

Maximise remote team productivity with simplified collaboration



Remote work is here to stay. According to researchers, the shift that began during the pandemic has only picked up speed since the global 'return to normalcy' and is expected to increase through 2024.¹

The new reality

What does this mean for organisations focused on ensuring high productivity from staff working remotely? The good news is that studies have actually shown increases in productivity among staff working from home.² However, this boost can only occur within organisations that are prepared to maximise productivity within their teams, providing an environment that sets them up for success by simplifying the collaboration process.

Your organisation can reap the same benefits of remote collaboration by making use of five best practices for simplified, successful collaboration.



Build connections through strong communication

Lack of communication and isolation are two of the most-cited challenges with remote work.³ The absence of face-to-face interactions can create a sense of distance within your teams that hampers productivity and stifles collaboration. It is, therefore, important to reduce that distance by providing the means for your team to connect and communicate in ways that allow them to build a rapport.

Encouraging a shift towards more frequent video calls (as opposed to more impersonal emails) can help establish connections and empathy within your team, which will, in turn, inspire a more collaborative spirit. Additionally, virtual team-building exercises are effective opportunities to socialise and encourage a sense of belonging that translates to improved collaboration. In the wake of the pandemic, there are a plethora of platforms that provide secure, reliable video conferencing that facilitate these efforts. According to Forbes,⁴ "those intimately familiar with various regions of the brain assure us that humans process visual information far faster and more capably than text or audio". To prove this point, they conducted a study, and 73% of high-growth company executives agree that video conferencing significantly improves the quality of communication. At the same time, it enhances understanding by allowing you to connect personally, pick up on verbal and non-verbal cues, and build trust.

Effective communication is also critical to enhancing collaboration. This includes selecting virtual communication platforms that suit the culture and requirements of your organisation. In this scenario, the video also empowers your team to maintain a visual on other people in the meeting—participants will be more engaged, multi-task less, and set themselves up to process and understand more clearly.

Whether your team uses chat tools, video conferencing, emails, text messages, or all of the above, it's important to ensure that everyone is on the same page with the preferred platforms and using them to communicate clearly and efficiently.

¹ Source: The Economist - The fight over remote working will heat up in 2024

² Source: McKinsey Global Institute - How hybrid work has changed the way people work, live, and shop

³ Source: Forbes - The Untold Side Of Remote Working: Isolation And Lack Of Career Progression

⁴ Source: Forbes - 5 Reasons Why Your Company Needs to Embrace Video Conferencing Now



Set boundaries to prevent burnout

Office hours can be difficult to maintain when the office is at home, and a healthy work-life balance is a crucial part of enabling productivity and collaboration. This is why it is important to establish clear remote working policies that include expectations and boundaries that will protect your team from experiencing dips in productivity or burnout.

These documented policies should cover the expectations relating to working hours, availability, and performance, while also setting limits for after-hours communication that will allow your remote team to unplug and decompress. This way, they can recharge during their free time and return to their desks ready to work together seamlessly.



Ensure data accessibility for your team

Data accessibility is one of the most important aspects of any remote team's workflow. When projects require inputs from various team members, they can easily become stuck in the production pipeline if systems have not been put in place to ensure the free flow of information.

These kinds of roadblocks can be avoided by ensuring that data is centrally stored online in a location accessible to everyone who needs it. When the different departments have access to the files and folders they need and clarity into the availability of their teammates, they can work together effectively to bring their projects to completion on time.



Practice powerful project management

Remote project management is very different from the in-person variety, particularly if your team is spread across multiple locations and time zones. Fortunately, a number of project management software tools are available to keep remote teams at peak productivity by breaking projects down into specific tasks that can be assigned to team members.

These platforms facilitate the creation of effective work plans with a balanced distribution of deliverables and provide visibility at the management level, allowing you to hold your team accountable as you keep them on track. Choose the right one for your organisation's needs to simplify your efforts at encouraging effective collaboration.



Use the right collaboration tools for the right job

The success of your organisation's remote work arrangement hinges on your ability to create an online environment that encourages meaningful collaboration. The key is to find the software that fits the bill.

If your team's projects require extensive brainstorming sessions, then a high-powered video conferencing solution should be in your toolkit. On the other hand, if they work together to create written content, you should opt for a tool that allows group editing and comments. For design and development teams, look for platforms that incorporate real-time collaboration, comments, and a review process.

Once used effectively, the right online collaboration tools can increase productivity by 30% while boosting employee engagement work.⁵

The way forward

Remote work may indeed be the new normal, but this does not have to be a bad thing for your organisation. Handled correctly, this new state of affairs can result in your team being more productive than ever, with a little help from technology designed to simplify their collaborative processes. As always, you can trust C&W Business to provide your organisation with cloud computing and connectivity technology that will keep your productivity and collaboration toolkit running smoothly and your remote team happy.

