

# How To Recruit and Retain Flexible and Adaptable Professionals



If recent events have taught us anything about the working world, it's that flexibility and adaptability are two of the most important qualities one can possess in today's job market. A flexible workforce, made up of people who are able and willing to adapt when needed, is something all business owners should be looking for.

But, in order to attract flexible employees, companies need to demonstrate that they themselves are flexible and able to adapt.

Data from a pre-pandemic [study](#) found that 74% of people agree that the opportunity to work from home would make them less likely to leave their job. This number appears to be increasing, based on a more recent study from [Slack](#), which found that only 12% of workers prefer to 'always' work in an office setting. The remainder of those surveyed said they would prefer to have an opportunity to work a hybrid schedule, or always clock in from home.

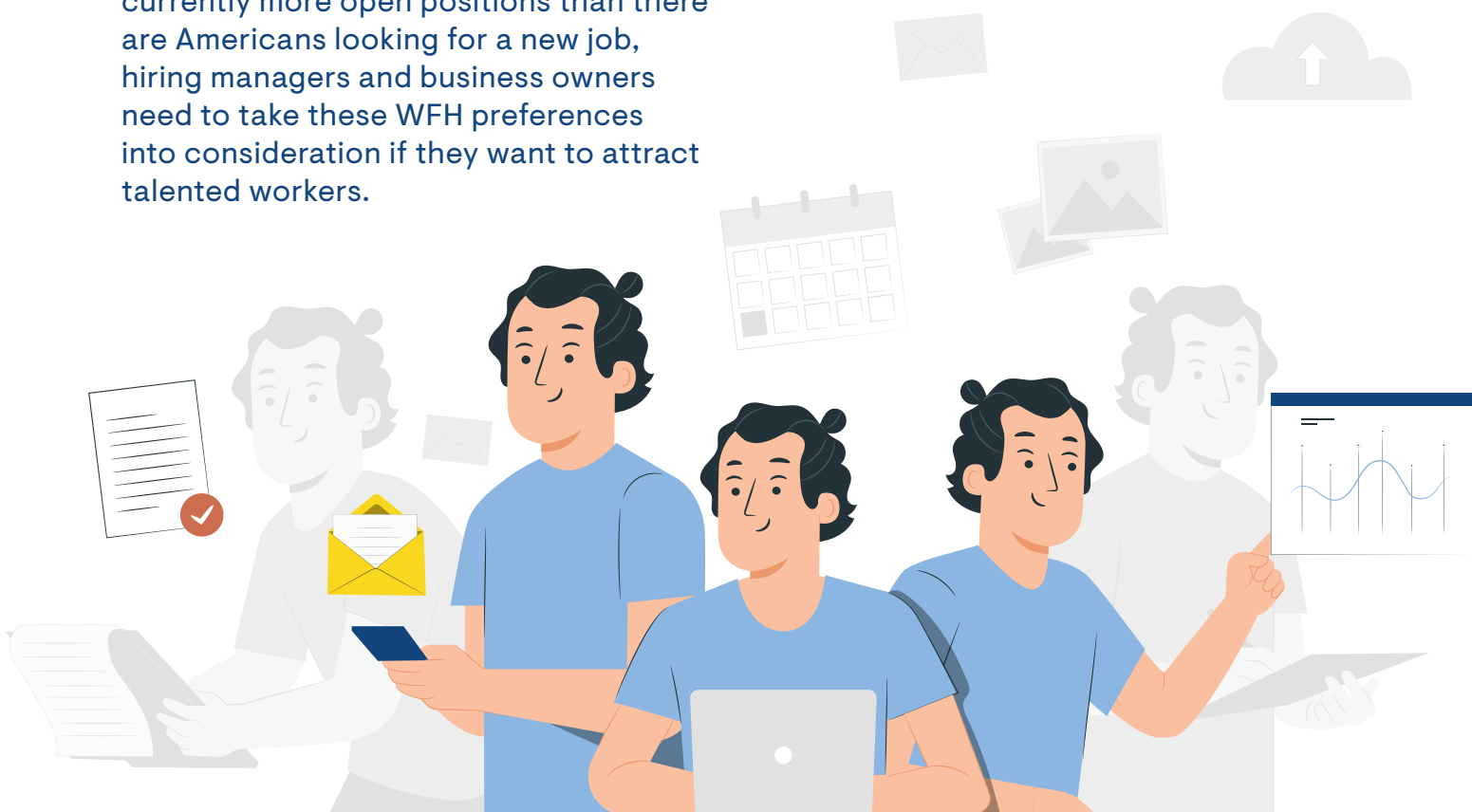
Considering the fact that there are currently more open positions than there are Americans looking for a new job, hiring managers and business owners need to take these WFH preferences into consideration if they want to attract talented workers.

