



# THE STATE OF REMOTE WORK

Trends, Sentiments and Strategies



# 01

THE FUTURE  
OF WORK

# 02

UNDERSTANDING  
TECHNOLOGISTS TODAY

# 03

REMOTE WORKFORCE  
RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

# 04

ONBOARD AND RETAIN  
REMOTE WORKERS

# 05

TAKING THE  
NEXT STEP

# THE FUTURE OF WORK

## THE WAY BUSINESSES WORK IS CHANGING

Today marks an inflection point for employers; one where decisions need to be made surrounding remote work. For years, technologists wanted to work remotely. In fact, some technologists sought out employers that specifically offered this benefit. Regardless of the desire, most employers did not offer formal remote and flex work policies to their employees. While some employers worried it would have an impact on productivity, others believed it would be a detriment to organizational culture.

Almost overnight, COVID-19 forced most employers to mandate remote work indefinitely. Whether businesses had formalized policies, resources and infrastructure, they needed to act quickly to equip their teams with the right tools and information - and hope that productivity wouldn't drop.

What most businesses found, instead, was that productivity maintained. At the same time, many businesses that collected employee sentiments found that their workers were largely content working out of the office. While some are happier with the flexibility, others feel more comfortable

working in a familiar space, further away from distraction. Regardless of the reason, what was once a daunting benefit for employers to offer has since shown to work.

This leaves many employers today with an important decision to make on their remote work policies. The majority of technologists have proven their productivity levels are independent of working inside an office. They've also voiced their satisfaction with their remote work situation, and in some cases have made it clear that they won't feel comfortable working in an office for quite some time. Whether organizations choose to create a full-time remote work policy for the indefinite future, a flexible work policy or require employees to be back in the office, employers need to make a decision, and be able to justify that decision to their current employees and future hires.



# THE REMOTE WORK SPECTRUM

Many organizations define remote work and its offshoots differently – ranging from work from home to telecommuting. To simplify the spectrum of policies, we define them by remote work, flex work and in-office. At a minimum, most technologists desire flex work options, and if this isn't something your business already offers, we strongly consider you adopt this type of policy to help your acquisition and retention strategies. We also strongly recommend that businesses consider remote work policies to expand their search, and recruit highly specialized talent that's beyond a commutable distance.



## IN-OFFICE

**Defined:** Employees are expected to work in the office daily.

**Pros:**

- Easier to create organizational culture.
- In-person collaboration.
- Easier to build strong working relationships.
- Clearly defined hours and expectations.

**Cons:**

- Not desired by technologists.
- Competitive disadvantage for employer brand.
- Increased spend on office space.



## FLEX WORK

**Defined:** Employees have flexibility to work outside of the office a set number of days per week or month.

**Pros:**

- More opportunities for deep work.
- Save money on office space.
- Highly desired by technologists.
- The best of both worlds.

**Cons:**

- Requires more attention to scheduling.
- Non-immediate access to team members.
- May require hot desking/logistics.



## REMOTE WORK

**Defined:** Employees spend 100% of their time working remotely, out of the office.

**Pros:**

- Recruiters have a much wider talent pool to find the right candidate.
- Competitive advantage for employer brand.
- Save money on office space.
- Highly desired by technologists.

**Cons:**

- Technologist salaries may drastically fluctuate based on their location.
- Perceived concern about company culture.
- Not practical for all roles.



# 02

## UNDERSTANDING TECHNOLOGISTS TODAY





# UNDERSTANDING TECHNOLOGISTS TODAY

## WHY REMOTE WORK IS IMPORTANT TO THEM

Dice has been tracking technologist preference for remote work for years through the annual Tech Salary Report and similar surveys – and by doing so we’ve tracked remote work’s growing demand. As represented in the data, technologists recognize a range of personal and professional benefits from remote work policies - and in some cases, they would even be willing to take a pay cut to work remotely.

### REMOTE WORK PREFERENCES

61% of technologists interviewed for the latest Tech Salary Report said that they would prefer to work remotely at least half of the time, although only 24% said they can do so. While the data represent pre-COVID-19 sentiments, it suggests that a subset of employers were unwilling to offer more offsite flexibility due to the perceived difficulties associated with communication, management and fostering an innovative workspace.

