MANAGING TEAMS WHO ARE WORKING REMOTELY

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has offered up a new leadership challenge for managers overseeing a remote workforce. The challenge is, evaluating the progress of the work that is now being done offsite as your team is partially or fully engaged in remote work.

Traditional office work makes the task somewhat easier as managers can work closely alongside their team and are available to answer questions and provide their support.

Remote work requires a different process for assessing the progress of projects, daily tasks and team goals. Instead of visual cues, managers must rely heavily on other forms of communication including telephone calls, email, text, virtual meetings, etc. One tool that can assist in managing remote work, is an individual work plan. Under these circumstances, it may be helpful to set work priorities and expectations using a written work plan which can then be used to assist with facilitating an understanding between team members who are working some distance apart. A work plan will increase the likelihood that the work will continue to progress smoothly according to the set timelines and can assist in meeting the team's deliverables. For an employee who is working remotely, a clear understanding of what the manager expects and when it is due is paramount to getting the work accomplished.

The **'Work Plan Status – Weekly Update'** excel sheet is provided as a tracking tool for managers to use with their direct reports to set priorities and guidelines. The work plan is designed to provide structure for the week. UMMS leadership has set an expectation that all managers will schedule check-ins with their teams and communicate daily with their direct reports. Using a workplan can assist with the communication process by helping employees to manage their work and confirm their understanding of the required deliverables. This is also an effective tool to determine if there are any barriers that would prevent them from accomplishing their goals. The work plan may assist you in providing support so that employees have all that they need to be successful.

NOTE: When using the 'Work Plan Status – Weekly Update' tool with your teams, you must use the 'SAVE AS' and change the name of the document to save edits to the document

If you have any questions about the 'Work Plan Status – Weekly Update' tool, or need additional tools to assist in managing a remote team, please contact the HR Department and ask to speak with an Organizational Development (OD) professional 508-856-5260 or email OD@umassmed.edu

HR 3.27.20