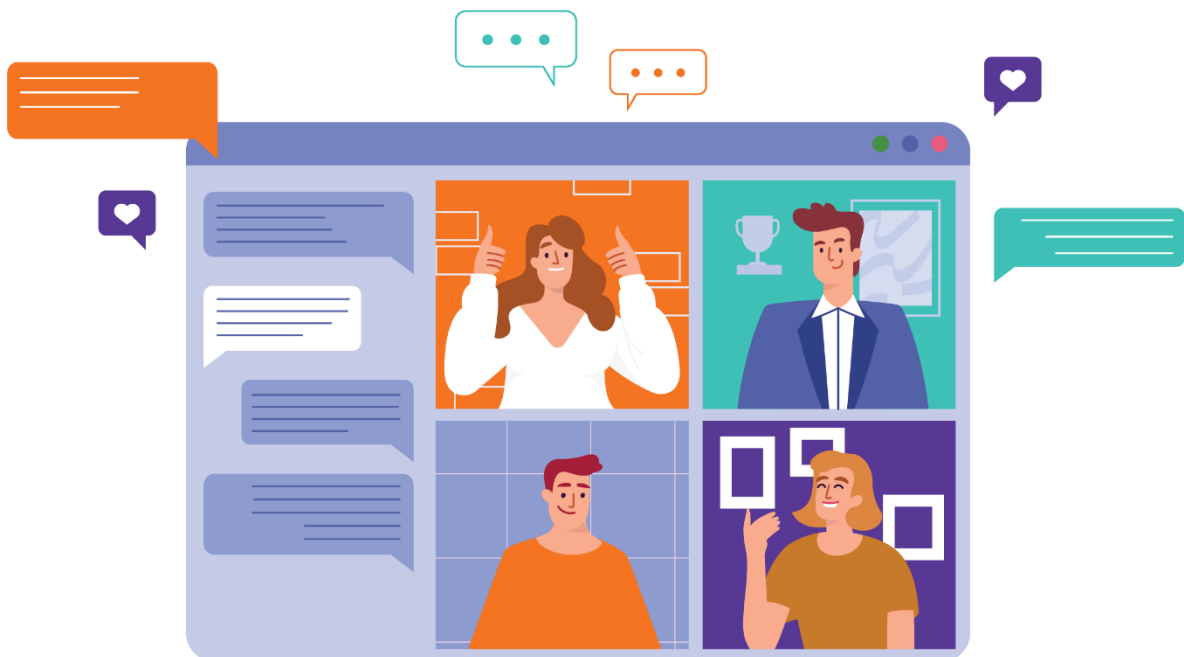




# In-Service training course for VET professionals

## Virtual Team Leaders Training



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## Overview of the training

### **Introduction**

Working remotely is growing faster than ever and shows no sign of slowing down. It's the future of work with benefits for both employers and employees. This training aims to help team leaders of eWorkers to adopt a positive attitude and advance their employees' wellbeing to promote performance.

This project aims to combine specific virtual team leadership competences with digital skills and wellbeing and engagement practices. The training tools included in the following modules have been especially designed to be applicable in any professional industry settings and will enable all Leaders to follow and cultivate and/or acquire invaluable capacities that will help them flourish both personally and professionally.

With this training course team Leaders/Managers will be able to acquire the skills and competences of working remotely and/or managing virtual teams, with an emphasis on wellbeing and engagement.

### **Training objectives:**

The aim of this training is to empower and equip team leaders with skills that will enable them to support eworkers and individuals in working remotely.

Through this training team leaders will be able to acknowledge the importance of digital skills and wellbeing practices in maintaining healthy and productive virtual teams.

More specifically, its objectives include:

- (1) the development of appropriate competencies in team leaders to better manage virtual team wellbeing and productivity and
- (2) enrich Virtual Team Leaders' capacity to use the appropriate technological tools.

### **Modules**

Module 1: Wellbeing practices for teleworking

Module 2: Building engagement and trust with virtual team members

Module 3: Effective use of technology and tools to support communication within the team

Module 4: Tracking progress and performance management of team members to achieve success

Module 5: Building skills in eWorkers for productivity



Module 6: Assisting eWorkers maintain work-life balance

## Learning outcomes

Which learning outcomes are addressed by the training?

The training for Team Leaders Training aims to address the following learning outcomes:

- Help Team Leaders understand and develop the skills required to effectively manage a virtual team
- Help Team Leaders understand the usefulness of wellbeing practices in teleworking
- Help Team Leaders build engagement and trust with members of their virtual team
- Effectively use technology and tools to support communication within the team
- Improve their communication and feedback approach with their virtual team
- Track progress and performance management of team members to achieve success
- Assist leaders in making their virtual teams able to achieve the full benefits from this style of working

### *Estimated duration*

18H/12H

## Module 1 - Wellbeing practices for teleworking

### Short overview of the module

Module 1 intends to provide virtual team leaders with a compact and comprehensive list of practical activities that can apply to support the wellbeing of remote workers.

### Estimated duration of the module

3H

### Objectives of the module

This module aims to give virtual leaders a better understanding of what wellbeing is and introduce them to some wellbeing practices for teleworking. It aims to provide them with skills that will enable them to safeguard and promote eWorkers wellbeing, including setting a self-care strategy, enforcing work life balance, and allocating fairly workloads to eWorkers. Participants will also be introduced to ways in which they can help eWorkers feel less lonely and isolated. Such activities can help promote eWorkers psychosocial wellbeing.

Upon successful completion of this module eWorkers should be able to develop their own action plan on how to safeguard their wellbeing.

### Learning outcomes of the module

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>MODULE 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand what is meant by wellbeing</li> <li>Explain what burnout is and identify early signs of it</li> <li>Learn the importance of self-care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn to identify the early signs of burnout</li> <li>Create self-care strategy</li> <li>Allocate fair and balanced workload to eWorkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciate the importance of wellbeing in the workplace</li> <li>Treating self-care as a necessity and not a luxury</li> </ul>

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the importance of social connection for eWorkers' wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn ways to stay socially connected with eWorkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciating the importance of social connectedness with their team members</li> </ul>

### Module Content

Session 1: What does wellbeing mean to you? (30 mins)

Employees' wellbeing is the foundation of a strong and engaged team.

Working remotely has many advantages but research also shows that **nearly half of remote workers feel less healthy mentally** working from home (Nuffield Health, 2021).

It is essential then for leaders to support and care about their eWorkers wellbeing.

**Step 1.** Watch the short video "What is wellbeing" provided below and take notes during the video on what wellbeing means.

[What is wellbeing](#)

**Step 2.** Take a few minutes and note down your own understanding of wellbeing- What does it mean to you?

Although there is no consensus around a single definition of well-being, in the present module we will be focusing on the **psychosocial dimension of wellbeing**. Psychosocial well-being refers to a state of mind where an employee experiences **positive emotions** such as **happiness and satisfaction**, and is able to develop and maintain **meaningful relationships** with others and fulfill his/her need for belongingness.

**Step 3.** What factors can impact your eWorkers wellbeing? Watch the video below and note down possible factors that might impact the wellbeing of your team.



[The remote-working revolution: how to get it right | The Economist](#)

**Step 4.** After watching the video, you could arrange a 1-2-1 meeting with your team members and discuss the following questions.

1. How would they rate their satisfaction with their overall wellbeing on a scale from 1-5 (1- not satisfied at all to 5 - very satisfied)
2. What factors impact their wellbeing while working remotely?
3. Are they able to work productively in their remote-work environment?
4. How well does the team work together?
5. What are their needs? How could you as a leader help with their wellbeing?
6. How strongly do they feel valued/appreciated at work?

Session 2: Familiarize yourself with the early signs of burnout (40 mins- 1 hr.)

**86% of employees who work from home full-time experience burnout (Gallup, 2022).**

**Excessive and prolonged emotional, physical, and mental stress can lead to burnout. Burnout happens when you're overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to keep up with life's and work's demands.**

**Step 1:** Dimensions of Burnout - Watch the short video "What does it mean to have Burnout?" and note down the three dimensions of burnout.

[What Does It Mean to Have "Burnout"?](#)

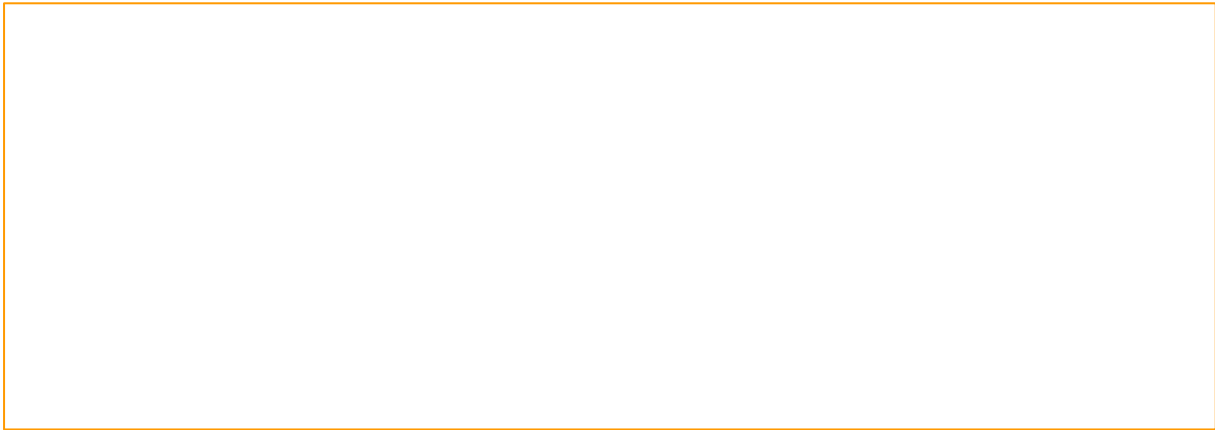
**Step 2.** Take some time to reflect on the video you just watched.

Can you relate to the description of burnout?

Do you believe that any of your team members would relate to this description of burnout?

**Step 3.** Read the following reviews article ["Burnout Symptoms and Treatment"](#) and try to answer the following questions:

1. What are the most **common signs** of burnout? Note down at least 3
2. Have you noticed any such signs within your team of eWorkers?
3. What are some **causes/risk factors** of burnout?
4. Are such risks prevalent in your workplace?



### Session 3: Prevention and Treatment of Burnout & Stress (40 mins)

Burnout is reversible. A leader can help an eWorker who is feeling burned out to make some changes to their work environment and daily routine. Below you will find some tips and suggestions.

**Tip 1: Encourage your team to create self-care strategies.**

Self-care looks different for everyone and that is okay. It can vary from going to the gym to having dinner with your family.

**Step 1:** To get a more in-depth idea of what self-care is watch the TED video below on “Self Care: What it really is”

[Self Care: What It Really Is | Susannah Winters |](#)

[TEDxHiltonHeadWomen](#)



**Step 2:** eWorkers wellbeing starts from the top. Make sure you and other leaders are taking care of themselves so they can take better care of their teams. Reflect on what self-care practices you apply to yourself. Note down a few self-care practices that you apply.



**Step 3.** Help your team create their own self-care strategy by playing online **self-care bingo** [here](#). This online tool can help you with encouraging your team members to engage in self-care activities in a fun and interactive way. Example of activities that you can include in your online self-care bingo can be found in the image below



**Tip 2. Prioritise and enforce work life balance (please see [Module 6](#))**

Below are some simple ways that you can promote eWorkers' work life balance:

- Value vacations and time off
- Offer flexible schedules
- Set clear boundaries between your professional and personal life
- Help them with managing their time more effectively and prioritising their tasks

**Tip 3. Allocate fair and balanced workloads to eWorkers.**

Pay attention to how you are delegating and balancing workloads across the team. Especially for remote teams, it can be difficult for leaders to have clear insight into the work people are doing day-to-day. That is why regular team check-ins, one-on-ones, feedback systems, and project management tools are so important. Check our [toolkit](#) to get ideas of tools that you can use for effective remotely project or performance management.

Ensure that your team is properly staffed to accommodate the amount of work required. As a leader your role is also to clarify performance goals regularly and revise as needed to meet organisational requirements.

#### Session 4: Ensure that out-of-sight doesn't mean out-of-mind. (40 mins)

eWorkers often feel **isolated and lonely**. Especially extroverted personalities may suffer from this as they are used to gaining their energy from those around them. Such feelings can make eWorkers more **vulnerable to stress** and have a negative impact on their **psychosocial wellbeing**. Leaders need to be proactive in ensuring that eWorkers do not feel lonely while being away from the office.

**Step 1.** Stay connected with your team by **effectively using ICT's**.

Review the [toolkit](#) section on tools for effective communication when teleworking and note down which tools you are currently using and/or which ones you could potentially use in the future.

