



Strengthen Focus

Set clear expectations: Everyone has a different idea of what doing something "urgently" or "well" means. Whether showing examples of what you expect to be done, sharing calendars, etc., make sure you set clear expectations from those you work with online, and make sure they understand these expectations. Reach clear agreement on priorities and urgency of tasks.

Stay focused on goals, not activity: Don't worry as much about the individual activities your associates are doing. Instead, concentrate on what is being accomplished. Set clear goals around expected outcomes and regular check-ins on work.

Be efficient and creative: Take this opportunity to focus your team on business process improvement efforts and make work more transparent.

Communicate Effectively

Ensure you have cell phone numbers for your associates

Set a cadence of communications, including how quickly associates need to respond to email, what follow-up steps should be taken on an assignment or project, and on which days check-in calls should occur. Your team must understand that they have an obligation to stay in regular contact.

Sharpen your own communication skills: When leading discussions, check for understanding and pay attention to silence. Clarify and document actions and next steps via email.

Engage associates daily and promote inclusiveness using multiple channels—instant message, phone, video conference, or email to communicate. Respond quickly to emails or set expectations with associates on when they can expect you to address emails. Consider daily huddles via phone or video conference.

Plan scheduled 1:1s with your direct reports at least weekly. This is important for connection and inclusion. People often feel disconnected when working remotely. Use video/cameras when possible.

Provide frequent feedback and be aware that, without physical cues, misinterpretation is more likely. Use the phone for more sensitive messages and instant message for positive feedback.

Leverage Technology

Note your team's availability: Log in to your instant message system at the start of your workday and ensure your team does as well. Share your email calendar. Post planned out-of-office days using your email system meeting invites.

Use the "highest touch" technology possible: Provided you have enough bandwidth from your internet service provider, use video calls when possible, use visuals in a video conference, and use phone instead of email for sensitive topics.

Promote online collaboration: Unplanned conversations between coworkers are important for flow of knowledge throughout an organization, which is why you have a responsibility to literally create brainstorming moments that spark creativity. Encourage the use of instant messaging, blogs, and threaded conversations on online collaboration tools.