



THE WORKFORCE DURING COVID-19

**Keeping the Team Motivated and
Productive while at Home**

and

The Future of Work

May 6, 2020



KEEPING THE TEAM MOTIVATED AND PRODUCTIVE WHILE AT HOME

Working at home has created a new set of challenges for managers and workers alike. We are hearing from SMEs that many of their workers are not as productive as they used to be in the office.

Many workers are also saying it is difficult to stay motivated throughout the day with the distractions at home and in the absence of the camaraderie of the workplace.

For managers and workers at home, it is important to create a routine.

- **Get up at a certain hour each day.**
- **Bathe and change into some form of “working clothes.”**
- **Do not stay in your sleep wear all day and crawl over to the computer.**
- **Where possible create an area which is the designated workplace and go there at an appointed time.**
- **Outline goals for the day. What would you like to accomplish by end of day?**
- **Sign in for the morning and sign out at the end of the day.**
- **Schedule specific breaks for coffee or snacks but don’t allow yourself to keep going to the fridge to look.**
- **Maintaining a mentally professional stance is crucial to making a success of working from home.**

The pandemic and new work-at-home paradigm have opened a clear window into the capabilities and motivation level of each employee. It was easier to hide low performance in a crowd. Welcome to the New Normal. Everyone is going to have to step up their game.



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A daily or weekly company-wide call is critical to maintaining productivity and holding each other accountable. A quick round robin asking each person what they got done yesterday and what they hope to accomplish today is a very good way to run the meeting.

We also recommend an end-of-day email which signals signing off from the workday and outlines what actually got accomplished that day and what is intended for the next day.

Managers must recognize that employees differ in capability and levels of motivation.

- A. If Employee has High Capability + High Motivation = Manager can give high level instructions and long deadlines.**
- B. If Employee has Lower Capability + High Motivation = Manager needs to give detailed step by step direction and possibly additional training and long deadlines.**
- C. If Employee has High Capability + Low Motivation = Manager needs to give high level instructions + short deadlines with frequent check in.**
- D. If Employee has Low Capability + Low Motivation = Managers need to give detailed instructions + short deadlines with frequent check in.**

Bottom line is one style of management will not fit in all circumstances. Guidance and accountability are key.



MANAGEMENT STYLE HAS TO DIFFER BY EMPLOYEE CAPABILITY AND MOTIVATION

- Defining which employee belongs in which box;
- The box determines the level of guidance needed and frequency of checking in required;
- Example: The task is to “Make 60 dresses” by the end of the week.

High Capability/ Low Motivation	High Capability/ High Motivation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give High Level Goal & Short Deadline • High Level Goal: Make 20 dresses by end of day • Short Deadline: Check every half day that they have made 10 dresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give high level goal and long deadline • High Level Goal: Make 60 dresses by end of the week • Long Deadline: Leave them be until end of week
Low Capability/ Low Motivation	Low Capability/ High Motivation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give detailed steps and short deadlines • Detailed Steps: Select the pattern+ Cut the fabric+ Place the pattern pieces + mark and sew darts + sew back zipper + sew shoulder seams+ prep neckline facing etc. • Short Deadline: Check in every half day to ensure progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give detailed steps and long deadline • Detailed Steps: Select the pattern+ Cut the fabric+ Place the pattern pieces + mark and sew darts + sew back zipper + sew shoulder seams+ prep neckline facing etc. • Long Deadline: Leave them until end of week



WEEKLY MEETING AGENDA

- 1) Overall Company Update
- 2) Celebrate what went right; goals achieved
- 3) Identify key learnings from what went wrong; goals missed
- 4) Go around the virtual room with each person (including the manager) talking about accomplishments and goals
- 5) What did you accomplish last week?
- 6) What do you hope to accomplish this week?
- 7) Outline new tasks, assignments and who is responsible
- 8) What might prevent you from accomplishing your goals this week? Where might you need support? More detailed task guidance; an extra body; more training?
- 9) How busy are you? Can you take anything else on?
- 10) Where might you want to contribute further?



KEEPING THE TEAM MOTIVATED AND PRODUCTIVE WHILE AT HOME

Lisandra Rickards, Founder & CEO of Soul Career on how to keep the team motivated and productive while at home.

This is our opportunity to **shift our work culture in Jamaica from a carrot-and-stick approach of external motivation, to a results-driven, internally motivated approach.**

The bigger issue here outside of the tactics of a daily routine is this: **we must now learn how to manage ourselves instead of having someone else manage us.** For the people who are doing this for the first time, it can be a challenging transition.

The questions are:

- “How do we tap into the internal motivations of our team members?”
- How do we create a sense of mission and purpose that encourages people to get out of bed everyday, ready to attack the day?”

