPLOYER NAME

### Hybrid Work Policy

EMPLOYER has established a program to examine how teleworking can contribute to organizational objectives and employee well-being. These guidelines offer direction for teleworkers, employees not teleworking, and management.

#### PURPOSE

Teleworking or working in a hybrid environment, is a work arrangement that EMPLOYER offers to some employees when it is advantageous to both EMPLOYER and the employee. Teleworking is a workplace strategy that helps employees balance the demands of their work and personal lives, and is not an employee right. In a hybrid work environment, the employee spends a few days at the physical work location and the remainder at home or at an agreed upon location for the remote work.

An employee's compensation, benefits, work status, and work responsibilities will not change due to participation in the telework or hybrid work program. Teleworking and hybrid work employees must comply with all organizational rules, policies, and procedures.

#### ELIGIBILITY

Candidates for telework and hybrid work arrangements should have a history of satisfactory or better job performance ratings. The opportunity to telework must be approved by an employee's supervisor, who is ultimately responsible for decisions to continue or discontinue teleworking by the employee.

Selection of employees to participate in the Teleworking/Hybrid Work Program shall be based on specific, written, work-related criteria including:

- Job functions
- Employee responsibilities
- Need for, and nature of, interaction with other staff and external clients
- Need for use of specialized equipment
- Availability of other qualified employees on site
- Employee job performance
- Where the employee will work

# Sample Agreement

## Topics to include:

- Location for remote work
- Off-site/on-site work dates
- Typical assignments for telework
- Employee access and availability
- Home office ergonomics requirements
- Signatures
- Additional conditions

*This free sample agreement is available from  
Twin Cities Telework by Commuter Services:  
[tctelework.com](http://tctelework.com)*

TWIN CITIES  
**Telework** | by **Commuter Services**

### HYBRID EMPLOYEE AGREEMENT

Name of hybrid employee: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of employee supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

The hybrid employee agrees to work at the following off-site location: \_\_\_\_\_

Note which days of the week the hybrid employee will telework: \_\_\_\_\_

Note which days of the week the hybrid employee will be at the employer worksite: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List the types of assignments the hybrid employee will work on when teleworking: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_


List the equipment the employer owns that the hybrid employee will use from the telework location. **Note:** All employer-owned equipment and supplies must be returned to the employer when the telework/hybrid arrangement ends. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The hybrid employee agrees to check communications via email, telephone, text, instant message etc. at least \_\_\_\_\_ times per day.

The hybrid employee agrees to keep cohorts and their supervisor apprised of progress on their projects.

The hybrid employee must complete and submit the Home Office Ergonomics Checklist with this agreement.

[tctelework.com](http://tctelework.com) | 952.405.9425 



# Managing a hybrid team

1

Be deliberate about setting synchronous vs asynchronous communications standards.

2

Provide examples of synchronous meetings

3

Provide example of asynchronous time



# Synchronous and asynchronous

There will be a temptation to send out messages, schedule video calls, or arrange presentations at synchronous times immediately. You might expect that members of the remote team should answer your messages as quickly as someone in the office. But that probably won't be the case. On their end, they might have problems accessing information or keeping up with meetings and conversations.

To prevent this, follow the basic rules of [asynchronous communication](#):

- Constantly over-communicate with context
- Reduce the length of meetings and eliminate unnecessary ones
- Set agendas beforehand and ask for availability before scheduling anything
- Record meetings and document work
- Use specific outlets for communication



# Mentoring in a virtual environment

Remote work is here to stay, so managers and leaders need to master virtual mentorship. Commitment, trust, relationship quality, and mentor competence are the ingredients of developmental growth, all of which can be applied to virtual mentorship

To master virtual mentoring and build effective developmental relationships, managers and leaders need to sharpen four skills:

- Build trust
- Clarify the rules of engagement
- Be intentional when forming the relationship
- Balance authenticity with boundaries



# Sample selection survey for managers

EMPLOYER NAME

## Teleworker Selection Survey for Supervisors

Teleworking is a workplace strategy that involves working from home or another location, on a full or part-time basis. Every supervisor/manager must fill out a questionnaire on their employees who are interested in teleworking.

Supervisor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of employees under your direct supervision who are considered candidates for teleworking:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. Is the work done by any of your staff as it currently exists or with modifications suitable for teleworking, at least part of the time?

- (a) Yes  
 (b) No Please explain why.

If your answer was "no," this completes the survey for you. Thanks!

2. Please describe the kind of work your employees do.

3. The rest of the survey should be completed for each of your employees who are interested in participating in the teleworking program. Some questions, such as those dealing with your management style, will probably have the same answers for each employee. Please rate each characteristic as high (H), medium (M), or low (L) by placing the appropriate letter in each blank. Some questions, however, will inevitably have

different answers for different employees. Please duplicate this form for each employee.

### Existing Work Characteristics

Please rate the following according to your employee's existing job requirements and characteristics.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of face-to-face contact required
- \_\_\_\_\_ Degree of telephone communications required
- \_\_\_\_\_ Autonomy of operation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ability to control and schedule work flow
- \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of in-office reference material required

### Future Work as a Teleworker

Please rate the following job characteristics for your employee in terms of his/her adaptability to teleworking.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of face-to-face contact required
- \_\_\_\_\_ Degree of telephone communications required
- \_\_\_\_\_ Autonomy of operation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ability to control and schedule work flow
- \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of in-office reference material required

### Employee Characteristics

Please rate the following according to your employee's characteristics.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Need for supervision, frequent feedback
- \_\_\_\_\_ Importance of co-workers' input to work function
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discipline regarding work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Desire/need to be around people
- \_\_\_\_\_ Potential friction at home if teleworking (e.g. interruptions due to caring for sick child or spouse)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Level of job knowledge
- \_\_\_\_\_ Quality of work

### Supervisor Characteristics

Based on your attitude towards teleworking and work style, please rate the following.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Positive attitude toward teleworking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Trust employee's ability to telework
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ability to establish clear objectives
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ability to communicate with employees

4. What criteria do you use to evaluate your employee's work? (For example: quality of work, quantity of work, timeliness, etc. Please be specific.)

5. Considering the nature of your employee's jobs, how much would you want him/her to telework? (Choose one only)

To make your selection, put the cursor over the box you want to mark, right click the mouse, and select "Properties." Under "Default value" in the dialog box mark "Checked."

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) About once every 2 weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Three days a week                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) About once a week        | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Occasionally for a special project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Two days a week          |   |

6. What kinds of work would you expect him/her to do while teleworking? (Choose all that apply)

To make your selection, put the cursor over the box you want to mark, right click the mouse, and select "Properties." Under "Default value" in the dialog box mark "Checked."

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) Writing/typing       | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Research               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Planning             | <input type="checkbox"/> (g) Sales calls            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Data management      | <input type="checkbox"/> (h) Preparing reports      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Administrative       | <input type="checkbox"/> (i) Field visits           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Reading              | <input type="checkbox"/> (j) Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (k) Computer programming |   |

# Sample employee self-assessment

**EMPLOYER NAME**  
**Teleworker Selection Survey for Employees**

Telework is a workplace strategy that can involve working from home or another location on a full- or part-time basis. Teleworking can be a productive scheduling practice for many employees although it may not be feasible for employees whose job duties and home environment may not be conducive to working away from the office. Teleworking arrangements are successful when an employee's work responsibilities and personal work style is well matched with working away from the office.

This questionnaire provides an opportunity to consider whether teleworking will be an effective tool for meeting organizational and personal objectives. Responses to this questionnaire will help you and your supervisor to assess if teleworking can work for EMPLOYER and you.

This questionnaire must be completed by each person interested in participating in the teleworking program.

