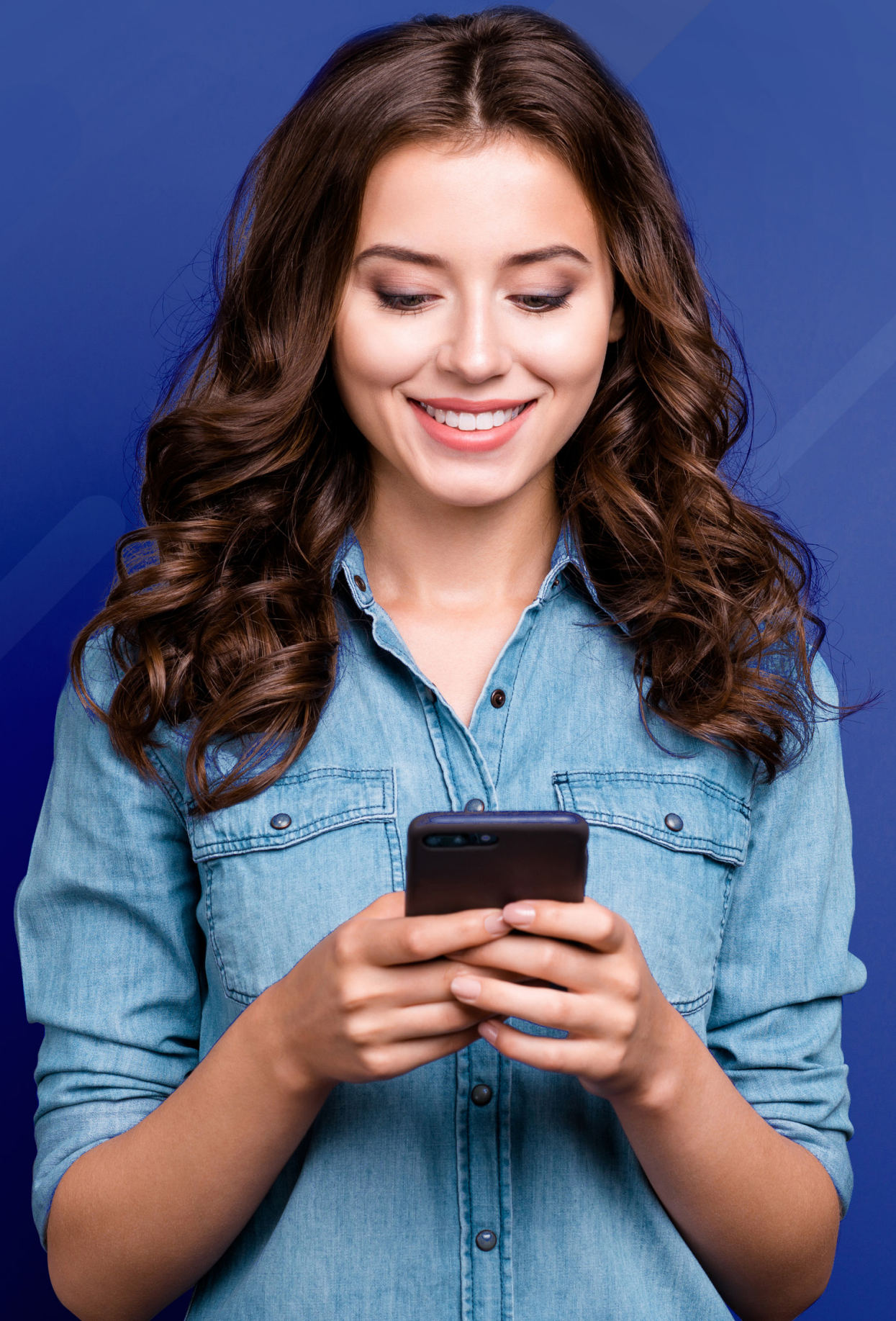


Going 📶  
Remote

**PRESSING  
THE BUTTON ON  
REMOTE WORKING  
IN THE UK**

**RingCentral®**



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# FOREWORD

Remote working is more popular than ever. Its various benefits are felt in different areas: workforce productivity, cost savings, employee motivation, mobility and business agility. Multiple factors have been driving adoption on an international scale for some time, and as businesses recognise the benefits to their peers or competitors, instances of remote working are on the rise across Europe and beyond.

