



# Starter's Guide to Remote Work

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From stakeholder buy-in to  
remote friendly job listings

How to set up teams for success - regardless of where they work from. Insights from Stack Overflow and other companies running remote teams.

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# How Stack Overflow has remote culture built in

While we now have offices in New York, London, Munich and Austin, Stack Overflow was born remotely and it still shows in our culture: we have 39% of our employees working remotely across 14 countries. And an even higher number on the engineering team, where 80 % work remotely. This is however not just something unique to our own culture, but a growing trend.

## Why should you offer remote working options to developers?

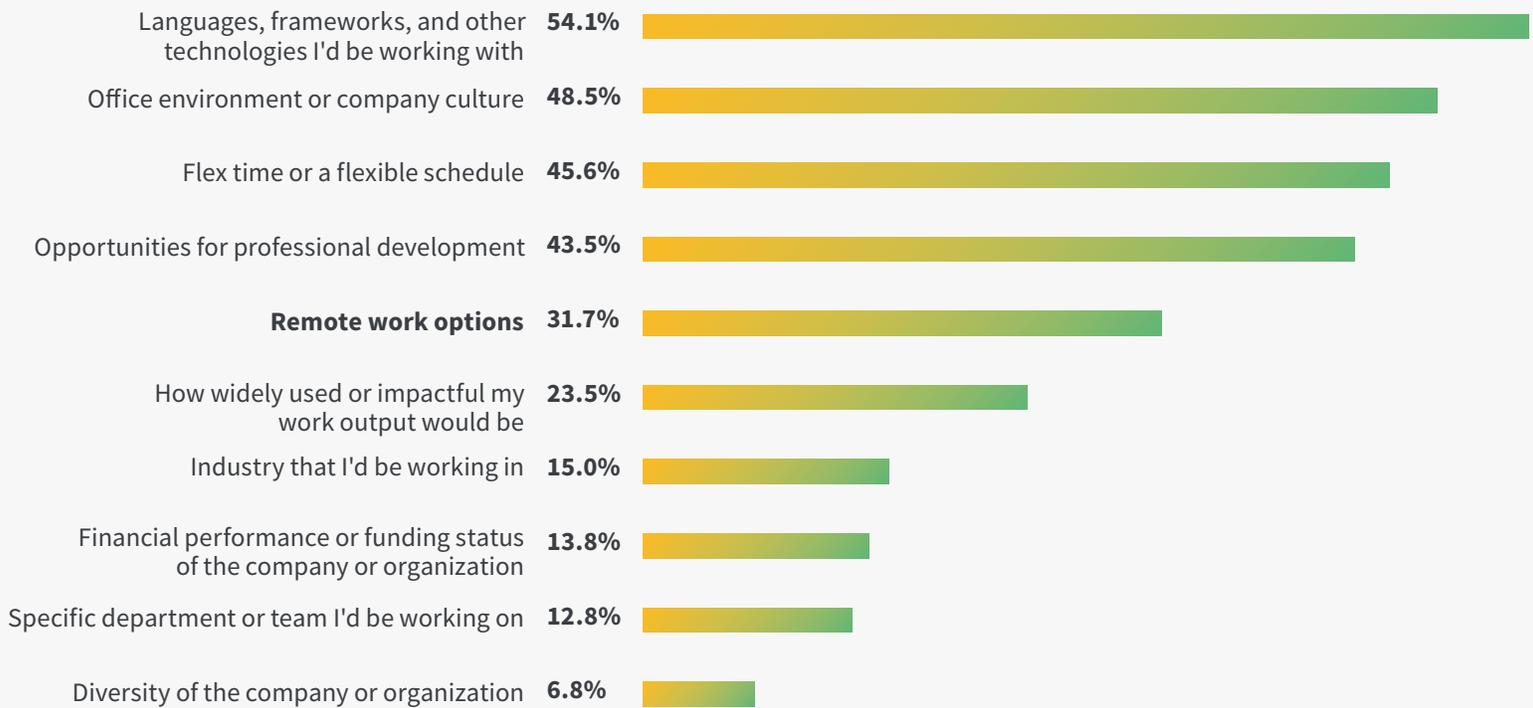
Considering that 90% of developers are at least part-time employed, it's high time to think outside the box to meet your developer hiring goals. The most obvious opportunity to expand your recruiting reach? Offer remote working options to talented developers outside of your area.

Allowing developers to work from wherever they're located is a great way to grow your talent pool. However, it takes a lot more than simply declaring "our developers are everywhere" to effectively source, hire, and retain remote developers.

