CONTEXT FOR REMOTE WORKING

- If you expect your employees to work for several weeks (or months) from home and maintain normal productivity and engagement levels, it is best to set clear expectations and make the necessary investments in technology (e.g. video-call capability, online document and file sharing capability, social intranet) and training upfront

- Flexible and remote working is on the rise so think of this as something that will pay dividends in the future as well

- More than 60% of employers that allow remote work report increases in productivity among telecommuters

- Remember - the more employees work apart, the less they work together so new mechanisms need to be established

10 TIPS TO MANAGING REMOTE EMPLOYEES

1. Set clear expectations of what normal working hours are for the team

2. Set agreed-upon timeframes for length of time for responding to communications

3. Ensure there is a cascade of agreed-upon deliverables with performance measures in terms of timelines and outcomes with employees and supervisors

4. Establish communication norms and procedures (e.g. team end-of-day check-ins, team weekly review meetings, one-on-one meetings)

5. Build in video meetings vs overreliance on emails. Push to ensure everyone is using video technology vs audio-only calls given the benefits of video (non-verbal communication, participation in a quiet professional location)

10 TIPS TO MANAGING REMOTE EMPLOYEES

6. Encourage employees to set-up defined workspaces in their homes to maintain productivity and maintain work/life balance

7. Build-in mechanisms for people to communicate if/when they are struggling and to receive support/guidance

8. Recognize that some jobs are better suited for remote work (e.g. sales) than others (e.g. product development) and be more tactical/deliberate in the work areas that present a challenge

9. Organize employees into appropriate groups for departments, projects and other subsets for information and calendar sharing

10. Don't forget to include the personal and fun parts of work (spend the first 20-30 secs of weekly meetings for each person to share the best part of their weekend, create an online space to share and discuss books/movies/recipes/pet photos; recognize and celebrate team members for their efforts and achievements