It is also worth mentioning that providing a WFH option has been proven to increase productivity, and it opens up labor opportunities to workers who, for one reason or another, are not able to come into the office every day. [Research](#) regarding the environmental changes seen during the first few months of the pandemic, also found that working from home four days a week could reduce pollution generated from traffic by 10%.

Another way of looking at these numbers is this—providing a flexible work environment could be a net positive.

But only if done correctly.

Remote work is not without its issues and challenges, so before we outline the best strategy for how you can recruit and maintain a more flexible workforce, let's take a second to review some of the hurdles business owners might encounter.



# The Challenges with Remote Work

There are three main challenges that business owners must address when adopting a remote work structure:

1. Remote work has been **shown** to increase pressures on employees, making them feel they need to work longer hours and respond to emails more quickly. On average, those surveyed said they were working 28 hours of overtime monthly.
2. According to **research** reported on by Forbes, employers are more likely to offer flexible work opportunities for higher paying positions, creating less flexible work environments for low-wage workers and feeding into existing labor market inequalities.
3. Unless companies put in the effort to make a community for their remote workers, they run the risk of creating an environment in which employees feel isolated and lonely.

Keeping these issues in mind, we've created a framework for companies and hiring managers to use when shifting from a fully in-office environment, to a more flexible one. Therefore, creating a workplace that attracts and retains talented, adaptable employees.



## Communication is Key

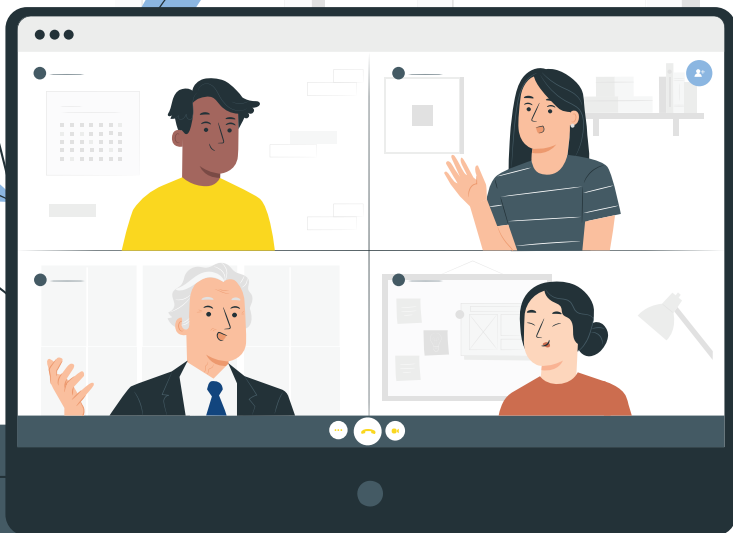
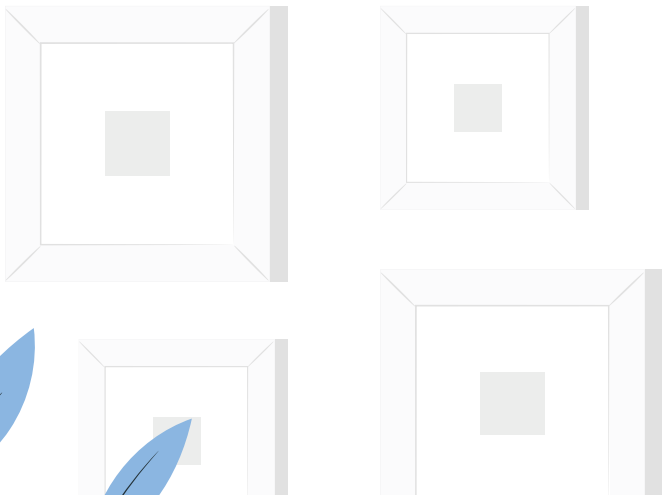
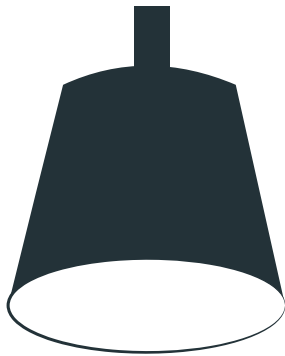
Without a consistent and timely flow of communication between colleagues, remote and hybrid work is impossible. Unlike an in-person office setting, in which workers can run over to the next cubicle and get an answer to their question in real time, remote workers must rely on slower forms of communication.

