remote

Hiring remote employees: A guide for HR professionals

Learn how to recruit, hire, and onboard remote employees with ease

So you want to hire a remote employee.

Congratulations! You've just taken the first step toward embracing the future of work.

There's no doubting the benefits of remote hiring, from wider talent pools and increased diversity to more flexibility and lower costs. Companies that hire across borders are also primed to attract the best talent, too.

> ## 81% of employees
> would move to a new state or country if they could do so without making sacrifices in their careers.
>
> REMOTE GLOBAL WORKFORCE REVOLUTION REPORT

However, hiring talent from multiple locations really opens the floodgates. For instance, don't be surprised if you receive **hundreds or even thousands of applications** for a posting that would normally only attract a few dozen candidates. Employing remote workers provides you with access to the best talent in the world, but recruiting, hiring, and onboarding that talent presents a host of new challenges.

Fortunately, Remote is here to help. Not only are we the top solution for payroll, benefits, taxes, compliance, and more, but our team is filled with dedicated experts on all aspects of international hiring.

In this guide, we'll tap into that expertise, and walk you through the entire process of onboarding remote employees. By the time you finish, you'll be primed and ready to start growing your global team — so let's get started.

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Are you remote-ready?

Before you can start hiring remote employees, you need to have the culture and infrastructure in place to support them. Otherwise, you're likely to come unstuck.

This means implementing a culture of documentation, and ensuring remote workers are not treated as an afterthought in communications. To work effectively with people in multiple locations, you have to implement processes that are equitable for everyone, starting with the following:

Establish remote-friendly project management
If you have systems to manage tasks, store files, and track progress, make sure those systems are easily accessible for people working outside the office. This might involve some input from your IT security team but, in general, it's best to work with partners that treat collaborative cloud storage as the default. If you're relying on physical tools like notes on a board, files in a cabinet, or an internal mail system, you need to update.

Start documenting everything
How much does your company depend on knowledge that exists solely within the heads of your employees? You might be shocked at the amount of information bottlenecks just because something simple isn't documented. Set up a secure, designated space for each team to record notes, guides, and best practices, and help employees use those repositories instead of sending emails back and forth.

Default to public channels

Unless sensitive, encourage everyone to communicate publicly. Remote workers depend on always-accessible information and conversations (and it increases awareness of what's going on across departments). For instance, instead of private messages, tell your people to ask questions on public channels, and publish meeting recordings.

Convert from synchronous to asynchronous

This one is a bit tricky, but if you have implemented the previous steps, you're already halfway there. Teams with workers in multiple time zones cannot operate at peak efficiency when people have to wait on one another to move projects forward. As a result, you need to operate with the understanding that hours will vary. Take advantage of this and push projects forward around the clock. Empower your team to work when it's most productive for them, and you'll reap the benefits.

The most important part of the remote work process is to **view the digital experience as the default.**
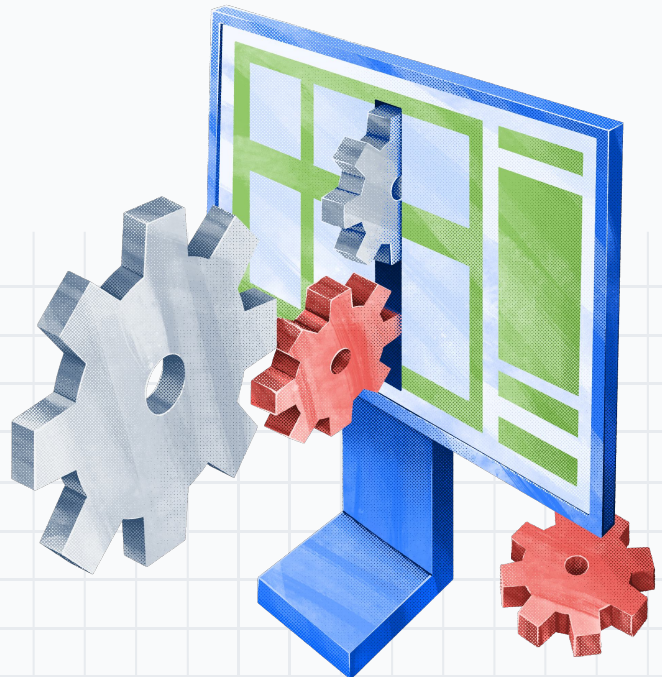
1. Adopting asynchronous work

As mentioned, a big part of remote work is asynchronous communication. Adapting to an async approach can be a significant shift, so here are some ways to make it work.

