TRANSITIONING TO A REMOTE WORKPLACE | Tips From an Architect*

1. **Camera**: Sometimes older computers have very dull cameras. I bought the below camera for my business and highly recommend it for high-quality video. It’s very easy to install and setup.

2. **Conferencing**: I’m using Zoom as my preferred digital conferencing platform. Other popular options include Go-to-Meeting and Skype.

3. **Audio**: I prefer to call-in to conference lines using my phone with a headset to get the best quality; however, you can easily set up a computer headset to push audio through your conferencing platform.

   **Also, using a headset is critical. If you’re on speakerphone the audio will not work as well for the person on the other end of the call.**

4. **Communication**: In addition to using email & calling people directly, Slack is THE go-to resource to ensure your team can stay connected (or alternatively Microsoft Teams). Both work! Slack is rolling out a lot of impressive new support to help teams quickly transition to online operations.

RUNNING THE FIRM REMOTELY | A Practical Outline from a Local Firm**

1. **Firm Strategy**
   - Daily CEO & COO Covid communication on firm, office, project, and personnel issues
   - Creating a new overhead billing number for personnel to bill time for lost productivity so people can get to 40 hours esp. for hourly staff
   - Giving people an allowance to purchase equipment to get their home office up and running
   - Using ADP as a central repository of contact information and mass communication via text and email.
   - Bolstering VPN and virtual connectivity
   - IT and HR Daily updates for running list of best practices

2. **Office Level**
   - Office meetings via Zoom
   - Staffing meeting and collaboration via Zoom and emails.
   - Assign dedicated staff to visit the office to restart computers and servers etc.
   - Office Culture: keep it light and fun "send us a picture of your home office" and similar activities.

3. **Projects Level**
   - Construction Administration projects have halted or slowed, so we are looking into shifting personnel to design-phase work or overhead priorities so everyone is gainfully employed.
• Depending on project complexity: daily 15min checks for teams to keep on track
• Use of online tools like Zoom Conferencing, Skype/Teams Messaging, Slack, Sharepoint, and Newforma.
• Principals working closely with Client Project leadership to communicate expectations

4. Personnel
• Reviewing company health coverage to include free COVID-19 Testing
• Allowing personnel to dip negative PTO hours for recovery
• Allowing personnel flexibility since we are playing roles of project team members, distance teachers, chefs, and housekeepers simultaneously.

* Courtesy of AIA California
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