**Teleworking Screening Survey for Employees**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Classification: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Please describe your current job tasks.**

2. The following four groups of characteristics relate respectively to your existing work, to your future work as it can be adapted to teleworking, to you as an employee, and to your manager. Please rate each characteristic as high (H), medium (M), or low (L) by placing the appropriate letter in each blank.

**Existing Work Characteristics**

Please rate the following according to your existing job requirements and characteristics.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of face-to-face contact required
- \_\_\_\_\_ Degree of telephone communications required
- \_\_\_\_\_ Autonomy of operation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ability to control and schedule work flow
- \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of in-office reference material required

**Future Work as a Teleworker**

Please rate the following job characteristics in terms of their adaptability to teleworking.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of face-to-face contact required
- \_\_\_\_\_ Degree of telephone communications required
- \_\_\_\_\_ Autonomy of operation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ability to control and schedule work flow
- \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of in-office reference material required

**Employee Characteristics**

Please rate the following according to your own characteristics as an employee, and as a teleworker.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Need for supervision, frequent feedback
- \_\_\_\_\_ Importance of co-workers' input to work function
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disciplined regarding work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Desire/need to be around people
- \_\_\_\_\_ Potential friction at home if teleworking (e.g. interruptions due to caring for sick child or spouse)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Level of job knowledge
- \_\_\_\_\_ Quality of work

**3. Considering the nature of your job, how much would you want to telework? (Choose one)**

To make your selection, put the cursor over the box you want to mark, right click the mouse, and select "Properties." Under "Default value" in the dialog box mark "Checked."

- (a) About once every 2 weeks
- (b) About once a week
- (c) Two days a week
- (d) Three days a week
- (e) Occasionally for a special project
- (f) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. What kinds of work would you expect to do while teleworking? (Choose as many as apply)**

To make your selection, put the cursor over the box you want to mark, right click the mouse, and select "Properties." Under "Default value" in the dialog box mark "Checked."

- (a) Writing/typing
- (b) Planning
- (c) Data management
- (f) Research
- (g) Sales calls
- (h) Preparing reports

- (d) Administrative
- (e) Reading
- (k) Computer programming

- (i) Field visits
- (j) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Given the amount of teleworking you want to do, and the kinds of work you would do while teleworking, what equipment/services would you need, and which of those do you currently have? (Check appropriate box)**

|                                     | Need                     | Have                     |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Computer/laptop                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Printer                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| High speed internet                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Desk, filing space, other furniture | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| More than one phone line            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fax machine                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Voice mail                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify) _____        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**6. Do you have adequate space in your home to dedicate to working?**

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

**7. Are there any distractions/obligations that will make working at home difficult or impossible?**

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

# Recruitment and Retention



# Employee retention

According to Gartner, the pace of employee turnover is forecast to be 50–75% higher than companies have experienced previously, and the issue is compounded by it taking 18% longer to fill roles than pre-pandemic

Managers need help with three things:

- Shifting the focus of career conversations from promotion to progression and developing in different directions
- Creating a culture and structure that supports career experiments
- Managers need to be rewarded not for retaining people on their teams but retaining people (and their potential) across the entire organization

# Why are employees leaving?

- **Because they can.** Leaving a job used to be anxiety inducing; it isn't anymore. The cost of switching jobs has gone down significantly
- **Because they are upset.** Those who voluntarily left cited experiences with uncaring leaders, unsustainable expectations of work performance, and lack of career advancement as factors in their decision
- **Because they are exhausted.** McKinsey Quarterly research shows that poor mental health (burnout and stress), family-care demands, and reflections on purpose because of the COVID-19 pandemic played big roles in why some workers left their companies without another job in hand





# Why are employees leaving?

Employees have left the workforce for a number of reasons, including lack of personal and professional support.

Top reasons why people left a job without another in hand,<sup>1</sup>% of respondents

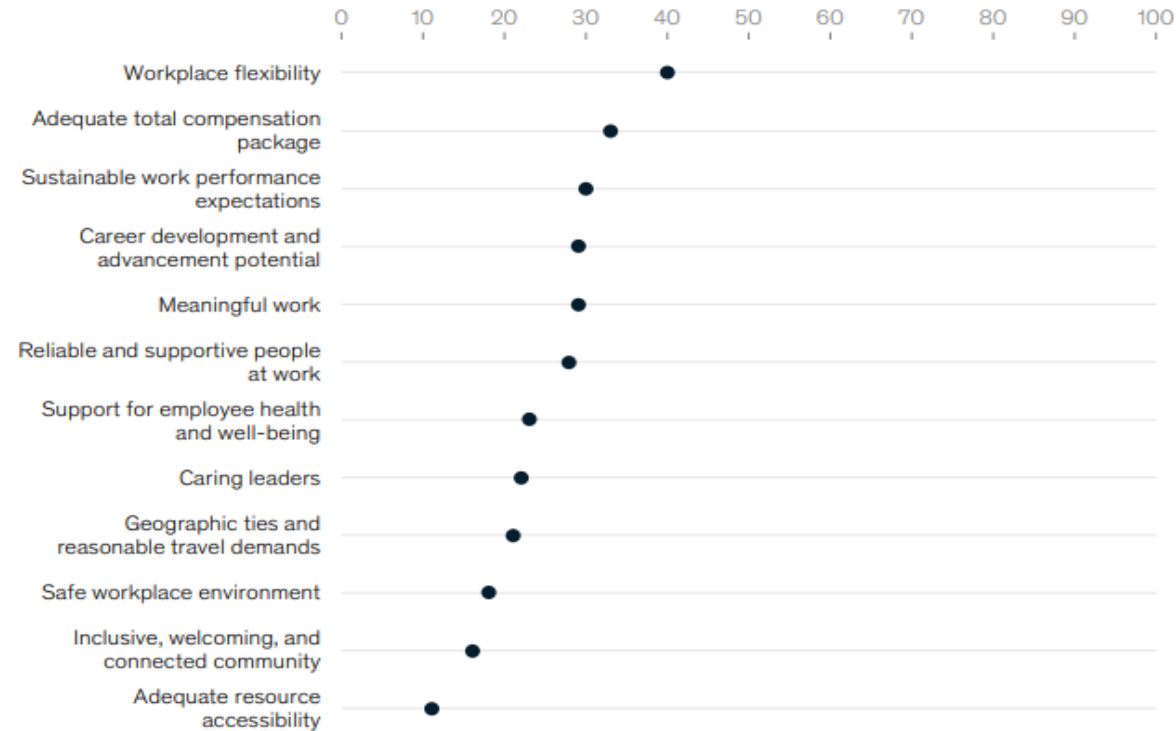


<sup>1</sup>Based on top three ranked choices from respondents to McKinsey's Great Attrition, Great Attraction survey who left a job between Dec 2020 and Dec 2021 without another job offer in hand (n = 587).

# Why are some employees returning?

**Workers who have returned to traditional employment cited flexibility, compensation, and sustainable performance as top factors.**

**Top reasons why people accepted their current job,<sup>1</sup> % of respondents**



<sup>1</sup>Based on top three ranked choices from respondents to McKinsey's Great Attrition, Great Attraction survey who left a job between Dec 2020 and Dec 2021 without another job offer in hand and returned to traditional employment (n = 211). Traditional employment refers to an employee–employer relationship in which a single employer hires and pays an employee and manages the employee's work.

