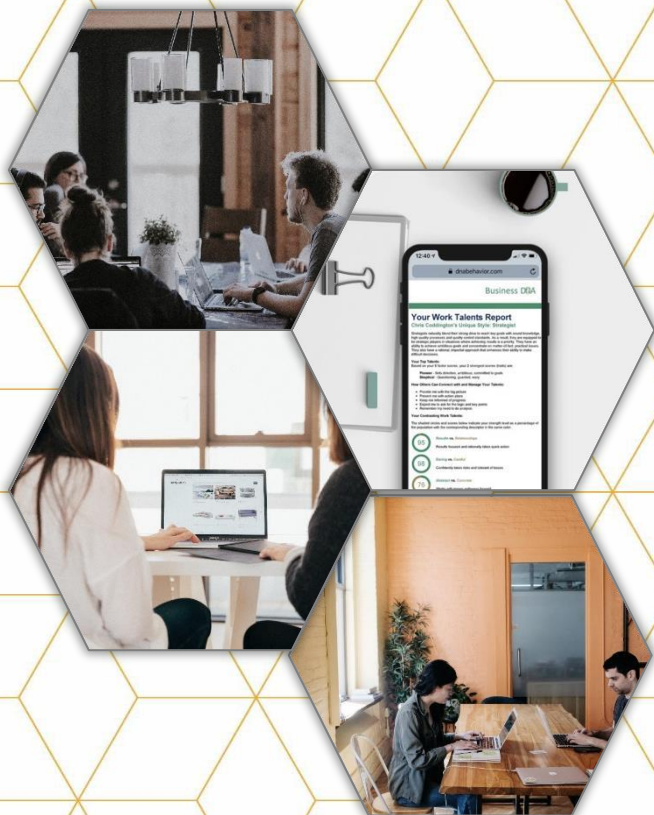


7 Tips for Working in Virtual Teams



Virtual Team Working – The New Normal:

These are strange and uncertain times. As more and more businesses move towards various forms of virtual working, it is important to focus on individuals. We are rapidly moving to a state of home working where many will welcome the opportunity, and others will feel isolated and unsettled.

I write this guide as I find myself stranded away from my homeland. As a remote worker for DNA Behavior International, a global business, I am currently finding ways to return back from a European business trip, knowing I face a 14-day period of isolation, whether sick or not. (In fact, I am well).

My colleagues have engaged with me on a daily basis to ensure I am OK. Not once have they mentioned the state of work or the success of my business trip.

We have many parts of our business where teams work virtually, and the practice has always been to connect on a daily basis. It's not just about work; it's genuinely to ensure we are all doing well and have all we need to do our job.

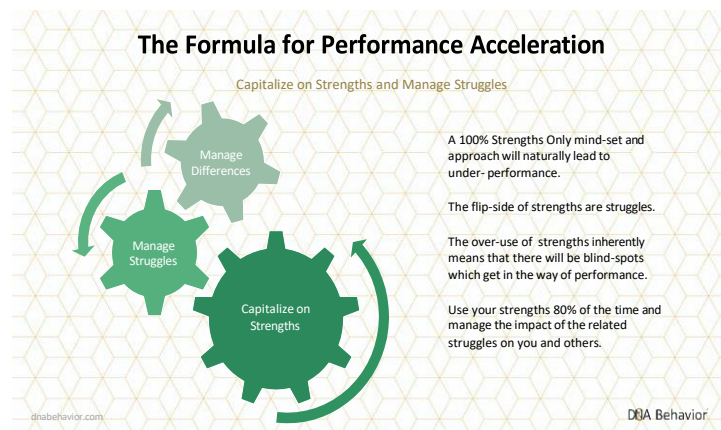
This got me thinking about businesses forced to move to virtual and/or home working during this crisis. Are they prepared? How will their people respond to the possible isolation? Are leaders ready for the challenge they and their business faces in this new environment?

Maybe the DNA Behavior Story Will Help You!

At DNA Behavior International, many of us work remotely. We know how to do it successfully. We know our customers and partners will watch to see our response to this global problem.

So here it is - stay Calm, Cool, and Collected.

Your teams, your customers, and your partners will take your lead most of the time. We, as a business, are prepared for this type of global event. We've moved much of our technical requirements to the cloud, our partners have a disaster preparedness plan, and we use all forms of social media to stay in touch daily.



As a leadership team, we are steady. We understand each other and our teams well.

We know who in our teams, or partnerships, might struggle with these turbulent times and those that won't. We know how to manage differences and capitalize on strengths.

Many organizations use virtual work in some form. Whether an outsourced part of their offering or home working for a range of business reasons. In today's globalized business environment, it's useful to use the technology at our fingertips to extend how we work.

But are leaders ready for the very real possibility of virtual teams working for the long term? I suspect not. Within the last few weeks, virtual teams have become a fact of business life, so what does it take to make them work effectively?

