



A Guide to Remote Hiring and Onboarding

The secret to hiring the best developers in the world



Remote Hiring

- VanHack's Story
- Advantages of Hiring Remote
- Characteristics of Successful Remote Workers
- Perceived Disadvantages
 - Quality
 - Trust
 - Cultural Differences
 - Process
- How to structure remote contracts
- How to pay remote employees

Remote On-Boarding

- Actions prior to Start Date
- Week 1
- Weeks 2-4
- Measuring Productivity
- Software & Tools
- VanHack's Process
- Resources

Contents

Remote Hiring +
Relocation since
2015

36 employees in 10
countries

Started because we
needed to access great
talent that wasn't easily
available in Canada

Remote is now our
preferred way of
hiring

VanHack's CTO and many other employees were hired remotely

We've also helped over 800 candidates get hired in Canada and the European Union.

Remote Hiring: Advantages

Global talent pool	Companies can be geographically constrained, or financially constrained, or both. If you're located in a smaller city or state, finding great talent is hard. You may be located in a big tech hub - but then you're competing for the best talent with many other companies, driving up your costs. Remote hiring makes it possible to widen your search for talent to the whole world.
Highly motivated candidates	Senior developers that are used to working remote are extremely motivated to do well. They have chosen to work remotely since they've found it works really well for them, and usually want to make sure that their employer has no reason to doubt their commitment. In addition, candidates that are looking to immigrate are focused on realizing their dream of moving abroad.
Follow the Sun	You don't have to be a large company to take advantage of multiple time-zones. You can have a small team (1-3 people) in Europe, Asia, and North America, and achieve 24-hour coverage for your business. VanHack operates this way - some part of the company is always working!
Team Diversity	An oft-overlooked benefit of remote hiring is the diversity of culture and thought it brings to your team. Having people from different countries hacking at the same problem often leads to new ways of working
Lower Risks & Move Fast	Hiring is hard, but remote hiring gives you a chance to evaluate your new employees work before you decide to move them to your HQ. This can save you time & money, and increase efficiency. Additionally, remote workers can often begin working within days of being offered the contract.

We've found that the most successful remote workers have certain characteristics in common. If you build your interview process to try and identify these personality traits, you'll have a much easier time finding great candidates.

- **Defaults to Action**

- Able to identify tasks and get work done without constant supervision. Note that this takes some time to develop - you need to onboard your new employee properly and give them a few weeks to get used to how your company works.

- **Communication Skills**

- Excellent communication skills are non-negotiable. Remote workers are connected to their colleagues via text/video, and if they aren't able to get their thoughts across, they won't work out for your company

- **Able to manage their own time**

- This is especially relevant if you're hiring people living across the world. They need to be able to work on their own hours and deliver quality work. You shouldn't expect them to be working the same time zone as you. As long as the work is done, time zones don't matter.

- **Inspires Trust**

These are the most commonly associated disadvantages/issues with remote hiring. In the following slides, we'll show you to to avoid getting tripped up by these.

- Interview Process
- Quality
- Trust
- Language/Cultural differences

- Practice with your existing employees first
- Understand what non-verbal cues you look for in in-person interviews - some cues do not translate to video/phone calls
- Be flexible with time-zones; you want your candidates to be at their very best
- Ask the candidate to test the video conference solution prior to the call (and give them a test link or something similar)

How do you ensure that work of the quality you require?

- Assign a buddy/mentor for the first month or two
- Clearly document your internal processes
- Institute a “no silly questions” policy
- Tell people it’s OK to fail a few times while getting started - everyone makes mistakes
- Resist the temptation to micro-manage
- However, check in once a week to ensure the new hire doesn't feel cast adrift

How do you build trust on a remote team?

