

The 2020 pandemic and the ensuing shift to remote work has changed how teams operate, and HR professionals are now facing challenges related to [managing remote teams](#).

Debbie Millin, Chief Operating Officer at Globalization Partners, and Emily Boynton, Vice President of Human Resources at Globalization Partners, say these are the top challenges HR teams will face this year.

Table of Contents

[Challenge #1: Finding the right talent - on a global scale.](#)

[Challenge #2: Making remote work effective, and doable - for everyone.](#)

[Challenge #3: Cross-cultural training will become essential, not optional.](#)

[Challenge #4: Mental health will become key to employee success.](#)

[Challenge #5: Remote work will change laws and regulations.](#)

Challenge #1: Finding the right talent - on a global scale.

Global business growth will continue despite the pandemic. In a [survey](#) conducted by Globalization Partners, CFOs said that Covid-19 has not limited companies' internal growth. In fact, 45 percent of respondents were planning for global expansion within a year. The International Monetary Fund also projected a 5.2 percent global growth this year.

Another important statistic to consider is that nine out of 10 developed nations will face a shortage of local talent in 2021. An [Oxford Economics](#) study revealed that, as a result, these major economies will have a high demand for international talent.

The biggest challenge [global growth](#) presents for HR teams is not just expanding their talent search on a global scale but finding ideal candidates within this newly widespread talent pool. The ability to quickly identify, onboard, and manage new employees across the world is going to be key to success.



Challenge #2: Making remote work effective, and doable - for everyone.

Even before Covid-19, 80 percent of people wanted to work from home, at least partly, according to [Global Workplace Analytics \(GWA\)](#). A recent [survey by PwC](#) emphasized that this enthusiasm around work from home flexibility is here to stay, reporting that after the pandemic, 89 percent of the global workforce will work remotely at least one day a week.

The shift to a partial or fully remote workplace has created many [advantages](#) for both employers and their employees. For example, companies are seeing that employees maintain high productivity and exceed output expectations. Cost savings also play a part — GWA reported that the average employer can save around US\$11,000 a year for every employee who works remotely half the time. [Remote work](#) is also having a positive impact on employee engagement.

Another top benefit of embracing remote work is the opportunity to [hire talent worldwide](#), as borders are “virtually” disappearing.

But does everyone on the team have the ability to work effectively from home - on a long-term basis? HR will need to help companies assess what additional support is needed to help

employees do their best work.

Challenge #3: Cross-cultural training will become essential, not optional.

When companies expand globally, they must be prepared to work with people from different cultures and backgrounds, and to embrace diversity and inclusion with sensitivity and awareness. HR teams need to be ready to effectively manage global teams remotely. The more diverse your company is, the more successful it will be, but the more cross-cultural training the team may need.

How can HR professionals lead the way in creating a workplace that embraces cultural differences? Make sure new hires and everyone in the company receives diversity, inclusion, and cultural sensitivity trainings. Make it an ongoing process until a global mindset becomes the norm. It is also important to emphasize openness, curiosity, communication, empathy, and compassion.

[The more diverse your company is, the more successful it will be, but the more cross-cultural training the team may need. Click To Tweet](#)

Challenge #4: Mental health will become key to employee success.

Recent research by LinkedIn and the [Mental Health Foundation](#) found that 54 percent of HR managers agree that mental health issues like anxiety, burnout, isolation, and loneliness have become more prevalent in their companies due to remote work. The research also indicates that 75 percent of U.S. workers have struggled at work with anxiety due to the pandemic.

HR professionals need to evaluate and implement strategies that support their employees' mental health and keep them engaged and happy. Providing employees with guidance and resources that promote their wellbeing, supporting initiatives that encourage healthy habits in and out of the workplace, and making sure they take time off will create a culture that fosters mental wellness. Companies can also help employees cope with mental health issues by providing flexible work schedules.

Challenge #5: Remote work will change laws and regulations.

According to the [International Labor Organization](#) (ILO), temporary work from home arrangements do not require any permanent adjustment to employment terms or conditions. However, countries like the [Netherlands](#), [Poland](#), and [Chile](#), have begun legislating remote work.

In the U.S., there are tax implications when employees work from different locations. There are also different conditions depending where the company is registered, where it operates, or if people work internationally. It is necessary to take all these factors into account.

It is crucial to understand the legal requirements in each country regarding remote work. HR should take the lead in helping the company and the employees navigate the changes in local laws and regulations. Moreover, the ILO says companies should consider developing a solid remote work policy that clearly communicates what the expectations are to ensure employees are successful working from home.

If you want to learn more about these challenges and how to overcome them, we invite you to [watch the webinar](#) discussion.