**Step 2.** Be proactive in reaching out, connecting, engaging and interacting with your team members.

Instead of simply waiting for scheduled meetings, sometimes it is helpful to have that “virtual” coffee break or an informal chat with an eWorker.

You never know, they may be feeling somewhat isolated and will appreciate your making the effort to interact with them. This could eventually lead to reduced feelings of loneliness and improved psychosocial wellbeing.

Review the following article: [Virtual Happy Hour: Everything You Need To Plan a Fun Event | Hoppier](#) and draft your next virtual happy hour with your team below answering the following questions:

1. When are you planning to have your virtual happy hour (specify month, day of week and time)  
Hint: read section on “Schedule your virtual happy hour at the right time”



2. Which platform will you use to host your virtual happy hour? Hint: read section “Choose Platform”
3. Choose your next virtual happy hour theme and briefly describe it. Hint: read section “11 Virtual Happy Hour Ideas to Take Your Event to the Next Level”

**Step 3.** Encourage your team to create social support networks.

Social support networks enable eWorkers to establish a network with whom team members can **discuss and provide mutual assistance, discuss challenges** that they might be facing, or even **best practices** for working remotely.

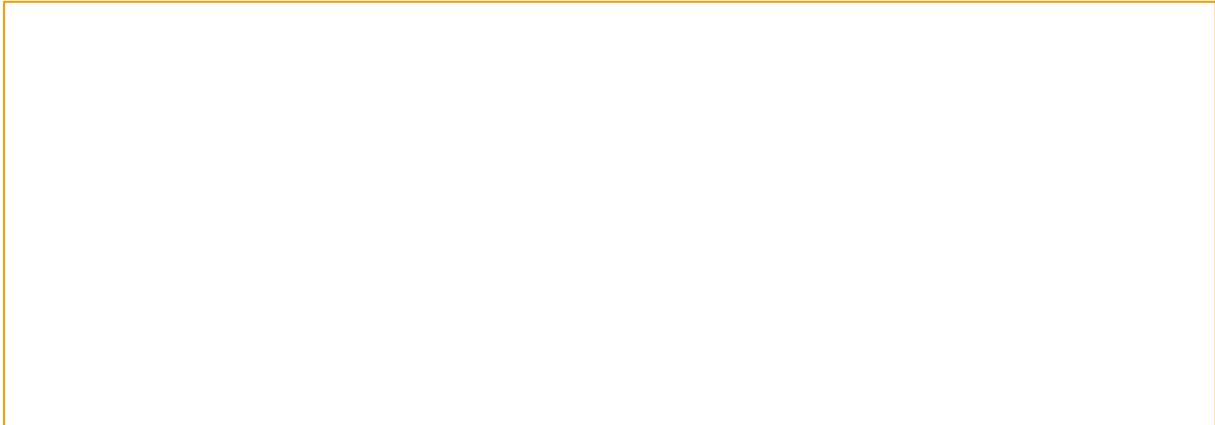
There are many **LinkedIn groups** for remote workers, and most of them are active and engaged. It's a great place to connect with other remote workers, ask for advice, and learn from other people's experiences.

In this short video [Joining LinkedIn Groups](#) you will learn how to search and join groups on LinkedIn.

Some common and large groups for remote workers are:

- Remote Work Professionals (over 190,000 members)
- The Virtual Workplace (over 160,000 members)
- The Work-At-Home Woman (over 50,000 members)

**Step 4.** In this article [How to Find Support Communities for Remote Workers](#) you can find some of the **best online communities for remote workers**, and **tips** on how to join them and get the most out of them. Read the article and note down **3 online communities** that you could suggest your team (or you) to join. Pick **three key tips** that you could share with your team on how they could join and make the most out of these groups.



In your next 1-2-1 meeting with an eWorker of your team, present them with possible online groups for remote workers and tips on how they can join and get the most out of it. This could eventually lead to reduced feelings of loneliness and improved psychosocial wellbeing.

### Session 5: Action Plan (30 mins)

Based on what you have learned in this module, help your eWorkers to create their own action plan on how they can safeguard their wellbeing. What steps/actions can they take (e.g. join an online community for remote workers, self-care strategies, tools for internal communication/ social connectedness)?



### *Handouts and activity sheets*

- Handouts,
- Activity Sheets,

## Assessment tools

1. Which of the following are common signs of burnout?

- a. Cynicism (emotional distance)
- b. Lack of energy
- c. Difficulty concentrating
- d. All of the above

2. A high-stress job always leads to burnout

True/False

3. Which of the following are considered as risk factors for burnout?

- a. unreasonable time pressure
- b. lack of role clarity
- c. unmanageable workload
- d. All of the above

4. Reflective Question: Members of your virtual team often complain that they find it difficult to maintain a healthy work life balance. Note down at least 3 steps that you as a leader can take to promote your eWorkers' work life balance.

5. Which of the following statements are **true** about self-care?

- a) Self-care requires a lot of effort
- b) Self-care is an excuse to escape from everyday life
- c) Self-care looks different to everyone and varies
- d) Self-care can be costly in order to be effective

## Bibliography

- **Suggested Reading**

Charalampous, M., Grant, C. A., Tramontano, C., & Michailidis, E. (2019). Systematically reviewing remote e-workers' well-being at work: A multidimensional approach. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 28*(1), 51-73.

Gallup. "Remote Workers Facing High Burnout: How to Turn It Around." Accessed on June 16, 2022.

- **Further Resources**

Grant, C. A., Wallace, L. M., & Spurgeon, P. C. (2013). An exploration of the psychological factors affecting remote eworker's job effectiveness, well-being and work-life balance. *Employee Relations*.

## Appendix

### Correct answers to the Assessment tools

1. Which of the following are common signs of burnout?

- a. Cynicism (emotional distance)
- b. Lack of energy
- c. Difficulty concentrating
- d. All of the above

2. A high-stress job always leads to burnout

True/False

3. Which of the following are considered as risk factors for burnout?

- a. unreasonable time pressure
- b. lack of role clarity
- c. unmanageable workload
- d. all of the above

4. Reflective Question: Members of your virtual team often complain that they find it difficult to maintain a healthy work life balance. Note down at least 3 steps that you as a leader can take to promote your eWorkers' work life balance.

**Indicative answer:** Value vacations and time off, offer flexible schedules, set clear boundaries between your professional and personal life, Help them with managing their time more effectively and prioritising their tasks

5. Which of the following statements are **true** about self-care?

- a. Self-care requires a lot of effort
- b. Self-care is an excuse to escape from everyday life
- c. Self-care looks different to everyone and varies
- d. Self-care can be costly in order to be effective



## Module 2 - How to build engagement and trust with virtual team members

### Short overview of the module

Module 2 intends to provide virtual team leaders with a compact and comprehensive list of practical activities that can apply to build engagement and trust in remote workers.

### Estimated duration of the module

3H

### Objectives of the module

This module aims to give virtual leaders a better understanding of what employee engagement and trust are and how they can help eWorkers become more engaged. It aims to provide them with skills that will enable them to build engagement and trust in remote workers, including showing appreciation and recognition to employees. Participants will also be introduced to ways with which they will be able to enhance employees' sense of autonomy - a key factor that can lead to trust and engagement. Upon successful completion of this module leaders should be able to develop their own action plan on how to build engagement and trust in remote workers.

### Learning outcomes of the module

For each of the training programmes and each module:

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>MODULE 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand what is meant by work engagement and trust</li> <li>Understand the benefits of having an engaged team</li> <li>Explain the 5 languages of appreciation at</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn to increase employees' sense of autonomy and reduce micromanaging</li> <li>Develop skills on how to show appreciation and recognition to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciate the importance and value of showing appreciation and recognition</li> <li>Focusing on increasing team member's sense of autonomy and reducing</li> </ul>

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
	work	their team members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set an action plan on how to build their team members' engagement and trust.</li> </ul>	micromanaging behaviours.

## Module Content

### Session 1a: Defining work engagement (20 mins)

A key issue for leaders is how to maintain or increase remote employee engagement.

#### But what do we mean by engagement?

**Step 1:** Take a few minutes to reflect and note down some thoughts on what work engagement is.

The description of an employee's profile below will help you get an understanding of what is meant by employee engagement:

Jack has been working as an accountant for 3 years now. He feels **passionate** about his job, he is **committed** to his organisation and puts **discretionary effort** into his work.

**Definition of engagement:** *“Work engagement is a positive, affective-motivational state of fulfillment that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption”* (Schaufeli et al., 2001).

**Vigor:** refers to high levels of energy and resilience, the willingness to invest effort in one's job, not being easily fatigued, and persistence in the face of difficulties

**Dedication:** refers to a strong involvement in one's work, accompanied by feelings of enthusiasm and significance, and by a sense of pride and inspiration

**Absorption:** refers to a pleasant state of total immersion in one's work which is characterized by time passing quickly and being unable to detach oneself from the job

**Step 2.** Why does work engagement matter? Watch the short video on [Why is Employee Engagement Important?](#) and note down some reasons why leaders should focus on having an engaged team.

Employee engagement matters because more engaged teams show these **improvements**<sup>1</sup>:

**Increases:**

- 22% in profitability
- 21% in productivity
- 10% in customer ratings

**Decreases:**

- 41% in quality defects
- 48% in safety incidents
- 37% in absenteeism

**Step 3.** What factors can impact work engagement? In the [Gallup article](#) , read the section on “What are the drivers of employee engagement” and note down the factors that might impact your remote team's engagement.

Can you think of other factors that could increase employee engagement?

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://www.custominsight.com/employee-engagement-survey/what-is-employee-engagement.asp>

**Step 4.** Arrange a 1-2-1 meeting with your team members and discuss the following questions.

1. How would they rate their overall level of engagement on a scale from 1-5 (1- not engaged at all to 5 - very engaged)
2. What factors impact their engagement while working remotely?
3. What are their needs? How could you as a leader help with building their work engagement?

### Session 1b: Defining trust in the workplace (20 mins)

Learning how to **build trust** at work is key if you are going to lead remote working teams.

**Step 1.** Take some time and reflect on what trust really means? What exactly are we talking about when we discuss about trust?

**It takes time to build trust...**When we discuss trust, we are talking about:

- Earning someone's credibility
- Feeling secure and confident when dealing with someone

**Step 2.** Why should we care about trust in the workplace? Read the following short article [Trust in the Workplace: Why It Is so Important Today and How to Build It](#) and note some key reasons.



## Session 2: The Power of Appreciation and Recognition (40 mins)

Two of the top drivers of work engagement and trust are **appreciation** and **recognition** of one's work and efforts.

When employees' feel that they will be recognised and appreciated if they contribute to the organisation's success, they are **2.7x more likely to be highly engaged** compared to employees who do not feel recognised and appreciated.

**Step 1.** Watch the video below and note down the benefits of appreciation at work [Mel Robbins: Why showing appreciation is YOUR superpower](#)

**Step 2.** Take some time to reflect on whether you, as a leader, show appreciation to your team members. If yes, how? How frequently do you show your recognition to your team members? If not, what are some possible reasons?

<p><b>Step 3.</b> Appreciation and recognition come in different forms. Watch this short <a href="#">video</a> on the <b>5 Languages of appreciation at work</b> by Psychologists Gary Chapman &amp; Paul White. While watching the video take notes of the 5 different ways with which you can show appreciation and fill in the description of each “language” in the table below. <b>Language of appreciation</b></p>	<p><b>Description</b></p>
<p><b>Words of affirmation</b></p>	
<p><b>Quality time</b></p>	
<p><b>Acts of service</b></p>	
<p><b>Tangible gifts</b></p>	
<p><b>Physical touch (think of ways that this can be applied in remote settings)</b></p>	

Language of appreciation	Example
Words of affirmation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Send private message of gratitude to your team members</i></li> <li>2.</li> </ol>
Quality time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>
Acts of service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>
Tangible gifts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>
Physical touch	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>

**Step 5.** Take some time to reflect and think of how you could apply each of these languages of appreciation to your remote team members. Note down at least two examples for each ‘language’. An example is already provided for “words of affirmation”.

**Step 6.** Many tools and platforms are available that leaders can use to show recognition and appreciation to their employees working remotely. Review the best online tools/platforms for employee recognition “[10 Best Employee Recognition Platforms To Celebrate Top Talent In 2022](#)” and select **two tools** that you could eventually use to show appreciation to your team members.

**Step 7.** Below you can find some **further suggestions** for ways to show recognition to your employees who work remotely:

- Appreciation letter
- Give social media shout out
- Personalised appreciation gifts
- Constructive feedback
- Remember work anniversaries & birthdays
- Celebrate Employee Appreciation Day (first Friday in March?) with a special treat.

