Tip Sheet: Helping Remote Workers Stay Connected

- **Involv 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, workshops, 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

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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.