



Work from Anywhere: How International Businesses Are Embracing New Working Practices



January 2022

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INTRODUCTION

01

01. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic ushered in the popularity of work from anywhere policies. More than work from home, work from anywhere means employees can choose the location from which they work, be it within or outside the country their company is primarily based in. Although initially an interim solution to deal with the global health crisis, the flexibility work from anywhere offers is garnering more and more demand amongst employees. Managers are now asking themselves how they should adapt their work environments to their employees' needs.

Managers are now asking themselves how they should **adapt their work environments** to their employees' needs.



Omnipresent, a holistic global employment services provider, and PerchPeek, a tech-driven relocation provider, have joined forces to learn precisely:

- Where we are in this transition to working from anywhere.
- What this means for physical offices.
- What is missing to make work from anywhere possible for companies who want to offer it.

We spoke with people/
HR leaders all over the
world **to get the most
advanced insights.**



Our key findings revealed:

- 01.** 58% of managers are planning to shift to remote or hybrid work models and it's a popular option across managers of all generations.
- 02.** 14% of managers are still wondering how to make remote or hybrid models work for their business.
- 03.** As popular as remote work is, 68% of our respondents said the physical workplace still has a role to play. Managers are embracing hybrid over fully remote or purely on-site structures.
- 04.** Communication and collaboration is a focus for employers. 59% of our respondents are including communication guidelines in their remote / hybrid transition plans.
- 05.** 44% of managers say productivity isn't tied to the physical workplace.
- 06.** 61% of our respondents said their employees are currently working from anywhere.

02

WHO ARE REMOTE WORK ADVOCATES?



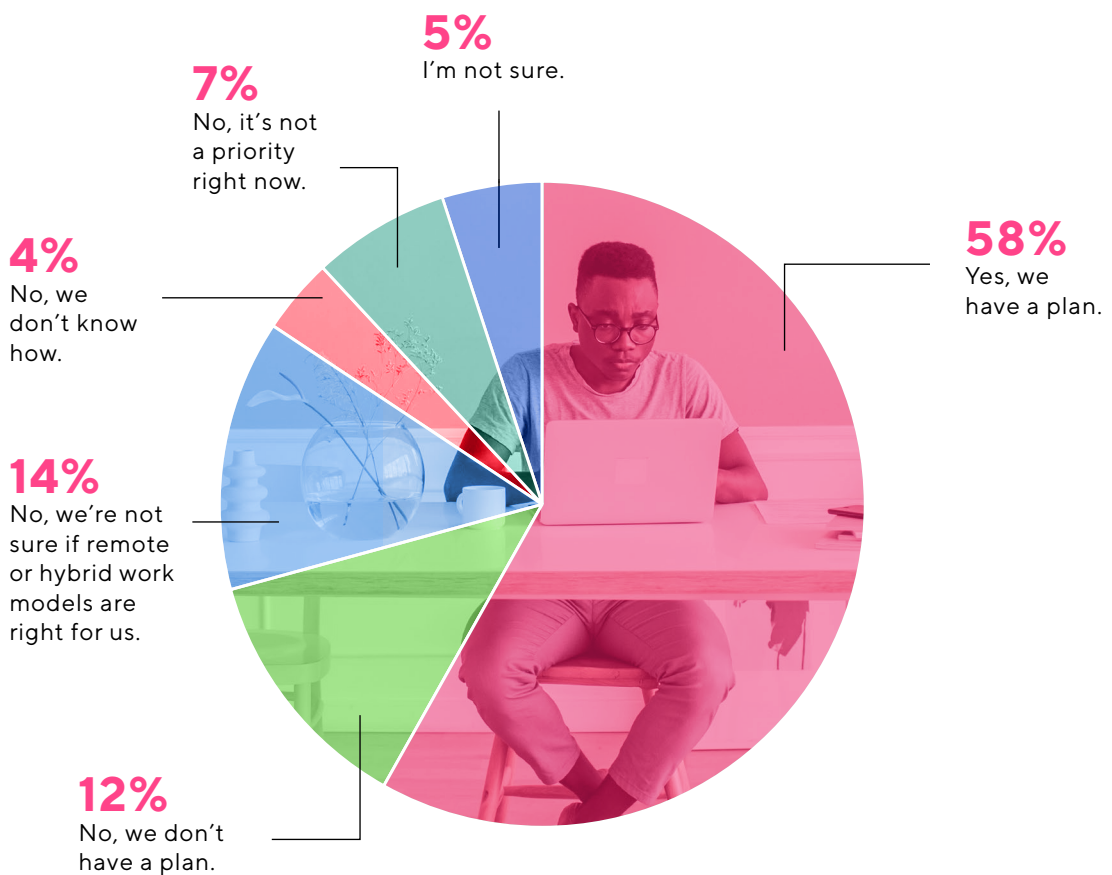
02. Who are remote work advocates?

Hybrid models and remote work are providing companies with the ability to remain flexible and productive in uncertain times. Additionally, they're offering managers the opportunity to create more employee-focused work practices.

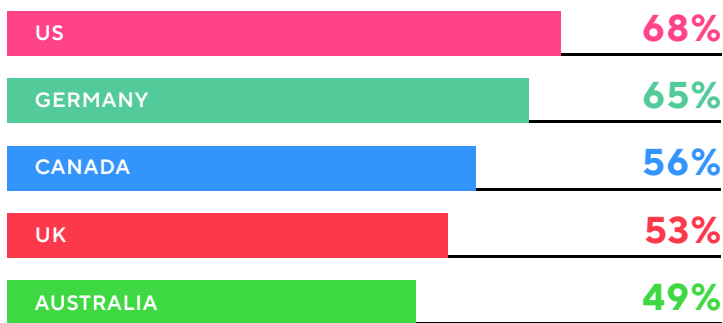
58%

of managers said they plan to transition to remote or hybrid work long term.

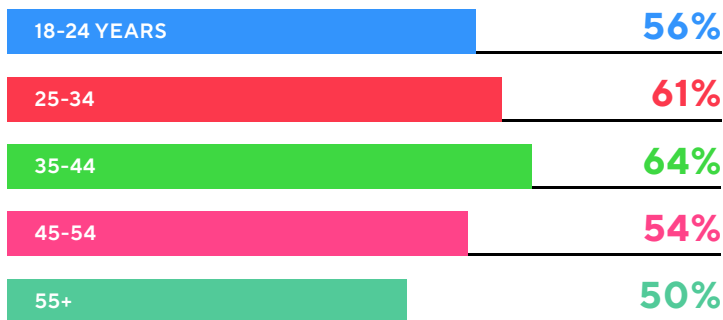
DOES YOUR COMPANY HAVE A PLAN TO TRANSITION TO A REMOTE OR HYBRID WORK ENVIRONMENT PERMANENTLY?



We found that the dedication to remote or hybrid work was most popular in the US and Germany, **with 68% of US-based managers and 65% of German managers saying they have a plan to transition to remote or hybrid work.** Even in the most skeptical countries, the belief in remote or hybrid work was still close to 50%, indicating that across the globe, the majority of managers believe remote and hybrid work is here to stay.