In the UK, the number of remote workers increased by 25% in the decade from 2008 to 2018. That rate was mirrored in mainland Europe. As digital capability transformed the way we live inside and outside of work, it shaped our behaviour and expectations.

Tradition can be hard to break, and after more than a century of time-bound labour, employers are slowly adapting to the demand for flexibility in the way work is conducted and evaluated. UK companies have felt the squeeze as much as any.

Businesses are under more pressure than ever to deliver a compelling value proposition while keeping overheads to a minimum. As digital trends shape customer and employee expectations, attracting and retaining talent brings new challenges.

The demand for remote working comes from employees seeking a better work/life balance and greater control of their lives – not as a radical overhaul of workplace philosophy, but simply as a continuation of their experience outside of work.

Realisation of this demand is enabled by the evolution of connectivity. Faster internet speeds, secure networks and the advent of 5G provide the reliable foundation on which to base business collaboration. Features such as HD video conferencing, secure file sharing and call flip provide the mobility for employees to collaborate from anywhere.

Enabled by technology, the evolution of workplace roles leads to the untethering of workers from their desks, as increasing numbers of tasks can be completed remotely. The practical benefits such as cost savings, access to a wider talent pool, mobility, greater productivity and efficiency make resistance to the shift counterintuitive.

The results are primarily people-focussed, centred around empowering employees to operate at their most productive levels. After all, good management is about creating the space for employees to thrive and deliver results. It's about creating a win-win situation for the business and the customer – whether that customer is internal or external.

**Sunny Dhami - Senior Director of Product Marketing & GTM at RingCentral**

# REMOTE WORKING SHOULDN'T BE A REMOTE OPPORTUNITY

“If it wasn't for the age of remote working, and the fact that there are good people and good companies out there, I wouldn't be working at all.”

Mark Webb

In addition to being director of SEO at start-up business upUgo.com, Mark is head of communications for multiple sclerosis charity Shift.ms. As someone dealing with MS himself, Mark found that a nine to five, office-based role simply didn't work for him.

Elizabeth Rouski, customer experience manager at Macmillan Cancer Support, identifies multiple benefits of working remotely. From the business's perspective, facilitating remote working allows Macmillan to save on office costs. From Elizabeth's personal point of view, remote working allows her to enjoy a better work/life balance.

“Wherever I am based, I would still have to travel, so I'd be wasting expensive London desk space,”  
says Elizabeth Rouski.

“That's a big consideration for a charity. On a personal level, life is busy, and this arrangement gives me flexibility around occasional family commitments without compromising my work performance or output.”

After moving to a remote working policy in 2018, digital agency Reddico is on course for its best year ever. As Luke Kyte, head of culture and business improvement at Reddico, reflects,

“Everyone has the opportunity to choose their working hours and can work from wherever they want.”



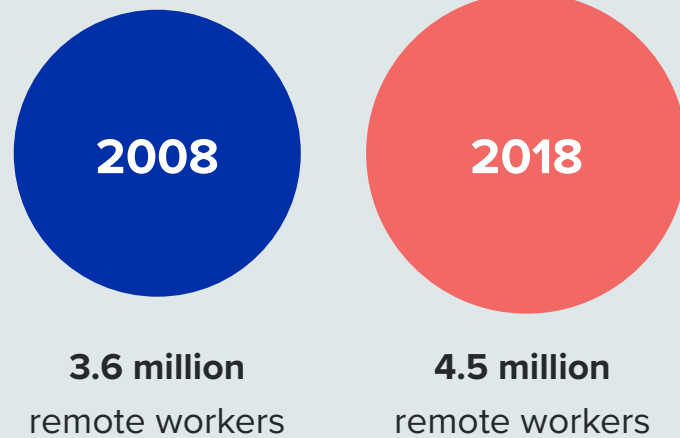
“On a personal level life is busy but this gives me flexibility around occasional family commitments.”

