



Working from home

Toolkit for managing remote working teams

Managing Performance of Remote Working Teams

Set expectations clearly

When transitioning to a virtual team, it can be tempting to micromanage by monitoring employees too closely and requesting status updates more frequently than necessary. However, by setting clear expectations and establishing benchmarks upfront, managers of virtual teams can manage effectively without smothering their remote employees.

When employees have a clear understanding of the expected deliverables and how long each task should take, they are more likely to produce good work on time.

Stay focused on goals, not activity or hours worked

It is important to manage expectations and stay focused on goals when embracing a remote workforce. An outcomes based approach is best suited for supervising remote working. Don't worry as much about what is being done. Instead, concentrate on what is being accomplished.

Avoid micro-managing and be results-oriented

Avoid worrying about whether individual team members are putting in their hours. Instead, focus on quality and timeliness of a remote employee's work.

Evaluate performance regularly by scheduling check-ins

Making a commitment to frequent check-ins will help keep you well-informed about a team member's performance. How often you should check in depends on the difficulty of correcting problems as well as the potential consequences of a problem. A minimum of once a week is a good rule of thumb.

Should an individual's work have the potential to cost significant resources, more frequent check-ins should be scheduled, to address problems as and when they arise. Refer the Question Guide for One-on-One Meetings for questions that could be asked during check-ins with direct reports working remotely.

Look to concrete measures of performance such as assignments completed on time, quality of work produced, comments from fellow team members and clients, complaints about the individual, frequency and quality of ideas contributed at team/individual meetings etc.

Stick with good management practices

Leaders still need to continually communicate goals, initiatives and 'what matters most'. Regularly share and track how the extended team is meeting its group goals and objectives. Do not forget to celebrate successes!

Remember everybody works differently

For some, the opportunity to work from home is a definite plus. For others, it may be a challenge. Keep in mind that everybody will not experience this transition in the same way. Be aware of giving those who need additional support and consideration, where and when necessary.

Identify ways to measure performance that could inform broader change

Once the initial flexible response period has passed, this data will allow us to reflect on what worked, what didn't and why. This will help us identify better ways to work, even once the crisis has passed. It will also ensure that we have the data to develop a proactive, organised, flexible work disaster response ready for the next time there's a challenge to operational continuity.