

## Strategies For Negotiating A Remote Work Arrangement

According to Gallup, 43% of Americans report that they work remotely at least some of the time. In addition to this, millennials have indicated that they want flexible work arrangements. This includes the ability to work remotely.

In spite of this, there are still managers and organizations that are resistant to this idea. Many fear that productivity will go down. Others are concerned that allowing some folks to work remotely will cause discord among others who have jobs that simply don't allow telecommuting. Then there are those for whom remote working is an entirely new concept. They simply don't know if or how it will work out for their business.

If you wish to negotiate a remote work arrangement, you'll need to convince your boss that it will benefit the organization and that it won't have a negative impact on your work patterns. Here are three strategies to make that happen.

### 1. Research existing policies on working remotely

Even if nobody else in your department does it and your boss hasn't vocalized it as an option, your company may have policies allowing remote working. They may also have policies specifically restricting it. In any case, HR is the best place to start. You will want to know what rules and regulations might work in your favor and which are stacked against you.

This way, you can get information such as:

- The success of remote working in other departments.
- Reasons why remote-working options may have been revoked if they were available in the past.
- Guidelines and expectations for remote workers.

With this information, you can approach your boss with examples of success stories, steps you will take to ensure that past mistakes won't be repeated and your assurance that you will go above and beyond when it comes to meeting all expectations.

### 2. Request a test period

If you are dealing with fear of the unknown or negative experiences, sometimes the best way around that is to request a brief test period. You can either suggest a limited time period where you work remotely, then work with your boss to determine whether or not the experiment was a success.

During the trial period, you will want to put your best foot forward, of course. However, you want to avoid creating false expectations or meeting standards that you cannot continue to meet long term. So polish up your balancing act here.

### 3. Propose the changes in writing

You may not get very far if you simply ask to work remotely. Your boss may assume that it's casual conversation, or perhaps just a bit of venting about workplace frustrations. If you take the time to create

a detailed proposal, chances are your request will be taken a bit more seriously. Here are some things you might include.

#### A. A description of circumstances driving your request

In some cases, people want to work remotely because they believe it will allow them to be more productive and it makes for a less stressful workday. For others, there are specific life circumstances that make the need to work remotely more pressing. Perhaps you need to be available for an ailing family member or you want to pursue a Masters in leadership or have more time to homeschool your child or finally pursue your dream of traveling the world or something has happened that has made the commute unworkable for you. If that's the case, include it in your proposal.

#### B. Your work schedule and plan

Detail your daily work schedule. Include when you will log into the company systems, your work hours, the days of the week you will be working remotely, when you will be available to come into the office and when you can be contacted.

#### C. A list of benefits for the company

Identify ways in which your working remotely can benefit the company. Statistics on the overall benefits of this are okay, but you are better off thinking specifically. For example, by working a flexible schedule remotely, you may be more available for clients in different time zones.

#### D. A description of reporting requirements and metrics

Be prepared to use numbers to prove that you are meeting all productivity standards if you work remotely. If you have productivity or sales numbers, include them, then detail that you will continue to meet or exceed those.

#### E. A summary of equipment and technology

Do your best to lay to rest any concerns that there will be connectivity issues or other technical problems that could impact your ability to do your job. Provide details about the computer equipment you have as well as your internet connectivity to assure your boss that you can be online and productive at all times.

If you need any special hardware or software, detail this as well. For example, you might need copies of your company's video conferencing or project management software.

So many workers are enjoying the benefits of working remotely. You may be able to join them. The key is presenting your boss with a reasonable proposal and being prepared to solve any problems that might arise. Take the right approach and you may be able to get your manager to embrace your suggestion.

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