



Tips for the **NEW** Modern Manager



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The role of management in the 'new normal' is a completely different animal, and it continues to evolve. Regardless of experience, every manager is currently learning on the job and the learning curve may be the steepest for the most experienced, who also face the challenge of unlearning on the job. Having had experience of being a manager counts for something, but it's not enough to succeed in this new managerial climate. This is because the role of a modern manager has evolved into something different.

It's not easy to simply take on a management role and know how to organise a team, especially with so many employees now working on a hybrid or remote basis. There is also the task of ensuring that employee wellbeing is being taken care of correctly, rather than being brushed under the carpet as has often been the case in recent years. It's not enough to provide some basic feedback during an

appraisal, employees and business owners alike want everything to be backed up by data. Simply, modern managers are more than just managers. Today, managers are team leaders and support systems, and they set the standard for an entire workforce.

Whether you are a manager or a recruiter of managers, you need to be aware of how top performers are meeting the changing needs of the role and the workforce. After speaking to our candidates and clients and conducting extensive research into what makes a great manager, this white paper examines five winning strategies for the new modern manager, which run the gamut from high technology to deep human connection.

1. Managing a hybrid/remote workforce
2. Using performance data for appraisals
3. Mindfulness
4. Emotional Intelligence
5. Soft Skills

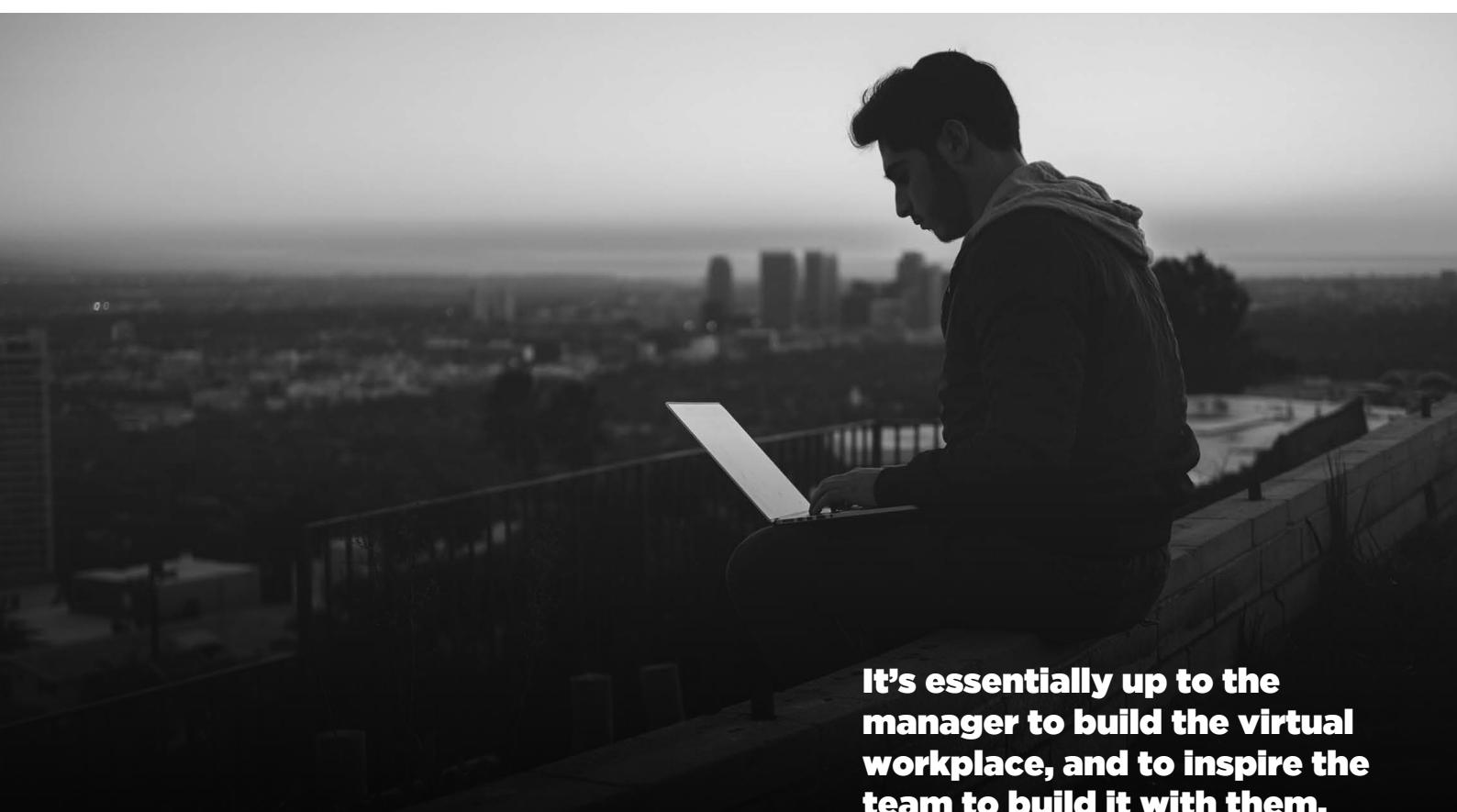
Managing a hybrid/ remote workforce

Good remote management is a multi-faceted skill that's both similar to and different from good in-person management, and remote management during a crisis like COVID is different again from remote management as a long-term way of life. It's essentially up to the manager to build the virtual workplace, and to inspire the team to build it with them.

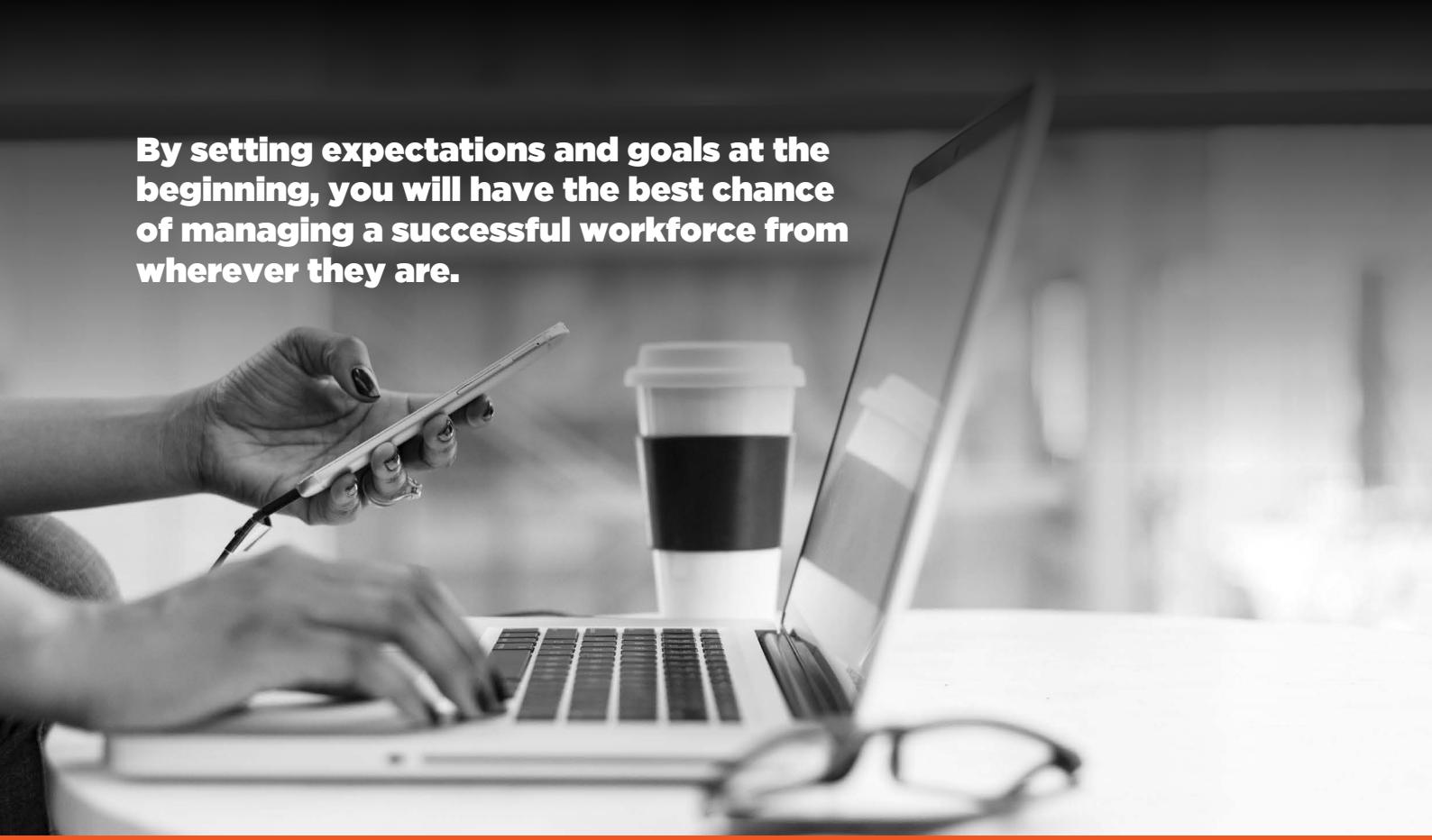
- **Trust Your Staff** - Trusting your people is step one. It's understandable to worry about their ability to get work done without you keeping an eye on them, but resist the temptation to micromanage as it will only damage morale, and you definitely won't be popular if you use monitoring software to track their activity. People work best when they feel trusted.
- **Set Expectations** - Set clear and realistic expectations around each person's tasks, priorities and deadlines. Focus on outcomes rather than hours spent.
- **Be Visible and Approachable** - Have regular 1:1s with each team member, and communicate frequently and openly. Don't feel you have

