

# Remote Work Toolkit

This toolkit was designed to help business leaders navigate situations that require employees to work remotely. The learnings and resources captured here are from guidance we've shared with our own internal teams, as well as best practices we've gathered from experts in this space.

In general, remote work challenges teams to be more thoughtful about how they're operating in the absence of face-to-face interaction. At Facebook, we've experienced first-hand the benefits of placing more emphasis on things like documenting work and decisions, planning and prepping for meetings, communicating frequently and effectively, and checking in on one another. It's also important for companies to set a culture that supports employees to do their best work remotely while maintaining their individual health & well-being.

You should take independent, legal, and professional advice on issues affecting your employees. However, we hope the tips and resources here can help you support your teams and empower them to do their best work during this time.

# Remote Work Toolkit

This toolkit includes guidance on the following topics:

- [Remote Work Best Practices](#)
- [Company Tools & Infrastructure](#)
- [Virtual Meeting Guidance](#)
- [Internal Communication](#)
- [Culture & Well-being](#)
- [Additional Third-Party Resources](#)

## Remote Work Best Practices

Working remotely challenges teams to establish new norms and routines for how to communicate and collaborate with one another. Teams might benefit from more structure and predictability in their ways of working, while also needing patience and flexibility. Below are a few things we ask our teams to keep in mind when working remotely, that may work for your organization as well:

- **Set up your team's infrastructure.** Make sure your team has the right tools and norms in place to communicate and collaborate effectively. Some things that might be helpful for you to try are:
  - Circulate a cell phone contact list to help people feel connected and supported in lieu of in-person access.
  - Ask managers to speak to their reports about their preferred working hours, and define realistic expectations for response times via email, etc. Share these with the rest of your team so everyone knows what to expect, while supporting people's need for flexibility.
  - Establish a documentation process for meeting notes, decisions, goals, deliverable, timelines, and more. This ensures people are aligned and accountable to clear expectations upfront.
- **Discuss working preferences with each of your direct reports and partners.** Talk about communication preferences (Email, WhatsApp, VC), 1:1 frequency, and how/when to escalate.
- **Regularly communicate and check for context.** When teams are dispersed, it is difficult to know who has been exposed to project knowledge and updates, so reinforcing context in writing, 1:1s and team meetings is important.
- **Structured meetings.** Well-structured meetings and follow-ups are critical in helping people stay productive and connected when some or all of the team is working remotely. Best practices include:

- Making sure meetings have a clear goal and agenda set ahead of time and sending out necessary pre-reads in advance.
- In fully remote meetings, assign a moderator and establish ground rules to ensure everyone is heard. For example, you can set up a chat thread for comments and questions which can be fielded by the moderator to avoid interruptions in large groups.
- Encourage people to use video conferencing for meetings, including 1:1s. Video helps establish presence and connection.
- Create collaborative posts/documents for all meetings and share clear and detailed notes after.

## Company Tools & Infrastructure

Every organization has its preferred tools and infrastructure to enable teams to work productively and stay connected. At Facebook, we use our own platforms and other enterprise services to help us work together - across offices or from home. These include:

- **Cloud Collaboration.** Using your preferred cloud-based file-sharing platform enables teams to securely collaborate on documents, decks and spreadsheets in real time, making it easy to share, store and access files from wherever people are.
- **Video Conferencing.** As a solution for larger meetings, conferences and customer events, we often use a video conferencing provider in our daily business.
- **Corporate Communication Tools.** As a global organization ourselves, we actively use [Workplace](#) to keep our employees around the world connected and informed through tools like groups, chat, video and Live. Leaders and teams share updates and guidance regularly in channels that employees are familiar with and continually check. We maintain a single source of truth in a company-wide default Workplace group, so employees can follow along as updates come in, and teams can then share in more targeted groups.
- **Messaging.** Messaging apps like WhatsApp, Slack, Hipchat and Facebook Messenger (among others) enable teams to communicate in real time and on-the-go. At Facebook we primarily use Workplace Chat, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. WhatsApp, with its end-to-end encryption, offers secure video conferencing for business calls in the office and on-the-go. Facebook Messenger offers video conferencing capabilities that can bring up to 50 participants together across laptops (without apps) and smartphones and allows them to share content via screen sharing directly from the computer.

## Virtual Meeting Guidance

If you are shifting meetings to VC, you can be mindful of fostering inclusivity on calls by following some of these tips:

### Basics

- Confirm that everyone has the adequate technical requirements to VC.
- Ensure everyone has access to the team group and/or shared drive for agendas, notes etc.
- Try to avoid meetings that fall outside of normal working hours.
- Evaluate the necessary length of the meeting. Can a 30-minute meeting be accomplished in 15 minutes? Can an hour meeting be 45?