**Step 8. Tips** on giving effective recognition:

- Address team and individual needs
- Do not delay
- Publicize the appreciation
- Go beyond the work goals
- Keep it frequent
- Rejoice the small moments

### Session 3. Avoid micromanaging - provide autonomy (50 minutes)

Closely monitoring what employees are doing, when they are working, and where they are at all times can lead to feelings of **mistrust** and **disengagement**.

To build trust and boost engagement in remote work teams, leaders need to give employees **autonomy**, and hold them **accountable for their deliverables**.



**Step 1.** Listen to the podcast [‘Ep. 104: Autonomy - The Power To Shape Your Work Environment’](#) to learn more about how to foster autonomy in your organization. Note down possible ways that **autonomy** can be **fostered in an organisation**.

**Step 2.** Below you are presented with **some bad practices** that restrict an employee's sense of autonomy and that could eventually lead to disengagement and lack of trust. Take some time to read and reflect on whether you engage in such behaviours. In the column “DOs” note down some best practices and behaviours that could increase employees' sense of autonomy.

DON'TS	DOs
Tell them the “how” to do it	
Let them know the way you want it done	



Having the need to approve everything	
Focus on mistakes	

Here are some examples of DOs and DON'TS

DOs	DON'TS
Trust their skills and capabilities	Tell them the "how" to do it

Let employees test and apply learnings	Let them know the way you want it done
Trust their decisions for sick days, time off, personal days and work hours	Having the need to approve everything
Communicate clear goals and “what” needs to be done; clear and comprehended by everyone	Focus on mistakes

**Step 3.** Mastering employee autonomy - below you will find some tips on how you as a leader can **increase employees’ sense of autonomy.**

1. Demonstrate you trust your team: Whether it’s keeping your virtual door open to talk, engaging your team in shared goal setting, or giving them the space to try new solutions on their own, you need to find ways to actively demonstrate that you trust them.
2. Personalise autonomy: Use personal meetings to determine with each individual just how much autonomy is right for them depending on some key factors such as tenure, expertise etc. And find out what they expect from you as a leader to encourage them to work confidently on their own.
3. Set and agree goals together: Employee autonomy is about properly setting goals, clarifying expectations, and agreeing on deliverables, then giving them the freedom to reach those goals

in their own way. Set the goals together with your employees and let them know your virtual door is always open.

4. Listen to employees' concerns: Encourage employees to give feedback on how they are feeling about the level of control they feel they have over their own work, or whether they feel you're over-managing. [Officevibe](#) is one tool that leaders of eWorker team members can use to let employees give anonymous feedback to their managers about various aspects of their job such as autonomy provided.

## Session 4 - Get your team members involved in decision making (30 mins)

Involving employees in decision making can be beneficial for your organisation as employees can give you different perspectives to make better decisions.

When you let employees help with decisions, it shows that you **trust** them. Even if you only let employees give input to assist you in making the final decision, you still show that you **value their opinions**.

**Step 1.** What are the benefits of involving your team members in the decision-making process? Read this short [article](#) from the Harvard Business School Online on Why managers should involve their team in the decision-making processes. Note below your answers.

**Step 2.** How can you involve employees in the decision-making process? Below you will find some possible ways. Read carefully the options available to you and choose the one most appropriate for your team. How exactly are you planning to apply your chosen option (provide as many details as possible)?

1. **Digital Suggestion "Box"**: This could be a shared folder, online form, or designated email, where employees can provide their suggestions, ideas, thoughts and opinions on a matter/decision that needs to be taken. Make sure to acknowledge and respond to their suggestions and explain to them how you will use it. If you decide not to use it again ensure that you justify why so (in a respectful manner).

2. **Employee Surveys:** The aim of such surveys could be to collect employees' ideas on how organisation practices can be improved, express their opinions and ideas, or even express any complaints that they might have. Once you receive the findings it's important to take all necessary steps to improve the organisational practices, based on the data collected.
3. **Decision making committee:** Set up a decision-making committee comprised of eWorkers of your team. The committee should regularly meet to generate ideas and give their own input about upcoming decision-making processes on issues that affect them directly. Or, you might set up a communication channel for ongoing conversation (e.g., group chat).

## Session 5. Action Plan (20 minutes)

Based on what you have learned in this module make an **action plan** on how you are planning to **build your teams' engagement and trust**. What steps/actions can you take (e.g., increase their sense of autonomy, ask them to provide feedback, show them how much you appreciate their efforts)?

### *Handouts and activity sheets*

- **Handouts,**
- **Activity Sheets,**
- **Suggested Reading**  
Ford, R. C., Piccolo, R. F., & Ford, L. R. (2017). Strategies for building effective virtual teams: Trust is key. *Business Horizons*, 60(1), 25-34.
- **Further Resources**

## Assessment tools

1. Mark wants to do more at work because he is enthused about his organization, its mission, and his ability to make a contribution to his team and larger goal. Mark shows \_\_\_\_\_ (select from the option below).

- a. Absorption
- b. Dedication
- c. Vigor

2. Note down three factors that can impact work engagement.

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3. Note down three ways with which you can show appreciation to your team members.

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4. Checking in with your employees on a recurring, consistent basis best describes which of the following language of appreciation?

- a. Words of affirmation
- b. Quality time
- c. Acts of service
- d. Tangible gifts
- e. Appropriate physical touch

5. \_\_\_\_\_ is a practice that team leaders can use to increase employees' sense of autonomy.

- a. Giving employees no guidance on how to complete a task
- b. Exerting control over employees' performance
- c. Giving employees precise instructions on how to complete each task
- d. Allowing employees, a sense of control over their job tasks

6. Involving employees in decision making processes can be a sign of trust

True/ False

## Bibliography

Landry, L. (2020). *Why managers would involve their team in the decision making process*. Retrieved online from <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/team-decision-making>

## Appendix

### Correct answers to the Assessment tools

1. Mark wants to do more at work because he is enthused about his organization, its mission, and his ability to make a contribution to his team and larger goal. Mark shows \_\_\_\_\_ (select from the option below).

- a. Absorption
- b. **Dedication**
- c. Vigor

2. Note down three factors that can impact work engagement.

Indicative answers: Opportunities for learning and development; focusing on employees' strengths, meaningful work, showing trust to employees.

3. Note down three ways with which you can show appreciation to your team members.

Indicative answers: welcome their feedback, formally recognise each employees' contributions, celebrate milestones, give employees a voice.

4. Checking in with your employees on a recurring, consistent basis best describes which of the following language of appreciation?

- a. Words of affirmation
- b. **Quality time**
- c. Acts of service
- d. Tangible gifts
- f. Appropriate physical touch

5. \_\_\_\_\_ is a practice that team leaders can use to increase employees' sense of autonomy.

- a. Giving employees no guidance on how to complete a task
- b. Exerting control over employees' performance
- c. Giving employees precise instructions on how to complete each task
- d. **Allowing employees, a sense of control over their job tasks**

6. Involving employees in decision making processes can be a sign of trust

**True**/ False

## Module 3 – Effective use of technology and tools to support communication within the team

### *Short overview of the module*

Module 3 intends to provide virtual team leaders with a compact and comprehensive list of practical activities that can provide an effective use of technology and have knowledge of tools to support communication within the team.

### *Estimated duration of the module*

3 H

### *Objectives of the module*

This module aims to give virtual leaders a better understanding of how to effectively use current technological means, as well as to introduce them to tools to support communication within the team. It aims to provide them with the skills that will enable them to achieve an efficient application of technology in their work processes. Upon successful completion of this module, eWorkers should be able to develop an understanding and comprehension of which tools and technological means they could use in order to help their remote team members to have efficient communication within the team.



## Learning outcomes of the module

For each of the training programmes and each module:

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>MODULE 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how digital communication works well thanks to technology.</li> <li>• Learn strategies for building trust, establishing reliable communication and staying connected</li> <li>• Learn to use some applications that will help you stay in touch with your colleagues or clients when you are working remotely.</li> </ul>	<p>Learn how to share notes with our colleagues and make them collaborative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the best ways to stay in touch with your work colleagues and be able to make calls</li> <li>• Set an action plan for a good communication system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders helping eWorkers set an effective communication system</li> <li>• Leaders encouraging eWorkers to plan their communicational technology and tools and stick to that plan</li> <li>• Appreciate the importance of make a mutual understanding</li> </ul>

## Module Content

Effective communication is key in order for eWorkers to work together properly. Physical distance can be an obstacle for communicating effectively. When working remotely we engage in synchronous and asynchronous communication. Distance makes some communication inputs not available, like nonverbal communication or tone. Sometimes you can read an email, thinking that it has a harsh tone, when the sender has not written it that way. The global economy sometimes involves teams with people from other cultures, countries, customs, who speak other languages. In this case we not only have the gap of distance in communication, but we have to take into account several cultural gaps. Firstly, when we are managing international teams we should use a lingua franca, English in most cases, that in some teams won't be the mother tongue of any team member. Also, people from

different backgrounds will have different codes that could make mutual understanding harder. International communication also has other issues, like needing to communicate between different time zones. In this module you will be introduced to 5 Sessions that will help you improve your tech-communicating skills and learn how to use them in your day-to-day communication with your team members. A key issue for leaders is how to effectively use the tools and technology to support communication within the team.

Session 1: How to effectively use the tools and technology to support communication within the team. (20 mins)

**But what do we mean by effectively the tools and technology to have good communication?**

The use of these communication channels is widely accepted and used by all types of companies. Specifically, 47% of respondents say they use them globally. This is revealed in the report on mobile messaging usage trends in 2021 by Esendex, a leading provider of enterprise mobile communication solutions, in collaboration with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) on a sample of more than 4,300 organizations located in Europe and Asia Pacific.

In this context, companies have particularly relied on this channel for emergency communications and alerts (used by 21% of respondents), event-based marketing (20%), customer notifications and reminders (19%), business process management (19%) and marketing campaigns (19%). SMS usage by companies has increased by an average of 38% during the pandemic.

In this context, companies have particularly relied on this channel for emergency communications and alerts, as SMS for this purpose have increased by 42%. Within this framework, the main reasons for the organizations surveyed to use SMS to communicate with their customers are its effectiveness (25%), its ability to personalize (22%) and its cost (21%). SMS is perceived by these companies as a method that is more likely to be received and opened by the user.

**Step 1: Take a few minutes to reflect and note down some thoughts on what digital communication is working well by using technology.**

**Step 2. Why does the success of any team depend on good communication?** Watch this video to learn strategies for building trust, establishing reliable communication and staying connected. [Staying Connected and Communicating as a Team](#)

Note down some reasons why leaders should focus on establishing reliable communication and staying connected in a team.

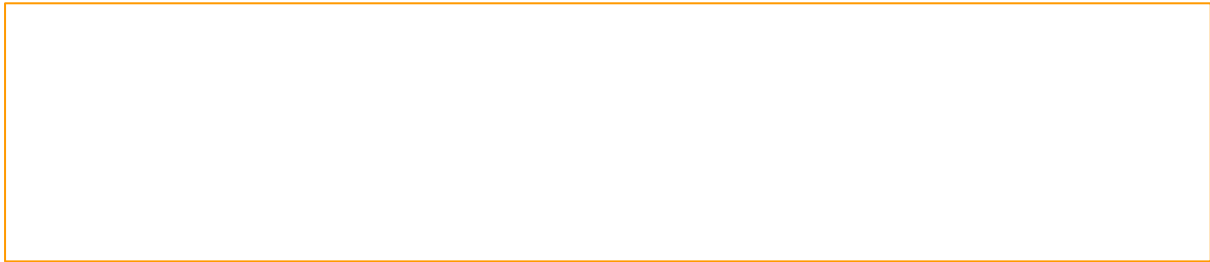
**Step 3. Instant messaging to stay in touch and one of the best ways to communicate:**

Let's look at two applications that will help you stay in touch with your colleagues or clients when you are working remotely.

**Skype** is perhaps one of the best options out there. With Skype, you will be able to stay in touch with your work colleagues and you will be able to make calls. You will be able to make group video calls for meetings, you will be able to send instant messages, and you will even be able to share your screen to show your colleagues something you need. The remote worker must be able to communicate with the rest of the team in a very simple way, and, above all, through the technology that you have agreed on in your company.

After this comment, install Skype, and do the following test: **send 4 instant messages to any co-worker, and then create a group or chat** room with which you can be in contact with several people simultaneously. This way, when you are all working on the same project, you will be able to create a specific room for that project where you can discuss all the issues that arise. Check this [VIDEO](#) before to test this test.

Another task you can try with Skype is: **Make a video call**, in this [VIDEO](#) you can do it. Either through images or simply by voice. Once you have started the call, you can even share your screen. Imagine you want to show something to your colleague and you don't quite know how to explain it. Perhaps the best option is to share your computer screen directly by selecting any of the monitors you have and clicking Start. Right now, your partner is seeing everything you see on the screen. You will be able, for example, to show him or her some activity from any of the applications you work with.