Let's be clear about what Virtual team working is:

A virtual team (also known as a geographically dispersed team, distributed team, or remote team) usually refers to a group of individuals who work together from different geographic locations and rely on communication technology such as email, FAX, and video or voice conferencing services in order to collaborate.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_team

Note the phrase – *who work together from different geographic locations* – that is the challenge for leadership. You might have the most sophisticated IT infrastructure but that is no guarantee of successful remote working.

Some Tips From Our Experience

1. Invest just 10 minutes in understanding your people. You will very quickly know who can manage to work remotely and who will need more support. We will help you. See the call to action at the end of this guide. Free and on us.
 - a. Here is an example of just one of the detailed reports that will help you understand your people at a deeper level.
2. Trust them. Let go. Use the DNA Behavior insight into your people to move towards remote working with confidence immediately. You will get clear insights to customize the experience for each team member. You might think you already know your teams, but do you know those that would function well in virtual working and those that won't?
3. Focus on the individual. Get to know them. They are the ones who will sustain your business during this global crisis. Look at ways you can support what each individual needs from you. One size fits all will not work in a stressful situation, those leaders that



can provide what each person needs will be the most successful.

4. Apply Behavioral Economics to your business and take advantage of external confusion to become self-directed, self-managed, and self-motivated as a business by understanding your people and giving them 'permission' to work with you through this unprecedented turbulence.
5. Forget about the way you used to work. Look at setting up quick touch-base meetings through chat or video to check on your teams. Agree that your employees have a running chat board so that "office chatter" can be digitized and give people a sense of connection while remote. Allow that to be more organic than strict meeting schedules. Remember, some of your people will feel extremely isolated from virtual work. They need interaction to function well.
6. Be a leader who embraces the opportunity to invest in and trust your teams. While things are chaotic, your team will need you even more. Set the example by "over" communicating and flexing communications to match the needs of your people. In a remote work environment – clear communication is key, and you will find that it's helpful to repeat messages far more frequently than you think to keep everyone on the same page.
7. Since times are different, consider that your priorities may need to be different. What was important to "normal business operations" might not now be as critical. Re-assess your priorities and clearly communicate what is important and what can and should be deferred.

It Does Pay to Know Your People:

Remote work is about trust. Are they doing their job? Are they slacking off?

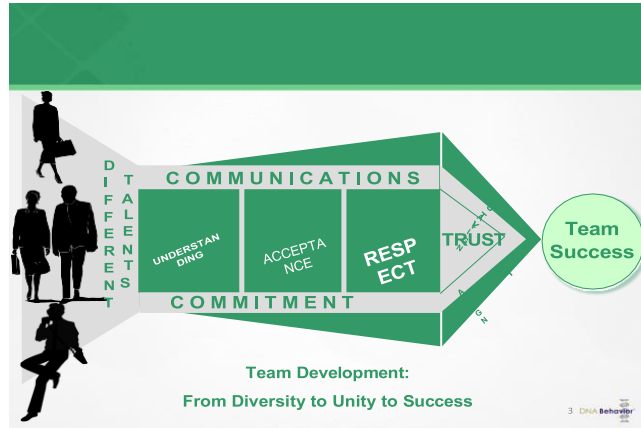
Sometimes leaders don't support remote working because they need to be in control, and very often, with good reason. Yet when leaders build relationships with their teams based on trust and a commitment to always find ways to strengthen the relationship, the viability of everything they do will increase. Why? Because when employees know they are genuinely understood and valued, they will build the business for you.

Let's look at our team as an example.

We're a global company; we have key executives working remotely. The executive team meets regularly via Zoom, WhatsApp and other online mediums to discuss strategy and projects. The team leaders meet virtually at the beginning of each day for 10 minutes. The executives are also present. This is when each supervisor gives a quick account of the work to be done and raises any issues that require an answer or decision. This works well as the senior decision-makers are on the call.

We have systems to hold people accountable for their tasks – we monitor activities with Wrike and use Traction – that is, we have clear goals and deliverables – and these tools make it easier to "let people go" and do their stuff based on trust.

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Our teams are in regular contact with the managing director at least once a week with the full executive team. If time zones get in the way of face-to-face meetings, we record them, and the links await the team member when they are back at their desk.

