

Remote Teams: 10 Tips To Manage Them Effectively



Marie Raperto, [The Hiring Hub](#)

Remote teams are a reality. Whether on a permanent basis or during times of upheaval, doing work remotely is now the norm. But without a water cooler, breakroom, conference room, what is the best way to handle your remote team? Here are 10 tips to help you devise a strategy and work plan:

- 1. Make sure the equipment and tools are up-to-date and working properly.** Employees must be able to be constantly in touch for messaging, video calls etc. Look out for any team member who isolates themselves. Working remotely calls for a very collaborative, over-

communicative environment. Employees should have the best monitors, headphones and cameras for virtual meetings.

2. **Have a system in place.** An emergency situation is not the time to start a system. Employees should be aware of the tools available to them and how they will be used. They need to focus on work and not equipment.
 1. Video is best when you have a sensitive or complicated issue. These take more time to arrange but it is the best way to get everyone on the same page.
 2. Voice is good as most people communicate far more effectively on the phone. It's what they do normally in the office.
 3. Online chats are fast and great for updates but not good for detailed communication.
 4. Email works very well for detailed communication and provides a record for reference. It is, however, very prone to misinterpretation.
3. **Develop a communication strategy.** Once your system is in place, you can arrange how and when employees will check in, set guidelines about what you expect at these check ins and what is urgent and what isn't.
4. **Keep your remote team connected.** As a manager you must develop your own communications strategy. It's up to you to keep everyone on the same page and up-to-date. You also need to make sure employees connect with each other. This can be through outside chat rooms, event calendars, introducing employees who live near each other or who share common interests.
5. **Set expectations so that you can supervise your employees on an outcomes-based approach.** Give them clear tasks, a reasonable workload and schedule regular check-ins. Catching issues before they become a problem is a priority.

6. **Ask your team for feedback.** Listening to their concerns and issues will help you correct any system or communications issues. Be honest with them about any employee monitoring software that may be in use as incorrect information can cause issues.
7. **Schedule meetings to help keep everyone in the loop.** Weekly calls, monthly meetings, blog posts, sharing work status, acknowledging birthdays/work anniversaries all help to keep a positive team atmosphere. If you can get together in person once a month, do it. It reconnects the team. Don't forget to schedule one-on-one meetings/calls. Everyone needs to be heard as a team and as an individual.
8. **Make sure your directions are clear.** When you are not face-to-face, it is easy to misinterpret things. You must specify everything about the work and who is responsible for each item. You may want to include the time you expect it to take, the desired end product, your KPI's for the work, tone/design/style etc. Make sure you record, verbally or in writing, your brief so everyone can refer back to it, if necessary.
9. **Avoid as much unnecessary multi-tasking as possible.** Is an email 'reply all' effective or just unproductive. Is a video conference with everyone needed or would a phone call with one or two people work just as well. Remember, you are responsible for keeping your team updated daily or weekly.
10. **Remember to talk about company business.** When you are working in an office environment, you hear and see things about what's going on, new products, company news etc. Keep everyone updated on what everyone else is doing. Make it part of a weekly email or call. What you think is interesting and important may not be what your employees think, so don't be selective. Pass on the news and let your team members decide what's interesting.

We are entering a brave, new world, so be prepared.