“YES, WE HAVE A PLAN TO TRANSITION TO A REMOTE OR HYBRID WORKING ENVIRONMENT PERMANENTLY.”



What’s more, we found that plans to permanently shift to remote or hybrid work holds for managers across age groups. 63% of managers aged 25-44 are preparing to transition to remote or hybrid work permanently. In comparison, 52% of over 45-year-olds are planning to make the shift. While the difference hints at a generational or life stage gap, remote and hybrid transitions are popular amongst the majority of these broader age groups.

The universality of this sentiment across ages, particularly concentrated with younger cohorts, indicates that a transition to remote will play an **important part** in the future of work, as well as attracting and retaining talent **in future years**.

PERCHPEEK INSIGHTS:

A major tech firm has upgraded their work from anywhere policy to include PerchPeek relocations, so their employees can now relocate to wherever they want to work from. It's a win-win: the company doesn't have to contribute a major relocation budget to their work from anywhere policy, while their employees can feel supported when moving to exciting new locations and keeping their role.





**APPROACHES TO WORKING
FROM ANYWHERE**

03. Approaches to working from anywhere

14%

of our respondents said **they're unsure** if remote or hybrid work is **suitable for their businesses**.

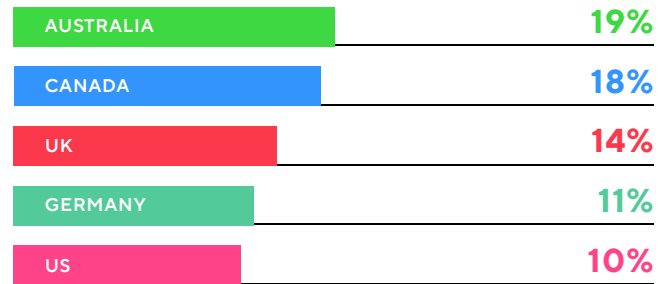
Acknowledging that remote and hybrid styles of working are here to stay, not all business leaders are sure about how to make it work for their business in the long term. If you're one of them, don't worry, there are many companies worldwide who are in the same boat.

We found that our Australian and Canadian respondents were most uncertain about making the shift permanent. **19% of Australian managers and 17% of Canadian managers said they're unsure about remote or hybrid work for their business.** This is relatively high compared to **only 10% of US managers having similar concerns.**





"WE'RE NOT SURE IF REMOTE OR HYBRID WORK MODELS ARE RIGHT FOR US."



Rather than questioning whether it's the right way forward, these managers are unsure about how to go about building the right remote or hybrid work model. In truth, there is no one model that'll fit every company perfectly. The key is to focus on what'll work for your business and your employees.

Depending on your business and your strategic vision, remote and hybrid working can be used to fulfil those aims. Below are examples of ways in which three of our clients have used remote and hybrid set-ups to benefit them.



STRATEGICALLY HIRING REMOTELY FOR SPECIFIC ROLES

COMPANY A

A fintech company based in London, UK with 110+ employees, with 11 remote employees across 10 countries.

PROBLEM SOLVED

Hiring specific, hard to find talent.

WORKSET-UP

Hybrid – they have a flexible work culture. Remote work is encouraged where it's compatible with the business' requirements and this is their hiring philosophy.

REMOTE AS KEYSTONE FOR INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION

COMPANY B

A computer software company based in the US with 90+ employees, with 17 remote employees across 9 countries.

PROBLEM SOLVED

Expand operations into Europe where they have no existing presence.

WORKSET-UP

Hybrid – hiring remotely has allowed them to employ people and establish a presence in target countries, while maintaining their existing on-site employees.

REMOTE FIRST

COMPANY C

An internet company based in London, UK with 80+ employees, with 28 remote employees across 10 countries.

PROBLEM SOLVED

Grow operations quickly while offering employee flexibility.

WORKSET-UP

Remote-first has allowed them to grow their operations as well as hire extremely specialized staff.

04

MAKING THE TRANSITION TO REMOTE WORK



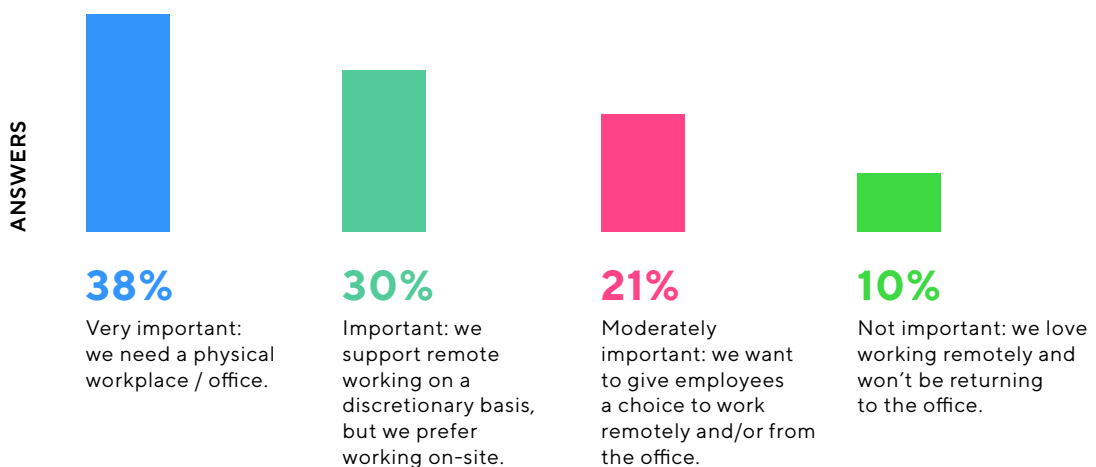
04. Making the transition to remote work

68%

of our respondents said the **physical workplace is important** for their company, but this includes **30%** that **support remote working** on a discretionary basis.

Though the COVID-19 pandemic continues and demand for remote work options is mounting, some managers and business executives are reluctant to fully let go of the physical office. Our respondents included business managers and leaders whose employees are currently working fully remotely or in a hybrid work set-up.

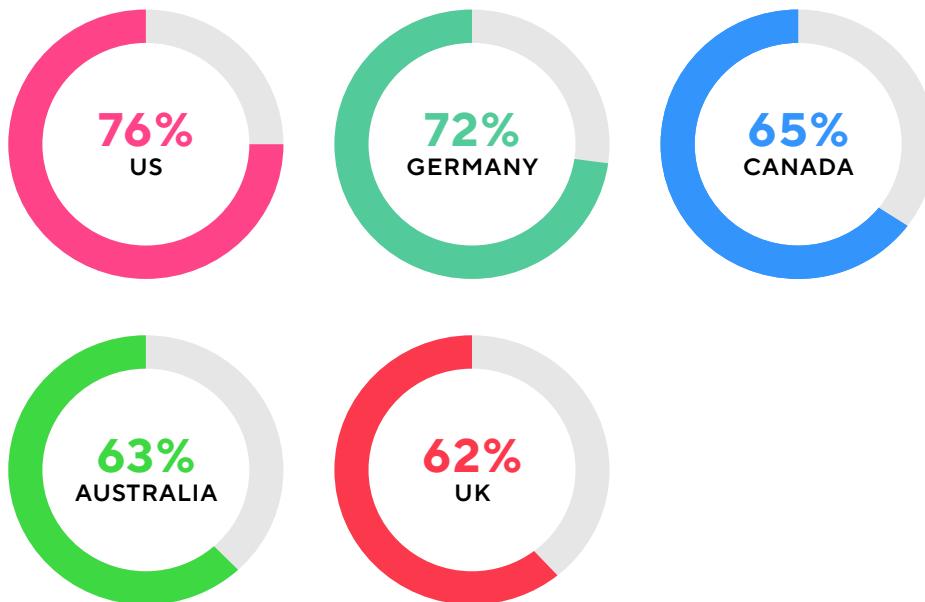
HOW IMPORTANT IS THE PHYSICAL WORKPLACE COMPARED TO REMOTE/ OFF-SITE WORKPLACES TO YOUR COMPANY?



