5 Tips for Managing High-Performing Teams (Remotely!)

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Today's workplace is more digitized than ever before — especially in tech. Work-from-home adjustments and nearshore outsourcing have surged in the last two years, requiring the modern manager to adapt quickly. Working remotely hasn't changed the core of good management practice but has inspired reevaluating priorities and updating traditional methods. These five top tips will help you navigate this new digital workspace with grace and poise:

1. Focus on the destination

Office culture, especially in tech, has developed for years, assuming that filling a workweek with crunch time delivers optimal results. Over the last two years, evidence indicates that this isn't true — team members provide based on goals and measurable performance metrics, not a punch clock. Evidence suggests that comfort, an internet connection and geographical distance do not hamper results. Deliverables don't care how long you've spent working on them, and measurable progress is the best workplace motivator. Excellent management focuses on the destination and the team over the journey.

The best way to bring the team aboard is by leading by example — teach to inspire. If the employees feel comfortable with your management style, their reception will likely align with your vision through met targets and high responsiveness. As a manager, it is crucial not only to delegate but participate consistently while being available to give resolutions and

help accordingly.

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2. Preserve the workday

Working remotely has dramatically changed the nature of the workday meeting, as it should have – it's an open secret that most meetings should be emails! This necessity doesn't mean that management should sacrifice office hours, however. On the contrary, a solid routine of morning huddles and regular check-ins throughout the traditional day helps enforce the discipline of office life without the discomfort. Maintaining office schedules should be a priority for any modern developer or project manager – one made more accessible by clearly communicating meeting times and expectations as well as leveraging domestic and nearshore talent.

It goes without saying that many things are likely to get in the way when people work without physical supervision. However, assignments are a great way to keep tabs on productivity. You might be surprised if you think people need more hours to deliver. Some employees feel motivated to speed up progress and stay ahead to create time for other commitments. Thanks to technological innovations, we have a wide array of project management tools that offer 24/7 visibility of the team's progress, thus promoting accountability.

3. Keep it personal (within reason)

Geographically distributed and hybrid teams do not have a water cooler to gather around for small talk. Interactions are shorter and more personal in a digital space, and the mindful modern manager will find it necessary to interact with an individualized touch. Researching high-performing teams, Ron Friedman notes that the best teams are more effective because

they invest time connecting naturally, yielding closer friendships and better teamwork later. This is contrary to the assumption that it is because they work all the time.

Take time to intentionally create opportunities for interaction within the team as you would in the conventional office setup. Celebrate birthdays, send your employees complimentary gifts if you can afford to, and pay attention to individual engagement and passion levels. The goal is to create a play in the work environment to motivate engagement, consequently keeping distractions at bay. It is not unusual to encounter hiccups now and then. However, the best way to handle concerns is by taking them up with individuals or teams directly and separately.

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4. Follow up consistently

Teams working remotely need clear objectives and deliverables. In tech, time to work independently is vital – as is consistent reporting of achieved progress and metrics. Great managers learn to balance these needs, regularly checking in with team members in-office, at home, and nearshore without micromanaging. The key to good leadership is communication and direction in the office and digitally.

A good manager also keeps a few tricks up their sleeves to keep up with the few sly employees. The same way you would drop in on your team every once in a while at the office, impromptu check-ins make you unpredictable.

5. Build a culture of innovation

Remote teams work from their comfort zone, outside of the uniform conformity of the standardized office space.

Sometimes, team members collaborate from different nations in adjacent time zones. Project managers can leverage that unique comfort to deliver exceptional results. Work-from-home arrangements are a fantastic way to make good on that opportunity, using remote platforms to level-set while allowing teams the space to achieve deliverables in innovative ways.

Encourage creativity and innovative thinking by creating a safe space for sharing ideas. An excellent way to do so is by welcoming views on arising challenges. It comes down to employee preferences regarding working remotely and acknowledging their struggles. Remote working could be an excellent place to tap into your employees' creative side as they are already in their comfort zone. A little push could blossom into some of the most outstanding ideas.

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Modern hybrid workspaces and digital offices offer opportunities never before seen in business. With skill, the right team can deliver exceptional project results from traditional offices, homes and nearshore without compromising the standard workday. Remote management isn't going away – it should be an essential part of your toolbox.

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