

# TIP SHEET: HELPING REMOTE WORKERS STAY CONNECTED

## INVOLVE REMOTE WORKERS IN REGULARLY SCHEDULED STAFF MEETINGS, CONFERENCE CALLS, AND ONLINE CHATS

- o Set the dates and times for meetings well in advance
- o 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

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

## INVOLVE REMOTE EMPLOYEES IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, WORK RETREATS, AND SOCIAL GATHERINGS, AS POSSIBLE

- o Where possible, remote employees can participate in professional development or training together
- o Identify opportunities for remote workers in the same location to gather regularly
- o Invite remote employees to participate in all retreats and meetings
- o Create a Networking group that meets monthly
- o Invite remote employees to monthly executive roundtables – ensure site employees are there as well to provide opportunity to connect
- o 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

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

## SCHEDULE REGULAR ON-SITE VISITS AND MEETINGS

- o Set a regular schedule for employee to visit or meet in the office
- o 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

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

## BE ACCESSIBLE TO REMOTE EMPLOYEES

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