

Abstract

This study identifies management impacts on telework (TW) and return-to-office (RTO) transitions. The literature review identifies factors that support effective management of distributed workforces and transitions from TW to onsite work. These include managerial character traits, communication tools and technology, relationship management, collaboration and engagement, agile responses to evolving policies, and mitigation of RTO challenges. Responding to the U.S. Navy’s shift in January 2025 from TW to full-time in-office work and a redistributed workforce, the study documents supervisors’ assessments of the benefits and challenges associated with the change. The applications focus on supervisors within the Naval Education and Training Command (NETC), where most people teleworked until they were required to work onsite. The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) data collected in the summer of 2024 indicated that trust, communication, and accountability were strong at NETC; however, the transition created challenges. This capstone presents three literature-informed conceptual models that depict effective management for hybrid teams, in-office management challenges, and best practices for transitioning back to in-office work. The recommendations build on managers’ responses to the NETC-RTO survey, offering practical strategies to enhance management practices and optimize hybrid and in-office work environments within NETC’s evolving operational landscape.

Research Questions

1. How can managers ensure collaboration and engagement when overseeing personnel who telework?

• What are the attributes a manager should have to manage a remote or hybrid team successfully?

• What kinds of tools and technology can managers use to best communicate with a remote or hybrid team?

• How are relationships managed effectively with a remote or hybrid team?
2. What are the essential resources and practices to support effective management of a team transitioning to or from telework and in-office work?

• What support and training are available for federal managers?

• What practices of policy review support excellent management of hybrid teams?

• How can managers navigate the challenges of significant shifts related to telework and in-office work?
3. How effectively has NETC facilitated telework and return-to-office (RTO) from the perspective of its employees?

• How can NETC improve support for telework and the transition to in-office work?

Methods

- Comprehensive Literature Review
- FEVS Survey
- NETC-RTO survey

Results and Recommendations

3 Literature-Informed Conceptual Models

