

100% Remote: Managing Teams Working From Home

A guide to
sustaining effective
team working in the
new normal

March 2020



Our new context | **Teams working 100% remote**

The rapid and largely unplanned for mass transition to remote working will create huge challenges for us in the remainder of 2020.

This will likely be the greatest test of our resilience and ability as managers of people in our lifetime.

We need a proactive response to address inevitable issues with engagement and well being. Alongside this we need to focus our attention on the significant drop in productivity that has been created by this shift almost overnight.

Within our control to address this are three key areas for action:

- 1. Management Behaviours supporting virtual working:** We need to set a new standard in behaviour. We need to Model the Way - to give purpose and structure to our work every day and every week.
- 2. Remote Working Practices:** In addition, our management practices and routines that have often been neglected in an office setting must now come to the fore. A key part of this is how we manage demand and capacity.
- 3. Enabling Tools:** Lastly, selecting the tools that will best enable us to be effective in this new environment will be important - both leveraging what's available and selecting additional tools where needed.

Successful managers and teams will effect a conscious transition to remote working focused on the above areas.

Everyone is experiencing this same challenge

This short form guide outlines the most important issues we need to confront as managers and suggests a few points for each of us to action now. We are seeing clients do some great things in response and we have captured these. This is a toolkit, rather than a sales document, based on what we think will work. We hope you find it useful.

100% remote working | Managers can have impact addressing Team Working challenges

Teams are rapidly shifting to a new way of working – 100% remote.

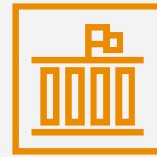
Focusing on addressing effective remote **Team Working** represents the single biggest area of potential impact for managers.

100% remote - 3 key challenges today and in the coming months:



1. LIFE SITUATION

- Work isolation anxiety
- School closures
- Domestic disruptions
- Lack of motivation
- Over-working
- Bad health habits
- COVID-19 related personal issues and absence



2. TEAM WORKING

- Orchestration of people
- Changing customer demands
- Prioritisation of work
- Wellbeing impact
- Silo working
- Accountability / missing in action
- Issue resolution
- Mis-communication



3. PHYSICAL & TECH CONSTRAINTS

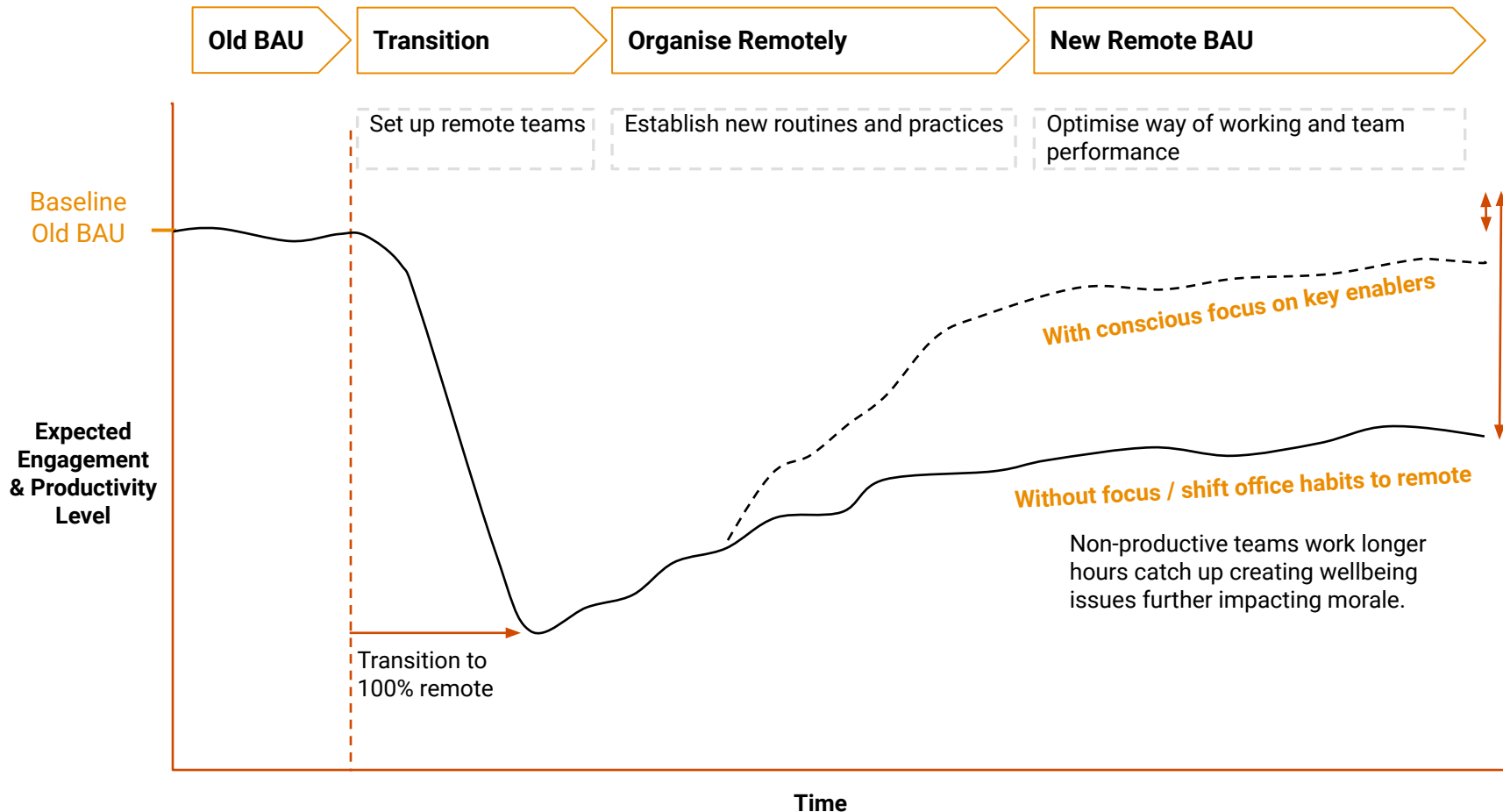
- Absence of technical collaboration solutions
- Hardware issues
- Bandwidth
- Server capacity
- Application reliability
- Lack of face-to-face contact

