

Checklist: Is a Remote Workforce Right for Us?

According to a study by Owl Labs, 83 percent of respondents agree that the ability to work from anywhere makes them happier.¹

Making a decision to commit to a remote workforce over the long term is a classic risk-reward equation. We've included a few starter checklists along with recommendations to help your team weigh potential risks against the potential benefits.

According to a recent LinkedIn survey, optimism for a remote workforce is highest in the heavily digital industries such as software, media, and finance with more than three quarters of respondents endorsing the idea that remote work and efficient operations go hand-in-hand.²

Establishing a remote work program has a number of potential benefits for business resilience:

- It ensures senior leaders can lead from anywhere during a crisis.
- With remote workforce support as standard operating procedure, employees become adept at how to do business remotely and securely.
- A distributed workforce connecting to cloud-based infrastructure is inherently more resilient than those that rely on centralized, on-premises environments vulnerable to single point of failure scenarios.

How to assess third-party business continuity risks

Questions to ask endpoint security vendors:

- What are your business continuity plans and procedures? How often do you review them?
- Which business continuity procedures do you practice on a regular basis?
- Can your solution secure both corporate-owned and BYO devices? If so, how so?
- How can your technology continue to protect endpoints when they're disconnected?
- Describe your technology's reliance on on-premise access or presence. Is your technology cloud-delivered as well as cloud-native?
- How are your customer support representatives able to provide support securely when working remotely?

Questions to ask Managed Security Service Providers (MSSPs):

- What are your business continuity plans and procedures? How often do you review them?
- Where is your service delivery infrastructure located? How do staff members access it remotely and securely?
- Have you ever experienced a service interruption and how did you handle it?
- Who on your team is responsible for responding to service disruptions? Are these dedicated resources? How are they trained?
- How do you measure business resilience? What are your KPIs?
- What makes your business continuity program better than your competitors'?

¹ Owl Labs. "The State of Remote Work 2019". September 2019.

² LinkedIn. "As remote work sweeps the U.S., 55% say it can succeed in their industry". George Anders. May 13, 2020.

The following checklists can serve as a starting point for a team brainstorming session to help decide if a remote workforce strategy works for your organization.

OPERATIONAL RISKS	
RISK	MITIGATING RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Cybersecurity: Can we overcome risks targeting our remote workforce workstations when IT is also working from home?</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p>	<p>Implement VMware Workspace ONE and VMware Carbon Black Cloud™ to securely manage all the devices your remote workforce uses to connect to corporate data and apps.</p>
<p>Employee productivity: Have we enabled our employees with the right tools and workflows to overcome any productivity risks?</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure employee expectations are understood. • Survey your remote workforce to determine whether their operational needs are being met. • Provide a way for remote workers to register requests for new technologies and/or self-serve for IT support tasks they can do themselves (e.g. password resets). At the same time, find a way to establish and enforce employee accountability.
<p>Customer service: Can we continue to serve our client base at every stage of their buying journey even when all of our employees are remote?</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess your organization's ability to win new client opportunities as well as support clients over the long term when most (or all) employees work from home. • Consider exceptions to SOP (e.g. emergencies) as well as any necessary changes to your SLAs. • Address any gaps in your delivery infrastructure before changing your remote workforce policy.

CULTURAL RISKS	
RISK	MITIGATING RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Team cohesion: Are we prepared to overcome the challenges in team unity when we're all remote work warriors?</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regular company-wide communications - over web conferencing. • Ensure that all team leaders and supervisors do the same with their own teams. • Pro-tip: Throwing monthly or quarterly social events can help maintain team cohesion when working remotely.
<p>Worker isolation: Are we ready to assess and help support employees who may feel isolated from time to time?</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the most of social channels and networks (emphasis is on social). • Set up at least one Slack channel or Facebook work group that is entirely dedicated to non-work related hobbies.. • Consider setting up a buddy system or other type of 1:1 relationship to cultivate employee collaboration and connection.
<p>Worker burnout: Can we recognize the signs of employee burnout and are we ready and willing to proactively address it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage employees to establish a regular routine to set healthy boundaries between work-time and family-time. • Evaluate performance metrics and how they may need to adjust based on a remote workforce context • Offer support to employees who may exhibit symptoms of burnout or express feelings of being overworked.

According to Kate Lister, President of Global Workplace Analytics, remote workforce programs could save U.S. employers over \$30B a day, which represents an opportunity to gain back losses during office closures due to COVID-19.³



LEARN MORE

THE FUTURE OF REMOTE WORK: SECURING A DISTRIBUTED WORKFORCE EBOOK

Check out our one-stop-shop eBook for everything you need to know about workforce security, so your users (and you) stay safe while working remotely. After all, the easier you make it for employees to do the right thing, the better the outcome. carbonblack.com/resources/the-future-of-remote-work-securing-a-distributed-workforce

Remote Workforce Benefit Ranking

Estimate potential savings where relevant

- Lower facilities costs including:
 - Reduced rent (includes space, equipment, and another office expense)
 - Reduced service fees (facilities management, office cleaning services, etc.)
 - Estimated monthly savings _____
- Lower liability costs
 - Estimated monthly savings _____
- Geographically wider and more diverse talent pool
- Greater employee flexibility and work-life balance (reduced childcare and commuting costs)
- Greater staffing flexibility and efficiency (9-5 no longer applies)

3. Global Workplace Analytics. "Global Work-from-Home Experience Survey". Kate Lister. June 2, 2020.