

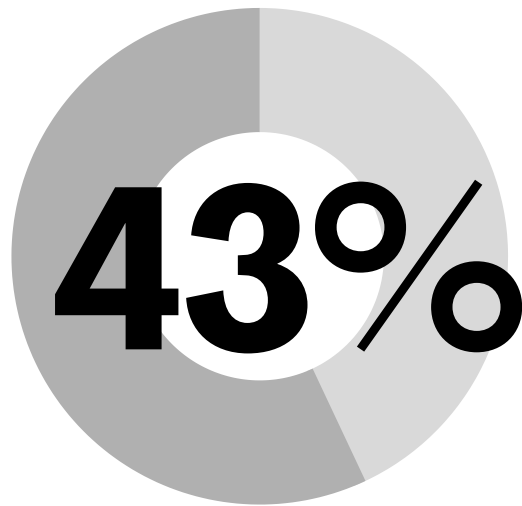
PIVOT TO PERFORM

REMOTE MANAGER INDEX

LaSalle Network Report on the State of the Remote American Manager

In a year unlike any other, bosses were put to the test. A pandemic. Transitioning employees to working from home and managing a remote workforce for the first time. Social injustice and emotional distress. Riots and safety concerns. A financial recession. The list could go on and on. Leaders in 2020 were faced with a stark new reality with minimal, if any, training to prepare.

In our *Remote Manager Index*, we outline trends based on data collected from professionals who have transitioned into a remote work setting since the start of the pandemic. While the majority of relationships between managers and professionals grew stronger in the transition to remote work, 43 percent of respondents stated the relationship with their manager worsened since transitioning into a remote setting.

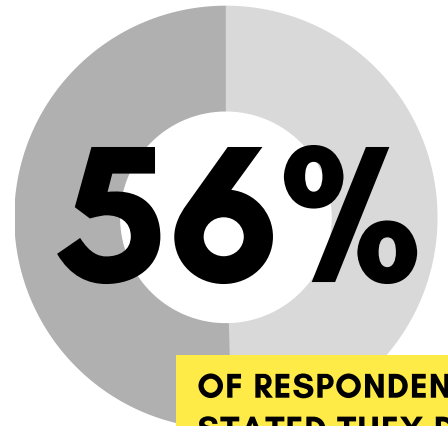


OF RESPONDENTS STATED THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR BOSS WORSENE DURING VIRTUAL WORK

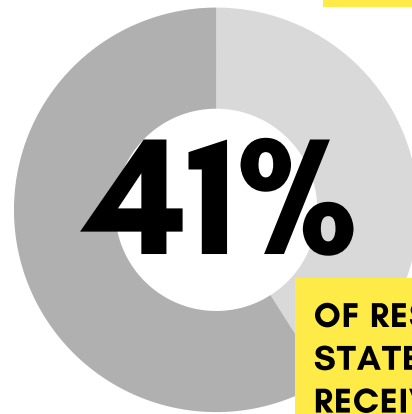
To retain talent as we head into 2021, leaders must reassess their virtual leadership practices and Pivot to Perform in the year ahead.

SHOWCASE APPRECIATION

56 percent of respondents reported they do not feel appreciated and 41 percent stated their manager rarely or never praises them for a job well done. Even if formal recognition initiatives have continued while working remotely, positive feedback and informal verbal recognition may have fallen by the wayside, allowing employees to feel less appreciated.



OF RESPONDENTS STATED THEY DON'T FEEL APPRECIATED



OF RESPONDENTS STATED THEY RARELY RECEIVE PRAISE

PRO TIPS:

- Create new awards to highlight those being especially innovative and flexible in their role. Those pivoting their responsibilities to help the business should know their willingness to adapt is appreciated.
- Integrating professional and personal accomplishments in your recognition can help employees to feel seen, or that you're invested in their personal interests.
- If an employee has been going above and beyond to support the company, consider giving them a long weekend. This is a great way to reward them for their hard work and give them extra time to relax or destress before the coming workweek.
- In lieu of taking an employee out to lunch to show appreciation for a job well done, consider sending them a credit towards a food delivery app or another gift card and hopping on a video call.
- To celebrate a milestone or a challenge an employee worked hard to overcome, consider sending a handwritten note. Now that most communication has become virtual, a tangible note can feel more personalized and special.

INVEST IN YOUR PEOPLE

43%

of respondents stated their employer stopped investing in their growth and development. Organizations that focus on learning and development have higher rates of employee engagement, while also building a stronger and more capable workforce. While many companies have had to forgo annual raises or bonuses in 2020, providing employees opportunities to learn new skills or develop into more confident leaders can help serve as an incentive and reengage top talent.

