Tip Sheet: Helping Remote Workers Stay Connected

• Involve remote workers in regularly scheduled staff meetings, conference calls and online chats
  • Set the dates and times for meetings well in advance
  • Ensure that the time is as convenient as possible for all attendees. If necessary, rotate the date and times so that everyone shares “off” hours.

• Build teamwork by establishing communication guidelines
  • Create opportunities for teams of remote and non-remote workers to work together to accomplish important tasks
  • Reward effective performance and contributions to these team activities
  • Make sure that all team members know their roles and the special talents that they contribute
  • Implement a site buddy program for remote employees

• Involve remote employees in professional development opportunities, work retreats, and social gatherings, as possible.
  • Where possible, remote employees can participate in professional development or training together
  • Identify opportunities for remote workers in the same location to gather regularly
  • Invite remote employees to participate in all retreats and meetings
  • Create a Networking group that meets monthly
  • Invite remote employees to monthly executive roundtables – ensure site employees are there as well to provide opportunity to connect
  • Get involved in Diversity Network Groups, Club activities, local Volunteer opportunities

• Call employees, use instant messaging, and email to assess work progress, to share company announcements, and to communicate departmental news
  • Pick up the telephone and call your employees to ask questions, to check progress, to ask how they are doing, to share some information
  • Use instant messaging to share quick news
  • Establish a protocol regarding email communications: who should be included, who needs to respond
  • If social networking tools are available, add photo, personal, and professional information on profile

• Schedule regular on-site visits and meetings
  • Set a regular schedule for employee to visit or meet in the office
  • Plan to visit the employee in his/her location to ensure supportive work environment

• Encourage remote employees to participate actively in meetings and reply to electronic communications
  • Encourage remote employees to participate actively in meetings (to make voice heard)
  • Have the remote employee make a presentation at the meeting
  • Overcome the “out of sight, out of mind” idea

• Be accessible to remote employees
  • Be available for and responsive to the needs of all of your employees
  • Anticipate that there may be special needs of remote employees and be flexible in talking through solutions.