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During [COVID-19](#) working circumstances, we would like to provide some brief general guidance for you and your team as you manage through this uncertain time.

Managing change effectively can help you and your team transition from the current state to a new, desired state. It is important to remember that everyone adapts to change differently and at their own pace. Rapid change can cause periods of stress for many. Additionally, it can be overwhelming to handle change at work when employees are also worried about personal situations as well as national and international events. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and resources, including learning opportunities, to help you prepare yourself and your team to effectively transition to a new way of working which for many of us includes social distancing and managing staff remotely on a regular basis.

### **Take care of Yourself, first!**

Before taking care of others, you need to care for yourself. It is important that you focus on yourself and how you adapt to change so that you can manage your teams effectively. Self-care can mean different things to different people. Some suggestions for your consideration follow:

- **Set boundaries: Professional and Personal.**
  - Pay attention to the news you consume, the people you talk to, and the thoughts and feelings you have that impact your sense of well-being.
  - Set boundaries to protect your spirit.
    - Social distancing
    - Topics that are off-limits for discussion
    - Time alone, or with others, as needed
  - Pace your day. Remote working can be draining if too much of your day is on the phone or Zoom.
  - Remember that in addition to regular meetings with your team, you may be on calls with peers, your manager, or other members of your team.
    - “Own Your Calendar” - To manage time spent on the phone, it may be best for you to proactively schedule meetings, including breaks in between for other work, or brief social interactions, as appropriate.
- **Identify Resources**
  - How can you help your team and colleagues (and vice versa)?
  - How can your manager help and support you (and vice versa)?
  - Is there a trusted colleague/friend that you have in the workplace whom you can trust and confide in to share your feelings and ask for advice?
- **Affirmations**
  - Tell yourself “you've got this” - because you are probably doing better than you think!
  - Have a go-to affirmation that you can tell yourself when you're struggling. Something like "I'm safe" or "I'm doing the best I can."
- **Let it out!**
  - Spend a few minutes getting your thoughts and feelings on paper or with a trusted colleague or friend to clear your mind and make space for positivity.

- **Breathe**
  - Take a deep breath and sigh it out (yes, make noise!) to release tension in your body.

### **Manager Engagement with Team**

One of the most important things you can do in your leadership role is to model the behavior you wish to see in your staff.

- **Empathetic Behaviors**
  - Be present, empathetic, and listen to employee concerns
  - Recognize and accept that employees may show frustration/anger as a way to handle the change
  - Encourage discussion and be open to different perspectives/opinions
- **Provide frequent individual and collective communication**
  - **QMT (Quick Motivational Tips)**
    - Say “hi” or “good morning” via text/email or Slack (in person, as appropriate).
    - Identify a consistent day (or time of day) for even a brief check-in meeting.
    - Plan for some fun, as appropriate. Quick team building activities can provide connection and build trust amongst the team.
- **Use technology tools like Trello, Outlook, and/or Google Docs**
  - To help with organizing and prioritize key tasks
  - Set performance and behavior standards
  - Enables delegation and clarity about expectations.
  - Empowers others to take responsibility and come up with solutions.
  - Encourage innovation! Pilot a new way of doing something.

### **Virtual Meeting Planning**

The manager/supervisor should plan ahead, set an agenda, ensure appropriate people are invited, and commit to sending out a follow-up or summary of the meeting.

- **Quick Motivational Tips (QMT)**
  - Check calendars to gauge best availability (day and time) for the meeting. Use the scheduling feature.
  - Whenever possible, send meeting agendas a minimum of 1 business day in advance and offer the option for staff to add to the agenda.
  - Schedule a “TEST Meeting” to simply confirm everyone has access, answer any technical questions, and allow you to set the expectations for Zoom/video conferencing interactions.

### **Virtual Meeting Etiquette and Tips**

Most meetings for the foreseeable future should be facilitated by the use of our digital collaboration resources (Slack, Zoom, etc.) and should not be held physically in conference rooms, if at all possible, to comply with social distancing requirements.

- **QMT (Quick Motivational Tips)**
  - Sign in to a meeting 5 minutes early to test that the technology is working. Contact [lsupport@princeton.edu](mailto:lsupport@princeton.edu) as needed.

- Be aware of background noise.
  - Mute microphone on phone or computer audio.
  - Encourage people to speak loudly and clearly (especially those who may be practicing social distancing in a conference room).
- During Zoom (or other video conferencing):
  - Consider kicking-off meetings during stressful times with a quick ice-breaker....like having everyone use the chat feature to write down their favorite food or place of travel, or what they are looking forward to doing over the weekend.
  - Pick a room with adequate light and appropriate background.
  - Remind people to be present for the meeting and limit multi-tasking (ie. emails or texting) as much as possible.
  - Look at the camera as often as you can (as opposed to the screen) to allow for better eye contact with your meeting participants.
  - Be aware of visual cues, such as raising a hand or people speaking while they are on mute.
  - Be sure to schedule and encourage breaks, as appropriate. Consider asking people who are sitting for a while to stand up and stretch, if they are comfortable.
  - Prior to moving to the next agenda item, check-in with the group to confirm agreement/understanding and action items.
  - If there is a lot of conversation on a topic but no resolution, listen to all opinions and then make a decision for the group. Course corrections can always be made as necessary.
- Ensure everyone is aware of contingency plans in case the call is disconnected or another technical disruption is experienced.
- Read: [Stanford: Make the Most of your Virtual Communications](#)

### **Post-Meeting Follow Up**

One of the most important parts of a meeting and often the most forgotten! Take the time to record meeting notes including action items.

- A best practice is to share meeting notes with staff within 24 hours of the meeting (including those who were unable to attend).
- Encourage all participants to share feedback, comments, questions, and ideas after the meeting through email/slack, etc.

### **PUL Remote Learning Resources**

PUL employees with a netID can access these (link below) videos through the regular Princeton authentication process. The University has an enterprise license with Lynda.com, which is now part of LinkedIn. These resources will be periodically updated and refreshed.

**Click here** → [PUL Remote Learning Resources](#)