This trend is most strongly felt by managers in the US at 76% and managers in Germany at 72%, the same populations who were most likely to be planning to transition to remote or hybrid working long-term. Managers in the UK were the least concerned about the physical office at 62%, though the majority here too have a clear preference for maintaining one.



“THE PHYSICAL WORKPLACE IS VERY IMPORTANT OR IMPORTANT COMPARED TO REMOTE / OFF-SITE WORKPLACES FOR OUR COMPANY.”



All this indicates managers' desires to hold onto physical workspaces in some capacity.

What role will physical offices play in the work from anywhere trend?

Of our respondents who said they planned to transition to remote work, 72% said the office was still important to them. Only 8% of these managers and executives said they won't be returning to the office at all!

This indicates that managers are anticipating a hybrid work model rather than a fully remote or purely on-site work structure. The only remaining question is how the use of a physical workplace will be organized for employees under a hybrid work model: the options are unlimited but will likely be guided by the type of work that needs to be completed by an employee or team.

IN THE NEWS

[Microsoft](#) is telling employees the core days and hours when they must be on site - after that, **it's up to the employees to plan their work days.**



A photograph of two men in business attire sitting at a glass table in a modern office. The man on the right is pointing at a laptop with a marble-patterned lid, and both are smiling. The background shows a large window with a view of a city.

PERCHPEEK INSIGHTS:

PerchPeek is still seeing a significant percentage of companies aiming to bring key teams together in one location. Industries such as manufacturing and financial services can by nature be unfavorable to remote work, whether through requiring physical presence or being subject to legal restrictions in order to operate.

Sometimes a heavy requirement for in-person collaboration can lead to a preference for physical office space. In the middle of the pandemic, a leading car manufacturer opted to relocate an entire engineering department to the UK from Germany rather than work remotely.





**SUPPORTING REMOTE
TEAM WORK**

05

05. Supporting remote team work

Our respondents are creating strategic transition plans to help build their remote and hybrid work cultures. Our results show that communication is the most important process to plan for when transitioning to a remote or hybrid setup.

59%

of our respondents said communication guidelines **are critical.**

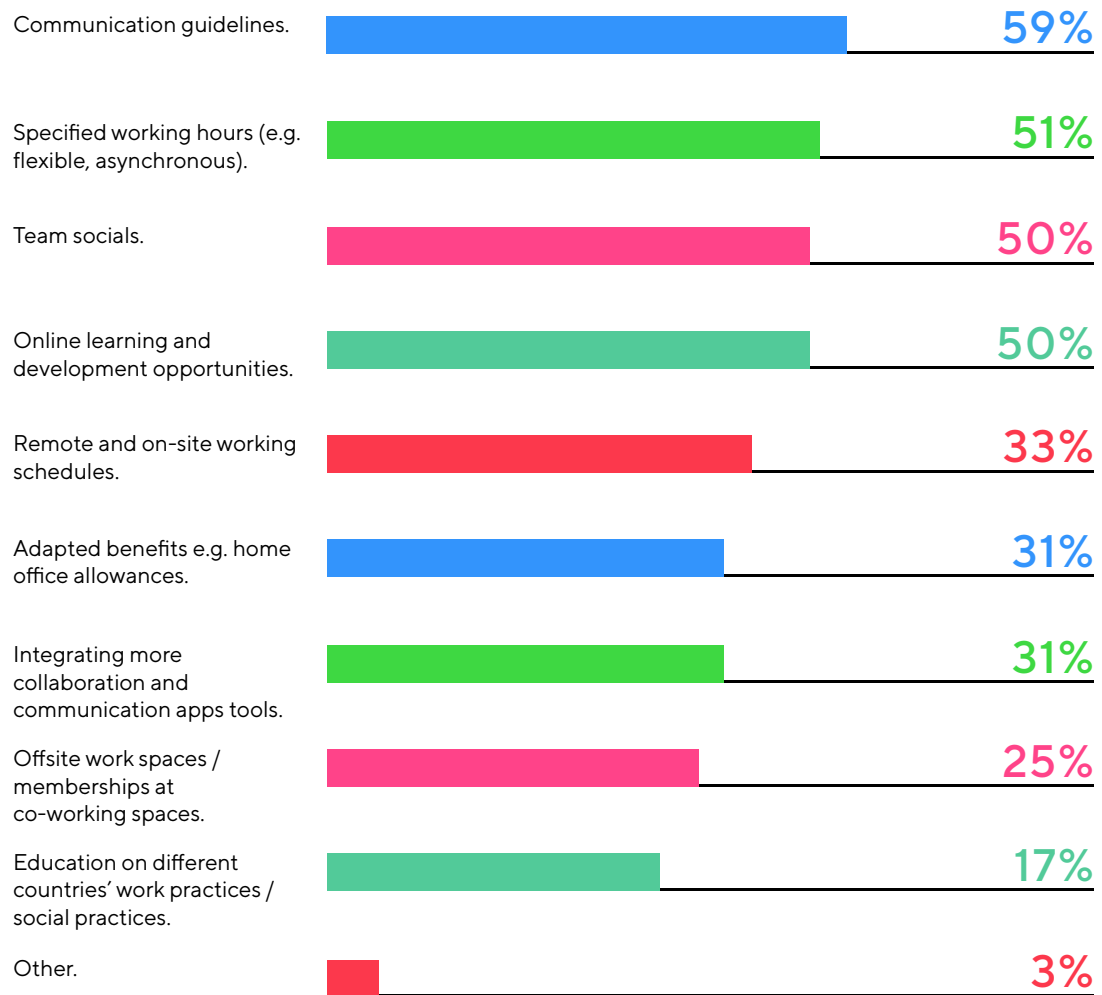
These will help your employees understand how to connect with their colleagues and managers on a daily basis.



Regular team activities can also really help build a sense of belonging and community amongst your employees. **50% of respondents said team socials are part of their transition plans.**

You'll also need to decide whether you want to include flexible, asynchronous, or synchronous working hours. **51% of managers and business executives said their transition plans include outlining agreed working hours.**

WHAT DOES YOUR CURRENT REMOTE/ HYBRID TRANSITION PLAN TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES INCLUDE?



The work-from-anywhere trend is also causing managers to rethink effective team communications.

