Trends in Remote Work Arrangements

Introduction

Remote work continues to shape Canadian workplaces, influencing how organizations attract, retain and engage employees. This survey aims to explore trends, practices, and perspectives related to remote work arrangements across organizations. Your responses will provide valuable insights into how businesses are adapting to these changes and planning for the future.

Current Work Arrangements

1. **Does your organization offer a formal remote working arrangement, where employees have a structured option to work remotely on a regular basis?**
   - ○ Yes, employees can work remotely on a regular or structured basis (go to Question 4)
   - ○ No, but we allow remote work on an ad hoc basis (e.g., occasional work-from-home days for specific needs) (go to Question 3)
   - ○ No, but we are considering implementing a formal arrangement
   - ○ No, we do not offer any remote work options (go to Question 3)

2. **You indicated that your organization is considering implementing a formal remote work arrangement. When do you plan to implement?**
   - ○ Within the next 12 months (go to Question 40)
   - ○ 1 year or more from now (go to Question 40)
   - ○ Unsure (go to Question 40)

3. **You indicated that your organization currently does not offer formal remote work arrangement(s) to employees. What are the main reasons? (check all that apply)**
   - ☐ The nature of our work requires employees to be on-site (go to Question 40)
   - ☐ Concerns about maintaining employee productivity or accountability (go to Question 40)
   - ☐ Lack of adequate technology or infrastructure to support remote work (go to Question 40)
   - ☐ Belief that in-person work fosters better collaboration and organizational culture (go to Question 40)
   - ☐ Difficulty managing or supervising remote employees (go to Question 40)
   - ☐ No demand or interest from employees for remote work options (go to Question 40)
   - ☐ Other (please specify) _____ (go to Question 40)

4. **Why does your organization offer remote working arrangements? (check all that apply)**
   - ☐ To remain competitive – employees and new hires are requesting/demanding it
   - ☐ To aid in the attraction of employees regardless of geographic location
   - ☐ To aid in the retention of employees
   - ☐ To reduce overhead costs (e.g., office space costs, transportation subsidies, etc.)
   - ☐ To accommodate employees' caregiving/family obligations
   - ☐ To improve employee wellness and overall mental health
   - ☐ Other (please specify) _____

5. **How long has your organization had remote work arrangements in place?**
   - ○ Since before the pandemic
   - ○ Introduced during the pandemic
   - ○ Introduced after the pandemic was declared over (May 2023)

Eligibility and Job Role Requirements

6. **Are there any roles in your organization explicitly restricted from remote work?**
   - ○ Yes
   - ○ No (go to Question 8)

7. **You indicated that certain roles are restricted from remote work, which types of roles are they? (check all that apply)**
   - ☐ Frontline or customer-facing roles
   - ☐ Roles requiring on-site equipment or resources
   - ☐ Supervisory or managerial roles
   - ☐ Junior roles or roles in development
   - ☐ Roles involving confidential or sensitive information
   - ☐ Other (please specify) _____

8. **What factors does your organization consider when determining eligibility for remote work? (check all that apply)**
   - ☐ The nature of the job role (e.g., on-site requirements, client interaction, equipment use, etc.)
   - ☐ Level of seniority
   - ☐ Tenure
   - ☐ Employee's job performance
   - ☐ Department-specific needs
   - ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Level of Participation

Remainder of question relate to employees that meet the eligibility requirement to work remotely

9. **Are employees given the choice of remote work? (check all that apply)**
   - ☐ Employees **may choose** to work remotely on some or all workdays or not
   - ☐ Employees **are required** to work remotely on some or all workdays

10. **Do any employees have formal arrangements to work <u>fully remote</u>? (e.g., there are no requirements to be on-site)**
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No (go to Question 12)

11. **What percentage of employees have formal arrangements to work fully remote?**
    - ○ Very few (less than 15%)
    - ○ Less than half (16% to 49%)
    - ○ About half (50%)
    - ○ More than half (51% to 85%)
    - ○ Virtually all (more than 85%)

12. **Do any employees have formal arrangements to <u>participate in hybrid work</u>? (e.g., mix of remote and on-site)**
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No (go to Question 15)

13. **What percentage of employees have formal arrangements to participate in hybrid work?**
    o Very few (less than 15%)
    o Less than half (16% to 49%)
    o About half (50%)
    o More than half (51% to 85%)
    o Virtually all (more than 85%)

14. **On average, how many days per month are hybrid employees required to be on-site?**
    o No requirement – employees can choose how many days to work on-site
    o 1 to 5 days a month
    o 6 to 10 days a month
    o 11 to 15 days a month
    o 16 days or more a month
    o Requirement varies widely

Remote Work Policies

15. **Which of the following best describes your organization's approach to remote work locations?**
    o Employees may only work remotely from their primary residence if it is within reasonable travel distance to the business location (go to Question 18)
    o Employees may work remotely from any location within the same province/territory
    o Employees may work remotely form any location within the same country
    o Employees may work remotely from any location globally