- Over-communicate
- Be transparent
- Build a culture of trust that starts top-down
- Get to know each other - spend time socializing (virtually)
- Set clear expectations - and stick to them
- Focus on work-done, not hours clocked
- Create rituals that work for your company. At VanHack, we have the following
 - Everyone says “Good Morning” on Slack when they log in to work (whatever time that is)
 - The VanBot posts a daily reminder of our company values
 - Our “High Fives” are publicly posted to Slack so the whole company can see them
 - Virtual Happy Hour - Twice a month, the whole company comes together in a Zoom call where we just chat

 **vanhack - Maria Beatriz** 2:26 AM
Morning everyone! ☺️
☕ 8 😊+

 **VanHack-Adam Olsen** 4:39 AM
Morning team ☕ let's finish the week off strong 💪
☕ 8 🏋️ 8 😊+

 **VanHack-Luis** 5:21 AM
Good Morning Team ☕
☕ 5 😊+

 **vanhack-Melissa** 5:35 AM
Morning team! 😊
☕ 6 😊+

 **vanhack-Zohair** 5:51 AM
Morning team!
☕ 6 😊+

 **vanhack-Robyn** 5:59 AM
Morning team 😊

 **VanBot** APP 8:00 AM
VanHack value of the day:
| **We have No Borders**
🌐 6 😊+

 **15Five** APP 2:19 AM
High Five from Aditya Nag
@AndrezaMendes for stepping up and helping SO much with B2C Marketing. Thanks Deza!
[Comment](#) · [Like](#)

 **15Five** APP 3:52 AM
High Five from Bitan Banerjee
@AndrezaMendes for being the best Team Lead anyone could ask for. Thank you so much!
[Comment](#) · [Like](#)

High Five from Bitan Banerjee
@JuliaFavere for being the constant support to bank on for any problem or issues.
[Comment](#) · [Like](#)

High Five from Bitan Banerjee
@LuisBenitez for being the best team mate to work with! Let us rock this week!
[Comment](#) · [Like](#)

👍 1 😊+

- Be forgiving when it comes to language - code has no accent
- Ensure that your team is aware of cultural differences and is open-minded
- Understand Holidays in employees' home country
- Expect the unexpected!
- Have your leaders drive this change
- Encourage new hires to share aspects of their culture with the rest of the team

Remote workers in Canada are hired as regular employees, with a few specific terms in the employment contracts. Adjust as needed for your company

- Place of Work
 - remote position
- Equipment
 - Company provided or not
 - Maintenance requirements
 - Security, data protection
 - Internet speed
 - Return to company if the contract is ended
- Compliance with company policies
- Allowance to cover office-related costs (optional)

Remote workers overseas are usually hired as Independent Contractors or outsourced payroll.

Have a Lawyer review the fundamental clauses of the contract to ensure you don't run into unexpected issues later. You only need to do this once.

- Independent Consulting Services
- Responsibilities
- Billing
- Fee
- Statutory Obligations - It is the contractor's responsibility
- Confidential Information, Non-Disclosure, Conflict of Interest, Non-Competition
- Termination
- Notice
- General Provisions

How to Pay Remote Employees

- There are many services that allow you to pay remote workers
- VanHack has successfully used the three listed below to pay workers in South America, Europe, Nigeria and India
- Each has pros and cons and it depends on which country you're transferring from and which you're transferring to

The TransferWise logo features a blue lightning bolt icon to the left of the text 'TransferWise' in a dark blue sans-serif font.The Payoneer logo features the text 'Payoneer' in a dark blue sans-serif font, with a red curved line above the 'y'.The PayPal logo features a blue 'P' icon to the left of the text 'PayPal' in a blue sans-serif font.



- Actions prior to Start Date
- Week 1
- Weeks 2-4
- Measuring Productivity
- Software & Tools
- Remote + Relocation: Details on how to do it

On-Boarding



Prior to the Start Date

1

Get all the documentation required signed before the start date

2

Send instructions through email with important tools list and agenda for the 1st week of work

3

Send online onboarding videos on selected dates

4

Select a buddy to support the new hire



Week 1

1

HR Onboarding Call

2

Direct Manager Onboarding Call

3

Introduce the new hire
company-wide

4

Introduce the buddy

5

HR check-in at the end of the
week

- Should be scheduled as the very first thing on the employees calendar. Don't make them wait a few hours - schedule it for 9 AM their time (or whatever time you've picked as their start time)
- Schedule an hour. You may end sooner, but it's always better to have some time for questions and to get into things in detail
- Go through company's mission, values, structure and handbook
- Check to make sure all documentation/contracts are signed
 - Bank account/tax information is collected and validated
 - Give the employee a chance to ask questions - especially if this is their first time working remote for a distant company
- Go over the collaboration tools
- Talk about the company's communication culture (formal/informal), and general expectations around things like replying to Slack messages

