



REMOTER LEADERSHIP, CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Leadership Mindset:

Leadership must help build a culture and mindset that supports remote work. This must be a genuine belief that people want to do a good job; be part of an organizational community whether working virtual or otherwise; and that employees derive a sense of purpose and connection in work and career that satisfies intrinsic human needs. Also, leaders have to be transparent, inclusive and provide the policies and resources to make remote work successful. That includes:

- Leaders must have confidence that remote teams can succeed and remoters will meet their expectations.
- Organizational mindset needs to come from presumption that remoters want to work, want to meet or exceed expectations and want to be part of the team and organization.
- Leaders must be very trusting of their employees and show empathy, listening and emotional intelligence skills. Working remotely can make one feel isolated and lonely. There can be a sense of being disconnected or unsupported. Therefore, those skills are crucial and must be modeled for those who manage a remote workforce.
- Leaders must recognize and reward remoters in individual and group meetings. Success is success, virtual or otherwise. That success must be acknowledged and rewarded in the virtual environment.

Basic Tool Kit for Remoters:

A very basic toolkit for remoters is below – depending on position, more may be needed for a remoter to perform the basic duties of her/his job:

- Document libraries, shared folders, company intranet or some other resource they can draw critical information needed to do their jobs.
- Invest in great internet or reimburse for great internet.
- Video conferencing technology.

Basic Tips for Managers and Supervisors

Like any manager/employee situation, the best way to manage a remoter is to develop a trusting and supportive relationship. To do that with a remoter there are three elements that have to be done more intentionally than in a traditional office environment. Those elements are connection, collaboration, and engagement. Additionally, expectations and deliverables need to be very clear and explicit even more so with a remoter than a traditional office worker. This is due to the fact access to an immediate manager may not be readily available. To keep the remoter and remote teams productive, it is vital to have clear expectations and deliverables. Below are tips for the supervisor managing remoters:

- When scheduling individual or team meetings, have structured and unstructured time. In other words, create “social time” into the agenda for individual remoter meetings. For teams, you can make it optional - suggest folks join meeting 10 minutes early or stay 10 minutes late to hang out and get to know each other.
- Communicate established response times to you and the team. Identify reporting structure when those response times will not be met.
- Have an established protocol for contacting the supervisor if the remoter will be offline or out of their remote office. Transparency is key and a remoter should know the supervisor expectations for appointments, calls or being offline. How does the remoter inform the supervisor for both planned and unplanned need for time away from the remote office?
- Run effective virtual meetings is critical. Have established expectations about video on or off (highly encourage on). Ensure background noise, distracting visuals, lighting is considered in meetings. Set agendas, encourage participation by calling on team members to get their ideas and suggestions. Start meeting by saying what stated objectives are and end by reviewing outcomes, next steps and assignments. Also make it a point to acknowledge team members’ work in these meetings and any life events that your remoters would feel comfortable with you sharing. Include some announcements about the broader organization and how, overall, things are going for the business. Have someone take meeting notes and post them on collaboration space.
- Avoid virtual conflict by:
 - Using communal task board to minimize task redundancy;
 - Avoid miscommunication by working out loud (see below);
 - Communicate often, via video whenever possible;
 - Create feedback loops on projects and tasks (communal task board, team meetings or in your one-on-one meetings). Make sure feedback comes from all directions. Ask for feedback on how you can lead or support better.
 - Identify conflict resolution guidelines for remoters and the team. If you sense a virtual situation is accelerating know how you and team will intervene. Unlike in person situations, body language, tone, paraverbal skills and other “buffers” that mitigate conflict or convey emotional and mental intent are missing.
- “Work out loud” – this means take time in team meetings to have each person discuss what they are working on, what they’ve completed and what they’re learning. Share some of your work as the supervisor.
- Create assignments where your remoters have to work on line together. Create assignments that will simulate a physical office environment and do it virtually. You don’t have to be in those meetings or on those assignment, create them for you team.

- Conduct retrospectives – once you and your team have worked remotely for a period of time, or if you have changing team members conduct a retrospective meeting. Ask: what is going well; what could have gone better; what have we learned?
- Focus on outcomes, not hours worked. Ensure you are clear desired outcomes and have them report out on those outcomes during one-on-one calls and group meetings as appropriate.

Collaboration/Connection/Engagement Programs

At team and organizational level the following programs and tools can be provided to encourage relationship building, engagement and fun.

Slack Channels:

Pet sharing, book club, cooking club, garden club. Poll your employees and ask what channels they would like to set up. There are channels for HR as well as project related channels where employees collaborate.

Virtual Coffee breaks:

Make suggestion to teams about taking coffee breaks together. Maybe they do it away from their work-at-home office space (their kitchen) and talk socially for a few minutes on zoom or some other teleconferencing software.

Virtual happy hour:

Employees pre-order wine or non alcoholic beverages (adding options for their kids in COVID-19 era). Have shipped to arrive to their homes one Friday a month. Employees can zoom in and hangout or play game. They can also chose to spend it with members of their household.

Virtual lunches:

Reimburse employee one time a month. Hang out on zoom, have lunch. Starting these next month.

Virtual Game Playing

Play games together (drclue.com, virtual trivia) can incorporate into happy hours or let employees schedule after hours as much as they want (the free games at least).

COVID-19 SMS Messaging

Just instituted. Our employees get daily message to let them know we are supporting them thru this period and if they need anything from us, to respond Yes. HR calls and does “in-take” to identify need and provide support to the employee as needed and as appropriate.

Zoom Meetings

Training on Zoom <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697>

□ Remote Work – Resources and Articles

- [Guide for Startups: Remote working when you're not a remote team](#)
- [Resources for Companies Embracing Remote Work \(Gitlab\)](#)
- [Best Practices for Working Remotely \(Udemy\)](#)
- [How to Setup Remote During Coronavirus \(Fast Company\)](#)
- [How to Embrace Remote Work \(Trello\)](#)
- [How to Get People to Actually Participate in Virtual Meetings \(HBR\)](#)
- [New to Working from Home? Here are Some Tips to Help You Meet Like a Pro \(Zoom\)](#)
- [How Telecommuting Can Save Your Team: 3 Top Tips To Manage Any Team Remotely](#)
- [Amid Coronavirus Fears, How to Support a Shift to Remote Work \(exaqueo\)](#)
- [Transitioning from Offices to Distributed Teams during a Crisis \(John O'Duinn, Author "Distributed Teams"\)](#)
- [Slack on Slack: Adapting the Way we Work When Offices Need to Close \(Slack\)](#)
- [The Ultimate Guide to Remote Meetings in 2020 \(Slack\)](#)
- [Your Guide to Working Remotely in Slack \(Slack\)](#)
- [Tips for Managing a Remote Workforce During Coronavirus - and Beyond \(LinkedIn\)](#)
- [Glitch for Remote Work \(Glitch\)](#)
- [Remote Work Canvas - a framework for designing your day \(OrgHacking, Itamar Goldminz\)](#)
- [How to Collaborate Effectively if Your Team is Remote \(HBR\)](#)
- [Working Together When We're Not Together \(Inside Google\)](#)
- [How to Manage Your Remote Team Effectively? \(Hi5\)](#)
- [Remote Working Masterclass - workshop and tools for a smooth transition \(Hi5\)](#)
- [Remote Working: Setting Yourself and Your Teams Up for Success \(LinkedIn Learning-free\)](#)
- [Remote Work Survival Guide \(crowdsourced google doc\)](#)
- [The Employer's Guide to Engaging Remote Works \(Good Impact Network\)](#)