

Is anybody out there?
Working & Managing
in a Virtual Environment

Objectives

- 01 Recognize the benefits and challenges of working on a virtual team
- 02 Outline communication techniques that best support a virtual team
- 03 Name behavioral styles and their impact on virtual teams
- 04 Identify tools and approaches to managing a virtual team

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What is a virtual team?

Chat GPT:
a group of individuals who work together to achieve common goals but are geographically dispersed and typically communicate and collaborate through digital tools and technologies rather than face-to-face interactions.
Also referred to as remote team, online team, global team, distributed team


EVOLUTION OF TEAMS IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

All coworkers, managers and leadership in same location

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EVOLUTION OF TEAMS IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

May have teammates in other locations in same city/region, manager may be at other location




And then there was this thing called COVID

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EVOLUTION OF TEAMS IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Now working with people in multiple locations, multiple states, in offices, working at home...



EVOLUTION OF TEAMS IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Multiple countries, multiple time zones, people you may never meet in person!



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TECHNOLOGY

Benefits of virtual teams


- ✓ No geographical limitations
- ✓ Allows team work without relocation
- ✓ Increases employee morale/satisfaction
- ✓ Reduces business costs
- ✓ Enables company growth

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What makes a good virtual team member?

- ✓ Self-motivated
- ✓ Works independently
- ✓ Results-oriented
- ✓ Strong communication skills

Challenges for virtual teams



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Overcoming the challenges

Communication

- Use appropriate technology
- Repeat important messages
- Consider time zones
- Identify personal preferences
- Understand verbal/non-verbal cues

Overcoming the challenges

Cultural differences

- Understand local customs and holidays
- Address language barriers
- Identify commonalities
- Explore differences

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Overcoming the challenges

Relationship building

- Develop trust
- Complete questionnaires
- Post profiles/pictures
- Hold virtual lunches/coffee breaks
- Incorporate into communications meetings
- Use team building activities

Overcoming the challenges

Manage conflict

- Determine if interpersonal or task related
- Utilize an online discussion board
- Assign a point person to manage issue and responses
- Address issues as quickly as possible

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Technology

Conference Calls

Video conferences (Zoom, Teams, WebEx)

White boards (Miro, Board)

Instant messaging/Live chat (Slack, Teams)


Email / Text

Shared Spaces (Dropbox, OneDrive, Box)

Project Management (Trello, Asana, Basecamp)

Communication techniques

CONFERENCE CALLS



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Dominant/directive/controlling style

- Fast paced and decisive
- Results oriented
- More task oriented than people oriented
- Extroverted and outward focused
- Team Role: Leader, problem solver
- Team Expectation: Efficiency

Behavioral styles

Amiable/relating/mediator style

- Outgoing, "people person"
- Embrace change, positive outlook
- More people oriented than task oriented
- Idea person rather than implementer
- Team Role: Motivator, lead brainstorming
- Team Expectation: Enthusiasm

Behavioral styles

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Thoughtful, introverted

- Thoughtful, introverted
- Treats others dependably
- More people oriented than task oriented
- Good listener, team player
- Team Role: Mediator, relationship builder
- Team Expectation: Sincerity

Behavioral styles

Compliance/Corrective/Analyzing style

- Systematic, dependable
- Focused on quality
- More task oriented than people oriented
- Want details, analytical by nature
- Team Role: Planner, record keeper
- Team Expectation: Accuracy

Behavioral styles

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What styles are you and your team?

ASK QUESTIONS:

- Fast paced or slow paced?
- Formal or informal?
- Introverted or extroverted?
- People-oriented or task-oriented?
- Dominant or easy going?
- Detail-oriented or big picture?

Assessment tools available

Behavioral styles tips

- Styles are not labels
- Styles may change over time or based on project
- Understand and appreciate the differences
- All styles play an important role on a team

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How do you manage a virtual team?

How do you manage a virtual team?

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How do you manage a virtual team?

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How do you manage a virtual team?

Overcoming barriers to success

Ineffective leadership	Select and train leaders with necessary skill sets
Lack of clear goals	Technical
Lack of clear roles and responsibilities	Team building
Lack of cooperation	Interpersonal
Lack of engagement	Set goals and team direction
Inability to develop relationships	Keep members engaged
	Early feedback
	Team-building exercises
	Periodic 1:1 meetings

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Overcoming barriers to success

ineffective leadership

- Lack of clear goals
 - Outline goals and objectives at onset of project
- Lack of clear roles and responsibilities
 - Engage at follow-up meetings and through communications
 - Review priorities on a regular basis
- Lack of cooperation
- Lack of engagement
 - Invite to the shop talks/meetings

Overcoming barriers to success

ineffective leadership

- Lack of clear goals
 - Provide frequent updates and feedback
- Lack of cooperation
 - Create a team reference tool for guidance
- Lack of engagement
- Ability to develop relationships

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Overcoming barriers to success

ineffective leadership

- Lack of clear goals
- Lack of clear roles and responsibilities
- Lack of cooperation
 - Build trust
 - Be inclusive regardless of location
- Lack of engagement
- Ability to develop relationships

Overcoming barriers to success

ineffective leadership

- Lack of clear goals
- Lack of clear roles and responsibilities
 - Perform regular team assessments
- Lack of cooperation
 - Levels of contribution and participation
- Lack of engagement
 - Occurrence of conflicts
 - Motivation levels
- Ability to develop relationships
 - Celebrate accomplishments

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Overcoming barriers to success

- Lack of clear goals
- Lack of clear roles and responsibilities
- Lack of cooperation
- Lack of engagement
 - Meet in face-to-face time
- Ability to develop relationships
 - Develop communication strategy
 - Allocate time for social interactions

Keys to success

- Know what and where do not work for every project or situation.
- Recognize that virtual teams and co-located teams are different
- Invest in virtual team training and knowledge

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RESOURCES

Virtual team Behavioral style

Free Management Library - Virtual Teams
<http://www.managementlibrary.com/virtualteams.htm>

Virtual Team Intelligence
<http://virtualteamintelligence.com/>

Effectiveness Institute
<http://www.effectivenessinstitute.com/>

Resources Unlimited
<http://www.resourcesunlimited.com/>

DSC Practice 4U
<http://www.dscpractice4u.com/>
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Discussion / Questions
