Effectively Managing Remote Teams in a Post Pandemic Environment

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$>WHOAMI

- Experience
  - Manager of Cybersecurity Platform Engineering team at Cardinal Health
  - Global Cybersecurity Manager at Cooper Tire
  - Various other security & IT roles in manufacturing, healthcare, and telecommunications (10+ years)
- Education
  - A.S in Network Administration & Computer Programming from NSCC
  - Finishing B.S in Cybersecurity & Information Assurance from WGU
  - Industry Certs: CCSP, SSCP, CEH, ECES, CySA+, Security+, Network+, A+, CCFR, CCFA
- Personal
  - Spending time with family, grilling/smoking, working in home lab, and traveling

What is a remote team

- Remote teams are really just decentralized teams – this is not a new concept as global companies have been doing this for decades

- Consider a company that has operations in AMER, APAC, EMEA, & LATAM regions

- Consider outsourcing IT support and administration or development work to a contracting company

Understanding Remote Teams

Advantages

- Significantly larger talent pool
- Greater capacity for DE&I
- Decrease the cost of office space
- Decrease office drama
- Often more productive with less office disruptions
- Flexible for companies and staff
- Better work/life balance
- Can work from literally anywhere

Disadvantages

- Lack the "in person" factor
- Relationships take effort
- Inclusion requires effort
- Collaboration requires a new perspective
- Opportunities require more effort
- Requires trust

What a remote team is not

- They are not going to work the same way as they did in the office
- They will not be on video all of the time – and you shouldn't expect them to!
- They may have interruptions or distractions – these are not absent in office environments, they are just different
- They are not something to be feared

To Video or Not to Video

- There are times that video might be required
  - E.g. During interviews, during 1:1s (unless otherwise stated), during introductions, or during small meetings with senior leadership
- There are times that video might be optional
  - E.g. During team meetings, during large company meetings, or just when speaking in regular meetings
- Video should never be required during the entire shift - it is invasive and stressful - "Zoom fatigue" is very real
- Listen to your teams feelings, if someone is having a bad day, feels ill, or just doesn't want to be on video – don't force them

Flexibility

- Remote work provides significant opportunities for flexibility that can't always be attained in an office setting

- Be flexible with start and stop times – especially when dealing with different time zones
  - The same goes for meetings

- Be flexible with appointments and errands folks need to run throughout the day – if you flex for them, they will flex for you

Inclusion & Team Building

- 1:1s – take the time to get to know your team
  - Learn their career aspirations, training needs, interests, and hobbies
  - Have these reoccur on a cadence you are both comfortable with
- Team meetings
  - Include everyone that you can and have these regularly
  - Consider time zones when planning meetings
- "Cube Time" – A concept I learned from Cardinal
  - Essentially a time to multitask and get to know each other while still getting some work done
- Virtual "Happy Hour" – beverages optional
  - Have these regularly and ensure that everyone knows that alcohol is optional – these are great opportunities for small teams

Some Recommendations

- Pay attention in meetings
  - Look for folks that come off of mute, but go back on – they have something to say – call on them to give them a chance to speak
  - Watch body language to determine how people feel
  - Watch for signs of disengagement – is it you, the topic, or is something else going on
- Be democratic
  - Ask everyone's opinions and listen to them
  - Provide feedback
  - The team has goals and objectives you have to meet, how you get there is up to you
- Encourage folks to take PTO – working from home is not a vacation
- **Be the leader you always wanted**

Questions?

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