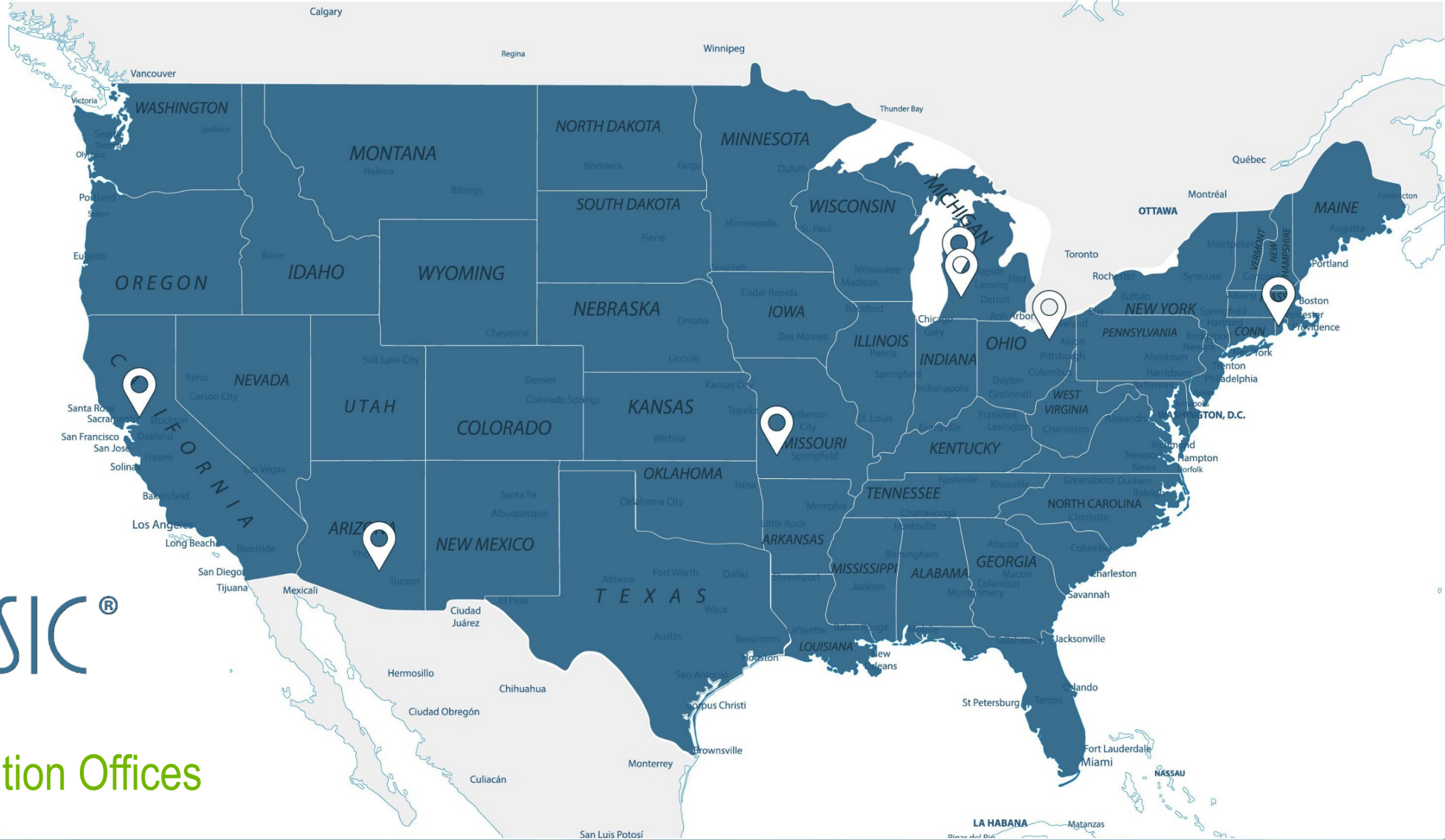




Employee Engagement - Strategies for Onsite and Remote Workers



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➤ Presenter



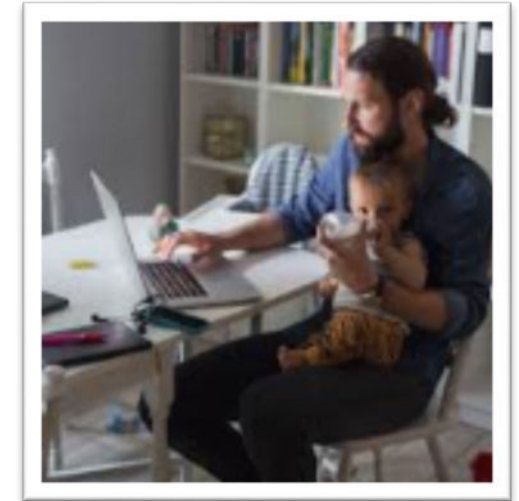
Joe Aitchison, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, CHRS

Joe provides Business & HR client advisory services and HR out-source services nationally. He is a Human Resource professional with over twenty five years business management and HR consulting experience. He has worked with multi plant International Tier I Automotive Manufacturing, retail, food processing, health care, legal administration and professional services.