Dice conducted a remote work survey, which technologists were asked about their opinions related to remote work. The data showed that 7% of respondents said they would even take a 5% salary cut to work remotely. Moving forward, it’s likely that technologist demand for remote and flex work will be even greater.

### How often would you prefer to work remotely?

Remote Work	Always	22%
	More than half the time, but not always	19%
Flex Work	Half the time	20%
	One day a week	18%
	A few days a month	14%
In-office	Never	3%

Source: The Dice 2020 Tech Salary Report

### What is the highest salary cut you would take to work remotely?

5% salary cut	11%
10% salary cut	7%
15% salary cut	4%
20% salary cut	3%
25% salary cut	1%
Greater than a 25% salary cut	2%

Source: The Dice Remote Work Survey

## WHY REMOTE WORK IS IMPORTANT TO THEM

### EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The professional benefits of remote work go well beyond the ability to simply work from home. In fact, 53% of technologists listed greater productivity as one of the main professional benefits they gain from remote work. Another 59% said that feeling more relaxed while working was a main benefit.

When it comes to personal benefits, most technologists (80%) agree that money saved on commuting is the main perk. Also, worth noting is that 47% of technologists said that better work/life balance is a main benefit of remote work. Today, work/life balance is one of the primary attributes that technologists value in an employer, and within this in mind, it's clear that a significant portion of technologists agree that remote work is a step in the right direction.



### What are the main professional benefits you receive from working remotely vs. working in an office?

Easier to work at home	61%
More relaxed approach	59%
More productive	53%
Avoid office politics	49%
Devoted more time to work	43%
More time for in-depth thinking	40%
More time for creative thinking	34%
More time for backlog projects	30%
More time for email & chat	25%
There are no professional benefits	9%

### What are the main personal benefits you receive from working remotely vs. working in an office?

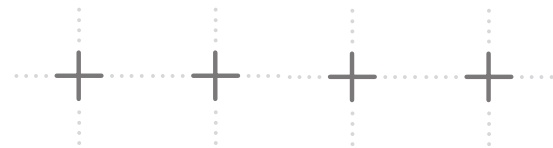
Save money on commute	80%
Easier commute	67%
More comfortable attire	67%
More control on environment	54%
More schedule control	52%
Better for the environment	48%
More time for family	48%
More work / life balance	47%
Save money on food	44%
More time for relaxation	43%
More time for hobbies	24%
There are no personal benefits	4%

## THEIR COVID-19 SENTIMENT

As COVID-19 forced employers to adopt remote work policies, Dice aimed to gather technologist opinions as it related to the pandemic, and the bigger picture; how they enjoy working from home, to what extent their workload has been impacted and how happy they are with their company's response.

The survey found that many technologists have generally enjoyed working from home. What's also interesting is that 37% of technologists believe that working remotely hasn't caused problems for company culture, while only 5% believe its caused an extreme detriment. The survey also found that technologists are seeing their workloads slightly increase, which is no surprise; companies in every industry are trying to adjust their product functionality to account for the shift in consumer behavior. Moving forward, businesses will put even more focus on things like ecommerce portals and will require technologists to develop these tools.

Also important, the survey found that technologists are generally content with their company's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Moving forward, this data will be increasingly important to recruiters, as technologists that are most dissatisfied with their employer's response to COVID-19 will also be the most likely to change companies. For recruiters, this makes it even important to be able to speak your organization's response in a clear and concise way.



### How impressed have you been with your company's response to the COVID-19 pandemic?\*

1 – Not at all impressed	6%
2	7%
3	17%
4	33%
5 – Very impressed	38%

### How much has your workload increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic?\*

1 – Has not increased	31%
2	11%
3	25%
4	23%
5 – Increased by twice as much or more	10%

### Do you think that a significant number of employees working remotely is a detriment to company culture?\*

1 – Not detrimental at all	37%
2	23%
3	30%
4	10%
5 – An extreme detriment	5%

\*Source: COVID-19 Sentiment Survey



## HOW COVID-19 CHANGED TECHNOLOGISTS' MINDSET

### REMOTE WORK

For a period, nearly every office was abruptly closed due to COVID-19. The reopening of offices, however, is a more gradual process, and that should be taken with slow, strategic steps. For technologists, an employers' remote work policy and eagerness to reopen offices may have an impact on their likeliness to apply. As the results show, 71% of technologists consider remote work to be a more important factor in a job. For recruiters, it makes it necessary to convey your company's stance on remote work in both the short- and long-term future.

