Improve Remote Work

A Guide To
Team Effectiveness
When You're Working Apart

How to lead an effective and efficient remote team

SHIFT

Work around the world is changing rapidly. For teams that are suddenly working remotely, it's a big adjustment for everyone. Keep what makes your team exceptional, even when apart.

Teams working remotely often struggle with these five key things:

1. Establishing trust and accountability

2. Building personal connections without face-to-face contact

3. Fostering a culture of productive disagreement

4. Sticking to deadlines and setting interim milestones

5. Assessing productivity fairly when most communication is done through writing

❯ **Keep reading to learn more about how to overcome these five challenges and how to help your team build the habits that will allow them to thrive in their new remote setting.**
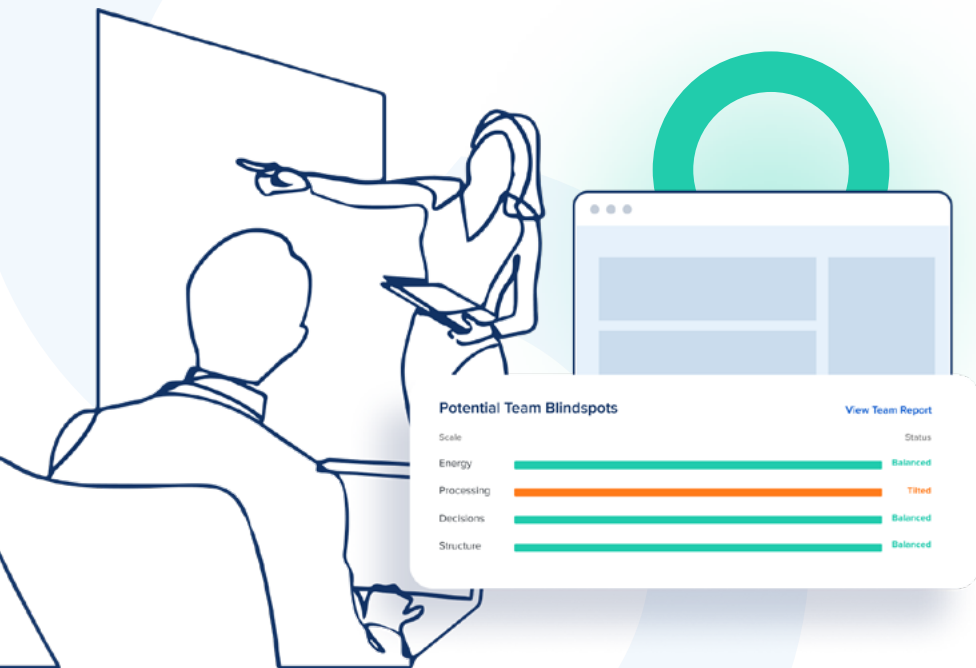
Establishing trust and accountability.

❯ **The Challenge:** What builds trust in remote teams is different from in person teams. In person teams rate trust based on relationships, while teams working apart base it on ability to deliver quality on time. If your team is newly remote, some of this trust is already established, but other signals such as delivery gain more importance in this new environment.

The Solutions:

❯ Leaders must set an example of over-communication to establish relationships among their teams and maintain consistent expectations.

❯ Always assume the best of your teammates to decrease the ability for communications to be lost in translation.

❯ Maintain the social engagements you used to have in the office through digital channels - team drinks, lunch, whatever - to maintain rapport.

Potential Team Blindspots   View Team Report

Scale		Status
Energy		Balanced
Processing		Tilted
Decisions		Balanced
Structure		Balanced

Building personal connections without face-to-face contact.

❯ **The Challenge:** It's harder to disagree productively on a video call or over email than it is in person. This leads some teams to reduce debate and fail to pressure test ideas. Meanwhile, other groups lean into disagreements but don't have the trust or empathy and create unhealthy conflict that erodes trust.

The Solutions:

❯ Book a 30 minute check in every morning or at the end of the day to ensure employees feel connected.

❯ Schedule informal coffee or lunch via video conferencing to dedicate time to invest in personal relationships.

