THE SCIENCE OF MANAGING REMOTE EMPLOYEES
DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES

**Slides:**

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**Talking Points:**

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**Why we care:** Keeping tough conversations free from emotional distraction allows people to listen, take accountability, and respond with the desired behavioral change. Take the prequestion “Speak the Truth with Making People Angry” (found in the webinar slides) to determine how successful you are at Speaking the Truth without Making People Angry.

**Avoid:**

- Conversations that are attacking, pleading, disintegrating, stinking, soft pedaling, or that include “compliment sandwiches” (a criticism sandwiched between two compliments).
- “Trigger words” that instantly make people defensive (“you” language that attacks, adverbs, and absolutes that exaggerate the facts, and negations and negative emotions).
- Interpretations (“Sally ignores everything I say”), emotional reactions (“I’m really irritated at Sally”), and denied lines (“Everything Sally writes has to be edited”). The F.L.R.E. model (facts, logic, reason, emotion) eliminates the irl and keeps conversations focused on the facts.

**Instead:** Stick to fact-based communications that are causal, objective, specific, timely, and emotional (“Yesterday there were two types in Sally’s memo”) by using one of three scripts:

**I.D.E.A.L.S.:**

- **I:** Identify the situation.
- **D:** Define the facts.
- **E:** Explore feelings.
- **A:** Accept the facts.
- **L:** Look for the next step.
- **S:** Summarize the facts.

**Example:**

**Step 1:** Invite them to partner: “Would you be willing to have a conversation with me about (insert the facts)?”

**Step 2:** Distract yourself: “I’d like to review the situation to make sure I’m on the same page as you.”

**Step 3:** Eliminate blame: “And if we have different perspectives, we can discuss those and develop a plan for moving forward.”

**Step 4:** Affirm their choices: “Does that sound OK? I can talk now, or if necessary, I have time later today.”

**Step 5:** List corrective feedback: list the facts and then listen to determine whether or not they’ve made a corrective leap.

**Step 6:** Synchronize your understanding: “Tell me how you think we can work together to build on this and make things even more effective next time.”
EVERYTHING BASED ON RESEARCH
### HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR JOB?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Traditional worksite, like an office building</th>
<th>Mobile work, where you use multiple spaces</th>
<th>Telework or telecommuting, in w.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I hate it!</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I dislike it.</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s tolerable.</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like it.</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love it!</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SYSTEM FOR MANAGING REMOTE WORKERS
GOOD PERSONALITIES FOR EMPLOYEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works well</th>
<th>Problematic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecters</td>
<td>Very quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive</td>
<td>Loners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solvers</td>
<td>Passive-aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruminators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Task completion, not neatness, is your predictor*
# PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEIR JOB & DEADLINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadlines</th>
<th>For research purposes, in you.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I hit deadlines no matter what, even if that means pulling all-nighters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional worksite, like an office building</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile work, where you use multiple spaces both in and out of the office (also includes traveling w.. Telework or telecommuting, in which you work primarily from a home office)</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sometimes need to ask for a little more time to finish projects on deadline.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional worksite, like an office building</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile work, where you use multiple spaces both in and out of the office (also includes traveling w.. Telework or telecommuting, in which you work primarily from a home office)</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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# PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEIR JOB & FEEDBACK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>For research purposes, in your experience, which of the following statements is true?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Total Number of Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to hear it coupled with some positive feedback or compliments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional worksite, like an office building</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile work, where you use multiple spaces both in and out of the office (also includes traveling w... Telework or telecommuting, in which you work primarily from a home office</td>
<td>31% 32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want the candid unvarnished facts about what was wrong.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional worksite, like an office building</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile work, where you use multiple spaces both in and out of the office (also includes traveling w... Telework or telecommuting, in which you work primarily from a home office</td>
<td>69% 68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEIR JOB & RULES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules</th>
<th>For research purposes, in you.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like having rules and clearly defined expectations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional worksite, like an office building</td>
<td></td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile work, where you use multiple spaces both in and out of the office (also includes traveling w.. Telework or telecommuting, in which you work primarily from a home office)</td>
<td></td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer not to be constrained by a set of rigid rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional worksite, like an office building</td>
<td></td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile work, where you use multiple spaces both in and out of the office (also includes traveling w.. Telework or telecommuting, in which you work primarily from a home office)</td>
<td></td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOOD PERSONALITIES FOR LEADERS