## Session 2: How to communicate our ideas to others (30 mins)

Emojis aren't the most professional way of communicating things, despite they can be used in inner chatrooms in a work context. The aim of this game is not to improve the way emojis are used, but to help us reflect on how communicating our ideas to others might impact how one interprets those ideas. Thinking in how we communicate ideas and how we interpret them. One choice of doing this is by using instant messaging services like slack or google hangouts. It also can be done in the chatroom feature of a video call service like *skype or zoom*

**Step 1: Game of Name the song/movie with emojis.** This game is going to be played individually. Firstly, the members are going to choose between movies or songs. Set 1 minute on a phone timer. The first player is going to write a song or a movie by using emojis. The one who will guess correctly the movie or song, is his/her turn to write a song or movie using emojis

For example, if we decide to write rocket man by Elton John it would be something like

☐☐

It can also be done with movie titles, for example. If we want to type the lion king. We will be something like.

☐☐

If the time runs out, the writer is going to explain what he was meaning and why those emojis had been used. The game can be competitive. If the movie or the song are guessed, both *the writer* and *the guesser* have a point. If it is not guessed, the *writer* loses a point for not being capable of communicating effectively. Repeat it until each member has been *the writer* 2 or 3 times. The game can be used to think about how the means affect the communications and to make a reflection of how we have to pre-think while using them.

You can try this session by writing the last song you heard and the last film you saw using emojis. Send them to a friend, will he or she understand it?



## Step 2. Work with shared notes

Imagine you are working with your remote team on a project where you have to add comments, or imagine you have just started a new project and you are just in the brainstorming phase, where you all have to write down your ideas in a shared document.

One of the best options is to work with shared notes.

What options exist for working with shared notes regardless of the operating system you and your colleagues have. One of the great tools when working remotely are collaborative documents. These allow you to work simultaneously with your colleagues on text files or spreadsheets, no matter where your team members are located. These are small text notes with which you can work simultaneously to follow, for example, the pace or order you have set when working on a project.

**There are two applications that allow us to share notes with our colleagues and make them collaborative.**

1. One interesting application for shared notes is ***Simplenote***. This application, which is available cross-platform, allows us to create shared notes and work on them simultaneously. The advantage of Simplenote is that it is a cross-platform application. You will be able to download the application on your mobile devices, whether they use the Android system or the iOS system, you will be able to install it on your iPad and you will be able to install it on your Mac or on your Windows PC. Plus, you'll be able to access it remotely through your web browser.

**Example:** The process for sharing a note is very easy. Simply, at the bottom you will be able to write the email address of the person you want to share the note with, as well as having different options at the top right.

Watch the video about [SimpleNote Taking App | Top 5 Things You'll Want to Know](#)

2. Another of the applications that exist for shared notes is the ***OneNote application***. It is perhaps one of the most powerful tools for working with shared notes. Here, all team members can work on notes and create to-do lists. In short, working on the same project, but through a note, where you can compile all the changes you are going to make, all the needs you have and so on.

Choose the application that best suits both your needs and those of your team. Implement it in your day-to-day work, and I assure you that when you get used to working with shared notes you will not want to stop doing it.

[In this video,](#) I will show you how to use the OneNote desktop app for Windows.

### **Step 3. How to improve your abilities as Virtual communicator**

Imagine that an alien fleet has reached the Earth. Fine, there is a big problem. They don't speak English. Not English, not French, not Spanish or even not Hindi. They cannot speak any human language. And obviously no human can speak their language either.

In this module we are trying to improve your abilities as Virtual communicator, so forget about silly action movies and let's try to network with these aliens. In this exercise you will have to express a complex idea by drawing 5 images. You can choose between your company's products and corporate culture, your major, some project you did or anything career related. It is important not only to communicate physical things but to try to express non tangible things like the culture of a company or the background of a project.

Take your time to think about how you will express those things. Keep in mind that the 5 images should express part of the same idea. Also, several things you can think of in drawing can only apply to people who have some grasp of your field of expertise or they have sense in a situated cultural context. Your outcome has to be the most universal possible.

This game doesn't require a lot of time. Whenever a project is started between partners of different cultural backgrounds or even in multidisciplinary projects, you can bring it to team members. In this case they can use it to express their companies' culture and products. It will make bonding and it will make people eager to think in communicating outside their cultural and career shaped boxes.

Video Call services like Zoom have a whiteboard feature where participants can interact in real time. This feature can be useful in many contexts and it is a one way to put in action this activity. Images can also be drawn in non-real time, and then be shared in a shared presentation.

[Top 6 FREE ZOOM ALTERNATIVES For Video Conferencing](#)

## Session 3: Knowing each tool of communication (45 mins)

### **Step 1. A resume of each tool**

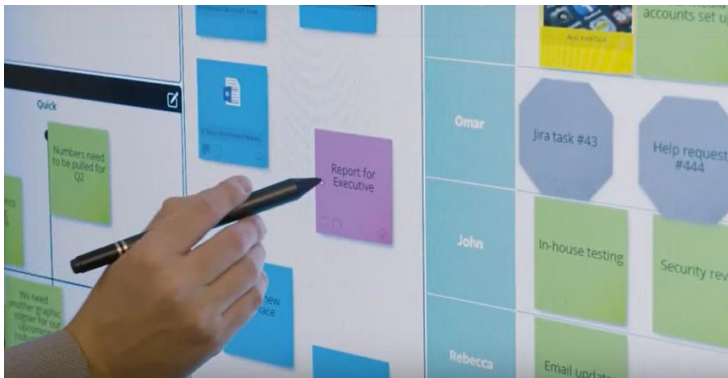
It is important to understand every tool. Having a 60 minutes meeting for something that can be solved with a memo or an email is not efficient. If we don't need instant feedback or complex debates, communications and feedback can be done by responding to mails. If we need for example feedback, but a non-complex one, instant messages can be the most useful tool. Whenever 5 partners have to check a document, using email services can be chaotic, but making a video call can demand too much time.

As a VET it is key to manage the situation of every communication need and to choose what kind of tool is needed.

Purpose	Tools	Some Options	features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group meetings and reviews</li> <li>Detailed discussions and explanations</li> <li>Brainstorming and explanations</li> </ul>	Video calls	Microsoft Teams	Screen sharing, note taking and instant messaging: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqzGP40Krks">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqzGP40Krks</a>
		Zoom	Screen sharing and making annotations, really useful for reviewing. Saving video and recordings and automatic transcriptions <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmwUhwzDg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmwUhwzDg</a>
		uShare	A combination between zoom and slack. Its features contain: One click Audio and Video meetings, Group chats, access anywhere, zero setup and enterprise grade security: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_fMmmjLPR4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_fMmmjLPR4</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief certifications</li> <li>Needing feedback in a short time</li> <li>Being capable of categorize conversations</li> </ul>	Instant messages	Google Hangouts	Hangouts chat can support 28 languages and make room for 8.000 per chatroom. It can be integrated to google calendar and other google apps: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqAV6luHtOA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqAV6luHtOA</a>
		Slack	You can categorize diverse chat rooms by channels. It can also be integrated with Drive, Zoom, Click Up and other platforms. <a href="https://4pi.com.au/blog/slack-instant-messaging-the-basics-part-1">https://4pi.com.au/blog/slack-instant-messaging-the-basics-part-1</a>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Real time updates</li> <li>● Project statuses</li> <li>● An overview of other members work</li> </ul>	<p>Project and Team and Collaboration Tools</p>	<p>Click Up</p>	<p>Click Up can make duties comments that can be transformed into tasks. It helps to ensure that your team members work on your suggestions. Click Up also lets real time collaboration. <a href="https://clickup.com/">https://clickup.com/</a></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Saving common files</li> <li>● Checking files and working them in a collaborative way.</li> </ul>	<p>File Storage and collaboration tools</p>	<p>Drive</p>	<p>Drive determines which role shared users have with each file. Reader, editor or commentator. Several editors can work at the same time over the same document so there is no risk of working over clashed documents: <a href="https://www.businessinsider.com/guides/tech/what-is-google-drive-guide">https://www.businessinsider.com/guides/tech/what-is-google-drive-guide</a></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brainstorm and ideate together</li> <li>● Plan a new strategy or campaign</li> <li>● Review your past processes</li> </ul>	<p>Virtual Whiteboard tools</p>	<p>Storm Board</p>	<p>Each user can vote between on screen boxes. It has a chat box and it lend assigning tasks <a href="https://stormboard.com/blog/lev-erage-your-team-with-digital-boardroom">https://stormboard.com/blog/lev-erage-your-team-with-digital-boardroom</a></p>
		<p>Zip Broad</p>	<p>Content review, bug tracking and feedback management. <a href="https://www.invisionapp.com/inside-design/online-whiteboards/">https://www.invisionapp.com/inside-design/online-whiteboards/</a></p>





Source : <https://stormboard.com/blog/leverage-your-team-with-digital-boardroom>

**Step 2.** For you as a Virtual Team Leader it is important to know the tools, the providers, its pros, its cons and its prices. Technology is maybe not the main focus in communicating in virtual teams, but each platform shapes technology. It's important to think of situations that some tool can be useful and situations where it won't.

**Now take your time and think in 2 stations both real or hypothetical where video calls are or where useful and 3 situations where it had made things messier or it could do.**

Useful	Useless
A calendar should be set and agreed for the incoming phase of a long-term conditions	You want to notify that a peer reviewed comments had been added to a document

**Do the same thing with instant message applications**

Useful	Useless
Sharing the route of a shared document	Discussing the framework of an article

Tool	Useful	Useless
Project and Team and Collaboration Tools		
File Storage and collaboration tools		
Virtual Whiteboards tools		

In the case of project team and collaboration tools, file storage apps and virtual whiteboards tools you only had to imagine or recall one good usage and one bad usage

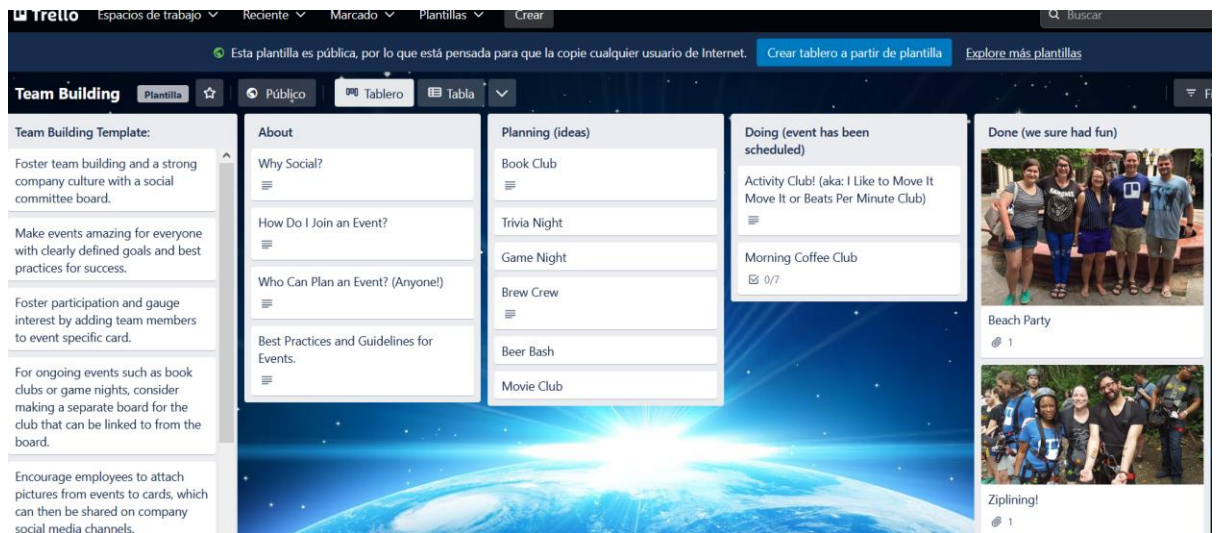
#### Session 4.-Why Communication is Important for Remote Teams (45 min)

While remote work has many benefits, one significant disadvantage is decreased access to crucial communication cues, such as facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice. This lack of information can lead to miscommunication and conflict. Remote employees also had a harder time resolving conflict than in-office employees.

Thankfully, there are many things you can do to counteract these negative effects and better manage your remote team, including:

- **Regular 1:1 meeting: Having one-on-one time**, even virtually, with your direct reports can help them feel seen and heard. It allows you to address any issues directly and provide the support they need.
- **All-hands meetings:** Gathering your entire organization into one online space can increase alignment, especially when things feel unstable or fragmented. This is your chance to celebrate milestones, go over next steps, hear updates from each department, and bond as an organization.
- **Shared online workspace:** Using an online project management tool like Trello is essential to keeping everyone on your team informed on assignments, project progress, and deadlines.
- **Team building activities:** Book clubs, pop quizzes, game nights—you name it, you can probably do it virtually.