Mr. Aitchison is recognized as a leader in human resources and has obtained a lifetime certification as a senior professional in human resource management, SHRM – Senior Certified Professional and Healthcare Reform Specialist by the Healthcare Reform Center & Policy Institute. Mr. Aitchison serves on several for profit and not for profit boards.

➤ Today's Topics

- Challenging Personality Tendencies and Traits
- Workplace & Problem Employee Behaviors
- Work From Home (WFH) Challenges
- Manager's Role with WFH Employees
- Transition to WFH
- Summary



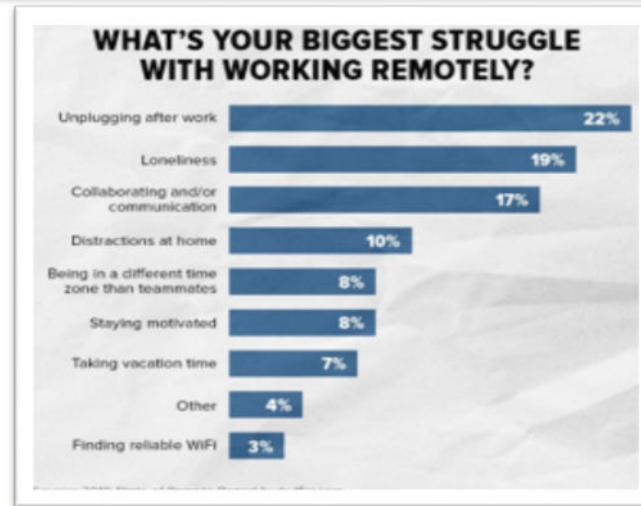
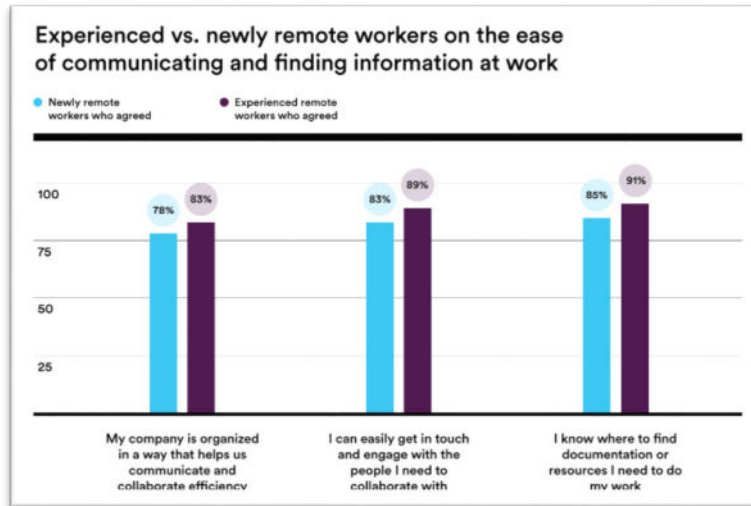
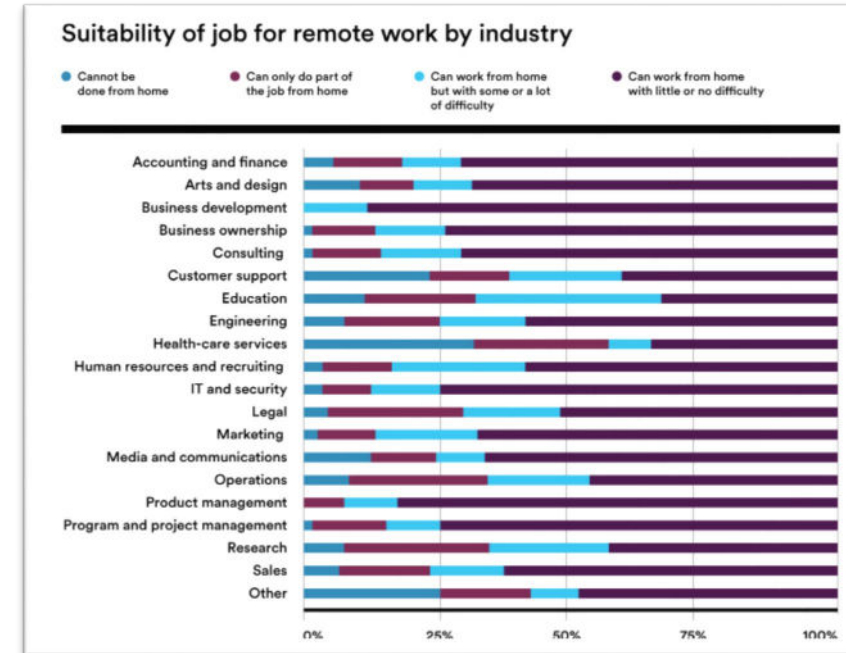
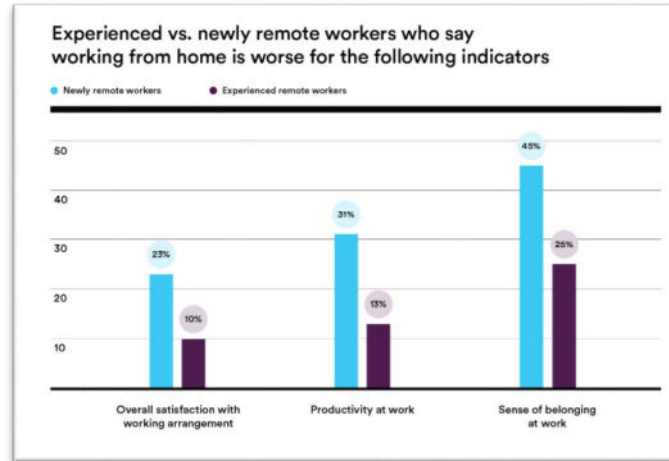
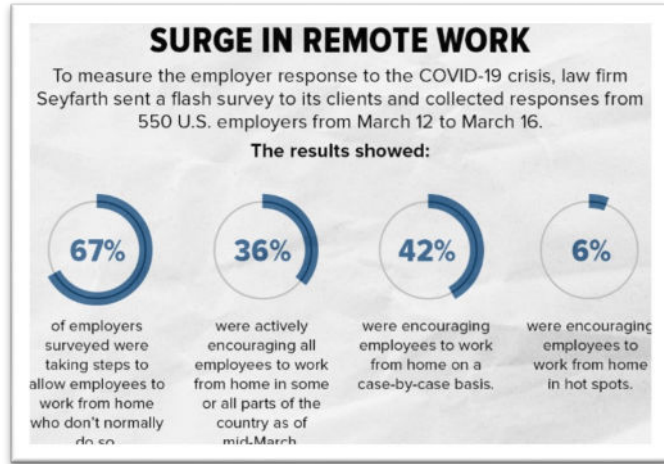
➤ Employee Engagement