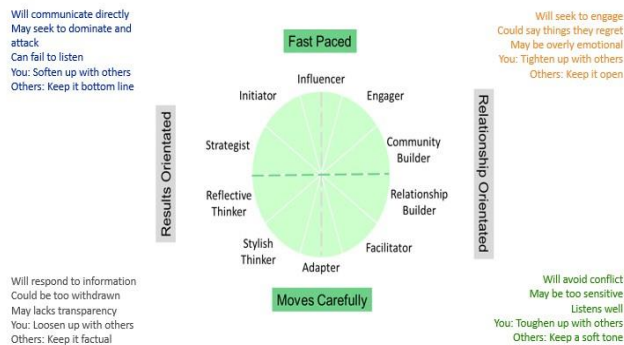
We don't take our leadership approach for granted. All executives and team leaders must participate in our 360-degree performance review once a year. Regardless of where they sit in the world or where their staff is, we continuously check to ensure everyone feels valued and supported. We ask to be critiqued; that's the true value of the DNA Behavior 360-degree process. This is our chance as leaders to improve how we lead our people.

Each individual team member is 'known' to us, and by that, I mean behaviorally. Whether we work together in the office or remotely, we understand each other's inherent behavior. We know strengths as well as struggles. We understand pressure and stress points that can impact our work together.

Not everyone has the behavior to be comfortable working remotely. Some will want and need the interaction of working in an office with a team around them. Others will need to know the full story before they feel comfortable. And some will simply grab the opportunity and deliver results as and when needed.

DNAB Natural Behavior Unique Style Matrix

Potential Behaviors Influencing How You Manage Stress Communication



Business DNA

Having this insight enables leaders to plan remote working much more effectively.

As an example, for those that need the stimulation of people around them, wherever we can, we accommodate this. It may not be in the conventional sense but by making ourselves available to each other via social media.

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Even as I write this in a time zone different from our head office in the USA, I've had a quick Zoom call with the MD just to check a fact with him. In this new environment of global concern, we are already well prepared to move to full remote working.

Remote working has always been a keystone of our business. All staff is hired not just for their talents and credentials but also for the 'fit' to the benchmarked role they will fill. We profile each person using our Business DNA Natural Behavior Discovery Process. This scientifically validated system ensures their behaviors meet our cultural and behavioral standards, but equally important, it reveals those whose inherent behavior is more suited to remote working. For instance, those with the traits of being self-reliant, reserved (introverted) task focused, and structured will prefer remote working. The more outgoing (extroverted) people will find it more difficult to work remotely for extended periods of time because they will miss the people connection.

We Hire the Best in Terms of Their Skills – Why Wouldn't You?

Our DNA Behavior Discovery Processes are designed to reliably uncover every facet of an employee and client's DNA wiring (talents, communication, and decision-making style) for behavioral discovery and performance development based on extensive validated behavioral sciences research.

DNA Behavior is in the business of accelerating human performance. We deliver real-time management solutions through validated behavioral insights to connect, customize and power human performance.

Therefore – we hire the right people. We use DNA Behavior Natural Discovery to understand candidates' inherent behaviors from the outset. These behaviors need to be managed in times of turmoil (such as now) or to be built on to deliver success for the individual and the business.

Uncertain Times Call For Us To Help Each Other

Today's exceptional circumstances mean that leaders have to move swiftly to remote working to safeguard their business and the health and well-being of their people. Our preparedness ensures we can quickly shift to full remote working without disturbing the business or the service we offer.

Technology is the key enabler of virtual working and ensures that colleagues can communicate and collaborate instantaneously. The key to successful remote working is knowing our people behaviorally at a deeper level.

There is no question that many employees will respond poorly to the requirement to work from home. Others will be excited by the challenge. Some won't have the capacity even to make virtual working a business choice.

The days when all team members were physically located in the same office and spent their working days together are long gone. It is, however, easier said than done to make virtual teams work.

The greatest gift leadership can give to their virtual remote working teams is to trust them. In return employees will be happier and loyal. We've seen that stress levels are low, and they work hard and yet have the space to play hard and keep their life in balance.

The world today is in uncharted waters. We hope you can learn from our experiences so you will be able to maintain your business at a level that ensures you won't go under.

I'm sure many of you reading this are working hard to strategize how best to manage this global challenge we are all facing. Focus on the people. Get to know them. They will be the ones to deliver the business and keep you functioning well in these turbulent times.

We at DNA Behavior are genuinely here to help. We know you. We are you. But we are just a little further ahead on understanding people when working and delivering a successful business through virtual working.

So, as I end this – yes, I'm stranded and want to find a way home. But even as I've written this, Hugh Massie, our CEO, and Founder has checked in to ensure I'm OK. Leon Morales, our Managing Director, did the same. So, guess what? Even in this stressful time, I'm head down working and count it an honor to do so. That's what every leader who trusts and understands their people should expect in times of crisis.

From our teams to yours – let's do this together.

A Word from the Boss.
'I was skeptical in the beginning but after eighteen years of remote working in some form or other, I'm persuaded every leader should consider using this form of working with their teams'.
Hugh Massie
CEO/Founder

To learn more about DNA Behavior International and the solutions we offer, please visit: www.dnabehavior.com

If you have any questions or would like to discuss with an executive on our team, please email us at: inquiries@dnabehavior.com

