

With flexible policy, Salesforce says 9-5 workday is 'dead'

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The Salesforce Tower in San Francisco is the headquarters of the US cloud computing giant, which is allowing most employees to work from anywhere under a new flexible workplace policy

Most employees at Salesforce will be able to work remotely indefinitely under a new policy unveiled by the cloud computing giant, which says the 9-to-5 workday is "dead."

Salesforce's new policy released Tuesday gives wide flexibility to employees and follows the lead of other technology firms adapting workplace rules for the post-pandemic period.

Salesforce, whose office tower is a centerpiece of the San Francisco skyline, said it made changes after surveying employees who have been mostly working from home since the coronavirus outbreak began.

"We learned that nearly half of our employees want to come in only a few times per month, but also that 80 percent of employees want to maintain a connection to a physical space," said Brent Hyder, the company's president and chief people officer.

"So we are giving employees flexibility in how, when and where they work with three ways of working."

Hyder said most employees will opt for the new "flex" plan with one to three days in the office, but that others who live far from an office may work remotely full time.

"The smallest population of our workforce will work from an office location 4-5 days per week if they're in roles that require it," Hyder said.

"An immersive workspace is no longer limited to a desk in our Towers; the 9-to-5 workday is dead; and the employee experience is about more than ping-pong tables and snacks."

Silicon Valley rivals such as Google and Facebook have extended their work-from-home policy for most employees until at least mid-2021.

Others such as Twitter and Microsoft have told some employees they may continue to work remotely as long as they wish.

Cornell University professor Bradford Bell said the Salesforce move could be a harbinger of workplace trends.

"Many companies are considering a more balanced mix of hub, home, and hybrid work arrangements in the future," said Bell, who heads the school's Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies.

"As companies expand their menu of work arrangements, they will need to address several important questions. Are employees able to choose their work arrangement or are they determined by the company? How do the type of work, employee preferences, and business needs factor into decisions about who is a good fit for a particular work arrangement?"

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