### JOB SECURITY

70% of technologists said they find job security more important since the onset of COVID-19. When applying to jobs, technologists want to know the health of a company, the security of the role and how the business communicates its performance to employees. Recruiters should be ready to speak to all of these points.

### COMPANY LEADERSHIP

59% of technologists also put increased importance on company leadership. Today, they want to know who is leading the charge, what their immediate and long-term visions for the company are and how they plan to achieve those goals. By spending a few short minutes to familiarize candidates with company leaders, you can pique their interest, but also a create a sense of trust with those making company-wide decisions.

## HOW MUCH DO YOU LIKE WORKING FROM HOME?\*

NOT AT ALL

3%

VERY MUCH

42%

### Has the COVID-19 pandemic changed what you think is important in a job?\*

	More Important
Remote work	71%
Job security/stability	70%
Company's COVID -19 response	63%
Company leadership	59%
Work life balance	56%
Company benefits	50%
Fit with personal values	41%
Meaningful work	39%
Salary	34%
Ability to be creative at work	31%
Colleagues	29%
Challenging work	24%

\*Source: COVID-19 Sentiment Survey

# 03

## REMOTE WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES



# REMOTE WORKFORCE STRATEGIES

## ATTRACT CANDIDATES

It's clear: Technologists want flex or remote work options. Not only do they perceive very few negative impacts on company culture, but technologists also value a variety of benefits from remote and flex work. With this in mind, nearly every business should adopt a flex work policy for technologists that extends beyond COVID-19. At the same time, there are several indicators that employers should also consider trialing remote work.

While developing a remote or flex work policy opens new doors for recruiters, there still needs to be a strategic and organized process. Follow these key principles throughout the sourcing stage in your recruiting process:

### **INTEGRATE REMOTE HIRING WITH YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND, ESPECIALLY ONLINE**

You want your business to be an employer of choice for technologists, so you need to make clear that remote hiring and flexible work arrangements are an important part of your company culture. Use social media channels and your company's career and "About Us" pages not only to publicize your remote-work status, but also, to showcase your company's mission, values, corporate culture and emphasis on teamwork. Potential remote hires need to be able to quickly glean what working for your organization is all about – and how they would complement your team, even though they will be working off-site most or all the time.

### **DEFINE EXPECTATIONS IN YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION**

Use the job description to explain exactly what you mean. If the position is flex, outline expectations like how many days per week or month they won't be in the office. If the position is remote, make sure to mention how (and how often) they're expected to come into the office for key meetings.

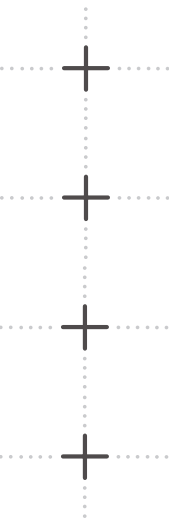
Emphasize that your company works to make all employees feel valued, which includes remote members. If possible, also talk about the overall health of the company, and how remote employees can feel confident they are joining a solid operation with future opportunity.

### **PERSONALIZE OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS**

When reaching out to the candidates, personalize your communications so that technologists know you not only welcome remote technologists, but you actively hire them. To do so, consider creating landing pages that include specific information on your remote work policies and how the company works to make each employee feel valued. You can include links to these pages in your initial outreach, which can answer questions like how often entire teams come together and the benefits that are offered. While using templated emails to reach out to potential candidates is a mistake, it's an even bigger mistake to use the same communications for remote and in-office candidates.

