WORKING REMOTELY

Statistics, Data, How, and Why

Go back in time 50+ years and working remotely never came into play. Instead, employees were expected to be in the office from 9 am to 5 pm five days per week.

Fast forward to today and everything has changed. While there are tens of millions of people who still work a regular schedule from the comfort of an on-site office, there are just as many who are taking advantage of working remotely.

01 Questions

02 Benefits

03 Reasons

04 The future

Here is how the North Carolina Department of Commerce defines remote work:

"Remote work is labeled many ways. We define it as work completed in an environment other than the employer workplace. This can include working from a home office for employees & contractors and/or working from any other imaginable environment (hotel, beach, in transit, etc.). Remote work is a fast growing trend in the workplace with 3 out of 5 North American workers stating they can work remotely."

While that entire passage is important, the one detail that really stands out can be found in the last sentence: Remote work is a fast growing trend in the workplace with 3 out of 5 North American workers stating they can work remotely.

In other words, 60 percent of workers in North America have the opportunity to work remotely. This is a huge number, with many expecting it to grow in the years to come.

60% of workers

With all this in mind, there is an important question to address:

Why has remote working become so popular in North America, as well as other parts of the world?

While every company has its own reasons for adopting this arrangement, here are some of the biggest benefits:

Worker retention. Simply put, the large majority of people enjoy the ability to work remotely. This provides them with flexibility to balance their personal and professional lives. As a result, people with remote working capabilities are more likely to stick with their company.

Increased productivity. Many companies have found that employees are more productive when working from a remote setting. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that they don't have to waste time commuting to and from the office.

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Cost savings. Every company is interested in saving money. Remote work practices can save on expenses related to travel, time, training, and employee turnover.

How it's Done?

One of the primary reasons for the growth of remote work is access to advanced technology.

In the past, before the days of the internet, it was imperative for employees to gather in the same office every day of the week. After all, the best methods of communication included face to face meetings and the telephone.

This is no longer the case, with advanced technology allowing for efficient and effective communication, even when employees are not in a central location. This technology includes but is not limited to:

01 Enterprise instant messaging applications

02 Email

03 Mobile apps

04 Text messaging

Through this technology, employees find it easy to remain efficient when working remotely. For example, an instant messaging program can provide access to features such as: chat rooms, video chat, and screen sharing. Review these statistics (courtesy of GlobalWorkplaceAnalytics.com) for a better idea of just how common working remotely has become:

* 3.7 million employees (2.8% of the workforce) now work from home at least half the time.

* Regular work-at-home, among the non-self-employed population, has grown by 103% since 2005.

* 50% of the US workforce holds a job that is compatible with at least partial telework and approximately 20-25% of the workforce teleworks at some frequency.

* 80% to 90% of the US workforce says they would like to telework at least part time.

These statistics prove two things to be true:

Telecommuting continues to become more common in the United States.

Employees in the United States are interested in working remotely, even if only part of the time.

Reasons to Use Instant Messaging

At this point, you realize that working remotely is the wave of the future. With a growing number of companies moving in this direction, it's important for each organization to have a clear plan for internal communication.

Instant messaging fits this need, as it allows coworkers to communicate in a real-time and efficient manner.

Here are some of the primary reasons why **instant messaging** has become the number one communication tool among companies with a distributed workforce:

Real-time communication. Email remains popular, but the problem with this is that people are not communicating in real-time. The same cannot be said about instant messaging, as every message is sent and received without delay. This allows workers to communicate as if they are in a face to face environment.

Everyone can get involved. With an IM application, it's simple for every employee, regardless of location, to converse with others. By creating a private network, everyone in the company will have access to everyone else.

High level of features. The "backbone" of instant messaging is the ability to send and receive text based messages. However, these applications go well beyond this. An example of this is video chat. With this feature, users have the opportunity to see each other while they communicate in real time.

When you combine these benefits with the growth of distributed companies, it's easy to see why instant messaging will remain a popular platform for internal communication.

Conclusion

There will always be companies that fight against letting employees work remotely. However, there is no denying the fact that the telecommuting trend continues to grow with each passing year.
Thanks to the use of technology, there is no reason to believe that this trend will reverse at any point in the near future.