Where managers can have greatest impact in the short to mid term

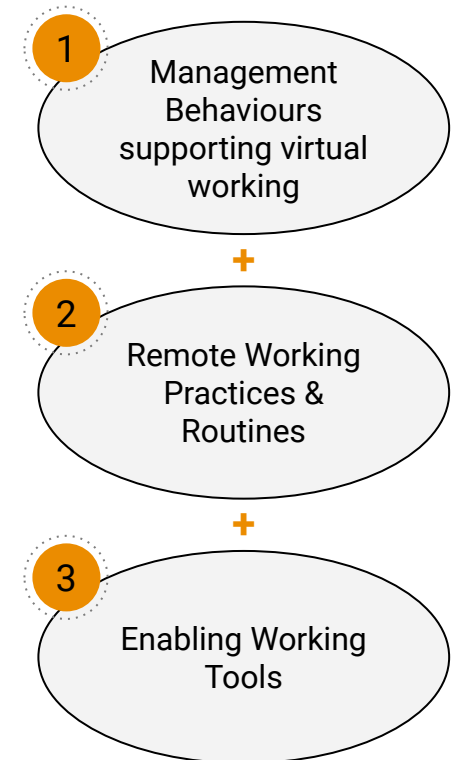
The journey teams will go on | A conscious transition will aid engagement and productivity

The realistic goal should be to keep teams emotionally engaged and to get within 10-15% of office based productivity. Without a proactive approach, non-productive teams will work longer hours to catch up creating wellbeing issues which will further impact morale.

Expected team engagement and productivity journey - Engagement will be strongly linked to productivity



Key enablers of more engaged & productive remote teams



1 | Management behaviours supporting virtual working

Organisations with strong management behaviours that consciously transition to the new way of working will keep teams engaged and productive through hard times ahead.

Key Management behaviours to enable virtual working:



MODEL THE WAY WITH A HUMAN TOUCH

Show visible leadership in remote working and connecting with teams. Empathise with personal circumstances



CREATE A SHARED GOAL, AGREE NEW EXPECTATIONS

Encourage personal accountability by co-creating goals and expectations in the team each week and each month



FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS, SOLVE PROBLEMS

Positively focus on structured problem solving to resolve issues and setting standards driving the one best way of working for the team



ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT VIRTUALLY

Delegate appropriately within teams, provide visibility of all work happening and empower team members to take accountability



PRAISE OFTEN & CELEBRATE SUCCESS

Re-enforce good behaviours of the virtual team. Recognise performance in new ways that matters for the team

