VIRTUAL BUSINESS

The 4 Biggest Myths About Working at a Virtual Company

⏱ 4 min read

DAVID AND CARRIE MCKEEGAN
CONTRIBUTOR
Co-Founders of Greenback Expat Tax Services

f 63   🐦 156   in 65   +

💬 1   ✉ 🖨

JANUARY 20, 2015

Whether you are working from home or managing those who do, separating fact from fiction is critical to personal and corporate success. Virtual companies may operate differently than traditional ones, but that doesn't mean that "traditional" rules go out the window! Team members must still produce and managers still need to manage.

Let's debunk some of the most common myths and set the record straight.

Myth 1: You can work anywhere.
Remote workers often think, "I can work on the beach! I can call in from the Little League stands! I can prepare dinner and tweet at the same time!"

Related: **4 Ways Your Virtual Business Can Build Customer Confidence and Credibility**

Reality: If this was the reality, we'd all be doing it! But it isn't. Working from home means working from home. It is important for remote workers to be efficient and productive --that's the most important way to gain the trust of team members and managers who don't benefit from face-to-face interaction. While positive results are the goal as a remote worker (just like any company), achieving them through a pathway of respect and responsibility is most critical. You may be able to "do your work" from the swim meet but forcing your co-workers to hear the screams and chants in the background when on a call is rude and unprofessional. Successful remote workers are always responsible, respectful and *serious* about their job.

Myth 2: There is no drama.
Some bosses may believe that by having employees work from home, they can avoid office politics and all those unpleasant interpersonal relationship issues.

Reality: Not a chance! Your team isn't working on-site, but there is the the same potential for personal conflict as on-site workers -- and likely even more issues related to communication.

As a manager, if you see posts like, "I'm waiting on Janie who is always late with the monthly numbers," than realize that's a red flag! Find out the real story: Is Janie always late or is Liz a complainer and staller? Create a positive environment where your team can succeed.

The key to *our* success has been extensive screening for both skill and ability to work remotely. We also maintain a virtual water cooler that builds team camaraderie but also provides a peek into co-worker interaction.

Related: **3 Qualities Every Remote Manager Needs (Infographic)**

Myth 3: There is no need for reviews.
Some bosses may think that employees should feel lucky that the company allows them to work from home, so they can ignore raises, reviews and recognition.

Reality: Remote workers are just as motivated by upward career mobility, raises, recognition and rewards as traditional workers. But none of that can be achieved unless you have established standards to measure productivity.

Our team members are physically out of sight but their work can always be seen with our extensive online project management program, Podio. Monitoring and measuring team member performance regularly can be achieved through weekly reports, clear measurable quarterly goals and self-assessment and manager assessments. It is important to do online or written goals and assessments, but take the time for calls to make sure none of your comments or constructive criticism were taken out of context or have hurt the team member's morale.

Bottom line: Respect your team members and reward outstanding work appropriately.

Myth 4: There is a certain type for the virtual environment.
The leadership team, employees and potential candidates may believe that working virtually means you must possess high-tech and professional skills but very low interpersonal skills.
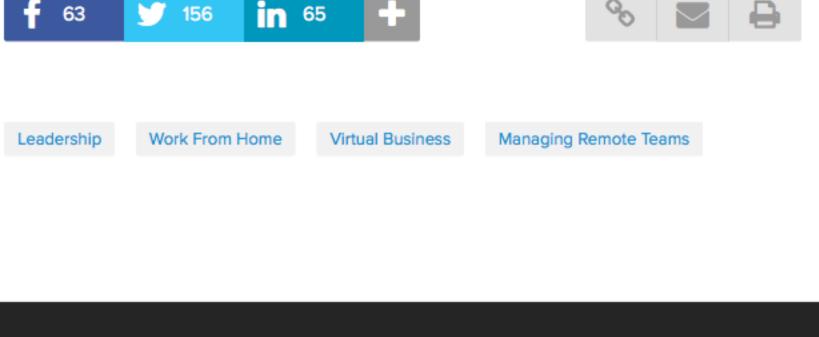
Reality: It's the exact opposite. With virtual workers, it is more important than ever to get along and work collaboratively. While technical job skills are critical, we also look at the ability to be part of a team, how they adjust to working with others and their experience with working remotely. Finding the right "mix" of team members may be one of the greatest challenges of building a remote workforce. Remember that hiring and training in a virtual world is time-consuming for managers and team members and the loss of productivity can be costly. If someone can learn your systems but doesn't integrate well with the team, it is ultimately a waste of time, money and resources.

Working virtually needs to be successful for you and your team -- but ultimately for your customers. Build a team that works well internally and externally and your virtual company will thrive.
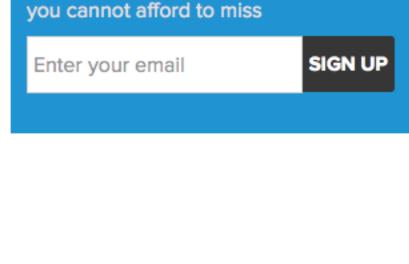
Related: **How to Get The Most Out of Employees Who Work From Home**

💬 VIEW COMMENTS (1)

f 63   🐦 156   in 65   +

🔗 ✉ 🖨

Leadership   Work From Home   Virtual Business   Managing Remote Teams

Company
Advertise
Brand Licensing
Contact Us
Staff
ALLEY NYC

Events
Growth Conference

Products
Business Books
Reprints & Licensing
eServices
Classifieds

International Editions
China
Middle East
Mexico
Philippines
South Africa

Follow Entrepreneur
f Facebook
🐦 Twitter
in LinkedIn
g+ Google+
📌 Pinterest
Instagram
YouTube
t Tumblr
RSS

Subscribe Now
Gift Subscriptions
Subscriber Services

Digital Editions
iOS | Android | Kindle