ConnectWise®

# The 4 Pillars to Building a **Top-Notch Remote Workforce** eBook

INTRODUCTION

The age of the remote workforce is upon us. In fact, GlobalWorkplaceAnalytics.com states that since 2005, the percentage of the non-self-employed telecommuting population has grown by **115 percent.** That's nearly **ten times faster** than the rest of the workforce!

This offers a unique opportunity for both businesses and employees, contributing to the increased popularity of telecommuting. As traditional work arrangements evolve to include remote teams, companies can garner the best talent, **regardless of their location,** while also providing their clients with more comprehensive support coverage. This arrangement can also **enhance the lives of individuals** that prefer or require a more flexible schedule, like parents, individuals with the inability to work during traditional hours, and those seeking to shorten their commute. **With this guide, you'll learn how to build a top-notch remote workforce to ensure success both inside the office and out.**

CHAPTER 1
THE RIGHT TALENT
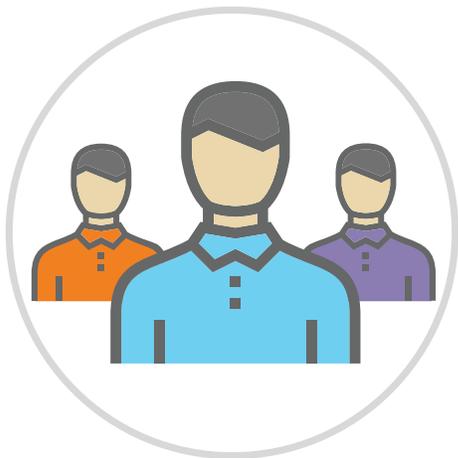
Finding the right talent can be a challenge for any business. Finding the right talent for a remote workplace can be an even greater challenge. How do you determine whether a candidate has the specific skills you're looking for?

Ask the Right Questions

JNR Networks, founded by James Riley, operates entirely with a remote workforce. To determine the best candidate for the role, James took steps to automate the first portion of his interview process. He discovered he could save time and effort by weeding out only serious candidates with the first email inquiry. By using a **ConnectWise Manage™ Service Board** dedicated to jobs with an attached email connector, James creates tickets to record and track written responses of job applicants. A workflow rule automatically sends responses thanking the applicant for their inquiry and prompts them to answer a set of questions. If they're interested enough, he says, they'll respond.

By incorporating this small, yet significant automated step, James has set the stage for **deeper insight** into how his applicants will communicate, document, and handle written customer relations for his company which plays an integral part of any remote worker.

Understand Past Work Experiences

Key indicators of a prime remote candidate can be determined during resume review. Spot them by asking yourself the following questions:

Have they previously worked a remote job?
Prior experience is often an advantage as the candidate is aware of both the benefits and challenges that telecommuting presents. If so, the interviewer can engage in a learning opportunity by asking additional questions related to the candidate's experience. Which processes were effective? Which were unsuccessful?

Have they been in business for themselves before?
An entrepreneurial spirit exhibits a sense of leadership and independence. A magical combination reflecting a fierce self-determination and ability to commit. This question also enables interviewers to better understand the candidate's mindset and business background. Be on the lookout for those 'successful exit' candidates, such as those with a startup that transitioned through an acquisition, merger, or partnership.

Have they made lateral moves within the same company?
Career advancement is an attribute of a self-starter. These movers and shakers are driven by the need to continually build their skills sets and can be a tremendous asset to furthering the success of your organization.

Get Face-to-Face

Conducting in-person interviews is a solid way to read the interviewee's body language and determine how they conduct themselves in a work environment. This allows you to decipher how they may interact with your existing and prospective clients, while also allowing both parties the chance to determine if the partnership will be symbiotic.

In addition to being a self-starter and excellent communicator, as well as having a balanced set of job-specific technical and nontechnical skills, there are additional characteristics that a well-rounded remote worker often possesses. Although sometimes overlooked, the following skills are highly desirable qualities in a remote employee and may help formulate additional questions throughout the interview:

Asks for help. Be aware if the candidate asks questions for clarification, a trait essential for optimal client relations.

Excels under a low-touch management style. This is essential, as remote jobs offer minimal oversight regarding making sure employees are staying on track.

Works well independently. Some employees may work more efficiently with the social support that an office environment can provide.

Proficient in multi-tasking and self-regulation. Managing and prioritizing multiple tasks is an extremely resourceful skill that supports the self-management necessary for a remote role.

Just as important as finding the right talent, is **taking effective steps to onboard** your new remote workforce and ease transitions.