The answer is that **we need to learn about our team members on a personal level and our mission as a company needs to speak deeply to them.** Why did they join your company (apart from money)? What do they want to do with their lives? What do their personality tests look like? Once we understand this, we can try to align projects and results with each team member’s motivations.



KEEPING THE TEAM MOTIVATED AND PRODUCTIVE WHILE AT HOME

Lisandra Rickards, Founder & CEO of Soul Career (cont.)

Management is a learned skill - you do not automatically become a good manager because you have a title. In fact, many studies have shown that the main reason employees leave their jobs is because of a bad manager. So how can people become better managers?

- **Start with understanding yourself and your natural leadership style.** Take a personality test to help with this. Then do the same for each team member. Try www.16personalities.com.
- **Match projects and assignments to the skills and passions of your team members.**
- **Set clear, measurable objectives** so it's a matter of fact, not debate, whether or not your employees have reached their performance targets.
- **Take an active role in the development of your team**, so that they can learn and grow as the organization evolves.
- **Work on communicating effectively.** How you communicate to your team can determine whether you succeed or fail.
- **Publicly recognize good performance.** Recognition for a job well done plays a key role in employee motivation.

Great managers match projects to the interests of their team members, ensure that they are rewarded for their performance, and develop their talent by assigning progressively more challenging and meaningful projects.



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Lisandra Rickards, Founder & CEO of Soul Career (cont.)

But it is not only about the managers getting better at their jobs, team members are equally responsible to ensure they increase their effectiveness at work during this time. They can do this by:

- **Taking initiative:** Don't wait for someone to tell you what to do, but be proactive.
- **Being reliable:** Show up consistently and complete your tasks before the deadline.
- **Producing high quality work:** It should be obvious that you put a lot of time, effort and care in your work.
- **Volunteering for key projects:** especially if there is a project that aligns with your interests and motivations.
- **Offering solutions:** Find ways to solve problems faced by the business.
- **Make your manager's job easier:** Build trust, take on some of their tasks to free them up to be more strategic, and try to identify and fill any gaps in their skillsets.

Most employees just execute, but if you're one of the few who are constantly coming up with new ideas and are taking on new responsibilities that are not required of you, this will go a long way in making you invaluable at work.



KEEPING THE TEAM MOTIVATED AND PRODUCTIVE WHILE AT HOME

Lisandra Rickards, Founder & CEO of Soul Career (cont.)

In order to take these actions, the team member will also need to take responsibility for understanding their own goals, and how their job helps contribute to those goals. The first step to cultivating discipline within ourselves is to develop a strong WHY.

After doing this exercise, take steps preserve your mental health by following the tips below. If you are feeling low energy, sluggish, and in a mental fog - the tactical routine will not help as much. You will need a lot of energy to accomplish your goals, so actively work to create positive and healthy mental energy

4 Tips for Establishing a Mental Health Routine:

- 1) Go outside in the sunlight and nature for at least 15 minutes a day to get some vitamin D.
- 2) Exercise daily to increase the level of serotonin in your brain to give yourself more mental energy.
- 3) Reduce your anxiety by limiting how much news you consume and doing things that calm you like listening to music, reading and meditation.
- 4) Consume inspirational content - listen to an uplifting podcast, reading a book, or watch a YouTube video.



THE FUTURE OF WORK

Dr. Carolyn Hayle, CEO, Etalon Global Solutions Limited, muses on the Future of Work



COVID-19 arrived in Jamaica on March 9th without invitation. Amongst other things, it forced companies to move their existing businesses online. This caused confusion and stress for many business owners. The Chinese symbol for **crisis** is written using two symbols. The same two symbols when written in a different placement create the word **opportunity**. Notice that the difference is on the placement of the symbols.

According to the Institute for the Future, in a report entitled “Future Work Skills 2020”, the two most important skills going forward will be virtual collaboration and cross-cultural competencies. Jamaican employers, unaccustomed to managing people they cannot see, view remote work as a crisis. Yet a shift in focus creates a new placement. Agility, efficiency and compatibility will get companies into the new world game.



THE FUTURE OF WORK

Dr. Carolyn Hayle, CEO of Etalon Global Solutions Limited (cont.)

When the dust settles, many industries that were once revered will be no more, and new ones previously unheard of will emerge. Companies around the world will have lost many skills creating huge gaps in their workforce. This provides opportunity for Jamaican firms that are nimble and ready to accept change and seize opportunities.

Shrewd employers will use this time to recalibrate and refocus. They should have already begun to scan the horizon to see global industries likely to emerge and into which of these could their companies fit. The environmental scan should include a drill down into those industries likely to seek partners and collaborators. In selecting the right partner, similar to selecting the right workforce, the focus should be on compatibility of core values.

