Managing an Unexpected Remote Workforce

Angela Schafer
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/angela-d-schafer
Twitter: @AngelaSchafer

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Angela Schafer
(she/her)

- Business leader focused on people and culture
- Wife and mom of two teenagers
- Remote working enthusiast
A fire at a building 1870 Alta Vista Dr. sent firefighters out into the cold Thursday morning. The fire was brought under control within 20 minutes, but the fire service said smoke caused 'significant damage' on the second floor near the fire area.

Photograph by: Marc Messier, Ottawa Fire Services

January 3, 2013

"The flames were extinguished within 20 minutes — preventing it from spreading inside — but heavy smoke filtered into the building causing significant damage on the second floor..."
Let’s start with the end:

Business results in 2013

- Top decile for employee engagement
- Strong financial results
- Top decile for client satisfaction
How did we transition to remote?
Three phases to successfully move to a remote workforce

1. Acknowledge the loss
2. Establish the new normal
3. Create a lasting legacy
Acknowledge the loss

This is not business as usual
- Focus 1:1 meetings to discuss emotional and mental well-being
- Conduct team meetings to create new working norms
- Understand individual and specific needs
- Facilitate leadership forums to support each other
- Take care of yourself
Establish the new normal

Transitioning to a new way of working
Promote Freedom in a frame
- Align on outcomes
- Assume trust
- Focus on guidelines, not rules

Get creative to stay connected
- Be a role model - Turn on your video and ask others to do it too
- Replace the water cooler conversation
- Virtual team events
- Regular communication from leadership

Give people the tools they need
- Allow people to obtain items from the office
- Set up a home office purchase plan

Adapt to work-life integration
- Encourage non-work activities during the traditional work day
- Foster a culture where individuals discover what works for them
- Share success stories
Create a lasting legacy

“Small fire, lasting legacy”
We noticed significant improvements:

- Commute time
- Meeting quality
- Trust
- Innovation and experimentation
- Responsiveness to field
- Managing to outcomes
- Environmental benefits
- Family time
A new beginning
What will be your lasting legacy?
Acknowledge the loss

Establish the new normal

Create a lasting legacy
Questions?
Let’s Stay Connected

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