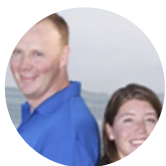


VIRTUAL TEAMS

4 Myths Debunked About Employees Working Remotely



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JULY 15, 2015

Let's face it: The world has gone mobile. By the year 2016, it is estimated that [nearly 2 billion people will have smartphones](#) and currently, about 53 percent of all [email is opened on a mobile device](#). So why are you still in a traditional brick-and-mortar office? If you think operating remotely isn't for

you, we dare to tell you why you are wrong.

1. Myth: If I don't see my team members face to face, I can't trust that they are doing their job.

Reality: If you are hiring people you need to keep tabs on all day long to ensure productivity, you aren't hiring the right people, or perhaps you need to rethink your management style.

Related: [The 4 Must-Use Tools to Help Virtual Teams Remain Focused](#)

Management isn't about physically watching your team members work, it's about monitoring their overall productivity and ensuring the goals of their project and the business are being met. You don't need to look over their shoulder to properly assess their performance.

In a virtual environment, we rely heavily on our project-management software to track projects day to day, as well as detailed weekly reports. We use Skype and GotoMeeting when we need some "in-person" time but also encourage the team to regularly reach out to others so no one feels like they are operating on an "island by themselves!" This has cultivated an environment of trust, respect and ultimately, productivity.

Myth: Team members will be distracted and not actually work during working hours.

Reality: It's all about who and how you hire. If you don't have a detailed, in-depth hiring process, we admit this is a valid concern. But it's one that can be dismissed if you employ the right techniques to find the best people for the job.

Team members who can show proven success with a remote position are ideal, as you know they can handle working in a virtual environment. It's not

for everyone, so it's up to you and your HR team to flesh out the right candidates. Successful virtual team members stick to the clear working hours you set for them and feel comfortable asking for time off or flexing their hours when necessary. They aren't working poolside or answering emails in the carpool line. They are committed to their job -- and that will ultimately show in their overall productivity.

Related: [5 Must-Ask Questions When Recruiting A Virtual Team](#)

Myth: Our customers won't trust us without a physical location.

Reality: The world really is changing and with the advent of technology, consumers don't need to walk into a storefront to believe you are real. Without a physical location, you just need to find more creative ways to earn your prospective customers' trust.

If you are operating virtually, your website is the face of your business. You need to ensure that it accurately reflects your brand and products/services and includes plenty of credibility-increasing content. Include testimonials from happy customers that highlight the best parts of your business and create a page with compelling and *interesting* biographies on each team member. Getting great press coverage? That should be easy for visitors to find on your site, as it's the ultimate nod to your business when others are talking about it! Ensure your content is compelling, professional and error free and you will earn your customers' trust. (It goes without saying that of course, you still need to provide an outstanding service or product to retain that confidence!)

Myth: We provide a better customer experience when everyone is one place.

Reality: In fact, the opposite very well may be true. With one physical location,

you need to hire team members from the surrounding geographical area. This forces you to choose from that selection of candidates only. What if the best customer-service manager for your company lives two hours from your office? By operating virtually, you can find the best of the best, regardless of *their* physical location. This ultimately benefits your customers: The better your business runs, the better the experience for your customers.

It's hard for some business owners to imagine a world without an office but there are many advantages to doing so. As with any decision, it will take careful planning and spot-on execution. But if you are committed to success at all costs, there are many compelling reasons to shake up the traditional approach and switch over to a virtual setup.

Related: [10 Ways to Successfully Manage Virtual Teams](#)