



10 Tips to Effectively Manage Remote Employees



Managing remote employees often comes with challenges such as limited face-to-face opportunities, social isolation, disjointed communication and information access, and distractions. Here are some suggestions to help overcome these challenges.

→ 01

Set clear expectations

One of the most important parts of an effective remote work management strategy is setting clear expectations for everyone involved. Communicate any expectations relevant to each employee's role, such as how often and when to check in, virtual work hours, and project updates. Whether daily or weekly, stick to a regular schedule for check-ins to create consistency and predictability.



→ 02

Have a communication strategy

Communication is a common workplace issue often exacerbated in a remote setting where organic interactions are less frequent. To support regular communication, provide policies and information around different communication methods. For instance, define when a group video call versus an e-mail or Slack message is appropriate depending on the nature and urgency of the situation. Provide details about timing and responsiveness, such as how soon you expect a response to e-mails during work hours. Remember: overcommunication is better than undercommunication.



→ 03

Encourage socialization

In addition to regular meetings and communication, it's essential that employees can socialize holistically and independently. Setting up casual forums like an ongoing video conference for virtual co-working, pet cams where people can drop in with their pets, or Slack channels dedicated to discussing the team's favourite television series can facilitate connection and relationship-building within your teams. These connections can help relieve the social isolation of remote work and even lead to unplanned conversations that yield great ideas for your business.



→ 04

Balance team meetings

Virtual events and team building activities can foster a sense of unity and help employees get to know each other. Team meetings also allow remote workers to contribute ideas and voice concerns about projects. When scheduling meetings, be mindful of Zoom fatigue, otherwise known as the burnout associated with too many virtual meetings. To avoid boredom and inefficiency, consider alternating communication methods and making some meetings optional.



→ 05

Foster trust, rapport, and transparency

Transparency is essential for employers to build psychologically safe and effective relationships with their employees. Many people feel a sense of belonging at work when their needs are being met, and psychological safety comes from feeling safe to share any concerns. When it comes to building trust between you, your company's leadership, and your employees, listening is the most effective strategy. Create opportunities for employees to provide feedback or ask questions. In turn, you can use their feedback to make strategy adjustments and show that their input is valuable to the organization.

→ 06

Focus on onboarding

Providing new employees with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed at a company is an important part of onboarding. Turnover due to poor onboarding is expensive, but successful onboarding processes can increase retention, employee satisfaction, and productivity. To promote long-term success, allow new remote employees to concentrate on onboarding during those crucial first few weeks rather than on actual work assignments.



→ 07

Use tools to manage remote employees

Many available tools are designed to help manage remote employees. These tools can facilitate communication and collaboration, keep projects and tasks organized, share files, and more. To manage and empower your teams, consider the following tools:

- ✓ Google Drive
- ✓ Slack
- ✓ Zoom
- ✓ GitLab
- ✓ Tettra
- ✓ Slab
- ✓ Asana
- ✓ monday.com
- ✓ Twist
- ✓ Trello

→ 08

Show flexibility

Your business's team is made up of individuals with unique lives and needs. Some may be parents working from a private home office or spare quiet room. Others may enjoy taking their work with them when they travel and tune into Zoom meetings from their hostel lounge or a coffee shop. Regardless, it's important to show understanding and flexibility so that your employees can manage their personal lives in conjunction with their professional lives.



→ 09

Focus on outcome, not input

When you're not sitting next to your employees, it's easy to underestimate their productivity or efforts. This can quickly develop into micromanaging behaviour where you overwhelm remote workers with communication and requests for progress reports. Instead of micromanaging their responsibilities, focus on outcomes and goals rather than visible activity and hours worked. At the same time, some employees may not have the self-discipline for remote work; it's critical to recognize this behaviour quickly and support the employee's growth before it affects team productivity.

→ 10

Encourage people to protect their time

It can be hard to disconnect from work when it's in the same place you live and relax. This is especially true if you collaborate with people in different time zones. To encourage work-life balance, managers should engage in job crafting, or empowering people to design their workdays. This can look like using Slack statuses and e-mail signatures to communicate work hours and set expectations for response times, or making it acceptable for workers to reserve blocks of focus time on their calendars for meaningful or focused work.



