

People Success Toolkit

Remote Work



Dear Senior Leader,

I know that you and your organization are working hard to help your employees make the shift to remote work. Seemingly overnight, you've had to consider the impact of employees working from home, seeking to find a new rhythm of work either in isolation or conversely, surrounded by family 24/7. How is this change impacting your people and their ability to feel safe, connected, engaged, and productive? What's working, and where do they need more support to move your organization forward?

At Glint, we've been helping leaders find the answers to questions like these and to respond effectively. In just the first couple months of the pandemic, we've amassed 2.5 million employee feedback responses (and growing) along with hundreds of senior leadership observations from organizational interventions. While the ratings employees give on these pulse surveys help us prioritize general focus areas, their comments tell us what they really need, especially in such fluid and ambiguous times. Of the 100+ of topics we track from these comments, "communication" and "infrastructure & tools" emerge as most important and should be front and center in your strategy to address the shift to remote work.

Glint's analysis of over 2.5 million pieces of feedback revealed that **communication and infrastructure & tools were the most common topics mentioned in employees' comments.** A pattern that was consistent across multiple, consecutive weeks.

Organizations should focus on helping their employees get work done in a remote environment, whether that means setting teams up with technology or shifting their focus to employee wellbeing and virtual collaboration.

Perhaps surprisingly, employees are happy with the level of company support they're receiving, with 85% saying they agree or strongly agree with the statement "I feel well supported by my company at this time." However, we know from working closely with these organizations that adopting a few core, people-centric habits can make a big difference in understanding and responding effectively to employee needs. They are:

- Frequently gather employee feedback on critical topics
- Equip managers with insights that help them address concerns
- Have regular team and one-on-one conversations
- Check in on goals to prioritize work and time
- Learn from input in a way that improves organizational and individual success

I'm pleased to share this toolkit to help your organization develop a strategic and people-centric approach to remote work environments. I hope you and your team find it informative and helpful.

And I'd love to hear what you think. Please [email](#) or [message me](#) if you have questions, would like to learn more, or want to connect with others who are working through these same challenges.



Justin Black

Head of Glint People Science at LinkedIn

An HR Leader's Playbook: Remote Work

During times of uncertainty and rapid change, organizations turn to HR leaders like you to keep people safe, informed, and supported.

Depending on your pre-Covid practices with regard to remote work, you're either ramping up or reinventing right now. Either way, there are some critical things the Glint Team has learned from studying the millions of pieces of feedback coming in each month and by observing which practices are working and not. The most important thing we've learned? The basics matter more than ever, and it's actually not that hard to get them right, even if you're new to remote work.

The long term implications of the mass migration to remote work are yet to be understood, but we do know that in order for people to continue to be happy and successful at work, they must remain connected to their organizations. Developing a few core organizational habits will go a long way to achieve this:



Habit 1

Get Feedback and Insights



Habit 2

Have Conversations



Habit 3

Set Effective Goals



Habit 4

Encourage Learning and Growth

Stay connected, understand, and respond to employee needs

Here are a few high-impact practices that you can adopt today.

- Frequently gather employee feedback on critical topics
- Equip managers with insights that help them address concerns
- Have regular team and one-on-one conversations to ensure people can adapt effectively to change
- Check in on goals to prioritize work and time
- Provide resources to help people make sense of this change in work
- Learn from input in a way that improves organizational and individual success



Habit 1

Get Feedback and Insights

Assessing the impact of remote work starts with gathering employee feedback. While no two organizations are the same, there are a few fundamental questions every organization should consider in designing an employee feedback strategy to support remote work.

Let's take a look at the top questions.

When should we survey?

Frequency of pulsing depends on an organization's strategy for collecting and responding to feedback, as well as changing circumstances related to COVID-19. Glint recommends a monthly pulse during times of major change to help people share concerns and stay connected. Remote working conditions make this regular touchpoint even more important given the absence of informal avenues to surface issues, such as hallway or water cooler chats. Items related to remote work can be used as part of a short, monthly pulse to quickly understand and respond to people's needs. Glint recommends quarterly pulses during stable times.

What should we ask?

While employee needs during challenging times are similar no matter where work is conducted, it's best to include a few questions that are tailored towards remote workers that remind participants that they should respond in the context of a virtual setting. People who aren't working remotely can skip a question that isn't relevant. The latest research on remote work points toward the following topics as key indicators of employee engagement and productivity, and you can use these questions to survey your team or organization:

Support	I feel well supported by my company at this time.
Remote work	I have what I need to be productive while working remotely. (Skip if you have not worked remotely at your company.)
Prioritization	I know what I should be focusing on right now.
Connection	My company is doing a good job helping employees feel connected to one another.
Manager Support	I can get the support I need from my manager right now.
Well-being	How are you doing?
Open ended	What would help you feel more supported right now?