Why go asynchronous?

The biggest difference between remote and in-office employees is that, with remote hires, you need to think more carefully about potential bottlenecks and roadblocks. These issues will have likely existed at some point anyway, but now it means that your organization will find it difficult to operate effectively until you have addressed those underlying issues. This is where an async approach becomes so effective.

> **Asynchronous work** demands that all communications be public, or at least accessible to the right people on demand. That way, colleagues working in different time zones or on different schedules can easily find the necessary information and continue moving the work forward.

The benefits of async are not limited to solving time zone differences, either. If someone takes leave, others can continue to progress their work, as long as everything is correctly documented. This is why it's so important for all your team members — remote or otherwise — to buy into this approach.

How to make async work for you

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Record videos explaining important updates
Instead of hosting meetings that not everyone can attend, create a short video and share it on your main communication channels. You can also attach it to any relevant documentation. At Remote, for instance, we use **Loom** to create videos, and **Notion** to store guides, information, protocols, and updates. Other team members can consume this information in their own time.

Make a habit of pointing to documentation to answer questions
If someone has a query, find the link to the relevant documentation and provide that link. That way, you and the person asking can make updates if required, and ensure that anyone else who has a similar query is seeing the most up-to-date information.

Treat instant messaging as an asynchronous tool
Learn to treat Slack — or your preferred communication tool of choice — as an asynchronous platform. Again, this requires buy-in from everyone in the organization, with the expectation that instant messages will be answered when the recipient is able (within reason). Tools like Slack are also a great way to communicate availability.

The asynchronous approach is just as effective as a synchronous one (in some cases even more so), but only if everyone — remote or in-office — is on board and contributing.

> To learn more about the benefits of async and how to implement it, check out this Async Masterclass video series prepared by from Remote's CEO, Job van der Voort.

2. Recruiting remote candidates

Once you have the culture and infrastructure in place to support remote hiring, you can start recruiting suitable candidates. However, while the rewards are undoubtedly worth it, finding and onboarding the best candidates is not so straightforward. Here's what you need to consider.

Before you can recruit...

Hiring remotely is not as simple as spotting someone with a great CV and extending a job offer. If your candidate lives in a different country, there are considerable legal hoops you need to jump through first. There are three ways you can approach remote hiring.

• 01 •

WORK WITH AN EMPLOYER OF RECORD (EOR) PROVIDER, LIKE REMOTE

An EOR acts as your hire's legal employer in their country of residence, and handles all the key HR responsibilities such as onboarding, payroll, benefits, and HR management. It also ensures that you are fully compliant with all local tax and employment laws. Learn more about EORs and how they work.

If your company requires flexibility and is looking to hire in multiple countries, this is by far the quickest, safest, and most cost-effective option.

• 02 •

SET UP YOUR OWN LEGAL ENTITY (OR ENTITIES)

The other primary option is to establish your own legal entity in your hire's country. This can be a costly, time-consuming process, with a lot of commitment. However, if you're focused on one country and plan to hire at scale there, this may be a preferable option.

With your own entity, you can either manage everything yourself or outsource key HR functions, such as payroll. Depending on your plans, you might even set up your own entities in some locations, and use an EOR for others.

• 03 •

HIRE CONTRACTORS

If you want to test the waters in a new country, one option is to hire independent contractors. This allows you to leverage the best talent and, if things don't work out, it's easy to sever ties.

It's crucial, though, not to treat your contractors as employees. Most countries have legal definitions that clarify the difference between contractors and employees, and misclassification can have serious legal, financial, and reputational consequences.

Remote makes it quick and easy to pay your contractors and manage invoices. We can also help you avoid misclassification risks, and convert your contractors into employees if required.

