



Working remotely: 3 concerns and ways to address them

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With remote work, you might find yourself needing to be available at odd hours so you're awake at the same time as a colleague across the world. (Envato Elements pic)

According to a recent survey, more than half of businesses say remote-work options are a top priority when looking for a new role post-pandemic. Yet, if you've never held a flexible or work-from-home job, you might have doubts about whether working remotely as a permanent arrangement is a good idea.

Maybe you've seen one too many online job listings that sound too good to be true. Or perhaps you're just so used to going into an office that it's hard to imagine doing anything else.

Whatever the case, making the switch to remote work can be daunting. Here are a few common concerns, and some ways to address them.

1. You won't really be part of a team

If you're just one of just a few folks who work from home, there's the risk that in-office teammates might be prioritised, leaving you feeling like you're not an equal member of the team. This is why it's important to bear in mind that remote work has become increasingly common, especially in light of the pandemic.

Businesses are realising it's not a smart hiring move to limit their search for talent just to, say, Kuala Lumpur or Singapore – the best talent could be located anywhere in the world.

And over the past decade or so, technology that makes working from anywhere just as easy as working in an office has become readily accessible, which means teamwork doesn't suffer.



Some people worry about not being an equal member of the team if they're not in the office, but if everyone works remotely, it levels the playing field. (Envato Elements pic)

Tip: Look for companies that are “remote first” or “100% remote”, meaning the company has a work-from-anywhere policy, where all or most team members work remotely. That way, communication and processes will be optimised to benefit teams spread across multiple locations.

When everyone is working remotely, it levels the playing field.

2. Time zone differences make collaboration difficult

Remote collaboration tends to be more asynchronous – it's quite likely that a teammate might be working while you're sleeping, or vice-versa. Or you might sometimes find yourself having to work at odd hours so you're awake at the same time as a colleague across the world.

But when many teams, both remote work and co-located, use online communication and project management software, collaboration practices often look very similar for everyone. Technology has made remote collaboration just as easy, if not easier, than being in an office together.

This is why it's especially important for remote teams to have clear communication about work hours and availability.

Tip: Various free online tools and applications are available at your disposal for scheduling meetings across time zones or seeing when a teammate is reachable, so take advantage of them.

3. Remote jobs aren't legitimate or aren't as good an opportunity

In every industry, there's the good and the bad, and while there might be some individuals or questionable businesses looking to take advantage of people willing to work remotely, it's a mistake to characterise every such job as a scam.

Employees these days are looking for the flexibility and work-life balance that remote positions offer. (Envato Elements pic)

In fact, many established companies and growing startups are turning to remote hiring or even a fully distributed structure as a smart business strategy. Businesses are realising that many of the best candidates are looking for the flexibility and work-life balance that remote positions offer.

Tip: Do your research. Many remote-first companies emphasise this aspect of their organisation in job listings or on their website, and tend to be upfront about compensation, expectations for availability, and collaboration practices.

Note, however, that if remote work isn't a focus in a company's communications, then it may not be in practice, either.