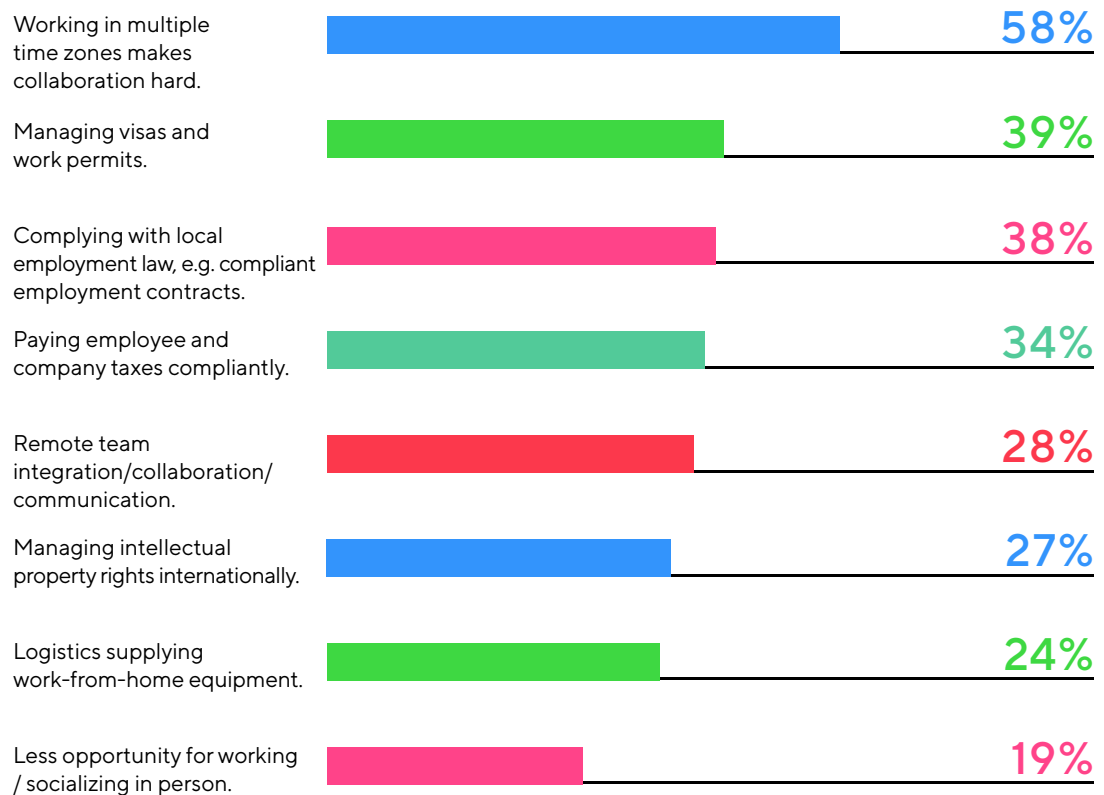
58%

of our respondents said **working across timezones is a significant challenge** of working from anywhere.

To meet this challenge head-on, many progressive companies are exploring novel communication and collaboration methods for their distributed teams. [Learnerbly](#), an online ed-tech company, uses [cross-functional hackathons](#) to drive strong collaboration across their on and off-site teams.



WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE CHALLENGES TO EMPLOYING PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES OR JURISDICTIONS?



CASE STUDY:

At Omnipresent, we've been working across time zones since the beginning. We recently celebrated many of our initial team members' first anniversaries. As a global employment services provider, we didn't just want to help clients evolve their remote employment strategies; we wanted to experience it too. That's why our team is distributed across countries and working asynchronously.

Reflecting on the benefits of a growing global team working across time zones, Paskal Zhelezov, Business Developer at Omnipresent says, "We have 20 people just in the sales department, and it's amazing because we have people available in different time zones, people who speak different languages, people from so many different backgrounds."



Whatever your approach to communication and culture, the important thing is to create a strategy that aligns with your business goals and works for your team.

That's why

59%

of our respondents, who said they plan to transition to remote or hybrid work permanently, are **including communication guidelines in their transition plans.**



CASE STUDY:

Impala, a travel tech company that operates across multiple markets, has a remote team that has access to Perchpeek as part of their benefits package. Employees can use this to base themselves wherever they want in Europe. They're then allowed to work flexibly, as long as they're online for a 5-hour window per day (10am-3pm GMT).

Impala's head of People and Talent, Tilly Firth, explained how with so many employees spread out working remotely, their leadership has to be loud and explicit on their company culture. "If anyone was going remote, the first thing I would recommend is asking how you are going to look at your culture and really make that super, super strong and tangible."

Impala has a remote experience manager whose job is to create socials to build community and real, meaningful team bonding. They promote this further through their benefits package by encouraging employees to spend time together and develop inter-office friendships to help promote happiness and productivity. An example is their Pop-Up Parties, where team members spend 30 minutes online doing whatever they want except work.



06

CHALLENGES MANAGERS ARE FACING



06. Challenges managers are facing

Engagement is the key to high productivity and employee retention, whether working on-site or remotely.

Many managers are recognizing that employees can be engaged without being in the same physical space, with

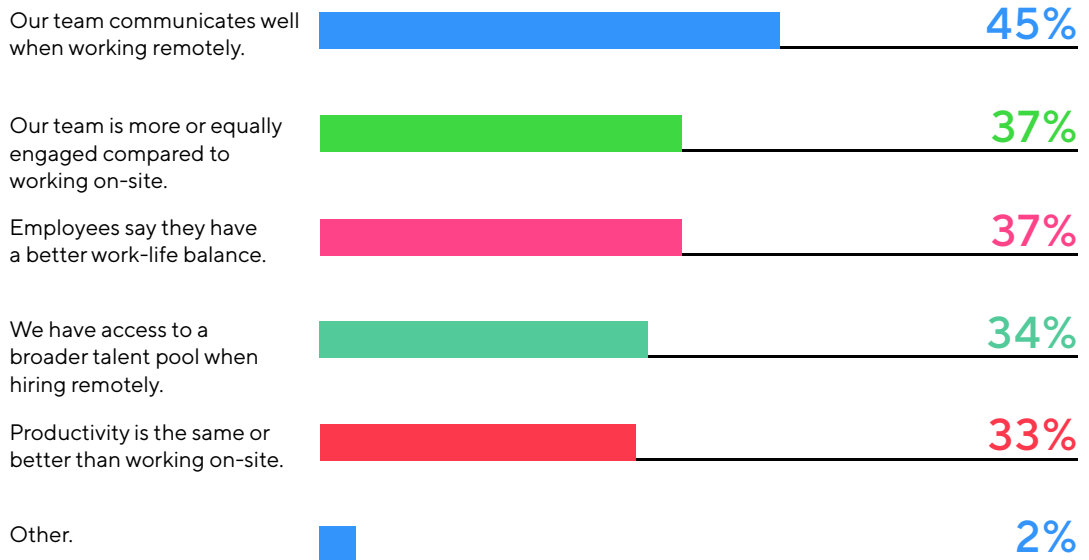
38%

of our respondents saying their **employees are equally or more engaged when working remotely** compared to before the pandemic.

However, this shows that this is a challenge for the majority of respondents. So how can you provide the proper support to keep your remote and hybrid workers engaged?