Who should see results?

The goal is for everyone in the organization to feel ownership of pulse results, and that starts with sharing employee feedback immediately and openly. Company-level results can be shared with executive leadership and corporate teams, such as HR, IT, facilities, and security to ensure that appropriate plans are in place to make remote work most effective for employees. Managers can discuss team-level results to ensure people feel a level of control over their situation as new solutions are developed—for example, determining how frequently to conduct virtual meetings as a team. Glint’s findings to date reveal highly localized employee needs, suggesting that getting pulse results into the hands of managers right away is more important than ever.



Habit 2

Have Conversations

Regular check-in’s—team and one-on-one —are the best way to facilitate action based on pulse insights—they build trust, ensure effective prioritization, surface roadblocks, and prompt ongoing action. For remote employees, it is even more important for managers to engage in frequent conversations with their employees to ensure individual needs are being heard and where possible, addressed. Understanding what someone needs can be as simple as adding a question to a regularly scheduled one-on-one. For a set of questions we’ve seen work well, please see the conversation guide in this toolkit.

Remote Work Conversation Resources

[Conversation Guide for Managers](#)

Glint

[Turn Feedback Into Action](#)

Infographic, Glint

[Survey Results Conversation Guide](#)

Manager Toolkit, Glint





Habit 3

Set Goals Effectively

In times of change and an environment dominated by remote work, effective goal-setting takes on a new level of importance. Consider what employees need during times of distress: support, focus, a feeling of control, connection with colleagues and with the organization. One of the most common roadblocks to remote work revolves around a traditional mindset of management. Here are a couple of common examples: “I can only manage work I can see being done,” or “how will I know what my employee is doing if I can’t see them?” This mindset demonstrates what employees don’t need: a lot of documentation, rigidity, complexity and performance ratings. Organizations that have more agile habits related to goal setting and conversations are seeing the benefits during these times of distress.

Remote employees will likely need additional support in determining how to best spend their time, where to focus and what to prioritize. It’s important to include a discussion of goals in one-on-one and team conversations—especially as priorities are rapidly shifting. Helping employees identify a single, top priority will help them focus and make decisions on critical activities that contribute to organizational priorities as well as their own development.

What employees don’t need:

- A lot of documentation
- Rigidity
- Complexity
- Performance ratings

What employees need:

- Support
- Focus
- A feeling of control
- Connection with colleagues and with the organization



Habit 4

Encourage Learning and Growth

With new demands, a new working environment, and new goals come new opportunities to learn. A regular conversation habit gives people a chance to discuss learning opportunities relative to business priorities on an ongoing basis. Dispersed teams, shifting business priorities, and managing stress are all a part of the changing world of work and offer us the opportunity to rethink relevant skills and reflect on what meaningful work looks like.

When faced with a challenge, we have a choice whether to take one step forward in the right direction. For the organization to move forward, it's important that leaders model, promote, and give people time for professional growth. In any new work situation, we must give people a chance to take stock of what new skills they need and to plan how to acquire them. Create a habit by discussing learning progress in regular check-in's.

Here are a few resources to support remote work:

Remote Work Learning Resources

A collection of free learning resources to help you and your organization build skills to support remote work.

[How to Work Remotely Effectively](#)

Learning Path, LinkedIn Learning

[Leading Remote Teams Successfully](#)

Learning Path, LinkedIn Learning

[Stay Connected While Social](#)

[Distancing](#)

Toolkit, Glint

[Managing Performance Remotely](#)

Blog, Glint



Get Started

Actions to Support Remote Work

Here are some specific actions to create a people-centric approach to remote work. We've broken it down for each level of your organization. Because every organization is different, start where it makes the most sense for your situation.

Organization

- Deploy regular pulses to gain insights into how your people are doing.

- Put pulse results in the hands of your managers to take localized action.

- Encourage frequent, lightweight conversations about goals, priorities, and support needed to help people succeed.

- Ensure people have access to the technology they need to collaborate, connect, and get work done.

- Challenge the workplace mindset: Work is not a place but something you do.

Manager

- Trust your employees.

- Check-in with team members frequently.

- Regularly review goals to ensure alignment and priority.

- Discuss how team members can best share needs and progress with you.

Employee

- Share your perspective on what would make it easier for you to work remotely.