This is why it's imperative that higher-ups diligently check emails, phone messages, and chat forums throughout the work day.

### The Virtual Open Door Policy

You should be as available to your employees as you would in an in-person setting. You can do this by having a virtual open door policy, which means having your email and any other communication software/sites your company uses, open on your computer all day.

Imagine it's like sitting in your office with the door open. When you are online, it means that any of your employees can come and ask questions, as they would be allowed to do with an in-person, open-door policy. Along these same lines, you should only close your door during office hours (i.e. go offline) when absolutely necessary—like for important meetings or much-needed screen breaks.





## Communication Expectations for Employees

Now that we've established the importance of timely communication, especially for those in managerial or leadership positions, we're going to pivot a little and say something counterintuitive.

The expectation for employees to respond to you and to one another as quickly as possible, and at any time of the day, simply is not fair. As mentioned above, remote workers feel an increased pressure to respond to emails than they would if they were working in the office, and this pressure leads to unwanted overtime.

The best way to set reasonable expectations in regards to communication for your remote workers is to use the expectations you already have for in-person employees. You wouldn't expect all of your in-office workers to be glued to their desks, eagerly waiting to respond to your emails, all day every day. On the other hand, you would need to have a conversation with an employee who never responded to your emails, or was never at their desk when you went looking for them.

## The Importance of Hiring and Training

For those new to the world of remote hiring and training, it can be a very intimidating process.

First, if the person you're hiring can clock-in from anywhere in the world, that opens up the talent pool significantly—which is both a blessing and a curse.

Second, a core feature of a successful training and onboarding plan is making sure your new hires feel like they are part of the workplace community. That can be difficult to do in an online setting.

There are a few ways business owners can approach these difficult tasks, but many of them are costly solutions. Implementing new hiring software can be expensive, and jumping through the bureaucratic hoops of international recruiting is often time-consuming and frustrating.

One option that small and/or young businesses in particular might want to consider, is the use of a professional recruitment firm. Firms like IsoTalent have been hiring remote workers for years, and we offer some of the best hiring software on the market. We can also provide EOR services for those looking to hire internationally. Recruitment firms can save you time and money during the hiring process, and because IsoTalent is an expert in finding the right employee for you, we can also cut down on onboarding time and turnover.

That said, regardless of how you choose to find your new hires, managers and business owners should be developing a flawless onboarding plan for both their in-person and remote workers. This plan should include things like constant communication between manager and employee, as well as opportunities for new hires to get to know their colleagues (either on zoom or in-person).

*For more information, check out our ebook on [Onboarding](#).*



## Corporate Compassion – Celebrating Your Employees

It can be easy to forget this step in a remote-work setting. You're not seeing your employees as you walk past their office, nor are you engaging with them about their work in the breakroom. Out of sight, out of mind.

But because remote workers already run the risk of feeling higher levels of isolation and disengagement, it is vital that managers go above and beyond to make sure their employee's achievements are recognized. This also ties into corporate compassion more broadly, which is another important tool that has been proven to help with employee satisfaction and retention for all workers.