Elizabeth Rouski

# REMOTE SUCCESS

These are just a few of the success stories that illustrate the growing popularity of remote working and its ability to attract top talent, improve engagement and reduce costs.

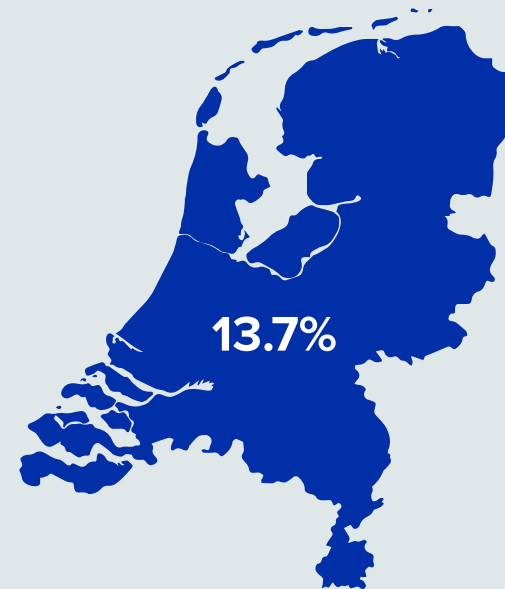
Remote working is clearly a growing phenomenon:



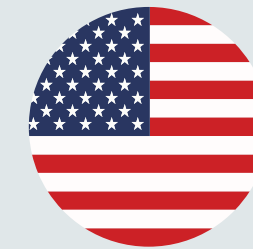
The UK had **4.5 million** remote workers in 2018, up from **3.6 million** ten years before.



In Europe, **9.6%** of people worked remotely in 2017, compared to **7.7%** in 2008 (including those who work remotely some of the time).  
(Source: Remoters.net)

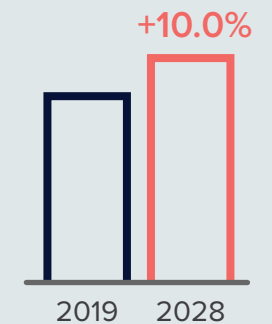


In the Netherlands, **13.7%** of the workforce worked remotely in 2017, compared to **0.3%** in Bulgaria.  
(Source: Remoters.net)



In the US, **5.2%** of workers (**8 million** people) worked from home in 2017, compared to **3.3%** in 2000.  
(Source: US Census Data)

By 2028, **73%** of US companies will have remote workers, compared to **63%** today.  
(Source: UpWork's Future Workforce report)



Numbers of remote workers are expected to reach **33 million** across the EU and USA by 2025, compared to **20 million** today.

# WHO IS DRIVING THE DEMAND FOR REMOTE WORKING?

**How employees, together with a new ‘work from anywhere’ capability, are changing working practices.**

The demand for remote working is largely coming from employees who want a better work/life balance and greater control of their lives, according to Gary Walker, remote working consultant at Ready for Remote. “It’s not companies – it’s individuals,” he says.



**“People want freedom, they want flexibility.”**

Gary Walker

This is particularly true of younger generations. “Millennials are driving it – they are saying ‘I’m not going to sit in an office nine to five for the rest of my life when I don’t need to,’” says Brittnee Bond, remote work consultant at Remote Collective.

“They are a lot more globally-travelled and open-minded, and value new experiences over money, and they will drive the market to grow.”