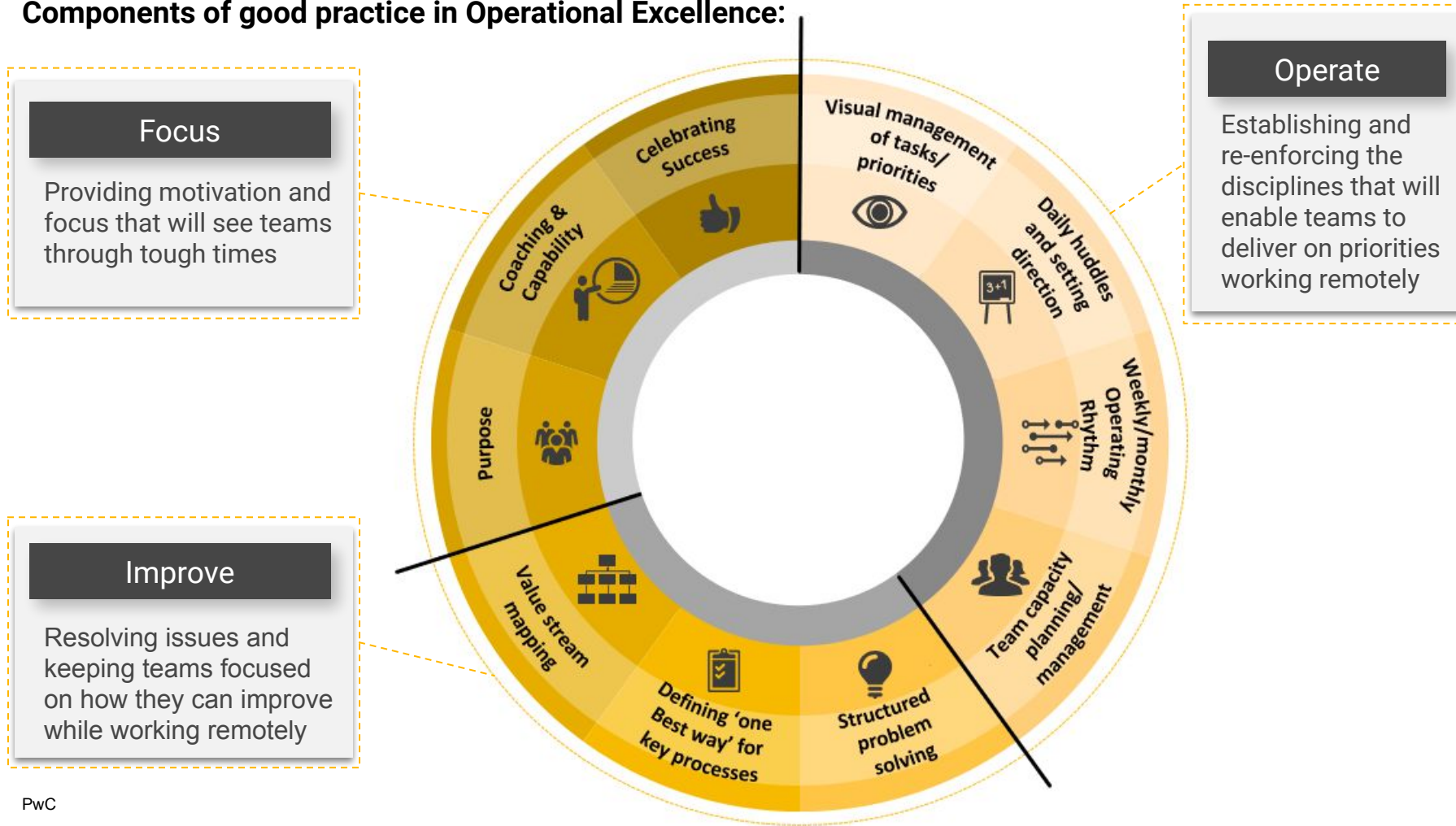
5 actions to take now:

- 1. Model the way by showing compassion and being transparent in every interaction from today.** This will build trust. No one has all the answers.
- 2. Set & keep 3 personal standards for working remotely.** Talk about these commitments e.g. single task - be present in meetings. Consciously eliminate office bad habits e.g. too many people at meetings, overuse of email etc
- 3. Meet with your leadership or team** to talk about expectations for working in the new way. Give the team confidence in taking on responsibility. Tell the team they are empowered.
- 4. Create an expectation of a focus on individual / team well being.** Encourage team members to establish daily routines that are built into calendars.
- 5. Praise frequently and thank people for their efforts at least once every day.** Ask teams how they would like to celebrate hitting targets or deadlines.

2 | Remote working practices & routines

The inflection point in the journey will come when teams are organising themselves for remote working. Orchestrating demand and supply, and adhering to Operational Excellence good practices in a work from home environment will give teams the best chance of maintaining engagement and productivity.

