



With so many employees working remotely right now, employers face the challenge of keeping remote workers productive and engaged. This is especially important for employees who are working from home for the first time, or who have been mandated to work from home due to current circumstances.

**Virtual Co-working is an excellent way to:**

- ★ Create a **positive, supportive, productive work environment**
- ★ Help remote employees be **more engaged and less isolated**

**Virtual Co-working does not have to be complex to be highly effective.** In a nutshell, Virtual Co-Working is empowering your employees to facilitate structured, group co-working sessions held via videoconferencing. I find it works best when employees are empowered to schedule and lead the sessions.

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## How Virtual Co-Working Works

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- Employees schedule blocks of time to virtually co-work using videoconferencing
- Employees are encouraged to diversify their co-working partners to include people they know well and others they might not know so well. I recommend 2-10 people per co-working session
- A "lead" employee is designated for each co-working group. The lead is responsible for scheduling, timekeeping, starting and closing the session, and ensuring the sessions stay on track
- The co-working session starts with each employee sharing their goals for the session, i.e. what they will be working on, what they want to accomplish, etc. For large groups, I recommend 1-2 minutes each for sharing, and 5 minutes each for small groups
- After sharing goals, the group launches into a block of time (1-2 hours) for *uninterrupted* work. For longer sessions, a 10-minute break in the middle is a good idea
- At the end of the *uninterrupted* work period, employees each take turns briefly sharing how they did and discussing any support, resources, or ideas they might need from the group
- The lead employee closes the session and reminds the group when they are scheduled to co-work again

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## 3 Easy Steps to Set Up a Virtual Co-Working

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1. **Communicate.** Start with an email to your employees explaining why the company is encouraging virtual co-working (engagement, support, and productivity) and how it works
2. **Guide.** Give employees guidance on how to run effective virtual co-working sessions (feel free to use the bullets above)
3. **Evaluate.** Ask for employee feedback and implement changes as needed to improve co-working

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## Tools for Staying Connected with Remote Workers

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- [Zoom](#) - Videoconferencing
- [Voxer](#) - Voice Message App
- [Marco Polo](#) - Video Message App
- [Slack](#) - Chat/Messaging