

Top 10 tips for managing remote teams



The latest government advice is to work from home if you can. For some this has been really effective and for others, not so much.

It looks like we are in this for some time still so it is key to address any concerns you have with those working from home.

The CIPD has released its top 10 tips for managing remote teams which we think may offer some helpful suggestions:

1. Agree ways of working. Make sure every team member is clear about how you will work together remotely, how you keep each other updated, and how frequently.
2. Show the big picture but prepare to flex. Remind your team about the big picture and how their work fits into it. Review short-term goals regularly and adjust as needed. If some members can't carry out all their usual work, consider other skills they can lend to others to meet team goals.
3. Set expectations and trust your team. Be clear about mutual expectations and trust your team to get on without micromanaging. Focus on results rather than activity.
4. Make sure team members have the support and equipment they need. This includes any coaching they might need to use online systems or work remotely. Keep your calendar visible and maintain a virtual open door.
5. Have a daily virtual huddle. This is essential for keeping connected as a team, to check in on each other's well-being and keep workflow on track. It needn't be long, but regularity is key.
6. Keep the rhythm of regular one-to-ones and team meetings. This maintains a sense of structure and continuity for all.
7. Share information and encourage your team to do the same. Without physical 'water-cooler conversations', opportunities to pick up information in passing are more limited. Share appropriate updates or learnings from other meetings and projects and invite your team to do the same.
8. Tailor your feedback and communications. People can be more sensitive if they're feeling isolated or anxious, so take this into account when talking or writing. Communicate regularly, not just when things go wrong, whether it is information, praise or criticism.
9. Listen closely and read between the lines. Not being in the same room means you don't have extra information from body language or tone to get the sense of what people are thinking or feeling, particularly in more difficult conversations. Home in on what's not being said and ask questions to clarify your interpretation.
10. Help foster relationships and well-being. Make time for social conversations. This increases rapport and eases communication between people who may not meet often. It also reduces feelings of isolation.

From HR Reward & Wellbeing