

## Tips for New Remote Work Managers

*“How to start building the Ecosystem for Growth as your workplace goes remote”*

Hi All,

I hope you and your families are well as our communities, and businesses are experiencing unprecedented disruption. While many of us are lucky to be able to work remotely, it presents new challenges. The On Plane team hopes this list of resources and tips help you adjust quickly and keep your teams productive.

First, please be mindful that this is a very unsettling time for many. While I know we will get through this, it is easy to fall into the trap of “what if” and worrying about the unknown. People are adjusting their work life and home life at the same time. This additional stress on top of the “what ifs” is a lot for anyone. Before trying to accomplish work, make sure your teammates are getting what they need and help if you can. Remember to focus on your team members as people first, workers second. Encourage them to focus on their personal health and well-being as they find a new ‘normal.’ Your kindness now will not be quickly forgotten.

Second, you will need to make some changes as you manage the team remotely. Here are a list of resources and suggestions we found useful:

1. **Be intentional about checking in on your team. Displaying empathy for their safety and wellbeing is the first step towards building a virtual relationship.** This is an abnormal time and many people are seeing stressors from family, finances and work which have not come all at once in our lifetime. You should set up daily calls just to check on your direct reports and expect your team to do the same.
2. **Our friends at Unitonomy have a great blog post located here =><https://unitonomy.com/collaboration-in-the-remote-work-age/>.** The key point:
  - a. *“Building a great remote work culture starts with the acceptance that you will all have to place more effort into communication. This does not mean increasing the sheer volume of communication per se, but making sure your team is intentional about communicating with precision and transparency within the group.”*
3. **Pick a platform to utilize for internal messaging and video meetings.**
  - a. Microsoft Teams is available for free for anyone on Office 365 and is a great platform for video calls.
  - b. Hangouts Meet is another good platform and is available free for those on G-Suite.
4. **Stay connected.**
  - a. Assure your employees have the proper tools (i.e. laptops) and that your internal platforms can support work from home – VOIP access, VPN

access etc. Check to be sure you have the proper IT help desk support for a remote team.

- b. Make sure the team and those you interact with know how to contact you.
- c. Be transparent, and encourage your team to do the same, about availability and schedules.
- d. Be careful not to overcommit as there are many unusual demands on our time right now – like homeschooled children or adult care issues.
- e. Request team members circulate brief daily or weekly updates via email that summarize what they're working on, key updates, any challenges they need assistance with, and what's coming over next week or so
- f. If possible, set times where the team will be available or “office hours”
- g. Be sure everyone's calendar is up to date and visible

#### **5. Set Clear Expectations**

- a. Set some basic guidelines for your team's communication your team should decide what goes via email or slack or phone? A good example of this guidance from slack is here =><https://slackhq.com/etiquette-tips-in-slack>
- b. Ensure you have set clear expectations with each team member around work responsibilities. If you have already done goal setting/performance planning, revisit goals to ensure they still make sense or adjust accordingly.
- c. Be sure your goals are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timebound). This gives everyone clarity and allows the team to self-manage.

#### **6. Maintain connections to the organization**

- a. Send an email each week to re-cap the progress made by the team, and how it aligns with the Company's greater Mission and Vision. Recognition could also be part of this email.
- b. Reach out to each person on your team individually to understand
  - i. How are they doing – (family first, work second)
  - ii. Do they know what they need to be focused on?
  - iii. What do they need from you to be successful?

As you work to navigate a new ‘normal’ for yourself, your teams and your business, don't hesitate to contact the On Plane team if we can assist you in any way.