Employee Engagement - Research

- Research demonstrates that **“When employees have strong relationships with their coworkers, employee engagement rises, and brings all the other benefits you can think of with it.”** (Higher morale, greater productivity, better communication and interactions at the operations level.)
- **“Employees who report having a best friend at work are seven times more likely to be engaged.”**
(Gallup Research)
- **“Managing a virtual team requires managers to double down on the fundamentals of good management, including establishing *clear goals*, running *great meetings*, *communicating clearly*, and *leveraging team members' individual and collective strengths*.”**

Julie Wilson, founder of the Institute for Future Learning and instructor at Harvard University.

➤ Work From Home – The Stats

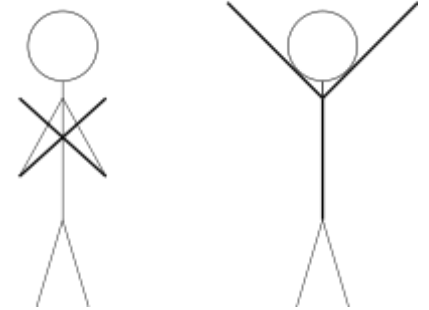


➤ The Psychology – WFH

Theory X and Theory Y are rooted **theories of human work motivation and management** created by Douglas McGregor (MIT Sloan School of Management in the 1950s), and developed further in the 1960s and in motivation theory created by Abraham Maslow

- **Theory X** explains the importance of heightened supervision, external rewards, and penalties
- **Theory Y** highlights the motivating role of job satisfaction and encourages workers to approach tasks without direct supervision

Management use of **Theory X** and **Theory Y** can affect employee motivation and productivity in different ways



“X” - I don't want to do this – Reason I got a job was to earn some money and get out of the house ...

“Y” - This is fantastic!!! I love my job and I get to do it from my home ... what could be better than that!!!