> 🇺🇸 Companies in the US can usually hire workers in other states, although there may be some tax implications and state-specific employment laws that you need to adhere to. To learn more about these differences — and how Remote can help you manage them — check out our in-depth US State Explorer tool.

Best practices for remote recruiting

Once you're legally able to hire remotely, you can start your search. Here are a few quick tips for finding the best candidates:

Advertise in the right places
Advertising in-office jobs is relatively straightforward, as you're restricted geographically. With remote roles, though, you need to be more creative and careful with your budget. As a starting point, target remote-specific job boards, and platforms that are widely seen by remote job hunters, such as LinkedIn. If you have a particular country or region in mind, you can also target local job sites in those areas.

Be clear about any restrictions
If you are looking for people in a specific country or region, be clear about this in the job posting. For instance, if you need an accountant in Poland, be clear that, while the role is remote, the candidate must be based in Poland. For other roles, you may be willing to be a lot more flexible. Either way, the clearer you are, the less likely you'll be inundated with applications from ineligible or unsuitable candidates.

Be as transparent as possible
Good candidates may be potentially dissuaded from applying if they don't know much about remote work — or how your company handles it. Talk about your company's culture and approach in your job postings, or follow Remote's lead and create a public-facing handbook. This can explain your way of working in more detail and encourage high-quality candidates to apply.

Use your employees' networks
Referrals are an excellent way to find outstanding talent, so lean on them where possible.

3. Reviewing applications

As you might expect, opening up the talent pool means receiving more applications — a lot more, in some cases. Here are some ways to lighten the load and establish an effective, efficient screening system.

Take time to get your applicant tracking system settings right
As with in-office applications, your ATS should do most of the heavy lifting. For each role you post, make sure the proper filters are applied, along with clearly defined user roles and timelines. Create and document your process to keep the process moving along.

Integrate where necessary
For high-volume applications, automate and integrate as much as you can. If you're planning to hire through our EOR, for instance, you can integrate Greenhouse — a world-leading ATS platform — to manage the candidate journey from initial screening right through to onboarding and beyond.

Set up a formal referral program
As mentioned, referrals are a great recruitment tool. To ensure that referred individuals are not lost in the pack, create a formal program that makes reviewing their applications quick and easy. You should also create referral incentives, and make the process quick and painless for your employees that have someone in mind.

Make diversity happen deliberately
Focus on diversity as you expand. If you don't, you will slowly realize that a lot of the people you hire remind you of yourself. Fortunately, building a diverse applicant pool is easy. Don't have sufficient diversity in your candidate pool? Go public and ask candidates from other backgrounds to apply. Don't start interviews until you have a solidly diverse pool from which to choose.

4. Interviewing remote candidates

Your remote interview process should, on the face of it, be the same as your in-office process. The key difference, of course, is that the candidate will be on a screen, and not in the same room as you. That said, there are some subtle differences that you need to take into account.

Train your hiring managers to face remote biases

Video interviews can generate some interesting biases in the minds of hiring managers, so it's important to discuss these with them.

For example, does the room the candidate is interviewing in have a bearing? And if it's messy, does that impact the assessment? What about if their doorbell rings during the interview? Some interviewers may argue that these things are unprofessional. However, office-based personnel may not have been interviewed in this way, so it's important to train your hiring managers to remove these biases and conduct the process as fairly as possible across the board.

Make the process as async as possible

Whether it's in person or through video, nothing can beat or replicate a real-time, face-to-face interview. But there may be other elements of the recruitment process that can be done asynchronously.

During screening interviews, for instance, you might put certain questions to your candidates and then give them two minutes to provide a video-recorded answer. You may also set written or online assessments to be completed by a certain deadline. This can allow you to get a full picture of your candidates, while allowing your hiring people to focus on other tasks.

> ### Determine culture fit with actual team members
>
> This is often overlooked by many organizations, but conduct at least one interview with the candidate's potential peers. These are the people who will be working closely with the candidate, and it gives them a great chance to assess that person's cultural suitability.

