

How to role model support for your working parents when working remotely

Working parents will soon find themselves at home balancing a career and caring for their children full time. So as a manager, it is more important than ever to embrace the challenge ahead and role model support for your working parents. With 52% of parents stating that managers in their organization do not role model support for working parents, this is your chance to step up and lead with confidence.

Remove any bias

Working parents are not looking at this next period as a holiday and time off from work. Their stress levels are higher than ever, so it's important not to assume that they are enjoying this and having time with the family. Remove bias that:

- They are not focused anymore.
- They are working less than others.

Show empathy for your team and their needs

Take time to understand what their at-home schedule will be like and how they need to readjust their priorities while working flexibly. The more supportive you are as a manager, the more productive their output will be.

Balance flexibility with structure

Working parents will require this next period to be flexible. Think about how you can best support your team, and balance a new form of flexibility, but with a clear structure. Your parents will be looking to you for clear expectations on ways of working.

- Do you want to set core working hours?
- Do you have a daily team check-in?
- Are you happy for them to work their hours anytime?

This is your opportunity to work with your team on setting up a way of working that works for everyone. Your trust levels need to be higher than ever before. Working parents will be doing the best they can to get through this period of work.

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Some things will not go to plan, meetings may be missed and in some cases, you might find a little person attending team meetings. Remove any judgment and trust your working parents. And don't be afraid to reiterate this trust to them.

Measure outcomes and not hours

Remember... measuring outcomes - not hours or visible presence - is your new normal. It is important to stay focused on output when embracing a remote workforce and not on time spent online. The reality is that working parents are not going to be able to deliver a 9-5 day. So focus on what is being accomplished.

You need to set expectations

It's fair to say that what we are facing ahead is new to everyone. Most parents will be feeling apprehensive so don't be afraid to ask your team:

- How are you feeling about working from home?
- What excites you or worries you?
- How can I best support you?
- What work structure will help you whilst balancing your kids at home?
- What is your number one ask from me over the next period?

Create a parent channel in your organization

This is your opportunity to role model support for working parents. If you can, create an informal channel where your working parents share tips and ideas on how to make WFH with kids actually work!