

# Maintaining Productivity With A Remote Workforce

With COVID-19 spreading globally, businesses are increasingly moving to a fully remote workforce. When implemented incorrectly, this level of remote work can harm a company's productivity, effectiveness and overall culture. But this does not have to be the case! We have shared our guide for quickly implementing a remote work environment that can maintain productivity and protect culture.

## Ensure your teams' understanding of goals and objectives are clear

Having standards in place for accountability, as well as for streamlined team performance, is essential. People feel engaged and "close" to their team members when standards are clearly communicated and predictable.

At a minimum, expectations should be clearly set for the following business protocol:

1. What are the normal workings hours for the team (when will the workday begin and end)?
2. When can I expect a response from you (manager, peer, direct report)?
3. How will we notify each other when we will be unavailable and/or unable to meet certain expectations (e.g. out at a doctor's appointment)?

It is also imperative that you, as a leader, think strategically about how your team's current objectives may need to pivot during this period. This is your opportunity to review the overall business objectives, meet (virtually) with cross-functional leaders and help your employees to develop skills and experience outside of their specific department. How can your Office Manager contribute to the marketing plan your team was working on? Or can your IT Administrator assist the Customer Success team with any issues they are experiencing with their systems?

## Establish a regular meeting cadence

A regular meeting cadence can build collaboration and awareness with a remote workforce. By creating consistency in your meetings, your team will feel encouraged to stay connected with each other and develop a steady communication channel.



Take these meetings a step further by creating a video first culture. Some major benefits of video meetings are:

- The ability to use and observe nonverbal communication.
- Promotes participation (and not just dialing in and muting while focusing attention on other work).
- Reduces the opportunities for misunderstandings-visual aids and showing, not just telling, can create much more clarity throughout the team.

Focus on dividing your meetings into three (3) main areas:

### Daily team stand up

Because of the lack of in-person interactions, it is important that you find ways for the entire team to give and receive status updates. As a manager, having access to these updates means having a greater awareness of your team members' priorities. While such frequent contact may seem unnecessary, remember that if a team member spends time on the wrong task, that leads to wasted effort and hours.

### Weekly one-on-one with each team member

Use these one-on-ones as a time to build connections with your team. You can address any concerns, ensure they have the resources they need to be successful and promote an environment of regular praise and feedback.

### Weekly departmental meeting

These department meetings should be time set aside to focus on any priority projects, major goals and key objectives for the department. These meetings are useful in project management to ensure the team is on track to meet key deadlines and deliverables.

★ **Key Tip:** At the beginning of the meeting, it can be beneficial to have everyone spend 30-40 seconds sharing something non-business related such as "what was the best part of your weekend?" Taking time to share stories about life outside of work may not sound productive, but it's key to building highly productive teams. When everyone starts a meeting by speaking up; it makes it easier to speak up later in the meetings, creating more collaboration and inclusion.



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## **Make work accessible and easy to find**

If you expect your team members to work remotely for several months and keep their normal productivity, then you should be prepared to make at least a minimal investment in hardware and software.

Remote workers cannot walk over to someone's desk and ask "Where is this?" They will either (a) dig through lots of files and folders, inherently wasting time, or (b) ping someone consistently about where something is, also wasting time and pulling other employees off-task.

## Consider the following:

- The basics: high speed WiFi, external keyboard, mouse and monitor for their laptop or tablet.
- For video-conferencing software consider many free or low-cost options to start: Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams.
- For teaming and project management software consider: Basecamp, Asana, Wrike, Monday.

## **Promote a positive team environment**

Even with a fully remote workforce, culture is still critical in hiring and retaining top talent. The idea of "being engaged with the culture" tends to imply an employee is more aligned with the larger goals of the business and more connected with their team, but they do not have to be physically in-office to be engaged.

Get creative! Set up an online game tournament, create a forum for everyone to discuss their favorite TV shows weekly or host a photo contest for best at home office setup. Ultimately, it is about finding new and unconventional ways to connect with your colleagues.

## Key opportunities to increase engagement:

1. Keep employees updated on what's going with the company via a weekly or monthly newsletter, CEO video updates, intranet or other employee communication channel.
  - ★**Key Tip:** Relay new company developments, exciting highlights from the week, big "wins" for a specific team, spotlight an employee of the month, celebrate personal occasions and provide important updates.
2. Provide opportunities and platforms for employees to give feedback on the company and working remotely
  - Pulse Surveys
  - Anonymous "virtual" suggestion box
  - Intranet polls
3. Give feedback and praise regularly

With remote work only becoming more common in the coming weeks or months, your organization cannot afford to wait until tomorrow to develop its own best practices-start today! These tips are simple, cost effective and do not require any sweeping changes. Your remote workforce has the potential for incredible productivity during this uncertain time, so provide them with that they need to thrive and untap their ultimate potential!

## About Arrowroot Capital

Arrowroot Capital is a global growth equity firm based in Santa Monica, CA focused on minority, majority, and buyout investments in B2B software companies. The firm serves as a catalyst for growth-related initiatives by partnering with management and leveraging its deep enterprise software expertise to deliver meaningful, tangible value.

## About Strategic Resources Group ("SRG")

As a niche firm focused solely on B2B software, Arrowroot has developed an extensive portfolio of resources available to its portfolio companies. Arrowroot's in-house Strategic Resources Group (SRG) is designed to serve as an extension to our management teams and supplement their domain knowledge by helping achieve accelerated, capital efficient growth by optimizing initiatives across Sales & Marketing, Human Capital, Technology & Operations, and Finance & Corporate Development.



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## Helpful Resources

1. [Fisher Phillips FAQ for Employers re: COVID-19](#)
2. [OSHA Guide for Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)
3. [TriNet Guide for Small and Medium Businesses Preparing for COVID-19](#)
4. [TriNet “Preparing the Workplace for COVID-19” Webinar](#)
5. [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
6. [Davis Wright Tremaine LLP COVID-19 Practical Considerations and Guidance for Employers](#)
7. [California Labor and Workforce Development Agency COVID-19 Employer Resource Guide](#)



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