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# Successfully Managing a Remote Workforce



With so many companies moving to a remote work environment, managers are struggling with how to set employees up for success and maintain high productivity. This document covers important strategies and technologies to maintain both productivity and culture when working remotely.

## Internet Bandwidth

Make sure each employee has adequate internet bandwidth at home. The demands of video conferencing and large file sharing, in addition to the bandwidth demands from kids and others in the house, may bring an internet connection to its knees. Don't worry because upgrading an internet connection is both easy and inexpensive. Plus, the cost of upgrading home bandwidth will be minor compared to the cost of an unproductive employee, so upgrade when possible.

## Communication Hub

Communication among your entire workforce becomes paramount when working remotely. If you haven't already, be sure to check out Slack which is a communication hub. Slack makes it really easy to communicate with individuals, small groups or your entire company instantly. You can create channels for specific topics or groups within your company so information is always relevant. You can message with others, share files and integrate with many third-party applications.

Slack can help with business discussions, but also can address social issues that can result from working remotely. You can create informal channels for employee recognition or maybe create a group just for dog owners.



## Cloud Based File Management

Quite often you will need to share files, especially large files, with your employees and clients. Make sure to consider using Google GSuite, Microsoft OneDrive, Box or Dropbox for file management. These services can easily be installed on your computer and offer various levels of capacity. The Cloud drive is very similar to a regular hard drive. All files are stored in the Cloud instead of on your computer. The files are very secure, allowing you to set up permissions based on groups or individuals.

## Task Management System

While Slack helps with communication throughout your company, you might also need a workflow or task management system. It's more important than ever to keep all employees focused on their objectives when working remotely. And when teams are involved, it's critical that everyone knows what needs to be done and when. We suggest using a project or task management system such as Basecamp, Monday.com or Trello to help keep everyone on track. All of these systems are really easy to use, enable you to efficiently manage people and keep all of your projects on schedule.

## Meetings

Having meetings with both teams and individuals is critical because working in a remote environment can feel very isolating. Also, you can't rely on the quick visits that normally occur in an office setting to share information. Therefore, be sure to schedule recurring meetings. This will give you an opportunity to discuss goals and objectives and help to stay engaged on a personal level.

Don't restrict conversations to all business, check-in on family, discuss common interests and current events. When you don't see someone in person, it's more difficult to tell how they are feeling. This means you have to reach out and ask how they're doing. These types of conversations happen naturally in a work environment, but take a little more effort when working remotely.

For meetings with multiple colleagues, be sure to keep them concise with set expectations. In a remote environment, if meetings go on too long or are unorganized it is way too easy to tune out.

For technology, we suggest using video conferencing for all meetings so that you can actually see one another. While it doesn't replace an in-person meeting, it certainly helps. Consider using a system such as Zoom, GoToMeeting, Webex, or Google Hangouts. All of these systems also include the ability for screen sharing which can help immensely when collaborating with colleagues.

## Be Patient and Supportive

Setting up a home office can be a little challenging. In your first remote meeting, you may experience barking dogs, individuals who are unable to get connected or can't hear everyone clearly. Some colleagues may have technical difficulties. Be patient during this time and be sure to assign someone to provide technical support. If you don't have someone you can assign internally, there are 3rd party companies you can hire.

## Next Steps

If you have any questions or need any assistance, please let us know. We're always happy to help.



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