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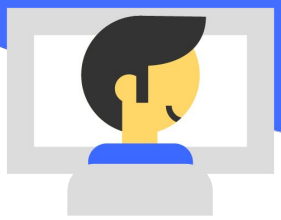

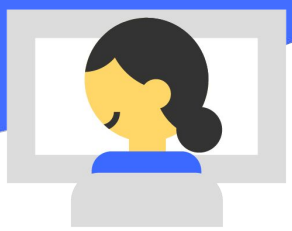

What's Next in Remote & Flex Work

Companies were forced to go remote overnight, but now they plan to stay that way. **90%** of HR leaders say they will continue to allow employees to work remotely at least part-time even after the COVID vaccine has been widely adopted. What started as a novel experiment has become a sustainable trend. **65%** of employees now want to work remotely full-time after the pandemic, while **31%** would prefer a hybrid work arrangement. *Designing a structure that meets your daily operating needs, and those of current and prospective talent, has never been more critical.*

Our guide will walk you through the practical steps you should consider and highlight sensitive issues that require deep attention.

Dream: Envision your ideal work system of the future

- Define the purpose and be inspirational: "*Build a highly productive & motivated team with the ability to scale, hire & retain talent irrespective of location*".
- Identify the metrics by which you can judge progress: "*50% of all new engineering hires will work remotely and 50% of creatives will be hybrid.*"
- Uncover needs & impacts: "*Tie wages to cost of living; fully reimburse home office expenses; assess performance goals; understand technology requirements.*"
- **Get into the nitty gritty: understand the impact on teams and individuals - their preferences, & their roles (caregivers, new recruits, trainees)**

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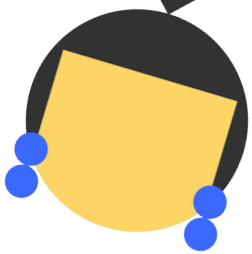
Where the Rubber Meets the Road

Hybrid: As we emerge from COVID, hybrid solutions will pose a significant challenge. Employees and employers alike will want to retain the benefits of WFH and the collaborative and social aspects of in person office work. HR/People teams will need to consider:

- How can you meet the needs and preferences of individuals, teams, and the organization?
- Do "perks" stay consistent for those at home vs the office/warehouse/plant?
- How do you manage schedules, desks, office space, meetings?
- How do you manage promotions?
- How do you identify and combat face-time bias? (*face-time bias can especially hurt women and caregivers - be careful)*

2/3rds of HR teams are rewriting their hybrid policies, focusing on 4 key areas:

1. Workplace safety
2. Employee retention
3. Employee engagement
4. Manager training/retooling



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Considering Remote & Flex

Your workforce represents a diverse range of individual and familial circumstances. This includes caregivers who need to structure their schedules to meet personal and business commitments. What does that mean for your policies?

- Remote work should be reason neutral
- Concerned about people slacking off? A culture of distrust and constant supervision builds toxicity
- Measure outcomes, not process, on both the micro and macro level

Flexibility another word for "burnout"

Ideally your workplace vision prioritizes health, wellness, and individual needs as well as building space for meaningful collaboration and connection. Yet, for many (especially caregivers), **flexibility is often just another word for burnout** when daily expectations, procedures, and policies lack clarity.

Use private DMs only when necessary. Use shared channels with a @name mention at the start of a message. There's a good chance someone else in the channel might know the answer and can reply immediately. A gentle bump if unanswered goes a long way.