Components of good practice in Operational Excellence:











5 actions to take now:

- 1. Plan your own day to take control.** Start with setting out your imperatives and those for the teams. Avoid logging on to email first thing and reacting to what is happening!
- 2. Ensure you have daily touchpoints with your team.** Make each day start with human connections focusing on mood before you move onto more task.
- 3. Establish a clear working pattern for the team each week / month.** Ensure that rocks in diaries are at times less likely to be disrupted.
- 4. Allocate work with clear time expectations and give purpose to every task.** This will ensure that the team are operating in a focused way with an understanding that what they are doing is important.
- 5. Maintain your role as a coach.** Ensure that there is clear separation between task and performance discussions with team members. Personal growth is still important.

3 | Enabling working tools

Every team should be looking at maximising the usage of internal tools (e.g. conferencing, shared drives), free to use where possible (e.g. Google suite) and paid for tools.

Example free to use and paid for tools:

	Operate	Improve	Focus
Free to use	<p>WhatsApp</p> <p>Virtually free, fast secure messaging App. Facilitates video calls and chat groups. Ideal communication vehicle for remote teams to share information, resolve issues and have some face-to-face time.</p> 	<p>Clockify</p> <p>Stopwatch App to capture how long you are spending on specific tasks that you can label, descriptions and activity details. Ideal for helping to analyse and structure your day.</p> 	<p>Weekdone**</p> <p>App to enable your team members to enter progress, plans and problems, which are compiled into an email. Ideal for collating remote team information</p> 
Paid for	<p>Perform Plus</p> <p>Digital tool that enables cross team priorities, marrying our award winning Perform coaching programme with smart technology and data we're creating highly connected, highly engaged remote workers.</p> 	<p>Data Mapping & Visualisation Tools</p> <p>Use of tools that increase both speed-to-insight and the level of insight, as well as visualise findings in a more dynamic way, especially between virtual workers.</p>   	<p>Learning Lab</p> <p>Aligns individuals around a single, best practice source of training material - whilst maintaining the flexibility to respond to learners as individuals. It acts as a personalised tutor, providing targeted questioning to best meet individual needs..</p> 

**The majority of goal setting, team performance or self-improvement apps have a free trial period before paying

5 actions to take now:

- 1. Identify the outcomes you want to achieve** and agree a terms of reference for each team connection. As part of this identify the tools at your disposal that could help you achieve these outcomes in-house and free to use.
- 2. Brainstorm with the team what tools are available** internally and free to use. Identify what other tools may work for your teams that are paid for. Transition and Organise are the times to define what is needed.
- 3. Use video for face-to-face interaction where possible.** Co create some rules with your team on how to make video calls effective such as dialling in 5 minutes before meetings start and going on mute when not contributing.
- 4. Build tools into your routines and working practices.** Create a team 'Week in the Life' routine schedule that blocks out time for connecting that fits around personal commitments and working routines.
- 5. Establish incentives in recognition of strong adoption of tools** and create tool champions who can train others.

100% Remote in Practice | What Financial Service companies and PwC are doing today

The majority of teams have started to take initial steps on the shift to remote working. Considering how they can work as effectively as possible and, importantly, how they can ensure their teams remain engaged and productive, whilst still having a bit of fun that helps with wellbeing

Here are some examples of actions being taken:

1

Management Behaviours supporting virtual working

- Setting up blocks of time in diaries for ad hoc queries from staff / 1:1 time using space in diaries from commuting and cancelled commitments.
- Leading issue resolution in discussion with the right people remotely and stopping email chains.
- Strong commitments to performance discussions / end of year reviews.
- Revealing more of themselves to the team and being inquisitive about home life.

2

Remote Working Practices & Routines

- Prioritisation of existing and new tasks with clear allocation of work to team members.
- Extending daily stand ups to all teams check how teams are feeling, enable operational priorities, understand capacity, identify issues for resolution.
- Taking good practice from the office remote e.g. establishing virtual team problem solving sessions

3

Enabling Working Tools

- Teams have set up WhatsApp groups to make communications easier as well as facilitating informal conversations.
- 1-2 minute video blogs instead of emails to communicate key actions or knowledge sharing to combat email fatigue.
- Teams have committed to use Google Hangouts or Skype to make video calls rather than phone calls, to maintain fact-to-face contact.

Keeping it light to help with well being...

- Teams using Google Jam Board to share pictures of themselves, their pets, something from their homes.
- Team step challenge or team to team challenge to ensure everyone stays active.
- Slots in the diary for coffee and chat or virtual team drinks at the end of the week.
- Theme for teams for the week - book, film, cocktail of the week to keep a common point of focus.
- Sharing 5 minute 'MyStory' from team member each week to foster connections
- Games and competitions e.g. through the keyhole, weekly team quiz.

Everyone is experiencing the same challenge...

We are here to help. Please reach out to discuss anything related to our new world

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Other thinking