WHAT, IF ANYTHING, HAVE YOU FOUND REWARDING ABOUT REMOTE WORKING?



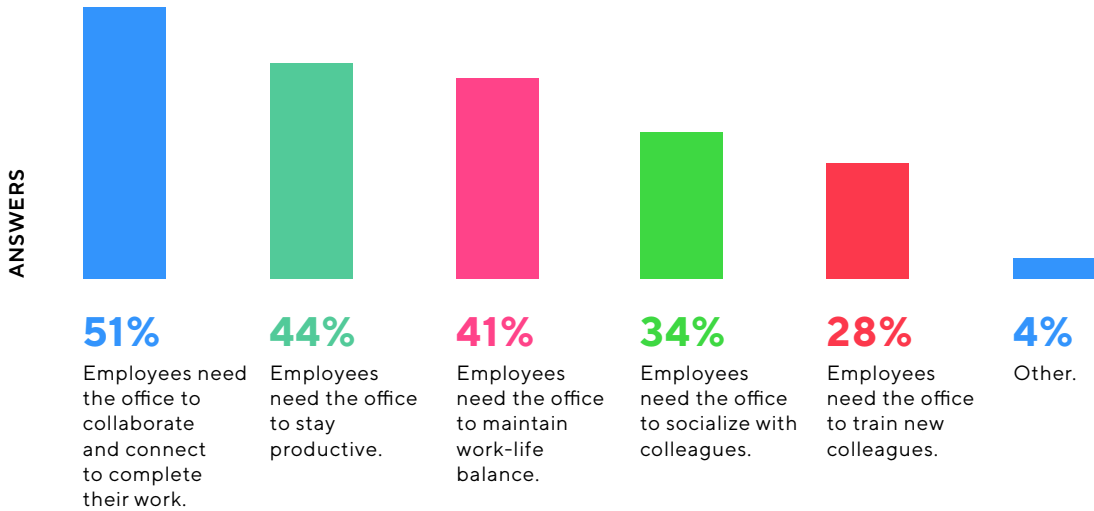
We asked our respondents how they valued engagement strategies like socializing and workplace training in the physical office, compared to the remote workspace.

We found that engagement strategies don't depend on the physical workspace as much as we thought.



Only **35%** of our respondents said **socializing** and only **28%** said **L&D are tied to the physical workplace.**

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, IS IMPORTANT ABOUT THE PHYSICAL WORKPLACE FOR YOUR COMPANY?



In contrast, communication and collaboration, work-life balance, and productivity were valued much higher. This suggests that managers feel L&D and team socializing work well in a remote or hybrid set-up.

While managers are planning for socials as a part of their remote or hybrid transition plans, the findings suggest that managers are not paying as much attention to L&D as they should be, given the connection between engagement and productivity. If anything, managers need to show more initiative in supporting their remote and hybrid teams, helping them get the training they need to succeed as and when needed.



**HOW TO AVOID ON-SITE BIASES
FOR HYBRID TEAMS**

07. How to avoid on-site biases for hybrid team



One of the most common employer concerns is how remote or hybrid work may impact their employees' productivity. At the same time, our results signal a shift in how managers are thinking about productivity in the remote office environment.

This suggests that the majority of managers across all locations surveyed believe that employee productivity is equally good if not better when working remotely. However when the question was posed in terms of what is considered a greater benefit of working on-site we see some inconsistencies.

For example, while **47% of German managers said that on-site working is important for productivity, 65% of German managers also planned to transition to a remote or hybrid work environment permanently.**

56%

of our respondents felt employees did not need the **physical office to stay productive.**



Instead of measuring productivity by synchronous hours spent at a desk, the key is to be **intentional and differentiate between necessary synchronous outcomes, and asynchronous inputs.**

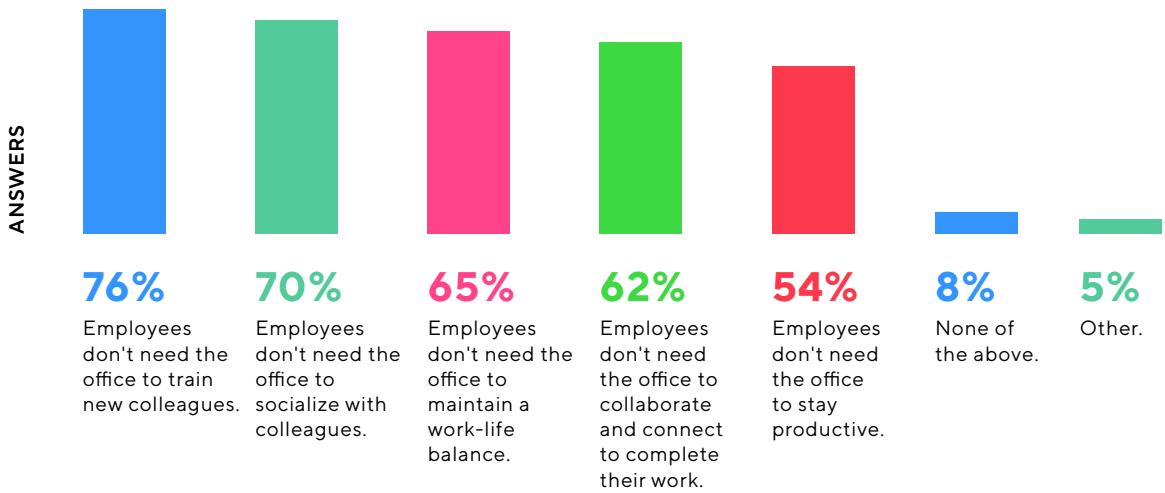
This may hint at an on-site bias on the part of some managers from the outset. There is therefore a risk that this bias becomes a part of the culture, negatively impacting employees, and ultimately limiting the benefits that remote and hybrid set-ups can offer. A similar pattern can be seen with UK respondents.

It is important that misconceptions, biases and outdated ways of measuring productivity are not written into the foundations for future remote plans. The key to unlocking remote productivity is to give your employees the flexibility and freedom to deliver work in the way that's best for them.

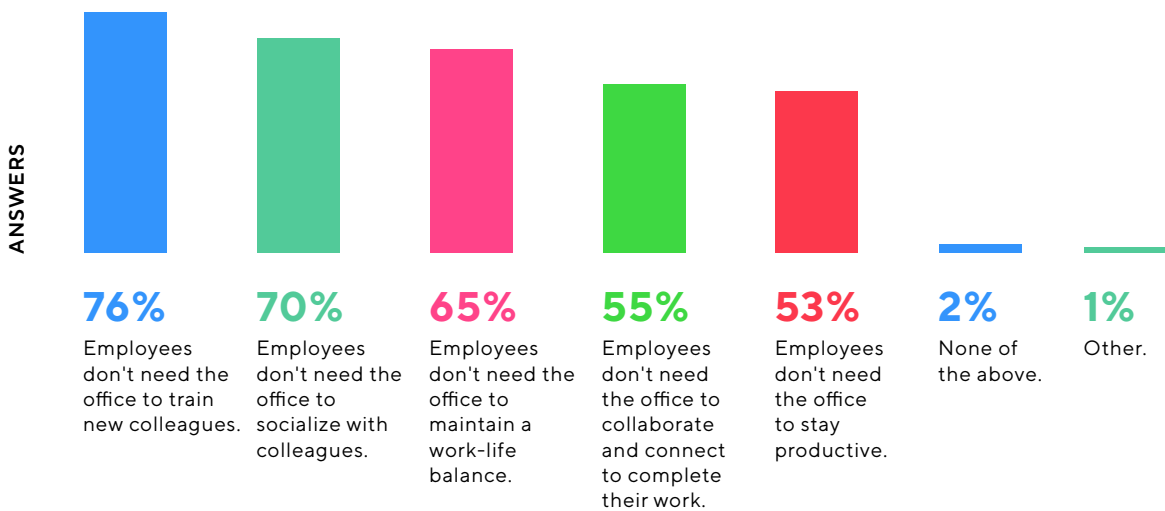
Peter H Jackson, CEO of Bluescape:

“Asynchronous is everyone working on a project and it's not tied to time.”

