



## Addressing the impact of COVID-19 Digitally enabled alternative work arrangements

As governments enact restrictions to slow the spread of COVID-19, remote work and alternative work arrangements become more important. Companies that inherently depend on staff being onsite or in the office to understand capacity, foster culture, and allow for unplanned interactions are struggling to figure out how work gets done in the short term and this might change how work gets done in the future.

Companies should actively think about their own employees as a gig/freelance workforce to understand their full range of skillsets beyond their pre-crisis set of activities, and deploy them in parts of the organization that need help.

Over the long term, companies should plan for a portion of their workforce to come from alternative talent sources to allow for flexibility and agility in managing the long term volatility caused by crisis events.

### Reasons why companies may be having issues

Companies across the board will face uncertain human resource conditions: excess capacity in activities that are no longer feasible (front office), over-burdened staff (supply chain), inability to hire, and regulations against staff reduction:

- Where activities have been stalled or significantly impacted, the staff supporting those activities will be under-utilized; absence of their complete skill inventory will limit re-deployment options
- A majority of the workers will become remote workers, forcing companies to improvise on technology, digital tools, processes, and culture capabilities
- A set of new managerial skills will need to be built to manage a workforce that works from home
- Companies that needed in-person interviews as a step for hiring will now face capacity gaps as these roles remain unfulfilled

### Suggested approach:

- **Promote remote:** Leverage this opportunity to design processes to make the workforce more remote ready. Support managers with training and practice to manage remote teams. Connect each manager with an expert remote freelancer to understand processes required for success.
- **Promote open talent:** In the short term, provide managers with the choice of rapid on-boarding of freelancers to support lack of capacity.
- **Promote marketplace attitude:** Understand 360° capabilities of each staff member to redeploy within and even outside of the company.

## Questions you should ask yourselves

**Do I have the staff to get work done today?**

Identify, source, and on-board call center and chat support agents from a digital ready, trained freelancer pool to support increasingly digital buying and support interactions.

Identify, source, and on-board trained and vetted technical design and development freelancers without long term P&L commitment to build new digital applications that support new modes of engagement, fulfilment, and support across products.

**Limit hiring:** Depend on accessing on-demand talent instead of full time talent to preserve flexibility and account for non-routine business activities as the economy adjusts to a new normal.

**How do I redeploy staff that is currently unused?**

Review existing skills inventory of full time employees: Append the knowledge with new assessments to understand 360° view of capabilities.

Redeploy existing staff into new roles to support increased requirements in some parts of the business with excess capacity from other parts.

Work with existing internal mobility platforms/marketplaces to make capacity visible across the organization to managers, which supports rapid identification and matching of need to capacity.

How do I use expert freelancers to support my remote journey?

Accelerate the learning curve of team and project leaders. Match expert freelancers with team and project leaders to learn the daily behavior, processes, and technology to seamlessly manage a remote team.

Establish process change sprint teams with external remote experts to work with project leaders to reimagine traditionally in-person processes as remote processes with limited or no latency.

**Freelancing approaches could solve short term capacity needs in addition to supporting the long term process changes required to transition to a remote model.**

### Contact:

#### For more information on how to respond, recover and thrive:

- Connect to Deloitte leaders [www.deloitte.com/COVID-19-leaders](http://www.deloitte.com/COVID-19-leaders)
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