### **SHIFT YOUR MINDSET**

While recruiting for an in-office candidate, your search is limited to the position title and location. While recruiting for remote positions, however, your search is expanded to the entire country. This presents a tremendous amount of potential for the talent you can bring in, but it also requires a mindset shift. Recruiters should focus their search to much more specific criteria, including years of experience, specific skills and even previous organizations candidates have worked for. With a much wider pool of talent to search from, recruiters should take the steps to ensure they can create a short list of the most qualified professionals for their roles.





## INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

When it comes to interviewing remote candidates, it's important to take the time to really assess each individual. Because interviews aren't in person, it's more difficult to pick up on certain signals, like body language. While, for in-office roles, you might conduct two or three rounds of interviews, for remote roles, you may want to conduct up to four rounds before making a decision.

### ASSESSING TECHNICAL & NONTECHNICAL SKILLS

While you'll ask a lot of the same technical interview questions during remote and in-office interviews, you'll need to dig a bit deeper to make sure you are recruiting someone who can work remotely and effectively. As a starting point, you should consider using pre-employment tests to evaluate candidates' skills – technical and nontechnical.

Many employers assign test projects to remote candidates, which they are asked to complete on their own time and by a specific deadline. Some companies will bring their team together virtually to work on a trial project or solve a specific technical challenge with a potential hire. That allows them to assess the candidate's technical abilities, critical thinking and communication skills, and team chemistry, all at once.

While interviewing from home, candidates face a different set of challenges. From outside noise, to pets and children, several distractions can arise. However, this isn't a reason to dock points from a candidate. Instead, ask them to set the expectation before the interview. That way, if a dog barks during the interview, for example, it's already been addressed and the interview can continue without pause.

Also, consider setting a dress expectation. In tech, dress expectations range from casual to formal, and when one person is dressed more formally than the other, it can cause some awkwardness. Consider making the dress expectations (or lack thereof) clear during the interview scheduling period.

### QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT WANT TO ASK:

- Have you worked remotely before?
- How do you schedule your day?
- How do you stay on top of multiple projects and deadlines?
- Why do you want to work remotely?
- How do you handle distractions – and what kinds do you typically face?
- What is your biggest productivity challenge as a remote worker?
- What technology tools do you find most helpful for remote work?
- Describe a time when you failed to communicate appropriately with your remote teammates – how did you address the issue?

### QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE READY TO ANSWER:

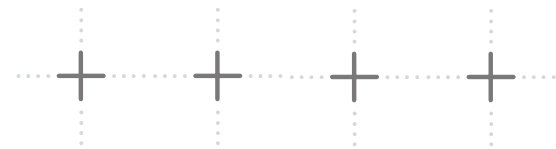
- What collaboration and workflow tools do you use?
- How do you measure success for remote employees?
- What materials and equipment are provided to remote workers?
- How does working remotely impact onboarding for this role?
- How does the remote helpdesk work, and how responsive are the support staff?
- Will I (or how often) will I be expected to travel to the office?
- What percentage of your workforce is remote?

## UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT ON SALARY

Once you've created a remote recruiting strategy, your organization needs to take a clear stance on if (and how) it will impact your salary structure. Factors like cost of living guide the salary ranges for roles in specific cities. That's why (among other reasons) salaries are vastly higher in Silicon Valley than they are in San Diego.

If your organization will open its policies to allow full-time remote workers who may be located on the other side of the country, you need to take a clear stance on how you will identify salary ranges for each role and location. For example, there will likely be a minimum of a \$10,000 difference in salary for a data engineer based in Silicon Valley compared to Houston.

This may be a good reason to identify (and stick to) salary ranges based on location and role. Many tools exist, like the Dice Salary Calculator, that organizations can use to pinpoint fair salaries based on role, experience and location.



# 04

## ONBOARD AND RETAIN REMOTE WORKERS



# ONBOARD AND RETAIN REMOTE WORKERS

## BEST PRACTICES

For remote tech workers to be successful, they need to feel a connection to their employer's culture and know that their contributions are truly valued. That starts on day one.