Although he says he hates the term, Andrew Richardson, digital marketing director at Fujitsu, is one of those millennials redefining ways of working. “We’re not 18 and starting out in the working world as some seem to think. We’re in our late 20s and early to mid-30s. Some of us are married with kids. Some of us are business owners or in senior positions. We’ve lived through this period of change, embraced it, and are willing to challenge the status quo.”

## Employees and roles are dictating change.

As members of the younger generation grow professionally and move into managerial roles, they carry with them their attitudes in favour of remote working, and so it becomes the norm. UpWork’s 2019 Future Workforce Report suggests that 74% of younger generation managers have team members who spend a majority of their time working remotely. Other generations are also seeing the benefits.

**“People are realising that pensions and career-driven things are not necessarily as important as having health and wellness and seeing your family more,”**  
says Brittnee Bond.

Of course, it’s not just employees driving change. Many roles, such as sales, marketing, writing and tech-related jobs, naturally lend themselves to remote working. Technology also enables many workers to ‘work from anywhere’.

**GARY WALKER SUGGESTS THAT IF AT LEAST 75% OF THEIR JOB IS DONE THROUGH A SCREEN, EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE ABLE TO WORK REMOTELY.**

## THE TOP BENEFITS OF WORKING REMOTELY

OFFERING REMOTE  
WORKING ALLOWS  
BUSINESSES TO  
ATTRACT THE BEST  
CANDIDATE FOR THE  
JOB, UNHINDERED  
BY LOCATION.

### 1) Improved productivity

Giving workers control of their time, freeing them from the dreaded commute and from being tied to their desk nine to five, improves productivity and loyalty. A greater sense of empowerment and trust improves motivation and enhances focus, and the freedom to find an optimal work location improves efficiency – whether that’s at a different desk, in a different office, or at home in slippers.

Remote workers are often eager to prove the arrangement works for all, and use the opportunity to work above and beyond. The benefits can be huge, with one report suggesting a productivity boost equal to a full day’s work.

### 2) Greater wellbeing among staff

Greater flexibility and freedom is appreciated by staff, and that demonstration of trust is returned in kind. It allows employees to potentially reduce stress and find a work/life balance that best suits them. Remote working often means employees are able to determine a workspace that suits them and in some cases even set their own working hours.

Most importantly for the individual: remote workers are able to fit those working hours around other commitments and responsibilities, ensuring greater wellbeing as a result. All of these factors are often additional forces driving improvements in productivity.

### 3) Reduced overheads

Fewer staff on site means a reduced need for office space and all the associated equipment, lighting and power that would otherwise be required. Instead, employees simply need the tools they require to do their job: a decent laptop or mobile and the company’s choice of communications and collaboration tools. While some companies will adopt a hybrid model that includes office-based and remote workers, others will go completely virtual, negating the need for physical office space altogether.

### 4) Increased reach into a broader talent pool

Offering remote working allows businesses to attract the best candidate for the job, unhindered by location. This means they can recruit potential staff from a wider geographic talent pool that stretches internationally. It also means those companies who may have had to previously secure office space in prime locations for their industry – such as London for media – no longer need to do so, further reducing their day-to-day operational costs.

# HOW TECHNOLOGY CAN SUPPORT REMOTE WORKING

**Technology has been key to achieving successful remote working.**

The proliferation of Wi-Fi, coupled with lighter, more powerful mobile and laptop devices, means employees don't need to be fixed to an office-based desk, PC and landline. The technology needn't be complicated, as long as it does the basic job of facilitating effective communication and collaboration among employees, regardless of geographical location.

There are numerous tools available – it's just a case of finding the right ones that fit. Phone calls, video conferencing and instant messaging tools can be used to help communicate, while project management and collaboration tools allow workers and their bosses to share projects, documents and updates on work in progress. Being connected anywhere, and being able to collaborate instantaneously, allows projects to keep progressing and allows employees to remain aware of current developments.

## Adopting a digital working mindset

Technology is important, but it isn't the most important part.

