

EQUIPPING LEADERS FOR LONG-TERM REMOTE MANAGEMENT

A CHECKLIST BY ECSELL INSTITUTE



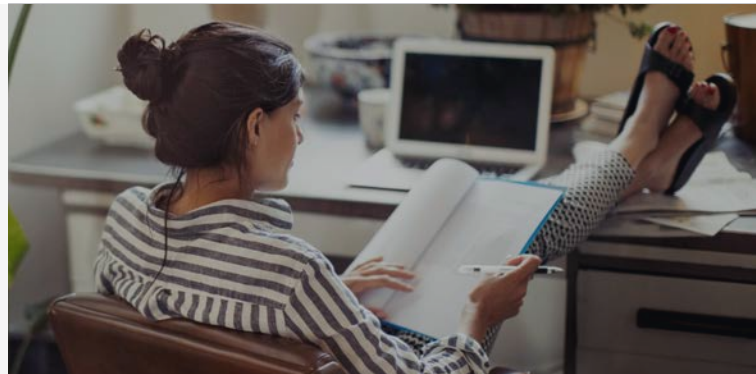
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REMOTE MANAGEMENT IS HERE TO STAY

Remember in March 2020 when we all told our employees to work from home for the next couple of weeks? 2 years later, whether by executive directive or by choice, two thirds of employees are still working remotely at least part of the time. Team members in a remote or hybrid situation have different needs from their managers than those in the office, and it's the manager's responsibility to know how to meet them. All team members, regardless of work environment, deserve to be set up for success.

66%

OF PROFESSIONAL WORKERS
ARE IN A REMOTE OR HYBRID
ENVIRONMENT



Most of us never considered how we'd equip our leadership team to lead remotely. It's one thing to do it for a few weeks. It takes an entirely different plan if remote leadership is going to last for months, years, or indefinitely. Your managers cannot rely solely on the skills they learned before, as remote leadership takes some new and different techniques. After two years of "we'll figure it out as we go," it's time to help your managers stop guessing how to be effective. There are objective, research-backed activities and behaviors they can learn to be successful. Use this checklist to see if your managers are equipped to lead remotely.

THE CHECKLIST

1 **Do your leaders know the best frequency for meeting with team members?** **YES** **NO**

With remote work, leaders can't longer rely on informal interactions to coach, support and communicate with team members. Therefore, management with remote team members needs to become more intentional.

This means leaders must have a clear, consistent schedule of time with their team, including knowing the best frequency to meet with each team member individually as well as a group. Without specific expectations, managers are likely to inhibit the performance of their team with actions like not giving their employees enough time or causing Zoom fatigue

2

Do your leaders know how to conduct virtual meetings effectively?

YES NO

Whether one-to-one or as a team, there is a knack to making virtual meetings effective. For individual meetings, managers can't rely on an unstructured conversation, as many people are less talkative in digital formats. So it's important to have an agenda that encourages discussion of key issues while also continuing to strengthen relationships.

For team meetings, it can be even more challenging. What are the tricks to keeping everyone engaged? How should they discuss challenging issues? What's the best way to facilitate interaction? Knowing the answers to these questions is vital.

3

Do your leaders know how often to give feedback verbally or in writing?

YES NO

Just like individual meetings don't happen as naturally or frequently in a virtual environment, neither does feedback. Before, leaders could walk into someone's office to discuss how they did on a customer call or a project. Now that time must be scheduled, or frequency of feedback simply goes down.

And based on Ecsell Institute research, giving effective feedback is one of the most essential things a leader does to improve their team member's performance. So, it's critical for managers to have clear expectations and accountability for giving verbal and written feedback to their team.

4

Do your leaders know how to ensure effective communication in a remote environment?

YES NO

Remote work naturally leads to communication barriers. Because team members can't drop by each others' workstations to ask a quick question, they may not ask the question at all. Or they may have to rely too much on electronic communication, such as emails and DMs, where the likelihood of a message being misconstrued increases.