# What to do



Companies won't be able to justify and sustain these moves for the long term, however. To start to repair relationships with employees, companies must take a different approach, focused on the following core principles



Pay to play: Revise compensation and benefits



Play to win: Make your workplace desirable. Compensation and benefits reviews are just the first step; companies must also invest in building desirable workplaces—listening to employees, anticipating and addressing their concerns, fostering psychological safety and a sense of community, and measuring outcomes

# More tips for managers

**Create a Sense of Purpose.** Make the office a place where people want to be. Collaborate, plan and brainstorm together. Don't use in office days for online meetings

**Set Very Clear Expectations.** Schedules, communication guidelines. Remote managers must be very clear about their expectations. This means providing regular feedback and coaching, as well as continually monitoring performance as you would in a face-to-face environment

**Provide Autonomy.** To effectively manage remote employees, it's critical that you set your team members up for success. Provide clear expectations, train them on the tools and resources they can use, and then provide a framework for accomplishing their goals. After that, give them the autonomy to get the job done

**Create Opportunities for Relationship Building.** Relationship building is critical to successful remote team management. To build relationships effectively, you have to select the appropriate method of communication for each situation

# Tips for onboarding

- Have a strong pre-boarding process in place
- Send a welcome email including the first day schedule, necessary documents, and company culture details
- Keep required information concise and relevant to the role
- Invest in necessary technology to make onboarding successful
- Involve relevant team members, provide introductions
- Explain company culture and uphold its importance
- Set clear expectations for tasks, upcoming projects, organizational values, team objectives, and individual goals



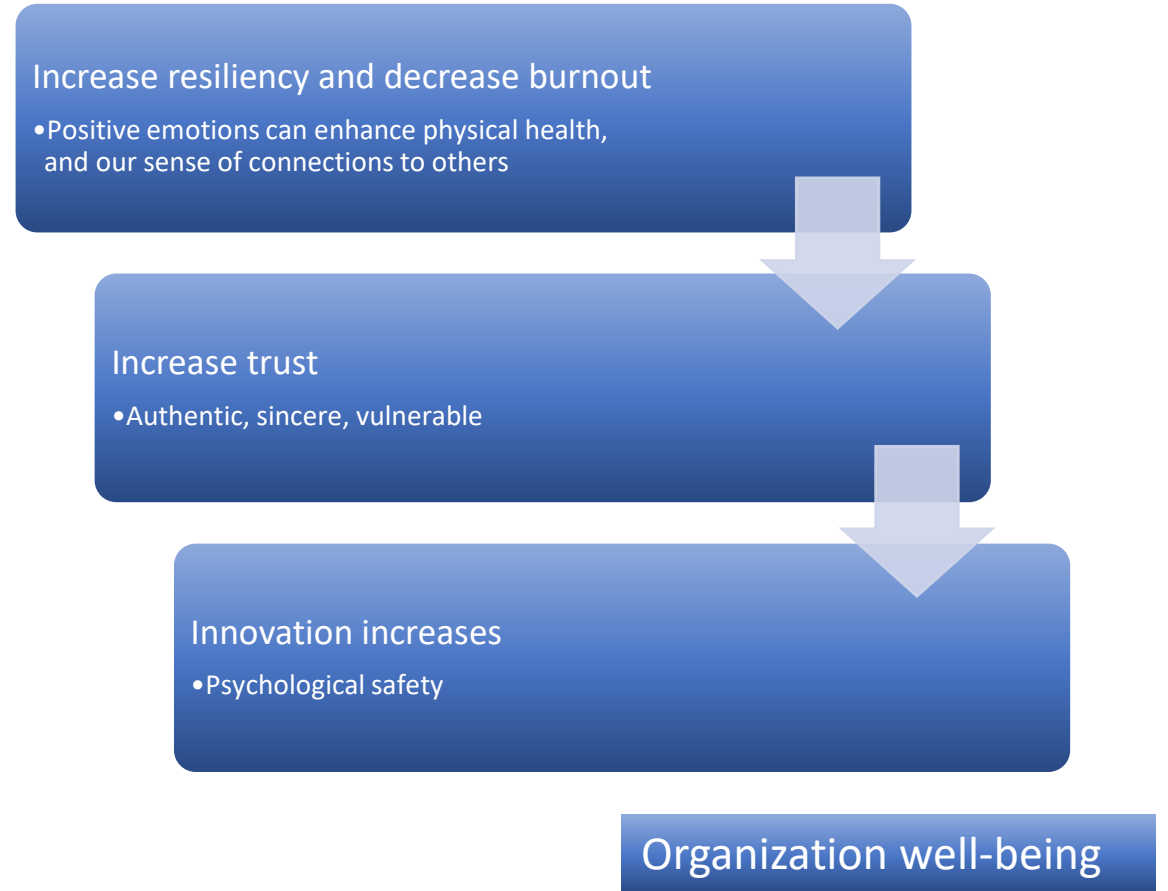
# Training



# Manager skills

Manager skills and competencies are evolving  
Emotions and behaviors that optimize performance, health and happiness are critical

- Hope
- Gratitude
- Compassion
- Kindness
- Empathy
- Realistic optimism
- Patience



# Teleworker training

The program and process

Defining program parameters

Getting organized

Scheduling teleworking days

Planning a home  
office/ergonomics

Training family and others

Employee engagement

Safety

Technology connectivity

Resolving concerns about  
teleworking



# Telemanager training

The program and process

The role of managers in having control of the program

Assessment of jobs and individuals

Teleworking being a management prerogative

Managing by objectives

Determining frequency of use and scheduling

Determining communication needs

Managing team dynamics

Technology issues

Collaboration

Resolving concerns about teleworking

# Setting up for success


## Topics to consider:

- A formal telework/flexible work policy
- Teleworker/hybrid worker application
- A pre-telework discussion
- Employee access and availability
- A memorialized telework/hybrid agreement
- Home office ergonomics requirements

*This free resource is available from Twin Cities*

*Telework by Commuter Services:*

[tctelework.com](https://www.tctelework.com)



**Setting it up Right - Telework and Hybrid Work**

**TWIN CITIES Telework**

Commuter Services has extensively studied and sought counsel on national best practices for teleworking, and helped employers of all sizes set up telework and flexible work arrangements.

Telework is all about work. Period. Not where the work is done.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a sweet spot for the number of days an employee should telework to maximize productivity, teamwork and business continuity, and that was a predictable one to two days per week.

We think that can easily become two to three days per week going forward with the right foundation.

Successful telework and hybrid work arrangements include:

- A formal telework/flexible work policy
- A teleworker application
- A pre-telework discussion
- A memorialized teleworker agreement
- Ergonomic and home office recommendations
- Training for managers and teleworkers

Telework succeeds when the job is right, the employee is self-motivated, the technology is in place and the manager manages by deliverables.

Telework is not a substitute for childcare or dependent care. Telework is not sending people home to never see or hear from them again. And most importantly, it is not an employee benefit, perk or right. Telework is all about work. Period. Not the place where the work is done.

Telework is a business strategy. It is not an employee benefit, it is not an employee right. It is a workplace strategy.

Your telework policy can help you with equity. Point to your policy for clarification on what jobs are eligible and state employees must meet or exceed their job expectations to be eligible to telework. Clarity and transparency from leadership should address telework eligibility.

Your telework policy should describe what types of jobs are a fit for telework. If the job primarily involves a computer and/or phone, the job could be a good fit. Your policy should state telework is only for appropriate jobs, and for employees who meet or exceed job expectations with a strong likelihood to succeed based on their work styles and the approval of their manager.

Ideal employees for telework are those who know the company, and who have been meeting or exceeding job expectations. The best teleworkers are employees who are self-motivated, good communicators and deliver their work on time.

Do not send poor performers home to telework. There is nothing sacred about telework. If an arrangement is not working, change it.

Telework is not for everyone. An employee might be self-motivated but not thrive in a remote work environment. Some people thrive in a bustling office, where others do their best work in a quiet environment free from distractions.

Managers need to be comfortable managing remote workers in order for telework or hybrid work to be successful. They need to manage by deliverables and establish communication standards, i.e., what time frame should emails and calls be answered within? It's also imperative that managers deal with problems as they arise.