UK MANAGERS:



GERMAN MANAGERS:



08

**THE REALITY OF WORKING
FROM ANYWHERE FOR
EMPLOYEES**



08. The reality of working from anywhere for employees

Work from anywhere means that companies are allowing their employees to choose which country or location they're going to work from. This has been a popular choice amongst employers during the pandemic and is likely to continue due to employee demand.

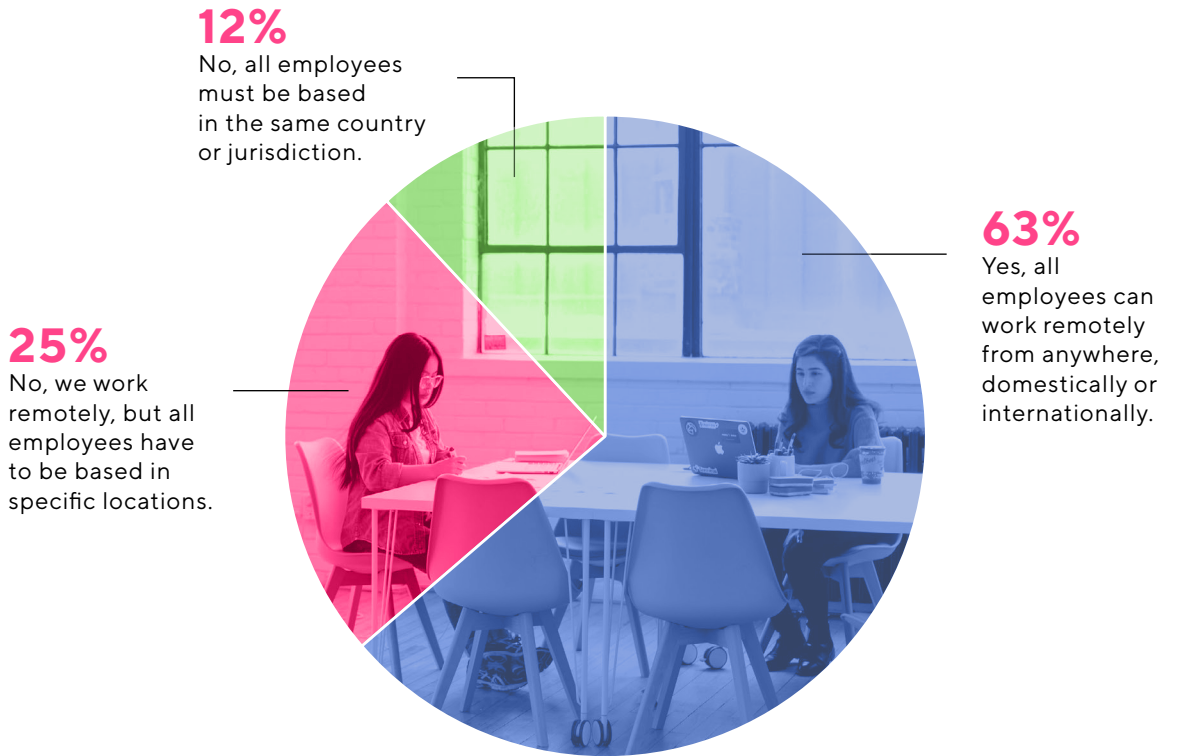
61%
of our respondents
said their employees
are **currently working
from anywhere.**



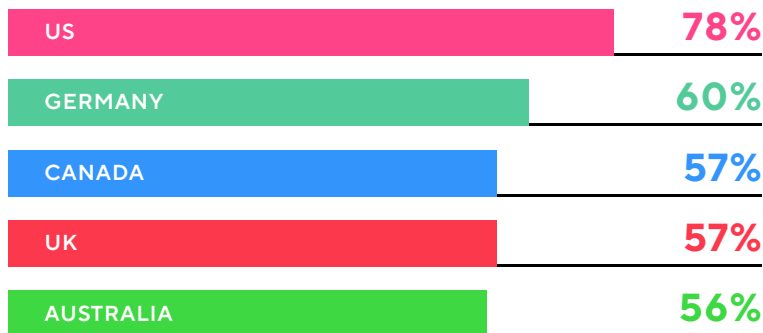
The majority of managers said their employees are or were working from anywhere. This was by far the most popular option in the US with 78% of US-based managers saying they allow their employees to work from anywhere.

Only 25% of our respondents said they're working remotely, but their employees have to be based in specific locations.

DOES OR DID YOUR COMPANY SUPPORT WORK FROM ANYWHERE?



“All our employees can work remotely from anywhere, domestically or internationally.”



More than a means to manage the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, work from anywhere is helping companies develop a more employee-focused work structure.

IN THE NEWS

[Revolut](#), a fin-tech company, and [Blueground](#), a global property tech provider, have responded to their employees' requests for greater flexibility and have introduced levels of work from anywhere into their remote work policies.












**ESSENTIAL LOGISTICS FOR
WORKING FROM ANYWHERE**

09

09. Essential logistics for working from anywhere

Despite the popularity of work from anywhere among employees, managers are still grappling with how to make it work for their businesses.

WHEN ORGANIZING THE LOGISTICS OF REMOTE WORK, MANAGERS NEED TO CONSIDER:

-  Employment and remote work laws
-  Payroll
-  Tax compliance
-  Work permits
-  Relocations
-  Remote offices
-  Visas



One of the reasons work from anywhere isn't being considered as a means of global expansion by some businesses is because of the issues of hiring legally and compliantly in different countries.

While having a team working from anywhere allows you to build a global presence, it can also mean a great amount of HR and compliance admin for you as the employer.