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A clear flex/remote policy will address ***all*** of the factors below:

- Objectives & core principles
- *Personnel* - title, time zone, working hours, communication preferences
- *KPIs* - What evidence will the manager have (without physical supervision) that the employee is staying on task and on track?
- *Responsiveness* - Expected response times for Slack, email, meetings etc When should a manager start to be worried that the worker is not on tasks/needs additional support?
- *Rituals* - meetings - daily, weekly, firmwide
- *Working schedule* - expectations re: active availability vs asynchronous
- *Expenses* - employer approved list, stipend
- *Ownership* - Who owns what? What are company vs individual assets?
- *Environment* -What's acceptable at what level meeting (client, internal), which meetings are camera on, what about dependent care or background noise
- *Tech Support* - How to find & use support
- *Firmwide Communication* - How will company leadership notify offsite & onsite team members
- *Socialization* - How will you maintain and build culture and connections. ERGs, group coaching, virtual coffee breaks, or annual retreats? Is participation optional or required?
- *Mentorship* - identify a point of contact (other than their supervisor) to be an information source for questions, concerns, or feedback.
- *Communication Channels* - How to use which channel of communication for which need. Client updates = email, non-urgent comments = comments in a file, and urgent questions = direct mention in Slack.

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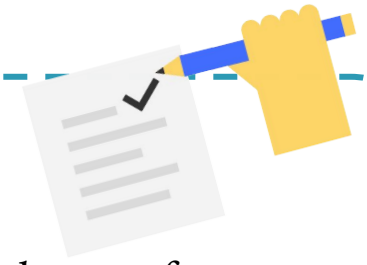
Meetings

With teams spread out and operating on different schedules, meetings should be revered and their purpose clear. This high-fidelity medium should be reserved for:



- Brainstorming: It's hard to "spitball" without meeting
- Feedback: Feedback is inherently human, it deserves a human face
- Small talk and catch-ups: You need a distributed water cooler
- Starting a project / milestones: Build trust and be unambiguous as to next steps

Every meeting should be a review of a concrete proposal or to catalyze a future series of asynchronous events, and only called when it will lead to a more efficient outcome than would be possible asynchronously.

Manager Training

Managers need help too. ***40% of managers have little self-confidence in their ability to manage employees remotely.*** Few are equipped to lead remotely and with empathy across a distributed team. It's imperative that they be given support, with clear directives from the executive team. Pay special attention to new/frontline managers as they are responsible for the daily experience of your team. It is critical that they learn to communicate clearly, manage expectations, extinguish resentments and balance personal requirements with team goals.

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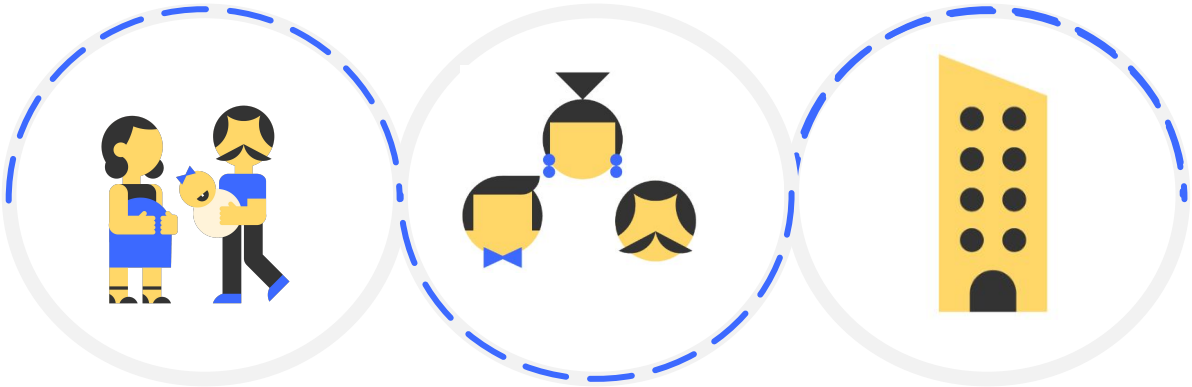
We deliver coaching and community to equip caregivers with the practical tools, emotional space, and expert support they need to integrate home, work, & family.

Our integrated and bespoke solutions include training to help managers lead in a remote, office, or hybrid environment and seminars that address the largest challenges impacting your entire organization.

An Integrated Solution



Caregivers *Managers* *Firmwide*

Contact us to learn how Kunik can support your organization wherever you work

BOOK A DEMO