**“A lot of it isn't the technology – it's the emotion of letting it go,”**  
says Remote Collective's Brittnee Bond.

“You can use any communication channel you want; all these things can be interchangeable. The thing that isn't is having the culture to follow the system and emotionally be on board to make it work.”

Ready for Remote's Gary Walker agrees: Tools are often seen as the easy part; you procure them and companies feel the work stops there.

**“The hardest part is that shift in mindset, from an office-based role where the outputs of your work are immediately visible, to a remote-based role where the outputs of your work are only visible when you choose to show them.”**

In the office, you don't typically have to do anything special to let people know you've been productive. Those working remotely, however, often feel they need to actively publish some form of updates and notify people to show progress.



# COMPANY STORIES

IF YOU WANT TO COMPETE FOR TALENT, YOUR BUSINESS HAS TO EMBRACE DIFFERENT WAYS OF WORKING. YOU HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THAT THE BEST TALENT IS NOT ALWAYS ON YOUR DOORSTEP – OR WILLING TO MOVE.



# THOSE WHO HAVE EMBRACED REMOTE WORKING

The positive aspects of remote working for both employer and employee can be compelling, but what about the personal experience? Over the next few pages we hear from companies and individuals that have embraced remote working to find out how it works for them.

## Reddico: Freedom of choice drives profitability

In 2018, digital marketing agency Reddico underwent a business transformation to remote working that saw it move from “being very traditional in framework, to providing complete self-regulation and control to the team,” according to Luke Kyte, head of culture and business improvement.

“We’re on course for our best year as a business.”

Luke Kyte.



That transformation has meant the team can now choose when and where they want to work. “Whether that’s at home, in a park or at a café, it’s completely up to the individual,” says Luke. That freedom of choice allows Reddico’s employees to decide how they work best, which leads to them delivering their highest quality work.

## A simple and successful move

The company’s focus on online marketing services has made the move to remote easier, as staff simply need the basic tools to do their job.

“Everyone has a laptop and can take that wherever, communications are maintained by our instant messaging system and emails, while clients can still have phone and video calls.”

says Luke.

Rather than being company-led, the changes were made after feedback from the team. Reddico’s willingness to adapt to their preferences seems to have worked.

“Some people are most productive working nine to five, whilst others might find the morning, or even the evening to be better for them. Some find offices distracting, whilst others like to be in and around others. As this is the case, why force everyone to work in the same way? It’s clearly not the best way to drive productivity.”



## Fujitsu – Managers lead by example

**“There is a lot of flexibility here at Fujitsu,”** says Andrew Richardson, a digital marketing director who manages a distributed team across five countries.

Although Fujitsu operates certain HR and IT policies that enable staff to work remotely, Andrew says there’s no set rule for how anyone must manage their team.



**“Whilst some teams are office-based, most people are empowered to work from anywhere. We’re all provided laptops and mobiles with cloud tools, and most of our offices are primarily hot desks rather than assigned desks. We sell products and services to our customers that enable this sort of working so it’s a bit of a ‘practice what you preach’ kind of thing as well.”**

Andrew Richardson

**“There are some teams that embrace it more than others. I guess part of it is managers leading by example. If the manager is always in the office, their team may feel obliged to always be there too.”**

## New demands

Andrew says changing cultures have given rise to a new need for flexibility around remote working and that companies have to adapt if they want to continue to attract the best people. “There are so many non-traditional jobs out there that are changing people’s perceptions of what going to work means. As populations have grown and business hubs have formed, commutes have become longer and more unbearable. All of this has led people to look at alternative options for work – whether that be flexible hours, working from home, travelling with work or something else.”

**“If you want to compete for talent, your business has to embrace different ways of working. You have to be prepared to accept that the best talent is not always on your doorstep – or willing to move.”**

# THE PERSONAL STORIES

“I WAS IN A PR ROLE, BUT IT BECAME MORE AND MORE IMPOSSIBLE AS MS TOOK HOLD. IT WAS LONG HOURS AND REQUIRED A PHYSICAL PRESENCE.”