to be available around the clock. In fact, it sets a good example if you have your "do not disturb" sign on at times, but make sure everyone feels that your virtual office door is open when you're there. If you need to explain something or clear up a misunderstanding, it can be quicker to jump on a call than bat messages back and forth.

- **Prioritise Feeling Connected** - It's important for team members to feel as though they are connected to leaders, so reschedule regular meets where they can ask questions and gain clarity on any recent changes. Regular team meetings are the ideal way to help minimise the feeling of disconnection amongst staff, especially those who work remotely. By using video conferencing tools, everyone can join the meeting and feel connected as a team. This often works better than long email threads and sending documents back and forth for a large project.
- **Be Perceptive of Your Workforce** - As a modern manager, you should read the body language and facial expressions of your staff.



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Not only does this help you to understand their mood, but it can help to avoid conflicts and resolve disputes between team members. A lot of communication is missed via telephone conversations, which is why video conferences are often the better choice for regular team meetings. Though it can be difficult to read someone's body language via video, paying close attention to each individual should give you an insight into their thoughts and feelings.

- **Be Consistent with Rules** - Regardless of whether staff work in an office or remotely, everyone should have to follow the same rules. Put these in place and be consistent, ensuring that everyone is following them correctly. This includes things such as treating company information as confidential and using the agreed tools for communication.
- **Set Clear Working Hours and Boundaries** - You should encourage employees to stick to a regular finishing time, and highlight that working into the evening regularly isn't necessary. A lot of employees blur the boundaries between work and home life by working late, and sometimes they need reminding of the importance that comes with logging off and unwinding. If anyone is struggling with this, offer time management tips.
- **Fill the Social Gap with Technology** - There are a lot of benefits that come with colleagues

being able to socialise with one another, but this becomes more difficult when some people work remotely. To fill the gap, embrace technology such as group chats to encourage team members to interact when they need to. There are a lot of tools and platforms available for staff to collaborate on.