A keen employer will not be annoyed by this symbol of crisis but rather view it as a time for evaluating the current talent pool, creating an online business in addition to the existing physical business and equipping the business with new skills. Acquiring the skills necessary for working across time zones, across cultures and through virtual collaboration will be essential. The focus, at this time, should not necessarily be on productivity but rather reshaping and retooling the workforce firmly focused on emerging opportunities.

The new skills necessary for the future can be acquired by focusing on managing existing clients, staff and products.



THE FUTURE OF WORK

Dr. Carolyn Hayle, CEO of Etalon Global Solutions Limited (cont.)

The following 4 activities can prepare a company for the future of work:

1) Review and amend, where necessary, existing company policies to accommodate remote work and to ensure that all legal requirements to operate in this space are in place.

2) Purchase the necessary software to enable efficient and effective management of your company regardless of the physical location of your staff. For example, www.monday.com. This software system gives the employer the ability to manage the entire team and tasks from his/her own device. It is similar to seeing each and every staff member, but in more detail.

3) Establish new procedures for managing teams and tasks working remotely.

4) Establish operational expectations:

Establish the right tone. Technology tends to be very cold so misunderstandings and conflict can arise if the company does not over-communicate. The time and effort invested in ensuring that the message is enveloped in the right tone is vital.

Establish procedures for the meeting: operational matters such as: **meeting times**, (the team agrees the time); **dress code**: business casual; **duration**: the meeting begins on time and lasts no longer than 15 minutes; and **backdrop**: depending on the video conferencing software being used the backdrop can be customized to depict the corporate logo or a special message.



THE FUTURE OF WORK

Dr. Carolyn Hayle, CEO of Etalon Global Solutions Limited (cont.)

Flow: At the beginning of the meeting all cameras are on so people can appropriately greet each other. After the greetings, the convener takes control of the microphones and the cameras giving permissions to share screens and comments, as appropriate. This is important because of unexpected interruptions from background noise.

Purpose: This must be clear. The meeting is intended to review achievements since the previous meeting period, the work plan for the current day and for identifying challenges (immediate or potential). The purpose is not an accounting of every minute of the workday but rather to focus on goals to be achieved and the progress being made.

Side bars: If a team member identifies challenges within the meeting, these are dealt with in a side bar. The team leader follows up on these challenges in one on one sessions with the team member. However, if the side bar reveals that the matter concerns the team then it gets put on the broader agenda for the next meeting time.

Black out day: The purpose of this “black out day” is to provide time for people to be able think, create documents and actually execute on agreed tasks. Constant meetings diminish productivity and demoralize the staff. It sends a signal of distrust.



THE FUTURE OF WORK

Dr. Carolyn Hayle, CEO of Etalon Global Solutions Limited (cont.)

There are two other important meetings times. The creation of a virtual lounge will facilitate a casual meeting spot. Here team members go for a coffee break, a brainstorm or a training session during the workday.

The second purpose of the lounge is to create a space where people can be themselves. In this spot people can share their playlist, play musical instruments, read poetry or books or have cook-offs. Some companies use lunch time for this activity.

These events are vital for creating a bond between the employers and the employees. It is in these moments that people begin to develop a sense of belonging which leads to productivity. These events must be open to all staff regardless of level or category. The group decides on the days, times and frequency of the “hang out sessions.”

Remote work is here. Will it symbolize opportunity or crisis? The choice is yours.



REFERENCES

16 Personalities Online Test for Team Members

- <https://www.16personalities.com/>
- Learn what really drives, inspires, and worries different personality types, helping you build more meaningful relationships and learn how to grow and better navigate the world around them.

Institute for the Future , Future of Work Skills 2020, n.d. internet search October 2019. Retrieved from

http://www.iftf.org/uploads/media/SR-1382A_UPRI_future_work_skills_sm.pdf

Remote Teamwork Management Software – Monday.com

- <https://monday.com/>
- monday.com connects your team so you can continue to collaborate, manage and track work in one easy-to-use platform, wherever you are. The flexible remote work software built to:
 - Collaborate anywhere
 - Track work progress
 - Align teams quickly
 - Turn video chats into actions

Chinese translation for “crisis” and “opportunity”

- Crisis -
<https://translate.google.com/?um=1&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&client=tw-ob#view=home&op=translate&sl=auto&tl=zh-CN&text=Crisis>
- Opportunity -
<https://translate.google.com/?um=1&ie=UTF-8&hl=en&client=tw-ob#view=home&op=translate&sl=auto&tl=zh-CN&text=Opportunity>

