

Working From Home?

Currently employers are faced with serious challenges unique to their sector and situation. Some will be able to retain staff, but others face losses of talented, trained employees. Government supports have been announced, but what can be done to cope with the immediate situation?

For employers trying to weather the storm, some employees can work at home, but many jobs don't allow that. So, what to do? We are grasping at straws here, so need to innovate.

All employers want employees to do well and contribute to the success of the business or enterprise. Employers want employees to build their knowledge and skills to contribute to that success. In normal times, however, employers seldom have time to devote to minor priorities.

These are not normal times, so here are some no-cost/low-cost ideas to consider while your capable employees are stuck at home. The options are, sit at home and do nothing, or do something.

1-Address small, but time-consuming tasks that often get pushed aside, such as,

- Updating current practices and policies that need to be brought up to speed
- Assessing day-to-day processes and procedures to improve workflow (staff may know best)
- Drafting step-by-step procedure guides for new employees or new tasks
- Draft reports or recommendations on items that need attention (customer service, administration, sales, service, inventory, safety, etc)

2-Develop new ideas and initiatives

- Ask employees if there are any ideas, issues or mini-projects that they would like to take on
- Ask employees to list opportunities to build the business or services you provide
- Ask employees for ideas on how the business or agency can successfully adapt to the “new normal” once this crisis is over.
- List ideas for in-house “mini-projects” to build employee knowledge when returning to work.
- Internal customer service. Are we serving each other well, to serve external customers?

These are just ideas to consider. In some cases they may not be feasible. They are however, based on longer term experience and surveys showing:

- Most people want to do a good job.
- Employees want input to decision making (especially experienced staff, but newcomers as well).
- Most employees want learning and growth.

Everyone says we need to innovate, well here's an opportunity.