- **Focus on Onboarding** - When it comes to equipping a new team member with everything they need at the company, onboarding is key. As a modern manager, you need to create an onboarding process that goes into detail about what the individual can expect from their working environment. Onboarding is critical in the first few weeks at a nice job, as it helps an employee to settle in and get to grips with working somewhere new. Good onboarding has been linked to productivity, happiness in the workplace and increased staff retention. To help with onboarding, you could pair a new recruit up with an existing member of staff.

Though there are certainly challenges that come with managing a hybrid or remote workforce, it's something that's easy to manage with the right planning. You need to have faith in your staff, and trusting them to do their job whilst communicating with you is key. By setting expectations and goals at the beginning, you will have the best chance of managing a successful workforce from wherever they are.



Using Performance Data for Appraisals

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Without the support of workers, a business will struggle to succeed and stay ahead of competitors. This is why, as a modern manager, you need to pay attention to your team and how they are performing. Though this is not an easy task by any means, it's a vital part of managing a workforce. Thankfully, appraising staff is made a lot thanks to performance and employee data. There are a lot of different types of employee data available, much of which can be used to keep track of how individuals are performing at work.

• **Demographic Data** - This type of data is based on facts about your team members, such as their gender and age, education level and marital status are also included. This can be used to gain an insight into staff diversity and showcases the kind of people that make up your workforce. You can use demographic data to determine if you need to diversify your workforce and whether your business could be improved by working with those from multicultural backgrounds.

• **Qualification Data** - This type of data includes everything about an employee's professional experience, such as their training and previous jobs. It will provide an insight into how long they spent at another company, what their responsibilities were and which courses they have completed. You can use this data to improve workforce development and boost your internal recruitment, as it should be clear who is ready to progress to the next level. You can also use qualification data to identify gaps in anyone's skills and organise training accordingly.

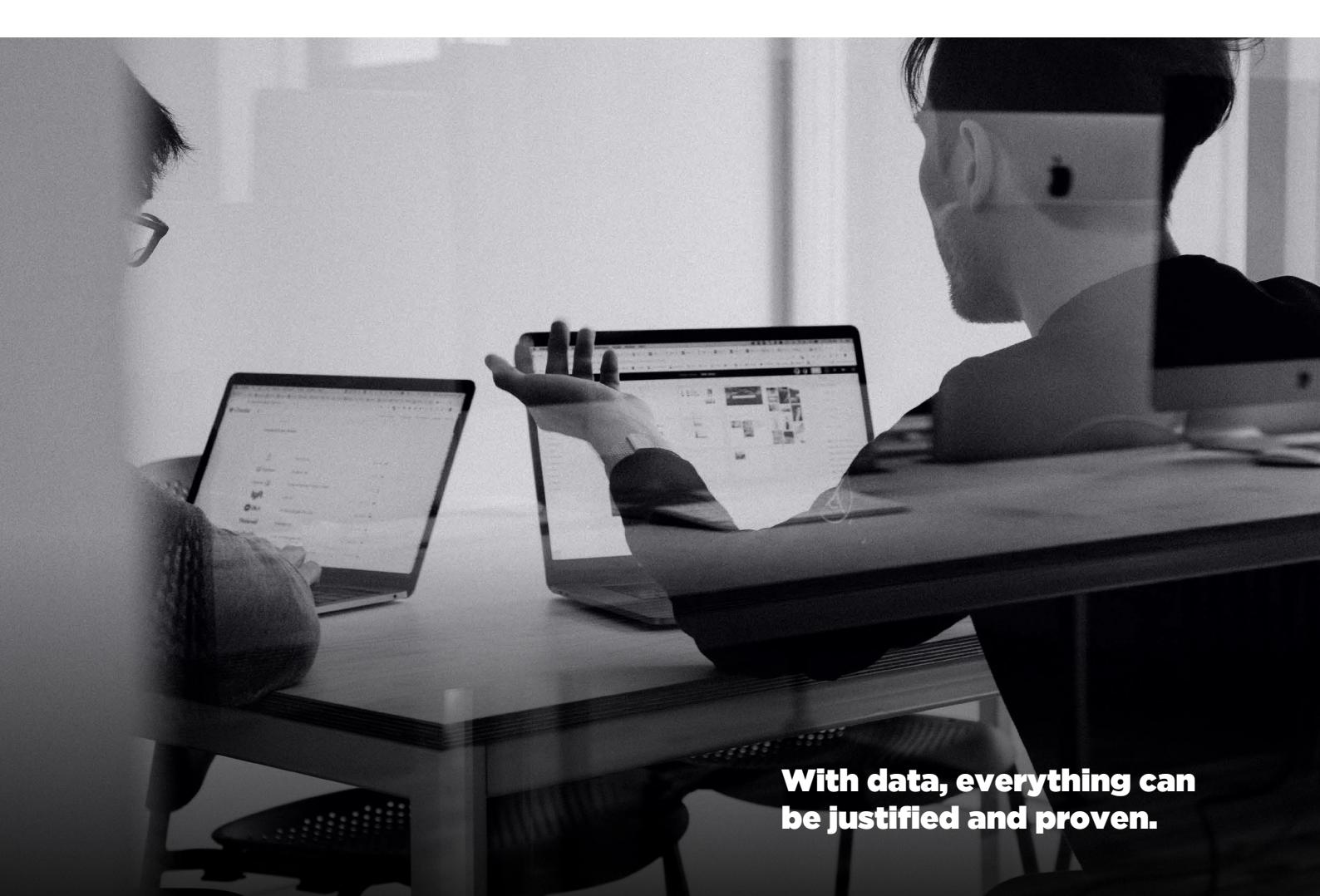
• **Attendance Data** - Attendance data will highlight which team members arrive on time, who takes too many or too few breaks during the day, how often staff call in sick and how many holidays people take. With this information, you can better improve productivity and work to prevent as many absences as possible. Plus, by looking at planned holidays and time off, you can arrange staffing in advance and avoid being short staffed at any time.

