

Greasing the Gears – Taking the Friction Out of a Suddenly Remote Workforce

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Today's situation is not normal

- 1) There are things you CAN'T control.
- 2) There are things you CAN do to minimize friction



If you're leading an organization...

1. Focus on the business case and the ROI.
2. Set reasonable expectations – consistent flexibility is key.
3. Provide the optimal tools for the job.
4. Reduce the work-from-home and 'new tool' friction.

1. Focus on the business case and the ROI – it keeps you positive.

“...make an educated and intentional decision about how telecommuting will impact your business, research the processes and understand the benefits that you can expect by making the change... (Spoiler alert: the average is \$11,000 USD per part-time worker.)”

-- Laurel Farrer, Forbes



2. Set reasonable expectations – consistent flexibility is key.

“We all have loved ones who need care, groceries that need purchasing, doctor’s appointments to keep, neighbors who need a phone call. And you know what? We trust our colleagues. People will work when they can, and when they can’t, we trust they’ll be right.”

-- Katherin Maher, CEO of Wikimedia



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If you're leading a team...

1. Be willing to change the way you and your team work together.
2. Model your behavior to encourage changes you want from your team.
3. Deliberately connect with each other.
4. Ask your team what they need to be productive.

3. Deliberately connect with each other.

“after three weeks of working from home, a manager helped moderate a video chat for 20 people on their team. With drinks in hand, they talked about their working environment, their pets, their families (some showed their kids on camera), and shared happy and funny stories.”

-- Bloomberg, Hong Kong

If you're an individual contributor...

1. Keep a practical routine
2. Prioritize your connection with your team
3. Reduce discomfort and distraction
4. Understand how to work across devices

1. Setup a practical routine and a stable workspace

“Try to stick to some semblance of your original routine from before you started working from home... If you needed to be at your desk at 8 a.m., don’t wake up at 7:59.

“I bought a small table and chair to sit at, and advise getting a monitor and separate mouse/keyboard so you’re not slouched over a tiny laptop.”

-- Bloomberg, Hong Kong