

# Coronavirus

## Motivating virtual teams



COVID-19

#keepbusinessworking

**So, you've all tried out the trendy background settings, but now Zoom fatigue is setting in. Your team is sliding back to sending long emails rather than using the agreed instant messaging apps. Video conferencing calls are getting longer and less productive and you can tell people are doing other work while they are supposed to be participating.**

**Now is the perfect time to revisit and reset working from home expectations and check everyone has the technology and support they need to work effectively. Here are five tips to help you keep your team motivated and productivity levels up.**

### Lead by turning on your camera

It may seem obvious but if you are the first one to turn on your camera on every call then you will see other faces start to pop up. It's still important to see each other and although non-verbal cues can be harder to read through screens and tech delays, the more you see each other, the better you will get at judging how engaged your team really is.

### Show empathy

Keep listening and make time for regular 1:1 conversation with all your employees. Create and send appreciation boxes – these packages don't have to be expensive – a favourite healthy snack, candle, voucher and a hand-written note all go a long way to show your appreciation.

### Resist the email trap

Tone and emotion are tougher to get right if you only communicate using email and instant messaging. Use voice notes and video memos to get the same message across in a more personal way or go old school and use a phone! Set up a virtual coffee chat at the same time each week and encourage talking about non work-related stuff to keep your team bonding. If you

can't all be in the same place, you can at least feel like you are by setting up a team Spotify. A team playlist that everyone is adding and listening to creates a sense of sensory connection.

### Set clear expectations

Agree response times. If you are in the office, you can see that another person is in and out of meetings and under stress and you accept longer response times. Seeing a colleague might prompt you to finish a piece of work or ask for their advice. Working from home, these triggers aren't obvious so over communicate and clearly state expectations. Have clear agendas for video calls and circulate agreed actions.

### Create new traditions

Virtual collaboration presents the opportunity to create a new set of team rituals. Does everyone wear stripes on a Tuesday? Do you kick off each call with an energy check and yoga stretch? Ask your employees for ideas of what they think can help to keep each other in the zone.

### Together we'll keep business working.

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