In order for teleworking to be successful for everyone, employers must provide the proper training for teleworkers and managers so they know what you expect and how to handle challenges.

Commuter Services has a free webinar training for managers called: Getting it Right - Best Practices for Teleworkers and Their Managers. You can access it at: <https://www.tctelework.com/webinars>

Have questions or need resources? We provide free telework materials and are here to help.

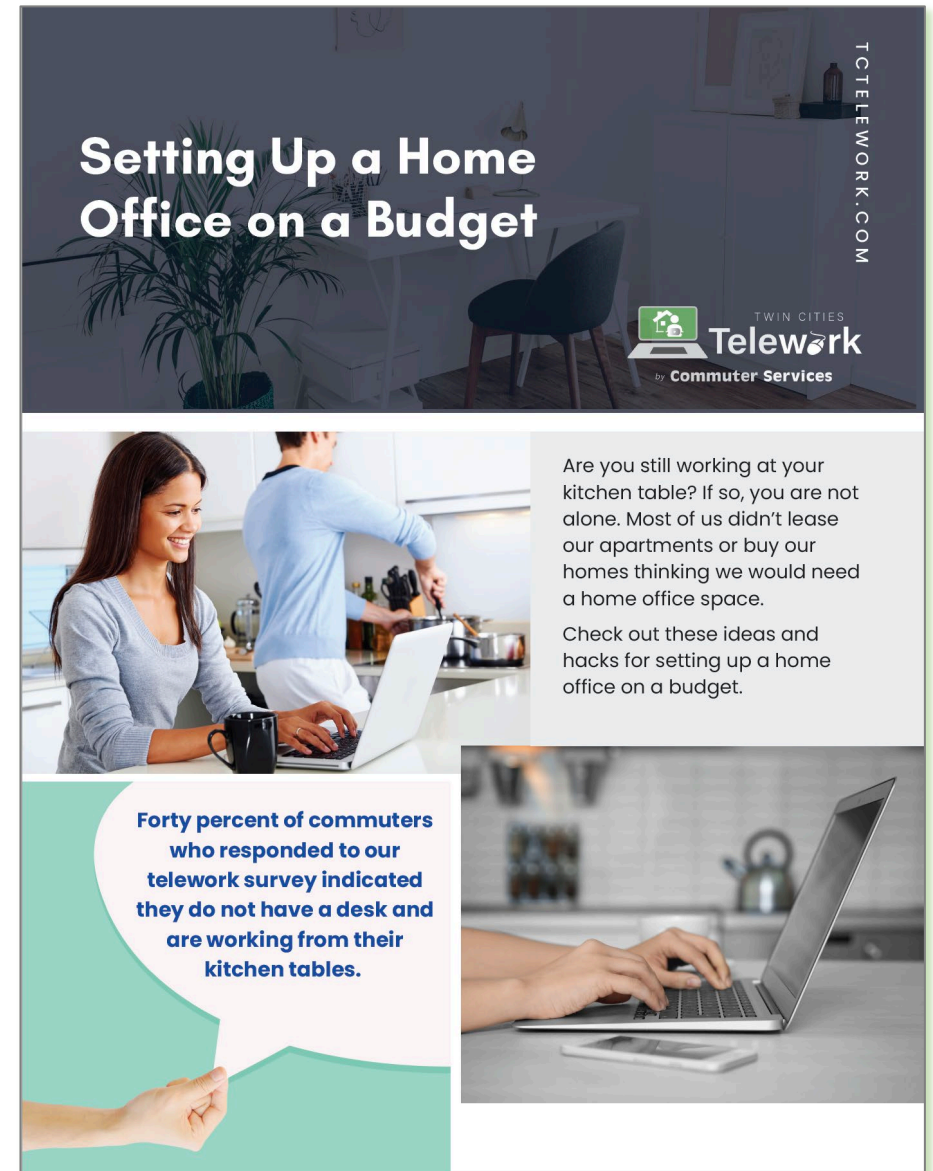
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# Setting up the home office

## Topics to consider:

- Visiting thrift shops or bargain websites
- Look for sales during peak times: back to school, the holidays, etc.
- Repurpose everyday items to fill space and storage needs

*This free resource is available from Twin Cities  
Telework by Commuter Services: [tctelework.com](http://tctelework.com)*



**Setting Up a Home Office on a Budget**

TCTELEWORK.COM

TWIN CITIES  
**Telework**  
by Commuter Services

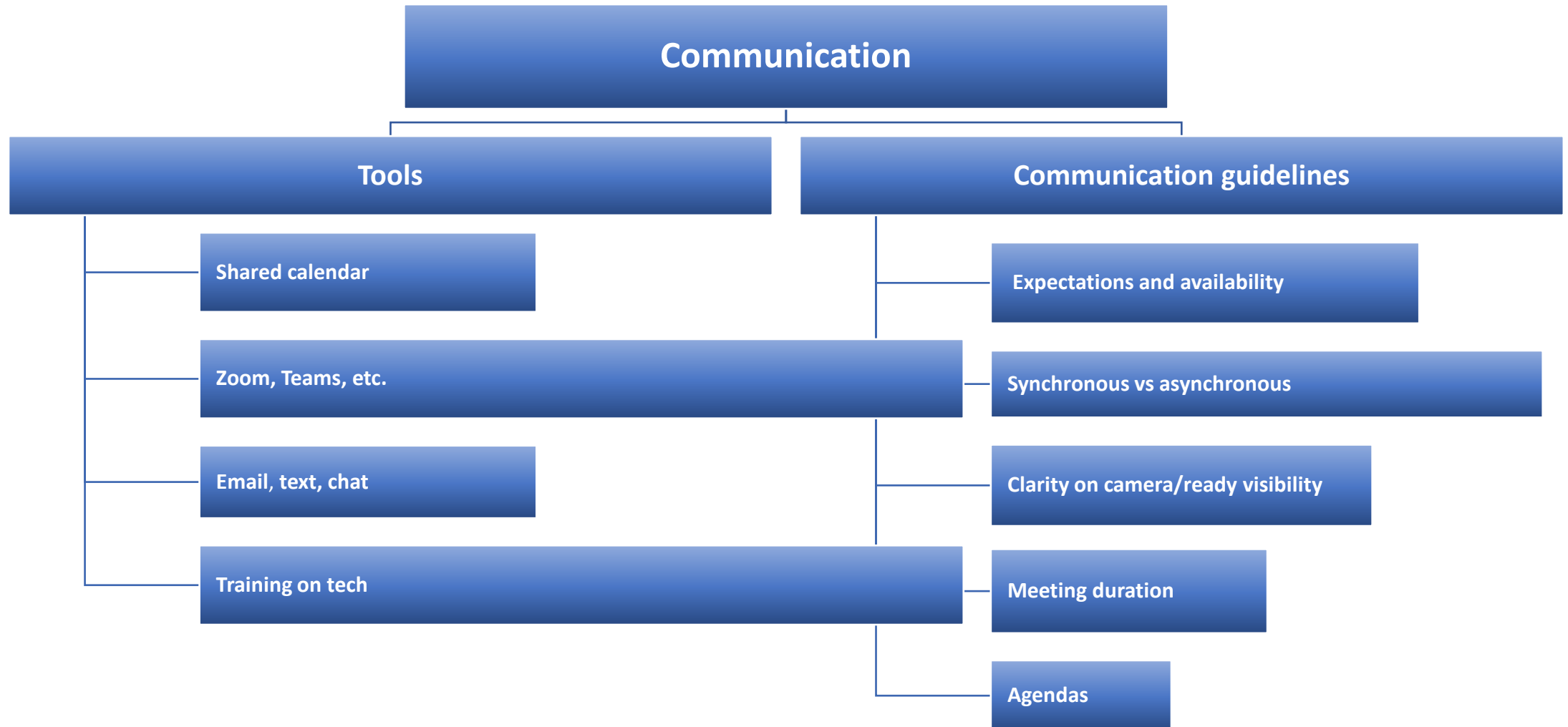
Are you still working at your kitchen table? If so, you are not alone. Most of us didn't lease our apartments or buy our homes thinking we would need a home office space. Check out these ideas and hacks for setting up a home office on a budget.

