Mobilize Your Workforce in Response to COVID-19

Whether you are running an organization, division or department. There key steps you need to take to convert from traditional to a remote workplace. Start at the organizational level and assess these resources:

Technology

Today the network is the workplace and leveraging technology tools is likely the easiest step in mobilization. Working with IT will help you enable people to quickly connect from their new home office. Along with the typical VPN and internet access, here are a couple more considerations as you deploy your teams:

- Provision employees with equipment
- Staff up an employee helpdesk
- Provide cameras if possible so people can continue to connect face to face
- Confirm people have headsets with microphones and additional monitors
- Find technology training that will quickly upskill you people

Set Up Communications Platform

Communication platforms may vary inside organizations, it will be important to select one, enterprise wide, communication solution to ensure that everyone has access to the same resources and are able to interact when working from their remote location. Assess what is being used inside the company today and if changes need to be made to ensure seamless connection, work to keep these changes as simple as possible and provide clear instruction on how to utilize the tools. Again, work with IT to provide on demand training and resources. Many organizations have suites of tools they can use but tend not to use all of them. Yammer is a popular internal social media tool that can be a powerful communication tool during this crisis. Encourage teams and divisions to set up "communities" where they can stay connected with each other in real time. Other platforms include:

- TEAMS from Microsoft
- Skype (Group Chats)
- Yammer from Microsoft
- Slack
- Zoon
- Google Hangouts

Set Expectations for Managers

Some managers will be more comfortable than others in the area of leading dispersed teams, but all managers will want clear guidelines about how they should lead during this time of crisis. Provide all managers will a recommended schedule on when to connect with their teams. For example:

- Start each workday with a brief, stand up meeting
- Establish daily goals with the team, answer questions adjust as needed
- Leverage calendars
- Provide virtual team building tips and resources
- Encourage managers to establish team response times to communications
- Invite all people to use vide if it doesn't strain the bandwidth of the meeting

Set Expectation for Individual Contributors

Everyone is in different places, based upon on how ready or open they have been to remote work. Individual contributors don't know what they don't know when they begin working remotely for the first time. They need to have structures in place to remind them to take action and when, because all the signals from the traditional office will be gone. Here are examples of how to help employees stay visible, connected and understanding expectations.

1. Encourage employees to reset communication practices. Connecting at the beginning of each day opens the door to back and forth collaboration throughout the rest of the day.
2. Set collaboration expectations. Putting these practices in place now and throughout the pandemic will provide clarity and reduce anxiety some people who are new to remote working will likely experience.
3. Set on technology norms. Encourage employees to keep it simple and be good at what they're good at.
4. Provide employees with tips and tools to stay connected and reducing feelings of isolation through virtual happy hours, lunch hours, etc.