

Ask HR: Will Working Remotely Reduce Recognition?

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SHRM President and Chief Executive Officer Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., SHRM-SCP, is answering HR questions as part of a series for USA Today.

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(<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2018/01/18/hr-ask-our-expert/1040330001/>)

My company has announced that we will all be working remotely permanently. I'm concerned that not having the usual office interactions will hurt my chances of getting promoted and being recognized in the company. How do I make sure people recognize my hard work? —Anonymous

Johnny C. Taylor, Jr.: This is an important question. The saying "out of sight, out of mind" holds some truth. Organizational leaders tend to promote the people they see in person and chat with in the elevator. These workplace relationships are often built face to face and can affect promotional decisions.

That said, the pandemic has changed many office dynamics. However, at least this has stayed the same: Whether you're remote or in the office, your performance speaks volumes.

Given your particular situation, there are a few steps you can take to ensure your hard work is not overlooked.

First, talk about your concerns with your manager and discuss your company's plans for recognizing stellar performance in a remote world. If you've got your eye on a promotion, I urge you to gain a clear understanding if that's a realistic option.

I want to note there are many factors that go into a promotion—things like budget, effort, the ability to backfill your role and getting on the radar of the decision-maker. It might not be up to your people manager alone.

Here's what I recommend: Focus on building relationships. Try to participate in as many virtual get-togethers and optional meetings as you can so your peers and management have the opportunity to see your abilities and leadership skills firsthand. And even though you're not physically in the office, you should act as if you were—always keep your camera on and be professionally dressed.

Contributing ideas, supporting teammates even when you have a full plate and taking a proactive approach when challenges arise will go a long way in showing—not telling—why you deserve to be recognized.

Consider tracking your wins to demonstrate how you add value to your team and organization. It's OK to brag a little when your performance review rolls around. And if the time is right, someday it could lead you to your dream promotion.

Remember: Many companies are still trying to figure out this new normal of remote work—balancing business needs while not losing traction on the things that matter, including employee engagement and recognition.

Best of luck to you!