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The remote and hybrid work experience playbook

A quick-reference guide for creating exceptional distributed team experiences

As more companies embrace distributed work, the focus has shifted beyond where people work, to how they work and how to best support and enhance their experience.

Remote and hybrid work models may have been sparked by necessity, but they've evolved into long-term strategies for accessing global talent, building resilient teams, and supporting flexible growth. At the same time, they've challenged organizations to rethink how they approach everything from onboarding and communication to well-being and performance.

Creating a meaningful employee experience across locations and time zones doesn't happen by accident—it requires thoughtful infrastructure. With the right foundation in place, distributed teams can do more than function; they can thrive.

This playbook is designed as a quick-reference guide for HR and People teams looking to build thoughtful, equitable, and high-performing distributed workplaces. From tools and technology to culture and feedback, these practices provide a starting point for ensuring every employee is set up for success—no matter where they are.

1. Onboarding

HELP NEW HIRES FEEL SUPPORTED FROM DAY ONE BY LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR CONNECTION AND CLARITY.

- **Send a welcome kit:** Provide a digital or physical kit with company values, team structure, ways of working, and culture cues. Branded swag is also a nice touch.

- **Assign an onboarding buddy:** Pair new hires with a partner to help them get connected and navigate their first weeks.

- **Set up essential tools:** Ensure logins for platforms like Slack, email, and project management tools are ready before day one. Include instructions or offer a tech walkthrough.

- **Schedule connection points:** Pre-book intro calls with teammates and cross-functional partners to build relationships early.

- **Define a 30-60-90 plan:** Outline key milestones and expectations to give new hires direction and build confidence.

- **Create a "Getting Started" hub:** Centralize company norms—such as remote work policies, meeting protocols, and communication etiquette—in one accessible place.

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2. Communication

## 3. Performance and development
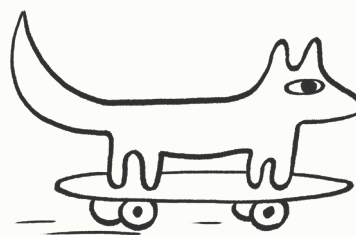
BUILD A STRONG CULTURE WITH CLEAR, INTENTIONAL COMMUNICATION THAT ALIGNS AND EMPOWERS YOUR TEAM.

- **Set communication norms:** Define expected response times across communication tools and clarify when to use team vs company-wide channels.

- **Clarify video expectations:** Communicate when cameras are encouraged or optional to reduce fatigue and promote inclusion.

- **Embrace asynchronous work:** Use tools like Loom, Slack, and Miro to support async collaboration and decision-making, paired with clear deadlines to keep teams aligned across time zones.

- **Promote meeting inclusivity:** Rotate meeting times, record sessions, and document key takeaways to support participation and accessibility across time zones.

- **Default to over-communication:** Prioritize clarity and repetition to avoid confusion and ensure everyone has access to the same information.

CREATE EQUITABLE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH STRUCTURE, TRANSPARENCY, AND OUTCOME-BASED EVALUATION.

- **Tie goals to the big picture:** Align team and individual goals with company objectives to drive clarity and reduce bias from proximity or visibility.

- **Create consistent feedback loops:** Schedule regular 1:1s to check in on progress, identify growth areas, and explore cross-functional opportunities.

- **Democratize development:** Provide equal access to learning opportunities—webinars, online courses, mentorship—regardless of location.

- **Recognize contributions publicly:** Celebrate wins in team meetings, internal newsletters, or Slack to build visibility and foster belonging.

- **Evaluate output, not online presence:** Focus on outcomes—not hours logged—to assess performance fairly across all environments.

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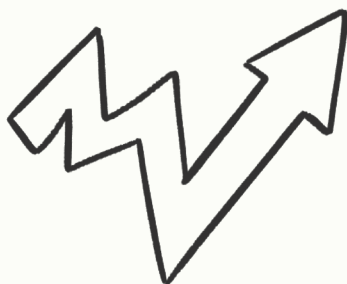
4. Well-being

SUPPORT EMPLOYEES' MENTAL, PHYSICAL, AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING TO BUILD A HEALTHIER, MORE RESILIENT TEAM.

- **Check in on well-being:** Create space for honest conversations and monitor workload and energy levels to help prevent burnout.

- **Offer flexibility:** Let people work during the hours they feel most productive—whether that's early mornings or late nights.

- **Support holistic well-being:** Offer monthly stipends alongside access to virtual therapy, wellness workshops, or other resources that help your team feel their best.

- **Home office setup support:** Provide a one-time or recurring stipend to help employees create a comfortable and focused remote workspace.

5. Culture

STRENGTHEN CONNECTION AND BELONGING THROUGH RITUALS, RECOGNITION, AND INTENTIONAL CULTURE-BUILDING.

- **Create meaningful rituals:** Establish regular, intentional virtual coffee chats, brainstorming sessions, or games that help teammates connect beyond day-to-day work.

- **Celebrate stories and wins:** Share employee spotlights, customer stories, and team wins to reinforce impact and community.

- **Offer in-person touchpoints:** If budget allows, invest in offsites, team meetups, or co-working stipends for IRL connection.

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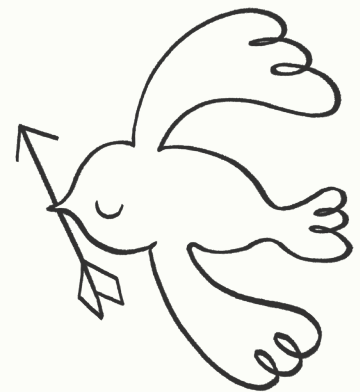
6. Tools and tech

EQUIP YOUR TEAM WITH THE INFRASTRUCTURE THEY NEED TO DO THEIR BEST WORK, WHEREVER THEY ARE.

- **Provide a standard home office toolkit:** Laptop, monitor, mouse, headset—whatever they need to do their job well.

- **Offer useful add-ons:** Tools like Grammarly, Copilot, or AI assistants can improve productivity and reduce friction.

- **Reliable IT support:** Make help easy to access and fast to respond. A crashed laptop shouldn't derail a full day.

7. Feedback

IMPROVE CONTINUOUSLY BY BUILDING FEEDBACK LOOPS AND ACTING ON EMPLOYEE INPUT.

- **Conduct regular pulse surveys:** Use formal check-ins and informal feedback loops to assess satisfaction, collaboration, tools, team effectiveness, and culture perception.

- **Act on employee feedback:** Close the loop on the feedback you collect with updates on changes that are being implemented.

- **Monitor HR health metrics:** Track retention, engagement, internal mobility, and segment by work mode to identify gaps and trends.

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