Job Satisfaction of Remote Technology Employees Seeking Work/Life Balance at a Growing Silicon Valley Firm

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Katherine Kennedy Allen

Spring 2021

Advisor: Dr. Cynthia Nebel

Acknowledgements and Gratitude

"Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

To my three children: Grace, Emerson and Pierce - this is for you. My girls, I hope this cracks that glass ceiling for you so that you can shatter it in pursuit of your big dreams. I pray that each of you will look back and see that pouring hard work, dedication and love into all that you do becomes a legacy that inspires others.

To my parents Barbara and Kevin Kennedy: Thank you for always saying "yes" to my outside-the-box ideas and supporting me and the kids in a multitude of ways that we are eternally grateful for. Your examples as leaders in both industry and family help us navigate the new normal and teach us to aspire to be generous above all else. Thank you.

To my husband, Grant Allen, one of the smartest minds I have been blessed to challenge, and a fantastic father to our children - thank you for being on my team as I always take the path less travelled. Also, thank you for letting me turn our master bedroom closet into my office and dealing with my incessant typing at 3am for the past few years ;).

To my friends near and far: Thank you for the ear, the wine and the fellowship as I did the cha-cha in a struggle to find my own identity between working, academics and motherhood. You cheered me on from around the world and this work was done for all of us.

To Professor Nebel: Thank you for seeing me as a doctoral student, a professional woman and when needed, as a mother. Your patience, grace and guidance got me to this finish line.

I am grateful to Vanderbilt University for pioneering a program that let me pursue my doctorate whether I was in person in Nashville or logging in at 3 a.m. in Zurich taking statistics. A program that maintained cadence in a global pandemic, I am grateful to be part of it all.

Table of Contents:

Executive Summary

Remote work employees hailing from Silicon Valley technology firms increased exponentially during the 2020 COVID-19 crisis. Prior to then, many companies in the Bay Area had remote employees who telecommuted but had prioritized providing benefits that improved the employee experience at the physical headquarters to remain competitive as a destination employer. Employers also focused on their employees as they identified in the office, often not taking into account the other roles they play in their communities and households.

Benefits like three catered meals a day, complimentary dry cleaning, on-site massages, private transportation, gym memberships and workout equipment, happy hours and top-of-the-line office equipment were the standard. With remote work becoming mainstream, these benefits became moot, encouraging technology companies across Silicon Valley to rethink their "perks". One such company, a marketing service provider which will be referred to as, "The Organization", wanted to take a deeper dive into incentivizing productivity while working remotely. Reimaging the job design of their employees, The Organization wanted to create benefits that would retain and attract new talent in the highly competitive market.

Additionally, the Organization wanted to hone-in on key accommodations and benefits they could provide for their employees to ease the burdens of working from home while taking care of dependents. Previous research indicates that an employee-base who considers themselves to be technically skilled, well-informed about company priorities and motivated to succeed is an extremely rich competitive advantage for any organization, so addressing this new context is necessary (Cascio & Boudreau, 2008).

This study began by looking at remote work job satisfaction for all employees and diving deeper into three primary indicators of functional job satisfaction: 1. Job design 2. Identity as a remote worker and 3. Accommodations, perks and benefits. I specifically inquired into the following four research questions to guide my investigation:

1. How do employees of The Organization feel about long-term policies to work remotely? How do these attitudes change depending on their responsibilities at home?

2. As The Organization grows, in what ways can HR utilize constructive job design to attract and retain remote employees?

3. In what ways does an employee's identity shift when working for The Organization remotely?

4. What resources, perks and benefits do virtual employees value most? What accommodations are seen as the greatest need for caregivers?

From there, I collected data to assess the needs of all remote work employees for the Organization before specifically looking at those employees who have identified themselves as caregivers.

The interviews, survey and historical data provided insights into both what was working for The Organization and where there was room for improvement from the perspective of the employees. Eight key findings emerged from the data collection which included:

Key Finding #1: Employees are generally satisfied with The Organization's adaption to a fully remote workforce.
Key Finding #2: Employees are struggling to balance work and family responsibilities while working from home.
Key Finding #3: Flexibility is the most highly desirable element of job design when it comes to remote work for employees of The Organizations.
Key Finding #4: Employees of The Organization are facing an identity shift as remote work become permanent.
Key Finding #5: While lower-level employees are thriving with the newly found autonomy, managers are struggling to manage remote work employees and desire more training.
Key Finding #6: Remote workers desire a well-equipped office space at home.
Key Finding #7: Benefits that lessen caregiving and housekeeping burdens at home are very attractive to employees of The Organization.
Key Finding #8: A majority of employees are looking to leave the Bay Area and move somewhere with a lower cost of living.

My overarching recommendation is to continue to apply the continuous improvement model and re-asses at regular intervals what is working for the remote workforce. I developed the following six key recommendations to be applied to the continuous improvement cycle as the permanent work from home progresses and evolves.

Recommendation #1: Formalize remote work policies and review job design of all employees
Recommendation #2: Invest in technology, train employees on said technologies, and continuously iterate the usage and policies for technologies that can enable increased productivity remotely.
Recommendation #3: Develop strategies and cadence for in-person engagement.
Recommendation #4: Develop policies, train managers and have executives lead by example in showcasing a corporate culture of "flexibility".
Recommendation #5: Allow employees to work remotely, from wherever.
Recommendation #6: Budget for benefits that improve work/life balance for employees working from home

Finally, I conclude this paper by acknowledging there is significant opportunity to review The Organization's progress working fully remote from a longitudinal perspective and highlight areas of bias and opportunity for further study. My findings identified that there is a correlation between remote job satisfaction and job design, perks and benefits and identity, therefore the data I collected will be useful for The Organization as they move forward with adapting to a fully remote workforce.

Introduction:

While remote work has been around for decades, the dramatic shift of optimizing for a fully remote workforce that has been accustomed to a traditional brick-and-mortar headquarters is uncharted territory for many. The March 2020 California Governor Mandate forced every business, which included all of the largest technology companies in Silicon Valley, to shut their doors and ensure their employees work from home and led to rapid change in organizational budgeting, job design and employment satisfaction. The employee population that found themselves adjusting the most? Caregivers (Golden, 2020).

In August 2020, after five months of government mandated work from home, the CEO and founder of a marketing start-up company in Silicon Valley came to me wanting to learn more about how her company (referred to as The Organization through this paper) could best assist their employees who were now working from home and balancing demanding caregiving duties. A working mom of two small children herself, the executive was personally invested in understanding how the human resource team could provide accommodations and benefits for employees as they sought to maintain productivity without external childcare, balance deadlines while caring for elderly parents, and keep a professional identity while working from home.

In the next sections, I illuminate the context surrounding the rapid adoption of work from home best practices during the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic and provide background information on the organization of practice. I will dive into a thorough literature review that will examine multiple variables of remote work job satisfaction. From there, I will assess the specific needs of the employees of The Organization based on a needs assessment for employees and managers. This assessment was conducted using a virtual survey I distributed for quantitative assessment followed by a multi-level qualitative interview approach with all management levels and functions within the Organization. Finally, I will explore why the Organization is considering a re-organization to meet the needs of the employees and retain productivity.

You will find that this paper explores the concept of remote work job satisfaction as it pertains to The Organization's three pillars of inclusive corporate culture, strategic job design and supplying perks/benefits as well as necessary accommodations to attract and retain the very best employees. I used a mixed-methods approach to unveil current attitudes of employees who have been working from home for the past six months, identify areas of corporate policy that have opportunity to progress to meet remote workers needs and showcase the delicate balance of work and family when employees

are surrounded by household obligations while on a conference call or preparing client work. I conclude this assessment with an analysis of my findings and a set of recommendations for The Organization moving forward, acknowledging the preference for a constant needs' assessment cycle and iteration as The Organization scales and grows their employee-base.
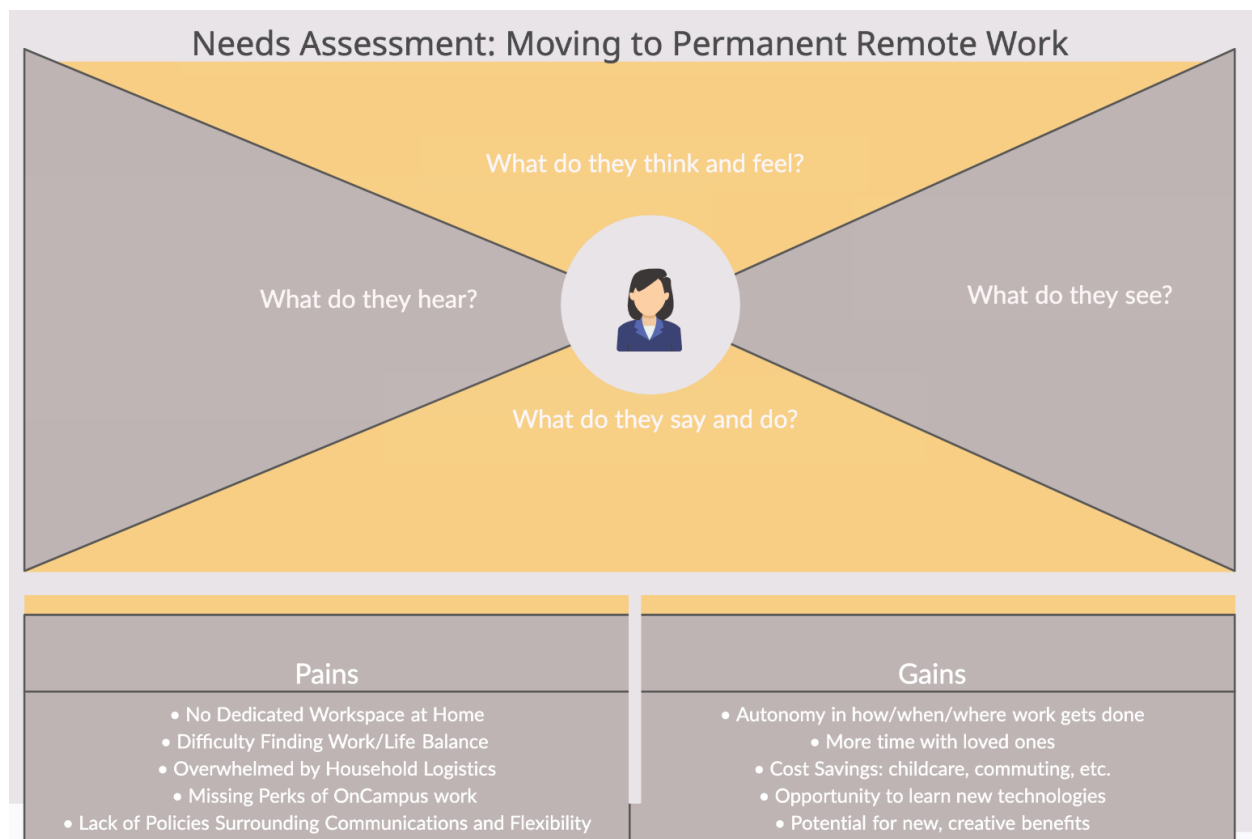
Context:

As technology has advanced over the past twenty years, so has the opportunity for employees in the technology industries to telecommute. Globally, a variety of means for entertaining the concept of remote work apply - from supporting remote work to being a full remote enterprise and hybrid models in between. For the past ten years though, Silicon Valley technology companies have spent hundreds of millions of dollars turning their corporate campuses into a home-away-from-home complete with three catered meals a day, massage rooms, workout rooms with robust fitness class offerings, banks, meditation studios, hair salons, onsite laundry and dry cleaning, etc. With the onset of Covid-19 and the March 2020 proclamation that all business offices must remain closed in the state of California, many of the most illustrious campuses had to shut their doors and find new ways to keep their highly sought-after talent while forcing them to work from home.

With the average house price coming in at $1,021.00/ square foot (Compass, September 2020) numerous employees from start-ups of the big three (Apple, Facebook and Google) began fleeing the Bay Area for more affordable options that would allow for a home office. To retain employees, organizations began looking for ways to optimize remote work. Companies tried to outfit their employees by offering stipends for standing desks, noise cancelling headphones, monitors and ergonomic chairs (Forbes, 2020). Twelve months after the initial close of doors, most companies are fortunately able to say that this is working and are now re-thinking ever re-opening their campuses again (Streitfeld, 2021). From a corporate financial standpoint, eliminating the overhead costs of rent, parking, supplying meals and on-campus perks could save a lot of money. But this new model of operating also changes management charts in job design, corporate culture and the benefits that companies relied on so heavily to attract and retain top talent (Schwartz, 2019).

In the following study, I examined one particular Silicon Valley company that had been struggling with the future of work and providing the best possible accommodations for their employees. I examined employee perceptions of virtual workplace accommodations from both the perspectives of managers and lower-level employees. I assessed conditions regarding work/life balance, benefits management and job design

for the Organization to explore in the context of temporary telecommuting as well as permanent remote work as a long-term solution. Focusing on the unique context of individuals working from home while also caregiving is another important facet of this study, as it lends to the question of how the Organization can provide material benefits to reduce the caregiving burden on employees in hopes that it will both retain them and increase their productivity. Many of said employees were also acting as full time, part time, or virtual caregivers while working remotely and have faced this unique challenge which we addressed in an initial needs assessment looking at the pains and gains of employees asked to work remotely.

Needs Assessment: Moving to Permanent Remote Work

What do they think and feel?

What do they hear?

What do they see?

What do they say and do?

Pains	Gains
• No Dedicated Workspace at Home • Difficulty Finding Work/Life Balance • Overwhelmed by Household Logistics • Missing Perks of OnCampus work • Lack of Policies Surrounding Communications and Flexibility	• Autonomy in how/when/where work gets done • More time with loved ones • Cost Savings: childcare, commuting, etc. • Opportunity to learn new technologies • Potential for new, creative benefits

Organizational Problem of Practice

The Organization is a technology marketing platform that has been around for 16 years, has received over $40 million in venture backing from some of Silicon Valley's biggest firms, is co-founded by an Asian-American female, and lauded for cutting edge benefits used to retain and recruit the best employees in such a volatile and extremely competitive tech-based job market. While they have asked to remain anonymous in

name for the publishing of this study, they are proud of these accomplishments and cite them as unique factors of why they feel compelled to pivot quickly. With 516 full-time employees in the United States as of September 2020, The Organization is scaling rapidly and anticipates reaching 1,000 remote employees in the next two quarters with jobs growing primarily in engineering, design and customer service.

The Organization first reached out to me in summer of 2020, during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic when they were looking to end their lease in June 2020 of their San Francisco headquarters which was costing them over $1.3 million a year in rent and parking but they were unable to use the facilities. State-wide, organizations like Twitter and Reddit began taking action to create a fully remote workforce in response to Governor Gavin Newsome's Executive Order on March 16, 2020 that mandated work-from-home for non-essential workers (Fast Company, 2020). The Organization's human resources team aimed to redistribute money previously spent on rent to ease the caregiving burdens of employees in hopes of retaining existing employees and attracting new employees with competitive benefits and perks in their own living rooms.

The Organization had no formal remote work structure prior to the forced government mandate of telecommuting during the pandemic. Additionally, most of the perks and benefits previously offered and budgeted for by the organization (like an on-campus chef providing three catered meals a day), were no longer needed in a remote work setting, so it was a priority to identify key areas that the money could be re-distributed to help attract and increase the productivity of employees working from home.

The Organization has a diverse employment base as was uncovered through conversations with the human resource department and in discovery through historical documentation that supplied demographic information of employees. Of the 516 employees, 48% are female, 50% male and 2% non-binary. The average age is 41 with employees ranging in age from 22-64. Prior to the move to remote work, 68% were commuting over an hour each way every day to the office by either personal car or public transportation (bus/ferry/train) with transportation costs being covered by the office. Also, of note, 77% of employees identify themselves as parents to children under the age of 18 living in their households, with 6% having children over the age of 18 living with them. Only 16% of employees who identify as married also identify as the sole-breadwinner in the household, noting that most of these employees come from dual-income families. From an educational perspective, 81% of employees hold at least a 4-year college degree, with 42% having an advanced degree. The Organization's employees identify as 44.1% Asian, 33.2% non-Hispanic white, 4.6% African American, 6.6% Island Pacific, 1.3% Native American and 43.3% Latinx. (Note: the data collected

allowed employees to choose all races that apply). Only 6.6% of employees identify as having a disability though specific disabilities and severity was not asked.

The aforementioned demographic information of employees supplied by The Organization's human resource team aided me during my historical document review in developing my research questions to support the inquiry of The Organization as to how an all-remote workforce will impact the employees moving forward.

Research Questions

After initial conversations with The Organization's executive team as well as their top five Human Resources department employees, I recognized three areas of primary concern with moving to an all-remote workforce: corporate culture/identity, perks/benefits, and job design. Each of these areas led to the overarching emphasis on maintaining and increasing job satisfaction as The Organization transitioned from a traditional brick-and-mortar headquarters to a fully remote organization with disseminated leadership and employees all over the country. Defining the key measured element as job satisfaction and the three variables as benefits, job design and culture led me to develop the following research questions:

Research Questions	
	1. How do employees of The Organization feel about long-term policies to work remotely? How do these attitudes change depending on their responsibilities at home?
	2. As The Organization grows, in what ways can HR utilize constructive job design to attract and retain remote employees?
	3. In what ways does an employee's identity shift when working for The Organization remotely?
	4. What resources, perks and benefits do employees value most for telecommuting?

To best assess the topics presented in these research questions and create my plan of action for review, I completed a literature review and study of theoretical frameworks that could be applied to remote work. In the following pages I explore previous studies on remote work in the context of job satisfaction as it pertains to caregiving responsibilities, employee identity, incentivization through perks and benefits and job design while also outlining scholarly findings to the drawbacks of remote work which will help shape recommendations at the end of this paper. The figure below delineates how these concepts intersect.
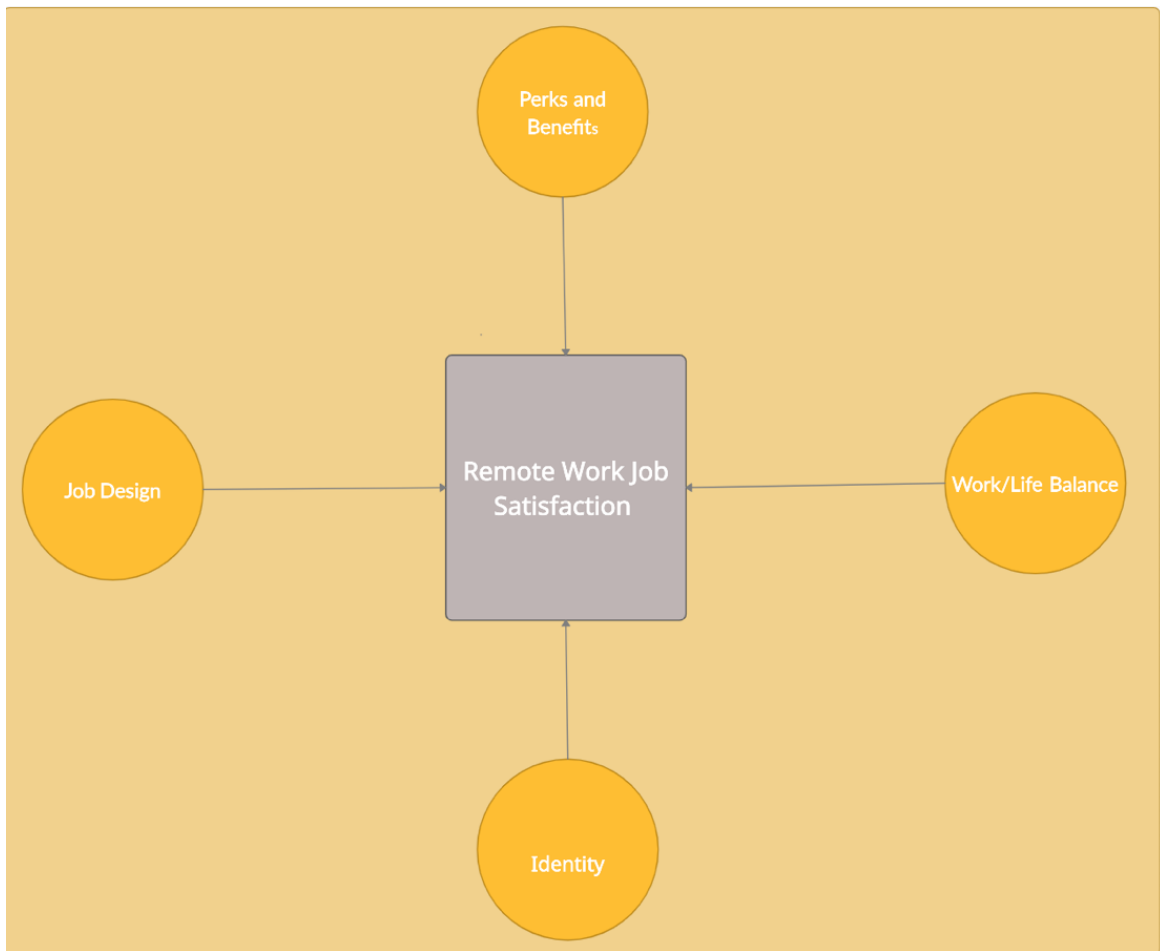
Application of Theoretical Frameworks:

The concept of remote work has been analyzed through the lenses of both management and psychology over the past twenty years, providing rich insight for those studying management and the future of work. For the purpose of The Organization's

needs in implementing permanent remote work and characterizing themselves as a learning organization, I focused on applying two specific theoretical frameworks: boundary theory and identity theory.