- **Employment Data** - Employment data will highlight whether or not your business has a high turnover of staff, something that needs to be rectified before it becomes a problem. If very few employees stay with the company for many years, it might mean that you have managerial problems and that employees aren't willing to build a career within the team. You can use employment data to find which employees are leaving prematurely and why, and then you can put plans into place to combat this. This type of data includes hire date, contract terminate dates and extended breaks from work.
- **Performance Data** - Performance data details an employee's achievements during their employment period, as well as any failures they might have suffered. It will highlight if goals and deadlines were met, and whether they contributed to projects in the way in which they should have. Things such as customer ratings, number of sales, productivity, effectiveness and project success can all be looked at. Performance data can be used for productivity management and employee appraisal, as it gives real examples to back up whether an employee is succeeding or underperforming.

The Importance of Data Driven Appraisals

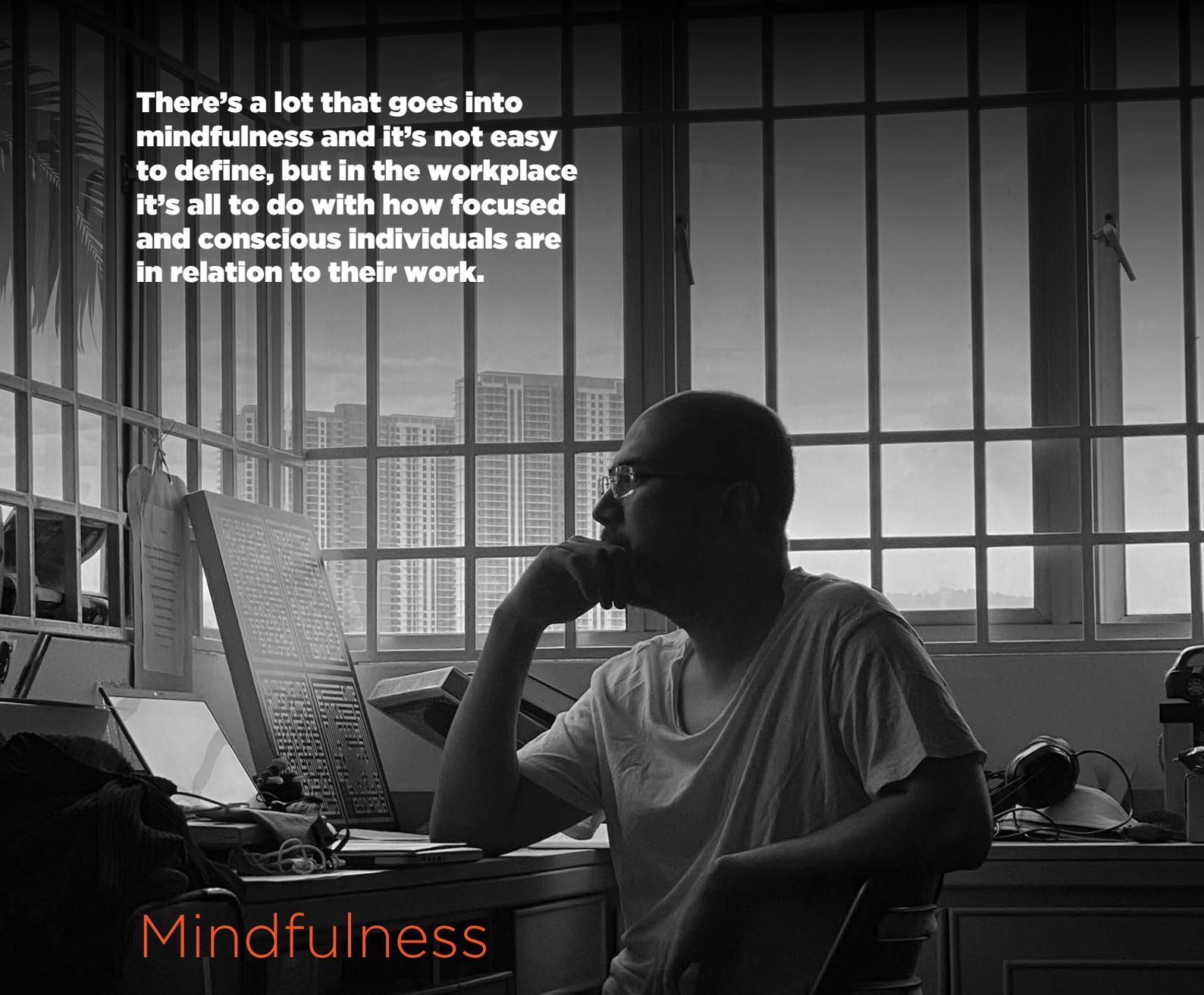
A lot of people terminate their role at a company because of managerial differences, and it's often a case that they experienced differences with their managers. This is why companies need to use employee performance appraisals to keep on top of everything that's going on in the workplace. Data driven appraisals help to keep things transparent, open and everyone is held accountable for their actions.

With data, performance appraisals can be driven by facts and evident, instead of any biases coming into place. As a manager, you can state your claim and appraise someone's performance with data evidence, which will allow you to better justify what you are saying. Without data, a lot of this could be argued against. Similarly, data driven appraisals help businesses to avoid any legal ramifications. If an employee is unhappy about their contract being terminated, they might try to claim that they were 'let go' unfairly. With data, everything can be justified and proven.



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Mindfulness

There's a lot that goes into mindfulness and it's not easy to define, but in the workplace it's all to do with how focused and conscious individuals are in relation to their work. Instead of worrying about the past and thinking about the future, mindfulness requires workers to be present and in the moment. It's all to do with experiencing things throughout the work day, without evaluating or analysing it too much, and instead simply reacting to whatever the day throws at them.

The Benefits of Mindfulness in the Workplace

Improved Social Relationships - Mindfulness can encourage positive working relationships, which in turn boosts productivity and employee happiness at work. Employees who are mindful are more likely to be accepting of other colleagues, more flexible and more responsive. This is key for businesses that rely on teamwork and individuals working together.