Indefatigable  Company Evangelists  Encouraging

Approachable  Constructive  Leadership 2.0
GOOD PERSONALITIES FOR LEADERS

Indefatigable

Long hours are required (9-5ers don’t cut it here)

Company Evangelists

Your culture will be strained in remote situations, so you need extra strong believers

Encouraging

Defeatism travels more strongly in cyberspace, so you need people who see opportunities in every challenge
GOOD PERSONALITIES FOR LEADERS

Approachable

• Do you feel like you can come to me with a problem?
• What’s getting in your way?
• What roadblocks are you facing?
• Never ask “how’s it going?”

Constructive

• Solve the problem first, (not the time for blame)
• No upside to emotional blame
• Upside to tracking and managing performance (but that’s unemotional, it’s just fact)
GOOD PERSONALITIES FOR LEADERS

Leadership 2.0

• Frequent
• Authentic
• Exchange
WILL I BE FORGOTTEN & WITHER AWAY?
KEEP PEOPLE CONNECTED & GROWING

Goals
What things would you like to get better at this month?

Realized
What’s something that you’re better at now than you were last month?

Highpoint
What was your professional highpoint this month?

Lowpoint
What was your professional low point this month?
CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Direct

- Have higher level managers send congratulatory email
- Post praise on the team website or send handwritten notes
- Leave congratulatory voicemail

Widespread

- Dedicate part of regular team meeting to employee recognition
- Host celebrations via videoconferencing
- Give employees visibility with other managers through email
- Rotate responsibilities for organizing some type of virtual celebration
- Encourage team members to publicly praise one another
“Great job on that report.”

“The way you got that report done ahead of schedule means a lot to me and the extra data analyses were really creative.”
SYSTEM FOR MANAGING REMOTE WORKERS
ATTENUATION KILLS ALIGNMENT

Focus & Frequency
FOCUS ON THE IMPORTANT

Productive Energy and Attention

Attention in conference calls

Duration
90%+ of meetings fail to produce an identifiable achievement.

When meeting participants were asked "Did this meeting accomplish its original objective?" the most common answer was "I have no idea."
FOCUS ON AN OBJECTIVE

Statement of Achievement

As a result of this meeting, we will have accomplished

If you can’t answer, you can’t meet
What are you personally going to achieve and by when?
### DECISION GRID

**Statement of Achievement:**

*Finalize proposal for ACME*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>By When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pricing for ACME</td>
<td>Increase by 10% in All proposal sections</td>
<td>Bill Smith</td>
<td>November 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- How would you answer someone who asked about the other ideas we considered but didn’t choose?
- Are there any circumstances under which our current decision won’t work?
- <To each member> Pat, if you could create a solution from scratch, would this be it?
Most virtual teams are sole proprietors coming together only to assemble their findings and prepare a report.

Instead, try less focus on individual contributions and more focus on collective generation of ideas.
DAILY HUDDLES

10 minute meeting (maximum)

Each person gets 1 minute to outline their “aligned goals” for day and any potential roadblocks

Roadblock solving conversations can take place “off line”

Dedicated timekeeper (forceful personality)
SYSTEM FOR MANAGING 
REMOTE WORKERS
## PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEIR JOB & RULES

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<td>63%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of Total Number
LEVELS OF FREEDOM

05
Take action; no further communication is necessary.

04
Take action; let me know what you did.

03
Assess the situation; give me a proposal; do it unless I say ‘No’.

02
Assess the situation; give me a proposal; don’t take action until I authorize.

01
Assess the situation; report all facts; I’ll decide.
WHO IS MORE INNOVATIVE?

231 keep generating great ideas every week to help the organization.

