

“The full-time hourly front-line employees, who until recently were feted as America’s ‘hero’ essential workers, will be left out of this new golden labor model.” ▶

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What started as corporate America’s temporary response to pandemic-related

restrictions and precautions has taken on a life of its own. Remote work options are now offered in various iterations and are certainly here to stay.

Many high-profile firms, especially tech-related mega-firms, have proudly proclaimed, “We are now fully remote option,” while other companies are touting hybrid remote schedules with two or three days at home. That means firms and candidates from smaller demographic areas are now on a level

playing field, and regional salary disparities will likely level off.

It’s also an excellent job market for global trade professionals, who can now market their skills and experience to firms in other states. They are offered competitive compensation packages and, in some instances, enjoying 20 to 30 percent bumps in salary for remote opportunities hundreds of miles from home. The current remote working phenomenon is occurring on the heels of the “don’t-ask-don’t-tell-your-compensation” legislation in place for the past two years. This translates to tremendous leverage for smart job seekers.

Remote hybrid business models are working very well for firms with multiple locations around the country within two to three hours’ commute by car. Relocations to headquarter offices will still occur, but at a fraction of the frequency just two years ago.

Caveat emptor: Companies should make sure the remote option is built into the employment agreement and look favorably on regional candidates that are a car ride away, rather than a plane ride, for meetings and possible overnights.

And be ready for collateral damage. The full-time hourly front-line employees, who until recently were feted as America’s “hero” essential workers, will be left out of this new golden labor model. For truck drivers, warehouse staff, port workers, final-mile delivery labor, and assembly teams, among others on an endless list of supply chain functions, working remotely simply doesn’t work.

Since there’ll be no remote perks to entice them, union contracts, salaries, and benefits will increase, and four-day work weeks will become the norm. Expect inflation to follow. **JOC**

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