Improved Resilience - Mindfulness in the workplace can encourage employees to be resilient, something that many people struggle with. It promotes positivity and shields them from negativity, such as being agitated by someone else's habits in the office. Being resilient can help staff to stay calm when under pressure.

Improved Task Performance - Mindfulness is linked to having fewer cognitive failures, such as being distracted or forgetting an important piece of information. Therefore, an employee who is practising mindfulness is likely to have improved task performance. They are less likely to make mistakes and become distracted during a stressful day at work.

The Importance of Mindfulness in the Workplace

Improved Job Satisfaction

- There's a lot of research to suggest that mindfulness in the workplace can improve job satisfaction, as being mindful reduces the chances of being affected by workplace stressors. When there's a challenge at work, a mindful employee will find it easier to adapt and find a solution.

Combating Employee Stress

- There are a lot of employees who struggle with workplace stress, but mindfulness can help to combat this. By eliminating as much workplace stress as possible, mindfulness helps employees to focus on tasks and productivity.

Improved Employee Engagement

- It's not uncommon for hardworking employees to burnout at work, but mindfulness can reduce the chances of this happening. With improved employee satisfaction and less stress, employees are much more likely to feel engaged at work.

Better Equipped to Cope with Change

- Change happens a lot at work, but mindfulness can help employees to cope with this. Not only does this make change a lot easier to deal with, but it makes it less likely to result in a drop in productivity or an increase in stress.





Emotional Intelligence

Those with a high level of emotional intelligence are able to determine what they are feeling, what those feelings mean and how those feelings can affect others. A manager with emotional intelligence is more likely to succeed

as a leader, as they are more likely to stay in control and assess situations in a calm manner. Without emotional intelligence, leaders tend to end up shouting and losing their temper.

Self-Awareness

Someone who is self-aware always knows how they feel and how those feelings can affect other people. When you are a manager, being self-aware means having a good understanding of your strengths and weaknesses.

There are five key elements that make up emotional intelligence in leadership and these are:

Motivation

It's important to be motivated as a modern manager, as this motivation helps you to work consistently towards your goals and the goals of your team. Managing a team of people can be difficult, and motivation is vital if you want to keep going when things get tough. Motivation also helps you to uphold high standards for your work, which can be difficult when there's a lot of projects on the go at once.

Empathy

As a manager, having empathy is a key part of emotional intelligence. It allows you to better manage a team by being able to put yourself in the shoes of others. If someone is struggling and needs feedback, empathy helps you to do this in an understanding and fair way.

Self-Regulation

Self-regulating yourself means not making rushed decisions, not making emotional decisions, not verbally attacking others and staying in control as much as possible. As a manager, this is a vital part of building a team that respects you and your decisions. Someone who is unable to self-regulate might struggle to stay in control when under pressure.

Social Skills

Working as a manager requires you to work with a lot of different people, which is why good social skills are important. Social skills allow you to communicate with employees, to manage change and to resolve conflicts successfully. These skills are also helpful when it comes to gaining the support of your team and getting everyone excited about an upcoming project.