- Mobile work, a work style in which a person consistently uses multiple spaces, both inside and out of the office, to accomplish his/her work.
  - 9% 22% 23% 23% 23%

- Telework or telecommuting in which an employee works from home, substituting telecommunications for the commute to work.
  - 18% 23% 21% 17% 22%

- Traditional worksite, like an office building (or hospital or factory or restaurant), where multiple employees come to work in a common environment, and where employees typically have a designated workstation (e.g. office, cubicle, station, etc.).
  - 15% 20% 24% 22% 19%
HYPER-DISCRETE PROJECTS

BAD EXAMPLE

Build a website
Week #1 check-in
Week #2 check-in
Week #3 check-in
Week #4 check-in
Week #5 check-in

BETTER EXAMPLE

End Goal: Website

Project #1: Positioning statement
Project #2: User stories
Project #3: Home page wireframe
Project #4: Sub page wireframe
Project #5: Color scheme
HOW TO ASSIGN WORK

END POINT

Date, quantity, quality, color, boundaries, budget, behaviors, etc.

WHY

Who benefits? Customers? Employees?

RESOURCES

What resources & authority can you use and NOT use?

OBSTACLES

Any obstacles that would prevent you from accomplishing this?
## TRANSPARENCY TOOLS

Transparency is best accomplished with **LIVE (REAL TIME)** updates. Tools include Google Docs, Microsoft, 37Signals, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boss</th>
<th>Employee</th>
<th>Employee</th>
<th>Employee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>Lori</td>
<td>Vanessa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top priorities for today</td>
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<td>Top priorities for today</td>
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### Transparency Tools

#### Harvest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thu</strong> 23 Jul</td>
<td>Creating Apps ( Zapier ) Admin – Reviewing the latest changes in our app integrations</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Live Test (Zapier) Admin – Testing new features</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating Apps (Zapier) Project Management – Planning upcoming tasks</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Live Test (Zapier) SugarCRM – Organizing contacts</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>6.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TRANSPARENCY TOOLS

PAYMO
WHEN IN DOUBT

Ask them...

“Help me figure out the best way to evaluate your performance?”
SYSTEM FOR MANAGING REMOTE WORKERS

**Leadership IQ**

- Connection
- Alignment
- Accountability

Effective Remote Workers

---

COMMUNICATION
# Technology Strengths & Limitations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>Two-Way</th>
<th>Body Lang.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Conferencing</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voicemail</td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# WHEN TO CHOOSE EMAIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you want a permanent record of this communication?</td>
<td>Email OK</td>
<td>Face to face, perhaps phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your message short?</td>
<td>Email OK (also TXT, IM)</td>
<td>Face to face, perhaps phone, formal printed documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there any chance that the recipient might have an emotional reaction?</td>
<td>Face to face, perhaps phone</td>
<td>Email OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you be comfortable with an unfriendly lawyer having access to this communication?</td>
<td>Email OK</td>
<td>Face to face, perhaps phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this absolutely have to be error-free?</td>
<td>Formal, printed documents</td>
<td>Email OK (also TXT, IM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EMAIL IS A MEDIUM FOR CREATING ACTION

What actions do you want people to take?
- Do something
- Answer you

YOU CANNOT SEND AN EMAIL UNTIL YOU ARE CRYSTAL CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT THE RECIPIENT TO DO.
GEAR YOUR EMAILS TO ACTION

Email Format:

To: lorem@ipsum.com

Subject: Topic & What Must Happen

Opening:

Dear (all names for whom action is required),

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.
**WATCH THE TONE…**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>“I don’t understand how you can believe that our Technical Support Line doesn’t impact sales revenue.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>“You aren’t listening to what our COO is saying...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>“If we were living our values as an organization we wouldn’t have this product recall situation.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>“Our marketing strategy has so many targets that it’s impossible to see any strategic focus in what we’re doing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>“Come on, you can’t keep making these mistakes!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>“You’re not making any sense.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JUST FINDING PEOPLE CAN BE TOUGH

BE AVAILABLE

- Keep team informed of schedule
- Keep electronic calendars updated
- Agree on email and voicemail response times for all team members
- Create a phone list of all team members
- Clarify best ways to communicate
  - Email, IM, website, etc.
  - Critical in “occasionally remote” situations
SYSTEM FOR MANAGING REMOTE WORKERS

ACCOUNTABILITY

Connection
Alignment
Accountability

COMMUNICATION

Effective Remote Workers
Contact us for information about our employee engagement surveys, eLearning, onsite training or keynote speaking