➤ Poorly Managed Work Relationships

There is a “Causal Effect ¹” - Adverse Impact on Employer / Employee Relations ... *What happens if not addressed?*

- Reduced Productivity
- Lower Morale
- Increased absenteeism / AWOL from remote work
- Emotional Distress of Workers & Coworkers
- Turnover

1) Causal effect means that something has happened, or is happening, based on something that has occurred or is occurring.

➤ WFH Workplace Scenario

Questions:

1. Did team members apply for a remote / work from home position?
2. Did team members “want” to transition to WFH?
3. Did team members willingly accept WFH – long term / short term due to Covid-19 concerns?
4. Did the “game change” from a temporary to permanent WFH scenario?

➤ Common Challenges - WFH

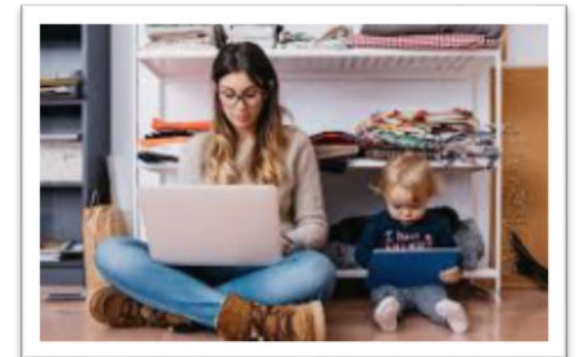
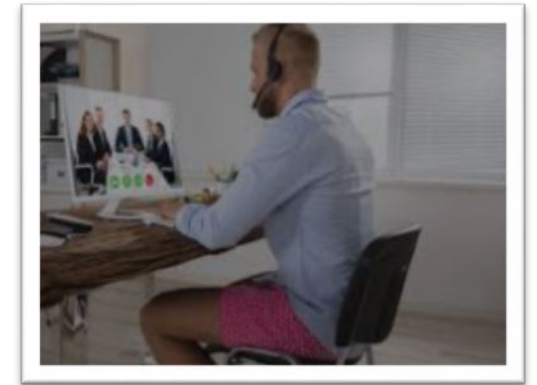
What is Your Scenario – WFH

Normal Circumstances – Planned (ideal transition)

- Managers & Employees have time to plan transition from Office to Work From Home (WFH).
 - Establish criteria for the home-work environment
 - Remote office set up that closely represents the onsite office environment
 - Dedicated workspace
 - Anticipate and plan for family member care and needs.
 - Approval required before authorization for WFH environment (this is a privilege vs. requirement).

Driven by External Forces or Opportunistic

1. Reason for transition demands change - Nonessential business - we need to change or lose customers / close the business
2. Change in business culture creates opportunity for change. (we don't have to but we are going to transition to WFH)
 - Above reasons creates a sudden unplanned transition to WFH platform
 - Creates a greater potential for employee uncertainty (continuation of employment)
 - Employees may be willing to transition to WFH, but may have home environments not suitable for WFH applications
 - Larger family – number of children, pets (talking /Squawking Parrot – but considered a part of the family) at home
 - Small living space – no separation from family & work
 - “I didn't sign on for this”
 - “Need my job”



➤ Challenging Employees

Who are they? Has their behavior changed, or will it change if they working remotely?

Employees who:

- Complain
- Goof off
- Refuse to cooperate
- Have a bad attitude
- Think they know best
- Spread rumors
- Make others look bad

➤ Challenging Employees ~ *What do they do?*

Challenging Employees

- See things negatively
- Expect failure
- Undermine authority
- Create hostile work relationships
- Break the rules (Policy/Procedures)

Typically, challenging employees represent between 5% to 10% of the employee population, create 80% of the disruptive behavior, and account for up to 20% or more in lost productivity



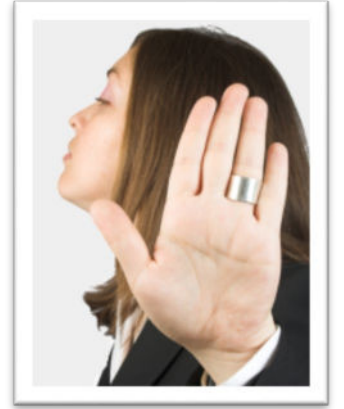
➤ Problem Employees ~ *Challenging Personalities*

Personality Tendencies / Traits

What are the different types and symptoms of personality disorders? According to the American Psychology Association, there are 10 specific personality traits / disorders:

