

Top 10 Tips for Managing a Remote Team

1. Daily morning check-ins

Speak to each member of your team in the morning to see how they're doing, check what they're focusing on and see if they need any support.

2. Be available

It can be isolating working virtually. Reassure your team that they can call you. Talk to them about their day-to-day duties as well as catching up on how they are and how they're feeling. Ask them how they're finding working from home and if they need any support or guidance.

3. Don't forget the importance of a sense of team

Have team meetings and team catch ups in a way that works for you, be it a short daily catch up or a weekly check in. Allow time in your team meetings to have informal conversations which are not work related. Virtual teams need time to bond and maintain relationships.

4. Delegation is key

When managing remote teams, clear delegation is essential. Be very clear about what you are asking them to do, your expectations, quality levels, timeframes, suggested approach (if there is one), let them know how much autonomy they have, agree on a deadline and monitoring process. Check they have understood by asking them to summarise the task back to you.

5. Give feedback and praise

Don't forget to provide feedback and praise, over email or phone. Recognition is particularly important when working remotely as it will keep your team motivated and engaged. You can still have difficult conversations over the phone if work is not where you need it to be. You will need to coach them over the phone to explain exactly what the issues are and how they can improve. Screen sharing can work well for virtual coaching – show them, where possible, what you need them to do, rather than simply telling them.

6. Ask them for feedback

Ask them how it's going from their perspective. Do they need more from you? Are they getting enough support? Is there anything you could all be doing more effectively as a team – create an environment where you welcome suggestions and empower them to find solutions.

7. Have clear deliverables for each person, with specific outcomes

You can't see what they're doing, so you need to give everyone clear tasks and then take an outcome-focused approach. Make sure each person has a unique task and communicate this out to the wider team to avoid duplication or misunderstanding. Be clear on ownership. If you're working remotely it's much harder to catch duplication or task overlap.

8. Encourage your team to use phone or video calls, rather than email

Hearing each other's voices and seeing faces will enable your team to maintain relationships and feel connected.

9. Use systems and project management tools

Tools like Slack or Microsoft Teams are great for collaborative working. Many systems combine project management and comms, enabling you to work efficiently as one team.

10. Don't forget about learning and development

Continual improvement is key for any team. Encourage your remote workers to engage in online learning and reading. If your company pay for access to an e-learning platform, encourage use of this. If they don't, there are loads of great articles and TED talks online which are all free. You could ask your team to share what they have learnt this week during your team meeting to foster a culture of continual learning.