## THE PERSONAL STORIES:

### Mark Webb, director at upUgo.com and head of communications at Shift.ms.

Mark Webb, former Dixons head of group social media and head of media relations, now works two remote roles. In one role Mark is a director at SEO business upUgo.com, and in the other he is head of communications at Shift.ms, a charity for people newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

As an 'MSer' himself, Mark says having bosses that have adapted to remote working has been key to allowing him to carry on working.

**“I was in a PR role, but it became more and more impossible as MS took hold. It was long hours and required a physical presence.”**

The advent of social media enabled Mark to replace that physical presence with an online presence while at Dixons. “The change was led by illness, but it was a natural progression that the new job could support and the company was thoroughly supportive of it,” he says.

When Mark finally left Dixons, a eulogy he'd posted online about how well the company had managed his diagnosis and found him a remote working role that suited him went viral. It led to the offer of 15 different interviews and subsequently his remote roles at upUgo and Shift.ms.

### Finding his own balance

Both roles have allowed Mark the freedom to choose the working times that suit him and how he is feeling.

You flex your hours; you don't just do it on a nine to five basis,” he says. “The first thing I do when I wake up is switch on social media, post something and interact. I can do the same at ten at night. It means I've been available for 14 or 15 hours but in that time I might also have slept again, exercised or watched something on TV.

**“In retrospect [without the illness], I would probably still be doing something office-based with the odd Friday working from home, but I love remote working. It works for me because it had to work for me, but I get to see my children, my home and my wife as a result.”**

**MARK WEBB,  
DIRECTOR AT UPUGO.  
COM AND HEAD  
OF COMMUNICATIONS  
AT SHIFT.MS**

## Elizabeth Rouski, customer experience manager for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Although a challenge initially, creating new connections has meant that despite being remote and relatively new, Elizabeth now feels a valued member of the team. “When I was new to Macmillan, finding out how it all worked and fit together without someone sitting next to me I could ask, and establishing my presence in the team and wider organisation from afar, slowed my induction and affected my confidence,” says Elizabeth.

**“Feeling part of the team took a while, but my line manager recognised this very quickly and has been exceptionally supportive, setting up regular meetings and making sure I’m included in department events, as well as encouraging me to meet up with other locally-based colleagues for lunch or coffee within my working day.”**

“I’m working on some large programmes with cross-matrix teams, so in the first year I attended as many meetings as I could to establish my face and credibility so I would have a recognised presence when on video meetings. I’m good at networking and this definitely helped.”



**ELIZABETH ROUSKI,  
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE  
MANAGER FOR MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT**

# FOUR CRUCIAL TIPS

“IT’S IMPORTANT TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINDING WAYS TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES AND HAVE SOME SOCIAL INTERACTION WITHIN YOUR WORKING DAY.”

# HOW TO SET UP A REMOTE WORKING CULTURE

Getting the culture of remote working right is the most important element of ensuring success. It requires a blend of the right management, communication and trust.

In the passages that follow, our remote work consultants and remote workers share their tips:



**“I ask about what’s working in an office environment and how can we translate that into a virtual environment.”**

Shauna Moran

## 1) Manage clearly and effectively

A move to remote working needs to be managed by someone dedicated to overseeing the challenges. Effective management is vital to ensure people are working with accurate objectives and measurement for the benefit of the individual and organisation.

**“People need absolute clarity on what you want them to achieve, and by when,”**  
says Gary Walker.

But many argue this shouldn’t be too restrictive.

Managers also need to consider how they are going to onboard new staff to the remote working process and to the company. “It’s about how you are going to engage a remote workforce.” says Shauna Moran, founder of Operate Remote and qualified business and executive coach, mentor and consultant.