Set Clear Expectations and Responsibilities

The first step to onboarding your new employees should be to provide a comprehensive introduction to the company. **Clearly communicate your company's vision, mission, and values,** as well as acquaint them with the rest of the team. Also, encourage workers to seek help and consult one another by establishing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). SOPs can include processes ranging from day-to-day tasks to business decision criteria. **Each SOP should have an established owner/proxy relationship** without direct connection to the business owner. This will empower remote workers with the ability to make timely, efficient decisions when necessary.

Provide Training Opportunities

Learning the various aspects of a new job can be overwhelming, which is why we recommend equipping your new hires with a welcome kit on their first day. **By starting out with a solid foundation, new employees can feel a greater sense of support** throughout the onboarding process. Be sure to include playbooks for internal processes, a list of online resources to use while in the field, SOPs, and access to the appropriate software tools to ensure a job well done. As an added bonus, tutorial videos on such tools can be **extremely beneficial** if the newcomer is unfamiliar with the software.

Take Ian Richardson, Founder and CEO of Doberman Technologies, for example. Not only does he provide his new hires with a complete crash course on all company products, but he also makes a point to debrief the client list.

"It's a part of the white glove service we provide to our clientele. It's important that new hires understand the different aspects of our clients to provide the best service possible," Richardson said.

Shadow Senior Colleagues

Each newbie should be paired with a 'move-in' buddy. Ideally, this would be a colleague performing the same role within the company or perhaps, an employee transitioning to another position. Regardless, **your new hire will need a reliable source to teach them** the ropes and answer any questions as they move-in to their new role.

Incorporate Company Culture

Think outside of the box when it comes to introducing your new hire to the rest of the crew. **There are countless ways to creatively portray your company culture** from the first day. One of our favorites is **using memes or pictures** to make a wordless introduction. Another idea is to kick things off with a 'Would You Rather' line of questioning. Even providing a few general questions regarding their favorite movie, song, or food may help your shy newbie warm up quickly to the group.

Doberman Technologies uses a personality test as a fun way to introduce company culture and assimilate new hires to the team. Ian recommends the **Eagle Center for Leadership's** test, which categorizes personalities into one of four animals. This q**uick and entertaining quiz** is designed to help the team learn more about one other's similarities and differences for a friendlier work environment.

CHAPTER 2
ALIGN COMPANY CULTURE

Build a Culture of Leadership

Empower your remote workers by providing autonomy, rather than micro-management. Clearly communicate this expectation of autonomy with your management team as complications and wasted time can result from attempts at constant oversight and unnecessary questioning.

Have Fun

Don't be afraid to mix work and play. In fact, James Riley, who presented at ConnectWise's Automation Nation 2017, encourages it! At JNR Networks, you'll find an Xbox that James installed for his 'gamer workforce'. Employees can play and challenge each other while enjoying some well-deserved entertainment during their lunch breaks or after hours. T**his also serves as an easy way to bring remote team members together.**