1. **Paranoid personality** – a pattern of distrust and suspiciousness such that others' motives are interpreted as malevolent.
2. **Schizoid personality** – a pattern of detachment from social relationships and a restricted range of emotional expression.
3. **Schizotypal personality** – a pattern of acute discomfort in close relationships, cognitive or perceptual distortions, and eccentricities of behavior.
4. **Antisocial personality** – a pattern of disregard for, and violation of, the rights of others.
5. **Borderline personality** – a pattern of instability in interpersonal relationships, self-image and effects, and marked impulsivity.
6. **Histrionic personality** – a pattern of excessive emotionality and attention seeking.
7. **Narcissistic personality** – a pattern of grandiosity, need for admiration, and lack of empathy.
8. **Avoidant personality** – a pattern of social inhibition, feelings of inadequacy, and hypersensitivity to negative evaluation.
9. **Dependent personality** – a pattern of submissive and clinging behavior related to an excessive need to be taken care of.
10. **Obsessive compulsive personality** – a pattern of preoccupations with orderliness, perfectionism, and control.

➤ Problem Employees ~ *Their Actions*



Personality traits / tendencies often create behaviors

- Questions decisions, sometimes argumentative, but not always
- Does not like to work with others – prefers to work alone, reluctant to work with others, does not cooperate with others in a group setting or on projects
- Disrespectful / challenges authority

➤ Types of Difficult Employees

Difficult employee may have a personality or behavior problem

There are **5 personality types** that most often create chronic workforce problems:

The Bully engages in physical and verbal intimidation, shouting, profanity, throwing objects, blaming others, and threats.

- This behavior is often caused by low self-esteem and from **seeking control**.
- In order to deal with a bully, **manager should be firm, use open-ended questions, not compete, take notes, and require their cooperation to sit down and talk.**
 - If there are frequent outbursts, it is critical to address the issues immediately to ensure a safe workplace.

➤ Types of Difficult Employees

The Procrastinator has trouble starting / completing tasks and lacks motivation. This is caused by a fear of humiliation, rejection, and failure.

- Managers should create timetables or schedules for procrastinators, with required “check in” dates / updates.
- Managers should be prepared to assign the project to someone else if the procrastinator is falling short on the timeline / completions.

The Passive Aggressive is friendly to your face and negative behind your back. Not a team player and they agree with everything, but end up doing what they want. The passive aggressive is angry but dislikes confrontation.

- The manager should be specific, concrete in expectations, clear about consequences, and try not to over-supervise this type.

➤ Types of Difficult Employees

The Gossip talks to / chats with everyone about anything, due to an extreme need to be liked and accepted.

- Managers should never participate in gossip and immediately identify it while using disciplinary action if necessary.

The Constant Critic falsely accuses and undermines others privately, including the boss and company decisions.

- This type also humiliates others in public settings in order to control the emotional climate at work.

➤ Employee Behavior Change

Modifying Remote Worker Behavior – *What skilled managers and supervisors need to know and do:*

- **Understand different personality traits**
 - Not all employees think and work the same
 - What affects one may not affect others
 - How one behaves does affect others

➤ Managing Remote Workers

What Managers need to know and do:

1. Prepare for the challenge

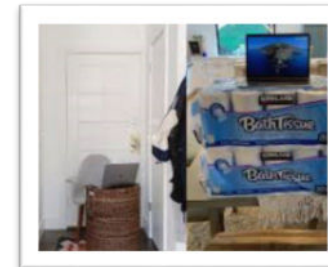
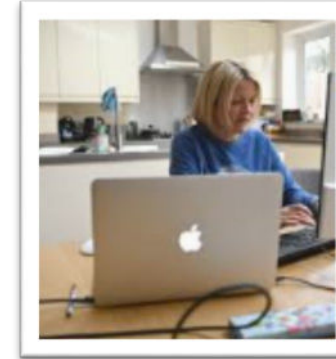
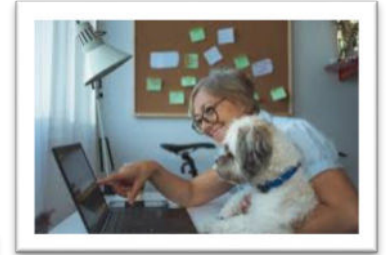
- Understand the problem(s)
- Manager should analyze their own feelings

2. Set aside emotions, personal opinions, and thoughts

- Maintain professionalism

3. Demonstrate behavior you want others to follow

- Model job performance and work behaviors
 - Punctuality, work organization, communications, workflow



➤ WFH Mangers Role

Lead by example

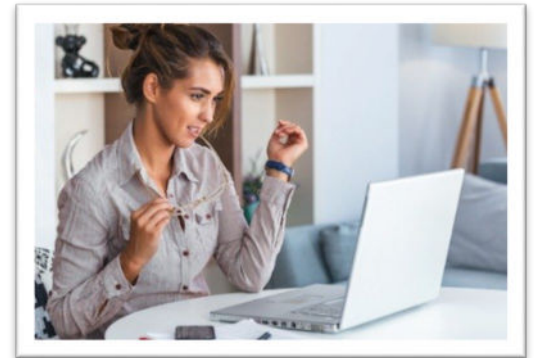
- Model the work from home habits and be a positive example
- Check in with your employees, ask for perspectives, and identify any areas for improvement

Provide support – the new norm

- Help each team member create their best and most productive work from home environment.
- Be open to suggestions and empower employees to recommend solutions to WFH issues & concerns. Ask leading questions like “What do you think will work?” or “Do you have an opinion that may help you and others?”

