

## Employee Development During COVID-19

**Managing Virtually:** Dispersed employees can perform as well, if not better than groups that are co-located. To succeed, however, virtual collaboration must be managed. Historically, managers are taught to focus on setting goals, planning, motivating employees, and coaching. These activities are still important, but they may not be enough to help managers lead and manage in a virtual environment and during times of change/stress.

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify who you are as a manager and what your organization needs now
- Understand how managing virtually is both similar and different from managing face-to-face
- Learn tips for effectively managing teams and individuals virtually
- How to make virtual employee interactions effective, engaging and satisfying

**Virtual Civility:** Respect, acceptable workplace conduct, and the types of behaviors that contribute to a productive and respectful workplace are concepts that all employees should understand and embrace whether in the office or working virtually. Civility is important to wellbeing. The culture of your organization matters and can be seen both in person and virtually. Respectful conversations in verbal conversations and electronic communications are important. If employees feel disrespected by other employees, including supervisors, productivity can be affected.

### Learning Objectives:

- Define workplace civility and describe the difference between civility in person and electronically
- Identify how incivility and virtual workplace behaviors may affect our decision-making, productivity, performance evaluation, day-to-day interactions, and other employment-related concerns.
- Identify the impact of incivility in the workplace and through technology.
- Identify strategies for addressing work behavior challenges when they occur, virtual and otherwise

**Performance Evaluation 2020:** Managers may have conducted dozens of performance reviews over the course of their career, but in the era of Covid-19 everything is different; yet there are many principles that can effectively carry over. Should organizations suspend performance reviews during the coronavirus pandemic, which has disrupted routines and created challenges for managers and employees? If you answered *no*, then how can the experience be more effective and less stressful for both supervisors and employees?

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify the value of performance reviews and feedback during COVID-19
- Understand what changes may be needed in tactics and roles.
- Understand and adjust communication challenges
- Recognize the role of empathy and the (different) influence COVID-19 has from employee to employee

**Time Management/Staying Organized:** Time management is one of the most common issues hampering productivity under normal circumstances. Working from home comes with additional time management challenges under regular circumstances. But time management on top of challenging events associated with COVID-19 creates productivity, engagement and stress that can be addressed and better understood by employees.

### Learning Objectives:

- Learning tips for effective time management when working from home
- How to be organized when working from home or, working at home *and* the office
- Learning to value and embrace self-care while doing your job and being productive
- Organizing in a space not originally intended as an office – and maybe sharing it



**Difficult Conversations in Virtual Environments:** Anytime we feel vulnerable or our self-esteem is implicated, when the issues at stake are important and the outcome uncertain, there is potential for us to experience a conversation as difficult. Not seeing supervisors and peers regularly may make interactions more difficult than usual

Learning Objectives:

- Identify anger triggers and remain poised in conflict situations – whether in person or electronically
- Be equipped to deliver difficult messages over a variety of mediums
- Know how to choose productive words and behaviors to address negative reactions in others.
- Using effective communication and management techniques no matter where you are physically

**A Primer on DEI and Its Value Today:** Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are important to all organizations and those who focus on it tend to enjoy more positive business outcomes than those who don't. Diversity, what makes us all different from one another; inclusion, deliberately creating a culture of acceptance of diversity; and equity, leveling the playing field and focusing on fairness, are essential topics to understand, master and promote. DEI has been thrust into the forefront in recent months but not everyone understands the concepts or the value that embracing DEI has for an organization.

Learning Objectives:

- Define workplace diversity, inclusion and civility and describe the difference between the concepts.
- Identify how DEI and workplace behaviors may affect our decision-making, productivity, performance evaluation, day-to-day interactions, and other employment-related concerns.
- Identify the impact of DEI in the workplace
- Taking on a shared and individual responsibility to address DEI issues in the workplace

**Feedback and Coaching Virtually:** The focus of feedback is most often driven by a desire to improve an individual's performance on the job or on a particular task. As a result of this focus on concrete issues, it requires that the coach be able to communicate and influence the employee how to develop. Coaching in a broad sense can last as long as needed but tends to be short-term. Feedback, on the other hand is and should be applied continuously. Much of coaching involves being able to give good and effective feedback in the moment or at appropriate points in time. Applying feedback and coaching concepts to a virtual environment is more complex and some managers may avoid it.

Learning Objectives:

- Define what coaching and feedback is and is not in the context of virtual management.
- Understand what effective feedback looks like and how to deliver feedback virtually.
- Understand coaching's and feedback's impact on employee engagement and retention
- How to capture the opportunity that a change in work environment presents

**Stress Management:** The pandemic may be stressful for employees. Fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions. Anxiety over job security and effectively balancing work, home and family responsibilities can be difficult to manage on top of pandemic fears. It may seem to employees that there's nothing you can do about stress at work and home; but there are steps you can take to relieve the pressure and regain control.

Learning Objectives:

- Effective tips for dealing with stress during a difficult time
- How to tell when you or other employees are stressed and how to respond effectively
- How to stop wasting valuable time feeling overwhelmed, distracted or bothered.
- Reduce workplace negativity and improve morale.