We even have a [team building Trello template](#) you can use to organize these events.



source: TRELLO

Over-communication during a crisis is important for all teams, but it's especially important for teams that don't see each other in-person. By implementing the above processes, you can ensure a better flow of communication.

### Step 1. How the tools will be used as a Virtual Team- GUIDELINES

After your team has picked its toolset, it's time to have a clear explanation about how the tools will be used.

Design a plan together about how you want to use each tool, and then write down these guidelines in a document that the team can access anytime. The bonus is that it also creates a training resource for new people joining the team.



As a manager, the process is perfect. Having a written reference for how all communication tools are used empowers team members to operate with confidence, knowing they're all operating within the same framework of understanding how a team functions.

## Step 2-Carve Out Meaningful Meetings

Meetings get a bad rep, but nothing is more efficient than an effective team meeting. A meeting where all stakeholders know what is being discussed, how long the meeting will last, and what they should prepare will set the stage for fewer future meetings. How do you accomplish this?

Similar to having a set of tools and establishing guidelines, team members need to know the structure, cadence, and expectations of team meetings.

The summary is that meetings are efficient, focused on an agenda everyone has access to ahead of time, and referenceable.

In this short video [This One Trick Will Make Your Meetings WAY More Effective!](#) You will learn how to having more effective meeting by flipping them with a video.

## Step 3. Be aware that the team is dynamic

Teams are constantly evolving, whether it's because of strategy decisions, product launches, or hiring changes, so it's important to make sure your team infrastructure is also dynamic.

Check in regularly to make sure guidelines are still relevant. Updating processes is key for keeping team members engaged. As the team grows even more, we may be moving to bi-weekly or monthly team meetings. The important thing is that as a manager, you have your pulse on how people are feeling and give options for changing processes.

All someone has to do is bring up an idea at a team meeting and we'll make the change if the team agrees. We then document the change in the appropriate resource docs. For managers, this is an amazing way to keep everyone engaged and invested in the team processes.

## Step 4. Dedicate time and synchronization of teams

It takes a lot of thought, process, and planning to set up an infrastructure that will keep your team in sync. The good news is that a big part of communication success is getting buy-in and participation from your team. This means less work for you, and more engagement from your team members. Here's one last look at your creative communications blueprint:

- Pick your tools. Everyone on the team should use the same ones for team collaboration.
- Set and spread the guidelines for using tools. Team members should feel empowered and educated on what to use when.



- Make meetings effective and efficient with a tool board that encourages productive time management.
- Review processes on a regular basis, and don't be afraid to make changes.
- Create structured opportunities or venues for digital “water cooler” encounters or just plain fun.

Set up your team to be effective and productive.

## Session 5. Action Plan (40 mins)

Based on what you have learned in this module make an action plan on how you are planning to

Have a good communication system with your teleworking team.

### *Handouts and activity sheets*

- **Handouts,**
- **Activity Sheets,**
- **Suggested Reading**
- **Further Resources**

## Assessment tools

1. Which of the following are methods that help virtual teams to communicate effectively?
  - e. Create a social meeting point
  - f. Using tools such as Skype or Webex
  - g. Make video-conferencing with the entire team
  - h. All of the above

2. In DRIVE several editors can work at the same time over the same document so there is no risk of working over clashed documents

True/False

3. Which of habits you can do to counteract these negative effects and better manage your remote team?
  - a) Regular 1:1 meeting: Having one-on-one time
  - b) Using an online project management tool
  - c) Team building activities: Book clubs, pop quizzes, game nights



- d) All of the above
4. Reflective Question: to establish an infrastructure that keeps your team in sync. Note down at least 3 steps that you as a leader can take to promote your eWorkers' work in synchronization.
5. Which of the following tools are available for FREE video conferencing?
- a) Zoom
  - b) Webex
  - c) Google Hangouts
  - d) Microsoft Teams

## Appendix

### Correct answers to the Assessment tools

1. Which of the following are methods that help virtual teams to communicate effectively?
- i. Create a social meeting point
  - j. Using tools such as Skype or Webex
  - k. Make video-conferring with the entire team
  - l. All of the above**
2. In DRIVE several editors can work at the same time over the same document so there is no risk of working over clashed documents
- True/False**
3. Which of habits you can do to counteract these negative effects and better manage your remote team?
- e) Regular 1:1 meeting: Having one-on-one time
  - f) Using an online project management tool
  - g) Team building activities: Book clubs, pop quizzes, game nights
  - h) All of the above**
4. Reflective Question: to establish an infrastructure that keeps your team in sync. Note down at least 3 steps that you as a leader can take to promote your eWorkers' work in synchronization.

**-Make meetings effective and efficient with a tool board that encourages productive time management.**



- Review processes on a regular basis, and don't be afraid to make changes.
- Create structured opportunities or venues for digital "water cooler" encounters or just plain fun.

5. Which of the following tools are available for FREE video conferencing?

- e) Zoom
- f) Webex
- g) Google Hangouts
- h) Microsoft Teams

### Bibliography:

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<https://www.nextiva.com/blog/virtual-team-communication.html>

<https://www.range.co/blog/team-communication-tools>

## Module 4\_ Tracking process and performance management of team members to achieve success

### Short overview of the module

In this module 4, we will look at the main challenges of managing a remote team and provide some ideas on how to properly navigate these challenges and lead your team to success.

### Estimated duration of the module

3 H

### Objectives of the module

This module will share several STEPS to follow and a list of QUESTIONS you can use to quickly and easily assess the performance of each of your team members. The performance management of your remote teams will improve over time; the more consistent you are and the more repetitions you have done, the better they will be.

### Learning outcomes of the module

For each of the training programmes and each module:

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>MODULE 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn to set the organization of a remote team towards the success</li> <li>Explain the creation of a Roadmap</li> <li>Learn to set</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw tracking progress</li> <li>Develop Roadmap and prioritizing skills</li> <li></li> <li>Set an action plan for performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders helping eWorkers getting their smart objectives</li> <li>Leaders encouraging eWorkers to plan their</li> </ul>



MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
	<p><i>distributing tasks and communicate your expectations effectively.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Learn to manage a good weekly summary with the tasks.</i></li> <li>• <i>Master to give constructive feedback to your team</i></li> <li>• <i>Performance the Assertiveness</i></li> <li>• <i>Create and set common, smart and clear goals.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>management to achieve success.</i></p>	<p><i>communication and tasks distribution</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Appreciate the importance of having a management of team forwards success.</i></li> </ul>

### Module Content

Tracking progress and performance management of team members to achieve success.

Session 1: Defining the organization of your team's work and how to communicate your expectations. (40 mins)

As a manager of a remote team, you create the space of safety and trust to drive their work and you also prioritize, distribute, track progress and evaluate the tasks of your team members to achieve success. Now, the qualitative and quantitative organization of work has a huge impact on your team's well-being, motivation and performance.

## **Step 1- Defining the roadmap**

Focusing on a roadmap is essential, i.e., the steps from one mini-goal to the next mini-goal and learning from the experience you generate as you go from one place to the next. Focus on generating short-term strategic plans to go from one small milestone to the next step by step. When you reach goal 1, then you create that strategic plan to go for goal 2 instead of creating a strategic plan for everything ahead of you making a very long-term bet. If you place the focus on the end goal you will lose the ability to focus on the small steps, and be assured that this is where the knowledge lies that will get you to the end you have set for yourself. Break the larger goal into mini-goals, so that you can base your next strategies and tactics on what has worked or not worked before. It can be very useful to have updates on the development of the mini-objectives from time to time and to intervene sporadically only if strictly necessary, because keep in mind that you learn from your mistakes.

Well, weekly updates can help you avoid these questions because they are already being answered. The sooner adjustments and corrections can be made, the better; especially with remote teams. It's the big difference that makes managing teams and projects easier. These tips can be used immediately to help you improve your team's performance and also help you make sure you are all working towards the same destination.

[Read this article about Roadmap creation tips for remote teams.](#)

## **Step 2. Send weekly summaries of the status of your work**

When working remotely, it is very important to keep your colleagues up to date on the progress of your work. Obviously, you are not going to be sending them summaries every day or emailing them with every step you take. It is important that once a week you send a summary of all the actions and tasks you have done so that they know what you have been working on. Let's see how to send a good weekly summary with the tasks. It is very important that your team is aware of the work you have done remotely. Remember that they also have their own day to day. So, when you make the report you are going to send out on a weekly basis, try to be clear and concise. Ideally, send an email/summary as a list, always sorted by priority or by tasks that affect the rest of the team. Finally, leave at the end of the email those tasks that only involve you, but that you need to communicate as they have been completed. Try to use headings to separate the different sections of the email, and then include each task in list mode with headings that describe the work you have done very well. If you use a task management application to which your team members have access, it wouldn't hurt to insert links to those tasks.

Here are some examples of questions that may help you. Remember to do this with them, in a collaborative way, i.e., teach them to self-assess their performance and learn from it.

## QUESTIONS

What is working?

What is not working for you?

What really makes sense to do at the moment?

What would you like to stop doing?

What are your reasons for wanting to stop doing it?

What should I ask you? On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your creativity, collaboration, productivity and communication?

What do you need for all of those to be a 5? And if you got a 5 on all of those, what would be different for you, and for the team?

How can I help you do that?

What all these responses do is to direct the employee's attention to their own performance while allowing you to understand where they are at and where you can help them.

Now it is not about telling them what to do, but about understanding together what makes sense and how to reinforce all those things that are helping you to achieve the productivity and purpose you have set for yourselves.

**Step 3. What ideas come to mind that might be useful before you start distributing tasks and communicating your expectations effectively.**

**Task distribution.** The type and quantity of tasks we perform has an impact on our results. How to assign them? Try to make them as varied as possible. Repeating the same task for hours, weeks and months has a negative impact on our well-being, our motivation and our performance. How can you distribute your team's tasks so that they face various types of challenges in their day-to-day work? Give visibility of the impact of each task on the finished product or service. How does the work of each person in your team contribute to the final result?

Remind them that the value they contribute is necessary and important. Don't promote or exemplify multitasking. It is proven. When our attention is spread across multiple tasks or bouncing from one task to another without clear focus or full presence, we perform less well and our mental and emotional well-being suffers.

Adjust the level of challenge. Constantly exposing ourselves to challenges that we can overcome develops our potential, boosts our motivation and nourishes our self-esteem.



Source : <https://www.learnlight.com/en/articles/build-trust-in-remote-teams/>

**Step 4. How do you transfer your expectations to your remote team? How do you expect the tasks to be executed? In what order? At what pace? What is the qualitative minimum? What would be an extraordinary result?**

When communicating your expectations, start by showing your vulnerability. You are not a perfect person and you do not expect the other person to be perfect, because commitment is what really matters. Show your commitment and encourage their commitment by explaining what the tasks are going to be used for, the value they are going to bring to others, the impact their effort is going to have. After the what for, express your expectations clearly, concisely and in detail. Sometimes providing written materials helps to retain and implement details. Make sure your message has got through.

**EXERCISE:** Give an example of an email in which you give feedback to the person in your team to resolve any doubts or expectations.

## Step 5. How to give constructive feedback to your team

As a manager, you have the responsibility to assign tasks and evaluate how they are executed. Why? Because you are the one who has the vision of the end result you are working towards as a team. That's why your feedback is the key to enabling the people on your team to optimize the value they are delivering.

For what, how and when you give feedback to your team about their work will determine many things. Their psychological security, their mental well-being, their productivity, their motivation, the development of their potential, their effectiveness and their efficiency.

Let's start with WHEN to give feedback. After organizing tasks, it is time to monitor how they are progressing and to evaluate them when they are completed. Now, if the follow-up is continuous, we leave no room, but if we only give our feedback at the end, we may miss the opportunity to redirect in time and have to ask the person to undo and start almost all over again. There is no magic formula, this is one of those things that you will be fine-tuning along the way.

WHY do we give feedback? Your leadership is based on the commitment you make from your authenticity to guide and empower a team of people towards a common vision. You have the overview of the work of the whole team.

When we evaluate the qualitative and quantitative performance of a person, we can find 3 scenarios: that they do not reach the set expectations, that they reach them or that they exceed them.

**A) When expectations are not met.** If the work has not met expectations, focus the conversation on the reasons for the mistakes. Probe until you identify the friction that is preventing the person from not accomplishing what was assigned. This information is very valuable. It will help you identify where you can optimize processes and it will give the person a powerful self-awareness of how to improve their performance. It is an opportunity for the individual to understand their importance in the team and how necessary their performance is for their colleagues to achieve their goals.