**Forty percent of commuters who responded to our telework survey indicated they do not have a desk and are working from their kitchen tables.**

# Communication



# Communication tools



# Teleworkers and communication

- Accessibility
- Contact numbers
- On-going communications within reason
- Electronic calendar
- Work and meetings
- Personal non-available time
- Work hours



# Communication



Integrate your teleworkers in innovation exchanges such as brainstorming, virtual water cooler



Face time helps build relationships



Use the telephone when possible

# Challenges and solutions

| Challenges          | Solutions  |
|---------------------|--|
| Coworker resentment | If an employee is not allowed to be a hybrid worker, make sure that it's either based on the job being essential, or the employee not meeting performance criteria. Other solutions such as flextime, compressed work weeks might be feasible for some essential tasks. Make sure you have flexibility solutions for all employees. Use your commuter program to assist employees that are not eligible. |
| Purposeful presence | Employees should have to be given opportunities for teamwork when in the office. It needs to be planned.   |



# Challenges and solutions

| Challenges                        | Solutions   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Having difficult conversations    | Communicate clearly and deal with issues as they arise. An employee should always know about their performance. If there are staff issues, involve participants in creating a solution.   |
| Staff not reporting to the office | Make sure that employees understand the need for accountability on presence. Make sure that attendance is documented. Talk to your employees and find out what is preventing them from coming into the office on required days. |
| Handling disengaged employees     | Have a practice of requiring camera-ready participation. Ask questions during meetings. Develop some fun activities based on team needs. Switch the environment to make engagement more enticing.                               |

# Handling communication or attendance challenges



Accurately document the problem



Talk to the employee about what might be causing the issue(s)



Have a written policy or guidelines on communication practices, for example, “respond to emails within x number of hours/minutes”



Develop a “meeting and communication etiquette” checklist



If the employee is not compliant, schedule an in-person meeting with them

# Ensuring manager success

## Topics to consider:

- Set attainable goals and expectations
- Develop communication goals and universal procedures
- Be patient
- Delegate assignments among team members
- Extend trust

*This free resource is available from Twin Cities  
Telework by Commuter Services: [tctelework.com](https://tctelework.com)*



## 22 Tips for Manager Success

Want to more effectively manage your teleworkers?

Many employers find managing teleworkers more challenging than onsite employees, often wondering how it's possible to manage workers they can't see (will employees be sending check-in emails while watching Netflix?). Yet when planned and managed effectively, telework is a great way for an organization to

build trust and teamwork. Fortunately, there are some proven research-based steps that employers can take to improve the communication and results of their remote teams.

# Productivity



# Setting employees up for success

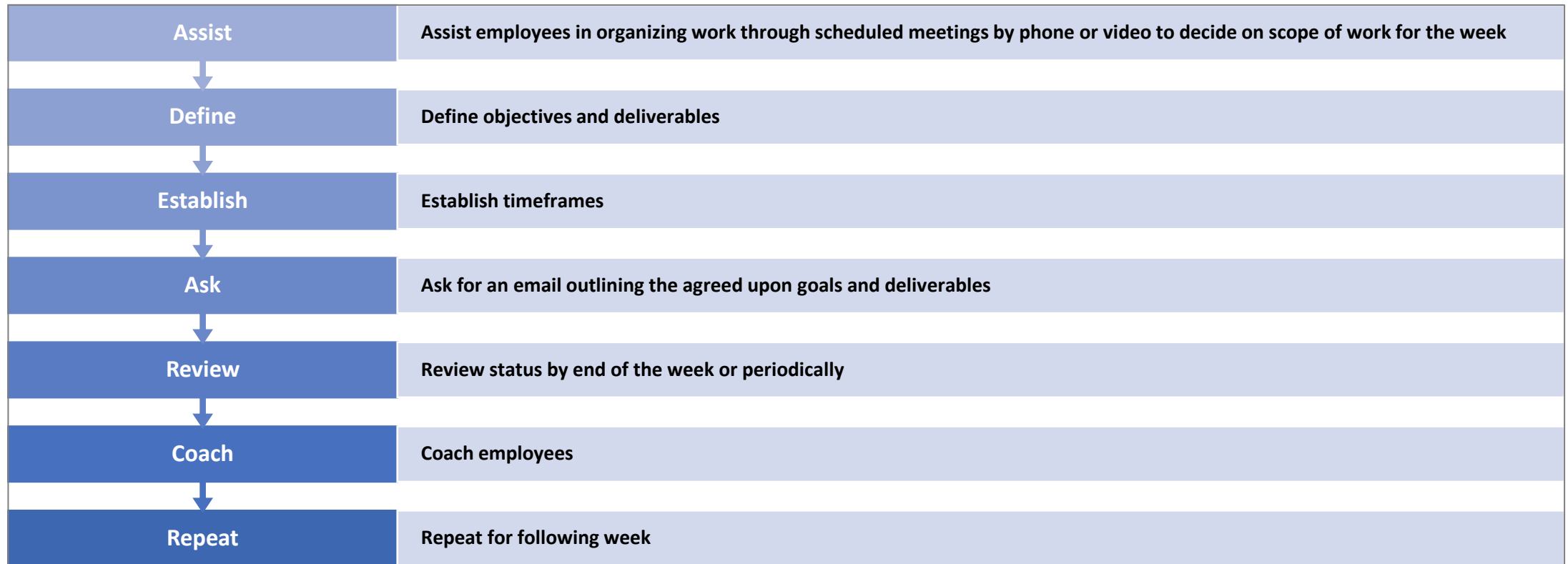
- Setting realistic expectations
- Establishing milestones
- Communicating in person
- Documenting the process
- Reviewing and fine tuning
- Feedback loop for group and individual



# Measuring productivity

| How Productivity is Measured when Employees are Teleworking   | Percent |
|---|---------|
| Responsiveness of employee (e.g., how quickly employee responds to e-mails, returns phone calls)              | 48%     |
| Line manager/supervisor establishes specific goals/parameters with the employee                               | 43%     |
| On the honor system; there is no standard mechanism in place to manage/measure productivity for telecommuters | 37%     |
| Our standard methods for measuring productivity are effective for both telecommuters and on-site employees    | 36%     |
| Employee records time worked on a timesheet or other logging system   | 34%     |
| Employee reports progress against assigned tasks on a scheduled basis   | 26%     |
| Organization is still working out how to manage/measure productivity for employees when they telecommute      | 23%     |
| Organization monitors employees via software (e.g., software that tracks and records computer behavior)       | 9%      |
| Other   | 3%      |

# Managing employees in a hybrid environment: Telemanaging through goal-setting with teleworkers





# Daily telework log

## Keeping a daily telework log helps to:

- Identify priority projects and assess daily progress
- Keep communication open between teleworker and manager
- Provide peace of mind for managers

*This free resource is available from Twin Cities Telework by Commuter Services: [tctelework.com](http://tctelework.com)*



**Before the start of each telework day**, use this form to note what tasks you will be working on. Email it to your supervisor before you start work and also let your teammates know you have started your telework day so they know you are available.