Keep in mind, celebrations can be about more than just a job well done. Many in-person offices will celebrate employee birthdays, and this is a tradition that shouldn't fall to the wayside just because everyone is working a more flexible schedule. Setting time aside to acknowledge important milestones in your employees' lives, either virtually or in-person, will go a long way to show just how much you value them.



## Meetups and The Virtual Water Cooler

One of the best ways to ease the unique pressures of remote work, is to provide employees with some of the social outlets that serve as building blocks to a healthy in-person work environment. We've already talked about one of the ways to do that—having an open 'door' policy (i.e. always being available on at least one communication forum throughout the day).

Another way to facilitate social connection in a remote work setting is to plan online or in-person meet ups. Try hosting a weekly happy hour to bring workers together and give them the space to talk about things that aren't work related. Similarly, creating a forum where employees can take breaks and have chats—an online water cooler if you will—is a great way to cut down on feelings of isolation that workers might have during their at-home shifts.





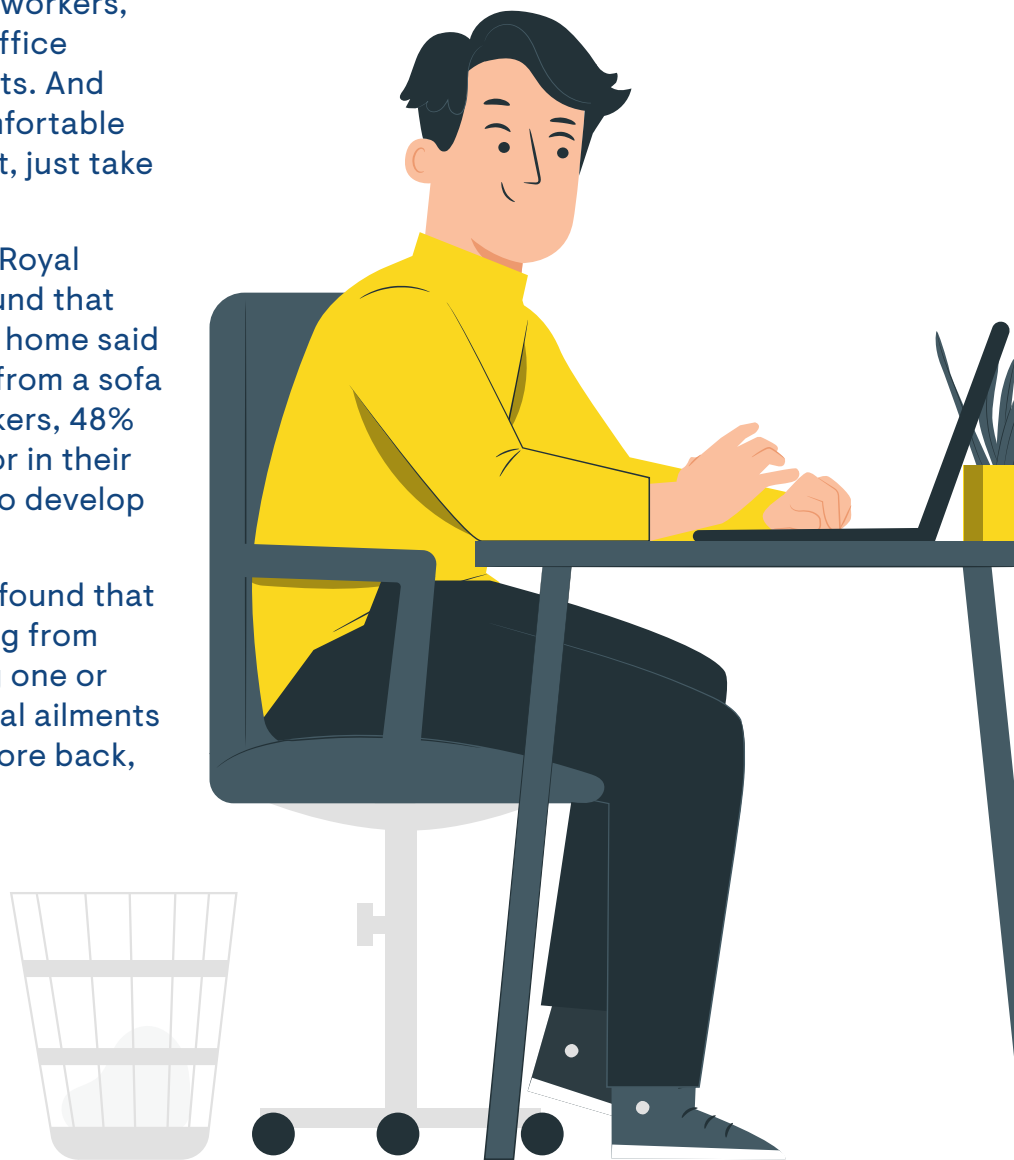
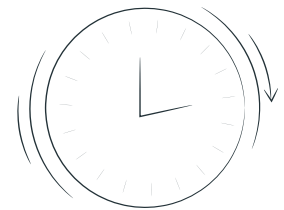
## Home Setup and ‘Office’ Expenses — How You can Help

