

Episode 67: How do you work from home?

The issues are not just for your people, but how you manage your people who do.

1. The Benefits

Outside of a manufacturing or retail environment, few of us clock in any more.

In the US most of us are employed to work, say, a 40 hour week, but not specific hours.

Moreover, as we look to employ a more diverse workforce, 9-5 just doesn't work.

You have a great programmer who wants to work 11-7, do you really care?

So if you don't care about the hours, why do you care where they are?

Assuming they don't need to be in face-to-face meetings, why not let them work from home?

Why pay for office space? Does it matter where the conference call is taken from?

The more flexible you are about hours and location, the wider your choice of employees.

2. The Downsides

For many people, working from home is a technology challenge – phones and broadband.

As an employer, do you need to pay for these and at what cost?

Once you have established people are working from home, it can be tough to get face-to-face.

Teams often need to be in the same place, conference calls don't offer the same collaboration.

Some like video-conferences, but they can be poor quality and only 1-to-1.

The biggest issue is trust: do you trust the employee to actually be working?

3. The Management Challenge

The fact is some work-types, like manufacturing, can make WFH impossible.

The truth is that letting your employees work from home can say as much about you as them.

It's not just about trust but about how you give the objectives and measure them.

If you have clear objectives and clear measurements then your people will have clear accountability.

Bottom Line: While the nature of your work may depend on your company's work from home policy, the reality is that the biggest influence on the policy may be the way you manage your people.

