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Remote Work Tips

for MANAGERS

Lead with empathy and open communication.

▶ Ask people how they are, how their new work arrangement is working, and be willing to make adjustments as everyone learns what works best.

▶ Be mindful and patient about challenges employees are navigating with partners, kids, elders, and animals at home. A dog barks? A child comes on screen? Laugh about it, say hello to the child, and continue on.

Communicate

▶ Share news and decisions with your team members. During times of heightened anxiety, it is often reassuring to hear regular updates from a manager – even if it is an acknowledgement of what is still unknown.

▶ If employees are working strange hours, unavailable for a Zoom meeting, etc., think about how information will be flowed to them. Asking people to watch a recording is unlikely to be effective. Share notes and highlights instead.

Use collaboration tools.

▶ Discuss as a team what tools (Google Docs, Slack, Skype for Business, etc.) you will use to work together based on the topic or need. If you try something and it doesn't work well, make a shift! See "Tech Tips" sheet for ideas.

Be planful about your time, and the time of your team members.

▶ Reserve real time meetings for short check-ins or for meaningful discussions, not routine updates that can be shared via email or other messaging.

▶ Hold short daily check-in "water cooler" meetings with your team. Check in with your team members every day - even if it's just to say hello or ask how they're doing.

▶ Meet individually with direct reports regularly. Use this time to understand how they are doing, discuss workload, goals, and deliverables, and remind them of self-care.

Arrange and lead effective meetings.

▶ Be intentional about meeting duration. A meeting of 45 minutes or less ensures employees have visual and auditory breaks before their next meeting.

▶ Be aware that unspoken communication - a friendly smile or nod - may be missing in remote conversation. Make an effort to verbalize what might be conveyed without words (e.g., "it's good to see everyone!").

Make best use of this opportunity.

▶ Help your team members who are experiencing a reduction in workload focus on important work that often doesn't get done in normal circumstances (e.g., review and update work processes, procedures, tools, directories, listservs, etc.).

▶ Encourage employees to participate in online training and identify lessons learned, newly developed skills, and workplace practices that can be applied at a later time.

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