It probably comes as no surprise that in **2020**, the market saw an increase of almost 75% for office chair sales. When workers were sent home in droves, they had to create comfortable and effective home-office spaces, which was not cheap. Nice office chairs can run anywhere from \$100 to \$1,000, and desks and new computer equipment can be even pricier.

These costs should not fall on the workers. In-person employees are rarely, if ever, asked to pay for their own office furniture, computers, wifi, etc. If you want to hire more remote workers, you must factor these home office necessities into the hiring costs. And if you don't believe that a comfortable work environment is important, just take a look at these statistics:

- A **survey** conducted by The Royal Society for Public Health found that 26% of people working from home said they predominantly worked from a sofa or a bedroom. Of those workers, 48% said that working on a sofa or in their bedroom had caused them to develop musculoskeletal problems.
- A 2021 **study** from Fellowes found that at least 25% of those working from home reported experiencing one or more of the following physical ailments — strained eyes, stiff neck, sore back, and headaches.

In addition to covering the costs of at-home setups, another way to ensure your remote workers feel just as valued and appreciated as in-person workers, is to offer expense allowances for items that they would normally get for free in the office. These items include coffee, tea, office supplies, snacks, and anything else you might keep stocked in the break room.



## Lastly, Avoid the Urge to Micromanage

Directors and higher-ups who are not used to managing their employees remotely are especially susceptible to micromanaging. They may fear that they have less control over their employees, and that makes them less flexible, and therefore makes the workplace less attractive to many modern-day job seekers.

Strict, unyielding workplaces do not appeal to flexible, adaptable talent. People who desire remote work are typically looking for a job that allows them more freedom, not less. They may have other responsibilities, like childcare or higher education, that they need to schedule around. If your managers are not able to accommodate them, or if they've fallen into the trap of feeling they need to micromanage everyone, you are going to lose talented workers.

*The truth is, the qualities and expertise that make a good corporate leader have shifted in recent years. Managers and executives need to understand three things:*

- *The changing landscape of work*
- *How these changes affects their employees*
- *How they themselves must adapt to these changes in order to continue being an effective boss*

Do your middle managers and higher-ups meet these standards?

If not, it might be time to start looking for more flexible and adaptable employees at every level, and a third-party recruitment firm can help. IsoTalent will not only find the right remote workers for all your low-level positions, but we also specialize in placing qualified people in managerial and executive roles.

Flexibility starts at the top, and adaptability is a quality that must be celebrated and nurtured, not micromanaged and controlled.



# Recruiting Reimagined

IsoTalent is a job recruitment firm based in the Silicon Slopes area of Lehi, Utah. We help high-growth startups, executive teams, hiring managers, and HR professionals find the talent they need at flexible and affordable pricing. Our low-cost hourly model saves organizations thousands of dollars compared to traditional hiring agencies. Our recruiting services help clients save an average of 40% to 70% to place high-volume, standard, technical, and executive roles.

## Hourly-Rate Recruiting

Standard Role

**\$110/hr**

Technologist Role

**\$125/hr**

Executive Role

**\$200/hr**

International Role

**\$75-\$100/hr**

*High-volume placements are billed at the standard rate and typically fill 10x faster than standard averages.*



## Contact

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