Check in frequently

- Unanticipated challenges
- Manage the expectations (performance metrics)
- Offer and provide support
- Take time to listen to and understand the unique needs of each team member



➤ Manager's Role – Remote Workforce

1. Promote a good company culture and provide training / education
2. Be proactive and responsive to problems, issues, and complaints
3. Appropriate follow-through and follow up!
4. Establish criteria for success up front and discuss progress on a regular basis
5. Clarify and prioritize which tasks are most critical and which can be deferred
6. Set intermediate reviews to determine progress on tasks

➤ Manager's Role – Build Trust & Confidence

A **shared mission, collaborative spirit, and strategic team building** will instill trust in remote workers:

- Establish, revisit, or clarify team mission statement
 - Goals & Objectives
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities
- Encourage collaborative projects
 - Team (department) effort will result in success
 - Promote individual thinking – creativity regarding process improvement
 - “How we can do things better?”
- Facilitate regular videoconference team meetings
- Give frequent feedback on successes and challenges
- Ask for and thank staff for feedback

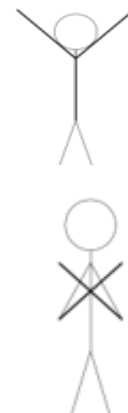
Transparent, frequent communication – Team meetings as well as one-on-one sessions

Department metrics – team meetings

Individual team member metrics – one-on-one meetings

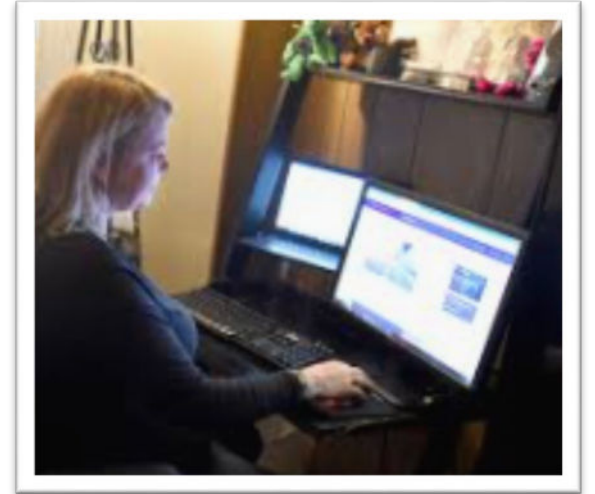
Positive feedback – roll up into team meetings / review during individual meetings

Performance improvement – review / discuss during individual meetings. Document, summarize, and forward to team member. The final step – follow up.



➤ Manager Responsibilities

- Be a positive force / influence on others
- Communicate effectively
- Uphold performance standards
- Filter issues to determine what needs to be raised with HR or management



➤ Manager Responsibilities

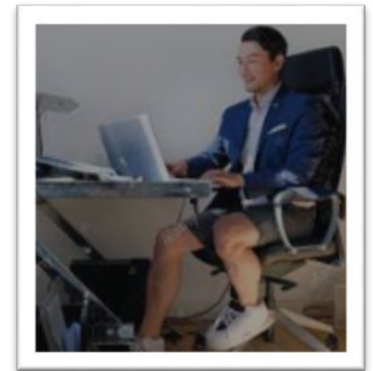
Positive Communication requires that you actively engage your employees. As a manager, it is not okay to ignore issues in the workplace or remotely.

Dealing With Difficult Employees

- Respond positively to challenging workers
- Explain your concerns
- Give specific examples
- Offer suggestions
- Avoid criticizing
- Stay focused
- Be firm
- State your willingness to help
- Agree on an action plan

➤ Manager Responsibilities

- Remember, it's what you are (your title) while at work, not who you are (as a person), to which your employees are responding.
 - You are the face of the company (in person or remote)
 - Negative attitude / interactions reflect on the entire organization
 - Most employee concerns can be dealt with early or avoided through positive communication



➤ Manager's Responsibility

Leadership of remote workers requires building and maintaining an infrastructure of **communication, connection and collaboration**

Ensure that the team has the right **tools** and **norms** to communicate and collaborate effectively:

- Work schedules
- Project timelines and updates
- Changes to deliverables
- Who is responsible for final decisions
- Meeting agendas and notes
- Coverage schedule for planned and unplanned absences
- Timely support (technical & departmental)

➤ Manager Responsibilities

Manager's daily responsibility or Contact Schedule with remote employees

Remote management is not much different from managing employees on-site. The most significant difference is a shift in management style from “observation” – seeing the employees at their workstation – to managing results remotely (performance metrics).

