

ANSWERS FOR Working From Ho! Ho! Home!



Remote elf-management

Relevant topics:

- Managing a remote team
- Wellbeing
- Accuracy
- Time Management

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Answers

Virtual team meetings - When speaking with the elves on Zoomdeer, it's best if:

- Father Christmas is the only person to speak
- Webcams are all switched on
- Everyone is unmuted
- The elves use the chat function to report present packing quantities
- The elves continue to pack presents during the meeting
- Father Christmas arrives last

Wellbeing - Father Christmas should encourage the elves to:

- Talk about what's on their minds
- Work through breaks to meet delivery deadlines
- Go outside and stroke the reindeer
- Work independently to get more done
- Thank, support and respect each other
- Pile all the presents, labels and gift wrap in their work area, close to hand

Accuracy - How can Father Christmas help his team to be accurate?

- Send an email to remind them about the importance of accuracy
- Urge them to take regular, short structured breaks
- Set up two elf teams: one for packing and one for checking
- Allow the elves to work more slowly
- Publish a daily list naming elves that have made mistakes
- Ask the elves to proactively check their own work with the mindset, 'there are mistakes here'

Time management - To help the elves manage their time effectively, Father Christmas should:

- Encourage the elves to allocate time to do specific tasks without interruption
- Keep talking to the elves throughout the day to make sure they are using their time optimally
- Communicate the team's priorities clearly
- Give a reward for the elf who wraps the most presents per hour
- Keep the elves on their toes by adding new urgent tasks to their to-do lists
- Be clear about what's required and allow the elves to get on with their work

How did you do?

Managing a team remotely, especially for the first time, presents challenges for new and experienced managers alike.

Virtual team meetings

Agree virtual meeting 'rules' with your team and lead by example. Keep your webcams turned on to foster the human connection and make use of the interactive functions to encourage contributions. Set the tone by arriving on time and engage individuals in conversation, reminding them to turn off their mics when not speaking. Turn off emails and other notifications to avoid distractions.

Accuracy

Telling people to be accurate doesn't work. Foster an accuracy culture where people are valued for getting things right. Additional levels of checking only dilutes each individual's responsibility, so promote an accuracy mindset where people actively look for mistakes. And help people to manage distractions, taking regular structured breaks to boost concentration levels.

Wellbeing

Talk to individual team members about any concerns they have and encourage them to take regular exercise to improve mental as well as physical health. Working from home can feel isolating, so encourage online collaboration between team members and support social interaction online as well. Messy workspaces lead to lost items and extra stress; promote a clear work area policy.

Time Management

Focus your people's time and attention on what's important. Be clear about individual and team priorities so everyone has a sense of purpose and structures their day accordingly. Don't micro-manage, or 'boss bomb' with regular requests, which interrupt people's workflow. And don't put people under unnecessary pressure because that leads to sub-optimal performance.

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