Theoretical Frameworks

Boundary Theory

Identity Theory

Boundary Theory:

My research began with boundary theory, as the Organization stated that they were concerned with the transition of a traditional in-office workforce moving to a fully remote workforce, and boundary theory can address this concern. Questions regarding employee ability to juggle work/life balance were top of mind, and the Organization's HR team wanted to create a clear policy around telework. Did the Organization need to have a strict policy, or would it be beneficial to emphasize a corporate culture of flexibility, allowing for greater autonomy while the company re-thinks job design for the future?

Work-life balance, the notion that individuals and employees hold several essential roles in their job, home and community and they need to balance those roles, is not something new. Border and boundary theory highlight the fact that people tend to be more enactive as opposed to reactive in describing their family and work lives.

Individuals actively develop boundaries within every domain of their lives, with each set of boundaries differing in strength depending on their preferences. Strong boundaries are developed to maintain family and work as differing domains, while weak boundaries are built to support ease of interaction among and between domains (Bulger & Matthews, 2007). Border and boundary theory argues that boundary strength can be characterized by flexibility and permeability. Bulger and Matthews define some boundaries as "permeable" if parts of one aspect of an individual's role bleeds into the domain and responsibility of another. In remote work, which removes the physical boundary of an external office, the boundaries can be even more convoluted.

Permeability within boundary theory can be defined as actual interruptions from another domain penetrating the current domain or place. A key characteristic of such permeability is a lack of employee ability to control or ignore these intrusions. An example of this lack of control would be a family member interrupting a remote worker during work hours to complete a household task. If a company has enacted rigid boundary policies, a worker in this situation would feel role conflict. But, if the company's corporate culture has embraced the concept of flexible boundaries, the remote worker would feel empowered to momentarily leave their work-role to address the family issue (Bulger & Matthews, 2007). The hypothetical ability to weaken or strengthen a boundary, perceived by the employee as a flexible work culture, can allow an individual to navigate their position in each domain and meet the needs of their multiple roles and responsibilities.

Understanding this concept of boundaries is integral to building out corporate policy for remote workers who may be faced with these trade-offs on a daily basis. Flexibility and autonomy are desirable organizational culture attributes that can decrease tension between an employee's personal obligations and their job responsibilities, while highlighting the need for efficient management of the home-work boundary (Fonner & Stache, 2012). For home-based remote workers where personal and work domains occupy the same physical space, this flexibility is exponentially important to consider.

Boundaries can determine the perimeter and scope of a person's role within an isolated domain, which can impact their physical and psychological movements between positions or roles. When a company is assessing their job design, allowing for autonomy and flexibility in a corporate culture may empower employees to assess their own time management and set their own boundaries. Boundary management techniques allow an individual to distinguish role expectations and demands into work and home silos (Kossek, Lautsch & Eatons, 2006). Transitioning between these roles can be problematic when strong, inflexible and impermeable boundaries are set, so it is up to the company

to promote a culture of boundary flexibility to maximize employee comfort and productivity.

While all working environments provide the complex challenge of transitioning between the work domain and the personal domain, remote workers have a unique additional challenge, as their flexibility is affected by the distance and structure of everyday work interactions and routines that are integral in establishing company roles (Fonner & Stache, 2012). It is vital to understand and identify the techniques that in-home remote employees use to manage their work-home boundaries, and for organizations to clearly communicate company policies and culture.

With technology at the forefront of remote work, one of the key management challenges organizations face is controlling the at-home job domain. Technology allows employees to be connected to their work domain 24/7 without leaving their home domain. Employees are often attracted to remote work, as they expect flexibility in scheduling family and work demands as well as eliminating the need to commute. These two positive elements of remote work have proved to alleviate some family-work conflict employees may feel (Eddleston & Mulki, 2015).

Boundary theory argues that employees being simultaneously and continuously available for both family- and work-related tasks can breed role conflict for remote employees. However, the theory also suggests ways to build spatial, physical boundaries between home and work domains, while acknowledging that, for remote employees, their job-domain is physically embedded in their home-domain (Jostell & Hemlin, 2018). One such way for employees to delineate the job-domain from the work-domain is to designate equipment and a physical space for work that is separate from the rest of an employee's home space.

Boundary theory examines how people maintain and create boundaries between family and work to simplify their worlds. Research has indicated that employees who self-identify as female are more likely than their male-identified counterparts to appreciate the demarcation between families and work to distinguish identity (Eddleston & Mulki, 2015), which leads to the next analytical lens of identity theory.

Identity Theory:

In Silicon Valley, much of an individual's identity is tied up in where they are employed. The "you are where you work" mentality permeates the region, informally categorizing people into "start-up risk takers," or "complacent but successful in the old guard" of large companies. Wearing corporate swag, riding organizationally owned private transportation to the office, and commenting on social media about the catered

meals and workout facilities your company offers, are all hallmarks unique to the region. For these organizations in particular, identity theory is essential to exploring the transition of an organization to a fully remote and geographically dispersed workforce.

Identity captures an individual's self-view and answers the "Who am I?" question (Hysmith, 2012). An employee's identity acts as a broad lens for the organization. Professional identity refers to a worker's sense of their role and the messages they convey to their colleagues about themselves (Khapova, Arthur, Wilderom & Svensson, 2007). It additionally refers to the constellation of motives, values, experiences, beliefs and attributes of how a person describes themselves within a professional role. Workplace identity shift had previously been defined as a change (typically an increase) in power or managerial responsibility, but, in the new world of remote work, workplace identity shift is now being examined as a lateral shift into a new work function or setting. What had previously been examined through in-office exposure around the water cooler has shifted to scholars studying workplace identity through online profiles (LinkedIn) and internal virtual communication interactions (Slack and Zoom meetings).

Both in-person and virtual job identity management is critical. An individual employee's identity can affect occupational surroundings. Misalignment between an individual's work situation and preferred work identity can be addressed through the concept of job crafting (Miscenko & Day, 2016). Moving from an in-office setting to one that is fully virtual opens the door to miscommunication and can lead to a perceived identity shift for both the individual employee and their colleagues. Professionals that identify as more adaptable and embrace change are likely to transition their identity from in-person to virtual more easily than those who struggle with adjustment (Khapova, Arthur, Wilderom & Svensson, 2007).

Remote work changes the patterns of workgroups and affects the entire organization on many levels, ranging from a workplace's structured communications to those that are more informal. In turn, this changes the behavior of employees and their perceptions of colleagues (Ansong & Boateng, 2017). An employee that had previously commuted to an office, with a clear, physical demarcation between their home and work identities is now needing to shift both of those identities. While their previous home identity had likely included their roles as a parent, spouse and dweller, now their home identity also needs to include their identity as an organizational employee (Hysmith, 2012). This transition to telecommuting challenges multiple aspects of an employee's identity. The employee will face new routines and behaviors while building a new remote identity or exerting effort to re-establish a pre-existing employee identity in a new virtual setting. Identity theory is critical in understanding how an organization can motivate remote workers so they can attract top talent and retain them.

A firm understanding of boundary theory and the identity theory created a strong theoretical foundation for my literature review. I will now explore how these concepts could be applied to job satisfaction for remote employees.
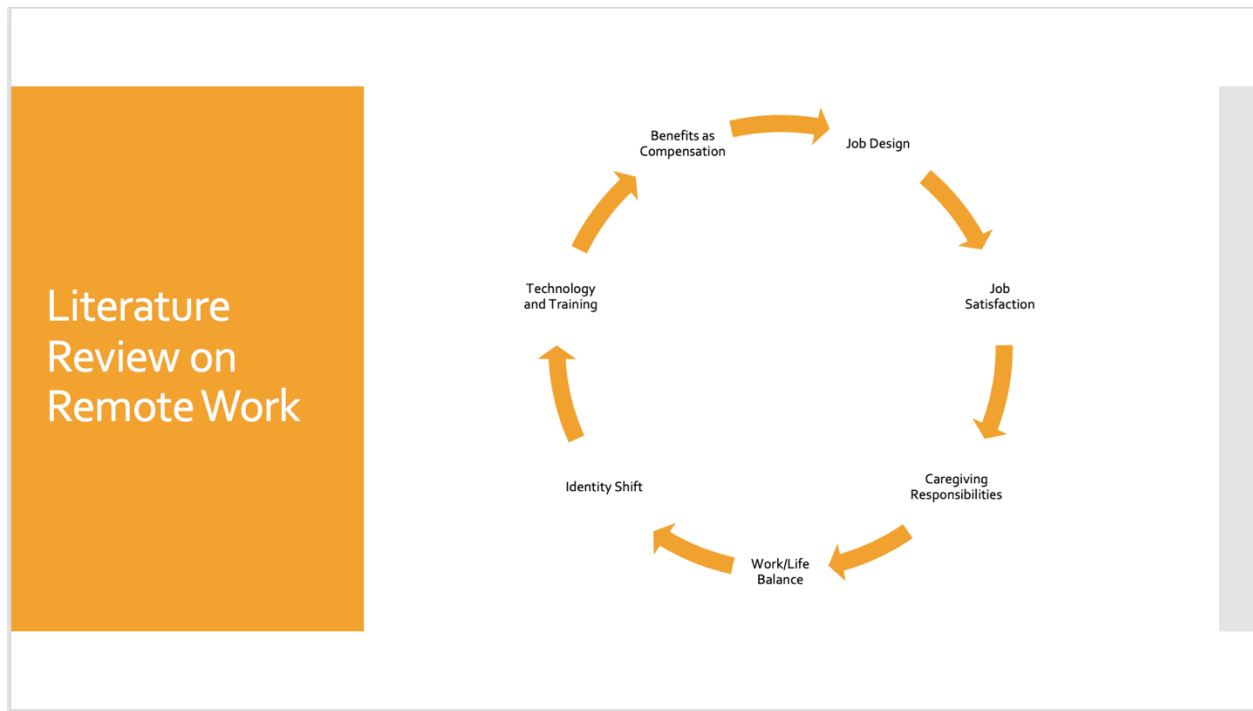
Literature Review on Remote Work:

Remote work, also referred to as telecommuting, is a work methodology that permits employees to perform their organizational duties outside of a conventional brick-and-mortar office (Devandra & Kulkarni, 2019). While remote work is not new, it has been considered siloed from the larger workforce. Remote workers have been viewed as an underappreciated employee base that lacked resources and did not feel their contributions were moving the needle for their organization (Scwartz and Porath, 2014). When the COVID-19 pandemic caused most major organizations to implement remote work policies, human resource departments across the world began to use evidence-based strategies to increase remote job satisfaction by developing stronger remote job design and trainings, addressing employee work/life balance, exploring employee identity, and providing benefits as motivation. What is defined as a "best practice" in each of these areas is still debatable as the field of research grows (Kantor and Streitfeld,

2015). From a human resource perspective, a fully remote workforce is a challenge to overcome for Silicon Valley companies who have notoriously put profit over people and competed for the most extravagant work campuses to attract the best employees (Duhigg and Barboza, 2012).

Job Design for Remote Workers:

For the past 40 years, remote work has been defined in broad strokes, but not in a way that allows for this complex managerial phenomenon to have a common description. Many scholars have attempted to define remote work within the following basic parameters: a flexible job arrangement where employees complete job tasks in a remote location distant from production facilities or a central office, and where employees lack in-person contact with their co-workers (Wang, Liu, Qian & Parker, 2020). Looking at remote work through the lens of human resources allows for a job design that is targeted to each individual employee. When an organization assesses each employee's skills, energy and commitment, it is easier to understand how that employee can best contribute. This process involves 1) optimizing an employee's skill set, 2) designing the employee's financial compensation, and 3) understanding the employee's lifestyle and autonomy needs (Cable & DeRue, 2002). An organization needs to consider remote worker retention and productivity when evaluating their optimal remote working job design.

Job design combines a job description with an individual's skills, relative to overall performance. It is an effective tool to satisfy the needs of both the organization and the individual employee. For over 30 years, job design has been used to increase a worker's production by properly assessing the skills of the employee within the functionality of the position. Determining this ratio of skills to needs can increase employee motivation by eliminating boredom (linked to specialization) and creating a context where an employee enjoys their job (Russon & Brown, 2006). Job design has been instrumental in engaging remote workers to be more productive and have higher rates of job satisfaction through increased autonomy, which contributes positively both to the output of the organization and to the retention of employees (Belias, 2013). It is also essential to include a variety of tasks in the job design aspect of remote work, so that an employee does not become bored with their position, a situation that becomes more likely when interacting with fewer colleagues (Parker & Wall, 2015). Doing the same tasks over and over again, without a manager physically witnessing any improvement, can lead to frustration along the managerial hierarchy (York, 2013).

The autonomy provided by remote work attracts potential candidates who are seeking flexibility and the ability to manage their own projects and schedule. Individual

motivation has been linked to productivity and optimized performance (Bandura & Wood, 1989). Linking this concept of self-efficacy to retention, workers with higher levels of autonomy in remote work opt to remain with an organization for greater tenure and report higher job satisfaction, noting higher levels of participation in meaningful work and opportunities for personal growth (Rogers, Miller, Flinchbaugh, Giddarie & Barker, 2021). This type of job enrichment is a pillar of job design, in that allowing an individual employee to develop their own job practice motivates and challenges the employee to do better. This process also needs to incorporate management design and learning from all levels of an organization. The likelihood of an employee benefiting from remote work is affected by personnel operation and their superiors' management style (Wang, Liu, Qian & Parker (2020). In an ideal remote setting, managers would dedicate time to regularly inquire about an employee's ideas, insights, and knowledge, and engage them in the decision-making process, even for projects outside their wheelhouse (Walsh & Gordon, 2008). An employee's job design experience can be transformed through flexible job policies and supervisor recognition of job demands.

Two key characteristics of job satisfaction with remote work are flexibility and autonomy in decision making. Employees cite schedule flexibility as a key benefit that allows them to balance work-related tasks with their personal life (Ortega, 2009). A proper work design motivates employees and stimulates their performance, while allowing them to be the decision makers on how they spend their time. In a remote setting, a worker can execute job-related tasks during their most productive times, instead of being tied to a conventional 9-5 office schedule. They can care for their families as needed (for example, caring for a child who is home sick) while still producing high level outputs for the organization. They can also reduce personal expenses related to transportation, childcare, and office meals. A job design that incorporates these cost savings will reap higher levels of job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction for Telecommuters:

Over the past decade, evidence has shown that remote work increases overall job satisfaction. This finding may compel more organizations and employees to embrace the approach even after the pandemic ends. Oftentimes, remote work results in employees feeling more content with their organizational position, as well as increasing overall employee productivity (Devandra & Kulkarni, 2019). Numerous studies assert that high levels of job satisfaction when working remotely stem from a variety of remote-associated benefits.

Working remotely allows for flexible work schedules, resulting in increased employee independence in planning their day to include both personal and professional

tasks. Remote employees are able to save large amounts of time and money that would otherwise be spent commuting. Additionally, evidence suggests that employees suffering from identity issues also benefit from working remotely (Devandra et al., 2019; Okasenen, 2015).

Beyond these benefits, remote work promotes the possibility of a more personalized employee experience. The link between office environment and job satisfaction has been studied over the years, with recent scholarship pointing to the differing needs of individual employees and their work environments. Allowing an employee to design and develop their own work space at home empowers them to create an environment where they will be most productive and happiest (Lazarova, 2020). Additionally, remote workers who are given the choice to perform organizational tasks outside of traditional work hours also report higher levels of job satisfaction, as they can accomplish their work at a time that works best for them, instead of conforming to the normative 9-to-5 workday.

It is important to note that employees are not the only members of an organization who are able to cut costs when they move to working remotely. Organizations' bottom lines can also benefit from reduced costs associated with fewer or no employees in-office. Eliminating the high costs of a physical office space, rent, catered meals, janitorial services, transportation, office equipment, etc. means cost savings could be transferred to employees, whether through an increase in salary or providing new benefits, which will ultimately lead to higher levels of job satisfaction for individual employees as well.

To expand on some of the additional financial benefits associated with remote work, employees report greater job satisfaction when they do not have to pay for gasoline or public transportation, for childcare during hours they would normally spend commuting, or for a professional wardrobe/regular dry cleaning (Okasenen, 2015). Another significant benefit leading to increased employee job satisfaction is the flexibility remote work provides to allow employees to spend more time with family and balance their identities of caregiver and employee, as outlined below.

Caregiving and the Remote Work/Life Balance:

The balance of work-family culture was first explored in the late 1990s, as researchers began to inquire into ways an organization can support an employee's family life while maintaining productivity at work (Thompason et al, 1999). Since then, news headlines around the world have promoted and questioned the concept of work-life balance, especially in fast-paced Silicon Valley start-ups where telecommuting had been trending more regularly. Scholars have found that remote work provides employees with

increased job satisfaction and ties to greater work-life balance, which in turns improves the employee's overall wellbeing (Been, et al., 2016).

As boundary theory indicates, employees have difficulty in balancing work-related activities while also committing to childcare or home-related responsibilities (International Labor Organization, 2020). It is essential for remote workers who are caregivers to learn how to strike this balance in order to enhance their productivity. Employees who are new to remote work often experience a sudden adjustment: needing to complete work-related tasks in an environment where they are surrounded by frequently frustrating, demanding, and loud loved ones. Most workers who shift to working from home report a reduced ability to focus, a concern for organizations who seek to prioritize company goals. Remote workers who are also caregivers are more likely to experience frequent interruptions, miss work, sign in late, and sign off early. Caregivers' responsibilities tend to take a toll on their physical and psychological well-being, with direct costs to the caregiver's employers. Working parents have competing responsibilities, unlike workers who do not have other social roles (Beauregard, Basile, & Canonico, 2019).

