

Hello. This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thanks for tuning in.

This week I want to talk about remote work and why it's here to stay. So why is this important? Why are we talking about this? Well, if remote work is here to stay, and I believe it is, then how do we make it work? What are the best practices? What do I need to do as a leader to help my folks be productive, have fun, be a part of the team, share the culture, et cetera? So, five tips that I think might help as we move into this hybrid future, where some people are coming back to the office, but some people are working from home or working remotely.

The first thing is expand your thinking as the leader. There are opportunities here. For example, hiring locally, as most of us try to do, is a constraint because you don't have infinite resources in your locality. Even if it's a wonderful place to live and work, you still don't have all the resources. But now, if people can work successfully remotely, your talent pool is the entire globe practically. So, think about that. That is a real opportunity to get some talent that maybe you couldn't have gotten before because people don't have to move from their state, where they may love it, to your place, where they may be detached from family and friends, and come into the office every day and work there. So that's a real opportunity.

The second thing is don't look at remote work as a cost-cutting opportunity. I don't think you should look at this as a cost-cutting effort because, frankly, I think it requires more work to be successful remotely. It definitely takes more work on the part of the senior leaders because it's harder to reach out and touch people if they're not coming into the office. And you actually have to make an effort to pick up the phone or schedule a Zoom call or something, and you end up working a little bit harder.

Okay. The third thing is communicate frequently and deliberately. And when I say communicate, I don't mean necessarily picking up the phone and having a one-to-one conversation, although that might be very nice. You're going to have to do more things. You're going to have to use Zoom. I know a number of our clients have contacted us because they want to do videos like this for the entire employee population. So use everything, use Zoom, use the phone, use video, use whatever tools you can to communicate relentlessly and the focus, as always, should be on your mission, vision, values, culture, updates about the company's health and wellbeing, things like that.

Okay. The fourth thing, if people are working from home, and pretty soon it seems like most children are going to be back in school, so you're not doing work over here, homeschool over here, preparing meals over here, it may be more just working from home. And if you're working from home, basically you can get out of bed anytime, log onto your computer and you can be working. And so, there are no clean boundaries. So here, the workday is, let's just say 8:00 to 5:00, and it's kind of a clean boundary. Before 8:00, you're thinking about work, but you're not really thinking about work. And after 5:00, you're trying to let work go. It's easier for some people than others. But for people that are working from home, the workday is 24 hours. So, focus on making sure that your employees are taking care of themselves. They're eating right. They're getting exercise. They're taking advantage of the company health plan and getting physicals and all those things. It's all about self-care, really. So, all work and no play, and all those kinds of things.

All right. And the final thing, focus on results. We were just talking about a client who requires direct reports to submit a daily report of what they did and work hours and all that. I guarantee he probably never reads the reports, but he requires them anyway. To me, it just smacks of micromanagement. But ultimately, as the leader of a successful construction company, do you care about hours worked? Do you care that somebody was in their seat in front of their screen from 8:00 to 5:00 with only a 30-minute lunch break? Do you really care about that or do you care about results? And that's what it's all about.

When it comes to remote work, who cares if somebody works from 8:00 to 12:00, goes to play golf, and then picks up the computer and works a couple more hours after the golf. As long as they're getting the job done, as long as your customers are happy, as long as your schedules are being met, as long as your budgets are getting met, what do you care if somebody

works from three in the morning until nine in the morning? It doesn't matter other than the self-care man thing I mentioned before. So, focus on results. That's the big picture. And that's what leaders should be focusing on anyway. Right?

So, I'd like to hear what you're doing in the way of innovation and adaptation when it comes to working from home and remote work. This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thank you.