- Communicate effectively
- Give clear notice of expectations
- Create opportunity to meet standards
- Provide feedback on performance
 - Follow through with performance evaluations
 - Issue disciplinary actions when necessary
 - Positive praise where & when appropriate
 - Avoid the “everyone gets a trophy or ribbon recognition” approach

➤ Remote Worker Responsibility

Accountability & Productivity

Accountability

- **Not all workers work at the same pace**
- Managers need to know how long “specific work activities take to accomplish” (tracking)
 - Daily work activity
 - Weekly work activity
 - Project based activity

Productivity Meetings with team member

- Recognizes performers – watch for burnout – over productive (self driven / motivated – super performers)
 - These team members may establish workdays that never end.
 - Overtime Authorization policy – nonexempt
 - Track exempt work time – if needed
- Track hours
- Discuss concerns
- Identify roadblocks to success
 - Remediate / follow up



➤ Remote Worker – The challenges

Face-to-face communications – physical contact – no more.

(a) Remote Support Access on Demand or (b) Wait for a Response

- Reduced / limited access to managerial support
 - May create frustration – Remote worker feels manager is out of touch with worker needs

Access to common information – No one person knows everything

- Increased or added time plus additional effort to obtain the same information from coworkers was quick in the office setting.
- Simple answers to questions can be a challenge
 - Create delayed response time
 - Delay / Stop individual productivity waiting for answer to question(s)
 - Cause remote worker frustration

**** A lack of “mutual (shared) knowledge” among remote workers translates to reduced productivity and a reduced level of confidence by the manager in the remote worker’s ability to perform and meet productivity requirements.*

Social Isolation

- **One of the most common challenges over an extended period of working remotely**
 - Creates a sense of a “one-person island” – Enduring corporate demands / requirements in an isolated environment
 - Corporate (department) “push for more production” – No outlet for low moral / anxiety / work depression
 - Remote work – looks for new job – filling the void experience in the remote work environment

➤ Manager Problem Assessment / Prepare

Don't think about the person, think about Cause and Effect.

- Focus on specific behavior or attitudes
- Identify why or what is the problem
- Think solely in terms of the job
- Be objective

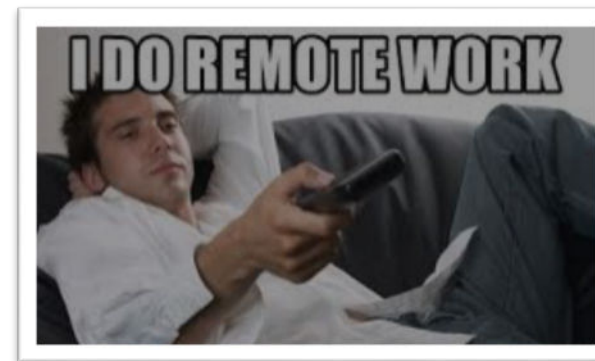
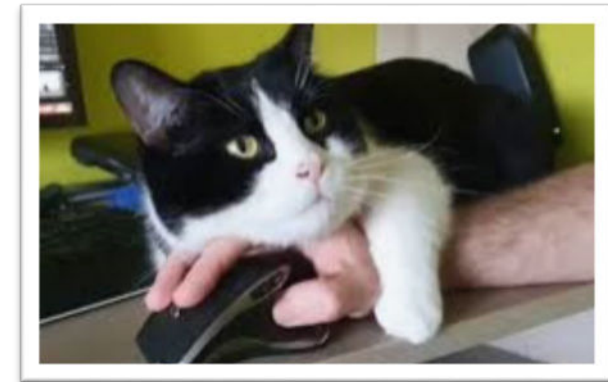
➤ Manager - Resolving Individual Remote Workplace Issues

Individual discussions / remote or One-on-one meetings – informal or formal with witness(es)

- Be direct
- Be professional
- Deal with issues
 - **There is a problem**
 - **We've got a problem**
 - **You've got a problem**



