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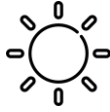
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Support for managers



June 2023



PHYSICALLY DISTANT, CONNECTED BY GOAL – OR HOW TO MANAGE A DISTRIBUTED TEAM?

In today's fast-changing digital world, we can engage with people located not only across the country but also around the world. This gives organisations global access to talent, which in turn allows them to build competent and diverse teams. Along with the benefits, however, come new challenges.

CHALLENGES IN MANAGING A DISTRIBUTED TEAM

- **Communication and relationship building.** Open space may not be the ideal workplace, but it certainly fosters spontaneous interactions and relationship building between employees. Sometimes a generally asked question will clarify the situation for many team members, and a quick coffee will help prevent a misunderstanding. We do not have such opportunities when working remotely.
- **Monitoring progress.** When you are in the office, you can easily watch what the employees are doing. You can approach someone's desk at any time and ask about the status of a task.
- **Weakening of attachment to the company.** Creating a shared culture in dispersed teams is often challenging, and failed attempts can lead to a decline in engagement, feelings of alienation and even isolation.

HOW TO DEAL WITH THESE CHALLENGES?

- **Establish team and individual communication channels.** How do you contact your employees when a matter is urgent? Where do you post important information for the team? This is important so that everyone knows what to expect. Make sure that every employee has the same access to information.
- **Use tools that make it easier to distribute tasks and check the status of their completion within the team** (e.g. Trello or Asana). Regularly set priorities for the whole team and for individual team members.
- **Establish regular status meetings.** It doesn't have to be an hour-long conversation with an employee once a week. Sometimes 5 minutes is enough, but more often! Work will go much faster when the employee can ask a question or clarify a doubt in real time. You, in turn, will keep an eye on everything.



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- **Make sure meetings are effective.** Protracted online meetings are a common bane of distributed teams. Set a plan, stick to a timeframe, avoid digressions. And turn the cameras on!
- **Update reporting rules.** Establish with your team what you are checking, how often, in what form and for what purpose. Try not to fall into the trap of excessive control. Each time, consider what the repeated questioning about the status of the task gives you.
- **Create space to build relationships.** This could be a regular virtual coffee, an online integration or a platform for sharing more personal information. Photos of pets are welcome!
- Consider how you celebrate the achievement of significant goals with your team. Celebrating is important! Perhaps some sort of a joint team ritual can be established?

Get inspired!

- Book [ENG] Long-Distance Leader by Eikenberry Kevin, Turmel Wayne

Do you find managing a distributed team challenging? Make an appointment for a consultation as part of EAP24 managerial support.

Contact EAP24 and benefit from psychological and/or managerial support.



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