Knowing how to drive effective team communication in a remote environment is essential to maintaining team harmony and productivity. Managers should be able to coach their team members to use the best communication methods based on the issue being discussed, as well as hold their team members accountable for being effective remote collaborators.

5

Are your leaders equipped to drive team accountability when working remotely?

YES NO

It's more difficult for a manager to know that their team members are working hard when they don't actually see them working. Our research also indicates that team members themselves are more skeptical that their peers are being held accountable in a remote environment.

To drive accountability, managers must be able to communicate clear performance standards, measure achievement of activity and goals, and address performance issues in direct yet supportive ways. It is vital for managers to learn these skills to avoid the finger-pointing that can happen when team members don't feel like others on the team are pulling their weight.

6

Can you measure the quality of your leaders' management activities and behaviors?

YES NO

Of course, it's not just that your leaders need to do their management activities, they need to do them well. By measuring the quality of your leaders' management activities and day-to-day behaviors, you can ensure that the time they spend with their team members is having the intended positive effect on performance. This is especially important when team members and leaders are working remotely, which makes it harder for you to gather informal feedback.

We have found that the best way to measure the effectiveness of a leader is to gather feedback from the people most impacted by that leader – their team members. Regularly surveying your employees on their management relationship with their leader can help you identify what they're doing well and where they need to improve.

7

Do you have a way to help your leaders continually grow their management skills?

YES NO

The final key to equipping your leaders for effective remote management is to ensure they can develop new skills during this time. Traditionally, companies have relied on on-site training or destination leadership conferences as development opportunities. These types of events may no longer be the best or most available option, so you need to find new ways to help your leaders develop the skills they need for managing remotely.

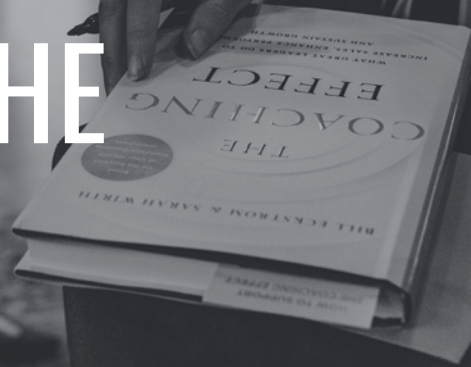
When considering any training for you and your leaders, consider the vendor's experience in training virtually and whether their training provides for ongoing reinforcement to ensure your leaders' new skills become a habit.

CHECK YOUR SCORE

		YES	NO
1	Do your leaders know the best frequency for meeting with their team members?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Do your leaders know how to conduct their virtual meetings effectively?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Do your leaders know how often to give feedback verbally or in writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Do your leaders know how to ensure effective communication in a remote environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Are your leaders equipped to drive team accountability when working remotely?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Can you measure quality of your leaders' management activities and behaviors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Do you have a way to help your leaders continually grow their management skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answer “no” to two or more of the questions above, your leaders are likely not as prepared as they need to be to manage remotely on an ongoing basis. To learn what you can do to get your leadership team ready, please email info@ecsellinstitute.com or [contact us](#) through our website to get started.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



SARAH WIRTH

Sarah Wirth is president of Ecsell Institute, as well as one of the world's foremost authorities in metric-based performance coaching and growth.

She has 20 years of experience in employee assessment, leadership development, sales executive coaching, and customer service. Sarah joined Ecsell Institute in 2011 to help executive leaders, sales managers, athletic coaches, teachers, and more to master how coaching done correctly is the #1 enhancer of performance. Her best-selling book, *The Coaching Effect*, was written to bring Ecsell Institute's mission to more people.

Ecsell Institute is the only organization that measures and educates on the impact coaching effectiveness has on employee performance. We are the world's foremost authority in metric-based leadership research, having studied over 300,000 coaching interactions in the workplace and authoring the best-selling book, *The Coaching Effect*.

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