5. Making the offer

Once you find a candidate who fits your needs, your values, and your mission, don't wait around. Top talent is always in demand, and the longer you wait, the more likely it is that your ideal candidate will slip away.

Make a competitive offer the first time
Great candidates usually know what they're worth. You should learn in the interview stage what kind of salary they expect and calculate a total compensation package that is serious and competitive. You can negotiate if need be, but your first offer should convey your positive intentions.

Plan for the possibility of a long notice period
You may want your new hire to start straight away, but they may be tied into a considerable notice period. In the US, most employment contracts are "at will," meaning any notice given is usually out of courtesy. But in other cases, your hire may be bound by their contract to work multiple weeks (or even months) of notice, especially if they're in a senior position.

[Remote-first recruiting practices: How we do it at Remote](#)

How can Remote help you secure the best talent?

As well as enabling you to legally hire in multiple locations, Remote allows you to offer competitive and equitable compensation packages around the globe — including equity incentives.

When you hire team members through our EOR service, you can cherry pick which benefits you want to offer, such as health insurance. This ensures that you're able to compete with larger companies and provide an overall compensation package that is highly attractive.

To learn more about offering global benefits — and how we can help — check out our in-depth guide.
We can also onboard your hires quickly, ensuring that they're not waiting around. For specific details on how long it takes to onboard new hires around the globe, check out our Country Explorer tool.

> " Switching to Remote has enabled us to operate more efficiently, make quicker decisions, and get people started in new countries so much faster than before.

LUKE MCKINLAY
VP of Finance at Fountain

�típ fountain

📑 Learn how Remote powers Fountain's international growth

6. Providing equipment and access

To enable your team members to work effectively and securely, you need to provide them with the necessary equipment. But for your remote workers, this isn't as simple as handing out laptops from the storage room.

As a result, you'll need to arrange a safe, reliable, and cost-effective way of transporting the equipment. Typically, you may need to send:

✓ **A laptop**
Most team members can perform their role with a laptop, although some team members may require specific machines or operating systems.

✓ **An extra monitor**
For remote workers that are going to communicate through video calls and video recordings, a clear high-definition webcam is crucial.

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✓ **Peripherals**
Additional hardware peripherals such as mouses, keyboards, USB converters, and headsets are also important for productivity and efficiency.

You may also need to consider ergonomic support; in some countries, this may even be mandatory under local health and safety laws. Of course, it can be impractical to ship chairs, desks, and other large items for every team member, so consider providing a home office stipend instead.

Don't forget to consider equipment delivery!

While you may want to offer all your team members the same equipment, this can become a challenge — especially as you hire in more countries.

Build up a network of local providers to ease this burden. At Remote, we use Apple products. We work closely with Apple specialists in different regions to help us get the equipment our people need quickly.

There is no right or wrong approach, and no one single best provider for your needs. Make sure you use trustworthy suppliers and keep everything you send fully insured.

7. Onboarding and introducing

Once your hire has accepted your offer, you need to start integrating them into your company and your culture. Again, for remote personnel, this comes with a slate of unique challenges.

It's a good idea to establish a [remote onboarding checklist](#) to make this process go smoothly but, in general, it should be structured as follows:

First day

For in-office employees, the first day is relatively straightforward: turn up at reception, meet the manager, and get the guided tour. Of course, this isn't the case for remote hires. As a result, it's important to communicate what is expected in the lead-up to their first day, including what they need to do when they log on.

For the first day, it's also advisable to communicate synchronously. Aim for your hire to achieve the following:

- ✓ Meet synchronously with their direct manager

- ✓ Confirm access to all necessary systems and tools (this should have been arranged prior to the hire's start date)

- ✓ Gain access to all internal documentation systems

- ✓ Receive and begin formal orientation and onboarding tasks

First week

By now, your new starter should have access to all the necessary tools and be able to find any relevant information independently. It's crucial, though, that your hire doesn't become quickly isolated.

At Remote, we use "onboarding buddies" to help new employees adapt to the company and, if relevant, to remote work in general. You should also encourage your hire to meet their colleagues and other team members; for instance, you might ask them to set up at least three informal video calls for the following week.

