Increasingly, employers are committing to long-term flexible and remote work policies, with many adopting a hybrid work model. This can present challenges when it comes to managing team alignment and collaboration, managing performance, and creating a sense of belonging. As managers re-engage with their teams, they should pay attention to the four areas below to ensure an engaged and productive workforce.

### Tips for Managers: Making Hybrid Work

Increasingly, employers are committing to long-term flexible and remote work policies, with many adopting a hybrid work model. This can present challenges when it comes to managing team alignment and collaboration, managing performance, and creating a sense of belonging. As managers re-engage with their teams, they should pay attention to the four areas below to ensure an engaged and productive workforce.

#### Team Norms & Guiding Principles

Formally relaunch your team and determine shared norms to help foster alignment.

- Discuss team members’ work locations and schedules, as well as expectations around availability.
- Enable calendar sharing and consider “office hours” — specific blocks of time when people will be available for meetings. Designate no-meeting days/times for uninterrupted work. Make sure to lead by example.
- Define the type of work that needs to get done in the office vs. remotely. Ideally, have set days in the office for face-to-face collaboration.
- Implement the use of task boards to help team members communicate asynchronously on the status of current tasks, reducing work interruptions.

#### Meetings & Collaboration Tools

Optimize collaboration tools and technology. Strive to support an equitable experience for employees, regardless of work location, and actively monitor imbalances.

- Assess employees’ comfort level using available collaboration tools. Agree on which tools should be used for which purpose.
- Be intentional about which team meetings require everyone to be on site. If at least one person is remote, ask all to join virtually.
- Discuss guidelines for cameras on or off during virtual meetings. Specify this in advance on the meeting invite.
- Balance the use of video calls and technology and provide a buffer time between meetings to minimize digital exhaustion. Encourage walking meetings when possible and appropriate.
- Ensure all participants have equal access to materials/handouts.
- When opening for comments, start with virtual participants. Actively monitor the chat.
- Use virtual whiteboards.
- For working lunches, order meals for those joining remotely.

#### Performance Management

Articulate specific goals and metrics, while empowering employees to have a say in how they do their work. Proactively keep your proximity bias in check when evaluating performance.

- Hold routine 1:1 meetings to agree on expectations and share feedback.
- Assess employees’ performance against agreed goals and metrics. Focus on results vs. facetime.
- Ask yourself: Are you recognizing your employees’ contributions and hard work regardless of work location?

#### Community & Belonging

Managing a dispersed team requires building strong connections with and among your employees. Create a climate of trust and psychological safety by leading with empathy.

- Routinely hold community-building events that allow team members to bond and get to know one another (e.g.: virtual or in-person lunches with food delivery, coffee chats, online experiences, games, etc.).
- When onboarding new team members, assign them a buddy in advance with team members on site for their first week(s), where feasible.
- Check-in with your team. Be an active listener and address their feedback and concerns.

---

**Proximity bias** is the unconscious tendency to give preferential treatment to those who are in close physical proximity to us, perceiving them as better workers.

**Tips for inclusive hybrid meetings**

- Ensure an optimal audio and video experience for remote participants.
- Set up the room and camera so that virtual participants are able to see everyone clearly.
- Ensure all participants have equal access to materials/handouts.
- When opening for comments, start with virtual participants.
- Actively monitor the chat.
- Use virtual whiteboards.
- For working lunches, order meals for those joining remotely.

**Cameras on or off?**

- Cameras on: Sharing feedback, sensitive or personal information, celebrations, team-building activities.
- Cameras off: All other topics, but make sure everyone has the option to do so.

**Useful resources**

- HubSpot Company Spotlight
- 12 Questions About Hybrid Work, Answered.
- Making the Hybrid Workplace Fair
- Remote Work Should Be (Mostly) Asynchronous
- Creating a Successful Hybrid Environment
- Managing Employee Burnout