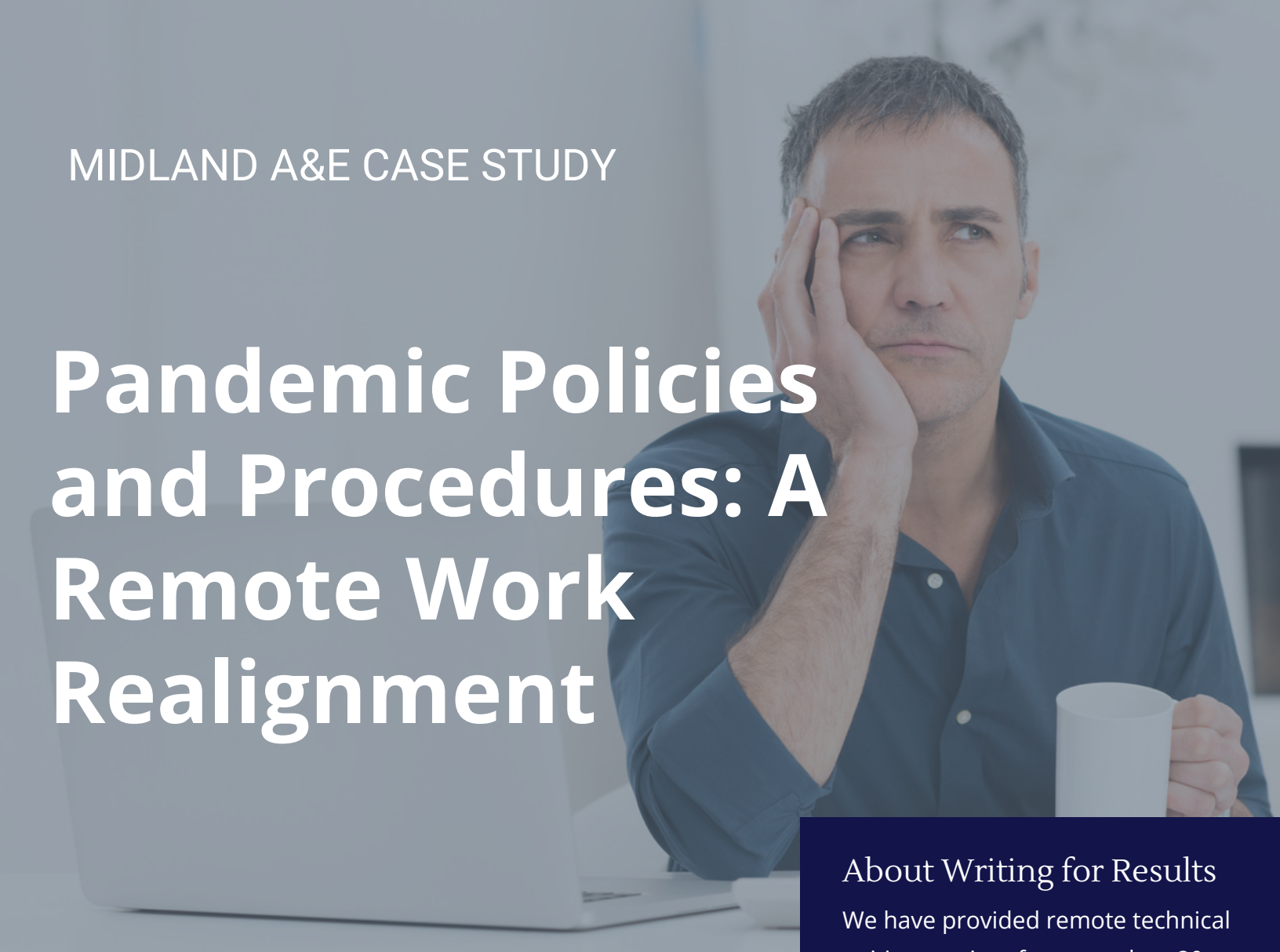




MIDLAND A&E CASE STUDY

Pandemic Policies and Procedures: A Remote Work Realignment

ADAPT OR FAIL

The next decade will usher in a new paradigm, created in no small part by the COVID pandemic and a shift to remote work as the new normal. Creation of remote work operational guidelines with which both employees and management are comfortable is not a luxury but an imperative for continued success.

