



# DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH STRATEGIES FOR REMOTE WORKERS

The outbreak of COVID-19 is posing multiple challenges on several ends, both internally and in the way we interact with our clients. The same way ensuring business continuity is critical, helping people grow both personally and professionally is necessary to keep a high-performance culture and deliver sustainable value in everything we do.

- 1 DO NOT FORGET TO DEVELOP YOUR PEOPLE:** working remotely and adapting to swift change is a real test for managers. Discuss with your people what they have been able to work on, and assess how it fits with the current situation.
- 2 MORE RECURRENT FEEDBACK IS CRUCIAL:** Talking every 6 months is not enough. Connect with your people weekly and redefine progress and key actions to commit to as things evolve.
- 3 IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND GROW:** Opportunities to adapt and learn new things appear every day. Discuss with your team members how to leverage them and provide a picture of potential areas of focus when *business as usual* resumes.



## Encourage DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is a key driver of engagement and a challenging element to manage when working remotely. When employees are not used to it, the sense of isolation can take a toll on the perception of career development.

Review with your employees what the main areas of development are that you have been discussing prior to working remotely. Set a meeting with your team members individually and find the best way to either support them to achieve their goals, adapt to the new situation or find alternative areas of focus.

Let your employees talk and share what their expectations are around how they can be supported and developed. Development is fundamentally personalized but now, working remotely has a different meaning for each employee, and individualization is more important than ever before.

Pay special attention to those employees in the areas where remote working poses a greater challenge or where clarity of expectations can be at stake more acutely. Also, try to take special care of recent hires as their initial development and onboarding experience will shape the next years to come.

## Redefine and align on the meaning of PROGRESS

Managing remote workers involves taking care of hygiene factors that allow people to do their best, but even more so, of motivational factors. Don't let your people feel unsupported or uncertain around how they are performing, as feedback is a cornerstone for performance.

Six months is a long-time horizon. Focus on discussing progress on a weekly basis and define monthly goals for your people, as working remotely is a huge change for your employees and things evolve rather quickly. Having tailored goals for each individual and what working remotely means for them, will help them feel empowered and valued.

Make goal-setting a two-way process you discuss with your team. They are facing new unprecedented daily challenges that affect their engagement. Taking their input into consideration will make sure the goals you both establish are more actionable, measure what really matters and make people feel empowered.

As simple as it can sound, start with the good old habits and routines that take place *on-site*. Think about what are the *trademark* activities that make you a great manager, and your employees value and appreciate you. Try to replicate them virtually as much as possible. Leverage what has been working well in the past and avoid creating additional complexity.

## Identify and build on new opportunities to LEARN & GROW

Many things are being thrown at us that we need to learn fast. At the same time, individuals may have more availability to focus on learning that has been on the back burner for some time. Whether it be out of necessity or availability of bandwidth, take advantage and recognize growth.

There are multiple new ways of working taking place. Often, organizations don't articulate the importance of the new way of working so it isn't seen as an opportunity to learn. Discuss with your team all the new skills you will have when the new normal sets in. Technology is certainly a good example.

Many online courses are being offered temporarily for no cost. Share some examples with your team. Send links of opportunities that you feel will help them in their career. Have them share something each month that they have learned from these classes and feel is relevant to the team and your business. Use this time to bring new ideas into how work gets done.

Share the goals or challenges your team is facing and ask your team members to do some research online to learn from what other organizations are doing. Develop their curiosity about the industry you operate in.

Spend time with each high-potential team member discussing their career. Get them started building relationships with individuals that will help them achieve the future they want at your organization.