Direct Manager Onboarding Call

- Schedule this shortly after the HR call - but not immediately after. A 30-min gap is fine. This will give your new employee some time to check out the employee handbook, the company slack, and so on
- 60-min call - make sure to leave time for questions
- Go over
 - Expectations for the role
 - Team communication style
 - 1x1 schedule
 - Details on tools and processes used by the team
- Ensure that your new report knows how to reach you - and make yourself available in the first week

- Introduce the buddy who will be supporting the new hire on Day 1 on a brief 15-min call
- The buddy should schedule a call with the new employee on Day 2 or Day 3
- Buddies should be volunteers and should be trained before they interact with new employees
- Also, make sure the buddy has been with the company for some time - they should be able to correctly answer most questions without hesitation
- Introduce the new employee to your whole company (or team) on the next all-hands call
- HR should have a brief (15-30 min) check-in at the end of the week



Week 2 and Beyond

1

Schedule onboarding meetings with head of key areas

2

Book 30, 60, 90 days check in calls with HR or Direct Manager

- Schedule 45-60 min calls with the heads of various departments
- If you're a smaller company, schedule with every department

- For larger companies, it's good to meet the key departments that the new hire is expected to interact with

- Ensure that department heads take this seriously and do not reschedule unless absolutely necessary

- Meeting goals:
 - Gain a holistic understanding of each department
 - Begin to build human connections with people
 - Get introduced to various key team members

- Separate 30, 60, 90 day check in calls should be booked with the direct manager and with HR
- HR should focus on
 - Employee well-being
 - Understand any issues with tools/processes
 - Answer questions around company policy that will always crop up as employees start to learn more (benefits, holidays, etc)
- Direct manager should focus on
 - Productivity (and any barriers)
 - Team cohesion
 - Task/role specific questions



Measuring Productivity

1

Focus on output, not hours

2

Foster a culture of open communication

- Managing a remote team (or even just one employee) requires a certain shift in your mindset
- You may need to examine your team's workflow to establish quantitative metrics that are easy to measure and are a good proxy for performance
- This can be surprisingly hard if you've never done it before
- Don't wait for your remote hire to do this - start well before
- Once established, make sure you use these metrics for the entire team, not just the remote worker
- Certain workflows are easier, for example: Customer Service - Tickets closed
- However, even easy metrics can hide issues - is your remote worker closing tickets without resolving the root cause?
- Superficial metrics (lines of code committed, instead of quality of code) are easy to game

- Building a culture of open communication makes managing a remote team a lot easier
- It starts from the top - managers need to be open to feedback about their own work styles
- Issues need to be addressed without assigning blame. It's almost always a process failure when something goes wrong, and the best companies recognize this and make the necessary changes without assigning blame to an individual.
- For example - did your new employee overwrite the staging database? You should examine your ACLs and training before blaming them - it shouldn't be possible to do this
- Encourage peer-to-peer communication through the buddy system, pair programming, or random (virtual) coffee breaks

VanHack's Remote Stack

Communication	Project Management	Performance/Goals Management	Handbook / Wiki
 slack	 asana		
			
 Google Hangouts			
			
 Google Docs			

- Check if the new hire has worked remote before; if not, share some articles and/or important tips e.g. ergonomics, schedule, organization
- Close approach and clear communication are essential for the first days
- Encourage video and phone calls instead of long texts
- Have your company handbook “handy” – easy to access and update
- List all tools that they will need to work remotely as well, processes and policies
- Default to trust - assume the best intentions till proven otherwise

Take Advantage!

- The world is moving to the remote work model; you can be a trailblazer
- Get a jump on your competition
- Once you've refined the remote + relocation hiring model, your hiring will be a real force multiplier
- You will get access to very experienced candidates who are highly motivated to work for you

- [Sign up as an Employer - this is completely free and non-exclusive](#)
- We'll assign a dedicated recruiter to work with you
- Post a job
- Our AI + your dedicated recruiter finds the best candidates and sends them to you
- You pick the ones you wish to interview
- We organize the logistics of the interview - entirely virtually
- You can hire without ever meeting in person
- When you wish to relocate, we help with the entire visa and immigration process
- You only pay if you hire a VanHacker

- [Zapier Remote Work Guide](#)
- [Gitlab HandBook](#)
- [Buffer Blog](#)
- [Automattic Remote Work Reader](#)
- [Distributed Podcast, Matt Mullenweng, CEO Automattic](#)

Thank you!

VanHack.com