If your remote employees work within the same city, events like seeing a movie, meeting at a bar, or even planning a team building exercise like an escape room, can **bring people together** and provide an opportunity to **create meaningful bonds.** Here at ConnectWise, culture and fun are priorities. Whether it's challenging each other to mini golf, racing go carts, or a enjoying dinner cruise, **colleagues come together each month** for an activity outside of the office to let loose and enjoy each other's company.
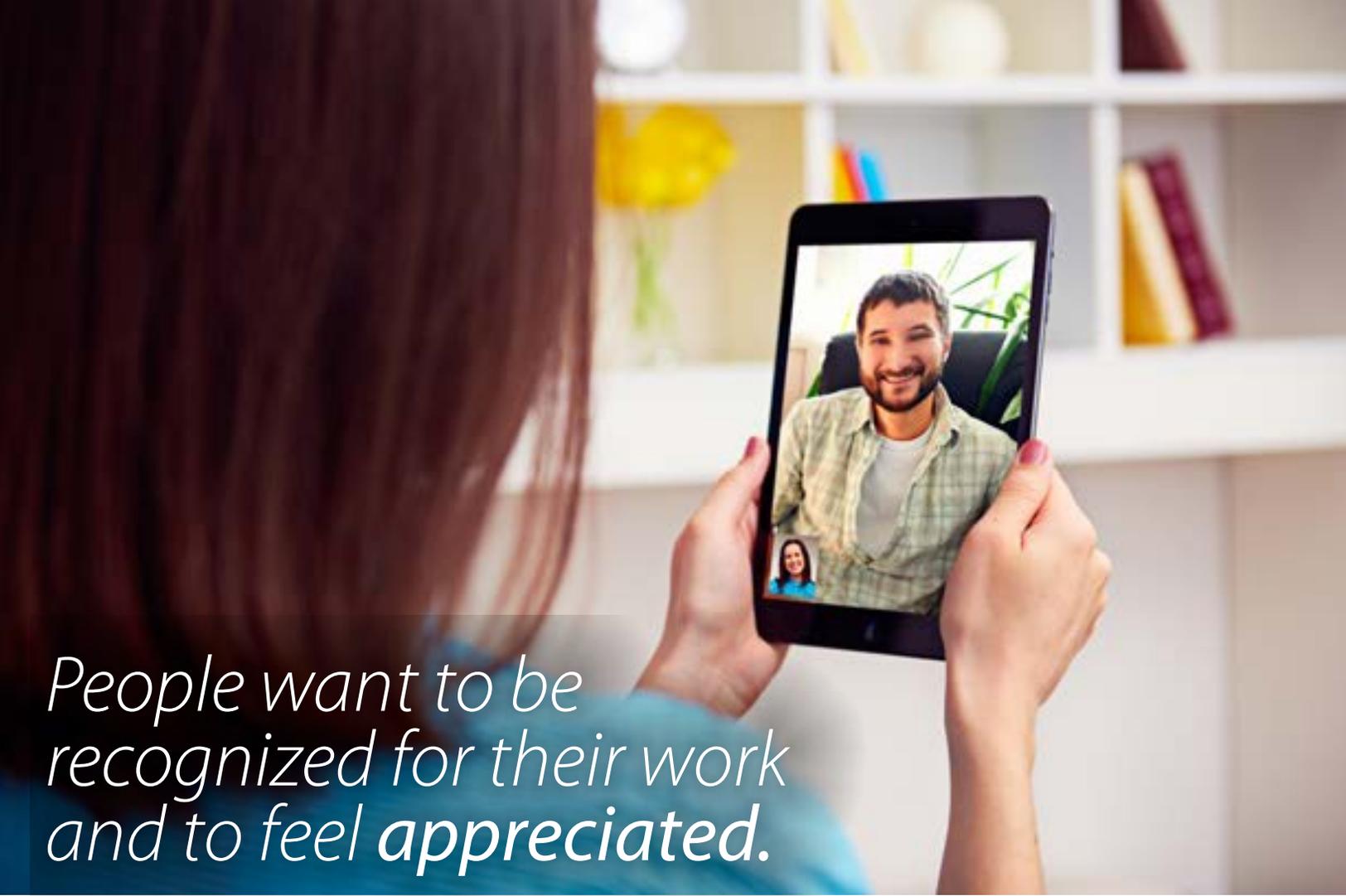
*People want to be recognized for their work and to feel **appreciated.***

Encourage Conversation and Say 'Thank You'

Setting up a virtual water cooler, using group chat tools like Slack and Yammer, establishes a friendly, casual place for employees to post updates about work, life, and of course, memes. Because we all know a good meme can bring a smile that may turn a day around. With minimal effort, you can create a sense of connection that may also provide a needed dose of motivation.

Even Entrepreneur suggests implementing "High Five Fridays" where people can publicly recognize those who are going **above and beyond.** Yet, it can be challenging to manage morale and comradery when you can't always physically pat each other on the back. **A virtual water cooler** can also provide a place where management and fellow colleagues can acknowledge stellar employees, which can be a well-needed affirmation of someone's hard work.

CHAPTER 3
FOSTER EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS
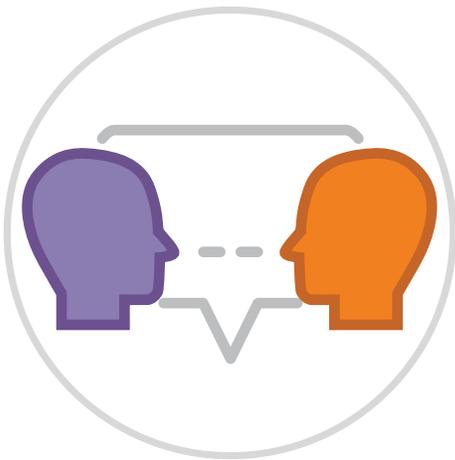
Daily Communication

As they say, communication is key - **especially when it comes to remote workforce success.** Anyone who has ever experienced working remotely can attest to this statement. That's why it's essential that you have the **proper channels in place to streamline information** and open the door for transparency and communication among your workforce.

Using an internal chat can enable quick and easy communication between employees. Video chat capabilities can also be an effective way to help ease the distance of a remote workforce, especially when used to conduct remote meetings. **Use ConnectWise Control™ to help you** to facilitate remote meetings using video or chat capabilities, as well provide the ability to exchange files.