16. **You indicated that your organization allows employees to work in different geographic locations than where your business is located. Does the compensation for those employees relate to the location of your business or the location of your employee?**
    o Compensation relates to the market rates in our business location
    o Compensation relates to the market rates of the employee's location

17. **For those employees working from locations outside the business location, who is responsible for covering travel expenses to attend in-person meetings at the business location?**
    o The organization covers all travel expenses
    o The organization covers some travel expenses
    o The employee is responsible for all travel expenses
    o It depends on the circumstance
    o Other (please specify) _____
    o Not applicable – employees are not required to attend in-person meetings

18. **Does your organization have a formal, documented, policy on remote work arrangements?**
    o Yes
    o No, but considering/planning (go to Question 20)
    o No (go to Question 20)

19. **You indicated that you have a formal documented policy on remote work arrangements. Which of the following are covered? (check all that apply)**
    - ☐ Positions eligible for remote work
    - ☐ Confirmation of the type of work that can be conducted remotely
    - ☐ Work hours and accountability (e.g., core hours when employees must be available)
    - ☐ Time tracking and reporting for overtime-eligible employees
    - ☐ Requirement to go into office periodically or on set days
    - ☐ Remote workspace suitability (e.g., internet connection, safety from hazards, no distractions, etc.)
    - ☐ Equipment (e.g., employer provided office equipment, chairs, extra monitors, etc.)
    - ☐ Communication tools and platforms to be used for team collaboration and interaction with colleagues and clients
    - ☐ Scheduled meetings/check-ins
    - ☐ Expected response times for communication
    - ☐ Expense reimbursement/subsidies (e.g., software subscriptions, internet costs, etc.)
    - ☐ Technology, cybersecurity, protection of company property/information (e.g., VPN to access servers, antivirus software, etc.)
    - ☐ Health and safety policy (ergonomics, wellness, emergency procedures, hazard reporting, etc.)
    - ☐ Employee conduct (e.g., dress code, video calls vs voice-only calls, etc.)
    - ☐ Performance management (metrics for performance measurement, processes)
    - ☐ Accommodations for caregivers/family obligations
    - ☐ Insurance
    - ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Employee Experience and Engagement

20. **Has your organization surveyed or gathered feedback from employees about their experiences with remote work?**
    - ○ Yes, through a formal survey or structured feedback process
    - ○ Yes, through informal discussions or ad-hoc feedback
    - ○ No, we have not gathered feedback (go to Question 23)

21. **Which of the following benefits have employees reported from remote work? (check all that apply)**
    - ☐ Improved work-life balance
    - ☐ Increased productivity
    - ☐ Reduced commuting stress
    - ☐ Greater job satisfaction
    - ☐ Other (please specify) _____
    - ☐ None of the above

22. **What are the most common challenges employees report with remote work? (check all that apply)**
    - ☐ Difficulty with communication
    - ☐ Feelings of isolation
    - ☐ Difficulty separating work and personal life
    - ☐ Technology issues
    - ☐ Decreased productivity
    - ☐ Other (please specify) _____
    - ☐ None of the above

Workplace Culture and Communication

23. **Has remote work impacted the overall organization culture?**
    o Positively
    o Negatively
    o No impact
    o Unsure

24. **How often are remote workers included in team-building or social activities?**
    o Weekly
    o Monthly
    o Quarterly
    o Rarely/Never

25. **Does your organization use specific tools to maintain engagement and communication with remote employees?**
    o Yes
    o No (go to Question 27)

26. **You indicated that your organization uses specific tools to maintain engagement and communication with remote employees. Which tools does your company use? (check all that apply)**
    ☐ Video conferencing platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.)
    ☐ Instant messaging platforms (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams Chat, etc.)
    ☐ Project management tools (e.g., Asana, Trello, Monday.com, etc.)
    ☐ Employee engagement platforms (e.g., Officevibe, Culture Amp, Qualtrics Employee Experience, etc.)
    ☐ Regular pulse surveys or feedback tools (e.g., SurveyMonkey, TinyPulse, etc.)
    ☐ Learning and development tools (e.g., LinkedIn Learning, Coursera, etc.)
    ☐ Other (please specify) _____

27. **Are there plans to invest in new communication tools or technologies to better support remote work?**
    o Yes, significant investment planned
    o Yes, minor upgrades planned
    o No, current tools are sufficient
    o Unsure

Productivity and Performance Tracking

28. **Does your organization track remote employee productivity?**
    o Yes
    o No (go to Question 30)

29. **How is productivity typically monitored? (check all that apply)**
    ☐ Self-assessment by employees
    ☐ Supervisor assessments
    ☐ Project completion and deadlines
    ☐ Software or tools that track activity
    ☐ Other (please specify) _____

AI/Automation in Remote Work

Artificial intelligence (AI) and automation are increasingly being used to enhance remote work. These tools can include technologies like workflow automation, virtual assistants, AI-enhanced collaboration platforms, and AI-driven cybersecurity solutions.