**B) When expectations are met.** When a person's work meets the expectations, you have communicated, feedback is also important. Ask them how the process went, what challenges they encountered, what strategies or skills they used to overcome them.

**C) When expectations are exceeded,** ask: What has made your work easier? What challenges have you overcome? What, in what you do, could help others in the team to improve their results?

Feedback is one of the keys to your leadership. Create direct, confident and fluid communication with the people in your team. Always value the work that has been done, whether or not they reach the expectations they have set. Ask them with interest and authenticity about their challenges and suggestions. And use this invaluable information to identify points to follow up on, lessons to extrapolate and how to reorganize tasks to maintain a constant level of individual challenge.

[Watch this video on Giving and Receiving feedback in a remote team](#)

## Session 2: Assertiveness with your team (40 mins)

Managing others' work is not an easy task. Beside the technical layer it lies a human one. This human layer can be quite intriguing, especially if we have little experience in managing people. During performance evaluations we might receive comments or feedback that we perceive as unfair and/or negative and this might lead to unpleasant emotions. In this aspect, Assertiveness is an essential trait and central pathway whenever we are planning a proper performance tracking process.

### **Step 1. Definition of assertiveness**

This word is used a lot in all sets of manuals, but what does it mean in this context. Whenever we are thinking about the role of who is going to manage the evaluation of a set of eWorkers we can think on two scales. The first scale is centered on the action of the evaluator within the work done. On one side of the scale the evaluator is passive and does not mind some errors detected, on the other aspect it is really active and wants to find a solution to any problem detected on the evaluation. The other is centered on the people involved in the project. On one side of the scale, we will have a very aggressive evaluator. An evaluator who does not separate between people and their performance. This kind of evaluator sometimes can be perceived as hostile by the workers. On the other side of the scale, we got an evaluator that does separate between people and the work done and is not aggressive to the people. The assertive evaluator will be positioned as someone who wants to solve all the problems detected and is very active in evaluating the work done and as some more easy and respectful in the human aspect. If you want to dive into the topic, you can read this [article](#).

Even if we are separating people from its performance, this respect is necessary. The aim of these tracks is not to start feuds, it is to make the job done. The focus of this process is not to tell what is incorrect, but how it can be done better. This should be part of an assertive performance tracking.



Source : <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/assertiveness-skills>

Building trust and confidence can make the life of the manager and the whole team much more serene and productive, so let's look at some tips for nurturing trust within the team. Pay attention and do it genuinely. When you pay attention to someone, it is returned to you. The need for attention or importance is about personal appreciation and professional respect, personal appreciation in the form of sincere interest in the person and their circumstances, and professional respect for the work they do and the effort they put into it.

Empower your employees by co-creating strategies to grow, improve or maintain. The point is to allow them to come up with their own ways of doing things and provide some input into the system that they suggest, not the other way around. In this way, their sense of ownership of the projects will be greater, as will their desire to do well and focus on the results, because they own them, because they make their own decisions.

Say thank you, acknowledge a job well done. Praise in public, criticize in private. And as a key tool in all this, focus on listening to your team, on really listening to them. Take the time to listen to them all the time, whether they bring a problem or a solution or whatever. If they perceive that you listen to them and help them, they will open up to you and give you their trust, which will facilitate coordination, increase productivity and group effectiveness, not to mention the serenity that this brings on a personal level and to everyone's well-being. That is why extraordinary managers focus on providing security and reassurance by making them feel that each and every one of them has our absolute trust, someone who cares about their processes, their learning and their goals, and who also helps them to constantly improve by showing their personal appreciation.

[Watch these graphs about assertive speaking.](#)



### Session 3: Setting common, smart and clear goals (60 mins)

A very important recommendation is to measure. Measure using specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound SMART objectives that you can evaluate efficiently. Also use mini-objectives to help you correct direction or accelerate appropriately. The more defined and specific the objectives, the easier it will be to evaluate performance and gather learning based on experience, so that you can adjust the plan to produce the results you want.

Finally, I recommend that you adjust the pace and actions as you go along. Because you have constant updates on performance and how things are going, you can correct the direction sooner rather than later. Take advantage of this by not imposing, but by showing alternatives and helping your employees to find those alternatives where they are most effective.

**Step 1.** If we want to make a proper process and performance tracking, we should start by building a good foundation. In engineering and architecture, **a good foundation** requires both **being solid and flexible**. In the case of any team project those foundations are the set of goals that the project will pass through. In the English language we can use an acronym system SMART to define a smart goal. These goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bounding. It is important to define these 5 characteristics in every goal. In a process where all the parts can agree on them.

Part	What it means	It is not	Its
<i>Specific</i>	The goal should be very precise with no room for misinterpretation.	Changing some codes of the previous version	Solving the bugs found in the version 2.3.1 regarding exporting contacts from the phone memory to the user profile in order to upload the version 2.3.2
<i>Measurable</i>	The goal should be quantifiable, and progress should be easy to track.	Raising the sales, a little bit.	Rising sales by 5% in between 3d Q and 4th Q in this year.
<i>Achievable</i>	The goal should be attainable – not outlandish or unrealistic.	Getting 1.000.000 new subscribers in 2 months	Getting 50.000 new subscriptions in 6 months
<i>Relevant</i>	The goal should contribute to your broader, overarching goals.	Upload videos about our company products in order to have	Upload videos about our company products to get new market segments

		content in the company's YouTube channel	
<b>Time-Bound</b>	The goal should have a defined start and end date.	The project will be done in nearby future	Between 1st of March 2025 and 31 of November 2025

**EXERCICE:** Watch the [video below](#) and arrange a meeting with your team members and discuss the following SMART GOALS of your company and note down in the following table:

Part	What it means	Its
<b>Specific</b>	The goal should be very precise with no room for misinterpretation.	
<b>Measurable</b>	The goal should be quantifiable, and progress should be easy to track.	
<b>Achievable</b>	The goal should be attainable – not outlandish or unrealistic.	
<b>Relevant</b>	The goal should contribute to your broader, overarching goals.	
<b>Time-Bound</b>	The goal should have a defined start and end date.	

**Step 2. Below you will find a list of WHAT LEADING QUESTIONS that can help you develop SMART OBJECTIVES:**

- **WHAT can we do to achieve the goal?**

A smart goal is an achievable one, but in order to make that process it is important to have a shared sketch of the frame of that process. It has to be clear; it has to be shared and it has to not leave room for ambiguity.

- **WHAT are the sub goals?**

Having a sole big final goal can make performance tracking quite uneasy and messy. In order to make this process easier it is needed to set and share a set of subgoals. All these subgoals should follow the SMART system and all the parts should be involved in its definitions.

- **WHAT are the milestones?**

Each project should have its milestones where the state of the project is going to be evaluated. Those milestones had to be clear and shared in criteria by all team members

- **WHAT are the deliverables?**

Linked to the milestones it is important to establish a defined criteria for what the deliverables will be.

One of the most classical ways to manage work performance is by knowing if the objectives settled had been completed. Setting the proper objectives is key to making an effective work performance management. If an unachievable objective is not reached, that work performance won't be accurate. If a goal that doesn't full fit the final objectives of a project or the long-term strategies of a company is reached, it will be a wonderful check in a checklist, but that checklist won't tell much of the work done, so it won't be a good work management practice.

SMARTly announced objectives assure you and your team where you are heading and how you will be able to measure whether or not you are making adequate progress. In a remote environment, the more specific you are, the easier it is to ensure that your team is moving towards the right and commonly agreed objectives.

## Session 4: Plan Action (40 mins)

Based on what you have learned in this module make an action plan on how you are planning to **have a performance management of team remote collegemates to achieve success.**

### Assessment tools:

1. What does mean a SMART objective?
  - a) specific, missing, achievable, relevant and time-bound
  - b) specific, measurable, achievable, relative and time bound
  - c) specific, measurable, attractive, relevant and time bound
  - d) specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound

2. The assertive evaluator will be positioned as someone who wants to solve all the problems detected and is very active in evaluating the work done.

True/False

3. Which are the characteristics of an effective feedback leadership?
- a) Create direct, confident and fluid communication with the people in the team.
  - b) Don't ask them about their challenges and suggestions.
  - c) Reorganize tasks of communication every day.
  - d) Make always a checklist of the work done.

- 4 Reflective Question: What does involve a good practice in constructive feedback?

5. How do you transfer your expectations to your remote team?

- a. Start by showing your vulnerability.
- b. Show your commitment and encourage them
- c. Express your expectations clearly, concisely and in detail
- d. All of the above

## Appendix

### Correct answers to the Assessment tools

- 1 What does mean a SMART objective?
- a) specific, missing, achievable, relevant and time-bound
  - b) specific, measurable, achievable, relative and time bound
  - c) specific, measurable, attractive, relevant and time bound
  - d) specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound
- 2 The assertive evaluator will be positioned as someone who wants to solve all the problems detected and is very active in evaluating the work done.
- True/False
- 3 Which are the characteristics of an effective feedback leadership?
- i) Create direct, confident and fluid communication with the people in the team.
  - j) Don't ask them about their challenges and suggestions.
  - k) Reorganize tasks of communication every day.

l) Make always a checklist of the work done.

4 Reflective Question: What does involve a good practice in constructive feedback?

- a. Identifying what the issue is
- b. Stressing the importance and articulating the consequences of any negative behaviours or practices
- c. Reaching agreement on the way forward, whilst establishing a way forward that works for the individual, team and organisation and one that all parties can get on board with.

5. How do you transfer your expectations to your remote team?

- a) Start by showing your vulnerability.
- b) Show your commitment and encourage them
- c) Express your expectations clearly, concisely and in detail
- d) All of the above

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## Module 5 – Building skills in eWorkers for productivity

### Short overview of the module

Module 5 aims to provide virtual team leaders with a compact and comprehensive list of practical activities that can be applied to help eWorkers build new skills to be more productive on the job.

### Estimated duration of the module

3 H

### Objectives of the module

A leader who guides his or her team helps the organization to evolve in ways it has never seen before. Leaders who do not do so miss the opportunity to influence others in a meaningful way. Coaching entails a specific set of skills to help employees continuously evolve, transform their ability to produce, support their aspirations and prepare them for the next level. This is essential.

In this course, you will learn the coaching skills you need to be a more influential and productive manager, ready to manage talent. We will look at concrete tools and train you to cope with the most typical mentoring problems. The information in this module will help you to amplify your effect and impact as a leader.

### Learning outcomes of the module

For each of the training programmes and each module:

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>MODULE 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the benefits of the coaching</li> <li>Explain proven Benefits of Workplace Coaching</li> <li>Improve your empathy in a remote team</li> <li>Adaptability as a skill of productivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop time for coaching and prioritizing skills</li> <li>Set an action plan for workers skills forwards the productivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders practice the exercises to foster your empathy</li> <li>Leaders encouraging eWorkers empathy</li> <li>Appreciate the importance of improving a performance</li> </ul>

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn to foster your empathy as a leader</li> </ul>		in a productive team

### Module Content

#### Session 1: Defining COACHING (30 mins)

Coaching is about getting others to be productive, helping them to identify and remove obstacles in their career, guiding them to reach their full potential and setting them up for success in their next stage.

#### Step 1.- Let's look at the 5 elements of coaching for leaders.

- 1. Coaching focuses on the short term** (what we call performance improvement) and the long term (performance development). Performance improvement coaching relates to helping employees become more productive with their current tasks, guiding them to acquire a particular skill they are lacking, addressing behavioral or interpersonal problems that prevent them from achieving their goals, clarifying expectations, and talking about consequences. Developmental coaching is more about preparing employees for the future, knowing their skills and their long-term career ambitions. The leader helps employees to define their goals, and then to acquire the skills and experience necessary for what lies ahead.
- 2. Coaching is a relationship, not an event.** Rather than structuring it as a commitment ("every Tuesday"), good leaders maintain an ongoing, interactive process that is based on sincerity and trust. When we agree to mentor someone, we enter into an extended relationship of ongoing support.
- 3. Mentoring can be formal or informal.** Yes, the manager meets regularly with the employees he or she mentors, but it can also be an informal meeting, in the break room or after a meeting. When the coach feels more comfortable with the process, he or she introduces coaching into any other day-to-day process.

4. **Mentoring is not about giving all the answers.** The leader listens and asks questions. Then, he or she guides the employee to find the answer. A coach starts a conversation, not makes demands. He asks "what if?" and arouses the curiosity of the employees, who are encouraged to invest in the outcome.
5. **Coaching is not for every situation.** It requires an investment of time, and there will be cases where it does not make sense to apply it.