How to Practice Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

- Consider how you react to people and interact with those around you; do you rush into making a judgement before finding out all of the information, are you accepting of other people's opinions and needs? Stereotyping, judging and not being open with those you manage is the opposite of emotional intelligence.
- As a modern manager, it's important to be proud of your accomplishments, but you need to practice humility alongside them. Instead of seeking attention for success, be quiet about your work and give others the chance to shine. This doesn't mean that you are being shy or underconfident, it means you are giving other people the chance to showcase their capabilities.
- Think about how your actions affect other people at work before reacting to a situation, as there may be a better way to approach things. If your decision will impact others, put yourself in their place and consider things from their perspective. If a decision is likely to negatively impact someone, consider alternative routes.
- There are a lot of resources online that allow you to evaluate your emotional intelligence, so utilise these as much as you can. Though you might feel as though you are as emotionally intelligent as possible, there are likely to be areas of improvement. Emotional intelligence involves being aware of how you can improve at all times.
- Evaluate how you deal with stress in the workplace. As a modern manager, there are a lot of sources of stress, but it's how you deal with them that's important. Becoming upset when there is a delay or when something goes wrong is not showing emotional intelligence, nor is blaming others for a problem. Instead, stay calm and in control, even when things become difficult. Keeping your emotions under control during a crisis is a key part of being an emotionally intelligent manager.
- As a manager, you are likely to upset someone at one point or another, and it's likely that people won't always agree with your way of doing things. When this happens, take responsibility. If you hurt someone's feelings, apologise, and face the problem head on. Being emotionally intelligent means owning your mistakes, apologising and asking for forgiveness from others in your team.
- As a modern manager, emotions in the workplace can appear at a moment's notice, but it's your ability to recognise them that is most important. It's important that you, as a manager, know how to keep your emotions balanced and in check during your time at work. Otherwise, you run the risk of hindering your capabilities as a strong and respected leader. By investing time in bettering your ability to recognise different emotions, you stand a much better chance of staying emotionally balanced as a team leader.



Soft Skills

A lot of people make the mistake of assuming that managers simply need to have technical skills, but this couldn't be further from the truth. As a manager, having soft skills is just as important. These are the skills that are related to personality traits, behaviours, habits and attitudes.

The Soft Skills All Managers Should Have

Dependability - As a manager, your team should be able to depend on you at all times. They should be able to trust that you will do what you say, when you say it.

Work Ethic - Though you are sure to have a team working with you, a manager shouldn't sit back and watch everyone else work. As a manager, you should get stuck in and be just as hardworking as everyone else.

Candour - Candour refers to being able to convey information without sugarcoating things, which is key in the workplace. Instead of saying what you think people want to hear, managers should be forthright and honest with their team.

Communication - There's a lot of information to convey from one person to another at work, and as a manager you need to be able to do this correctly. A manager should be able to communicate with those above and below them, both verbally and in writing.

Teamwork - With people working remotely and in a hybrid setting, you need to be able to encourage and enforce teamwork across the board. As a manager, you need to be able to work well with a whole host of different people, in a variety of locations.

Goal Setting - With a lot of things going on, goal setting is vital if you want to keep your team engaged and working hard. You should be able to prioritise tasks, before delegating them and putting deadlines into place.

Flexibility - There are a lot of hurdles to overcome as a manager, ranging from staff calling in sick to large project errors. In order to deal with these challenges, you must be flexible. You should expect change and plan for it, and be willing to change things at a moment's notice if you need to. The more flexible you are, the less disruption change will cause.

Time Management - As a manager, you are likely to have a lot of tasks going on at the same time. This is why time management is so important. You need to be able to develop and improve your time management skills at all times. This includes being able to chase projects, delegate tasks and communicate with people in a timely manner.

Take Direction - Despite being a manager, there will be times when you will be told what to do by someone else. When this happens, you need to take direction well. This could be a change in strategy or some constructive criticism from another member of staff. Being a manager usually means that you are telling people what to do on a daily basis, but you need to be comfortable should the roles reverse occasionally.

Conclusion

As you can see, there is a lot of work that goes into being a modern manager. Though this does put a strain on managers who are unprepared for the challenge, it creates a more productive and pleasant place to work for those who are willing to put in the work. With the right preparation - such as by following the tips and tricks listed throughout this white paper - successfully managing a team in a modern workplace is achievable.

Instead of struggling to balance their work life and personal life, employees are finally seeing the much needed support from those in higher up positions at work in the form of meditation. Similarly, modern managers are able to create a streamlined working environment that services both those in the office and those working

remotely. There is no need for an employee to feel disconnected and unassisted, as there are a number of ways for a modern manager to better manage a hybrid workforce. Plus, with a concise list of soft skills that are vital for those in management roles, every modern manager has a clear idea of what's expected of them.

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