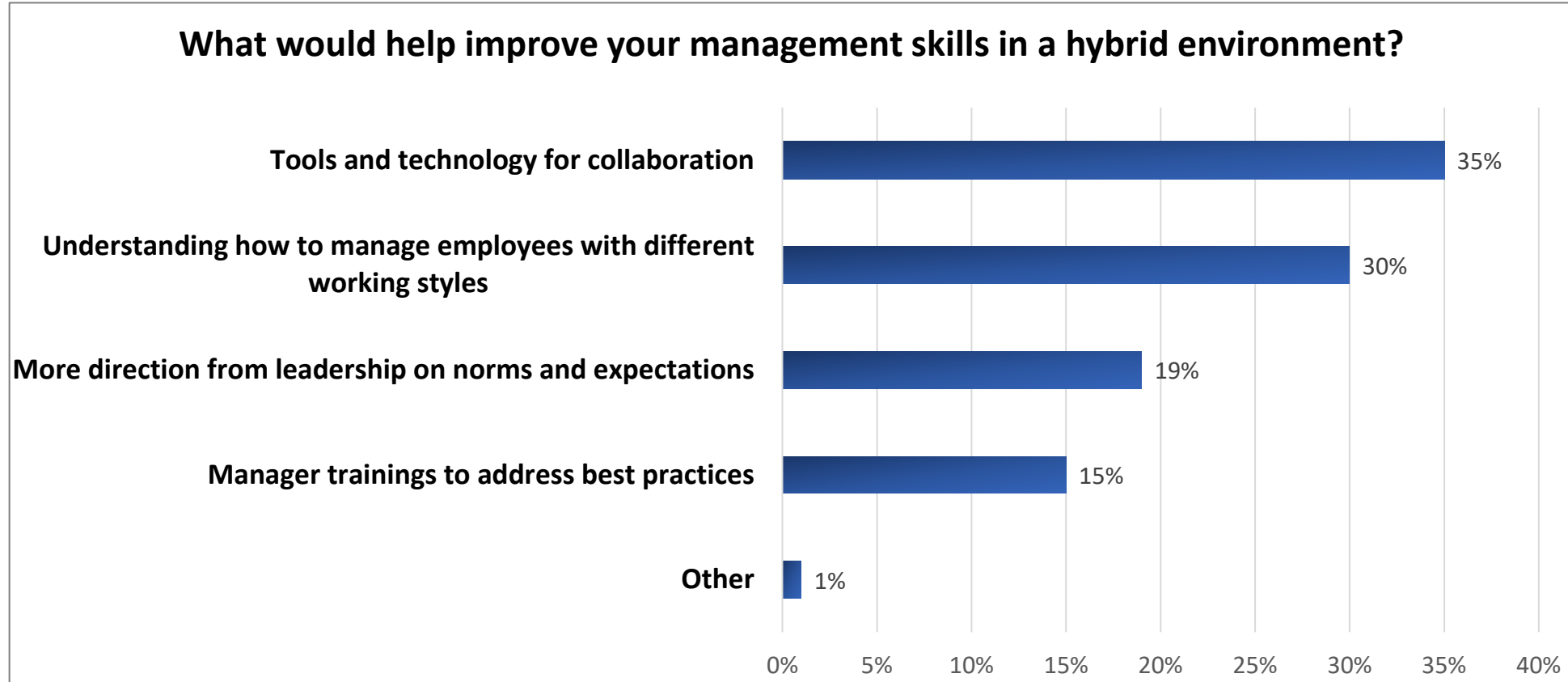
**At the end of the telework day**, fill out what you actually worked on with notes and send it to your supervisor. Also let your teammates know you are done working for the day.

| Employee Name: | Date:  |
|----------------|--|
| Objectives     | Tasks/Work Delivered   |
| 1.             | Comments: <input type="checkbox"/> Met<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not met |
| 2.             | Comments: <input type="checkbox"/> Met<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not met |
| 3.             | Comments: <input type="checkbox"/> Met<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not met |
| 4.             | Comments: <input type="checkbox"/> Met<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not met |
| 5.             | Comments: <input type="checkbox"/> Met<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not met |
| 6.             | Comments: <input type="checkbox"/> Met<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not met |
| 7.             | Comments: <input type="checkbox"/> Met<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not met |

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# Managing in a hybrid environment



# Developing management skills

What skills are most important to you to develop as a manager?

| Skill   | Percentage | Male | Female |
|---|------------|------|--------|
| Inclusive leadership  | 27%        | 31%  | 22%    |
| Being a clear communicator                                  | 26%        | 26%  | 27%    |
| Leading with empathy  | 25%        | 24%  | 26%    |
| Understanding of diversity, inclusion, and belonging issues | 22%        | 18%  | 24%    |

# Managing effectively

**44% of managers surveyed** believe they have the right tools to be an effective in a hybrid environment, **but 31% remain uncertain**

**23% of flex workers** described management of remote employees as the biggest challenge of working with a hybrid team

# Culture and employee engagement



# Sustaining company culture in a hybrid work model

One of the most important elements of effective leadership is when leaders are perceived as present and accessible

Closely related to visibility and accessibility is the need for plenty of open communication and transparency



# Sustaining company culture in a hybrid work model

Leaders can build strong cultures by creating places where people want to be

This means influencing offices that help people work better through spaces to collaborate, focus, learn, socialize and rejuvenate



# Hybrid workplace across three key areas

## Culture

- Prioritize culture to enable hybrid work
- Empower managers to lead the shift
- Rebuild social capital in hybrid work
- Help people learn and make an impact in the flow of work
- Focus on culture to attract and retain talent
- Combat digital exhaustion from the top

## Space

- Design for the people not in the room
- Transform your physical spaces with intelligent, cloud-powered services. Prepare for the metaverse

## Technology

- Use trusted collaborative tools

# Social capital: Who you know

Social capital has to do with the resources and opportunities you have access to because of who you know.

New team members may not feel included or may lack the connections that senior team members have.





# Rally teams around impact

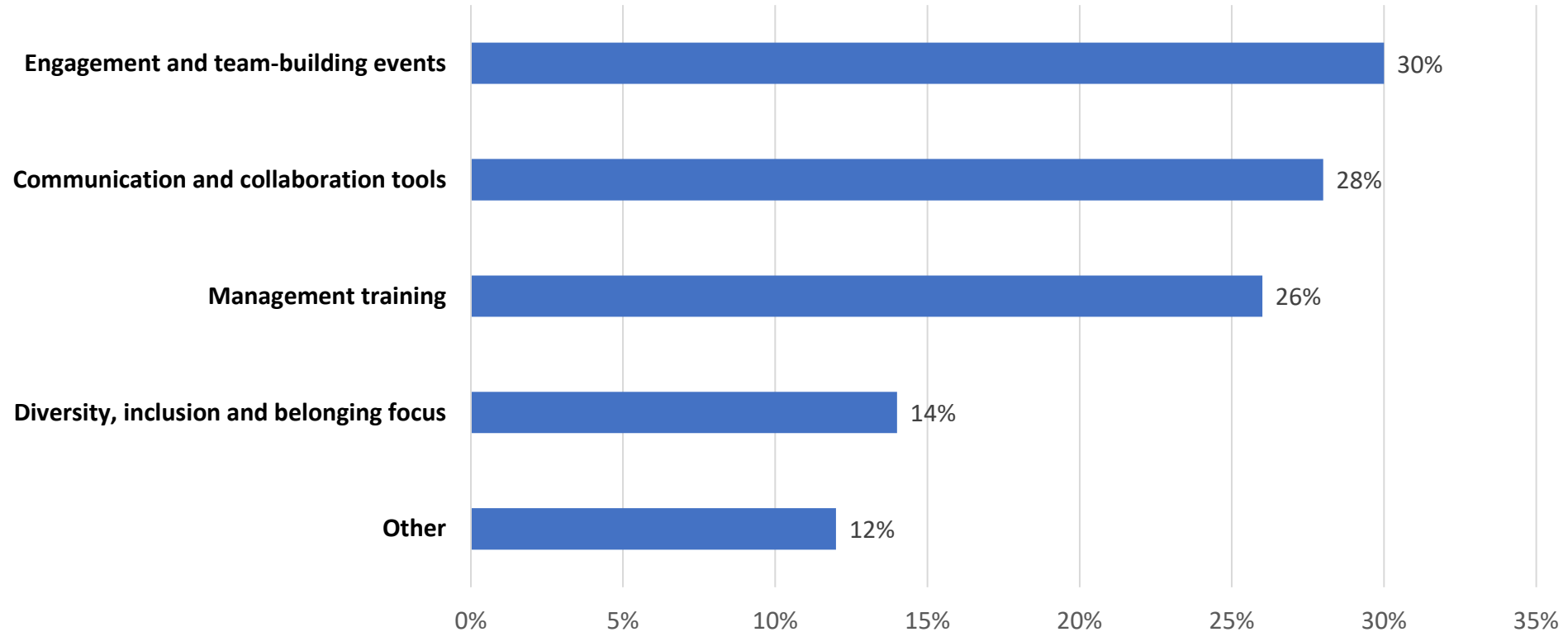
“To be effective leaders today, we need to embrace intentionality and the willingness to learn an entirely new set of skills, including the ability to prioritize and rally our teams around impact, rather than activity.”