- Avoid traps
- Goal setting
- Common benefits



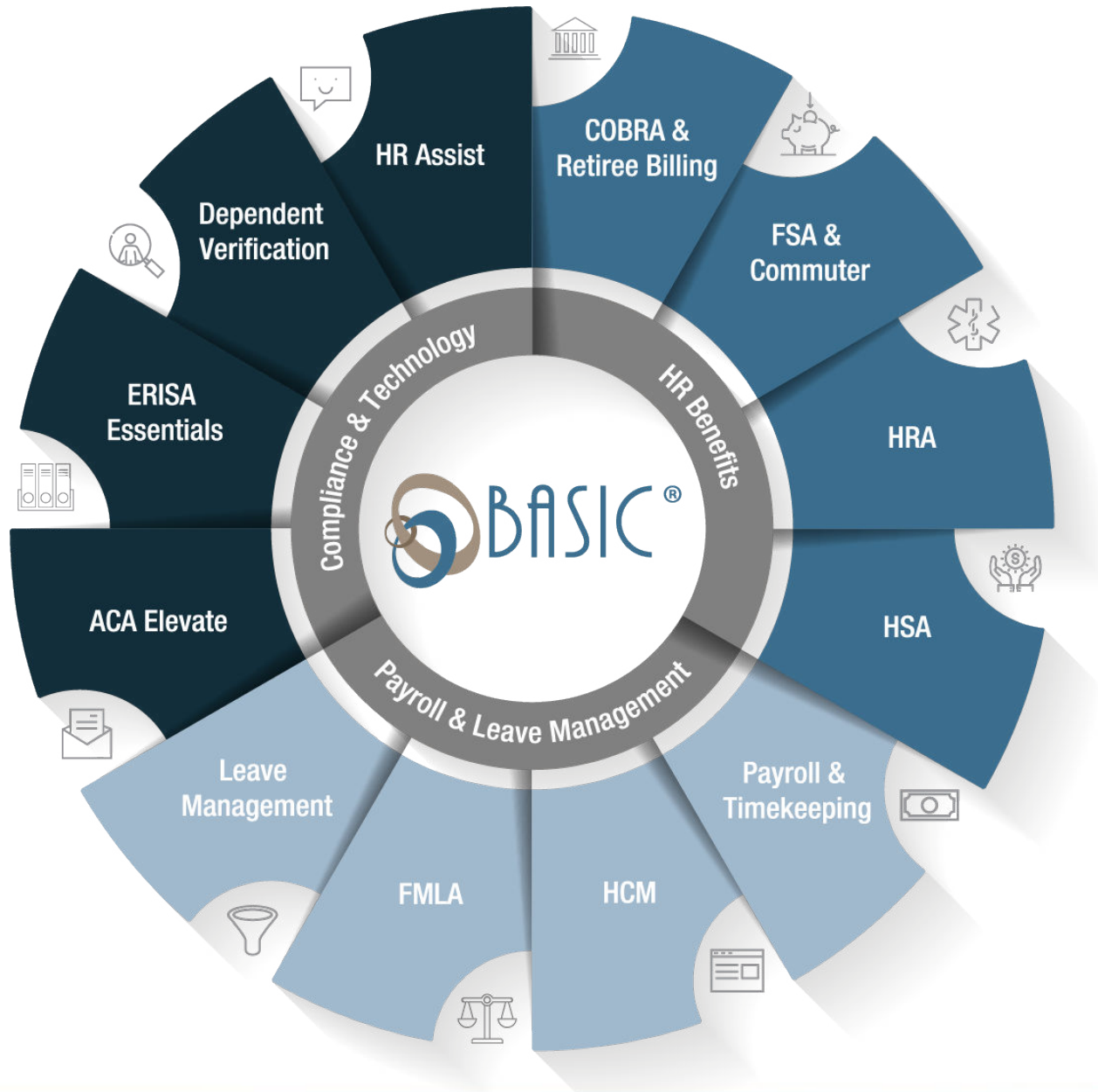
➤ WFH Transition Leadership Priority

- 1) **Recognize** that your greatest asset is your staff
- 2) **Communicate** the need / reasons for change
- 3) **Provide** resources, technology, and support to facilitate transition to WFH
- 4) **Train and Educate** managers, supervisors, and team leaders
 - Uniform policies & practices during transition
 - Department / company support – access to tools and resource
- 5) **Department / Company Resource Center – On Demand** response to questions – facilitate fast turnaround time on questions. A “need help” resource center
 - Staffed by field experts – capable of answering questions and putting in place action items
 - 1) **Department** – Technical resource On Demand
 - 2) **Department** – “Going off-line unscheduled” support team
 - 3) **IT** – Technical resource “on demand” not a “work order / ticket process”
 - 4) **Senior Management** – Accessible (not in meetings / no delayed response)



QUESTIONS





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