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.