Jared Spataro CVP  
Modern Work at Microsoft



# Culture

Where would you like to see your company invest to foster a strong culture?



# Creating connections

## Foster team relationships:

- Provide opportunities for collaboration
- Host fun virtual events like coffee breaks, team building events or word challenges
- Conduct virtual polls

*This free resource is available from Twin Cities  
Telework by Commuter Services: [tctelework.com](https://tctelework.com)*



## CREATING CONNECTION ON A HYBRID TEAM

Social connections in the workplace are important for job satisfaction and employees' overall well-being, but for hybrid teams, these connections with coworkers are especially critical.

It's imperative to build in time to foster connections and team building among your remote employees. In a hybrid environment, these connections need to be more intentional than when everyone is in the office together. Here are some tips to help everyone feel part of the team.

### EXCHANGE PERSONAL STORIES

- Talk about your favorite places to travel.
- Introduce and/or share pictures of your pets.
- Talk about recent movies or shows you've seen or books you're currently reading.



### EXPAND COLLABORATIONS

Collaboration can be more than workers on the same team working together. A good way to improve connections is to have high-level managers engage teleworkers and employees in the decision-making process and get them to focus on improving business practices.



### HOST A WORD CHALLENGE

Games like Wordle, Word of the Day, Word of the Week are a fun way to check in.



### HOST A VIRTUAL GAME NIGHT

Games like Bingo or Pictionary could be done with both in-person and remote participants.



### USE EMOJIS TO CONNECT

It can be harder to read how your team is feeling when they're working remotely. A fun and easy way to connect is for cohorts to use emojis to represent how they feel, which allows everyone to get a sense of each other's moods as well as the collective mood of the group.



### HOLD NON-MEETING MEETINGS

These are scheduled times when managers and colleagues, or just colleagues, can chat. These meetings can last anywhere from five minutes to a half hour and should not have an agenda.



### HOLD A COFFEE HOUR OR LUNCH

Morning coffee could be 15 minutes for anyone to have time to chat with team members before the day starts. Ask a social butterfly on your team to host a virtual lunch to shoot the breeze with co-workers.



### HOST A TEAM BUILDING EVENT

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Favorite recipe exchange         | Office trivia  |
| Virtual or in-person escape room | Karaoke night  |
| Virtual scavenger hunt           | Mystery dinner |
| Cook off                         | Painting class |
| Board game tournament            | Cooking class  |



### HAVE CONTESTS AND GIVE AWAY PRIZES, SUCH AS A \$10 GIFT CARD

Ugly sweater day  
Best virtual background  
Most creative screen name



### CONDUCT VIRTUAL POLLS



# Addressing FOMO

## Avoid the Fear of Missing Out:

- Open lines of communication
- Encourage growth and training opportunities
- Offer rewards or recognition for employees both on-site and in the home office

*This free resource is available from Twin Cities Telework by Commuter Services: [tctelework.com](https://tctelework.com)*

*How to Help Employees*  
**AVOID FOMO WHEN WORKING FROM HOME**

FOMO  
Fear  
Of  
Missing  
Out

Many employees who telework feel left out and anxious as their coworkers return to the office. **Here are some tips to help your remote team feel more connected - and stay more positive and productive.**

**FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET**  
Encourage employees to explore their areas of interest and pursue new training programs. Focusing on their performance goals as well as their personal development strengthens company culture.

**KEEP LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN**  
Telework does not have to be less engaging. Schedule daily **group check-ins, coffee breaks** or **one-on-one meetings** where teleworkers can engage with managers and coworkers. Managers should be sure to be transparent and communicate the same things to onsite employees as those who are working remotely.

**BOOST MORALE WITH REWARDS**  
Offer rewards and recognition for good performance to all employees, not just those who are onsite.

**ENCOURAGE SOCIAL SHARING**  
Use technology to create watercooler interaction opportunities. Set up a virtual space for all team members to interact via a shared social network - either on a social media website, your company's intranet, or a collaboration app. For example, if your team uses Slack or What'sApp, set up a social channel - or even a series of topic-based social channels - where people can share pictures or engage in casual conversations about topics that interest them.

**MAKE CONNECTION-BUILDING PART OF THE ROUTINE**  
Help remote employees be more productive and less stressed by promoting meaningful connections. Encourage them to catch up, share information and focus on each others' well being. You could foster connections with activities like **Storytelling Fridays** or **Gratitude Mondays**.

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# Burnout



# Employee burnout

Burnout has become its own epidemic and is now recognized by the World Health Organization as an official disease. Weary and anxious workers are resigning from their jobs in record numbers around the world. In the US alone, 20 million people quit their jobs between April and August 2021, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“Quiet quitting” is a way for employees to cope with burnout, but it is not a productive strategy.



# Employee burnout

Burnout is not an individual issue. It's an organizational issue needing organizational interventions. Efforts to strengthen relationships and build interconnectedness within the workplace can help enhance resiliency, which can reduce the potential for burnout; but understanding and acting on the root causes is necessary for real impact.

## Six main causes of burnout

- Unsustainable workload
- Perceived lack of control/autonomy
- Insufficient recognition and/or rewards for effort
- Community/relationships
- Lack of fairness or perceived injustice
- Mismatched values and skills



<https://www-benefitspro-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.benefitspro.com/2022/02/16/yoga-wont-cure-burnout/?amp=1>

# Burnout

What actions would you like to see your employer take to help alleviate stress and reduce burnout?

| Action                                  | Percentage | Male | Female |
|---|------------|------|--------|
| Allow for flexible time off             | 58%        | 56%  | 60%    |
| Provide mental health resources         | 31%        | 31%  | 31%    |
| Share clarity around hybrid work policy | 28%        | 29%  | 27%    |
| Invest in manager trainings             | 19%        | 21%  | 18%    |



# Combat digital exhaustion

- Reduce the risk of burnout
- Encourage quiet time. Promote employee wellbeing and help employees develop more sustainable work practices and habits
- Encourage people to take breaks. Research shows that taking even short breaks between meetings can have a big impact
- Avoid unnecessary meetings. Reduce meeting overload by collaborating asynchronously

# Burnout

To combat stress and burnout, employers are increasingly offering benefits like virtual mental health support, spontaneous days or even weeks off, meeting-free days, and flexible work scheduling

Despite these efforts and the increasing number of employees buying into the importance of wellness, the effort is lost if you don't actually recover. So, if you feel like you're burning out, what works when it comes to recovering from stress? The authors discuss the "recovery paradox" — that when our bodies and minds *need* to recover and reset the most, we're the least likely and able to *do* something about it — and present five research-backed strategies for recovering from stress at work



# Employee burnout

## Understanding stress recovery

Recovery is the process of restoring symptoms of work stress (anxiety, exhaustion, and elevated levels of the stress hormone cortisol) back to pre-stressor levels. It is referred to as a skill, because knowing how and when you can best recover from stress requires both knowledge (of what works for you) and practice (actually doing it)

- Detach psychologically from work
- Harness the power of micro-breaks during the workday
- Use your vacation time
- Prioritize high-effort recovery activities
- Shape your environment for optimal recovery




# Mental health recommendations

## Tips for mental health:

- Treat at-home workdays like on-site workdays: get up, get ready
- Take breaks, eat lunch away from the computer
- Live a healthy lifestyle including diet and regular exercise

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Telework by Commuter Services: [tctelework.com](https://tctelework.com)*



**TWIN CITIES  
Telework** | by **Commuter Services**

## Mental Health Recommendations for Teleworkers

For many, working from home seems like an ideal situation. Commuters tell us they like not having the commute, they save time and money, and feel more productive.