While you might not be able to provide an onboarding experience that's identical to your in-office experience, there's a lot you can do to make a remote worker feel welcome. Some best practices include:

- **Send a welcome package** with company-branded swag and treats like coffee to their home.
- **Set up a call before their first day** to introduce the new hire to the entire team, review roles and discuss upcoming projects.
- **Provide a structured, self-guided approach to training**, using tools like e-learning (if possible).
- **Assign the remote employee a mentor** who can teach them how things work and quickly get their questions answered.
- **Make sure new hires know how and when** they'll receive tech equipment.
- **Set up video chats** with seasoned employees and other remote workers.

That last tip can help to spark more organic relationship-building and camaraderie between remote tech workers and in-office staff. Making those personal connections is critical for retention. Another way to help facilitate informal conversation between remote and on-site workers is to set aside a few minutes before or after team meetings for people to share personal news, if they would like to.





## OFFER BENEFITS AND PERKS

Providing great benefits and perks is important for retaining all in-demand technology professionals. Because remote workers may have blurred lines between work and the rest of their life, employers need to consider more than just the benefits they provide, but also how they can offer benefits in a way that will encourage their use.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Many remote tech professionals find it challenging to advance their careers. They often miss out on career development options because they hear about them too late – or not at all. So, be sure to keep them in the loop with training vents, and invite them to take on assignments that will stretch their abilities and help them develop their skills. According to the Dice 2020 Tech Salary Report, 71% of respondents believe training and education is an important benefit – so it resonates with employees. These type of arrangements can be easily facilitated thanks to tools like video conferencing and by sending remote workers to in-person workshops.

### HOME SERVICES

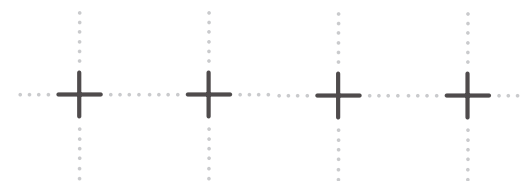
Domestic distractions and household chores can be a challenge for remote employees. For example, cooking or arranging for food can take time and effort – plus, it adds to the stress of a busy week. You can consider paying for a meal delivery service. You can also offer laundry, cleaning or gardening services to work-from-home employees.

### WELLNESS PROGRAMS

From providing activity trackers to remote coaching, there's a lot your company can do – easily and cost-effectively – to invest in remote tech workers' health and well-being. Some top employers give remote workers a monthly health allowance that they can use toward sports activities, stress-reduction options and more.

### A VACATION PLAN – AND A MANDATE TO USE IT

Research shows that many remote workers struggle to unplug – and even though many have ample vacation days, they only take about two to three weeks per year. In some cases, the lack of barrier between work and home can mean technologists work up to three hours more than their in-office peers. So, in addition to giving remote tech



05

REMOTE WORK IS  
THE FUTURE OF WORK



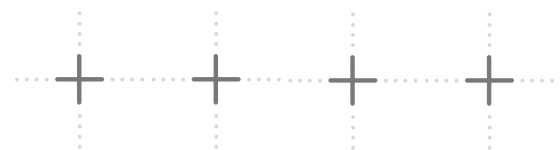
# TAKING THE NEXT STEP

Hiring remote technology workers may be a business necessity today for many companies, but it also marks a shift toward the future of work. As technology continues to advance and technologists demand continues, more employers will build and maintain remote workforces.

Simply put, nearly every company that hires technologists should consider trialing a remote work policy or, at a minimum, explore flex work options. Not only do technologists value employers that offer these policies, but the professional and personal benefits show promise for creating more productive and healthy environments - which translates to more positive business performance.

Offering remote and flex work puts employers at a significant advantage to attract high-quality tech talent. Yet, recruiters still need a coherent and organized recruiting strategy to reach their hiring goals. At the same time, the responsibility falls on company leadership to ensure that their remote work offering is just as robust as their offering for in-office employees.

Now is the time for employers to make a decision, not just about whether they will offer remote work, but also how they will equip recruiters with the tools to source remote technologists and how, as an organization, they will retain remote employees.





# ABOUT DICE

Dice is a leading tech career hub connecting employers with skilled technology professionals and providing tech professionals with career opportunities, data, insights and advice. Dice began as one of the first career sites, and today provides a comprehensive suite of recruiting solutions, empowering companies and recruiters to make informed hiring decisions.

Learn more at [dice.com/products](https://dice.com/products).

