How Remote Working Promotes Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

Written by Ajay Kaul   February 16, 2021

Diversifying your workforce can boost profit and performance.

Remote work has been a growing trend for years, but COVID-19 has forced many businesses to shift their workforces to a work-from-home environment to ensure the safety of their employees and help slow the spread of the virus. This workplace shift in response to the current pandemic has offered organizations the opportunity to reset and improve team dynamics.

Diversity, Inclusion More Important Than Ever

We all know about the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. This still holds true when working remotely. During times of crisis, the focus on diversity and inclusion becomes even more essential, but addressing it isn't always as forthright as it might initially appear. Leaders play a pivotal role in shaping the dynamics of their team and organization.

Hiring a remote workforce provides an opportunity to bring more diverse perspectives, from different geographies and backgrounds and across all job levels, functions and teams to the table. According

to [McKinsey Global Institute](#), gender-diverse organizations have a 15% higher chance to gain an above-average profitability, than organizations that are not gender-diverse. Another finding states that ethnically diverse organizations characteristically experience a 35% increase in performance versus non-diverse counterparts. Furthermore, [Boston Consulting Group](#) found that management teams from diverse backgrounds, generate 19 times more revenue than non-diverse teams.

Diversity has become increasingly important to job seekers as well. A recent survey from [The Manifest](#) found that 70% of job seekers value a company's commitment to diversity when assessing potential employers. Hence, talent seekers should make a note that to attract the best talent, they need to place [greater emphasis on diversity and inclusion efforts](#).

Remote Work's Relation to Diversity and Inclusion

Here is how remote work helps eliminate biases regarding location, disability, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and more.

- **Remote work helps breaks down location barriers.** Location bias is often dismissed, yet it's an important element in hiring diverse candidates. There are often many talented prospective hires who aren't willing to uproot their life and move to another city. Without the restriction of location, organizations have the liberty to recruit diverse talent from anywhere around the globe. Similarly, employees can choose where they want to operate, based on factors such as location preferences, cost of living and proximity to family and friends. From a recruiter's point of view, they can cast a wider net and reach more diverse candidates with exceptional talent and experience.
- **Remote work helps close the gender gap.** Remote operations offer better opportunities and greater flexibility for women. This is one of the major benefits of remote working. The ability to work from home can help close the gender gap, especially in conventionally male-dominated industries. This type of flexible, remote work can be especially attractive to single, working mothers, enabling more women to pursue professional careers.
- **Remote work makes it easy for workers with special needs.** Millions of people live with special needs, which not only impacts their everyday activities, but also job opportunities. It is common that people with disabilities often have to pass on an opportunity for which they're qualified because of challenges related to commuting, accessibility within the workplace and more. By working remotely, it allows these employees to work in an atmosphere that's more customized to their needs.
- **Remote work helps eliminate visual bias in the workplace.** Failure to integrate with the rest of the employees can lead to both conscious and unconscious visual biases for some employees. Visual bias leads to assumptions about a person based on their appearances, such as skin color, hairstyle, fashion, tattoos, etc. Such visual bias may make it challenging for some people to not only find appropriate jobs, but also advance in their career. Remote work helps eliminate the visual element from work. This becomes even more beneficial if it relates to race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation — in a remote working environment, these visual biases are less apparent.

How to Support Diverse Hiring Through Remote Work

Hiring diverse candidates isn't about checking off boxes, but rather about finding the best talent for your organization by seeking candidates with diverse perspectives and backgrounds. Here are some tips to find diverse remote workers.

- **Broaden your job search parameters.** As you start your hunt for qualified, talented, diverse candidates, open your search parameters to include remote Look for candidates from across the globe who are open to remote work opportunities.
- **Write inclusive job descriptions for remote workers.** If candidates see that your company is based in a particular city, they will be much less inclined to apply if it's out of their geographical range. In your job description, make it clear that your company is open to hiring remote workers and how you promote diversity and inclusion within the workplace.
- **Create policies and procedures to support remote work.** Organizations should re-examine their processes and policies if they truly want to support diversity and inclusion and make remote work a success. To make remote hiring and onboarding smooth and hassle-free for the remote employees, it's imperative to update current company policies and procedures to accommodate remote interviews, onboarding, performance management, etc.
- **Promote a culture of transparent communication.** Creating a culture that makes remote workers feel heard and part of a larger team will allow organizations to leverage their remote talent to the best of their ability and have higher chances at retaining these employees.

Right now is the time to make the best out of what remote working offers in terms of sustaining diversity and inclusion initiatives. You can significantly improve company culture, employee engagement level and earn respect from the communities you serve, all while hiring the best talent for your organization.

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