The truth is, working from home can come with its own set of stressors. Here are a few comments Commuter Services has received in our recent surveys: "The day never ends. I work longer hours." "There are no boundaries. I'm always 'on,' and don't take a break or end the workday."

Remember those days back in the office? When your computer and work stayed behind when you

left at the end of the day? That very act of leaving helped you shift your mindset from work to your personal life.

You had what many now refer to as "work/life balance." But now your computer is home and so is your work. Left unchecked, you work longer hours and the work/life balance can spin out of control. It's a recipe for stress, for sure, as well as anxiety and depression.

Twin Cities Telework by Commuter Services has developed this list of day-to-day tips to help teleworkers find the balance between work and life.

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# Workspace



# Space/purposeful presence

As employees prioritize and embrace flexibility, 38 percent of hybrid employees say their biggest challenge is knowing when and why to come into the office

Leaders need to rethink the role of the office space and adopt a degree of intentionality around the who, where and why of in-person gatherings

New cultural norms should be developed to help ensure the office is additive to the employee experience—helping all employees feel connected, engaged and able to innovate and do their best work

# Evaluation



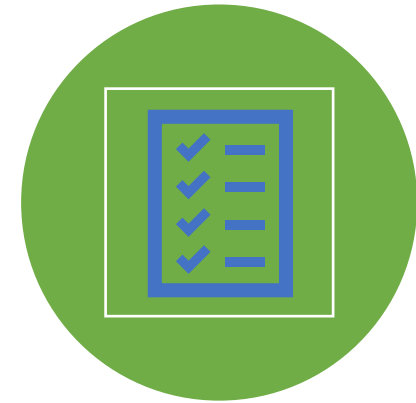
# Evaluation



Focus groups



Interviews



Surveys



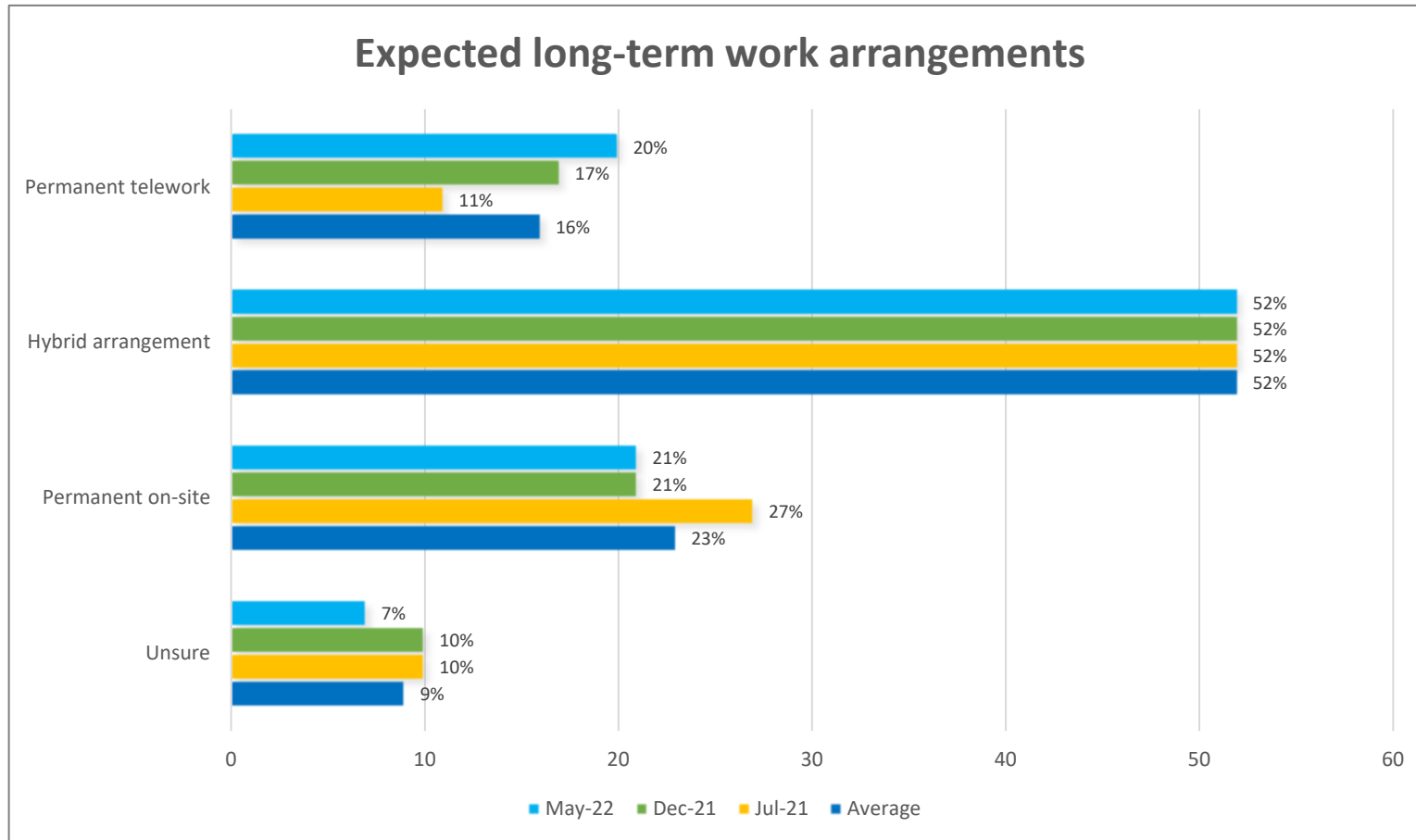
# Future of workplace strategies

- On going recruitment and retention issues
- The pendulum settling either in 3- or 2-days work in the office
- The acceptance that the new era will have to be flexible
- Employers with rigid rules may be surprised
- Changes in home office design
- The flexibility of hours of work becoming more advanced
- A 32-hour work week becoming more prevalent

# And then, the commute



# Hybrid and the commute in the Twin Cities



# Help your employees with their commute

- Transit Passes – Metropass
- Preferential Carpool / Vanpool Parking
- Bicycle parking indoors or secure area out of the elements outdoors
- Bike loaner programs
- Promote Try It campaigns and internal company challenges
- Communicate with employees via commuter e-fairs, newsletter, e-blasts, new hire packets and intranet. Commuter Services can help!



# Questions

# Contact us

Melissa Madison

[melissa@494corridor.org](mailto:melissa@494corridor.org)

952-405-9425 (office)

612-749-4494 (cell)

Kate Meredith

[kate@494corridor.org](mailto:kate@494corridor.org)

952-405-9425 (office)

612-750-4494 (cell)

Thank you for attending!