PRO TIPS:

51 percent of respondents stated their managers are unresponsive. Show your employees you're there to help them by providing on-the-spot feedback as much as you can. Rather than a stream of emails back and forth, a quick video call can give timely feedback and responses to questions easily.

Create a library of online training materials employees have access to. Especially now as many companies are offering free or discounted online materials, this can be created at little cost while still providing employees with valuable resources.

With today's technology, leaders can easily be accessible and connected to employees in the form of a quick video call. Leaders can take 5-10 minutes to call any employee to ask what they are working on and help brainstorm solutions. This can help employees feel seen and appreciated by their leadership team, as well as provides mentorship and learning opportunities.

Consider scheduling short, bite-sized training sessions throughout the month for employees to learn about the business, your clients or target customers, and major projects underway.

CONDUCT WELLNESS CHECKS

In times of high stress and emotional distress, employees need to see their leaders and feel connected; however, 41% of respondents stated their manager does not check in to see how they're feeling. Especially in a remote setting, many employees feel and are more isolated and stressed than ever.

Employee mental health is closely tied to productivity and engagement, meaning the decline in mental health may also significantly impact a business' bottom line. Increased anxiety and depression are also correlated with increased accidents and mistakes at work.



PRO TIPS:

Employees likely will not disclose if they are struggling with their mental health unless they have an established relationship with their manager or feels they have a safe space to share. Curating a psychologically safe work environment virtually takes consistency and vulnerability.

Conduct frequent check-ins simply to see how an employee is doing. Genuine empathy can help support employee mental health and engagement while allowing leaders to be present and accessible to employees.

Preemptively provide mental health resources to employees. This could include a list of therapists covered by the company's insurance, a list of meditation apps, or a list of recommended self-help books.

EXPLAIN THE WHY

47%

**OF RESPONDENTS STATED
THEIR MANAGER TELLING
VS. TEACHING WORSENE
THE RELATIONSHIP**

Leading a team through a crisis calls for direct communication and a leader who can create a plan with clear goals. However, that sometimes can translate to a demanding leader, ordering employees to do something rather than taking the time to explain the “why” behind each project, initiative or task being asked of them.

In fact, 47 percent of respondents stated what made the relationship worse is their manager “tells” them what to do instead of “teaching” them why it’s important.

PRO TIPS:

- Take a moment to explain that there will be a shift in communication to be more direct, not because it’s not important to explain the why, but given the economic circumstance and pandemic, this is a necessary shift in order to move quickly and keep operations running.
- Hold regular town halls to discuss the state of the business and the market, and allow time for employee questions.

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

Due to the rapid changes in the market, companies have had to remain nimble and pivot their business strategies quickly and efficiently. In order to do so effectively, managers must be involved and up to date on the status of each employees' tasks and performance, which may have led to 37% respondents stating the relationship worsened because their manager became a micromanager.

37%

OF RESPONDENTS STATED
THEIR MANAGER TURNED
INTO A MICROMANAGER
SINCE TRANSITIONING TO
REMOTE WORK

PRO TIPS

- Working through a pandemic was and is new for everyone – managers and employees alike. Therefore, effective managers had to jump into the details at a level they probably didn't have to pre-COVID-19.
- Leaders who are forthright with their employees and explain that due to the circumstances they will be more involved in day-to-day projects than ever before are able to establish the new working dynamic and work more effectively with employees.
- By having employees self-report their metrics, progress toward goals, and tasks accomplished each day, leaders can keep a pulse on activity without coming across as a micromanager. Communicate with employees that self-reporting will be a best practice moving forward and is necessary for remote work success.
- Schedule regular one-on-ones with employees if they aren't in place already. Having frequent opportunities to touch base is crucial to stay informed on an employee's performance, as well as hear about their challenges and offer support.

IN CLOSING

As many companies continue to work remotely for the foreseeable future, now is the time to take notice of your virtual management style and audit what needs improvement.

In addition, ask employees directly for their feedback and how to best support them in this time. While every team and organization are different, supporting employees and curating a strong company culture virtually is vital for an organization's success.

PIVOT TO PERFORM

Seeking assistance on more effective communication strategies for your leadership team? LaSalle Network's culture consulting service, Culture 20/20, can provide the tools companies need to focus on their culture and better support employees. For more information, [connect with us here](#).

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