Most remote workers who are also caregivers experience a lower amount of job flexibility and feel they have less job security compared to those who do not offer dependent care. Many caregiving remote workers also report that they receive minimal support from their supervisors. To ease the burden for remote workers with caregiving responsibilities, employers can subsidize or even provide eldercare or childcare. In the event that providing or subsidizing care is not an option for an organization, it can provide guidance and information to its employees about alternative caregiving options. Employers should practice patience and flexibility with remote workers who are caregivers. They should focus on an employee's output rather than the number of hours they have worked.

Organizations should also note that female employees are more likely to hold caregiving responsibilities. Research indicates that a significant number of women serve as the primary caregiver for children and aging family members, indicating that women who are working remotely are more likely to need to split their focus between caregiving and professional duties (Fuller, 2019). Women play a vital role in offering care to elder dependents in particular, a role with significant ramifications for the larger labor market. It is important for employees to understand the ways in which the demands of at-home responsibilities and work-related tasks contribute to role strain and role conflict (Gordon, et al,. 2012). Employers need to consider these factors while managing remote workers who identify as women. Workers and employees should pre-determine policies to enable

the employee to efficiently produce necessary work while maintaining care of activities at home.

An organizational culture that is supportive to employees with families and caregiving responsibilities tends to promote policies of flexibility, autonomy, and tolerance of familial obligations (Allen, 2001). Remote work provides organizations the opportunity to amplify the commitment to a family-friendly workplace. Remote work makes it easier for employees to provide care to their loved ones thanks to geographic proximity and availability, with perceived flexibility reducing the psychological pressure of managing two roles: caregiver and employee (Bulger & Matthews, 2007). Caregivers who work from home experience both the struggle and the opportunity to balance their familial and professional responsibilities (Thorner, 2019).

Flexibility in the workplace can help eliminate the guilt many employees feel as they try to balance their roles as both employees and caregivers. As an example, the ability to work at night after caring for a sick child during the day allows an employee to remain productive while providing grace in that delicate balance (Lupu, 2017). Organizations seeking to craft a family-friendly corporate culture need to provide managerial training on policies regarding flexibility and family life. According to a study conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, employers tend to underestimate the actual costs of employees' caregiving needs and fail to track the employee base's caregiving needs. This is critical to acknowledged as caregiving responsibilities impact employees' productivity, career trajectory and loyalty to a company. (Fuller, 2019).

Employees operating from home can use a variety of methods to balance their work and home life and ensure an optimal experience not just for themselves and their productivity, but also for their children's development. First, employees can maintain a routine and develop a daily schedule. A regular routine is essential to an employee's mental wellbeing and health, and routines can promote regular expectations for an employee's children, helping them feel calm, regulated, and safe. Children require structure. While developing a routine, employees should establish what works for their family and those around them (Vargas, 2020). For instance, a caregiving employee can keep bedtime and wake-up time relatively consistent for the entire family.

Remote workers should also consider small acts that can mark their transition from work to non-work, such as going for a walk. These acts can shift an employee's mindset from their work responsibilities to their home responsibilities. This separation is essential not just for the employee, but also for the employee's family. An employee needs to delineate clear boundaries and expectations when they are engaging in remote work, including determining how work will be accomplished around colleagues and family. If a

caregiving employee has a partner, it can be more effective to trade off caregiving duties instead of attempting to multi-task. Children also need to understand when they can interrupt, a concept that can be communicated using physical signs and setting alarms to manage transitions (Boston College, 2019). Additionally, remote workers who are also caregivers need to recognize that they are not going to be able to accomplish everything at once, so they need to prioritize and focus on their most essential tasks. These workers should collaborate with their colleagues and managers to identify their most important projects. Establishing realistic and clear deadlines increases productivity. When working with minimal or no supervision, employees need to develop focus and self-discipline. This focus has the additional benefit of role-modeling autonomy, a habit that children can emulate.

Remote work contributes to a family-friendly workplace culture in other ways. Remote work allows for families to optimize their location for better schools, instead of shorter work commutes. Plus, a lack of any commute at all allows them to spend more time with their family, which in turn makes them a more satisfied employee (Garg & Rijst, 2015). Employees taking the time to delineate their work and caregiving responsibilities, in a work environment that supports both, can help to strengthen their employee identity, as discussed in the next section.

The Identity Shift of Remote Workers:

The concept of employee identity ascribes a work-based self-perception encompassing various occupational, organizational and external identities that influence how an employee conducts themself in organizational functionality and workplace environments (Stuart, 2002). Silicon Valley human resource departments have long understood that an employee's identity is closely tied to the corporate culture the organization develops.

A person's identity acts as a broad lens for the organization and as an interpretation of inter- and intrapersonal experiences and actions. A career change is always accompanied by an identity shift. Many individual employee identities are shaped by other employees, which can be complex when employees are working primarily in a secluded, remote environment (Khapova, Wilderom, & Svensson, 2007). Any sort of environmental change, whether it be relocation or a move to remote work, results in the recrafting of an employee's identity (Miscenko & Day, 2016).

The seclusion associated with remote work can lead to the loss of a strong sense of employee identity for the remote worker, a situation most organizations want to avoid. It is easy for organizational management to overlook the needs of their remote

employees when their attention is likely focused on external stakeholders, such as corporate governing boards, shareholders, and customers (Stuart, 2002). To combat this issue, organizations need to regularly engage their employees in the shared vision of an organization. This process allows for an employee to feel part of the "bigger picture," whether that employee is working in an office or working remotely (Walsh & Gordon, 2008). Frequently communicating the shared vision for the organization and allowing employees to submit feedback is one way to regularly impress upon all employees that their contributions matter and are an important piece of the organizational puzzle (York, 2013).

Affording employees the autonomy of how they perform their work-related duties empowers their identity and position within an organization (Walsh & Gorgon, 2008). Thus, building autonomy within the remote workforce not only has positive impacts on employee identity, but is structurally important for job design and productivity. Work autonomy also plays an important role when an employee's identity shifts in a single environment, often between employee and caregiver. This frequent identity shift can take time to adapt to (Hysmith, 2012).

Technology also provides an opportunity for an individual employee to craft their own virtual identity - one that may be different from what would be witnessed in an in-person office environment (Peters, Tijdens & Wetzels, 2004). As mentioned above, moving from in-person to remote work can cause an identity shift as an employee tries to navigate their new roles and responsibilities in a virtual setting. This situation highlights the need for effective job design.

Technology and Trainings to Support a Remote Office:

The accessibility and success of remote work has increased with the use of advanced technology, despite initial organizational fears of inadequate resources and knowledge to sustain remote workers (Russo, 2017). Technology has aided in the transition to remote work and has resulted in somewhat of a revolution for remote workers who are also caregivers. Caregivers can now leverage technical resources to complete their job tasks from anywhere - a child's soccer game, a doctor's appointment, or even a vacation (Peters, Tijdens & Wetzels, 2004). The ability to satisfy both care responsibilities and work responsibilities through access to technology not only increases job satisfaction, but also acts as motivation for higher performance levels – many employees want to work harder when their family can see them working, to set an example of success (Mulki, Bardhi, Lasik, & Nanavaty-Dahl, 2009).

Technology is key to the success of remote work. Organizations need to recognize the imperative to invest in advancing technological tools (Zoom, Slack, equipment, etc.) and providing training for employees to maximize their use of such tools (Staples, 2019). Not all remote workers are familiar with technology and communication tools. To amplify productivity, organizations need to ensure they are not just providing the needed technology, but also empowering employees to properly use technical tools. This task can be accomplished through the optimization of a learning organization that continuously adopts new technology for increased communication.

With remote work, motivating an employee is essential, particularly because of the lack of in-person communication and opportunity for praise (Ketter, 2008). Motivation and proper technology promote a job design that allows employees to telecommute with technology in hand from anywhere in the world (Peters, Tijdens & Wetzels, 2004).

Benefits as Compensation and Incentivizing Employees Working Remotely:

Remote work saves organizations money that they would have otherwise spent on rent for office space and expensive on-campus benefits and perks. Organizations around the world have an opportunity to reallocate saved money to improve the remote work experience for their employees globally.

Research has demonstrated that relationships between employees and their organizations improve when organizations invest in their workers and respond to employees' wants and needs (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Barrick, 2015; Schwartz & Porth, 2014). Walmart has touted the phrase, "Employees are our best Asset!" while Silicon Valley companies such as Google and Apple spend hundreds of millions of dollars building out fancy work campuses with ice cream parlors, spas, dry cleaning facilities, and more (Hernandez, 2016). Employers considering shifting to a remote workforce need to think about what employees expect from the organization, as evidence suggests that employees tend to value benefits and perks beyond just a pay increase (Oksanen, 2015).

Technology companies in Silicon Valley have offered extravagant, personally tailored benefits, ranging from globally inspired catered meals to offering to freeze the eggs of female employees so that they can put off childrearing until they are professionally ready (Vargas, 2020) Managerial studies that analyze organizational needs demonstrate the importance of a human resources-based approach that provides benefits to increase employee motivation (Barrick et al., 2015). Organizations with "high commitment" practices, referring to high salaries offered to highly skilled, educated, and

talented employees, are more likely to offer a wide array of work and family benefits, including onsite childcare and flexible hours, in a traditional brick-and-mortar office setting (Osterman, 1995). Companies need to determine how to transfer the extravagant benefits to which employees have grown accustomed at the traditional in-office campus to remote workers unable to access in-person benefits.

Benefits employees had been accustomed to in the physical office space such as catered meals and access to gyms can be replicated in the remote work setting with digital workout subscriptions, meal kits, and grocery delivery. The benefits of these at-home services extend beyond employees viewing them as valuable job perks, as they also allow the employee to spend more time on professional tasks (Bhattarai, 2020).

Not all organizations will have the same policies when it comes to remote work, nor will they provide the same benefits. Attracting and retaining highly talented workers and consolidating workforce advantage is a significant issue for organizations that affects everything from management styles to financial costs. Understanding what attracts talented recruits may offer vital insights for human resource managers as they budget new incentives and benefits (Alniack, Erat & Akcinin, 2014). Studies show it is necessary to provide benefits specifically designed for remote workers. To identify candidates who will work well remotely, an organization needs to examine its recruitment and onboarding processes. Employees need to have specific strengths in order to succeed when working remotely, including self-efficacy. Such employees will typically find their most rewarding employment experience with a job designed to reward self-motivation (Bandura, 1977).

In order to recruit, onboard, and retain the best remote workers and decrease re-hiring costs, an organization can set itself apart from competition by re-allocating costs savings towards employee perks and benefits (Thorner, 2019).

Drawbacks of a Remote Workforce:

Despite numerous advantages, studies have shown that a remote workforce also has some disadvantages. For example, studies have concluded that failure to adequately acknowledge the contributions of those working remotely could result in high employee turnover, which would cause an organization to spend more money on recruiting, hiring, and training new workers (Oksanen, 2015). Lack of communication and social isolation from colleagues minimizes the sense of identity and loyalty remote workers feel towards their employers, which in turn prevents employees from believing their output is meaningful to the organization as a whole (Nekrosiene, Balciuniene, & Gostautaite, 2019).

26

Not being in the same physical space as other employees has additional drawbacks beyond the frequently reported feeling of isolation (Chauvet, 2003). Tensions arise between employees who are in-office and virtual. Remote employees have reported jealousy of their in-office colleagues (Morganson et al., 2010). An inability to resolve organizational tensions, delineate paths for career advancement, and a lack of structured remote work policies can lead to lower levels of job satisfaction for remote work employees (Baker, Gayle & John, 2007). With weaker relationships between managers and subordinates, professional advancement can also be threatened (Han, 2016).

Methods and Procedures:

For the purpose of this exploratory quality improvement project, I chose to begin with a systemic approach of a need's assessment framework developed by the University of Virginia in 2019 (Appendix A) to help The Organization's executive leadership and human resource department identify and address the gaps between current remote work benefits (pre-covid) and longer-term offerings as the company pivots into a fully remote organization (Kaufman, Rojas & Mayer, 1993).

I utilized a mixed-methods approach of both qualitative virtual interviews with employees, executives and key administrators to capture a multi-level analysis as well as a quantitative survey to help depict a clearer picture of both short term (during mandated work from home) and long term (permanent remote work) needs to be addressed. In working with the executive team, we defined the following needs assessment which led to the development of the study and procedures which are outlined in the following sections.
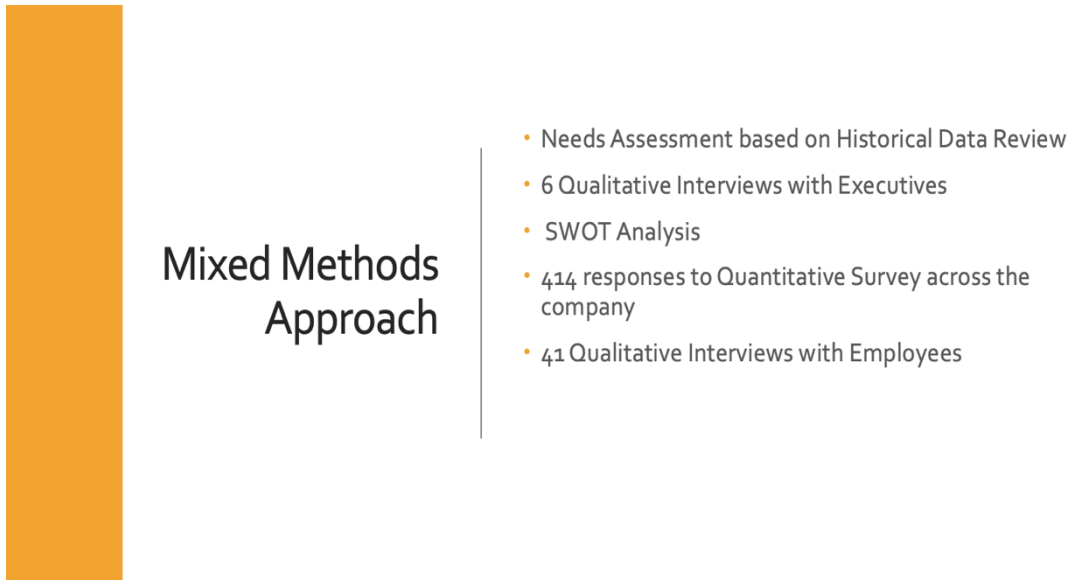
As mentioned, this needs assessment required multiple means of data collection including a historical document review, qualitative interviews with employees and managers from all departments and level of management/experience, as well as a quantitative survey based on that published by the University of Virginia's Survey on Telecommuting which helped to inform recommendations for The Organization and will be presented at the end of this paper. After receiving assessments, I then conducted virtual interviews with 10 questions (Appendix B) with management before beginning my document review. From there, I developed a fishbone matrix (Appendix C). Each of these is described in more detail below.

The below figure outlines which methods were used to address each research question and delineates relative notes to the data collection process.

Research Question	Methodologies	Notes:
How do employees of The Organization feel about long-term policies to work remotely? How do these attitudes change depending on their responsibilities at home?	Survey Interviews Fishbone Diagram	Organized survey data by differences between gender, managerial levels and caregiving responsibilities. Qualitatively, I reviewed the frequency of employees' usage of terms as identifying themselves in a caregiving capacity "son","father" "spouse" without delineating themselves as first and foremost being a caregiver.
As The Organization grows, in what ways can HR utilize constructive job design to attract and retain remote employees?	Interviews with HR Employee Interviews SWOT Analysis	Identified the frequency of key terms utilized such as: "flexibility", "tools", "communication cadence", "company policy", "time off", etc.
In what ways does an employees' identity shift when working for The Organization remotely?	·Document Review ·Survey Interview	I reviewed the historical survey data that and compared that with results from this study now that all employees have been working remotely. I then analyzed key terms pulled from NVivo relating to identity, sense of belonging, and identifying themselves outside of the workplace (e.g., marathon runner, dad, yoga fan, etc.).
What resources, perks and benefits do employees value most for telecommuting?	·Survey Interview	I analyzed and existing perks and benefits, then identified which are no longer relevant in a remote work setting.

Document Review

My qualitative research started with a historical document review with access provided by the human resources team of The Organization. I began this review in August 2020 and primarily focused on existing corporate policies in relation to employees working from home and acknowledgement of caregiving. I conducted a systematic review and utilized multiple data sources including previous survey data regarding job satisfaction, employment contract language, a review of human resources activities and maternity and paternity leave policies. To develop rich data at this stage, I leveraged the functionality of NVivo to develop a protocol and ability to view all coding categories supporting a hierarchical cataloging of review and access to benefits.

I also looked at utilization numbers of functional human resources areas which the team had collected on the 516 full-time employees of The Organization. These included reviewing metrics pertaining to sick leave (less than 10% of employees took sick leave in 2019), maternity/paternity leave (Only 4 women out of 11 eligible took the full 12 weeks of paid maternity leave in 2019, 8 men took two weeks of paid paternity leave in 2019),

and enacting FMLA (3% of employees took 6 weeks+). Coding my document review required sophisticated search functionality identifying not just text but characteristics which I linked in a "caregiving context" and then broke down by gender, partnership status (single, married, in a partnership, divorced with children under the age of 18, etc.) as well as number of dependents living within the household (disabled spouse, children, aging parents, etc.) and number of external dependents requiring financial or emotional support (grown children, etc.).

As part of the planning process, I first reviewed existing documentation provided by The Organizations' Human Resources department regarding the current offerings for employee benefits, compensation tiers, and corporate culture "perks". These documents included demographic information collected in May 2019, December 2019 and May 2020 which allowed me to see the growth of the organization as it expanded in diversity as well as experience levels, with many new hires coming with 10+ years of experience from other organizations. In addition to demographic information, the Organization granted me access to four iterations of company policy on everything from paid parental leave, vacation time, work from home policies and technology policies surrounding internal communications. The last component of the historical documents which I had access to included contracts of employees from the executive team down to the interns which allowed me to examine the expectations outlined for each role and level.

In addition to this historical document review, I was provided with information that the HR team collected from similarly positioned companies to attract and retain employees in the Bay Area. The head of Human Resources had me sign a non-disclosure agreement before proceeding with document review and all contracts and offers I reviewed were digital copies that were password protected and accessed via my personal computer with a designated login provided by The Organization.

Executive Qualitative Interviews:

Next, I conducted video interviews over Zoom with six key executives from The Organization (Appendix A), with introductions facilitated by the CEO who, as a caregiving working mother with substantial resources, admitted that she was seeing for the first time how difficult it was to truly wear so many hats. These virtual interviews were scheduled by the assistant to the CEO and took place over Zoom where I was able to transcribe and then use NVivo to code my data and identify trends by organizational function, tenure at the Organization, number of direct reports and total subordinates, caregiving obligations and gender. It is key to note that all employees I spoke with at this point were Zooming with me from their homes as the corporate headquarters in San

Francisco had shut down permanently due to COVID-19 and Employment Law restrictions in California. There was no opportunity for me to conduct in-person focus groups due to the government restrictions. I applied the conversations with management to a SWOT analysis which helped me measure the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of pivoting The Organization to a fully remote workforce. This then led me to the development of my survey for all employees of all management levels and finetune my questions for interviews with employees.

Strengths
1. Flexibility
2. Access to Highly Skilled Employees Regardless of Geographic Location
3. Reduction in overhead costs be eliminating office space and perks
4. Apply cost-savings to attractive benefit packages

S

W

Weaknesses
1. Employees do not have well equipped offices
2. No current formalized policy
3. Distractions at home/ overwhelm of household responsibilities
4. No longer have inperson benefits like free catered meals, massages, dry cleaning, etc.
5. Lack of Communication

Opportunities
1. Invest in technology
2. Amplify trainings for virtual management of employees
3. Develop new incentives and attrctive benefit packages
4. Re-define Remote Work Policies
5. Provide training on work/life balance

O

T

Threats
1. Performance could decrease due to lack of training
2. Management struggles to communicate with employees
3. Employees may have difficulty balancing household responsibiities
4. Threat to identity as a start-up employee

Development of the Survey Themes

In order to target the needs of The Organization, I designed my evaluation questions and logic model (Bickman, 1987). This led to the development of three main themes: 1. Employees were used to the in-house benefits that the San Francisco Office provided and missed them (three free meals a day, happy hours, free dry cleaning, well set-up office spaces with all of the technology and comfort they needed, etc.) 2. Balancing 24/7 caregiving responsibilities with full-time work was weighing heavily on the shoulders of employees who yearned for start-up identity 3. Remote work was going better than expected (productivity maintained, employees enjoyed not commuting, etc.).

I then investigated remote work satisfaction surveys done in previous scholarly work but felt with government mandated remote work, many of these were not sufficient in addressing issues such as how to handle caregiving responsibilities given the Shelter in Place orders (Newsome, Executive Order N-33-24, California). Ultimately, I utilized the recently published work of Bellman, et al. (2020) on the differences of Job Satisfaction and Work-Life vs "Work From Home" which helped me define my questionnaire in terms that defined the context of remote work to better assist in navigating my needs assessment process.

Quantitative Analysis: Survey Results:

The final survey (see Appendix D) contained 12 questions with associated comment boxes for additional qualitative analysis. The Organization's CEO alerted the entire San Francisco employee-base at a virtual All-Hands meeting on Wednesday, September 2, 2020 that the head of Human Resources would be emailing out a link to my survey and would provide my email address if anyone was interested in providing a 30-minute virtual Zoom-based interview with me. While there was no reward tied to participation, the CEO did phrase that this project was looking at potential employee benefits and perks which members of the organization could help choose by participating. Later that afternoon, the survey went out and in the first 48 hours, I collected 158 responses from San Francisco-based employees. On Friday, September 4th, an additional email went out reminding employees to participate which led to an additional 64 employees providing responses. By Friday, September 18th, 2020 I had received a total of 414 responses from the 516 employees based out of The Organization's headquarters, which indicates the future of working remotely is of great interest to employees.

Employee Interviews: Qualitative Part II

In addition to the six executive level interviews I conducted at the start of the study, I went on to work with an additional 41 employees that volunteered from every job function and management level to provide a more thorough multi-level analysis (Kreft and Leuuw, 2002). As previously mentioned, the call for volunteers to be interviewed happened at a virtual office-wide Zoom meeting on September 2nd when the CEO made the announcement that HR would be providing my contact information for any volunteer willing to provide their feedback in an informal virtual interview session. Thirty-one employees reached out to me, but I was only able to schedule 22 interviews in October due to the California Wildfires which had displaced many employees. I was able to schedule an additional 19 interviews in December for a total of 41 interviews. The 41 interviews were 30-minute, semi-structured interviews that allowed me to not only speak

with and transcribe our session, but also see the home office and environment (which was a topic of discussion in interviews and on the survey) in which the employee was working to provide greater context for the study. Working with employees representing every level of experience and management helped triangulate my data. I had representatives who had been with the company for less than a year and up to 6 years of their career spent with The Organization and employees from every department listed by the HR team.

This qualitative analysis utilized a rigorous coding scheme to analyze the interviews with an emphasis on developing an empirical, scientific and thoughtful coding system which broke down the data by demographics, length of employment, position in The Organization, and outside responsibilities (caregiver vs non-caregiver). This breakdown helped to understand the differences of each segment of the organization to help inform the ongoing needs assessment. Additionally, it provided an opportunity of different management levels to categorize preferences that may help inform the organization for future re-structuring, and topically based on some of the organic commentary that I saw as a common thread from caregiving-specifics to productivity-focused.

Security Measures and Precautions:

Security and privacy were an important issue for the Organization at the onset of this project. At the beginning of the relationship I was asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement. Additionally, it was requested that I keep the name of The Organization anonymous in my paper and limit any major identifiable descriptors.

From the perspective of the employees and their privacy, it should be noted that all digital questionnaires were anonymous and were not constrained by HIPAA requirements. Interviewees were delineated with a random number and letter coding, and interviews were transcribed, and data stored anonymously. Neither the coding process nor the transcriptions were shared with the Organization. That said, all transcripts, data, etc. were kept on a password protected, locked computer and handled only by me, the researcher. All proper protocols were followed in collecting the data, maintaining it for analysis, and proper removal. Moving forward, this paper is only to be utilized by The Organization and will not be distributed to be replicated or reproduced or make broad generalizations to other companies/research projects.
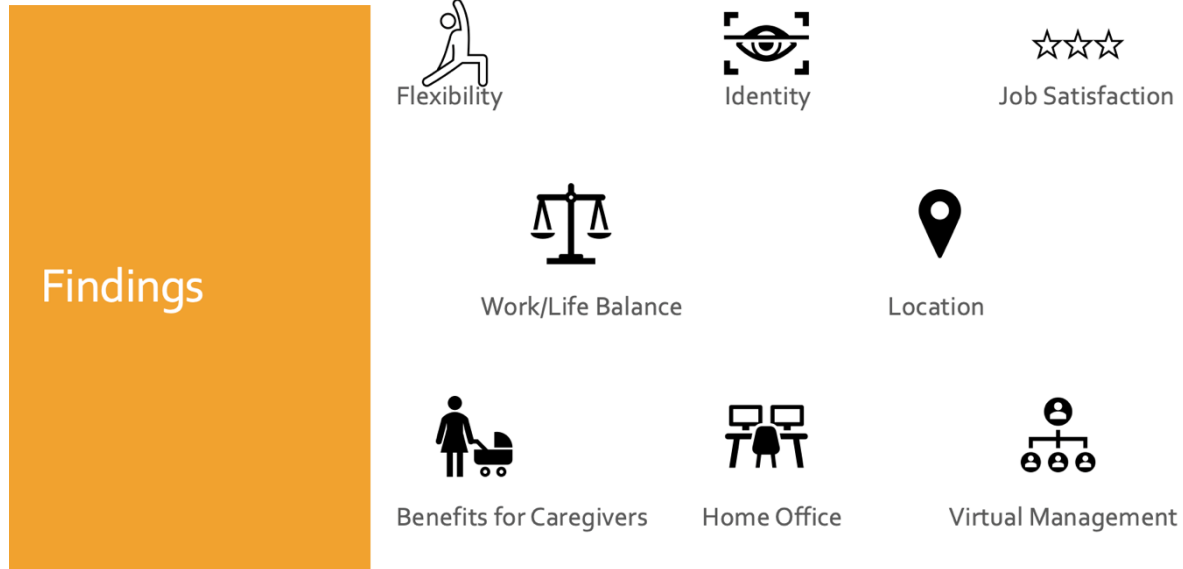
Findings:

The analytical strategy I utilized to sort both the qualitative and quantitative data for The Organization uncovered instrumental guidelines as to how employees of The Organization are balancing their family life with work responsibilities, all in a newly adopted remote work setting. In the following section I outline my findings in regard to overall job satisfaction, caregiving responsibility, job design, identity and attitudes towards possible perks and benefits employees of the The Organization to help address my research questions regarding the Organization's new remote work policies.

In total, there were eight key findings which led to my development of recommendations in the later sections of this review.

1.	**Job Satisfaction**	Employees are struggling to balance work and family responsibilities while working from home.
2.	**Work/Life balance**	Employees are generally satisfied with The Organization's adaption to a fully remote workforce.
3.	**Flexibility**	Flexibility is the most highly desirable element of job design when it comes to remote work for employees of The Organizations.
4.	**Identity**	Employees of The Organization are facing an identity shift as remote work become permanent.
5.	**Management**	Lower-level employees thriving with autonomy, managers struggling and seek training on virtual team management
6.	**Home Office**	Remote workers desire a **well-equipped office space at home**.
7.	**Benefits for Caregivers**	Benefits that lessen caregiving and housekeeping burdens at home are very attractive to employees of The Organization.
8.	**Geography**	A majority of employees are looking to leave the Bay Area and move somewhere with a lower cost of living.

Outlining Findings by Research Question:

While I will outline each of the eight key findings in depth over the next few pages, I first wanted to briefly define how the findings in general impacted my research questions posited earlier in this paper. As reference, the four research questions were: 1. How do employees of The Organization feel about long term policies to work remotely? How do these attitudes change depending on their responsibilities at home? 2. As the Organization grows, in what ways can HR utilize constructive job design to attract and

retain remote employees? 3. In what ways does an employee's identity shift when working for The Organization remotely? And finally 4. What resources, perks and benefits do employees value most for telecommuting?

Question 1:

Question 1:
How do employees of The Organization feel about long-term policies to work remotely? How do these attitudes change depending on their responsibilities at home?

Satisfaction with Crisis Transition to Remote Work

Caregivers ■ Non-Caregivers
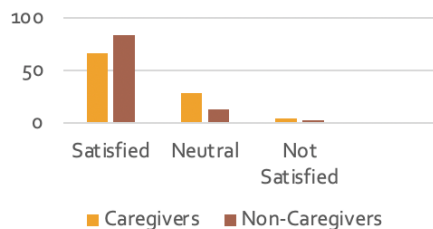
"Meetings went on as normal. Behind the scenes was a different story." – Female, Marketing VP, age 41 with 3 kids

Employees' Desire to Continue to Work Remotely
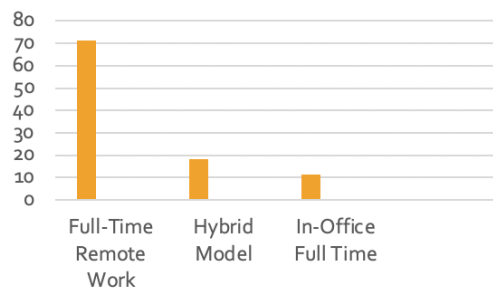
My findings indicated that employees were generally satisfied with The Organization's transition to remote work during the crisis period mandated by Governor Gavin Newsome in March of 2020 that was still governing corporate decisions when this paper was published in April 2021. The job was well done enough that over 70% of employees hoped The Organization would continue to allow employees to work from home a on a permanent basis.

Question 2:

Employees of the organization were very quick to delineate their needs from a job design perspective. Both in survey and in qualitative interviews I found that while employees had given The Organization a grace period, they did identify the same common trends of areas for improvement which included communication cadence, policy design and trainings which I will elaborate on in the coming pages.

Question 2: As The Organization grows, in what ways can HR utilize constructive job design to attract and retain remote employees?	64.2% wanted Formalized Flexibility
	48.1% asked to address "Zoom Fatigue" with a communication plan
	29.4% seek more Technology Training
	61.3% are looking for some in-person engagement
	33.7% wanted to know how their work fits into the shared mission

As the above depicts, the concept of "Formalized Flexibility" was at the forefront of employees hopes. In discussions with employees both at management and entry level positions, repeatedly the need for structured outline of what can and cannot be done in terms of flexibility of where, when and how an employee was working. Expectations for attendance at virtual meetings, where someone can work from, etc. were all common questions.

Communication cadence was another issue, specifically lower level employees wanted to address: when was Zoom appropriate? What about texting another employees' personal cellphone? The interviewees wanted everything laid out more clearly to better understand expectations. Training was another key area for potential implementation – specifically managers looking at how to manage employees who were now working in a multitude of time zones. Some in-person engagement at some part was also a theme: would they still gather in Las Vegas for an all-hands retreat once a year? What about where, when and how individual teams would be meeting now that there was no longer an office space in San Francisco.

As the findings portrayed that much of an employee's identity was related to their employee idenity and the physical office space, the findings showed that this was an area the management needed to address as well.

Question 3:

Question 3:

In what ways does an employee's identity shift when working for The Organization remotely?

- 53.1% of employees indicated that they were struggling with their identity in the new remote work environment
- 68% of employees enjoy not having to dress up for work
- 43.4% of employees who identify as caregivers don't feel their boss understands their home responsibilities
- But 69.2% of employees do feel management is generous with time off to address family issues which helps with the identity balance

As the findings for research question 3, "How does an employee's identity shift when working for The Organization remotely?" showcased that employees were feeling the shift as they now navigated working and living in the same space without an office to go to. In my qualitative interviews, many employees talked repeatedly about how they missed their peers, the organic networking and their identity in the larger start-up world of working for a hot company.

On that same note of how much had changed and employees missing the benefits of the office space, the fourth research question I investigated was regarding benefits employees would like to see offered. As I previously mentioned, I had been given a list of benefits from the Human Resource department of the Organization to test out.

Question 4:

What resources, perks and benefits do virtual employees' value most? What accommodations are seen as the greatest need for caregivers?

At-Home Benefits the Organization Would Like to Offer:
- 95.7% would like housecleaning services
- 90.5% grocery delivery
- 77.6% interested in meal kits
- 74% of caregivers would love access to pre-screened/pre-vetted childcare
- 69.8% laundry services
- 51.3% virtual personal assistants
- 41.1% access to fitness app like Peloton
- 36.8% interested in virtual mental health therapy subscription
- 24.3% prescription delivery services
- 19.8% dog walking or pet daycare

As the findings above indicate, many employees were struggling with the day-to-day tasks distracting them from their work while working from home. Laundry, house cleaning, and grocery services were some of the most requested items. I will dive more into this piece in the next section where I further outline the findings by topic.

Findings by Topic:

Job Satisfaction:

Key Finding #1: Employees are generally satisfied with The Organization's adaption to a fully remote workforce.

With job satisfaction being the most critical variable I was researching, I found that 88% of employees answered that they were satisfied to extremely satisfied with how their organization was handling the transition to remote work and 71.4% of the total employee population surveyed would like to continue working only remotely, while 18% would like to see a hybrid model implemented. Employees with a manager level or above indicated that they were less in favor of a fully remote workforce than employees at lower levels of responsibility, with many of these executives missing time with employees. With job satisfaction being tied to desire to continue to be employed by the Organization, only 12% of employees surveyed commented that they were searching for a new job, with four of them also answering the aforementioned question as "no-not really" in satisfaction with how the organization was handling the transition to remote work.

Job Satisfaction in Remote Setting

Employees' Desire to Work Remotely
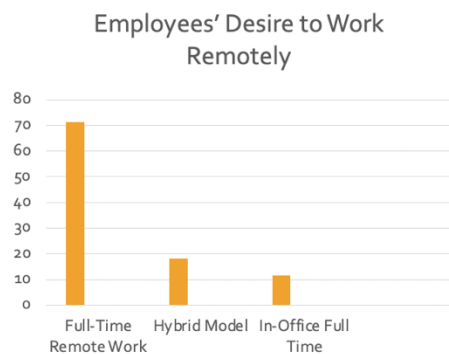
Satisfaction with The Organization's Adaption to Remote Work

■ Satisfied ■ Neutral ■ Dissatisfied ■
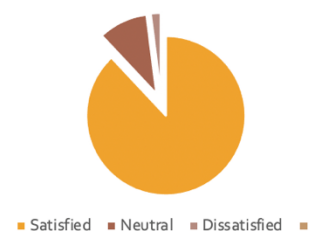
In my interviews, three employees noted that they may be moving closer to family and consider an-in person job in their new geographic location in the next 5 years. When broached with the question of whether or not employees felt they had everything they

needed to do their jobs, a surprising 91% answered "yes", they felt even in a remote work environment they were equipped to maintain productivity. To note, in December 2020 The Organization provided me with insights that showed productivity across the organization has actually increased in 2020 by 7.8% despite the initially forced transition to an all-remote workforce in March 2020.

Qualitative data collected by my NVivo transcriptions from October – December 2020 highlighted "spending more time with loved ones" (as coded by "children" "kids" "family" "spouse" "partner" "dog" "cats" "pets") as the number one reason individuals enjoyed remote work. This was consistent with the quantitative survey data which indicated that 77.0% of employees chose "spending time with loved ones" as their top reason they enjoy working from home. Next, was "autonomy" and the ability to create one's own work environment, schedule and not feel like they needed to be the first one in the office and last to leave with "not having to commute" as another key element of current job satisfaction which is consistent with previous findings (Singh & Singh, 2017). I will explore these further below in the section on Job Design.

Caregiving Responsibilities:

Key Finding #2: Employees are struggling to balance work life and family responsibilities while working from home.

As previously mentioned, the ability to spend more time with loved ones while working remotely was a primary driver for job satisfaction for the employees of The Organization. Employees were enjoying taking coffee breaks with their spouse and spending more time with their children instead of commuting to and from work. That said, they were also finding balancing working from home more difficult than managing caregiving burdens when they were working in an office.

Regardless of whether or not they considered themselves caregivers, 89.6% of employees admitted to conducting household chores/management during typical work hours. While at least 19 employees admitted in our interviews that they enjoyed being able to run a load of laundry, prepare meals or take care of their children, the survey data suggested that the burden of caregiving while working remotely was a heavy one with 91% of employees who identified as a caregiver (to a parent, spouse, or child(ren)) as more difficult and more time consuming when working from home. One key finding here was that 48.5% of non-manager level employees felt they did not have the proper housing set-up to work remotely and balance the responsibilities of home, not having a dedicated office space in pricey Silicon Valley where homes average $1,206 per square

foot (Compass, 2021). The transition to having to make meals for themselves and family members as opposed to being provided with three meals a day at the office was one of the most time-consuming caregiving activities employees indicated, with an average of 1.1 hours spent on it a day.

Employees who identified themselves as female reported 11.56 hours of domestic work per week that they balanced while working from home full-time, while employees who identified themselves as males only reported 7.4 hours of domestic responsibility during the work week (which I defined as Monday – Friday 8am- 6pm). Of note, female employees of The Organization with caregiving responsibility felt they were working an average of 50.3 hours per week on work-related tasks (at a 7-day week, not limited to weekdays, with 62% admitting they did at least "some" work on the weekend) while self-identified male employees estimated very they spent 49.7 hours per week on work-related activities which is consistent with literature.

Key Finding #3: Flexibility ranked as the most desirable element of remote work job design for caregivers.

On the topic of flexibility, one interviewee, a 33-year-old female on the marketing team remarked, "The number one thing this company could do is to have a culture that didn't penalize someone for childcare or other household/life responsibilities and was flexible enough with meeting times to allow an employee to admit when they need to juggle something."

Flexibility and time off seemed to go hand-in-hand. The Organization's generous existing policy on unlimited paid vacation/sick leave came up with great frequency, with 88.2% of employees indicating they approved of the policy and 7 interviewees suggesting this was a benefit that helped ease the transition to remote work, with an informal policy that it was acceptable to take a morning or afternoon off if needed to manage caregiving responsibilities. That said, only 43.4% of employees who identified themselves as caregivers felt that their manager knew the complexity of their caregiving responsibilities but 69.2% did feel their managers were generous with allowing autonomy and the flexibility to manage their own schedule to meet the needs of their family while maintaining productivity in their role and function within the organization. This is important to note as studies have shown employees who speak up about their familial obligations report higher job satisfaction and avoid unrealistic expectations by management (Thorner, 2019).

While overall I found that employees of the Organization were satisfied with their jobs and were enjoying spending time with their families in this newly enforced work

from home policy, this data suggests that they also seemed to be struggling to manage their caregiving responsibilities. My findings on this as it relates job design indicate that it could be because these positions as originally written in their contracts demanded more in-person communication, travel and oversight.

Identity:

When moving the organization to a fully remote team, it was important to understand the multiple identities each employee was now balancing in a single physical environment: their homes. No longer able to control the work-environment of a brick-and-mortar office space in San Francisco, it was vital to understand the other responsibilities of employees to identify how to best accommodate and motivate.

Key Finding #4: Employees are navigating an identity shift as they become remote workers, no longer having the physical boundary between work and family life.

As the first question (for those who identified as caregivers) of my quantitative survey assessment noted, 76% of the total 546 employees indicated they viewed themselves as caregivers - whether that be as a parent, child taking care of elderly parents, pet owner, caretaker for a spouse, etc. Of those who identified as caregivers, 98% said they had children under the age of 18 at home. Regardless of gender, both caregivers and non-caregivers indicated that they spent over 10 hours during the work week (Monday-Friday) on household-based chores while working remotely which leads to the assessment of yet an additional identity, caretaking for their home.

Aside from managing the duality of work-life identities, there was also a sense of loss for the start-up culture identity. One 29-year-old male from the engineering department commented, "If you were to ask what I miss about going in the office the most, it's definitely the social engagement with my team and who I was at the office." While the data made it clear that 87.4% of respondents were open to the idea of more permanent work from home opportunities, The Organization was curious as to how they could maintain what had been working in the office, and for some, that was the identity as an employee of a cool startup. The data did indicate that one of the perks of not working in an office meant they did not have to dress up, with 68% of employees noting that not having to dress for work was a draw to telecommuting which is consistent with previous studies (Raisiene, et al., 2020).

Job Design:

Job design, in regard to job satisfaction, was the area of research that had the greatest difference in perceptions and attitudes between management-level employees and non-management level employees.

Key Finding #5: While non-management employees are appreciating the gained autonomy of remote work, managers are having a difficult time managing their remote direct reports.

While non-management employees were celebrating their newly gained autonomy (87.5% recorded this is the job design element they appreciated most about working remotely) and managing their own schedules/work hours (71.3% noted this as a key benefit of remote work), management level executives were dissatisfied with visibility into their subordinate's work (31.1% indicated they would like to have greater visibility into the time management of employees.) This is on par with research that shows that seniority tends to have a negative association with remote work. (Walls et al., 2007).

Communication was the area which all employees, regardless of level, indicated there was the greatest room for improvement with 83.4% of employees surveyed admitting "Zoom Fatigue" from an overscheduling of video calls and 79.8% of employees stating that they would appreciate a company-wide policy to guide phone vs. video calls for internal communications. According to the tech team, the use of chat increased by 42% from January 2020 to December 2020, with more employees relying on the informal chat functionality to communicate with colleagues. In a similar vein, a 48-year-old male who is part of the executive team with multiple young children at home commented, "It would be nice to have a "contract" about not having to respond to instant messages or emails during non-work hours. Just because I work from home, doesn't mean I can be contacted and expected a response 24/7 on demand. There needs to be a distinction between home and work although we are always at home."

While members of the management team reported overall satisfaction (82.3%) with feedback from their bosses, 61% of non-management level employees felt their boss did not fully understand their workload. Five interviewees pointed out that when other teams were asking for input, their boss didn't know unless they reported it. This has diminishing the effects of task significance, a pillar of job design (Cezerati, 2020). The noted frustrations of communication between employees and their managers as well lack of workload understanding has historically been an issue with remote workforces. (Nakrosiene, Buciuiene, & Gostautaite, 2019). Additionally, 13% of non-management

employees reported "extreme frustration" with the company's use of Slack as a management tool.

That said, 88% of non-management employees and 86.5% of management employees reported that they felt they had the skills and tools needed to successfully complete their job regardless of their location. Additionally, 75.6% of non-management employees felt that since shifting to working remotely, they did not necessarily understand how their work fit into the larger corporate culture. This aligns with scholarly studies that have pinpointed remote workers often have difficulty seeing where their work fits into the larger organizational goals (Morganson et al. 2010).

Key Finding #6: Remote Employees Need a Dedicated and Well-Equipped Office Space, at Home.

Home Office Needs

Noise cancelling headphones, multiple screens, ergonomic chairs, digital assistants, laser printers and studio lighting.

Pay for cell phone services and upgraded internet coverage

Annual home office bonus to upgrade would be appreciated

In my interviews, multiple employees acknowledged their appreciation for The Organization providing a $500 stipend back in April 2020 to aid employees in setting up their home office. As reviewed above, boundary theory suggests the need for a physically dedicated space and equipment to be utilized in the home domain for work-related activities (Jostell & Hemlin, 2018). In my historical document review of contracts for employees hired since then, I noticed there was no stipend for a home office set-up for new employees which was corroborated by one employee who commented that having to pay out of pocket for noise-cancelling headphones and a standing desk "was not a deal breaker, but the expenses did add up."

As the historical documentation I reviewed indicated, all of 516 employees (regardless of job level or function) had been offered a typical Silicon Valley compensation package which included attractive on-site benefits like free massages, catered meals, paid gym memberships and laundry services. When they were hired, these perks were not only part of the identity of the Organization to position themselves as competitive and a destination employer, but they were also a part of the package to attract top talent by easing logistical burdens of everyday life.

Perks and Benefits:

The needs assessment uncovered that one of the biggest priorities for the executive team and all management level employees was finding ways to re-distribute the money saved on in-office perks (massages, catered meals, transportation, dry cleaning, etc.) and rent and supply at-home benefits for employees that will help attract and retain high performing assets. The human resources team provided me with very specific benefits they were looking to offer their employees which we tested on the survey ranging from meal kit delivery to pet sitting.

From these directed offerings, I found that as the employee base had a multitude of caregiving responsibilities, these employees were looking for benefits that assisted in the logistics and management of their at-home responsibilities.   In analyzing the responses of what perks could be provided to help employees of The Organization with their personal at-home responsibilities, helping with mealtime and stipends to keep household duties like laundry and cleaning were a top priority while things like pet services, addressing medical needs (in-home medical care, prescription delivery, etc.) were less popular.

Key Finding #7: Employees are extremely interested in The Organization providing benefits that help with at-home logistics.

The total employee base 19.8% of employees would appreciate a dog walking or pet daycare service, 24.3% would be interested in prescription delivery service to avoid having to run errands (not currently offered by existing BCBS health insurance), 95.7% were interested in a housecleaning service that is pre-vetted by the organization and potentially providing a stipend with an additional 69.8% of employees interested in a stipend for a laundry service (previously offered at the office in San Francisco). (See Appendix F) Of those employees who indicated they have children under the age of 18 living at home, 74% stated they were interested in pre-screened and background checked childcare.

Interviews with employees of all levels and all caregiving responsibilities indicated that there is a significant opportunity for The Organization to provide virtual personal assistance to employees with 51.3% of employees surveyed indicating that they would appreciate someone to schedule family doctor appointments, manage the family calendar, book personal services like dental cleanings and haircuts etc. which in turn would give them more time to focus on work. Grocery delivery was also a highlight with 90.5% of employees showing interest in having a subscription or stipend service for grocery delivery (See Appendix G for options). Of the same vein coming from a company-setting where 3 meals a day were provided for employees, 77.56% of employees were interested in meal kits to make mealtime easier for their families and cover the costs of the once offered meals for the employee themselves. In the interviews, three employees suggested having an opportunity to support small local restaurants near their homes.

Beyond Boundaries:

One particular area of interest for the human resources team was whether or not employees were planning on remaining in the Bay Area (within 90 minutes of the San Francisco Headquarters) now that their job design had led to all employees being able to be remote. I developed this question for the quantitative survey in hopes of providing greater insight and context for the following question regarding perks and benefits to help identify if there was a possibility to contract with service-based companies like house cleaners/childcare services, etc. depending on the results of the additional quantitative questions. This also would provide insight into whether or not providing relocation services would be seen as a benefit, even if it was not strategic for the organization and merely a perk to attract and retain talent.

Key Finding #8: Employees are looking to leave the Bay Area and are considering locations closer to family with a lower cost of living.

With almost two-thirds of respondents considering relocation (18.16% yes, 48.18% possibly) my qualitative interviews then spent a significant amount of time (6.3 minutes on average) discussing the "why" behind the move with 16 of the 22 interview respondents declaring lower cost of living elsewhere, 9 mentioning being closer to family and 6 for better schooling opportunities for their children. Employees who disclosed they were not leaving the Bay Area mentioned their spouse's job and already being established in schools for their children. With cost of living being a prominent concern for employee's choosing to leave the Bay Area, another impact could be on the high cost of healthcare in the area as the out-of-pocket costs for the company's California-based plan could be impacted as employees move out of state. This could impact

healthcare benefits and what healthcare resources are offered based on the disbursement of employees nationally/globally.

In my quantitative interviews, one key concept was that employees felt they could get more house/property to meet their needs for a better price and overall cost of living elsewhere. One key factor that was brought up in nearly two thirds of the interviews (64.3%) was a lack of dedicated, private office space - especially when they had kids conducting virtual school. Productivity goes hand-in-hand with office space (Bennett, 2017) which is why the human resources department was curious about existing office spaces. While Zoom backgrounds can help with a sense of professionalism, the team is at the drawing board looking for ways to optimize the work from home work setting for remote employees, which led us to the next question regarding potential physical items that could be purchased leveraging economies of scale, to best equip employees to maintain productivity. Sit/Stand Desks, Multiple Screens and ergonomic chairs were the items most sought after to equip a home office according to the survey, and fortunately all three items are pieces of equipment The Organization has kept in a storage locker in Oakland, California that can potentially be distributed to employees as they are already sunk costs. In our qualitative assessments of this topic, great appreciation had been shown for the $500 cash spot bonuses given in May 2020 that employees could use to outfit their tech set up in any way they saw necessary. These could be expanded to a quarterly stipend to meet the needs of the remote worker. It is also important to note that employees who remain in California but are mandated to work remotely can write off expenses on their personal taxes for anything needed to work from home (electricity bill, high speed internet, office furniture, etc.), so the HR department will need to assist in communicating this opportunity and potentially provide access to a CPA for consultation. The below table includes responses as to items that would be beneficial to outfit a home office for employees, all listed items were suggested by the HR team of The Organization as items they would like to consider distributing.

Summary of Findings:
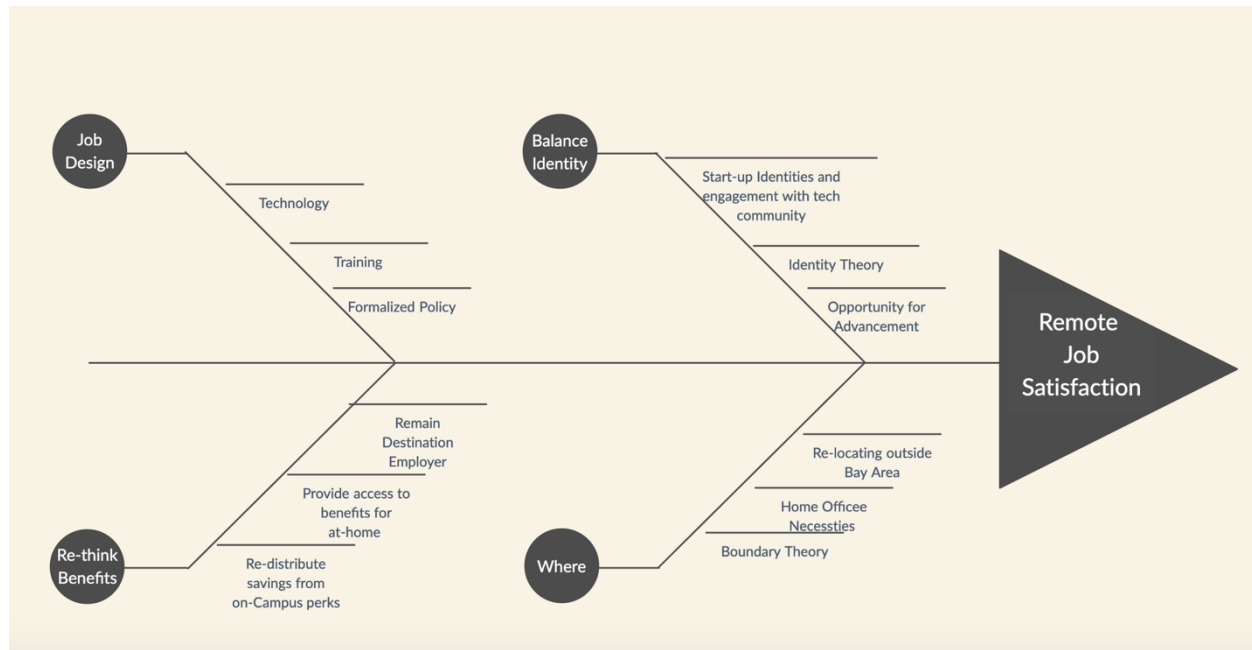
      As mentioned above, I wanted to analyze my findings through the lens of the human resource frame and specifically address the overarching concept of job satisfaction as depicted by the three variables of job design, identity in corporate culture and attractive benefits for retention/attraction. My analysis showed that women were more likely than men to feel stretched thin by the work from home balance, feeling like organizational demands were interfering with familial responsibilities 3:1. I also was able to uncover ways that The Organization could re-distribute the cost savings of eliminating the physical office space to best meet the needs of their employees working remotely from home. Meals were the overarching winner, followed by aid in addressing childcare needs. As many employees of all management levels struggled with their new identity working remotely from their household, 87.1% of employees interviewed commented that they would prefer a hybrid model moving forward. These employees communicated that they were willing to commute to meet with their teams in person either 2-3 days a week or at least once a month, so while the job satisfaction numbers are currently high, there is an opportunity to continuously improve the model and look for a meeting cadence that proves to be more hybrid.

      Specifically, the data concluded that the executive team members were more interested in maintaining cross-department coordinated in-person meetings than those earlier in their careers. Additionally, executive team members were more likely to already be dedicating non-work hours to work specific tasks (outside of 8am-6pm Monday-

Friday) with a mandatory C-level call every Sunday night from 6-10pm. Engineers of all management levels were more likely to work overnight compared with business functionality employees (Human Resources, Marketing, Finance). The data showcases that while every employee had maintained productivity, there was less of a need for all employees to be "on'' during typical business hours, especially when the team is working globally and in multiple functions.

Finally, in reviewing data from all levels of management and functionality, it became clear that company policy needs to be formalized. Communication cadence, methods of communicating, and policy and trainings for management on appropriate flexibility into the job with autonomy to manage one's own schedule, placing personal blocks on the calendar as needed. More on this in the section below.

Recommendations:

The findings, in conjunction with my literature review, helped me develop a list of potential considerations for the Organization as they look to adopt a permanent fully remote workforce. The below figure outlines the six key recommendations where the following pages dives deeper into each suggestion.

Recommendations	
	Formalize remote work policies and review job design of all employees.
	Invest-in and train-on collaborative technology.
	Develop strategies and cadence for in-person engagement.
	Develop policies, train managers and have executives lead by example in showcasing a corporate culture of "flexibility".
	Allow employees to work remotely, from wherever.
	Budget for benefits that improve work/life balance for employees working from home

Organizational Identity, Inclusion and Job design:

The data suggested that above all else, understanding proper job design will be vital to The Organization as it navigates the transition from on campus to fully virtual. While a majority of employees (87%) were hired to work in-person in the San Francisco office, it needs to be acknowledged that their jobs have fundamentally changed since they were recruited and signed their contract of employment. While new hires (since May 2020 after a temporary hiring freeze mid-March-May) have had the expectation set of a fully remote workforce, legacy employees need structure as to how things will change permanently, what parameters must be addressed and a formalization of policy.

Recommendation #1: Formalize remote work policies and review job design of all employees.

Developing strategic job design is essential for all employees to continue productive collaboration and maintain morale within The Organization which will ultimately lead to greater job satisfaction and productivity (Tikson, Hamid & Mardiana, 2018). The Organization needs to formally outline job descriptions and policy for remote workers -- both new hires and existing employees who have transitioned to remote work.

Developing and training hiring managers on a standardization of hiring practices that considers the new context of a fully remote workforce is crucial in navigating time zones, communication cadence and to set expectations between managers and subordinates. Job descriptions need to not only be inclusive, but also to expressly entail how the company communicates in a remote or hybrid model.

As a learning organization, this also means properly training managers and HR personnel on how to best hire a skillset appropriate for a remote work position. The onboarding experience needs to be re-imagined to help new employees feel like they are part of the larger organization and build company loyalty. Facilitating meaningful relationships with coworkers as they navigate the virtual office setting is also crucial and a bevy of tools like Zoom can be utilized to do so.

Recommendation #2: The Organization must invest in technology, train employees on said technologies, and continuously iterate the usage and policies for technologies that can enable increased productivity remotely.

Productivity was one of the biggest questions organizations faced when moving to a virtual workforce during the COVID19 pandemic. Fortunately, organizations have

shared that employees have not only maintained productivity but have also increased productivity, with JD Edwards announcing a 25% increase of employees working virtually vs in the office and American Express announcing in early 2021 that employees who worked from home were 43% more productive (JD Edwards, 2020; American Express, 2021). This is likely due to the investment and adoption of collaborative technologies and the insistence on proper training to maximize utilization of these tools.

I recommend that The Organization further investigate how existing collaborative tools are being utilized as many interviewees declared frustration with the tool, "Slack" as well as "Zoom fatigue". It is imperative that The Organization invest in both training employees to utilize these tools as well-as build out company-wide policies on how they will be used for virtual teams. Studies have indicated that a proper job design can boost the morale of employees and increase productivity and collaboration (Tikson, Hamid, & Mardiana, 2018).

Below I outline popular collaborative applications for the organization to consider and recommend testing on a continuous improvement cycle. It is important to note remote work changes workgroup patters and affects the entire organization as well as individual employee behavior which is why collaborative tools is a critical investment (Ansong & Boatend, 2017).

App	About	Currently Used?
Zoom	Attendee management, active speaker view, breakout rooms and transcription services - a video platform for every size meeting.	Yes
DropBox	Automatic organization, backup and file storage. Ability to audit sharing activities. Enterprise mobility management.	Yes
Slack	More secure and organized than email, allows employees to interact more seamlessly	Yes
Gsuite	Existing platform for email management. Chat functionality, collaborative document review etc.	Yes
nTask	Project Management structured to identify tasks importance and collaborative efforts across functions. Data export available	No
Monday.com	Integrates GSuite, Slack, etc. all into one platform with customizable fields and pipedrive integration	No

Recommendation #3: Develop strategies and cadence for in-person engagement.

Loneliness was one of the major trends of the data collected, where employees stated that they missed the casual interactions with their peers. A workforce that had seen each other daily and celebrated birthdays in person or regularly after happy hours

in the office, the tone was that while everyone is enjoying working remotely, there needs to be something in person. Also to note, managers were most concerned about the employees with the least amount of experience.

Retaining and attracting highly talented employees is a significant issue for all employers, especially in the era of a fully remote workforce. Comprehending what type of needs employees have for communication and in-person engagement offers vital insights to human resource teams (Alniack, Erat and Akcin, 2014).

Finding ways to onboard new employees digitally but engage them in person will be a challenge to overcome. Having regularly scheduled in-person time may increase travel expenses for The Organization but could in turn provide ample opportunity to increase loyalty of employees as they get to know their peers offline. Staying connected digitally through the tools outlined above like Trello, Zoom, etc. can be a helpful start. Beyond that, encouraging managers to set a regular cadence to check in with employees on the phone, 1:1 over zoom and for more "fun" meetings like virtual cocktail making classes, etc. could be beneficial. Budgeting for these informal team-building opportunities is essential. Job design has helped remote workers increase productivity which in turn enables them to enjoy their work and increases the output of the organization as a whole (Belias, 2013). Keeping an eye on ways to boost company morale both in-person and online will be critical as The Organization continues to adapt to a fully remote workforce.

Avoiding boredom is another reason to delineate regular cadence of in-person engagement. Monotony and job boredom is one of the leading causes of a reduction of an employee's productivity and morale (Russon and Brown, 2006).

Another huge risk with a fully virtual environment comes from hiring employees with the wrong skill set to adapt to such work. In the past, companies suffered from a lack of resources and knowledge to sustain and support remote workers. (Russo, 2017) Fortunately studies have shown that companies offering remote work see 25% less turnover, which reduces the risk and costs associated with rehiring (State of Remote Work, 2017). Perhaps having in-person onboarding when appropriate can help navigate these issues early on.

When poised with the question of full-remote permanently, many employees were wondering if the annual "All-Hands' ' meetings would still occur where everyone traveled to a destination for organizational team building. I recommend that the organization continues this and propose that they increase the frequency of such trips.

Optimizing for Work/Life Balance:

Recommendation #4: Develop policies, train managers and have executives lead by example in showcasing a corporate culture of "flexibility".

Similar to the results of my investigation with The Organization, a 2020 study by Owl labs surveyed over 3000 employees from 18 different technology companies who had transitioned to remote work and found that 79% of employees were more loyal to their organization because the company offered flexibility. Of the same vein, 32% of those employees admitted that they had left a previous job due to a lack of flexibility and understanding of competing priorities. As covered in my literature review, having a job boundary that is flexible allows an employee to deal with a family issue if it arises (Bulger & Matthews, 2007). both make a strong case for me to recommend that The Organization not only acknowledge the benefit of flexibility in remote position has offered employees, but further build it in with specific policies surrounding working hours, juggling family-commitments and communication cadence.

The concept of flexibility can also be applied and reviewed on a continuous improvement cycle as delineated below in my final recommendation. I opine the broad term "flexibility" will mean different things to a remote worker who is managing distance learning for 3 children then it does to that same worker when their children are in-person school and out of the house for the day. When developing the policy of flexibility, the overarching corporate policy needs to acknowledge non-formalized policies between employee and manager that optimize routines for what works for the individual employee in the context of working from home surrounded by family and responsibilities (Vargas, 2020).

Getting to know the families of their employees can provide major benefits for both employees and the employer (Grant, 2007). Having a transparent culture that allows employees to showcase photos of their loved ones on their desks, talk about family responsibility, etc. can provide huge benefits to employees who are nervous to speak up when they have a work/life conflict to navigate. Leading by example, I suggest all members of the executive team to be include nods to their family life in all-hands presentations, making it a company norm to let it be known that even the CMOs 6-year-old daughter is struggling with virtual schooling or that the CEO's dog needed to have 2 surgeries and is now requiring a lot of extra TLC. Humanizing the executive team will set an example for open conversations between employees and managers about the demands of caregiving roles and the role conflict (Gordon, Pruchno, Wilson-Genderson, Murphy & Rose, 2012).

Studies have shown that family events for corporations increase a sense of loyalty and improve work/life balance with partner tension decreasing when they are more familiar with a partner's colleagues. Some suggestions from other organizations include hosting virtual dance parties or paint nights for couples and generally acknowledging that working parents have competing roles and responsibilities between caring for children and job productivity. (Beauregard, Basile & Canonico, 2019).

Recommendation #5: Allow Employees to Work Remotely from Wherever

A common thread in the interviews was that employees were considering relocation, oftentimes out of the expensive Bay Area all together. They were looking at this remote work opportunity to move closer to family, reduce housing costs and optimize for better schools for their families. While some employers like Google are monitoring the VPN logins of employees and reducing their pay by 10% of they spend more than 180 days outside of the Bay Area, I encourage the Organization to put a policy in place that allows employees who were hired before the pandemic to work from wherever and maintain their salary.

Allowing workers to optimize for their own best work environment allows an increase in company productivity. Some workers may want to work near other employees to meet up for coffee or in a social work space like WeWork, while others may prefer a spotless home office in their basement where they can be alone and undisturbed (Lazarova, 2020).

 I encourage this as the cost saving of having employees work remotely is high, and many other technology companies are maintaining salaries despite geographic location - I encourage the Organization to be competitive by not reducing promised salaries despite the change in job design/location. I will note that this recommendation could increase travel costs for employees when they do meet in person, but I would strongly recommend that be budgeted appropriately.

Identity with the actual office-space was a huge thread of commentary in the interviews. Employees identified with the physical office-space in San Francisco, noting that they missed inviting their friends for catered lunch to show off their office space. The environmental change of now working from home posed an identity crisis that The organization needs to be aware of. This professional identity can be tied up in where an employee works from, so allowing them the choice when there is no headquarters will reflect the professional identity of the employee as they want to be seen by peers (Khapovam, et al., 2007).

Offering Benefits Attractive to Remote Workers:

While organizations like AT&T have reported that new telework initiatives will save them over $30million a year, smaller companies like The Organization have a huge cost savings as well by eliminating expensive office space in prime San Francisco as well as removing office-related perks and benefits like catered meals/onsite-massages/transportation and parking/etc. It is estimated that Silicon Valley-based businesses will save almost $12,000 per remote worker each year by not having them in office fulltime (Global Workplace Analytics, 2021). This is an argument that helps develop my recommendation to pass along the cost savings to employees through increased salaries, specifically tailored stipends for home office development and personal discretion for perks like meal subscriptions and gym memberships that can be purchased at a discount by leveraging economies of scale.

Recommendation #6: Budget for benefits that help employees balance work/family life.

The data showcased that while employees were productive at home, they did not have intentionally designed office space at home with many working from the kitchen table. I recommend that the Organization provide reimbursement for expenses of a home office up to $500 a year, as studies have shown that creating a personalized remote workplace enhances productivity (Oksanen, 2015). Leveraging items in storage for employees who are nearby like standing office desks, ergonomic chairs, monitors and more is a first step, but offering additional financial assistance to personalize the work space would be greatly appreciated as indicated by the survey data. Working from home gives workers the freedom to determine what their personal work space will look like, which can be seen as a benefit to many who care to orchestrate an environment built for their personal productivity. (Nicholas, 2016). As an organization that likes to supply corporate gifts to employees on a regular basis, items like logoed noise cancelling headphones, printers, phones to be used for personal use, etc. would all likely be appreciated and should be considered. Finally, covering the cost of high-speed internet and landline phone networks would also be recommended to maintain productivity.

The overall work from home experience benefits some individuals from their desire to minimize commute, wardrobe expenses and alleviate stress (Raisiene, Rapuano, Varkuleviciute & Stachova, 2020). But my findings showcased that employees want to see greater tangible benefits as they had grown accustomed to in-office.

While companies like Facebook offered an additional 6-week PTO for all employees during the pandemic, this isn't really relevant to employees of the

Organization who have unlimited PTO already. That said, encouraging PTO or even providing employees with gift certificates to be used at hotels could be a great way to encourage families and employees to utilize the existing benefit. Many employee interviews were similar to previous studies that indicated that while they appreciate their personal cost-savings of no longer having to cover the costs of commuting, they still were not necessarily thinking of attributing those cost-savings to their personal well-being (Garg & Rijst, 2015).

Satisfying family care responsibilities reduced at-home tensions, increase employee happiness and has been shown to motivate employee to work more productively (Mulki, Bardhi, Lassk & Nanavaty-Dahl, 2009). As identified in the survey results, providing company-sponsored access to applications like Care.com where employees can access profiles for caregivers for children and nurses for aging parents would be an asset to the existing benefits package. Reducing the caregiving burden by supplying either subscriptions for laundry services, meal prep and house cleaning or stipends to cover those needs could also be a competitive iteration to those items which were attractive on campus.

As indicated by my historical document review, the organization provides top-of-the-line healthcare for employees with 100% coverage for employees and 80% coverage for dependents. In my series of interviews, multiple employees mentioned they would like to see more robust benefits in the health space like paid memberships to One Medical, prescription delivery from a company like Alto, and mental health subscriptions to work with psychiatrists from BrightSide or GetCerebral. Mental health is an area that was not readily addressed in the previous benefit offerings and with the increased loneliness of the shift to remote work and identity challenges, could be seen as a very important benefit. A 2020 study by PriceWaterhouseCoopers on remote work noted that mental health was one of the most concerning areas for remote workers, with 43% of respondents noting that they would like virtual access to a mental health professional with benefits provided by their employer. I highly recommend that the executive team take this into consideration as mental health plays a significant role in the job satisfaction of their employees (Zhang, et al. 2020).

Maintaining a Continuous Improvement Cycle

It is my final recommendation that the Organization apply said findings to a continuous improvement cycle. As the workforce has successfully transitioned to remote work, there are still hurdles that have yet to be identified as the employees work in this way long term. The continuous improvement model, also known as Kaizen, is a form of management and thinking. (AliHaddas et al., 2014) The concept of continuous

improvement has been utilized over the years to improve quality management, decrease time spent on specific tasks, increase overall well-being, and lean management adoption (Formento, Chiodi, Cusolito, Altube, & Gatti, 2013). initi

Regular surveying and an open-door policy to discuss job design, benefits and work/life balance would be strategic for the company to evolve and iterate offerings to maintain competitiveness in employment (Singh & Singh, 2015). It will be crucial to have buy-in from all levels of management participating, especially the executive level. (Farooqui &Ahmed, 2009). Below I delineate a model for the team to show the three pillars of continuous improvement: 1. It is an iterative process. 2. It must be participative and 3. Change will be incremental to best be assessed.

Apply All Recommendations to a Cycle of **Continuous Improvement**

Iterative
Never-ending process towards increased quality and efficiency

Pillars of Continuous Improvement

Incremental
Small, slow changes are adopted

Participative
Includes the skills, input and intelligence of the entire employee base
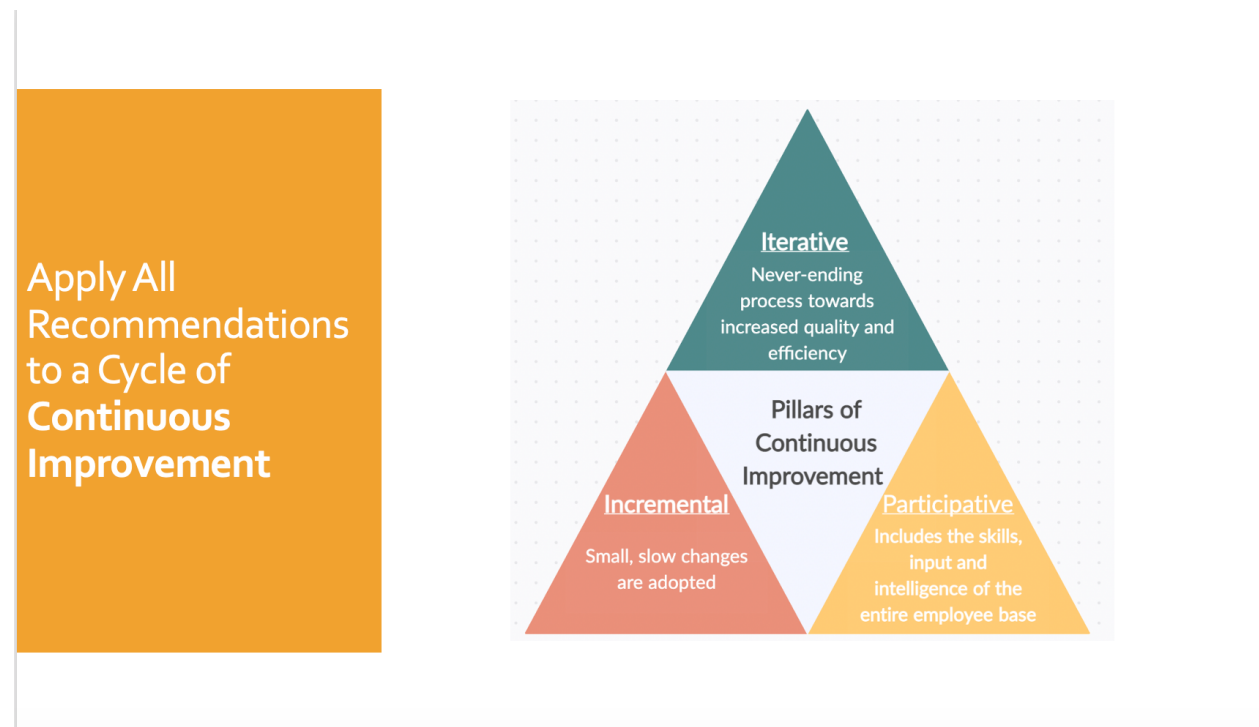
Keeping in mind how continuous improvement cycles improve and measure work systems while minimizing costs, I recommend additional check-ins 1. When California reopens office spaces in the San Francisco Bay Area 2. At least annually company-wide and 3. With individual employees after they have been working remotely for the Organization for 6 months to identify patterns of adjustment and make plans for improved onboarding experiences. Defining a clear cadence of review should hopefully encourage the Organization to regularly examine their offerings and provide the best

experience for employees which in turn strategically increases productivity for the Organization and maintains a positive corporate culture. (Farouqui & Ahmed, 2009) On top of this, I strongly suggest that representatives are distinctly appointed to manage, oversee, and be responsible for implementing regular reviews for this continuous improvement model to be successful (Farooqui & Ahmed, 2009).

Study Limitations

Before I conclude it is necessary to acknowledge the limitations of this project, the context of which this occurred, the data collection methods including the needs assessment, and boundaries laid out by the academic institution and the Organization. Contextually, this study was done under extraordinary circumstances ranging from a global pandemic to the California wildfires which displaced quite a few of the employees who had to be evacuated. These unfortunate circumstances limited the number of qualitative interviews I had and also made this study pertinent to the needs of participating employees in an unusual circumstance, not during a work from home period where they are choosing to work from home, have children in schools/day care, etc. I also was unable to interview or survey any of the board members or investors of the organization. In a future iteration, I think their insights and perceptions of how employees are satisfied with the remote work setting would be interesting to review against how employees report their own satisfaction. I also did not interview or survey any part-time or contract workers.

As mentioned in my methods section, the context of the pandemic also limited my ability to objectively watch employees work in the field/ their homes and see what day-to-day tasks look like. I do believe that studying the hour-by-hour work of an employee and how they fit in personal tasks with professional ones, how they balance their own calendars, etc. would provide rich insight for a future researcher aiding The Organization in determining future benefits to offer.

For my qualitative data analysis, I would have liked to include group interviews, and while I could have conducted these virtually, I felt that individual, semi-structured interviews were better and were chosen due to difficulty scheduling with so many employees having to evacuate because of the fires.

Next, there needs to be an acknowledgement that the human resources team of The Organization had very specific questions based on benefits they were already considering offering to their employees. This left little room to explore additional opportunities/incentives. In a future iteration of this study, I would like to leave the options more open to allow for more creative brainstorming.

Finally, I must address my bias. I am a working mother living in Silicon Valley who is friends with one of the founders of The Organization so what started as neighborly chit-chat developed into this project and I had personal interest in seeing the results both from a position of identity in the workforce and familiarity with the organization.

Conclusion:

Sometimes it takes a fearless leader to make great change, and sometimes it takes a pandemic. While a fully remote workforce was never in the 10-year vision plan for The Organization, my findings concluded that not only did the organization pivot well, but they are also thriving. Eager to adopt industry-wide best practices, I opine what will set them apart long-term is their willingness to iterate and continuously improve by engaging employees across all levels and optimize their needs to maximize productivity.

Through this 6-month long quality improvement study, I was able to assist The Organization in identifying key areas of strategic interest like prioritizing benefits, aiding in the set-up of a functionally productive home office, keeping workplace identity at top of mind for employees and re-thinking the indicators of job satisfaction in a remote setting. This project allowed me to develop a framework for the human resources department to apply regularly and encourage managers to view the needs of employees as individuals. These findings about job design, employee identity and work-life balance for the remote worker can be applied to continuous improvement cycles which will allow The Organization to iterate on its offerings to remain competitive in both retaining employees and attracting new employees as The Organization continues to grow and scale.

Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, I uncovered that there was an emphasis at all managerial levels of The Organization to balance the demands of work and home life while maintaining productivity remotely. Many existing employees were looking to optimize their work experience around the needs of their family members: small children, chronically ill spouses, pets and aging parents. My results uncovered that the logistical burden of caretaking while working remotely in the same setting as family members added complexity to the typical work week. Keeping this at the forefront of analysis may serve as an asset to The Organization as they continuously try to meet the needs of their existing employees by encouraging a structured communication cadence, prioritizing autonomy of schedule and maximizing benefits. On the note of perks and benefits, once considered a "destination employer" and attracting the best candidates from around the world, this new frontier allows recruitment from all corners of the earth without the cost of relocation or expensive office space. As I laid out, these cost savings can go back to the employees and leverage economies of scale for benefits like meal prep, child care,

medication delivery and more to ease the caretaker burden of employees while providing attractive benefits that will allow the employee to transition between identity as caregiver and employee more seamlessly.

As The Organization moves forward, they are now equipped with the information they need to make necessary decisions from a financial standpoint as to where their employees would like to see their money go. Eliminating the overhead costs of a central office space and daily catered meals allows The Organization to put together attractive packages that best meet the needs of their employees.

Applying these findings to a cycle of continuous improvement will allow the human resource team to iterate offerings based on the desires of the employees which in turn will increase overall job satisfaction. The remote work survey for managers and employees I adapted from the University of Virginia Telecommuting Needs Assessment of 2018 (Appendix B) is recommended to be utilized twice a year to identify opportunities for growth or adjustment. In turn, the hope is this information will aid to increase overall job satisfaction for their remote workforce. I conclude by emphasizing that it is my hope that the data provided should lead to increased productivity and retention of employees which in turn has numerous benefits for the organization as a whole as it continues to grow and scale even in this new setting as a fully remote office.

REFERENCES

Abrams, Z. (2019). The future of remote work: When it's done right, telework can improve employee productivity, creativity and morale, psychologists' research finds. *Monitor on Psychology, 50*(9), 54. https://www.apa.org/monitor/2019/10/cover-remote-work.

Alzahrani, A., Alkhafaji, A., Kula, K., Zaid, M., & Karami, N. (2017). The effects of remote work on team building. *Engineering and Technology Management Student Projects.* http://archives.pdx.edu/ds/psu/23178

Anser, M. K., Ali, M., Anwar, F., & Usman, M. (2020). Subjective age and job satisfaction: A moderated mediation model of job burnout and chronological age. *Frontiers in Public Health, 8*, 62. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2020.00062

Ansong, E., & Boateng, R. (2017). Organizational adoption of telecommuting: Evidence from a developing country. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries, 84*(1), Article e12008. http://doi.org/10.1002/isd2.12008

Ashforth, B. E., Kreiner, G. E., & Fugate, M. (2000). All in a day's work: Boundaries and micro role transitions. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(3), 472-491. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2000.3363315

Au, W. C., Ayudhya, U. C. N., Tan, Y. S., & Ahmed, P. K. (2019). The work-life experiences of an invisible workforce: The case of live-in women migrant domestic workers in Malaysia. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 39*(5), 567-583. https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-02-2019-0059

Baker, E., Gayle, A., & John, C. (2007). Satisfaction and perceived productivity when professionals work from home. *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management, 15*(1), 37-62. https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/bitstream/10453/6434/1/2007000202.pdf

Barsness, Z. I, Diekmann, K. A., & Seidel, M. D. L. (2005). Motivation and opportunity: The role of remote work, demographic dissimilarity, and social network centrality in impression management. *Academy of Management Journal, 48*(3), 401–419, https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2005.17407906

Bartel, C. A., Wrzseniewski, A., & Wiesenfeld, B. (2007). The struggle to establish organizational membership and identification in remote work contexts. In C. A.

Bartel, S. Blader, & A. Wrześniewski (Eds.) *Identity and the modern organization* (pp. 119-133). Psychology Press.

Belias, D., & Sklikas, D. (2013). Aspects of job design. *International Journal of Human Resource Management and Research, 3*(4), 85-94. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Dimitrios-Belias/publication/260288949_ASPECTS_OF_JOB_DESIGN/links/02e7e5308e7f4c1690000000/ASPECTS-OF-JOB-DESIGN.pdf

Beauregard, T. A., Basile, K. A., & Canonico, E. (2019). Telework: Outcomes and facilitators for employees. In R. N. Landers, (Ed.), *the Cambridge handbook of technology and employee behavior* (pp. 511-543). Cambridge University Press. http://doi.org/10.1017/9781108649636.020

Bhattarai, M. (2020). Working from home and job satisfaction during the pandemic times. *Research Gate.* https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.21515.11046

Bloom, N., Liang, J., Roberts, J., & Ying, Z. J. (2015). Does working from home work? Evidence from a Chinese experiment. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 130*(1), 165-218. https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qju032

Bulger, C. A., Matthews, R. A., & Hoffman, M. E. (2007). Work and personal life boundary management: Boundary strength, work/personal life balance, and the segmentation-integration continuum. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 12*(4), 365–375. https://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.12.4.365

Chauvet, M. (2009, May). *Cultural diversity of distributed teams* [Paper presentation]. Special Interest Group on Management Information System's 47th Annual Conference on Computer Personnel Research (SIGMIS CPR '09), Limerick, Ireland.   https://doi.org/10.1145/1542130.1542174

Chudoba, K. M., Wynn, E., Lu, M., & Watson-Manheim, M. B. (2005). How virtual are we? Measuring virtuality in a global organization. *Information Systems Journal, 15*(4), 279-306. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2575.2005.00200.x

Chicago State University. (n.d.). *Continuous improvement.* https://www.csu.edu/humanresources/empdev/documents/ContinuousImprovement.pdf

Cousins, K., Robey, D., & Zigurs, I. (2007). Managing strategic contradictions in hybrid teams. *European Journal of Information Systems, 16*(4), 460-478. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ejis.3000692

Dilmaghani, M. (2019). Exploring the link between sexual orientation, work-life balance satisfaction and work-life segmentation. *International Journal of Manpower, 41*(6), 693-715. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-10-2018-0313

Dubé, L., & Paré, G. (2004). The multi-faceted nature of virtual teams. In D. J. Pauleen (Ed.) *Virtual teams: Projects, protocols and processes* (pp. 1-39). IGI Global.

Eddleston, K. A., & Mulki, J. (2017). Toward understanding remote workers' management of work-family boundaries: The complexity of workplace embeddedness. *Group & Organization Management, 42*(3), 346–387. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601115619548

Farooqui, R. U., & Ahmed, S. M. (2009, June 2-5). Maintaining a focus on continuous improvement [Paper presentation]. 7th Latin American and Caribbean Conference for Engineering and Technology, San Cristóbal, Venezuela. http://laccei.org/LACCEI2009-Venezuela/Papers/PM250_Farooqui.pdf

Felstead, A., & Henseke, G. (2017). Assessing the growth of remote working and its consequences for effort, well-being, and work-life balance. *New Technology, Work and Employment, 32*(3), 195-212. https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12097

Fonner, K. L., & Stache, L. C. (2012). Teleworkers' boundary management. Temporal, spatial, and expectation setting strategies. In S. Long, Virtual work and human interaction research (pp. 31-58). http://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-0963-1.ch003

Ford, D., Reed, M., & Serebrenik, A. (2019, August). *How remote work can foster a more inclusive environment for transgender developers* [Paper presentation]. 2019 IEEE/ACM 2nd International Workshop on Gender Equality in Software Engineering (GE), Montreal, Canada.

Formento, H. R., Chiodi, F. J., Cusolito, F. J., Altube, L. A., & Gatti, S. P. (2013). Key factors for a continuous improvement process. *Independent Journal of Management & Production, 4*(2). http://doi.org/10.14807/ijmp.v4i2.76

Fredriksen-Goldsen, K. I., & Scharlach, A. E. (2001). *Families and work: New directions in the twenty-first century.* Oxford University Press.

Friedman, S. D., & Greenhaus, J. H. (2000). *Work and family-allies or enemies? What happens when business professionals confront life choices?* Oxford University Press.

Fuller, J. B., & Raman, M. (2019). *The caring company*. Harvard Business School. https://www.hbs.edu/managing-the-future-of-work/Documents/The_Caring_Company.pdf

Golden, R. (2020, March 11). Remote work may level the playing field for workers with disabilities, chronic illness. *HR Dive*. https://www.hrdive.com/news/remote-work-may-level-playing-field-for-workers-with-disabilities-chronic/573932/

Gordon, J. R., Pruchno, R. A., Wilson-Genderson, M., Murphy, W. M., & Rose, M. (2012). Balancing caregiving and work. *Journal of Family Issues, 33*(5), 662-689. http://doi.org/10.1177/0192513x11425322

Gurung, A., & Prater, E. (2006) A research framework for the impact of cultural differences on IT outsourcing. *Journal of Global Information Technology Management, 9*(1), 24-43. https://doi.org/10.1142/9789813109315_0002

Greeno, J., & Gresalfi, M. (2008). Opportunities to learn in practice and identity. In P. A. Moss, D. C. Pullin, J. P. Gee, E. H. Haertel, & L. J. Young, (Eds.), *Assessment, equity, and opportunity to learn* (pp. 170-199). Cambridge University Press.

Grover, S. L., & Crooker, K. J. (1995). Who appreciates family-responsive human resource policies: The impact of family-friendly policies on the organizational attachment of parents and non-parents? *Personnel Psychology, 48*(2), 271-288. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1995.tb01757.x

Groysberg, B., & Abraham, R. (2014). Manage your work, manage your life. *Harvard Business Review, 92*(3), 58-66. http://www.wbsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Harvard-Business-Review_Manage-your-work-Manage-your-life.pdf

Haddas, M. A., Asiri, M. H., Mukhalid, R. F., Alahmari, S. S., Al-Qathtani, S. A., & Hasan, S. H. (2014). Continuous improvement - development with time. *International Journal of Computer Applications, 108*(8), 35-39. http://doi.org/10.5120/18935-0360

Hakim, C. (2000). *Work-lifestyle choices in the 21st century*. Oxford University Press.

Halpern, D. F. (2005). How time-flexible work policies can reduce stress, improve health, and save money. *Stress and Health, 21*(3), 157-168. https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.1049

Han, S. J., & Beyerlein, M. (2016). Framing the effects of multinational cultural diversity on virtual team processes. *Small Group Research 47*(4), 351-383. https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496416653480

Hysmith, D. S. (2012). *The differential impacts of telecommuting on participant worker experiences* [Master's thesis, Pepperdine University]. https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1273&context=etd

International Atomic Energy Agency. (2006). *Management of continual improvement for facilities and activities: A structured approach.* https://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/te_1491_web.pdf

International Labor Organization. (2020). *An employers' guide on working from home in response to the outbreak of COVID-19.* https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_745024.pdf

Jagannathan, M. (2020, May 1). 'I was told I could never work remotely': Before coronavirus, workers with disabilities say they implored employers to allow them to work from home. *MarketWatch.* https://www.marketwatch.com/story/theres-no-excuse-for-not-offering-remote-work-the-coronavirus-induced-work-from-home-revolution-feels-like-vindication-for-some-workers-with-disabilities-2020-05-01

Jostell, D., & Hemlin, S. (2018). After hours teleworking and boundary management: Effects on work-family conflict. *Work, 60*(3), 475-483. https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/38035/1/gupea_2077_38035_1.pdf

Kersley, B., Alpin, C., Forth, J., Bryson, A., Bewley, H., Dix, G., & Oxenbridge, S. (2005). *Inside the workplace: First findings from the 2004 workplace employment relations survey.* Routledge.

Ketter, P. (2008, January 3). What's the big deal about employee engagement? *Association of Talent Development.* https://www.td.org/magazines/td-magazine/the-big-deal-about-employee-engagement

Khapova, S. N., Arthur, M. B., Wilderom, C. P., & Svensson, J. S. (2007). Professional identity as the key to career change intention. *Career Development International, 12*(7), 584-595. http://doi.org/10.1108/13620430710834378

Kossek, E. E., Lautsch, B. A., & Eaton, S. C. (2006). Telecommuting, control, and boundary management: Correlates of policy use and practice, job control, and work-family effectiveness. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 68*(2), 347-367. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2005.07.002

Kreiner, G. E. (2006). Consequences of work-home segmentation or integration: A person-environment fit perspective. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 27*(4), 485-507. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.386

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* Cambridge University Press.

Lazear, W. P., & Gibbs, M. (2015). *Personnel economics in practice (3rd edition).* John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Lewis, S., & Smithson, J. (2001). Sense of entitlement to support for the reconciliation of employment and family life. *Human Relations, 54*(11), 1455-1481. https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267015411003

Linden, M. (2014). Telework research and practice: Impacts on people with disabilities. *Work, 48*(1), 65-67. https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-141857

Lupu, V. L. (2017, August 24-30). *Teleworking and its benefits on work-life balance* [Paper presentation]. International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences & Arts SGEM, Bulgaria. https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2017/12/S02.087

MacDermid, S. M. (2005). (Re)Considering conflict between work and family. In E. E. Kossek & S. J. Lambert, (Eds.), *Work and life integration: Organizational, cultural, and individual perspectives* (pp. 19-40). Erlbaum.

Mateyka, P. J., Rapino, M., & Landivar, L. C. (2012). *Home-based workers in the United States: 2010.* https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/benefits/Documents/p70-132.pdf

Miscenko, D., & Day, D. V. (2016). Identity and identification at work. *Organizational Psychology Review, 6*(3), 215-247. http://doi.org/10.1177/2041386615584009

Mohite, M. D., & Kulkarni, R. V. (2019). Job satisfaction factors of employees in a virtual workplace: Review. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development, 1*, 38-42. https://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd23059.pdf

Morganson, V. J., Major, D. A., Oborn, K. L., Verive, J. M., & Heelan, M. P. (2010). Comparing telework locations and traditional work arrangements. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 25*(6), 578-595. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683941011056941

Nakrošienė, A., Bučiūnienė, I., & Goštautaitė, B. (2019). Working from home: Characteristics and outcomes of telework. *International Journal of Manpower, 40*(1), 87-101. http://doi.org/10.1108/ijm-07-2017-0172

Nolen, S. B., Horn, I. S., & Ward, C. J. (2015). Situating motivation. *Educational Psychologist, 50*(3), 234–247. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2015.1075399

Nurmi, N., Pamela J., & Hinds, P. J. (2016). Job complexity and learning opportunities: A silver lining in the design of global virtual work. *Journal of International Business Studies, 47*(6), 631-654. https://doi.org/10.1057/jibs.2016.11

Oksanen, J. (2015). *Better remote work: Do it right, and reap the benefits.* BookBaby.

Osland, J., Kolb, D. A., Rubin, I. M., & Turner, M. (2007). *Organizational behavior: An experiential approach.* Pearson Prentice Hall.

Otterbach, S., Tavener, M., Forder, P., Powers, J., Loxton, D., & Byles, J. (2016). The effect of motherhood and work on women's time pressure: A cohort analysis using the Australian longitudinal study on women's health. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health, 42*(6), 500-509. https://doi.org/10.5271/sjweh.3590

Parker, S., & Wall, T. (2015). *Job and work design: Organizing work to promote well-being and effectiveness.* SAGE Publication Inc.

Peñarroja, V., González-Anta, B., Orengo, V., Zornoza, A., & Gamero, N. (2020). Reducing relationship conflict in virtual teams with diversity faultlines: The effect of an online affect management intervention on the rate of growth of team resilience. *Social Science Computer Review.* https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439320907575

Peters, P., Tijdens, K., & Wetzels, C. (2004). Employees' opportunities, preferences, and practices in telecommuting adoption. *Information & Management, 41*(4), 469-482. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-7206(03)00085-5

Rapoza, K. (2013, February 18). One in five Americans work from home, numbers seen rising over 60%. *Forbes.*

http://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2013/02/18/one-in-five-americans-work-from-home-numbers-seen-rising-over-60/

Rogers, S. E., Miller, C. D., Flinchbaugh, C., Giddarie, M., & Barker, B. (2021). All internships are not created equal: Job design, satisfaction, and vocational development in paid and unpaid internships. *Human Resource Management Review, 31*(1), Article 100723. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.100723

Russo, G. (2017). Job design and skill development in the workplace. *Research in Labor Economics, 45,* 409-445. http://doi.org/10.1108/s0147-912120170000045011

Russon, C., & Brown, K. (2006). *Job design for evaluation.* http://www.ecdg.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Job-Design-PDF.pdf

Schall, M. A. (2019). *The relationship between remote work and job satisfaction: The mediating roles of perceived autonomy, work-family conflict, and telecommuting intensity* [Master's thesis, San José State University]. SJSU Scholar Works. https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.2x82-58pg

Schmitz, P. (2013). Job design with conflicting tasks reconsidered. *European Economic Review, 57,* 108–117. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2012.11.001

Shin, L. (2014, January 17). Work from home: The top 100 companies offering flexible jobs in 2014. *Forbes.* http://www.forbes.com/sites/laurashin/2014/01/17/work-from-home-the-top-100-companies-offering-flexible-jobs-in-2014/

Singh, J., & Singh, H. (2012). Continuous improvement approach: State-of-art review and future implications. *International Journal of Lean Six Sigma, 3*(2), 88-111. http://doi.org/10.1108/20401461211243694

Singh, J., & Singh, H. (2015). Continuous improvement philosophy – literature review and directions. *Benchmarking: An International Journal, 22*(1), 75-119. http://doi.org/10.1108/bij-06-2012-0038

Society for Human Resource Management. (2009). *Workplace flexibility in the 21st century: Meeting the needs of the changing workforce.* http://www.shrm.org/research/surveyfindings/articles/documents/09-0464_workplace_flexibility_survey_report_inside_finalonline.pdf

Stengel, G. (2020, April 20). Working from home opens the door to employing people with disabilities. *Forbes.*

https://www.forbes.com/sites/geristengel/2020/04/20/working-from-home-opens-the-door-to-employing-people-with-disabilities/#2047eaae14bf

Stuart, H. (2002). Employee identification with the corporate identity. *International Studies of Management & Organization, 32*(3), 28-44. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40397540

Swift, L. (2002, January 30). Work-life balance is important in the relief world, too. *AlertNet.* http://www.alertnet.org/thefacts/reliefsources2003

Thomsin, L., & Tremblay, D. G. (2008). Exploring the diversity of mobile working: a detailed examination on the sequences of workplaces and job satisfaction. *The Journal of E-Working, 2*, 47-66. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/26513129

Thorner, V. (2019). *From a distance: A practical guide to remote leadership.* Independently Published.

Tomasiak, M. A., & Chamakiotis, P. (2017). Understanding diversity in virtual work environments: a comparative case study. In B. Christiansen, & H. C. Chandan, (Eds.), *Handbook of research on human factors in contemporary workforce development* (pp. 283-307). IGI Global.

Vargas, D. (2020). *Working remotely while caregiving. Professional development series: working through a crisis* [PowerPoint slides]. Notre Dame Learning. https://graduateschool.nd.edu/assets/397541/2020_working_remotely_while_caregiving_vargas.pdf

Walsh, K., & Gordon, J. R. (2008). Creating an individual work identity. *Human Resource Management Review, 18*(1), 46-61. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2007.09.001

Wang, B., Liu, Y., Qian, J., & Parker, S. K. (2020). Achieving effective remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic: A work design perspective. *Applied Psychology, 70*(1), 16-59. http://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12290

York, K. (2013). *Applied human resource management: Strategic issues and experiential exercises.* SAGE Books.

Appendix A:_Interview Questions for Executives

**Note: these ten questions were explored via digital interviews on Zoom and took between 14 and 33 minutes per interview during September 2020.

1. How do you describe yourself? (Purposefully vague)

2. Please tell me more about your role at The Organization including position, tenure, number of both direct and indirect reports.

3. What are your caregiving responsibilities? How do you recognize the caregiving responsibilities of your direct reports?

4. How has your position changed since the Organization was forced to work remotely?

5. What aspects of remote work would you like to see included long term? What is working?

6. What areas do you see improvement needed? Do you think remote work is a long term solution for the Organization - why or why not?

7. How frequently and on what mediums are you communicating with your direct reports? Is it working? Why or why not?

8. What is the communication between yourself and indirect reports in your job function? Is it working? Why or why not?

9. What is the communication cadence between you and other executive team members? Is it working? Why or why not?

10. Are there benefits or perks you foresee the Organization offering yourself or employees that could benefit productivity and overall remote work job satisfaction?

Appendix B.

University of Virginia Telecommuting Needs Assessment

https://hr.virginia.edu/sites/default/files/PDFs/telecommutingneedsassessment.pdf

Utilized to help inform the initial needs assessment of The Organization for review with the executive team across all functionality. Along with the HR team, we utilized this instrument as a base draft and picked relevant questions for our Needs Assessment of the workforce.

Department_____

List the core responsibilities and percentage of time allocated:

1. _____   % Time _____

 2. _____   % Time _____

3. _____   % Time _____

4. _____   % Time _____

5. _____   % Time _____

Do core responsibilities require ongoing access to equipment, materials, and files that can only be accessed on at the office? Yes: _____   No: _____

Do core responsibilities require extensive face-to-face contact with supervisors, other employees, customers, or the public at the office?   Yes: _____   No: _____

Do core responsibilities require time in meetings or performing work at the office?   Yes: _____   No: _____

How reliant is this position on computer technology to accomplish core responsibilities? _____

What percentage of time is required at the office?   _____ %

The following types of work are typical of employees who telecommute.

Please check the types of work found in this position?   Indicate the number of hours per week spent on these duties.

Writing/Typing   Hours Per Week: _____

Research   Hours Per Week: _____

Word Processing   Hours Per Week: _____

Talking on the Phone Hours Per Week: _____

Data Analysis Mgmt Hours Per Week: _____

Computer Programming Hours Per Week: _____

Administrative Duties Hours Per Week: _____

Email   Hours Per Week: _____

Reading   Hours Per Week: _____

Field Visits/Travel (when allowed)   Hours Per Week: _____

Collaborative planning Per Week: _____

Data Analysis   Hours Per Week: _____

Can the time spent on the above types of work support telecommuting?   Yes: _____   No: _____

Can you rearrange the position's duties (performed on the same day) to support telecommuting?   Yes: _____   No: _____

How much time would you want employees in your siloed function to telecommute? _____ One Day Per Week: _____   Once Every Two Weeks: _____   Two Days Per Week: _____   Occasionally for a Special Project: _____ Three Days Per Week: _____   Other: _____

Do   the   current   assigned   duties   support   telework? _____

Do   you   need   to   add   additional   duties   to   support   telework? _____

Employee Assessment

Can the employee work in a self-directed manner in managing his/her work and time?