### Preparation

- Solicit agenda topics + publish agenda ahead of time.
- Set clear goals for the meetings.
- Set expectations about what people should do ahead of the meeting - i.e. read supporting documents / fill in docs etc.

### In the Meeting

- Establish a timekeeper and note-taker. Rotate these roles to ensure fairness.
- Ensure everyone is visible. Particularly for remote participants, camera visibility and eye contact with cameras is important.
- Solicit feedback from quiet rooms or people. Being remote can lead to participants “watching a meeting” instead of participating.
- Take time during discussions to solicit opinions from the full team, not just the loudest or closest participants.
- Avoid side conversations.

### Capture actions and owners

- Reserve a few minutes at the end of every meeting for a wrap up.
- Increased accountability and ownership are particularly important for remote teams.

### Post-Meeting

- Put the notes, including clear actions, in a shared drive or group. Notes saved by date of meeting allow for a running record of conversations and help keep everyone on the same page.

## Internal Communication

When teams are working remotely, it's important for leadership, managers and teams to have consistent and open lines of communication to ensure everyone feels informed, connected and supported:

- **Share updates and guidance regularly** in channels that employees will be familiar with and used to checking.
- **Maintain a single source of truth** in the form of a company-wide group or channel and allow teams to distribute this information in more targeted forums.
- **Share and maintain a master list of FAQs** to help respond to common questions and clarify expectations for working remotely.
- **Help minimize anxiety or stress** by sharing empathetic posts acknowledging the difficulties and challenges that can arise when working remotely.

## Culture & Well-being

Culture keeps people connected, regardless of where they are located. Use this as an opportunity to reinforce or improve culture when it comes to caring for a team, strengthening connection, and trialing new ways to work that can set your org up for a future where remote work and distributed teams could be the norm:

- **Revisit your core values as an organization.** These shouldn't change based on where you all are working. Use this as an opportunity to reorient your team around your collective north star as an organization. Regardless of how you will get the work done, step one is making sure you are all moving toward the same targets from a cultural and business success perspective. This is also a prime moment to remind your team that you trust them.
- **Stay connected.** Create shared spaces and more opportunities for spontaneous workplace conversations (water cooler moments) via chat or video when possible. Video technology, in particular, brings people together and increases a sense of connectedness to one another. Pick up the phone when it makes sense. A quick call (during working hours) is often the fastest way to work through a 1:1 or small group question or issue. Encourage teams to set the norm of using the phone to resolve issues quickly or if/when there are issues with connectivity.
- **Help people identify routines that help them work best - and to practice good self-care.** Support your team in identifying routines that work for them, which includes being mindful of distractions that may be more likely to occur at home. Make sure during team check-ins that you're not only checking on work progress, but also looking for signs of burnout or frustration, which can result

from feeling “always-on” when working remotely. Remind team members to set time boundaries for themselves and prioritize time for self-care and social activities outside of work.

- **Check-in with people.** People who are caretakers of children, elderly parents, a sick family member, etc. may need to take a more flexible approach when working during these times. Check-in frequently with your team to understand their needs and overall well-being. Some people may need to shift their schedule to accommodate family commitments. You can support your teams in these situations by setting clear expectations for outcomes (not hours worked) and being cautious about last minute meetings or rescheduling team meetings. Not everyone will be able to react to sudden changes in schedule as quickly as they had under normal circumstances

## Additional Third-Party Resources

### Remote Work

- [Using Workplace to Stay Connected](#)
- [Campaign: Step-by-step guide to working remotely amid coronavirus](#)
- [HBR: How to Manage Remote Direct Reports](#)
- [A Remote Worker's Guide to Stay Healthy](#)
- [2020 State of Remote Work](#)
- [Resources on GitLab's all-remote approach](#)
- [The Ultimate Guide to Remote Work - Zapier](#)
- [Five Crucial Tips for Working from Home - Forbes](#)
- [Your Guide to Working Remotely in Slack](#)

### COVID-19

- [Facebook Business Resource Hub: Managing through the COVID-19 outbreak](#)
- [Using Workplace to stay connected to your workforce during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [SBA Emergency Preparedness Guide](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- [Combating the Coronavirus, US Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Implications for Business, McKinsey & Co.](#)
- [Information for Communities, Schools, and Businesses](#)
- [OSHA Resources for Workers and Employers on COVID-19](#)
- [Get Your Workplace Ready for COVID-19](#)