

10 quick takeaways for leading virtual teams

LEADING AND WORKING IN VIRTUAL TEAMS – A TOOLKIT

1.

Commit to regular calls or check ins

Having a schedule of calls set up ahead of time means you both know when you will be in contact and can prepare in advance. This is precious time – nothing breaks trust like constantly cancelling meetings – so safeguard it in your diary and have a quiet space ready so you can be fully present.

2.

Be patient

Trust takes time. In a virtual environment it takes longer to build trust. Don't rush to get straight down to business – discuss the background to the project you are working on and take time to talk generally about what everyone is doing work-wise.

3.

Use a webcam

Whenever possible use video conferencing apps like Facetime or Skype for meetings so that you can see each other's faces. This helps you to read each other's non-verbal cues and build trust through eye contact.

4.

Make time for small talk

Just as you would with colleagues working in the same office, be sure to share personal insights and issues from your non-work lives when you are in virtual meetings. These conversations build trust by showing we care about each other and are a part of what makes us human.

5.

Keep the conversation flowing both ways

Make sure your virtual meetings and calls are two-way and not just a brain-dumping or briefing session. Ask for feedback and ideas, and really listen to your colleague's views and opinions.

6.

Get clarity with active listening

Remember that in virtual meetings it is even more important to check the assumptions you are making about what your colleague meant, said or did. Paraphrase information and ask questions starting with "Can I check that you mean...."



7.

Check-in emotionally

Honest, open conversations are a pillar of trust. In a virtual meeting, make the time to check that you and your colleague are in tune with each other, and understand what each other is feeling and thinking.

8.

Put yourself in their (distant) shoes

If you are based in the office and your colleague works remotely, remember how much they miss out on which you take for granted. Share as much information as you can with your remote colleagues and ask them if they need background before you launch into a complex conversation.

9.

Write it all down

Keep short notes of each virtual meeting so you can quickly pick up where you left off last time, check the progress you've made and stay accountable to each other. Of course, this is after you have covered off any personal topics!

10.

Reply to requests quickly.

If a remote colleague asks to talk with you, respond as soon as you can and positively, even if just with a time you are free to talk. Remember, they can't just walk into your office for a chat, so knowing they can reach you quickly when they need your advice or assistance is very important.

Kineo UK

info@kineo.com
+44 (0)1 273 764 070

Kineo USA

usinfo@kineo.com
+1-312-846-6656

Kineo Australia

info@kineo.com.au
+61 1300 303 318

Kineo New Zealand

info@kineo.co.nz
+64 (0)4 801 6688