Remote work can feel isolating for new employees, but many younger workers turned digital hangouts and Zoom calls into real-world socializing and those who don’t may negatively affect the second group’s career development, some experts say.

“Remote work makes it harder to make friends and it’s harder to meet people in-person. One way to overcome this is to meet people during social events,” said Veeva, a cloud-based software company based in Vancouver, Wash. They initially connected over a shared sense of humor and started there last August as a fully remote employee. Veeva, a cloud-based software company based in Vancouver, Wash. They initially connected over a shared sense of humor and started there last August as a fully remote employee. In 2017, more than half of people had five or more friends they could call or text outside of work; in 1985, some 27% of people had five or more friends they could call or text outside of work. The fact that the activity was outdoors helped boost attendance, Ms. Chang says. Because of distancing, workers have had to think through the logistics of hanging out in-person. Mr. Ma, 27 years old. Today, he has a couple of colleagues he hangs out with regularly. He’s now one of my go-to people to process life events, Ms. Chang says. “We know you have to be intentional about communication.”

Some companies with continuing remote-work policies have made socializing an explicit part of onboarding new employees. Veeva, a cloud-based software company based in Vancouver, Wash. They initially connected over a shared sense of humor and started there last August as a fully remote employee. In 2017, more than half of people had five or more friends they could call or text outside of work; in 1985, some 27% of people had five or more friends they could call or text outside of work. The fact that the activity was outdoors helped boost attendance, Ms. Chang says. Because of distancing, workers have had to think through the logistics of hanging out in-person. Mr. Ma, 27 years old. Today, he has a couple of colleagues he hangs out with regularly. He’s now one of my go-to people to process life events, Ms. Chang says. “We know you have to be intentional about communication.”

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