Managing and Leading Distributed Teams

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Agenda

• Teleworking Mindset
• Remote vs. Distributed
• Leading change: People, Process, and Technology
• Summary
Teleworking Mindset
Changes, Challenges, and Solutions
Teleworking is a major change

1. Acknowledge - it happens
2. Anticipate - prepare
3. Adapt - enjoy the new
4. Change - move with the 🧀

*From “Who Moved My Cheese?”*
Overcoming the Obstacles

- **Challenge**: Teleworking is an inconvenience
  - Reality: teleworking offers talent, cost, and personal benefits

- **Challenge**: Facetime is a requirement for employees
  - Reality: Contact is required, babysitting is not

- **Challenge**: Demonstrating productivity
  - Reality: New tools and processes will be required
Distributed Work
It’s here to stay

- Find ways to blend in-person and distributed work
  - In-person events
  - Allow for non-work time in meetings
  - Include virtual team leadership as a skill development goal
  - Utilize feedback mechanisms
  - Allow time for change

Pandemic changes: inelastic PP&E investment, modified business processes and new distributed tools, and cultural acceptance

Recognize personal and business benefit increases: productivity, time with family, and access to geographically disbursed talent
Remote vs. Distributed

Why do the words matter?
Remote

• “Distant, having little or no connection/relationship, unlikely to occur, aloof”
• Primary/secondary relationship (in-office vs. remote)
• Not a great interpersonal approach!
• Leads to inefficient processes and costlier tech

• “Include every member, independent

Distributed

nodes linked by a network”

• Independent but equal relationship
• Requires new approaches to managing people, business process, and technology tools

Mindset matters! Facilitate the shift to distributed teams & tools.
Leading Change
The Golden Triangle
Leading Through Change
The Golden Triangle

- Framework designed to facilitate organizational change
- Useful for:
  - Identifying drivers/impacts of change
  - Anticipating pushback
  - Developing successful change management strategies

Applied Organization Change in Industry by Harold Leavitt, 1964
People

- Lead with empathy
- Offset impacts like loss of casual conversation (-) with increased transparency in chat apps (+)
- Define rules & expectations and train
- Facilitate routine in-person meetings - annual retreat, team offsites, etc.
- Shift mindset so distributed/remote workers feel like first class team members
  - Default to include remote meeting links
  - Share info by recording meetings
• Change is hard. Fail to plan for and manage it and you’re unlikely to succeed.
• Changing people’s routines is uncomfortable
• Distributed work requires adapting processes for asynchronous communication, like switching from team meetings to a ticketing tool for decision making
Technology

- Bi-directional impact of process changes and tech tools
- Sharing knowledge via wikis increases availability, but is a new way of consuming information (visual vs. auditory)
- Always identify process needs & requirements first
  - Include compliance needs
- Beware of technology overload
Summary

• Telework and distributed teams are a new fact of life
• Change is a reality of this shift
• Build new skills and capabilities via training
• Identify a framework to analyze, estimate, and manage the change
Questions???

Feel free to reach out!
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