30. **Has your organization adopted AI-powered tools or automation to support remote work?**
    o Yes, extensively
    o Yes, but to a limited extent
    o No, but we are considering it (go to Question 33)
    o No, we have not adopted AI tools or automation to support remote work (go to Question 33)

31. **In what areas has AI or automation been integrated into your remote work processes? (check all that apply)**
    ☐ Workflow automation (e.g., document processing, scheduling, etc.)
    ☐ Employee monitoring and productivity tracking
    ☐ Virtual assistants or chatbots for internal support
    ☐ AI-enhanced collaboration tools (e.g., real-time transcription, AI-powered project management, etc.)
    ☐ Cybersecurity and fraud detection
    ☐ HR functions (e.g., AI-assisted recruitment, performance evaluations, etc.)
    ☐ Other (please specify) _____
    ☐ None of the above

32. **How has AI or automation impacted remote work within your organization? (check all that apply)**
    ☐ Increased employee productivity
    ☐ Improved collaboration and communication
    ☐ Reduced administrative workload for employees
    ☐ Allowed for more flexible and scalable remote work policies
    ☐ Raised concerns about employee privacy and monitoring
    ☐ Contributed to job reductions or role changes
    ☐ Other (please specify) _____
    ☐ No noticeable impact

33. **Does your organization plan to invest in new AI-driven technologies to enhance remote work in the next 1 to 2 years?**
    o Yes, significant investment planned
    o Yes, minor investment/upgrades planned
    o No investment planned in next 1 to 2 years
    o Unsure

34. **In your opinion, how will AI and automation affect the feasibility of remote work in the next 5 years?**
    o Increase remote work opportunities by improving efficiency and collaboration
    o Reduce the need for remote work by automating roles
    o Have minimal impact on remote work feasibility
    o Unsure

Challenges and Barriers

35. **What challenges has your organization faced in implementing remote work? (check all that apply)**
    - ☐ Technology or IT support
    - ☐ Management or supervision challenges
    - ☐ Cybersecurity and data protection
    - ☐ Employee engagement or morale
    - ☐ Communication barriers
    - ☐ Other (please specify) _____
    - ☐ None of the above (go to Question 37)

36. **What strategies have been effective in overcoming these challenges? (check all that apply)**
    - ☐ Providing technical support
    - ☐ Regular team check-ins
    - ☐ Investment in secure technology
    - ☐ Regular feedback from employees
    - ☐ Other (please specify) _____
    - ☐ None of the above

Future of Remote Work

37. **What are your organization's plans for remote work in the future?**
    - o Expand remote work options
    - o Reduce remote work options
    - o Maintain current remote work policies
    - o Not yet determined

38. **Do you expect remote work to affect talent acquisition or retention in the future?**
    - o Yes, it will positively impact talent acquisition and retention
    - o Yes, it will negatively impact talent acquisition and retention
    - o No significant impact expected
    - o Unsure

39. **Do you expect the demand for remote work from employees to increase in the next 1 to 2 years?**
    - o Yes, significantly
    - o Yes, slightly
    - o No, it will remain the same
    - o No, demand will increase
    - o Unsure

Organizational Information

40. **For us to send you the results of the survey, please complete the following:**

Organization Name:	
Person Completing Survey:	
Position Title:	
Email Address:	

41. Which sector describes your organization?
- Private Sector
- Public Sector
- Not-for-Profit Sector

42. How many employees (both full-time and part-time) do you have in Canada? (if unsure, please estimate)

[   ]

43. What is the appropriate industry classification for your organization?
- Agriculture, fishing, and hunting
- Forestry and forest products
- Mining, quarrying and oil & gas extraction
- Utilities
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Transportation & warehousing
- Information & cultural industries
- Finance & insurance
- Real estate & rental & leasing
- Professional, scientific & technical services
- Technology
- Management of companies & enterprises
- Administrative & support, waste management & remediation services
- Educational services
- Healthcare & social assistance
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, tourism, hospitality
- Accommodation & food services
- Other services (except public administration)
- Public administration
- Associations & Regulatory Bodies
- Other (please specify) _____

44. How did you hear about this research project?
- Email invitation (from WCBC)
- Work we have done with WCBC in the past
- From a colleague or peer
- Social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, X)
- Google ad
- WCBC website
- Board of Trade email
- CPHR BC email
- Unsure
- Other (please specify) _____

45. Please provide any comments you may have on this survey:

46. Are there any topics that your organization would like to see in future online surveys? We would appreciate your suggestions below: