



## Three questions with Cali Yost, CEO of workplace consultancy Flex+Strategy Group



**Our most popular story last week was how this rise in 'employee nomading' is leaving HR teams baffled about the whereabouts of some of their staff. How big a problem do you deem this to be?**

Employee nomading is happening because the flexibility that currently exists in many organizations was crisis-driven. Planning and coordination guidelines that everyone works within either don't exist or aren't widely understood, such as:

These are the states and countries within which you can and cannot work; or if you plan to work from a remote location you need to plan and coordinate where, when and how you will be working and for how long with your manager and team in advance; and when you work for X number of days from an approved location, you need to track and report those days in X system for regulatory purposes. Without those consistent guardrails, employees don't see their "nomading" as being a problem even if HR and their teams, think it is. And you can't blame them.

## **How can HR teams begin to rectify this issue?**

HR can't do this alone. HR needs to partner with the business. Clarifying consistent parameters for flexible working has to be an organization-wide recalibration process involving all teams and levels. Intentionally and thoughtfully take the best of the lessons learned over the past two and a half years about where, when and how people can work well and make necessary improvements to define the flexible way people will work next. That means if working from remote locations for extended periods has been effective for the business and for workers, then it can be as simple as defining the reporting requirements. But that same recalibration process could also find that there needs to be better coordination and planning, in addition to better reporting, which is important to know as well.

## **What are the stakes if they don't take action, and what will it mean for the future of flexible working?**

The stakes are the long-term sustainability of an effective flexible work model. A business has to operate within the law and abide by reporting requirements. If the way employees work doesn't comply, then that's a risk issue and HR has to manage it. That said, if all compliance requirements are being met then it's about the sustainable, flexible way the job can be done to attract and retain top talent and achieve great outcomes for the business.

Random, uncoordinated "employee nomading" is just one of a number ways crisis-driven flexible work currently falls short in planning, coordination and execution. Evolving and optimizing that flexibility, with strategic intention, can resolve these issues and make the way we work next even better and more effective. — *Jessica Davies*.

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<https://www.worklife.news/talent/why-gen-xers-are-struggling-with-remote-work/>