

How to Quickly Stand Up a High-Performance Remote Team

While remote working rollouts usually happen slowly, the advantage of a quick transition is that changing your team's workways to boost performance and morale is a manifest priority. (At their simplest, workways are "how members of teams or organizations get their work done." They are the patterns of behavior — like muscle memory — that underlie the culture, values, and mission of the team, group, or organization.) **The goal of effective managers should be to help their teams thrive while working remotely** rather than merely get by. High-performing remote teams are made up of highly self-directed, proactively communicating, intentionally collaborative, and results-focused individuals. It thus turns out that the conditions of remote working create the type of teammates we want to have regardless of whether they're remote or co-located.

Cultivating Communication and Collaboration

Establish new channels for collaboration and communication (not email).

Use Slack or another team communication tool for primary communication between team members.

Use Asana or another project management tool for communication and tracking of project work.

Establish a daily check-in and check-out process with your team. This can be done via Slack or another tool. Check-ins can be as simple as: "Hey, I'm here and working from 10am-4pm today!" Check-outs can be: "Leaving for the day. XYZ task/project is 80% complete; I'll finish it tomorrow."

Encourage an excess of proactive communication while everyone is getting their footing. Give examples of what you'd like to see.

Ask for examples from the team.

"Meet" regularly with your team to maintain human connection.

Establish a weekly huddle with the whole team. In addition to work-related topics, leave time for the team to share celebrations and challenges on things outside of work as well.

Establish a proper frequency of 1:1 meetings with staff to make sure they are adequately supported in their work and in their lives amid the challenges of today.

Recognize that more of your role may be meeting with and helping staff.

Look for opportunities to delegate more of your "working in the team" responsibilities to others, so you can spend more time identifying and eliminating roadblocks (see below).

Discuss with your own boss how your role is changing and ask for additional support from them to do it better/help you eliminate roadblocks for you.

Leading a High-Performance Remote Team

Look for opportunities to give team members autonomy over their time, tasks, and decisions.

Where possible, allow flexibility of work times so team members can coordinate with their spouses/partners for things like child care, home chores, and other work schedules.

Encourage staff to find new ways of getting the same work done that better fit the new environment. If this means redividing/reassigning roles and responsibilities, give the team ownership of those changes.

Identify the threshold of decision making for the team, whether in time or dollars. Example: if it would take less than two hours of time, or cost \$100 or less, the team member has full authority to make that decision without informing you first.

Find new ways to reward team members who exemplify the values and standards of the company or team, or who exhibit the sort of flexibility and ingenuity that's needed right now.

Model the sort of behaviors you want to see in your team.

Tell more stories, about:

Big or small company wins during this time.

How the work the team does serves others (particularly those in crisis).

How a particular team member exemplified the values of the company or team.

Personal challenges or triumphs or learnings you've experienced recently.

Removing the Biggest Roadblocks for Your Team

If you have budget responsibility for your team, allocate a portion of that budget for needed tools and resources, like hardware and software, office supplies, rewards, and gifts.

In your own work tasks:

Identify those that are critical to your team or department's functioning during the current quarter and next quarter, and identify those which can be postponed or canceled.

Then determine which of your tasks can be delegated to others, done less, or just not done.

Any time you save from those tasks, reinvest in your people.

Maintain lines of communication with your team, and encourage them to bring you issues along with their recommended solutions.

Maintain similar lines of communication with your own boss, and be the advocate for your team with the rest of your company's leadership.