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What is this?

15 biz leaders predict effects of the remote work trend



L-R: Robert Dumas, Natalie Ruiz, Andrew Duffell, Deni Tato, Daniel Serfaty, Laura Doehle, Kirk W. McLaren, Daniel Wilson, Joy Frestedt, Mary-Cathryn Kolb, Kieran Shanahan, Brent Maugel, Robert Newland, Jason Dunn, David Wescott



The Business Journals Leadership Trust
By Business Journals Leadership Trust Expert Panel®

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When the Covid-19 pandemic struck, many businesses were forced to set up remote work arrangements. While some companies have returned to the office, many others intend to retain full or partial remote work arrangements well into the future.

The shift toward telecommuting is bound to change the business landscape in a big way. That's why we asked 15 members of [Business Journals Leadership Trust](#) what they foresee happening as a result of the growing trend toward remote work. Here's what they believe some of the long-term impacts might be.

1. Expect cross-state tax implications.

Adopting a remote workforce can expand your pool of applicants outside your HQ state. But businesses may not realize they could be expanding their sales tax obligations by doing so. The same could happen for employees who live across state lines and now work fully remotely. States are being lenient for now, but we can expect them to want registrations for the newly added states if this becomes the standard. -

[Robert Dumas, TaxConnex](#)

2. Remote work may be a catalyst for better diversity, equity and inclusion.

Remote work can be a catalyst for better diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace. Recruiting the best talent – not just the closest – offering flexible scheduling and relying more on results instead of who best navigates office dynamics is a win. A remote model can lead to significant gains in bringing more underrepresented groups to the table. - [Natalie Ruiz, AnswerConnect](#)

3. Companies will have the opportunity to earn employee loyalty through flexibility.

Companies that offer more flexibility in terms of working arrangements have the opportunity to earn the loyalty of their employees, who in turn will work more productively and want to contribute more to the company. A negative is the lack of serendipitous connections between co-workers or employees from different divisions who form relationships, which can spur innovative improvements. - [Andrew Duffell, Research Park at FAU](#)

4. Businesses will need to incorporate trust-building practices into wellness offerings.

Trust is the foundation of any healthy team, especially those that are remote. On top of the pandemic, political division and civil unrest have left many of us shaken. Incorporating trust-building practices into your wellness offering will help employees feel safe with their colleagues so they can bring their full selves to work, enabling the team to perform at its highest level. - [Deni Tato, Corporate Consciousness](#)

5. Corporate culture will be more important than ever.

Pre-Covid-19, partial or full remote working was a differentiating employee benefit. The pandemic leveled that field. Those companies that didn't offer it before do now, and many of them find employees are happier and, often, more productive. As a result, corporate culture will become more important in attracting and retaining talent, as staff will expect the same level of interaction and professional development as they had onsite. - [Daniel Serfaty, Aptima, Inc.](#)

6. Businesses will need to give teams the ability to interact socially.

As businesses embrace remote work they need to remember that people want and need social interaction with their team. It's important that each team determines what that means to them and that they have the ability to be flexible about when and how those interactions take place. - [Laura Doehle, Elevation Business Consulting](#)

7. Remote workforces will escape the 'speed of paper.'

Escaping the "speed of paper" is a key benefit of embracing a remote workforce. Remote workforces teach teams to produce, share and store content in one effective step. In addition, electronic data is easier to update and easier to analyze or mine for actionable insights. Often, paper content cannot be found or deteriorates and information needs to be re-keyed to perform analysis. - [Kirk W. McLaren, Foresight CFO](#)

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8. Flexibility will provide a better work-life balance.

I think the flexibility that remote working provides will, in the long run, make the balance between work and personal life better. It will most likely be an employee-by-employee decision on how much if any remote working will take place. - [Daniel Wilson, Lacey Thaler Reilly Wilson Architecture & Preservation](#)

9. The quality of work and training may suffer.

On the negative side, I predict two things. The first is poor quality work from those who are not efficient or effective in a remote setting. Second, poor training can arise in difficult remote interactions when accountability for “actual” teaching and learning is not measured clearly enough and competency in a given topic is simply not realized. - [Joy Frestedt, Frestedt Incorporated](#)

10. Remote meetings could create a more intimate experience.

There are bursts of productivity because people aren't commuting or spending as much time in meetings. But many people also struggle with child care, distance learning, isolation or financial worries. Although Zoom can't replicate in-person meetings, it's a more intimate experience in some ways. You get a peek into someone's home office or dining room, and their kids or pets sometimes make cameos. - [Mary-Cathryn Kolb, brrr^o](#)

11. Maintaining company culture will be a challenge.

Most successful businesses have a distinct culture that defines who they are and how they operate. Maintaining that culture presents new challenges for businesses with

remote workers, particularly when they hire new staff members. Leaders would be well-served to think proactively about how they will onboard new team members and instill the company's values in them in a remote working situation. - [Kieran Shanahan, Shanahan Law Group, PLLC](#)

12. Corporate communication will continue to improve.

As we look for silver linings in the benefits of remote work arrangements, we certainly see families having more time together. Surprisingly, corporate communications have improved as we focus on regularly scheduled connection meetings and both personal and professional information shares – “Show and Tell” has gone corporate. What's missing? The basic human need for socialization. - [Brent Mangel, Mangel Architects](#)

13. Companies that haven't researched labor laws may face consequences.

We're seeing a lot of risk in labor and employment. There are too many employers out there running remote teams without having gone through a thorough evaluation of how changes in employment law and applicable regulations impact their policies and remote work. Unless this is done, we foresee an avalanche of cases that will cost employers dearly. - [Robert Newland, Newland Associates](#)

14. Investment in office real estate will decline.

Increasing acceptance of remote work arrangements devalues traditional office real estate. Logically, investment in traditional office real estate will likely decline relatively, both in existing infrastructure and new construction. - [Jason Dunn, CFA, DACS Asphalt & Concrete](#)

15. Businesses may be able to grow more quickly.

Working remotely will reduce overhead costs and allow for considerable growth without having to increase the office footprint. This may save business owners money and allow them to grow more aggressively. - [David Wescott, Transblue](#)