



Six Tips for Managing A Remote Workforce

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Teleworking: A Growing Trend

As business becomes more global, and teams can often be dispersed across cities or continents, businesses have begun adapting telecommuting as an added corporate culture benefit and as a way to recruit and retain key talent.



“Video conferencing makes it easier to have interaction between remote workers. Some people were skeptical at first, especially individuals in a commercial function. But now, everyone can see the benefits.”

MAURICE VAN SABBen, PRESIDENT, NAT GEO TV UK

As a result, managers may find themselves forced to respond to an all-new set of needs and concerns from their staffs. How does the international team leader ensure that the necessary lines of communication stay up when there are thousands of miles and half a dozen time zones separating offices?

Managing remote workers is no different than supervising those who are right down the hall from you. How? Video conferencing. By following a few simple tips, it's actually very easy (even intuitive) to boost productivity, enthusiasm and performance among your dispersed employees.

Communication is Vital

15 FEET APART OR 1,500 MILES AWAY

Whether the employees you manage are in the same office, across the country, or on the other side of the globe, it's just the means of communication that have changed.

Email and instant-messaging are both great ways to quickly issue assignments, touch base with workers and receive feedback, but they lack the personal touch that effective communication requires.

Phone calls are good, but video conferencing is frequently your best option, as it allows more complex dialogs to happen and provides full affirmation that meanings were interpreted correctly.

Address Employee Performance

THE BAROMETER OF SUCCESS

Regardless of whether an employee works at the office or from home, the barometer of her success is the same: is she getting her work done in a timely manner? Regularly assess each employee's performance and schedule video conferencing meetings as required, and you're sure to get great results.

Establish Guidelines and Rules

ACCOUNTABILITY IS KEY

A remote manager's worst nightmare is the idea that an employee is doing the dishes and watching daytime television on the company dime. If you're worried that your workers are ignoring their responsibilities and goofing around, then establish rules and guidelines about productivity, clocking in and out, attending meetings, submitting their work and more. Make them accountable.

80%

EMPLOYEES CONSIDER TELEWORKING AS A JOB PERK

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36%

WOULD CHOOSE A WORK-FROM-HOME OPTION OVER A PAY RAISE

Informal Meetings are Important too

VIDEO COFFEE BREAKS?

A team works best when everyone is pulling in the same direction toward a common goal—a feeling that can be hard to instill if the team is in wildly different places geographically.

Hence the importance of staging both formal strategy meetings and informal team-building meetings: they make people feel like part of a team and instill a sense of mutual responsibility.

Differentiate Channels of Communication

KEEP IN TOUCH

Sometimes, employees have big questions about assignments or the direction of the company; other times, they might have a quick question or concern that's best addressed in a low-key fashion. Make sure they have different ways of getting in touch with you, from HD video conferencing and phone meetings to simple IM chatting or emailing.

Prioritize Morale

THE WORKPLACE IS A COMMUNITY, NOT A HIERARCHY

Anyone who has managed a team knows how important good morale is to productivity, and keeping that up can be difficult when you're managing remote workers who know you only as a voice over the telephone.

It is often said that workplaces need to be seen as communities, not hierarchies. It's critical that employers look at things from their employees' points of view and offer relevant information and support. Nothing makes fostering a sense of trust and empathy across thousands of miles easier than high-speed, high-definition video conferencing.

Explore Video Conferencing

The important thing to remember about managing employees who work from home or in global offices is that, at the end of the day, you're looking for the same things from them as you are from your in-office employees: productivity and reliability.

There's no two ways about it: the whole world's your office now—but without the right tools for the job, you won't be able to take advantage of this exciting new international marketplace.

Seeing is Believing

We hope that you found our 6 Tips for Managing a Remote Workforce guide helpful and, because we know that "seeing is believing," we would be delighted to arrange an opportunity for you to experience the power of video for yourself.

For more information or to request your personal demonstration, visit us at: www.lifesize.com/demo



"I have a choice to make every morning. Either I drive for an hour and half each direction from my home to the San Antonio headquarters, or I can do a 30-second commute to my office in my home. I find that using video is a far more efficient way to conduct meetings and interact with my team.

SUAAD SAIT, CMO, RACKSPACE

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