If the added benefit of widening your talent pool beyond your location isn't enough to convince you to offer remote working options, consider how the hiring landscape has changed:

- A study by the Harvard Business Review found that remote workers were not only happier and more productive, but were far less likely to quit.
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that remote work is more prevalent than ever, with 38% of workers in management, business, and financial operations saying that they did some or all of their work at home.
- In a study of 500 managers, supervisors, and executives, 15Five found that 37% of companies have a main office with some people working remotely.
- In the 2019 survey among almost 90,000 tech workers around the globe 32% said, that the option to work remotely is one of the highest-ranking factors, that would make them choose a job.

## Most Important Job Factors for Technical Talent



79,371 respondents globally;  
top 3 factors selected

We asked respondents to picture themselves comparing two jobs with the same compensation, benefits, and location, and consider which characteristics would most influence their choice between the two.

# What makes remote work so attractive?

Remote work is no longer a perk to offer only if you're feeling generous. Developers have no shortage of career options, and when they decide they'd like to spend more time with the families or simply shorten their commutes, they also have plenty of remote work opportunities to choose from.

**Remote jobs are more attractive.** While remote is not for everyone, those candidates that prefer to work from a home office or co-working space nearer to them, will be likely to give an employer a hard pass if they are not offering it. Since it is still not the norm to offer remote work, this means the competition is smaller. We are seeing on Stack Overflow that job listings in the US that do offer remote work have an apply rate twice as high as those without.

**Your developer creates their ideal work environment** At Stack Overflow, we strongly believe that a developer needs (a) a private office, (b) flexible hours, and (c) a short commute. With remote workers, you can check off all three. Give them the tools they want to be successful, let them set up their workspace just how they like it. Whether it is a yoga break, walking the dog, sneaking in that power nap your employees can work in a way that helps them recharge most effectively and get into the flow more easily.

# Are you committed to remote culture?

How to get everyone on your team(s) on the same page about remote developers.

Before you can make any meaningful edits to your technical recruiting assets, it's up to you to start a conversation across multiple teams about how you all feel about remote work culture. Here are a few questions to help you develop your company's story and vision around remote work:

- 1. How much of our culture is remote? And is everyone at the company bought in?**
- 2. What types of benefits are we currently offering remote developers?**
- 3. What types of benefits should we be offering remote developers?**
- 4. How flexible can we be about work hours?**
- 5. Do our methods of communication work for developers who aren't in the office?**

Again, this will likely lead to some long and difficult conversations with a number of people. But to give you an idea of who you should ask for feedback on your remote work culture, here's a short list.

- 1. Engineering managers and team leads.**
- 2. Your CEO and other executives across the entire company.**
- 3. HR leadership.**



“To make asynchronous collaboration work there needs to be a lot of transparency and a commitment to documenting decisions. All proposals are discussed in written form, through Google Docs, where people can comment. As for chat and conversations, we rely on chat tools, or video conferences. Here we live by the ‘if one person is remote, everyone is remote’ philosophy. Often times, I’ll walk around our HQ and see two people in adjoining offices on the same meeting via Hangouts.”

**Ilana Yitzhaki**  
Senior Manager, Employee Experience

# Remote work is a benefit that attracts employees

Job listings are often responsible for making a first impression on candidates. If you're recruiting developers to work from the comfort of their homes (or wherever it is they like to work), make sure that your job listings tell a compelling story about how your company supports its employees, regardless of their location.

Here are a few things to include in your job listings to attract remote developers.

- **The tools your development team uses.** Of course, remote developers will be curious about your technology stack, but don't stop there. Remote developers are also interested in how your engineering team approaches development. Everything including how you do weekly check-ins, your preferred methods for ad-hoc communication, and your development methodology means a lot to candidates who aren't in the office.  
(Our everyday work includes Slack, GitHub, Google Docs, and other collaboration tools. And of course, we are fans of our own collaboration and knowledge sharing solution: [Stack Overflow for Teams](#))
- **The perks you offer remote developers.** Does your company proudly offer perks like top-of-the-line equipment, flexible hours, and Internet reimbursement or a budget for meeting up as a team to remote developers? Showcase those benefits in your job listings. Not only will developers who prefer working from home take notice, but this will also help you stand out to candidates who are on the fence.
- **Your company's commitment to a remote work culture.** Remote work environments are only successful when an entire organization is committed to making it work. If possible, share a relevant blog post ([here's one we wrote last year](#)) or link to a company website that goes into even more depth about the steps you've taken to support remote developers. If your company is just starting to transition to accepting remote developers, include your action plan for making remote developers a part of the organization.



We make sure there's a space to catch up on things unrelated to work much like one would at the lunch table. We host remote bev bashes and morning coffee. We also have a program called "Stackroulette" where we set up three employees mixed by an algorithm per department, tenure, and regions. They get to chat for 30 minutes and get to know each other better.

Interview Ilana Yitzhaki  
Senior Manager, Employee Experience



At Stack Overflow, we'll partner with you throughout the entire developer hiring process. From understanding the developer market to sourcing the right talent, we help you reach the right talent right now.

[Talk to an expert >](#)