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## Ways To Increase Remote Workforce Productivity

Managing employees is a challenge for any business leader – but managing a remote workforce presents some unique challenges. If you're used to the first-in-last-out philosophy of traditional corporate workplaces, you might be confused on how to check in on these employees. But today, there's an app for everything – and there's a booming market for apps to help remote workers. Here are five ways technology can boost your company's remote workforce productivity

### Invest in your onboarding

Your employee's first days and weeks will define how they work at your company – so you need to invest in a proper onboarding program. But, working at home, they miss it on the hints and nudges employees get from those around them. To make up for this, you'll need to invest in a solid communication stack: instant messaging and video conferencing apps (such as Slack and Google Hangouts) are all you need to keep up with new employees.

### Set realistic expectations

How workers understand what it means to work is subjective and will vary from one worker to another. Keeping all the workers on the same page, however, sets a clear expectation of what the company means by work standards. State expectations such as to what is expected of a remote office worker, which tasks should be accomplished, and how they should keep in touch if they need to reach out to other team members or their supervisor. These expectations should be realistic and attainable.

### Focus on work outputs

This may involve setting up quotas. Focus on project completions instead of the time logged by the remote worker, especially if not paid by the minute or by the hour. Let the workers work at their own pace, without compromising productivity. Instead of looking at how long it took to accomplish each individual project, focus more on how much work was accomplished for that day.

### Offer "offline hours" while at work

While working in the office has its own set of distractions, like loud conversations in the hall, a sudden impromptu meeting in the office, etc., working from home as a remote worker has its own distractions, too. In fact, depending on the circumstances, working at home may have more distractions than those experienced by non-remote counterparts at the office. Distractions such as constant emails, the use of Facebook, chat messages, interruptions by family members or phone calls, are just some of the things every remote worker must deal with, which may hamper productivity if not kept in check. Encourage your home-based remote workers to seek out a quiet place to work, free from these distractions, to increase their productivity.

### Set up incentives or bonus

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Although this may not be easy to implement especially if it goes against the company rules, setting up incentives or a form of bonus among workers, especially remote workers, builds up a sense of morale. Thus, these workers are more engaged at work and possibly are more productive.

#### Minimize stress

While stress is an individualized factor experienced on the part of the worker, promoting less stress on workers may be as simple as keeping in touch or boosting the morale of the worker. Stress subsided makes workers more productive at work. In fact, stress hampers the productivity of workers more than anything else at work.

#### Let workers control their environment

Allowing workers to control their own environment in relation to their workspace does not just give them the autonomy to work at their own pace, it does so while making them more productive. Whether the worker can work better with music or not, lights on or off are completely at the workers' whim. All without compromising productivity.

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