**“How are you going to get that company culture across and what activities and strategies can you put in place so that they are brought into the company and feel proud to work there?”**

## 2) Trust your employees (and let them know you trust them)

One of the biggest challenges a company introducing remote working will face is trust, especially in established companies that are moving to remote working.

**“Without trust, remote working doesn’t work. You’re doomed to failure because you will end up interrupting your remote employees just to reassure yourself they’re working,”**  
says Gary Walker.

Reddico’s Luke Kyte says it’s about taking the plunge.

**“It’s easy to think that people will abuse policies, but you have to be completely trusting and jump in headfirst.”**

However, employers also need to make sure their staff aren’t overworking.

**“They are so worried about proving they are working remotely that they will work overtime, always be available or have no balance between being on and offline, because they will always have their phone or computer with them,”**  
says Brittnee Bond.

### 3) Ensure staff connect with colleagues virtually

Communication between remote users and those in the office is vital. Getting this right means physically separated teams and managers know what is going on workwise and also ensures remote staff don't end up feeling isolated.



“For many workers the office can become their entire community, so when a team is going remote you are stripping away that part of the community, so you need to create opportunities for connection.”

Brittnee Bond

Using technology to stay connected is vital – whatever channel the employer or employee may prefer. Although many may dislike it, video conferencing can help put a face to a name and, as in Elizabeth Rouski's case, help accelerate acceptance within the company by getting a new face known.

### 4) Enable and encourage human contact

Although the employer needs to drive it, employees must also be encouraged to build social interaction into their working life – taking advantage of local and company networking and opportunities to build relationships.

**“It's important to take responsibility for finding ways to build relationships with your colleagues and have some social interaction within your working day,”**

says Elizabeth Rouski.

Shauna Moran suggests businesses that have reduced costs through remote working look to reinvest some of those savings into the social experience.

**“Remote working is cost effective, but teams need to meet up on a regular basis to help facilitate the water cooler moment, and you do need to reinvest to bring people together.”**

At Reddico, Luke Kyte says there is a focus on the fun factor within the business with regular get-togethers and events to help colleagues build relationships and combat the silo effect.

But it also means that those companies who may have had to previously take office space in prime locations for their industry – such as London for media – no longer need to do so, further reducing their day to day operational costs.

**USING TECHNOLOGY TO STAY CONNECTED IS VITAL – WHATEVER CHANNEL THE EMPLOYER OR EMPLOYEE MAY PREFER.**



# EXPERT BIOGRAPHIES

## GARY WALKER



**Gary is the founder of 22 North, author of Ready for Remote, and host of Enlighten (a future of work podcast).**

As product director and remote working consultant at 22 North, Gary works with companies to transform their ways of working by embedding remote and digital work practices, and helps clients create and launch truly digital services.

## SHAUNA MORAN



**Shauna is the founder of Operate Remote and a qualified business and executive coach, mentor and consultant who specialises in remote working.**

From Shauna's hands-on experience in building and managing remote teams internationally, coupled with her academic background and research focus on distributed environments, she works with clients and companies to create long-lasting change in their strategy, teams, performance and company culture.

## BRITTNEE BOND



**Brittnee is the CEO of Remote Collective and is an expert consultant on coworking and coliving spaces.**

She believes all people should have access to remote work and intends to make this a reality. Her experience involves the intentional design of spaces to spark collaboration, productivity, community, and a feeling of "home" or "third space."

# WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

## LUKE KYTE

Head of Culture & Business Improvement at Reddico



## MARK WEBB

Director at upUgo and Head of Communications at Shift.ms



## LIZ ROUSKI

Customer Experience Manager at Macmillan Cancer Support



# TESTIMONIAL

**Jane Hunt**

MD, JBH - The  
Content Agency



“As an agency with offices across the country and many employees working remotely, we need to make sure our teams can all communicate effectively wherever they are. **Glip enables us to work collaboratively and manage projects, and it has even helped improve productivity.** As a fast growing business we couldn't ask for more!”

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