

Scenario:

You have been hired by Stanford-Davis Reynolds (SDR), an assessment software firm based in Bentonville, Arkansas, to recommend strategies for improving remote working conditions as the company transitions to a fully remote status. SDR employs 85 full-time employees.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, SDR decided to transition to remote work. Since then, most of their employees have continued to work from home, even when the office has been able to open safely for brief periods of time. After considering the increasing uncertainty of the pandemic and the rising cost to maintain their large office space, SDR has decided to dissolve their physical location. While employees largely support the decision, they have raised some concerns about stress levels in their remote work environment.

On one hand, many employees are concerned that their lack of sponsorship from managers and one-on-one facetime with their coworkers may cost them important career opportunities. Alternatively, some SDR employees noted that their home environments were not conducive to long term remote work — especially parents, extraverts, and employees without home office space.

Before going remote, SDR had a lively, inclusive, and engaged workplace culture, but they have struggled to maintain that culture throughout the pandemic. SDR knows a positive work culture is inclusive of *all* employees, so they have hired you to conduct research and then recommend two ways they can support a positive remote culture.

Task: Compose a one-page, single-spaced [memo](#) with 1” margins that suggests two practices SDR can adopt to ensure that their remote work culture remains lively, inclusive, and engaged. Your recommendations should be heavily researched (see “Research” below) and presented in **paragraph form**. Make sure to communicate *how* your recommendations address SDR’s problems.

Questions to Consider:

What can SDR do to make sure that *all* employees feel comfortable and included in the remote office atmosphere? What kinds of communication channels can SDR institute to make all employees feel heard?

How can SDR accommodate the employees who may need an office space?

What are some remote work practices that have been proven to create less stressful and more inclusive remote work cultures?

Note: you will need to cite 4 different sources in APA on your references page. Your references page will not count towards the one-page requirement. When citing sources, use parenthetical citations (see Publication Manual of APA 6.11-21), not footnotes. The readings cited below are all in APA format but remove the hyperlinks when you cite. **Bolded** citations may be particularly useful to you, but you should read all the research so you can provide SDR with thoroughly synthesized recommendations.

Research:

Albarran, A. (2021, October 6). *Open offices failed. These are 6 essentials to make sure the next office doesn't.* Fast Company. <https://www.fastcompany.com/90682289/open-offices-failed-workers-these-are-6-essentials-to-make-sure-future-offices-dont>

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- Hewlett, S. A. & Ihezie, K. (2020, July 02). *Sponsoring a Protégé — Remotely*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/07/sponsoring-a-protege-remotely>
- Kreacic, Ana. (2021, March 08). *How Executive Sponsors Can Help Address the COVID Gender Gap*. MIT Sloan Management Review. <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/how-executive-sponsors-can-help-address-the-covid-19-gender-gap/>
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- Miller, C.C. (2020, July 31). *Remote Work Isn't Working? Maybe Your Company Is Doing It Wrong*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/31/upshot/remote-work-tips.html?searchResultPosition=16>
- Murphy, B. (2020, August 17). *In the era of remote work, we still need offices*. Fast Company. <https://www.fastcompany.com/90540372/in-the-era-of-remote-work-we-still-need-offices>
- Odom, C.L. & McAllister, C.P. (2021, January 2025). *Getting Representative Sponsorship Right in Your Organization*. MIT Sloan Management Review. <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/getting-representative-sponsorship-right-in-your-organization/>
- Orel, M. (2019, June 06). Supporting work–life balance with the use of coworking spaces. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, Vol. 39 No. 5, pp. 549-565. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-01-2019-0038>
- Petersen, A.H. & Warzel, C. (2021, November 22). *Remote Work is Failing Young Employees*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/22/opinion/remote-work-genz.html?searchResultPosition=4>
- Riedl, C. & Woolley, A.W. (2020, October 28). *Successful Remote Teams Communicate in Bursts*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/10/successful-remote-teams-communicate-in-bursts>
- Society for Human Resource Management. (2018, July 25). *Managing Organizational Communication*. Society for Human Resource Management. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/managingorganizationalcommunication.aspx>