

How to Cultivate a High-Performing Remote Team During a Crisis

Coach Remote Employee:

All employees should be successful Remote Employees! It is a learned skill and we can help coach the transition. The qualities that are necessary for a Remote Employee are the same qualities necessary for high performance within an office:

- Self-Motivated and Independent
- Great Work Ethic
- Highly responsive
- Resourceful
- Collaborative

There is a greater responsibility for a virtual worker to document their work, be available, and share their status. As leaders, we have to provide the tools for them to do this without adding additional burden to their normal work (frictionless tech)

- Uphold the commitment to the Organization – 40 hours is minimum commitment for a salary
- Document the contributions you made in exchange for your salary
- It is our responsibility to be present and make a great contribution without being supervised

Remote Manager:

A Remote Manager needs same skill set as a highly successful onsite manager needs:

- Ability to Manage Projects; Define Meaningful Process and Working Plan
- Manage by Results - not Hours
- Transparent Communication
- Ability to Create Stability and Trust within Teams

Ability to Manage Projects; Define Meaningful Process and Working Plan

- Define the Goals/Objectives (if first starting, define for a week or a month)
- Team Brainstorm all Tasks Required to Complete the Goals/Objectives
- Estimate the Time for Each Task
- List Dependencies and Risks
- Select Completion Date
- Choose Milestones for Reporting

Effectively Plan and Manage by Results

Productivity = Output divided by Input does not apply to Knowledge Worker

- Set Clear/Measurable Objectives
- Gain Agreement Projections are Relevant and Achievable
- Hold Individuals Accountable for their Delivery

Manage by Results, Share the Results:

- Institute a Work Overview to Report on the Status of their Agreements:
 - What did I do last week to move the team forward to the next milestone?
 - What am I going to do next week to move the team forward to the next milestone?
 - What are my issues and risks?

The team performance is the team's business and everyone should be aware:

- Publish All Team Members Results Weekly

Transparent Communication:

- In the short term, schedule daily standups for the team.
- Single Place to find Team Information/Documentation
- Have Performance Conversations individually and with the team to discuss what is going well and what needs improvement.

Promote Your Virtual Teams – we do not want to become invisible:

- Create a bulleted Executive Overview to Share Your Teams Contributions

Understands the Benefits and Limitations of Technology for Virtual Teams

Text-based media is generally more useful for sharing basic daily information, while video chats and telephone conversations are better for brainstorming, problem-solving and relationship-building.

- Evaluate what technology works and what needs to be changed, both in the short term and long term
- Ensure that you're not creating digital burnout with your team
- Don't assume you're 'secure' just because you're at home. Perform an at home/remote security audit

Connect with Your Teams:

Make Time for Connection of the Team

- Check In "virtual coffee break"
- Thank and Praise them for their accomplishments – handwritten thank you notes!

Regarding Team Addresses: I sent an email to the team asking if they would like to share their birthdate (month/day) and home address with the team. This leaves an option for an employee to not participate which is perfectly fine!

- Send Care Packages
- Celebrate** via video or when we have returned to life as we know it, send remote employees a gift card or check for drinks, dinner or a night out on their town
- Ask for Feedback on How to Better Serve your Remote Employees as their Manager
- Employee Volunteering** is another effective way to boost engagement and morale. Remote teams can identify causes they care about and how they want to participate.

There are three ways to tell if people are hard at work in an office:

- *the boss can watch them go to meetings. And they can watch each other in meetings as well.*
- *the boss can watch them sit at desks in an open office.*
- *we can make promises to each other about our deliverables and then keep them.*

It seems as though only the third one is a useful, long-term way to allow us to do our best work together.

The first two can help along the way, but if a meeting or an open office exists as a convoluted way to do surveillance, you're probably wasting precious energy and trust.

- *Seth Godin*