Aim for your hire to achieve the following:

- ✓ Finish orientation tasks

- ✓ Set up chats with members of the same team or department

- ✓ Begin to explore documentation more thoroughly

- ✓ Start work on introductory projects

First month

By the end of your remote hire's first month, they should have started to become comfortable with working asynchronously. They should also be taking on more responsibility. Check in formally to see how things are going and to discuss any challenges they might be having.

Aim for your hire to achieve the following:

✓ Complete a first-month survey to provide feedback to HR for improvement

First 100 days

After the first month, you can decide which milestones your hire should be looking to meet, and set up any formal feedback meetings as appropriate. By this point, your hire should be comfortable working asynchronously, and should have adapted fully to your company's culture.
To learn more about onboarding your remote employees, check out out detailed, actionable guide.

How can Remote help?

While the onboarding process is — and should be — company-specific, Remote can handle the administrative element.

By allowing us to take on the paperwork and make sure everything is fully compliant, you can focus on building your relationship and inducting your hire into your culture.
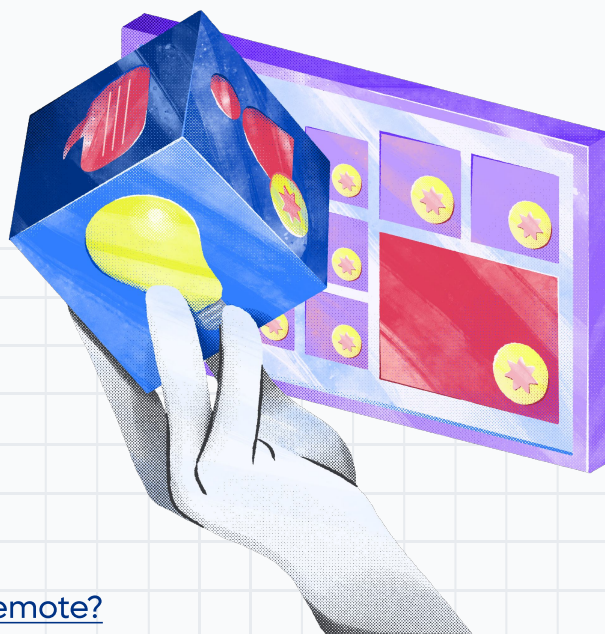
How does onboarding work with Remote?

Scaling your team with Remote

As your business expands and your needs change, you may want to hire more team members in different locations. One option is to work with local HR partners in those countries but, as you scale, this can quickly become inefficient, costly, and counter-productive.

With Remote, you can manage and pay all your global hires in one place through one system — regardless of whether you plan to hire one team member in one country, or 100 team members in multiple countries. With our Remote EOR, you can:

- Quickly hire, onboard, and manage top talent from almost anywhere in the world

- Provide tailored benefits packages, including equity incentives

- Easily run payroll in full compliance with all local employment and tax laws

- Manage your team members' day-to-day HR needs, such as PTO, time tracking, and expense management

- Stay compliant with all relevant labor laws in your hires' countries of residence

If you prefer to hire through your own entities, Remote can still simplify your global hiring processes. Our Payroll platform unlocks the ability to pay all of your domestic and international employees through one centralized system (and we also offer PEO services in the US).

To learn more about how we can help — and to see which approach is the most suitable for your business — speak to one of our friendly experts today.

Set up a chat with a Remote expert

Get advice on your unique
hiring needs to simplify the way you hire, pay,
and manage your globally distributed team.

Schedule a call

Employees Holidays

View all >

Paul Grant Marketing Manager		Only today
Beatriz Costa Product Designer		Mar 16 - Mar 18
Narobi Yan UX Writer		Tomorrow
Peter Rowling Marketing Manager		Tomorrow

Alisha Jackson

ONBOARDING — Step 1 of 3

Summary 82 countries	Annual salary $80,000.00

COUNTRY	ONBOARDING TIME
Argentina	7 days
Brazil	4 days
France	3 days
Italy	3 days

16 JOINERS
+5 from last week

512 HEADCOUNT
+10 from last week