

Keeping Your Employees on Track Through the Coronavirus Crisis

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In brief

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Running a business isn't exactly straightforward work at any time. But finding yourself trying to continue operations in the midst of a global pandemic can make things even more difficult. In January of this year, nobody could have predicted what the next few months would hold. The rapid spread of the deadly and contagious coronavirus has turned the world upside down for many of us. Hundreds of thousands have lost their lives. There are even more people who have lost loved ones and are finding themselves grieving. Even those who the virus itself hasn't directly impacted find themselves living in completely different circumstances to those they're used to. Governments worldwide implement a lockdown protocol, which requires everyone except key workers to stay at home and only leave to get the essentials, such as food and medicine. When people do leave their homes, they're being encouraged to wear face coverings, latex gloves, or use hand sanitizer while maintaining a two-meter distance from anyone else out at the same time. Unsurprisingly, this has hugely affected the way businesses operate, and the way employees work. Many businesses are struggling hugely - if their staff can't work while maintaining a two-meter distance. Unless the workplace can provide sufficient personal protective equipment, they can't continue operations. If your workplace can operate on a remote basis, you're in luck. Your workers can continue to work from home, and you can continue to make profits. But you're going to have to take a few different steps to help keep your employees on track during these difficult and unprecedented times. Here are a few to take into consideration!

Be Empathetic

First of all, you need to make sure you're being as empathetic as you can be. Nobody was prepared for this situation, and many employees won't be as productive as they'd usually be in the office while working from home. If any employees fall ill, you need to give them sufficient time to recover without placing too much pressure on them. Remember that some may have lost loved ones and will need to take time off to grieve. Schools are also closed, which means many employees will be trying to look after and teach their kids from home simultaneously as working. It's all a lot to ask. So, don't place too much pressure or too high expectations on your employees right now.

Make Sure They Have the Right Software and Tools

Working from home is different from working in an office space, and two main things factor into this. Firstly, you need to make sure your staff has the right equipment to work from home. If they usually work from a laptop in the office, this is relatively straightforward. They can take the laptop and its charger and take it home with them, so they have a device to complete their work on remotely. If you have your workers on computers in the office, things may be a little more difficult. As a part of the Work From Home nature in the business, the safety and security of the devices and tools used by the employees are also given higher priority. If the communication emails are delivered from an Android device, the android pgp programs should be used in all cases. You may have to invest in laptops to be delivered to them for them to work on. We don't know how long this situation will continue, so we see it as an investment. They could be using this laptop for months to come! Another area to focus on is ensuring that your staff has the right software to work remotely. Remember that in the office, communication is straightforward. If your staff is struggling with something, need clarification, or if projects are being pitched and ideas are being presented, getting the communication across is really easy. They can walk to someone else's desk. They can arrange a meeting. There are all sorts of face-to-face options. But when working remotely, this is more difficult. Your staff can't see when others are busy. They don't know if they'll be interrupting. Messages can get lost. Having the right software on board to help with these things can make working from home significantly easier for your staff. Make the most of resources like free employee scheduling tools and software so everyone knows when people are occupied or not. You may also want to consider software like Microsoft Teams. This is ideal for remote workers, offering staff everything they need to communicate with one another in an effective manner. It includes instant messaging software, as well as options for the security team meeting. Presentations are another great mode of remote team communication. Using tools like visually appealing PowerPoint templates can help create highly impactful business presentations, further improving remote team communications.

Make They Know What Is Expected of Them

It may be difficult for staff to keep on top of their work right now, as they may feel they don't have any direction or know exactly what is expected of them while working under these new conditions. So it's a good idea to clear up any doubts by outlining clear expectations in the form of KPIs (or "key performance indicators") and by setting goals. This will give a good indication of what staff needs to have achieved and by when. In addition, it will let everyone better organize their working days so they can ensure that every task they need to complete is turned in on time and of good quality. This can be good for the procrastinators amongst your workers, too, as it will ensure they don't fall behind or slack.

Create Routes for Feedback

Communication between you and your staff is important during this time, too - not just communication between your employees. Useful change, your staff is the best people to suggest improvements that can be made to help them be more productive while working from home. But, of course, many employees will walk on eggshells around their boss and will be reluctant to say anything potentially negative about the business' operations. But you do need problems to be highlighted to rectify them and ensure everyone can work to the best of their ability at all times! So, how can you get clear and honest communication from your staff? The answer is anonymous surveys. Asking your staff questions on an anonymous questionnaire will give them a chance to make suggestions without fear of repercussion. You never know, someone might make a simple suggestion that is simple to implement but could save your company a lot of money or help you make much larger profits through productivity increases!

Maintain a Sense of Team Spirit

Team bonding and team spirit are essential in any workforce. Of course, individual brilliance is important, but at the same time, people need to work together to produce the best results possible! Now, creating a team bond while remote working is in play may seem difficult. But there are ways to keep team spirit high. Nowadays, there are more and more apps and more pieces of software out there that allow for group video calls. Therefore, it's a good idea to get all members of set teams together on these calls so everyone can see each other at once and catch up. Just try not to have too many people on a call at once, as people can start talking over each other due to delays in transmission between different devices. These are just a few suggestions that can help to keep everyone in your company on track professionally during this worldwide pandemic. Sure, it may take a little time for everyone to settle into this new way of working - and hopefully, it will all pass soon. But for now, the above tips and tricks can really help to maintain good spirits and productivity!

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