About Writing for Results

We have provided remote technical writing services for more than 20 years. Logical thought is imperative—but so is creativity and thinking outside the box... That is what we do

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New Remote Work Procedures and Policies Create Win-Win Transition

Midland A&E is a small business and is reliant--as most are--on performance. The architectural and engineering firm has operated out of an office for nearly two decades. The requirements of each project were such that a high degree of interactivity between all employees was required. There was close physical contact onsite and in the office. The pandemic changed all of this overnight.

The Company put their interactive employee handbook on line one month

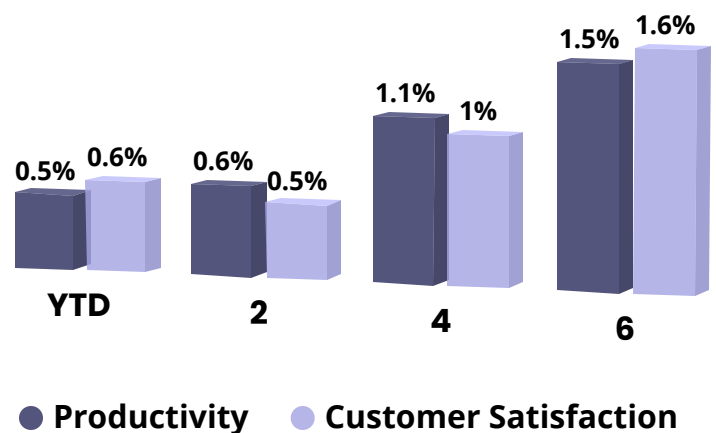
"Both employees and management participated in putting the handbook together. We were just starting to bring on younger workers and we didn't always have agreement but we ultimately had consensus. We couldn't have done that if we had tried to do it ourselves."

after they made the shift to remote work. Because of the nature of the business, all employees could work remotely and all agreed. There was no onsite work due to state and local restrictions.

"We didn't have an employee handbook of any kind when we began our transition to remote work. Now, we have an interactive online document that our employees are helping to evolve over time"

PRODUCTIVITY AS A BENCHMARK

Midland A&E had traditionally measured customer satisfaction by feedback and repeat business or referrals. Employee productivity had been measured by the quality of the highly-technical work and timely completion of projects--including those that ran into roadblocks. Both customer satisfaction and productivity were on the increase within six months from the time that employees began working remotely. No uptick in productivity was anticipated but occurred nonetheless.



UNCHARTED TERRITORY

TANGIBLE RESULTS

Two of the key Company objectives of the transition to remote work were that productivity did not suffer and that customer satisfaction remained high. Results indicated that while employee productivity increased at a fairly steady rate after introduction of the handbook, customer satisfaction suffered initially and then began to increase. Adjustments to best-practices communication and sharing of project data were believed to be responsible for the initial decline in customer satisfaction.

LESS TANGIBLE RESULTS

Not as easily measured but equally important were employee and management level of comfort with the arrangement.



EMPLOYEE RESPONSE*

Of all employees, 85% believed that the handbook was easily accessed and useful, important to the transition to remote work.



MANAGEMENT RESPONSE*

Management, universally, believed that the handbook improved consistency and communication and the transition to remote work.

*Feedback was obtained from individual interviews

POST-PANDEMIC EVOLUTION

The transformation of these eight architects and six engineers into a remote workforce was sudden. They were used to working closely with each other and with clients in person but that had changed for good. The online employee handbook was developed with the involvement of all stakeholders.

The first page of the handbook stated the Company philosophy; it set the tone for the entire document. The tone was set as well by a very significant change in terminology: Because it connoted isolation, the word *remote* was replaced by the word *distributed* throughout.

Some unique elements of this handbook included:

- **Personalization:** Each employee was given their own portal with the handbook that included their job description, job specific instructions or information, and any policies or procedures that were specific to them or their job.
- **Productivity:** Each employees handbook contained a mutually-agreed upon basis for performance and evaluation.
- **Policies and Procedures:** Since the Company--employees and management--had decided to make the remote work arrangement permanent, all policies and procedures reflected that.

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