Does the employee have a complete understanding of his/her job and performance expectations?   Yes ____   No ____

Does the employee regularly demonstrate that his/her approach to work is organized and dependable? Yes ____   No ____ Does he/she regularly meet deadlines?   Yes ____   No ____

Do you need to resolve issues for the employee? Yes ____   No ____

Can direction be provided by phone? Yes ____   No ____

Does the employee desire/need to be around co-workers?   Yes ____   No ____

Are there any known potential distractions at home (e.g., interruptions due to dependent care)? Yes ____   No ____

Does the employee have the technology, including computer and remote-access capability, to work from home?   Yes ____   No ____

Do you know if the employee has a suitable workspace at home?   Yes ____   No ____

Can the employee's performance at home be measured?   Yes ____   No ____

Does this assessment support the employee being a teleworker? Yes ____   No ____

Telecommuting Needs Assessment

Mangerial Assessment Does your supervisory/managerial style support telecommuting? Would you describe yourself as a "hands-on" supervisor? Yes ____   No ____

Do you provide solutions when requested for assistance?   Yes _____   No _____

Do you monitor the employee's work?   Routinely _____ Occasionally _____ Infrequently _____

Do you prefer face-to-face communications with you employees?   Yes _____   No _____

Are you able to establish clear objectives? Yes _____   No _____

Can you accurately measure the employee's work output? Yes _____   No _____

Time worked?   Yes _____   No _____

Do you have a backup to monitor work in your absence – for a day, week, or longer?   Yes _____   No _____

Do you trust in your employee's ability to telework?   Yes _____   No _____

Do you have a positive attitude towards teleworking?   Yes _____   No _____

Does this assessment support the employee being allowed to telework?   Yes _____   No _____

Decision (please check) The position's core responsibilities support telecommuting? Yes _____   No _____

The employee meets the criteria to be a teleworker?   Yes _____   No _____

My management style supports telework?   Yes _____   No _____

My organization supports telework?   Yes _____   No _____

I should allow my employee to telecommute?   Yes _____   No _____ Proposed telework schedule:

_____

Comments:

Appendix C. Fishbone
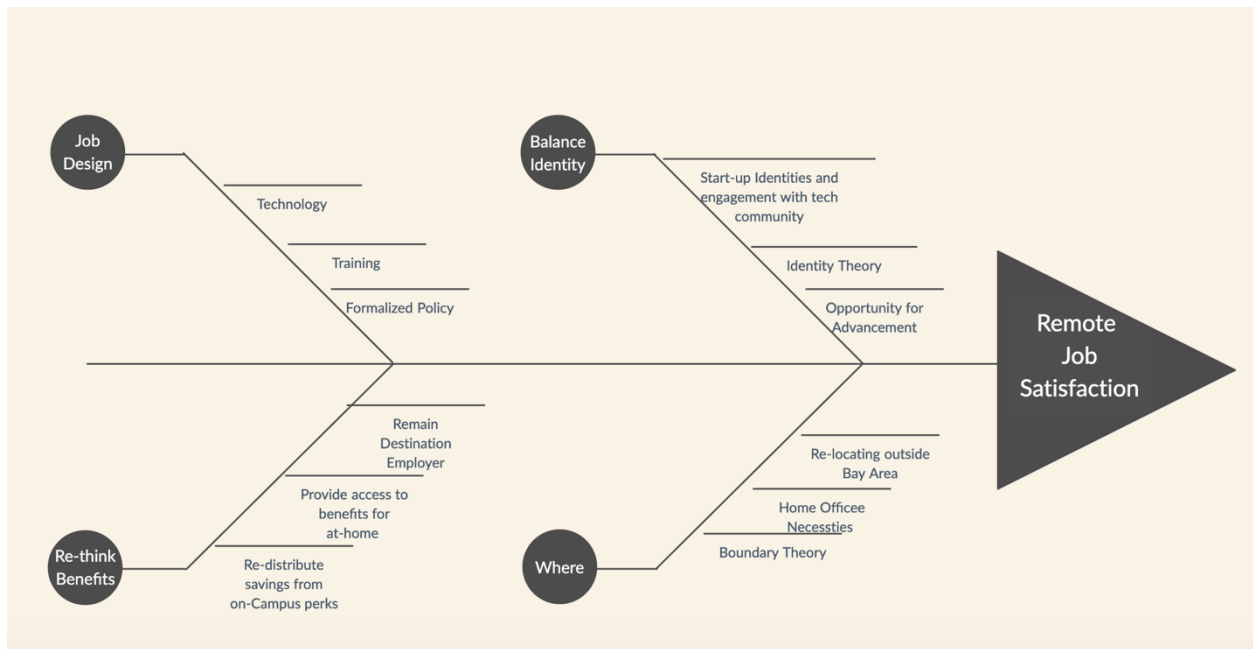
Appendix D. List of Documents Provided by The Organization, Accessed and Reviewed.

Document Title/Type	Utilized For	Date Accessed
May 2019 Demographic and Satisfaction Survey - Digital Access	Understand the employee population, observe growth and act as a baseline for future investigations	September 8, 2020
December 2019 Demographic and Satisfaction Survey - Digital Access	Observe trends from 5/19 survey data collected, acknowledge employee growth and turnover	September 8, 2020
Employee Handbook (digitally published and updated July 2020)	Gain understanding of corporate culture, workplace expectations and governing policies	September 9, 2020
HR Communication (E-mail) about Remote Work Policy	Understanding of perceived boundaries and communications for employees from the Organization as a whole.	September 11, 2020
7 emails from department Managers re: transition to remote work	Understanding communication cadence and channels utilized to communicate the change in policy	September 11, 2020

Appendix E.

Company	Policy	Quote	Link
Microsoft	"Hybrid Workplace" internal guidance	"The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged all of us to think, live, and work in new ways," says Kathleen Hogan, Microsoft's chief people officer, in a note to employees. "We will offer as much flexibility as possible to support individual workstyles, while balancing business needs, and ensuring we live our culture."	https://www.theverge.com/2020/10/9/21508964/microsoft-remote-work-from-home-covid-19-coronavirus
Salesforce	"Work from Anywhere" Policy has three options: work in the office, work in the office 3 days a week or work 100% remote	"An immersive workspace is no longer limited to a desk in our Towers; the 9-to-5 workday is dead; and the employee experience is about more than ping-pong tables and snacks," Brent Hyder, the president and chief people officer of Salesforce, wrote in a blog post announcing the change.	https://www.businessinsider.com/salesforce-employees-can-work-from-home-permanently-2021-2
Facebook	100K Employees to permanently work from home, 50% of all employees globally in 5 years	"We're going to be the most forward-leaning company on remote work at our scale," CEO Mark Zuckerberg said in an interview with The Verge. "We need to do this in a way that's thoughtful and responsible, so we're going to do this in a measured way. But I think that it's possible that over the next five to 10 years — maybe closer	https://www.theverge.com/facebook/2020/5/21/21265699/facebook-remote-work-shift-workforce-permanent-covid-19-mark-zuckerberg-interview

		to 10 than five, but somewhere in that range — I think we could get to about half of the company working remotely permanently."	
Twitter	Anyone who wants to telecommute can petition to do so permanently		https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/5/21/21266570/facebook-remote-work-from-home-mark-zuckerberg-twitter-covid-19-coronavirus?stream=top
Square	Also run by Jack Dorsey, same as Twitter		https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/5/21/21266570/facebook-remote-work-from-home-mark-zuckerberg-twitter-covid-19-coronavirus?stream=top
Dropbox	"Virtual-first" - where remote work is preferred but a hybrid model that has "dropstudio"offices around the world for meetings and collaboration	"we created a new option that we think will help us live our mission of designing a more enlightened way of working and deliver products that make distributed work easier. We set five goals for our policy: Support the company mission, give employees freedom and flexibility, preserve human connection and company culture, sustain the long-term health of our company, and retain a learning mindset."	https://blog.dropbox.com/topics/company/dropbox-goes-virtual-first?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_axioslogin&stream=top
Shopify	"Most" employees will work remotely on a permanent basis with a reduction of	CEO Tobi Lütke, "office centricity is over." Also notes	https://www.shopify.com/blog/working-remotely-for-

	headquarters office space	environmental impact.	the-planet#:~:text=In %20May%202020 %2C%20Shopify %20announced,a %20digital%20by %20default%20co mpany.
Coinbase	"Remote-First" organization that will encourage employees to work from home.	"This means that in the future, anyone who wants to, can continue to work from an office. That won't change. What is changing is that (almost) any employee who prefers to work outside of an office, can. For many employees, it will probably be a mix of both. But for all of us, being remote-first requires a mindset and behavioral shift. It means that the employee experience should be the same, whether you're in an office one day a week, five days a week, or never." - Brian Armstrong, CEO	https://blog.coin base.com/post-covid-19-coinbase-will-be-a-remote-first-company-cdac6e621df7
Infosys	TBD - short term plans on keeping majority of employees working remotely long term, possible hybrid option and closing offices around the world	"Having said that we also feel this whole concept of social capital is extremely important. We think that it is important as the Covid situation gets behind us, we start to create that social capital again so will have more and more work from the office environment as well. We have not decided the exact approach it will take," Parekh said.	https://www.then ewsminute.com/a rticle/infosys-allow-employees-work-home-or-office-2021-139717
Nationwide Insurance	Moving to a blended workmodel with most employees working from	"We've been investing in our technological capabilities for	https://www.insur ancejournal.com/ news/national/20

	home indefinitely from 5 states. Travel will take the place of office space	years, and those investments really paid off when we needed to transition quickly to a 98 percent work-from-home model," said Nationwide CEO Kirt Walker. "Our associates and our technology team have proven to us that we can serve our members and partners with extraordinary care with a large portion of our team working from home."	20/04/30/566954. htm
Nielsen	Rethinking real estate, Nielsen is converting office space to meeting space to be utilized occasionally. Most employees will be able to work from home most of the week	David Kenny: Most people will work remotely as long as they can, allowing people to have much more of a hybrid model in the future, where they're really only coming in when they need to	https://redtri.com /neilsen-is-hiring-100-work-from-home-employees/

Appendix F. Employee Survey Questions (**Benefits Question Written by and provided by The Organization's HR team in September, 2020) All questions were optional to reply.

1. Demographic Data

   Gender

       a. Female b. Male c. Non-Binary d. Prefer not to say

   Age

       a. 18-25   b. 26-35   c. 36-45   d. 46-55   e. 56+

   Department

     _Engineering _Marketing _Finance _Customer Support _Human Resources

Tenure at The Organization

a. Less than 1 year b. 1-3 years c. More than 3 years

2. Caregiving Responsibilities

1. You are a rockstar caregiver! Tell me more about your responsibilities... Check all that apply, please.

☐ I have children under the age of 18 living with me

☐ I have children over the age of 18 that still require assistance emotionally/financially/etc.

☐ I have a spouse with special needs/disability/doctors visits

☐ I have pets/animals/livestock at home

☐ I care for my elderly parents/in-laws/other extended family

☐ Other (please specify)

3. If you had the opportunity to work from anywhere in the world, would you move even if it meant taking a cost-of-living pay cut? (i.e. Living in California is more expensive than Kansas, so your company may see you login from there and ask you to take a 20% salary cut) 💬

○ Yes

○ Possibly

○ No

4. Home office: do you have a dedicated one? 💬

○ Yes, a private room in my home to use

○ I have a quiet spaced but not a dedicated room (ie my office space is in my bedroom/I use the dining room/Ive converted my garage or laundry room. etc)

○ Nope, sitting pretty in the center of the household chaos.

○ Other (please specify)

A. Benefits   Offered: **Question   supplied   by   HR   team

	Not Interested	Somewhat Interested	Interested	Very Interested	YES! YES!
Dog-walking/Pet Daycare Services	○	○	○	○	○
Prescription Delivery	○	○	○	○	○
Housecleaning Stipend	○	○	○	○	○
Laundry Wash and Delivery	○	○	○	○	○
Childcare (Babysitting) services (pre-vetted)	○	○	○	○	○
In-home Medical care (pre-vetted)	○	○	○	○	○
Tutoring/pod teacher services (pre-vetted)	○	○	○	○	○
Virtual Assistant to for personal/family use	○	○	○	○	○
Grocery Delivery stipend	○	○	○	○	○
Meal Kit subscription	○	○	○	○	○

Additional option to submit suggestions provided.

5. What kind of perks could The Organization offer to better equip you for remote work success? Check all that appeal 💬

☰	⬍	Noise Cancelling headphones
☰	⬍	Multiple Screens
☰	⬍	Ergonomic Chair
☰	⬍	Phonebooth office
☰	⬍	Google Home/Alexa/ Some sort of digital assistant
☰	⬍	Peloton Spin Tray (couldn't resist!)
☰	⬍	Sit/Stand desk
☰	⬍	Laser Printer/Paper/Ink
☰	⬍	Studio lighting/recording/mic equipment
☰	⬍	Decor Budget
☰	⬍	Other

**Again, supplied by The Organization

6. If you could continue working remotely, would you? 💬

◯ Absolutely

◯ Nah, its not for me

◯ Possibly

◯ I am not currently working remotely

◯ Comment

7. If you are currently working from home, what do you enjoy most about the situation? Choose all that apply! 💬

☐ Spending more time with family   ☐ I can prioritize my mental health

☐ Flexible work hours   ☐ I can prioritize my physical health

☐ Not having to commute   ☐ Better Focus

☐ Enjoying more time outdoors   ☐ I can work from anywhere

☐ Avoiding office politics/chit chat   ☐ Not having to dress up daily

☐ Other (please specify)

9. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your job?

○ Very satisfied

○ Satisfied

○ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

○ Dissatisfied

○ Very dissatisfied

10. How easy is it to balance your work life and personal life where you work?

○ Extremely easy

○ Very easy

○ Somewhat easy

○ Not so easy

○ Not at all easy

8. Any other brilliant insights you'd like to share?! The more the merrier... 💬
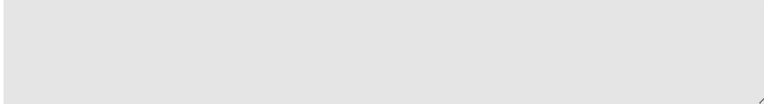
Appendix G:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	TOTAL	SCORE
Noise Cancelling headphones	20.05% 76	19.26% 73	15.04% 57	13.46% 51	12.14% 46	7.39% 28	6.33% 24	2.64% 10	2.11% 8	0.79% 3	0.79% 3	379	8.36
Multiple Screens	33.16% 131	29.11% 115	15.95% 63	7.09% 28	6.33% 25	2.78% 11	2.03% 8	1.27% 5	0.76% 3	1.27% 5	0.25% 1	395	9.37
Ergonomic Chair	18.18% 70	26.23% 101	27.01% 104	13.25% 51	7.79% 30	3.38% 13	1.82% 7	1.04% 4	0.78% 3	0.26% 1	0.26% 1	385	9.03
Phonebooth office	2.52% 9	1.40% 5	4.48% 16	8.68% 31	11.20% 40	10.08% 36	13.17% 47	17.37% 62	12.61% 45	13.17% 47	5.32% 19	357	4.95
Google Home/Alexa/ Some sort of digital assistant	1.92% 7	1.65% 6	4.40% 16	11.26% 41	14.01% 51	16.21% 59	15.11% 55	13.74% 50	12.64% 46	6.87% 25	2.20% 8	364	5.47
Peloton Spin Tray (couldn't resist!)	6.07% 23	3.96% 15	6.33% 24	10.29% 39	14.25% 54	18.73% 71	14.25% 54	14.78% 56	6.86% 26	2.90% 11	1.58% 6	379	6.16
Sit/Stand desk	12.43% 47	10.58% 40	14.81% 56	14.02% 53	10.58% 40	12.43% 47	14.02% 53	5.29% 20	3.70% 14	1.85% 7	0.26% 1	378	7.43
Laser Printer/Paper/Ink	5.88% 23	8.18% 32	9.97% 39	15.60% 61	14.58% 57	11.51% 45	11.51% 45	14.32% 56	4.86% 19	2.30% 9	1.28% 5	391	6.68
Studio lighting/recording/mic equipment	1.64% 6	1.37% 5	1.37% 5	2.73% 10	4.10% 15	6.01% 22	10.11% 37	14.21% 52	35.25% 129	17.76% 65	5.46% 20	366	3.85
Decor Budget	2.41% 9	1.34% 5	2.68% 10	4.83% 18	5.09% 19	8.31% 31	6.43% 24	10.72% 40	12.87% 48	41.02% 153	4.29% 16	373	3.88
Other	0.29% 1	0.00% 0	0.57% 2	0.29% 1	1.15% 4	0.86% 3	3.16% 11	1.44% 5	4.60% 16	8.33% 29	79.31% 276	348	1.55

Appendix H:

> **Recommendation #1:**
> Formalize Remote Work Policies and Review Job Design of All Employees

> **Recommendation #2:**
> The Organization must invest in technology, train employees on said technologies, and continuously iterate the usage and policies for technologies that can enable increased productivity remotely.

> **Recommendation #3:**
> Develop strategies and cadence for in-person engagement.

Recommendation #4:
Develop policies, train managers and have executives lead by example in showcasing a corporate culture of "flexibility".

Recommendation #5:

Recommendation #6:
 Budget for Benefits that Improve Work/Life Balance for Employees Working from Home

Appendix G: Summary of Interest in Potential Benefits Offered for Remote Workers

|	NOT INTERESTED	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	INTERESTED	VERY INTERESTED	YES! YES! YES!	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Dog-walking/Pet Daycare Services	59.95% 241	20.65% 83	10.70% 43	5.22% 21	3.48% 14	402	1.72
Prescription Delivery	54.79% 223	20.88% 85	12.78% 52	6.63% 27	4.91% 20	407	1.86
Housecleaning Stipend	0.97% 4	3.38% 14	10.39% 43	17.39% 72	67.87% 281	414	4.48
Laundry Wash and Delivery	15.82% 65	14.36% 59	16.55% 68	13.87% 57	39.42% 162	411	3.47
Childcare (Babysitting) services (pre-vetted)	14.36% 59	11.68% 48	18.00% 74	14.84% 61	41.12% 169	411	3.57
In-home Medical care (pre-vetted)	53.56% 218	20.15% 82	12.29% 50	6.39% 26	7.62% 31	407	1.94
Tutoring/pod teacher services (pre-vetted)	20.39% 84	13.83% 57	20.87% 86	22.82% 94	22.09% 91	412	3.12
Virtual Assistant to for personal/family use	29.30% 121	19.37% 80	19.61% 81	16.71% 69	15.01% 62	413	2.69
Grocery Delivery stipend	4.37% 18	5.10% 21	12.38% 51	27.67% 114	50.49% 208	412	4.15
Meal Kit subscription	10.98% 45	11.46% 47	15.85% 65	22.20% 91	39.51% 162	410	3.68

Comments (17)

Appendix H:

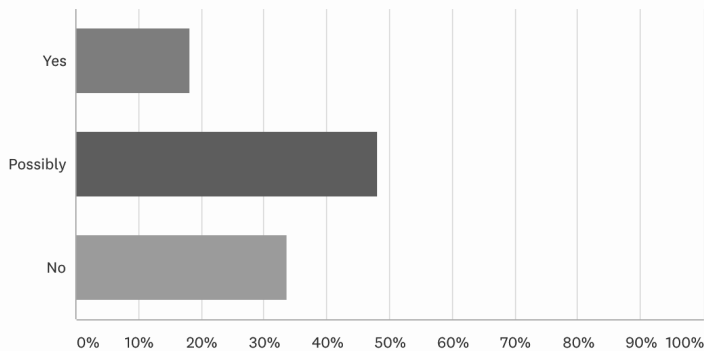## Do you plan on relocating/ leaving the Bay Area now that The Organization is fully remote?

Answered: 413   Skipped: 1
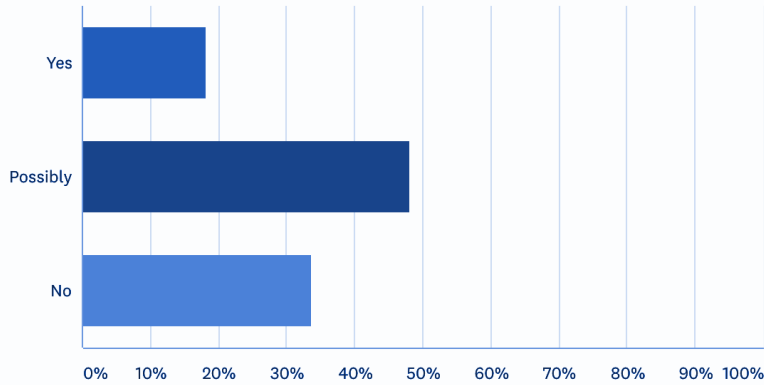
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (1)	18.16%	75
Possibly (2)	48.18%	199
No (3)	33.66%	139
TOTAL		413

Do you plan on relocating/ leaving the Bay Area now that The Organization is fully remote?

Answered: 413   Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (1)	18.16%	75
Possibly (2)	48.18%	199
No (3)	33.66%	139
TOTAL		413