39%

of our respondents said **managing visas and work permits is a challenge.**

Another **38%** also said **complying with local employment law is a hurdle.**

THIS HR ADMIN INCLUDES:



Managing compliant employment contracts



Onboarding & offboarding



Salaries



International payroll



Probation periods

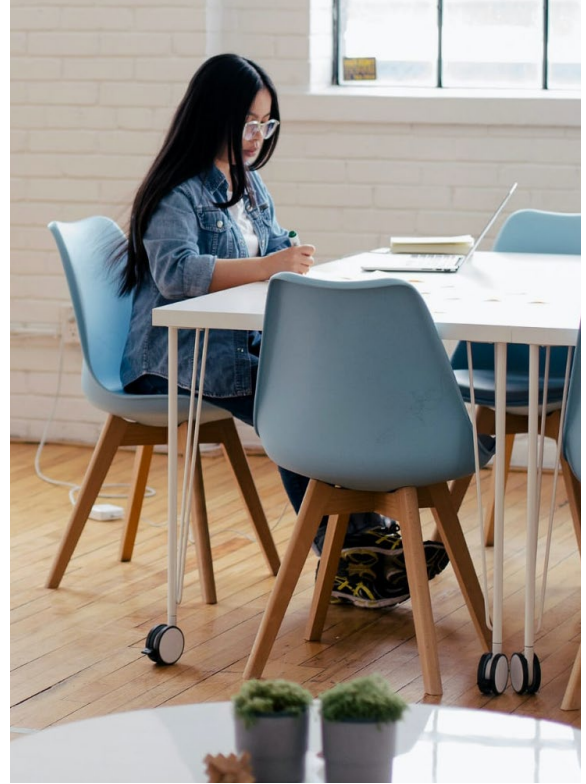


Performance plans

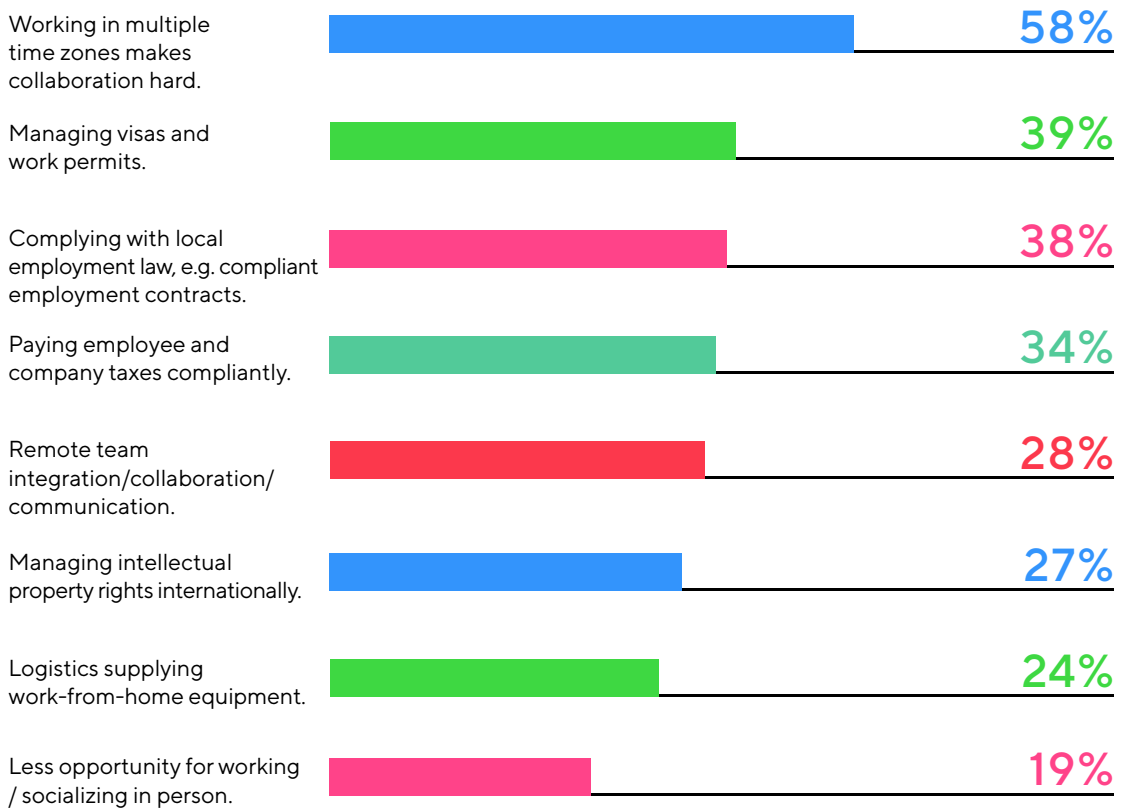


Terminations

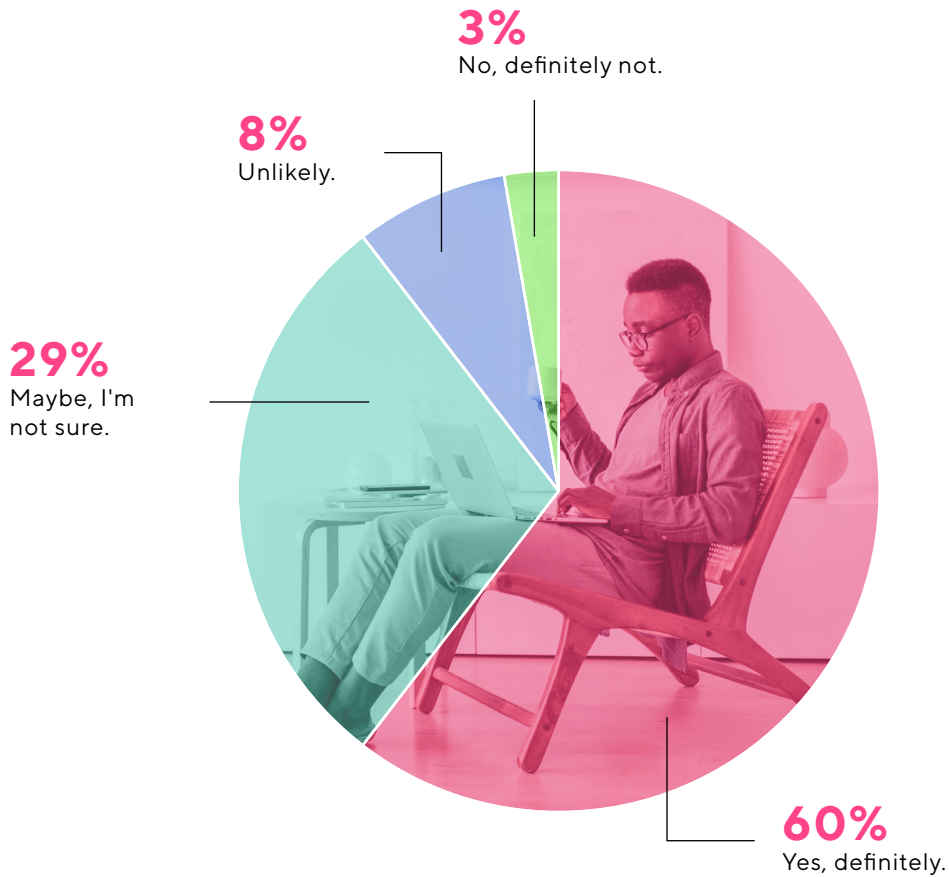
Though these tasks may seem daunting, **60% of our respondents said they would benefit from working from anywhere if they could overcome these obstacles.** This indicates a positive trend toward work from anywhere. What managers need now is the proper support structure to help remote-friendly teams transition smoothly to work from anywhere.



WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE CHALLENGES IN EMPLOYING PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES OR JURISDICTIONS?