- Determine how you will protect yourself from feeling lonely? Schedule time to connect with people personally.

- Make sure you are very clear on your priorities and goals.

- Discuss how you will communicate needs and progress to your manager.

- Gauge your comfort in participating in virtual touch points, both formal and informal, with your team. What do you need to make these interactions most useful?

Connect, Share, Grow

Connect with your peers and Glint's People Science experts to share challenges, ask questions, and swap experiences in our LinkedIn Group: [People Success Forum: Navigating Challenging Times Together](#)

A conversation guide for managers and employees

We are facing unprecedented times in both our personal and professional lives. This guide is designed to help you connect with your team members through a high-quality conversation.

In addition to the conversation prompts below, LinkedIn Learning has [free online courses dedicated to employees and managers](#) on how to prioritize your workload and manage your teams remotely.

Conversation Prep

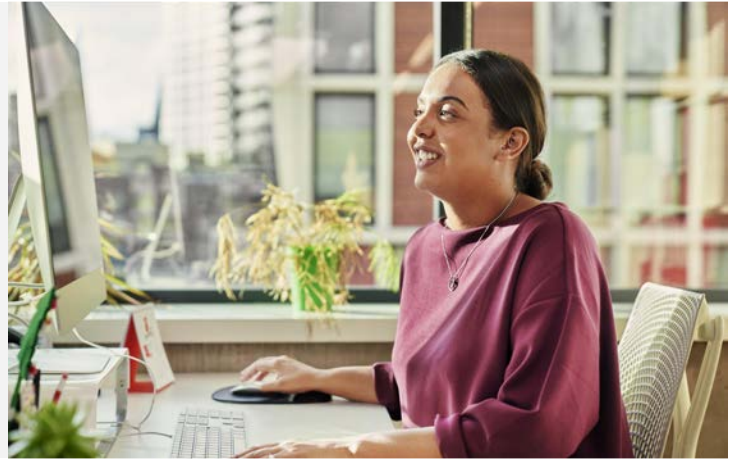
Before you connect with one of your team members, check in with yourself. Are you okay? Are you in the right physical and mental condition to have a conversation right now? Are you able to be present? If not, it might be best to reschedule. We are all facing this together and your team will understand if you need to shift the time. If you are ready to have the conversation, make sure you are clear on the most pressing priorities for your team. Aside from support, the most critical need for most managers and employees is to find a shared understanding of what to prioritize.



Tips for a Successful Conversation

Be present

Try to be on camera and avoid distractions, but also recognize that some people may be overwhelmed with the increased frequency of video conferencing. Make sure your conversation partner knows it is OK if they prefer to do voice-only calls periodically.



Use visuals

Share your screen when appropriate to help people understand exactly where they can access key information and resources that will help them be successful while working remotely.



Be explicit

Be explicit about your expectations, but also seek to understand what expectations others have of you.



As best you can, make sure everyone leaves the conversation with a clear idea of how to prioritize time, which priorities need to shift, additional flexibility that's needed, and the right frequency for one-on-one check-ins.

Questions to Ask in Your Next 1:1 Conversation

Whether you are in a manager role or employee, these questions are helpful prompts to guide a quality conversation. If you're in a manager role, keep these questions in mind to help guide the conversation. If you're in an employee role, think ahead about how you might answer these questions. If there's a question below that's important to you and it doesn't come up during your conversation, bring it up yourself.

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- 1 How are you doing? How are your family members and loved ones?
 - 2 How have you been adjusting to the changes in how we work due to Covid-19? What are your biggest challenges/concerns?
 - 3 How are you doing with maintaining boundaries between work and home responsibilities? What's working or not?
 - 4 Do you need any additional flexibility related to your working hours (when you work, or how long you work)?
 - 5 What are the most impactful things for you to spend your time on right now? Are any of those priorities at risk? What can be pushed back, transferred to another teammate, or removed?
 - 6 What do you need from me in terms of communication? What is your preferred frequency for 1:1 meetings while working remotely?
 - 7 How would you prefer to stay connected to the rest of the team? (don't assume all employees need or want the same type and frequency of virtual happy hours, coffee chats, etc.)
 - 8 Is there anything that I can do to make sure that you continue learning and innovating, even though we're all working remotely?
 - 9 What support or resources do you need to help you be successful during this time? How else can I support you?
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Post Conversation

After your conversation, make sure to document any follow-up actions. In order to encourage good follow up, try to identify at least one action you can take before your next conversation. It could even be something small like adding the next conversation to the calendar. Small actions are more likely to get done and build to larger change.