

What small businesses need to know about remote work

5 tips to keep your employees productive and your business secure



Working from home is here to stay

Because remote work saves money and improves productivity, working from home has become more prevalent.

56%

of companies worldwide allow remote work, and upwards of 85% in the US have policies that allow it.¹

73%

of teams across the globe will include remote workers by 2028²

Working remotely isn't going away, but it needs to be done right. Remote employees shouldn't feel out of the loop or disconnected. Here are some tips to keep your employees working productively, no matter where they may be located.

2X

Small businesses are twice as likely to hire full-time remote employees³

1

Make sure video conferences are secure

When you can't be in the same room, a great face-to-face meeting experience is the next best thing. With video conferencing, you can communicate easily, but it needs to be:

- Secure with built-in encryption to protect the privacy of both users and data
- Easy to use with one-click sign-on, high-quality video, and simple screen sharing
- Protected, so sensitive data isn't exposed and conversations can't be accessed by unintended audiences



2

Help teams collaborate easily

Make it easy for team members to stay on the same page using a virtual workspace that captures all of the interactions and information about a project. Look for a collaborative workspace that:



- Offers secure exchange of messages and files, across devices
- Makes it easy to search the space to find conversations and documents
- Allows you to privately message one person or create a group chat in seconds
- Includes a digital whiteboard for easy brainstorming
- Integrates with meetings, so you can keep the collaboration going

3

Never forget about security

Small businesses can't afford to overlook security when setting up remote workspaces. You need to keep your information safe no matter where your employees are located. Look for security solutions that:

- Provide secure network access, no matter what device people are using
- Protect your sensitive data by verifying the identity of users, devices, and applications
- Defend against threats with cloud-delivered security
- Detect and block cyberattacks



4

Embrace simplicity



As a small business owner, you still have a business to run, so you need simple, secure IT solutions. To reduce IT complexity, look for solutions that:

- Integrate meetings, calling, Wi-Fi, and security, so they work together
- Are easy to deploy by your employees without the need for onsite IT
- Are simple to manage
- Offer financial flexibility, with pay-as-you-need pricing options

5

Go beyond tools

With the right tools, employees can be just as productive virtually as they would in the office. But don't forget that remote working may be new and potentially challenging for some people. To support them, consider offering:

- Training, support, and fun activities like virtual social gatherings or "water cooler" calls
- Home-office upgrades to improve ergonomics and Internet connections
- Support for lunch breaks, stretching, and exercise to keep everyone physically and mentally healthy. (Don't let people work 16-hour days just because they're at home.)



We can help

Improve how your virtual teams connect, so they are able to produce their best work. Learn more about our Cisco Designed portfolio of solutions for small business. Let's talk.



1. <https://www.owllabs.com/state-of-remote-work/2018>
 2. <https://www.upwork.com/press/2019/03/05/third-annual-future-workforce-report/>
 3. <https://www.owllabs.com/state-of-remote-work/2017>