IF THESE CHALLENGES WERE OVERCOME, DO YOU THINK YOUR COMPANY WOULD BENEFIT FROM WORKING FROM ANYWHERE?



Unsurprisingly, **47%** of our respondents said their companies' **in-house HR teams are responsible for managing the logistics of work from anywhere.**

HOWEVER THE MORE GLOBAL TALENT YOU HAVE, THE MORE THE PAPERWORK PILES UP. THE DIFFERENT ROLES THAT ARE INVOLVED IN MANAGING TEAMS WORKING FROM ANYWHERE INCLUDE:



HR managers



In-house legal teams



In-house mobility teams



External lawyers



Global employment services providers



Relocation services providers

Many employers are making good use of their other in-house teams and additional services to assist their HR teams when hiring abroad.

43%

of our respondents said they have their **in-house mobility team to help them set up their employees.**

30% also said their legal teams support their HR managers with managing the logistics of work from anywhere.

HR managers and logistics teams also need plenty of legal support to ensure they're employing and relocating talent compliantly. Employment law and taxes are locally defined, so you need to know exactly what you're dealing with in order to hire and employ compliantly.

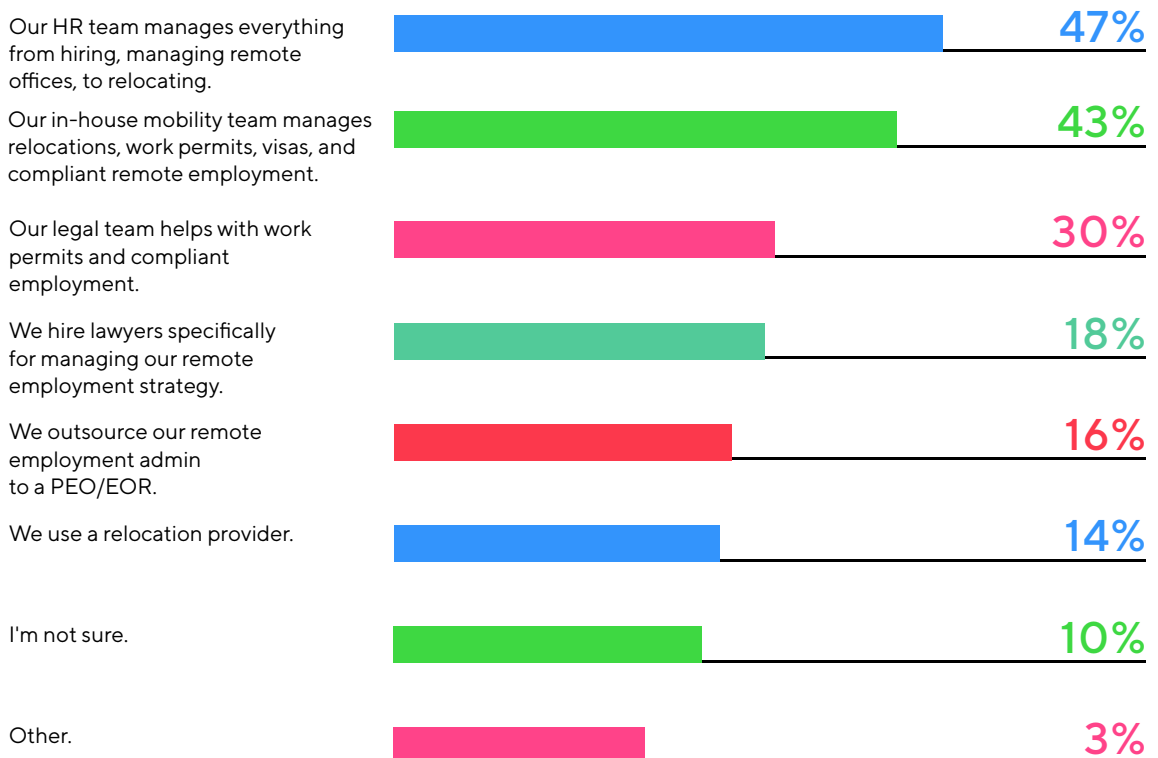
16% of managers said they're outsourcing the logistics of work from anywhere to global employment services providers.

14%

said they're using a relocation services provider to manage the logistics of work from anywhere.



WHO IN YOUR COMPANY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE LOGISTICS (LIKE RELOCATIONS OR COMPLIANT EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS) OF REMOTE EMPLOYMENT?



10

THE WORK FROM ANYWHERE
TRANSITION IS UNDERWAY



10. The work from anywhere transition is underway

Our findings have shown that while most managers are planning for remote work, and a majority are open to work from anywhere, fixed physical offices aren't disappearing for now. They still have a part to play as part of hybrid strategies as companies continue to define what working from anywhere means for them and their employees.

The key takeaway for you is the importance of flexibility in building a thriving, employee-focused workplace. Flexibility isn't just about letting employees have a say in when they work, but **where**. This may include offering a choice of a physical workspace, whether on-site or in a co-working space, or working from home or from anywhere in the world.

The point is to stay nimble and **offer your employees the option to work in a way that suits them and that works for your business.**



Realistically, work from anywhere and remote work isn't for everyone, whether employee or employer. But the same goes for working on-site. The point is to stay nimble and offer your employees the option to work in a way that suits them and that works for your business.

When planning your remote, hybrid, and work from anywhere models, don't fixate too much on the terms themselves, as their definitions are becoming increasingly blurred and they're likely to change over time. Remember that there isn't a single good place to start, but what will always work is focusing on what set-up works best for both your business and your employees.

About Omnipresent

Omnipresent makes it easy to hire, pay, and provide support for [global teams](#) across 160 countries and regions.

As your internationalization partner, Omnipresent makes it possible for you to hire talent anywhere with ease. By providing real-time support for businesses and their remote workers, Omnipresent offers:

- A strategic approach to international expansion, supported by a team of global employment experts and user-friendly technology.
- A comprehensive end-to-end service that covers everything from onboarding to offboarding, including compliance, payroll, expenses, and benefits.
- Reliable global support from an internationally distributed team, covering all timezones and more than 10 languages.



If you'd like to know more about Omnipresent's global employment services, [book a call](#) today.

About PerchPeek

PerchPeek has one simple goal: help anyone live anywhere. Recognized in numerous awards as a leader in the relocation and mobility services industry, PerchPeek combines expert relocation support with an end-to-end relocation app to take the stress out of moving to a new country or city and help employees find the perfect home in a neighborhood they'll love.

- **Employee experience**
A market-leading platform that helps assignees find homes that they actually love in a consistent high-quality experience across 47 countries.
- **Reporting**
Putting the data back into your hands with a full mobility overview, where you manage all assignees in 1 place. Individual employee progress reports keep HR teams up to date.
- **Cost**
Keep costs low for your mobility program, with an exceptional service only at more affordable prices.

If you're interested in getting expert digital relocation support for your employees, [contact PerchPeek](#) today.

This report draws on anonymous survey data gathered in June 2021, amongst 1000 HR managers and C-level executives. Our respondents work across industries in Australia, Canada, the US, Germany, and the UK. All survey data was collected using Pollfish.