Understanding the definition and context of coaching for leadership will give you advantages and make you more effective in pursuing and integrating this strategy.

### **Step 2.- Why is coaching worthwhile?**

Mentoring has several advantages for all parties:

1. What do the people being mentored gain? The obvious answer is that they broaden their skills, but it is more than that. When you mentor an employee, they feel that you recognize them and respect their potential. It's a great motivator. They think "my boss sees something in me worth caring about, I'm going to try even harder". When mentoring helps them identify their long-term career path, employees work harder and faster to achieve their goal. In other words, mentoring increases job satisfaction.

2. The mentoring relationship brings great benefits to the mentors themselves. Instead of leading, managers can position themselves as partners. Mentoring is the ideal space to build relationships with team members, to give constructive criticism and to support employees with their professional development. This allows managers to reinforce a sense of responsibility. It also allows them to be more creative with their roles as they think of new ways to inspire and motivate others who are at different points in their career.

3. Finally, what are the benefits for the company if it includes mentoring in its culture? Organizations benefit the most. Mentoring has been shown to have many consequences. Statistically, mentored employees exhibit higher productivity and higher levels of commitment. Good team relationships foster motivation. Employees' connection with their managers increases their loyalty to the company, which improves their retention rate and consequently lowers the cost of recruitment and training. The cumulative effect of these factors is higher performance. That is why companies believe in mentoring.

That is why coaching pays off. Companies and leaders who mentor will see lasting benefits.

**Watch this video about [The Importance of Coaching in the Workplace](#)**

**EXERCISE:** Give an example of 3 Proven Benefits of Workplace Coaching in your company.



## Session 2: Collaborative problem solving and empathy. (45 mins)

Empathy is a key component of efficient team working. Distance can make this more difficult since face to face interactions are the best ones to generate empathy. To mind this gap is important to maintain several checkups to maintain the other parts of the team present. As it happens with traditional work, it is also important to mind your eWorkers as a person outside the common projects. Getting to know them a little bit is good for being more productive. Simon Sinek explains about the importance of empathy for a leader in a 3 minute [video](#).

### **Step 1.- Here you can have 4 tips and 2 exercises to foster your empathy as a leader:**

#### **1. Imagine how an empathetic leader would act**

This can seem a little bit obvious, but non the less is one of the most important things to do. Once we have got the picture of how an empathetic leader is, we can start acting like one.

#### **2. Keep a journal**

We are hardwired to forget past feelings. We can recall quite easily what we were doing in some professional moments, but sometimes we don't recall what we were feeling. Keeping a record of it can be handy for this purpose.

#### **3. Ask better questions**

Making the right questions can make us more empathic. Imagine that after a harsh meeting you feel that a colleague seems annoyed. Instead of asking them "are you angry?" you could ask "is this affecting you?". First of all, you won't project your perceptions over the person you asked, and secondly you will seem more careful.

#### **4. Empathic listening**

Whenever you are listening to your teammates you should listen, don't interrupt and avoid having fixed preexisting ideas of people and what they are going to say.

#### **5. Trading places exercise.**

This exercise will require some time, reflection and paper and a pen. Think about some conflict you had had in the recent days. After that, take a pen and write about all the feelings and reflections you recall. After that imagine that a person with a great wisdom would manage the situation. Write about it if you will.

## **6. Empathy picture**

Take a photograph from a newspaper or any other source from a person. Now, in a blank paper write a series of questions about that person. Then looking at the photographs asks those questions.

Empathy makes work much easier and it is a key catalyst in collaborative work. Team work is always collaborative. Each member of a team has some better skills and some areas where they are less proficient. Knowing the strengths and the weaknesses of every person of a team is key for this. In all these processes digital tools are going to be used, and the interface of those tools is going to shape the interactions. But the main skill of coordinating people in a collaborative way is social. Trying to put the focus just on the tools that make these processes possible in a remote way is not the smartest approach. A good Virtual Team Leader has to know this. Mastering tools that make these collaborative processes is needed but the focus is the people. Understanding them. Knowing their particularities. No team is the same. And in this task empathy is key. Also engaging your team members in these dynamics, it is really important. Working in making these dynamics more flexible and letting people get involved is fundamental.

## Step 2.- The way of practice a useful critique

Critiquing employees can be very helpful and important, but many managers are not trained in this area. To improve your critiquing skills and your outreach as a coach, follow these five guidelines.

1. **The critique should be specific.** Instead of general comments such as "This morning, the client spoke very highly of you. That follow-up strategy is working. The employee changed his behavior and the result was customer satisfaction. Be specific and emphasize the importance of the behavior.
2. **Criticism must be timely.** If it is October and the employee has achieved an accomplishment, don't wait until the December appraisal to tell them about it. They need to know that you, the manager and coach, are aware of what is happening. Celebrate with employees or guide them to implement immediate improvements.
3. **Criticism should have a purpose.** The criticism you give should focus on helping the employee evolve, improve or progress. before making suggestions or constructive criticism. For example, "I am communicating this to you because I want you to improve your sales figures, and I believe that with this adjustment you can achieve this". This approach makes it clear to the employee that you care about them and their goals, and that you want to help them, so they will take on board your message in a very different way.
4. **Be tactful in your criticism.** It is never easy to give negative criticism, but if you don't know what needs to change, the employee is not going to improve. Remember to keep the emphasis on the problem behavior or situation rather than implying that someone is a bad person. Don't let your feelings come out, and watch your choice of words.
5. **Finally, criticisms should be followed up.** For the sake of the counseling relationship, criticism needs to be a regular part of conversations, not a one-off event.

If you give specific, timely and tactful criticism, employees will develop the skills they need to advance their careers more quickly.

Now it's your turn, take some time to reflect in this table the difference of a positive criticism and a you a negative criticism:

POSITIVE CRITIQUES	NEGATIVE CRITIQUES

## Session 3: Adaptability (20 mins)

The traditional Fordist approach to work, where each worker had a concrete profile and repetitive set of predefined tasks has changed forever. This is more evident in remote work eWorkers had to adapt to new working scenarios. Adapting means learning new things. Four key aspects for fostering your adaptability are the following ones:

### **1) Learning from others**

Learning is always a collective action. We learn from others. Working with someone who excels in some skill is a great opportunity to learn from them. You can take notes of how they make things, or even ask directly to them. This way, you also can mentor people based on your best abilities. Mentoring people in these ways is great to foster your skills as a Team Leader.

### **2) Finding the silver lining**

Self-Fulfilling Prophecies do happen. Mostly with bad ones. Being pessimistic about a task involving skill that we don't master can lend us to failure. If we don't excel a skill we have to go step by step. It can be slow, but being optimistic that we can full fit those skills can help us to make the way steadily. Being optimistic by itself won't do anything, but it can help us go through the process of doing something new.

### **3) Having the will to make mistakes**

Mistakes happen. They are going to happen. Those are planned. Don't be afraid of making mistakes while fostering a new skill.

### **4) Make questions**

Sometimes people are afraid of asking questions. People are afraid to seem doubtful in the workspace. Asking questions, it is always a good way to adapt to new tasks and conditions.



## Session 4: Set goals to achieve the eworker's skills development. (45 mins)

The mentoring relationship should be aimed at enhancing the employee's skills, improving his or her performance and preparing him or her to work at a different level of the organization chart. The quantifiable aspect is essential.

### **Step 1.- To achieve goal setting, here are four strategies you can put into practice:**

1. Employees must be involved in the process. If the coach sets goals without the employee's input, it will be difficult for the employee to commit. If the employee is involved in setting goals, he/she will feel a greater sense of responsibility for meeting them. If the employee determines what is possible, sets interim dates and progressive short- and long-term goals, he/she will be more motivated.

**2. One of the best techniques for employees to achieve their goals** is to relate them to departmental or company goals. Although with exceptions, career goals should bring more value to the organization.

**3. Keep the commitment alive.** It is tempting to end the goal-setting process and leave it forgotten until the next performance appraisal, but this undermines the benefits of the mentoring relationship. The coach should keep you up to date with employees' progress throughout the year, you can personalize the conversation, help them integrate new findings and analyze the effects of their performance. With this up-to-date coaching, employees get what they need.

**4. Be flexible with orientation goals.** Situations change and opportunities arise, and it is up to you to determine whether it is relevant or necessary to modify employee goals. Being too rigid with goals that for some reason are no longer realistic or achievable will only create stress and anxiety for the people involved. That said, changing goals should be a collaborative decision.

If your goal-setting model is positive and strategic, you will transform the way your employees think about their commitment to the organization, increase their engagement, their performance, and their potential to contribute at a higher level during their careers.



Source : <https://www.leetsconsortium.com/how-to-set-goals-for-executive-coaching/>

**Step 2.- Listen to the podcast: [Goal Setting in Coaching - YouTube](#)**

To learn more about how to foster coaching in your organization. Note down possible ways that coaching can be fostered in an organization.

## Session 5: Plan Action (40 mins)

Based on what you have learned in this module make an action plan on how you are planning to **build skills in eWorkers for productivity.**

### Assessment tools:

1.-What are aspects for fostering your adaptability?

- a. Learning from others
- b. Speaking about adaptation
- c. See examples of adaptability
- d. None.

2 The criticism you give should focus on helping the employee evolve, improve or progress. before making suggestions or constructive criticism.

True/False

4. Which are the elements of coaching for leaders?

- a. Coaching focuses on the short term
- b. Mentoring is giving all the answers.
- c. Mentoring is always formal
- d. Coaching always make sense to apply it.

5 Reflective Question: If you give specific, timely and tactful criticism, employees will develop the skills they need to advance their careers more quickly. What is your opinion?

6 Why is coaching worthwhile?

- a. The mentoring increases job satisfaction.
- b. The mentoring allows managers to reinforce a sense of responsibility
- c. The mentored employees exhibit higher productivity and higher levels of commitment.
- d. All the above.

## Appendix

### Correct answers to the Assessment tools

1. What are aspects for fostering your adaptability?

- e. Learning from others
- f. Speaking about adaptation
- g. See examples of adaptability
- h. None.

3 The criticism you give should focus on helping the employee evolve, improve or progress. before making suggestions or constructive criticism.

True/False

5. Which are the elements of coaching for leaders?

- e. Coaching focuses on the short term
- f. Mentoring is giving all the answers.
- g. Mentoring is always formal
- h. Coaching always make sense to apply it.

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8 Why is coaching worthwhile?

- e. The mentoring increases job satisfaction.
- f. The mentoring allows managers to reinforce a sense of responsibility
- g. The mentored employees exhibit higher productivity and higher levels of commitment.
- h. All the above.

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<https://positivepsychology.com/workplace-coaching/>

<https://www.leetsconsortium.com/how-to-set-goals-for-executive-coaching/>



## Module 6 - How to support the preservation of the work-life balance of eWorkers?

### Short overview of the module

Module 6 intends to provide virtual team leaders with a compact and comprehensive list of practical activities that can apply to support remote workers maintain a healthy work-life balance.

### Estimated duration of the module

3 H

### Objectives of the module

This module aims to provide virtual leaders with a better understanding of what work-life balance is and how they can help eWorkers achieve it. It aims to provide them with skills that will enable them to achieve work-life balance, including boundary management, time management skills and prioritising. Participants will also be introduced to the Wheel of Life - a tool that can help them understand how areas in their life (e.g., career, finances, fun, health, family, personal growth etc.) are currently balanced. Upon successful completion of this module eWorkers should be able to develop their own action plan on how to help their remote working team members find a better balance between their professional and personal life.

### Learning outcomes of the module

For each of the training programmes and each module:

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>MODULE 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the benefits of a work-life balance</li> <li>Explain factors that hinder a balanced life</li> <li>Learn to set boundaries between work and personal life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw boundaries between work and home</li> <li>Develop time management and prioritising skills</li> <li>Assess the balance of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders helping eWorkers setting their own boundaries</li> <li>Leaders encouraging eWorkers to plan their</li> </ul>

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
	<i>for a balanced lifestyle</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn to manage time and prioritise for a balanced lifestyle</li> </ul>	<i>each area of their life</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set an action plan for a better-balanced life</li> </ul>	<i>after-work hours and stick to that plan</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciate the importance of having a balanced life</li> </ul>

### Module Content

#### Session 1: What does work-life balance mean to you? (30 mins)

Research shows eWorkers are working longer, spending time in more meetings and having to keep up with more communication channels (Bloomberg, 2021).

Nearly **70%** of professionals who transitioned to remote work because of the pandemic say they now **work on the weekends**, and 45% say they regularly **work more hours** during the week than they did before<sup>2</sup>.

**Step 1.** Take a few minutes and note down your own understanding of work-life balance - What does it mean to you?

**Step 2.** Below you are presented with possible factors that can affect work-life balance. Read them carefully and select which ones you believe might possibly affect your team's work-life balance.

