

5 Ways to Support the Wellness of Remote Workers

HR Exchange Network | Francesca Di Meglio | October 10, 2023

Remote work brings with it a unique set of mental health and wellness concerns. For starters, many may feel isolated, especially if they work from their home for hours on end without other people around them. In addition, they may feel disconnected with their colleagues and those "water cooler" opportunities. Because many of them work from home, they have a hard time turning off and shutting down devices, so they end up working more hours, which can lead to stress or even burnout.

Human Resources has a challenge in supporting remote workers. HR Exchange Network recently turned to the experts on Featured, formerly known as Terkel, to ask for advice on how to help remote workers manage their wellness at work. Discover their responses:

Organize Mindfulness

"One effective strategy I've implemented in my fully remote company is called 'Mindful Mondays.' It's a virtual meeting where we all start the week by setting our intentions, sharing our challenges, and practicing mindfulness.

It's a space where vulnerability meets support, fostering a sense of community and belonging. The success of this practice lies in its simplicity and adaptability, making mental health more accessible and a shared journey, rather than a solitary struggle.

Each session is a mix of professional insights, peer support, and practical tools, tailored to the unique needs of remote working environments, which helps in reducing feelings of stress, overwhelm, or isolation."-Bayu Prihandito, Certified Psychology Expert, Life Coach, and Founder, Life Architekture

Offer Balance and Flexibility

"At Compt, our company's foundational culture revolves around balance and belonging, which has played a pivotal role in how we address the unique mental health and wellness needs of our fully remote team.

In today's virtual work environment, it's more important than ever to ensure that everyone feels supported and connected, even when they're physically distant.

One strategy that has proven incredibly effective for us is fostering a sense of belonging and community.

We've implemented several initiatives to achieve this, like virtual coffee chats (which we call Bevvyy Buddies), check-ins (like weekly 1-on-1 meetings), weekly game chats where we have the option to gather in a Zoom room and relax, and flexible schedules.

We have core working hours but empower employees to better balance their work and personal lives. If you need to go to a doctor's appointment or leave early for a kid's soccer game, go! We

also make a concerted effort to celebrate achievements, both big and small."-Amy Spurling, CEO and Founder, Compt

Focus on Communication and Stress Management

"Currently, we are addressing the unique mental health and wellness needs of remote employees by providing comprehensive training that addresses the importance of having good communication protocols.

This includes developing a well-defined system for communicating about tasks and deadlines in an understanding manner. Additionally, we have implemented a strategy of offering virtual self-care, wellness activities such as encouraging different ways to manage stress through relaxation techniques like mindfulness meditation and yoga.

These practices have proven to promote feelings of calmness, motivation, and self-care among our remote team members."-Michael Alexis, CEO, Virtual Team Building

Combat Isolation

"One prevalent concern is the feeling of isolation among remote workers. To combat this, it's essential to foster a sense of community and connection. Regular virtual team-building activities, daily check-ins, and opportunities for casual virtual interactions can help bridge the gap.

Another effective strategy is encouraging a clear work-life balance by setting boundaries for working hours. This helps reduce burnout and ensures that employees have adequate downtime.

CEOs should also promote the use of mental health resources, like counseling or virtual wellness programs, to support employees as they navigate the unique challenges of remote work. By prioritizing mental health, CEOs can ensure a more productive, engaged, and resilient remote workforce."-Nilou Esmaeilpour, Clinical Director and Registered Clinical Counselor, Lotus Therapy

Create a Supportive Culture

"In this era of remote work, it's crucial to prioritize the mental health and well-being of our remote employees, especially with the widespread adoption of remote work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One strategy that has proven particularly effective in fostering well-being within a virtual work environment is nurturing a supportive and connected remote work culture.

We encourage our team members to set clear boundaries between their work and personal lives, reminding them to take regular breaks to prevent burnout, and actively facilitating social connections among colleagues, even in the virtual realm.

Additionally, leveraging technology to provide remote counseling services can be a valuable resource for employees facing mental health challenges while working remotely."-Catherine Mattice, Founder and CEO, Civility Partners