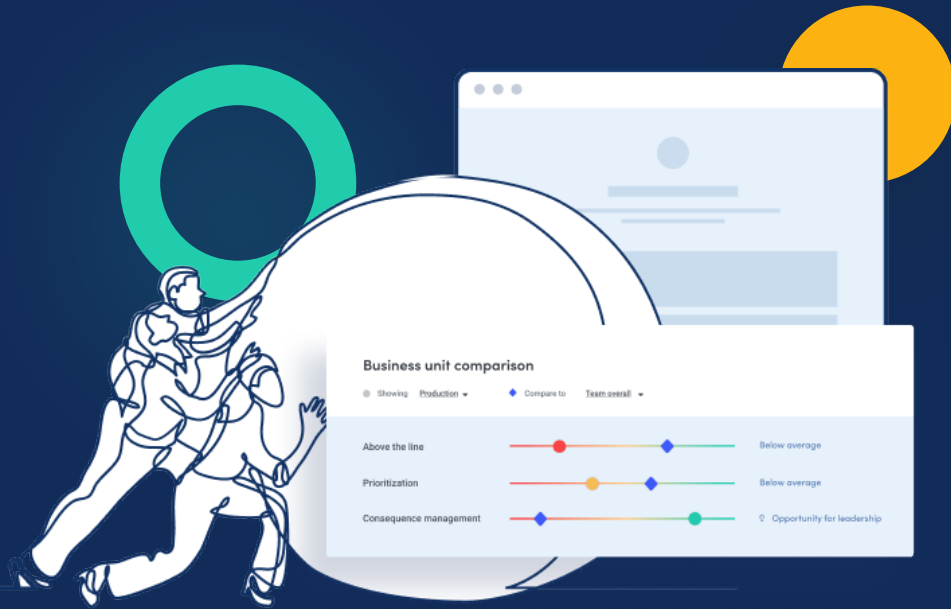❯ Find ways of protecting employees personal time to respect each other as individuals.
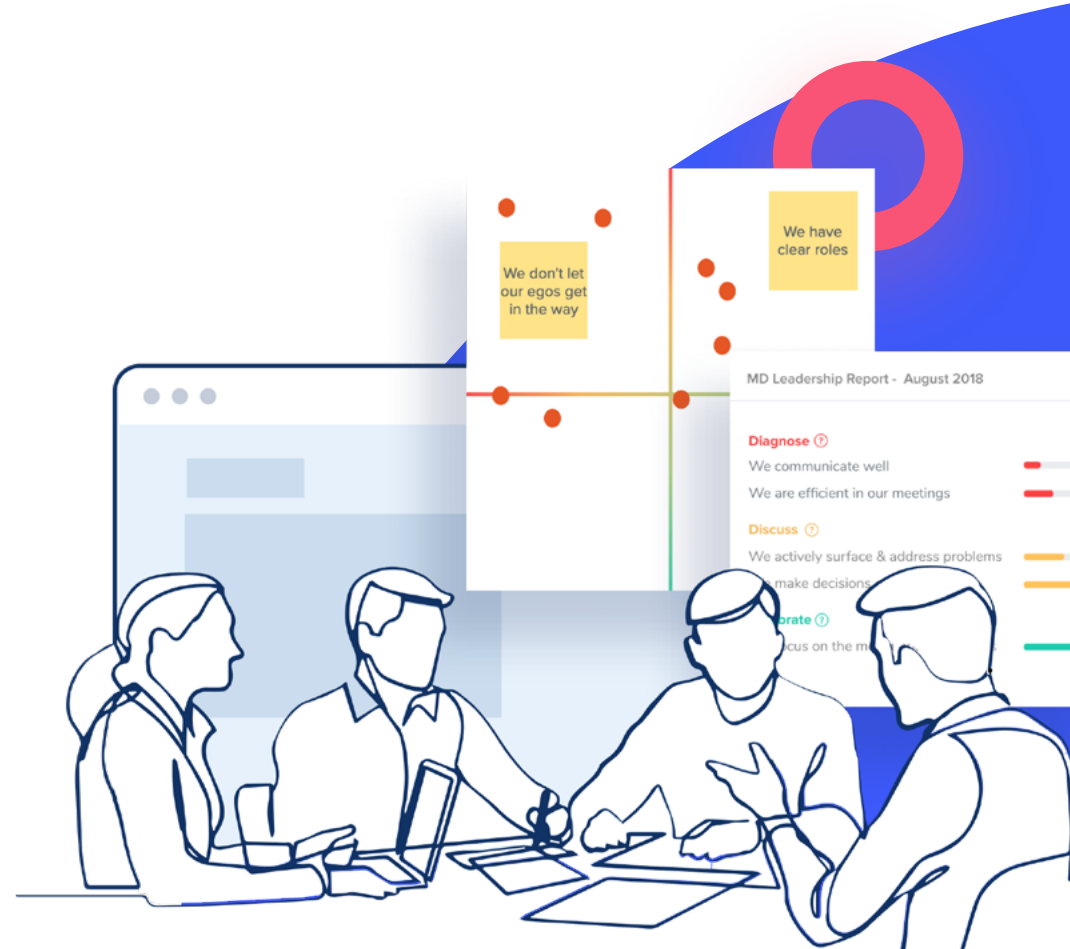
Fostering a culture of productive disagreement.

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The Solutions:

❯ Frame disagreements in a positive manner and with a tone that suggests you encourage debate to get to the best end product.

❯ Acknowledge the goal you're all working toward and remind the team that the debate serves to get there.

❯ When giving feedback, warn your colleagues that they do not have to take all of your suggestions and make changes.

Business unit comparison

Showing Production ▾   ◆ Compare to Team overall ▾

Above the line		Below average
Prioritization		Below average
Consequence management		⚲ Opportunity for leadership

Sticking to deadlines and setting interim milestones.

❯ **The Challenge:** Managers lose their ability to identify project delays or spot problems emerging too late to correct on time. Many managers have informal project tracking systems in their own head and therefore have no system for monitoring for issues that work remotely.

The Solutions:

❯ Teams should set and commit to milestones and ask team members to identify when they hit roadblocks or are trailing so others can provide support.

❯ Engage employees through blocking off time where they are expected to bring in questions and status updates on their progress.

❯ Be clear and over-explain when necessary to provide yourself and your team with clarity.

Assessing productivity fairly when most communication is done through writing

> **The Challenge:** Assessments of competency move from what you say to what you write. Colleagues who speak well but write poorly struggle.

The Solutions:

> Allow each employee to fill out a **personality test** to learn their communication styles and strengths relative to one another.

> Encourage employees to discuss their challenges openly.

> Set best practices that encourage team members to chat with one another.

> Evaluate employees individually instead of comparatively.

Clara
ENFJ
Scale
Energy
Processing
Decisions
Structure

John
INTP
Scale
Energy
Processing
Decisions
ture

SHIFT Recommendation
Make sure everyone is being heard in meetings

S SHIFT

Achieve team effectiveness while working remotely with SHIFT

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> To explore SHIFT's tools and customers, visit **chooseshift.com.**