Remote Work Basics

THE BASICS FOR PEOPLE IN TECHNOLOGY

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Tom Henricksen

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Starting with Remote in Mind

Setting up a remote office environment takes time and commitment. It doesn't happen by accident!

Tom Henricksen

The days of everyone coming to work in the same office is changing quickly. According to [Global Workplace Analytics][1], 80 to 90 percent of the US workforce says they would like to telework at least part-time. More and more companies are designed from the start with a remote workplace. Matt Ostanik founded [Funnel-Wise][2] with this in mind, "I launched FunnelWise in 2014 because when I worked in my previous businesses, I became very frustrated with the gap in the existing software tools I used to manage my marketing and sales reports." It is important to have the right tools to support a remote team and make it easy to collaborate.

Companies are experimenting with allowing their employees to work from home. Some companies don't have a physical office at all, while others maintain a balance of onsite and remote employees. Utilizing remote teams opens the organization to new opportunities, networks, and skill sets that would be available to them in their local area. Being part of remote teams also presents new challenges, for team members and managers alike.

How does your current company handle remote workers?

Do you have the right people on your team for remote work?

Do you have the right tools for your team to work remotely?

Drawing in Top Talent

One major reason companies are switching to remote setups is when you have a company in say Denver, Colorado there is only so many people who live there. When you consider a remote team you can bring in top talent from anywhere. This helped Matt staff FunnelWise, "So, though I was personally based in Des Moines, Iowa when I began hiring, I didn't limit my search to that geographical location. Instead, I expanded my search to other states and cities, giving the highest priority to the sheer talent and quality of the people I was hiring." So even if you are based in Crabapple Cove, Maine you can pull top talent from Silicon Valley.

Great remote teams don't just happen; they're built. Building a great remote team begins with strategic, intentional hiring practices. In order to scale your business, this process needs to be thorough, well-documented, and effective at both identifying strong candidates for remote work, and surfacing any potential issues before you make your decision. In my fifteen years of experience as an App Development and Development Manager, I've worked with and managed all types of remote teams. I'm going to share the important lessons I've learned about how to keep remote teams cohesive.

Hire for Alignment

Have you ever been burned when you hired someone? You followed your normal hiring process, found a remote employee with the right experience and skills, and then were shocked when they left your team just a few weeks or months later. What went wrong?

The short answer: Your process. Instead of blaming yourself or your hiring committee, see this as an opportunity to make sure your process helps you meet your hiring goals: Perhaps your process didn't do enough to ensure that this person had the ability to communicate, collaborate, and contribute without being in the office. Perhaps the role they were hired to do required them to be onsite in order to be effective. Ask yourself: How can we improve our hiring process for remote employees, so that we can ensure

better alignment next time?

The organizational values include things like: Getting the right people on the bus, having a culture that focuses on hard work, and also honesty, transparency, and humbleness. We need to care for each other as individuals. We don't want to work with jerks. Matt strives to make FunnelWise too, "It's not overly bureaucratic, and there's a flat or low hierarchy as much as possible. And, we're focused on excellent customer service and customer experiences and providing the best experience for our clients. We work towards constant learning and growth and we're all getting better at what we're doing."

Benefits for Employees

Working with a remote team is a very different experience than being in an office. There are many benefits for the employee too. The flexibility can appeal to workers of various stages of their career. For some people who have a busy family, the remote work options can help bring balance to work on home life. "I'm more productive with my family, less stressed…some days it works better, some days it doesn't but I know that flexibility is there. The remote working mode understands that you're more than a worker. That you're a whole person." from an Executive Assistant in a small midwestern firm.

Many people cite the reduced commute time as a big selling point. If you can eliminate time in a car every day as well as save on gas and wear and tear on your automobile you are saving a great deal. Not having to be in a certain place at a certain time is liberating for many people. Others enjoy the flexibility and autonomy of being able to decide for yourself whether or not he needed to be onsite. It can give you free time back on the weekends, too. If you have some free time you can start a load of laundry or wash dishes. Wherever you happen to be you can pull out your laptop and work.

Does casting a wider net for talent sound appealing?

How do you screen for people that align with your mission?

Can you make sure remote employees feel engaged?

[1]: http://globalworkplaceanalytics.com/telecommuting-statistics
[2]: https://www.funnelwise.com/

The bumps along the road to remote work

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Finding the right Remote Employees

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The Key Traits for your Remote Team

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