\*difficulty prioritising work correctly

\*non-structured work schedule

\*blurry boundaries between work and non-work time

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-news/pages/remote-employees-are-working-longer-than-before.aspx>



\*distractions at home

\* non effective management of time off

**Step 3.** Watch the short TEDx video “3 Rules for better work-life balance” provided below and take notes during the video

[3 rules for better work-life balance | The Way We Work, a TED series](#)

**Step 4.** After watching the video, you could arrange a 1-2-1 meeting with your team members and discuss the following questions.

-How easy is it to maintain work-life balance?

-Is there such a thing as a perfect balance?

-Which bad habits are stopping you from getting a work-life balance?

- Why is it important to have a work-life balance?

## Session 2: The Wheel of Life (50 mins)

Balancing work demands and personal responsibilities can be challenging. If we want to achieve a healthy balance in life, we need to understand how **areas in our life** (e.g., career, finances, fun, health, family, personal growth etc.) are currently balanced.

The **Wheel of Life** is a **visual** tool that you can use to assess your work/life balance.

### How does it work?

#### Step 1:

The following 8 areas of your life are presented;

**Health**

**Career**

**Love**

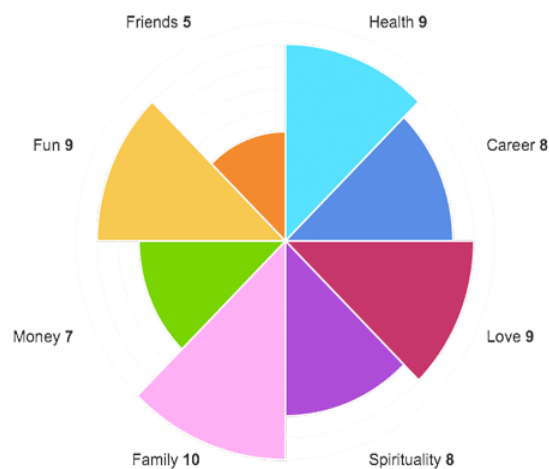
**Spirituality**

**Family**

**Money**

**Fun**

**Friends**



Consider each dimension in turn, and on a scale of 0 (low) – to 10 (high), select the amount of **attention you're devoting to that area of your life**. Mark each score on the appropriate spoke of your Life Wheel. You can use the online [Wheel of Life](#) interactive tool to complete this first step.

#### Step 2:

Achieving a balanced life does not necessarily mean that you are giving equal attention to all areas of your life, as some areas might be more important than others to you.

Consider what your **ideal attention level is for each category**.

### Step 3:

Using the table below note down **steps/action you can take** to address the areas you'd like to improve.

Things I will <b>START</b> doing to regain balance in my life	Things I will <b>stop doing</b> , reprioritize or delegate to regain balance in my life
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

**Note.** Once you familiarize yourself with the tool you can then introduce this to your team as well.

### Session 3: Help them with boundary management (20 mins)

Many eWorkers find it difficult to **switch-off from work** as the **boundaries** between personal and work life can become **blurry** when working remotely.

Control over **boundaries** is key to successful work-life balance.

Virtual team leaders need to encourage eWorkers to **establish boundaries**.

Kreiner et al., (2009) has introduced **four tactics** that can help employees manage effectively their boundaries between work and personal life. The four tactics are presented below:

1. **Temporal**; control time
2. **Physical**; physical boundaries
3. **Communicative**; managing expectations
4. **Behavioural**; negotiate boundaries

Tactics	Examples
Temporal	Plan “me” time; setting (non)working times; “screen-free” time; schedule daily physical activities
Physical	Only working at a specific place, such as the office; avoid doing work during dinner with family while at home
Communicative	Telling coworkers when and how one should (not) be contacted outside work; asking your family members to not interrupt you while on an online meeting
Behavioural	Actively managing technology, e.g. having separate emails on device, unplug, having a clear home desk Exercise

Introduce eWorkers to boundary management and ask them to **note down 3 actions for each boundary management tactic** (use the table below).

For **example, have** the eWorker experiment with dedicating specific hours strictly to work. That means letting colleagues know to not expect a response to any late emails out of office hours.

Tactics	Actions
Temporal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>
Physical	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>
Communicative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>
Behavioural	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>

## Session 4: Time management and prioritising for work-life balance (40 mins)

Time management is key! How you use the time you have will determine the work-life balance you maintain each day.

If you want to help your eWorkers gain a healthy work-life balance you need to teach them how to **prioritise their time and responsibilities both work and family related**.

You will now be introduced to Stephen Covey concept of the “**Time Management Matrix**” for prioritizing by advocating the use of **four quadrants** to determine the tasks you “need” to do and deciding what should be made a priority.

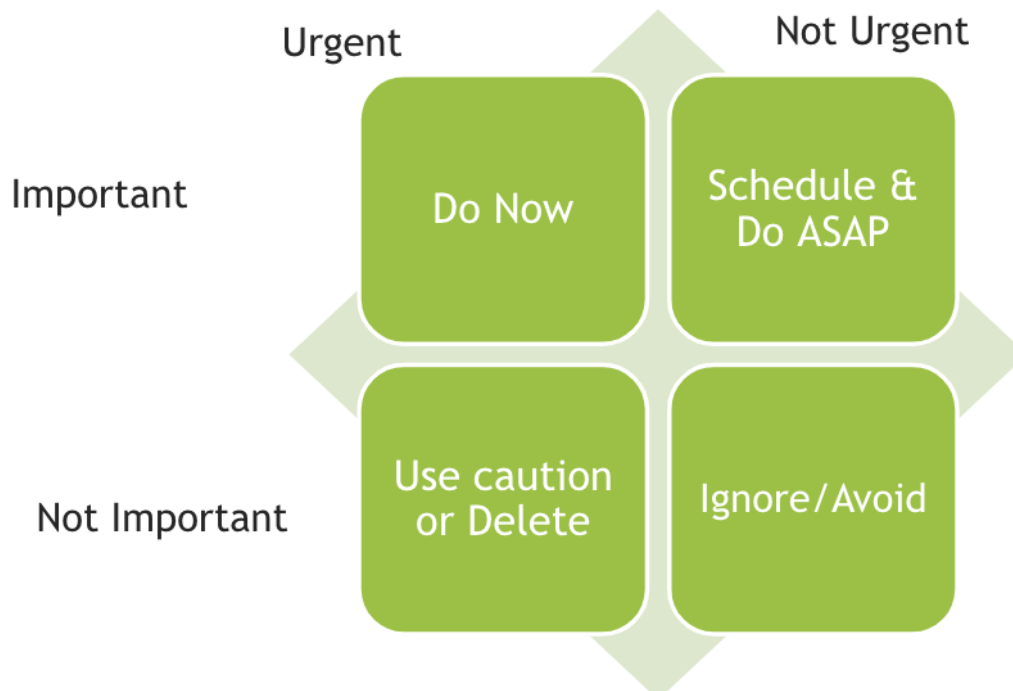
### Step 1:

Watch the short video on Covey’s Time Management Matrix provided below and take notes of the four quadrants during the video

[Stephen Covey's Time Management Matrix](#)

### Step 2:

The four quadrants of the Time Management Matrix are presented below:



### Description of the four quadrants:

Quadrant 1 (top left): important, urgent items; items that need to be dealt with immediately.

Quadrant 2 (top right): important, but not urgent items; items that are important but do not require your immediate attention, and need to be planned for. According to Covey this is the quadrant that we should focus on for **long term achievement of goals**.

Quadrant 3 (bottom left): urgent, but unimportant items; items which should be minimized or eliminated. These are the time sucks, the “poor planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part” variety of tasks.

Quadrant 4 (bottom right): unimportant and also not urgent items; items that don’t have to be done anytime soon, perhaps add little to no value and also should be minimized or eliminated. These are often trivial time wasters.

### Step 3:

Review the example provided and then using the blank Time Management Matrix (below) ask your eWorkers to try to **note down all the tasks that they need to complete tomorrow or this week**. Then have a go at **placing them in the grid according to the 4 categories**.

This will help them re-order tasks based on their **urgency and importance** in order to improve their time management skills and hopefully free up time to focus on priorities.





	Urgent	Not urgent
Important		
Not important		

Another technique that can help you and your team with better time management is the method developed by Francesco Cirillo in the late 1980s, called the **“Pomodoro Technique”**.

This technique uses a timer to break work into intervals, traditionally 25 minutes in length, separated by short breaks. Each interval is known as a pomodoro.

Instructions for the pomodoro technique:

1. Get a to-do list and a timer.
2. Set your timer for 25 minutes, and focus on a single task until the timer rings.
3. When your session ends, mark off one pomodoro and record what you completed.
4. Then enjoy a five-minute break.
5. After four pomodoros (intervals), take a longer, more restorative 15–30-minute break.



\*You might even use the following customizable pomodoro tracker app [Pomodoro Timer](#)

Watch the following video that explains how and why the pomodoro technique works.

[Why the Pomodoro Technique REALLY Works](#)

After watching the video reflect and answer the following questions:

- 1) Have you heard of this technique before?
- 2) If yes, how useful do you find it in managing your time?
- 3) If not, are you considering using this technique?
- 4) According to the video, what are the benefits of using this technique?

#### Other tips for better time management

- Make a list (no more than 5) of what must be done, what should be done, what would you like to do
- Learn to drop down unimportant activities
- Make a realistic plan of your day
- Don't waste time making excuses for not doing something

Can you think of any other ways to better manage your time?

### Session 5: Encourage your team of eWorkers to plan their after-work hours (20 mins)

eWorkers find it hard to step away from work at the end of a workday as there is no clear distinction between their workspace and personal space.

Encourage them to make plans for their after-work hours and to stick to them. Whether the plan includes a hobby or a dinner with a friend, if they have something to do or be at the end of their workday, they will be more likely to sign off and stop working at the end of their workday.

Ask your team to watch the video below on the importance of hobbies and tips on how to find time for them.

#### [Why Hobbies Are Important And How Do You Find Time For Hobbies](#)

After watching the video answer the following questions:

- Why are hobbies important?
- How can hobbies help us maintain a healthy work-life balance?
- How can we make time for our hobbies?



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Now, note down 3 hobbies or activities that you could do at the end of your workday (e.g. learn a new language, cook for your friends, go for a walk) and also note down ways in which you could stick to these hobbies and activities.

### Session 6: Action Plan (20 mins)

Based on what you have learned in this module, help your eWorkers to create their own action plan on how they can achieve a more balanced life. What steps/actions can they take (e.g. set communicative boundaries by letting their colleagues know to not expect a response to any late emails out of office hours)?

### Handouts and activity sheets

- **Handouts,**
- **Activity Sheets,**
- **Suggested Reading**  
Sullivan, C. (2012). *Remote working and work-life balance*. In *Work and quality of life* (pp. 275-290). Springer, Dordrecht.
- **Further Resources**  
Kübler-Ross, E. (2012). *The wheel of life*. Simon and Schuster.

### Assessment tools

1. Jim has informed his team that he will not be answering any emails during lunch time (12:30-13:00). This is a form of what tactic used to establish boundaries between personal and professional life?
  - a. temporal
  - b. physical
  - c. communicative
  - d. behavioural
2. Turning off your email notifications at night is an example of what boundary management tactic?
  - a. temporal
  - b. physical
  - c. communicative
  - d. behavioural
3. You have a task with a tight deadline and there will be significant consequences if you do not complete the task in a timely manner. In which of the four quadrants of the Time Management Matrix would you place this task?
  - a. First (urgent/important)
  - b. Second (not urgent/important)
  - c. Third (urgent/not important)
  - d. Forth (non urgent/non important)



4. *Pomodoro technique* can help one focus more and be more productive

True/False

5. Reflective question: What advice would you give to your employees that struggle to stick to their hobbies and after-work activities?

## Bibliography

Covey, S. R. (2013). *The 7 habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change*. Simon and Schuster.

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## Appendix

### Correct answers to the Assessment tools

1. Jim has informed his team that he will not be answering to any emails during lunch time (12:30-13:00). This is a form of what tactic used to establish boundaries between personal and professional life?
  - a. temporal
  - b. physical
  - c. **communicative**
  - d. behavioural
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  - a. **First (urgent/important)**
  - b. Second (not urgent/important)
  - c. Third (urgent/not important)
  - d. Forth (non urgent/non important)
4. *Pomodoro technique* can help one focus more and be more productive



True/False

5. Reflective question: What advice would you give to your employees that struggle to stick to their hobbies and after-work activities?

**Indicative Answer:** Note the activities down, Prioritize tasks according to how much you enjoy them, Schedule and commit (include them in your calendar).