



Objectives

- Define the skill sets important to virtual team members and leaders
- Identify the five success factors for building and leading virtual teams
- Explore prevailing myths about leading virtual teams and ways to overcome them

Virtual Team Defined

“Groups of individuals who work across time, space and organizational boundaries and who interact primarily through electronic communications.”
-Society of Human Resource Management, July, 2012

“Virtual teams are also known as geographically dispersed teams, distributed teams, or remote teams.”

-Wikipedia

“Virtual team members interact primarily through electronic communications. Virtual team members may be within the same building or across continents.”

-BusinessDictionary.com

Benefits of Virtual Teams

Five Success Factors



1. Connection

- Be sensitive to differences
- Promote participation and collaboration
- Encourage social interaction and humor
- Acknowledge birthdays and special occasions
- Celebrate success!

2. Confidence

- Ensure that the team understands the vision and team purpose
- Encourage team members to share successes as well as missteps
- Choose trust-building activities based on members' comfort levels and personalities

3. Communication

- Listen carefully
- Convey positive messages
- Focus on constructive feedback
- Choose technology that will help express a clear message
 - Discuss technology options with team members
 - Use several tools to address different need
 - Help team members feel comfortable with the tool
 - Establish guidelines for each tool

4. Collaboration

- Encourage trust and respect
- Promote sharing of information
- Emphasize teamwork
- Focus on visible contributions

5. Commitment

- Determine vision and peruse cooperatively
- Set the tone based on team's vision and goals
- Make "out of sight" contributions visible
- Guide communication and agenda using performance expectations
- Recognize members' contributions



Building Relationships Principles

From *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie

1. Don't criticize, condemn or complain.
2. Give honest, sincere appreciation.
3. Arouse in the other person an eager want.
4. Become genuinely interested in other people.
5. Smile.
6. Remember that a person's name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language.
7. Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves.
8. Talk in terms of the other person's interests.
9. Make the other person feel important - and do it sincerely.

Prevailing Myths about Virtual Teams

Myth	What strategies will you use to overcome them?
Virtual teams are less productive.	
Technology will get in the way.	
It's hard to manage virtual workers.	
It will impair career advancement.	
We can't communicate effectively.	



What Virtual Team Leaders and Team Members Need

- Positive attitude toward telework
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to build trust and respect
- Drive for results
- Able to delegate / be delegated to
- Awareness and communication abilities across cultures
- Open to new ideas and change

Christine Durst
Founder, CEO: Staffcentrix

“Be a Leader” Principles

From *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie

22. Begin with praise and honest appreciation.
23. Call attention to people's mistakes indirectly.
24. Talk about your own mistakes before criticizing the other person.
25. Ask questions instead of giving direct orders.
26. Let the other person save face.
27. Be hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise.
28. Give the other person a fine reputation to live up to.
29. Use encouragement. Make the fault seem easy to correct.
30. Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest.



What's Next?

How to Engage Millennials at Work

- Describe the characteristics of Millennials in the workplace and how they differ from the other generations
- Identify the workplace preferences and values important to Millennials
- Discuss ways to engage and retain Millennial employees

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