



# Sterling

## TRAINING GROUP

CONSULTING FOR PERFORMANCE RESULTS



### LEADING VIRTUAL EMPLOYEES - TOP TIPS

SPRING / SUMMER 2021





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In 2020, the pandemic changed how many of us conduct business. Employees scrambled to work from home, which was no easy feat. Especially for those companies who had resisted telecommuting before and had no formalized process for doing so. However, managing remote employees should largely be the same as if they were onsite, yet there are nuances to be aware of. Having managed remote workers for over 13 years, I am sharing with you, what I believe are the top tips at keeping your remote employees feeling connected, engaged, and productive.

-Debra Crombie, President - Sterling Training Group





## 1. SET THEM UP FOR SUCCESS

- Have a company policy in place for working from home including behaviors, distribution and collection of company equipment, along with a process for ordering and being reimbursed for office supplies.
- Share those guidelines with your direct report(s) along with your performance and behavior expectations.
- Provide them with all the tools they need to do their job including a web cam and chat capability.

## 2. ESTABLISH TRUST

- Be consistent and honor commitments and confidences.
- Be accessible, by phone, text, e-mail, or IM unless out of the office or in a meeting.
- Don't freak out if you call or IM them and they do not answer right away. They may be in the restroom, getting a snack, or putting on a load of laundry and that is OKAY! It is a perk of working from home. Think of it as if they were in the office and they had stopped to chat with a co-worker.







### 3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

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- Not everyone is cut out to work remotely, so accountability and deadlines are key items to manage to.
- Exempt Employees – For this group, you should have a good idea what is on their plate, along with their work style and pace. Be sure to focus mainly on their output.
- Non-Exempt – For this group, time monitoring and output are equally important.

### 4. COMMUNICATION

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- Be clear, transparent, and communicate often. Too much is never enough with remote workers.
- Check in on them occasionally and have regularly scheduled team meetings and 1:1s.

### 5. KNOW YOUR TEAM

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- Connection is important, so do not be afraid to get to know each person, their ambitions and achievements.
- Build rapport by asking about their favorite sport or animal, keep asking questions, until you find common ground.



- Leverage some team meetings for team building and/or getting to know each other better.

## 6. HOLD EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

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- Be sure to host at least one annual onsite meeting for enhancing those virtual connections.
- Even if you have onsite employees, if one is remote, for team meetings you all should be on web cams.
- Ask for a note taker or rotating meeting leader, to increase engagement levels.

## 7. POTENTIAL ISSUES

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- Noises - Barking dogs, babies crying, doorbells ringing, don't stress, it is our new normal.
- Conflict – do not avoid it, it must be handled quickly.
- Feeling excluded – don't let that happen, provide equal amounts of time to each direct report.







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For more information on this or other topics aimed at improving employee performance for better business results, call Sterling Training Group at **954-882-6523**.

 954-882-6523

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