

MANAGING FROM AFAR

LINDENWOOD LEARNING ACADEMY



LEADERSHIP IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

As we navigate the impacts of the coronavirus, it is more important than ever to exercise flexibility and trust with, and provide guidance and support to, those you supervise.

FACTS

The number of people working remotely in the U.S. increased 159% between 2005 and 2017, reaching 4.7 million people – 3.4% of the total U.S. workforce (Human Resource Executive). While working remotely is new for most of the Lindenwood community, it is not new for close to 5 million people in the U.S. We can learn from the wins and losses of others as we make our way through this territory for the first time as supervisors.

GOOD NEWS

The good news is that we are not doing this alone and we can lean on each other. The Learning Academy is here to provide assistance and guidance as we navigate these uncertain times.

Contact us at

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REMOTE WORK CONSIDERATIONS

As supervisors, now is the time, more than ever, to be vigilant about employee engagement. Engagement has been described as the **emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals** (Kruse, 2012). There are several methods organizations can use to engage employees and retain top talent: **providing trusting and challenging environments** (Gupta, 2015); **offering transparency and recognition** (Green, Edwards, & Tokarsky, 2017); **insisting on constant feedback and consistent performance management** (Magee, 2002); and developing a **personal connection with a supervisor** (Fitch & Van Brunt, 2016).

"As much as remote work can be fraught with challenges, there are also relatively quick and inexpensive things that managers can do to ease the transition" (HBR).

Trust

Identify ways to be deliberate about providing trusting relationships to your teammates. Gallup suggests that when supervisors treat their employees with trust, employees will trust their supervisors in turn. Hambley says, "Supervisors with remote team members need to be more intentional, more organized and work harder to establish trust than traditional managers. You can't get away with lazy leadership. You must proactively reach out to people regularly to create a sense of teamwork and community." [How to Manage Remote Teams Effectively](#).

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

What better time to promote growth of your employees? Are there things that you have always wished you had the time to research or create? Set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, Timely) for your employees to complete **stretch assignments**, create **how-to guides** for new and continuing employees, develop a **proposal to improve processes**, research **best practices**, and take advantage of [LinkedIn Learning](#).

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MICROSOFT TEAMS

Do you want to learn more about accessing Microsoft Teams? These three videos will help:

- [Schedule and Start a Video Meeting.](#)
- [Create Instant Meeting with Meet Now.](#)
- [Microsoft Teams - Comprehensive Training Resources from Microsoft](#)

UNIFY REMOTELY

- Hold virtual [stand ups](#)
- Engage your employees in [decision-making](#).
- Give everyone a voice
- [Empower employees](#)
- Establish rules of engagement and communication guidelines
- Be available
- Get everyone together on a Zoom or Microsoft Teams call at least once a week

[Unify Your Remote Workforce With These 12 Management Tactics](#)

PERFORMANCE

Employees *need to know* what is expected of them during these uncertain times. Every employee interaction (even remote interactions) can potentially impact the engagement level which then can directly or indirectly impact the organizations' bottom line. Be intentional, it is worth the extra effort.

Communication

Supervisors should create a communication plan for the team. Set up regularly scheduled team meetings using Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Establish Monday kick-off meetings that allow time to talk about each other's weekends in addition to plans and priorities for the upcoming week. Put virtual coffee breaks on the calendar to have casual conversations with individual employees. This will provide the much needed connection during these ever-changing times.

[Viewpoint: What's Your Company's Emergency Remote-Work Plan?](#)



RECOGNITION

Recognizing employees—making them feel valued and appreciated—may also support engagement. Supervisors need to let their employees know their ideas count (Kruse, 2016; & Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). Providing employees with meaningful work may also increase employee engagement. When leaders nominate individuals on their teams to participate in enhanced development opportunities, those individuals experienced greater motivation to perform at a higher level and exceed expectations (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017).

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