Providing visibility into colleague calendars can eliminate potential complications if attempting to schedule meetings or other events. ConnectWise Manage seamlessly allows this level of transparency and provides the functionalities required to map activities, as well as tie service tickets to calendars so remote members can q**uickly view each other's current statuses.**

Conduct daily check-ins, such as a scrum meeting. This simple, yet effective tactic is a great way to start or end each day by updating everyone on each other's progress. This can also be leveraged as a time to discuss a specific work topic, such as a problematic client, to receive feedback and support. Not only does this daily 'meeting of the minds' **often build morale between teammates,** it can also s**trengthen friendship and comradery** of the group.

Process is Important

Efficiency comes hand-in-hand with process. The development and utilization of processes is vital to remain competitive in today's business. In fact, **thoroughly-documented, transparent, and trained-upon processes** can mean the difference between a customer and a loyal patron. Be sure that your remote workforce has a **clear understanding** of all business processes, expectations of service level agreements, and transparency of gathered metrics and KPIs.

ConnectWise Manage provides peace of mind through efficient ticketing processes and easily tracked workflows that capture every moment of billable time. Reports on recorded data such as services, projects, sales, marketing, and finance, are then sent to take the guesswork out of strategy and help drive growth.

Document Everything

Recording the details of the job completed is as important as recording your time. Encourage and incentivize your remote workers to document their activities, as well as **provide any insight** into how to prevent, fix, or replicate a client issue. Answering the simple what, why, and how, can have a huge impact when working long distance.

There's no I in 'Remote Team'. Oftentimes, remote workers must collaborate to resolve an issue. This provides an opportunity to build relationships and develop unity. These efforts to communicate and document should be both acknowledged and rewarded.

Metrics and KPIs

It's important to gather data on your remote workforce to clearly understand their daily, weekly, and monthly metrics. If you're looking for a way to increase efficiency, a great option is to gamify performance. Healthy competition can be a fun and effective way to fuel productivity and precision.

CHAPTER 4
INVEST IN EFFICIENT TECHNOLOGY

Empowering your workforce with updated, practical technology will equip your remote workforce with the means they need to excel. Help your remote team level up by providing them with **user-friendly tools and valuable resources** to manage daily service delivery and communications, all with the convenience of a single vendor.

ConnectWise grows with you. No matter which stage you're at, the ConnectWise Suite™ provides you with an **award-winning software platform** that helps **achieve goals and organizational prosperity.**

Master superior service delivery and set your remote workforce up for success with **ConnectWise Manage.** Error-proof ticketing functionalities guarantees clear team communication and exceptional documentation. ConnectWise Manage also captures and tracks all steps, ultimately **helping to maximize visibility** so your remote workforce can deliver outstanding customer service.

Use ConnectWise Chat™ to quickly respond to service requests and ensure clients trust you have their best interests in mind. ConnectWise Chat™ enables customers to **gain immediate attention** for an enhanced service experience, as well as helps teams capture chat conversations directly inside ConnectWise Manage tickets.

Access client devices with the power of ConnectWise Control™.
This allows technicians to quickly and efficiently service their clients through an enriched remote control experience. Remote workers can **solve problems faster** and even **collaborate with each other** to simultaneously work on a single session. Using ConnectWise Control™ for remote meetings helps groups **easily engage and exchange ideas** during meetings, webinars, and other events. Participants viewing a shared screen have options to record videos, take screenshots, and chat with one another.

Leverage ConnectWise Automate™ to enhance your IT service team with flexible remote monitoring and management software. **Gain better visibility into managed devices and eliminate blind spots** in your supported environments before they become a problem. ConnectWise Automate also helps to **remove delivery roadblocks** by automating recurring tasks that can **free up valuable time** and **help support more endpoints** without adding headaches or head count.

CONCLUSION

Building and maintaining a first-rate remote workforce doesn't have to be rocket science. Remember to focus on the four basics to ensure success: **procure and enlist the right talent, align company values, foster effective communication, and invest in advanced technology.**

At ConnectWise, we're here to **help ease your transition** as you expand your work arrangements. From selecting the right talent to improving workflows, tools like **ConnectWise Automate** and **ConnectWise Manage** fill in support gaps so you can offer your employees **optimal work environments** without compromising the integrity of your services.

About ConnectWise

ConnectWise transforms how technology solution providers successfully build, manage, and grow their businesses. Offering a comprehensive set of award-winning solutions that deliver a seamless, simple user experience, ConnectWise gives its partners the ability to increase productivity, efficiency, and profitability.

Just as importantly, ConnectWise's relentless commitment to innovation and unparalleled passion for partner success assure its partners have comprehensive business support through every step of their journey. Today, more than 120,000 users in over 50 countries take advantage of the competitive edge that comes from ConnectWise solutions and its powerful network of ideas and experts.

For more information, visit **ConnectWise.com** or call 800-671-6898.