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willingness to stay at a company.

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By Tracey Porpora, Staten Island Advance, N.Y. (TNS)

While the Internet and texting changed the way people communicate, remote workplaces, due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, greatly altered the way co-workers socialize.

Meeting once a week on a Zoom call isn't the same as sitting in a cubicle next to someone. Remote workplaces lack a social element that impedes workplace

friendships from forming.

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New research found that fully remote workers have 33% fewer friends at work.

“Our survey of 1,200 remote workers found that the shift to full-time remote work is impacting social interactions among co-workers for many American workers,” said Kelli Mason, chief operating officer at JobSage. “Younger generations seem most impacted by this shift with millennials (39%) and Gen Z (21%) reporting the highest percentages of demographics without friends in a remote office setting.”

She said this could adversely impact workplaces on a greater level.

“The importance of workplace friendships has measurable value for both entrepreneurs and hiring managers to consider,” said Mason. “Workplace friendships help to create a more happy, creative, and productive workplace environment. Over nine in 10 respondents said friendships at work impact their willingness to stay at a company—95% reported being happier at work, 76% more creative, and 74% more productive.”

One major benefit to workplace friendships is it allows people from different age groups to connect through a common bond.

“One of the most fun parts of work relationships is their sheer diversity. We may have a close friend that we consider a ‘work mom’ or a ‘work dad’ (a significantly older co-worker that we consider a close friend), or more easily forge connections with people of different backgrounds due to working in close proximity. We may even enjoy closeness with a ‘work husband’ or a ‘work wife’ (which 25% of our respondents said they have),” wrote Mason as part of the study.

Study Highlights

The study concluded:

—95% of surveyed respondents say having a friend at work makes them happier.

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work friend they've never met in person.

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