

How to Make Remote Teams Accountable

One of the many, many changes that COVID-19 has ushered in is the extreme uptick in people working remotely. Social distancing has made working from home a necessity for millions.

The technology that is allowing remote working to take place has matured greatly in the last decade. Today, it is possible for team members to work from virtually any location. Of course, as with most technologies, there is a potential downside. Accountability can become a significant challenge with remote workers. Of course, the more remote workers you have at a given time, the greater the potential challenges will be.



Many businesses are struggling with the phenomenon of remote working, as it is something new for them. Under normal circumstances, large numbers of employees working remotely simply wouldn't happen. In a recent article, ["The Right Way to Keep Your Remote Team Accountable,"](#) author Elise Keith, Co-Founder and CEO of Lucid Meetings, explores the key steps businesses should take to help ensure that their employees stay on target while working from home.

Starting Slow

Keith believes that for remote working to be effective that there are 4 major mistakes that should be avoided. One of the biggest mistakes that employers, especially those unfamiliar with remote work, make is that they demand too much productivity right out of the gate.

She points out that remote teams can, in fact, be very productive and even outperform their in-office counterparts. Summed up another way, remote work can be extremely productive. Keith's perspective is that businesses should "identify the highest priority tasks right now and relax the rest." Business owners need to remember that they are not the only ones under stress. The simple and undeniable fact is that your employees are feeling the stress of COVID-19 as well.

Getting Good at Working Remotely

The second major mistake she points to is that people are assuming the current pandemic situation is temporary. Other crises will occur in the future, and it makes sense to be prepared. As she phrases it, why not "get good at working remotely?" Teams with good remote working skills are proving to be rather resilient right now.

Being Open to Technology

A third mistake she points out is businesses shouldn't disallow the use of non-approved tools. In short, now is not the time to worry too much about what software tools people are using. Instead, she suggests creating an expedited process for the adoption of new tools. If your team finds a new tool that boosts productivity, you should consider buying it.

She astutely points out, "Software costs pale when compared to the costs of lost opportunity." At the heart of this point is the fact that now, more than any time in decades, is the time to set aside restrictive thinking and become more open-minded and flexible. After all, your number one goal, and the number one goal of your clients, is to stay in business until the pandemic has passed.

Staying Flexible

Keith's fourth mistake centers on management's design to dictate hours and response times. Remote work is, by its nature, going to be more flexible. Trying to micromanage every move digitally is simply not a savvy move and will hurt morale.

Instead, she feels businesses should opt for having a daily meeting via phone or videoconference with the team. Additionally, she puts forth the idea of having a one-on-one meeting with every team member as well.

For many businesses and many situations, remote work may be the "only game in town." Trying to carry on business as usual is only going to cause headaches for everyone. Remote work can be highly effective for you, especially when used correctly.

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