



Job
@Jobvo

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16:00

1/ I've been managing people remotely for 8 years. Here's how to be a better manager in a remote (distributed) team:

2/ First off: being a great manager and being a great remote manager are nearly identical.

Most of these tips would directly translate to an office. If you are a good manager in the office, transition shouldn't be hard.

I.e. you don't need to smell people to manage them.

3/ One-on-one calls:

Have regularly 1:1 calls with all your reports. The point of these calls is to check in with the person, not the work.

What that means in practice is that you don't spend that time reviewing work - you can do that async.

4/ You spend the 1:1 time coaching, unblocking, helping them grow, providing feedback, discussing plans and doubts, etc.

Feedback first, then strategic, then tactical. Many managers make the mistake of doing this the other direction.

Do 1:1 meetings weekly. 30-60 minutes.

5/ Reduce length and frequency based on preferences of either party and/or a feeling of needing it less.

Always have an agenda, but keep it light. This is the exception to the rule of running tight meetings.

6/ You want to have the breathing room to discuss more sensitive and/or personal matters (e.g. job performance). Don't rush those.

7/ Setting the example:

Work and communicate in public for everything but personal matters. It's super easy to fall back into the habit of DMing people, rather than having discussions in public channels (be those @SlackHQ or your project mngt tool, or @NotionHQ

8/ This makes you much more accessible, visible, and sets a great example that reinforces async standards.

9/ Document things yourself. Don't delegate minor documentation tasks if you're directly involved. No one is too big to write documentation.

10/ Regularly check in on workload and working hours of all your reports.

Working remotely makes it much easier to overwork, and not everyone will naturally bring this up or even make it visible.

You have to ask.

11/ When you find that people are overtired, overworked or just need a break - give them that break.

Take their work/worries away and let them take off. Don't postpone this, do it right away. Rest is essential.

12/ Limit number of reports:

You should not have many reports. More than 8 is really hard to manage well. Exceptions to this are very experienced people, but everyone needs a coach or someone to help them get unstuck.

13/ A good manager is available to their team. That means they can make time for everyone.

14/ If you have more than ~8 reports, split the team up and either add hierarchy or some other structure that makes it so everyone has a manager that has time for them.

Point being: you need to have someone that can help you out. If you are that person, you need time for it.

15/ Document, document, document. No matter your seniority or rank, you should be documenting.

Document how you work, how you expect to work with others. Make changes to documentation that other people wrote proactively. Be the example.

16/ Connect individually at a deeper level, i.e. don't neglect to bond emotionally with the people you work with. This will make it more fun, and easier to work together - especially when times are tough.

17/ Hiring is a huge part of this. Here's a few nuggets on it, will expand in the future:

18/ Hire great people you can trust. Then once people are onboarded, give them that trust from day one. Always assume good intent. Don't ramp up on this, or wait until you see results. That's a false start for everyone involved. Trust starts day 1.

19/ To hire great people, focus on shared values.

Don't focus on remote working experience, but look for whether someone can work independently, and is able to communicate effectively. That'll fully determine whether they can do their work remotely.

20/ Once hired, set expectations. It can be super helpful to create 30/60/90 day plan with targeted goals.

Make feedback highly actionable by linking and documenting.

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