



# MANAGING CONTACT CENTRE HOME WORKERS: 20 QUICK TIPS

A Sensée eBook

Sensée — Brilliant service, flexible homeworking

# Managing Home Workers: 20 Quick Tips



## 1

### **Set yourself up to work from home**

Being a home worker will give you (as a Manager) a different and better perspective on the unique issues and pressures facing colleagues (in a way that you won't experience if you are office-based).

## 2

### **Ask yourself 'is the candidate right for homeworking?'**

Work from home isn't for everybody, especially if the home working candidate is someone who needs regular social company or isn't comfortable embracing virtual comms technology.

**Being a home worker will give you (as a Manager) a different and better perspective on the unique issues and pressures facing colleagues**

## 3

### **Be conscious of information security...**

Ensure tight data protection especially where customer data is concerned. Ensure that any computers used at home for work purposes are either only used for that purpose, or can be 'locked down' during the working day to prevent personal use. Ensure adequate anti-virus and firewall software is installed, and applications are password protected.

## 4

### **... and remain compliant**

Don't assume that because your business is compliant with ISO, GDPR and other regulations that your home office operation will be too.

## 5

### **Ensure good communications to maintain effective team working and prevent home working isolation**

Remember, no single technology or app is the complete answer. At Sensée, we use Connect for webinars, online training, desktop sharing, etc., Microsoft Teams for individual and team communication, and Yammer for social interactions within teams.

## 6

### **Create a virtual communications workspace**

On top of those mentioned in Tip 5, create a virtual workspace where homeworkers can collaborate and communicate in real time. This will also help remote workers build relationships and friendships with colleagues.



## 7

### **Run educational campaigns and quizzes/competitions to motivate and engage**

In 2019, for example, Sensée ran week long information campaigns to support both Mental Health Awareness Week and Carers Week. In December, we ran a virtual Christmas Party night with prizes and quizzes.

## 9

### **Build virtual team collaboration**

Enable home workers to have a freer chat with colleagues in a 'team room' environment within your virtual communications workspace. At Sensée, for example, homeworkers can take part in team huddles and have one-to-ones with their Team Leaders. Then each fortnight, they can take part in 'skillset huddles' so they can mix with other homeworkers outside their teams.

## 8

### **Check-in regularly**

Be conscious of the mental well being of remote workers, especially those operating in stressful situations (e.g. people dealing with anxious and vulnerable customers). Check in hourly if necessary but certainly on a daily basis. Homeworkers often need more one-to-one time with their managers than office-based workers.

## 10

### **Reset expectations and norms**

If you are moving to home working for disaster recovery reasons (such as during the Covid-19 crisis) ensure that you set realistic expectations and norms for your home workers. The working day may look very different.

**During the Covid-19 crisis home workers will often have to cope with other distractions - such as kids and partners at home.**

## 11

### **Expect and plan for inefficiencies**

During the Covid-19 crisis home workers will often have to cope with other distractions - such as kids and partners at home. Plan for business-as-usual as much as possible but expect and plan for some inefficiencies.

## 12

### **Monitor homeworker engagement**

At Sensée, we use a weekly online Employee Satisfaction and Engagement survey, asking 8 questions from 'How do you rate your overall satisfaction with your week?' to 'How do you rate your line managers' support'.



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### **Check your legal obligations....**

If a colleague is moving to work at home from an office-based role, you may need to amend certain elements of their terms and conditions of employment.

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### **.... and your business insurance**

Ensure any equipment provided by your organisation is safe, fit for purpose and adequately covered for insurance purposes.

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### **.... and your health and safety responsibilities...**

Typically, you'll have the same responsibilities for ensuring health and safety of home workers as for office-based staff.

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## 16

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### **Treat homeworkers the same as any other worker....**

Just because someone works from home doesn't mean they should be at a disadvantage. Within reason, ensure they are rewarded in the same manner, and receive the same company and career benefits. Where that isn't possible devise methods of creating similar reward and benefit packages for home workers.

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### **.... including the way you manage performance**

When it comes to reviewing quality and performance, homeworkers should be targeted, monitored and assessed the same as any other office worker, including the use of Personal Development Plans.



## 18

### **Train home workers the way you find most effective**

During the Covid-19 crisis, organisations have little option but to use virtual training techniques. During normal times, however, some home working organisations prefer office-based training, others virtual training, or indeed a mix of both.

## 19

### **Use virtual floor walkers**

If you're running a highly populated front or back office operation then think about using virtual floor walkers (or at least people to contact if your remote workers need support). If someone is unsure what to do they can then ask rather than guess - just like they would in the office environment.

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# AND FINALLY...

## 20

### **Enable flexible working:**

Many people home work because it gives them a better work-life-balance. This especially applies to work-at-home mums, carers (for elderly relatives) or those who need to fit work in around their other daily tasks. So give them the freedom to (at least partially) self select their own daily schedules and allow split shifts and other forms of flexible working.

