



Communicating with remote teams

Whakawhanaungatanga (Social connection)

Encourage activities to stay connected and replace the natural social interaction in the workplace. Ideas to try:

- Informal online kōrero (chat) between the team - try MS Teams
- Virtual social club on MS Teams
- Share things from our daily lives; photos or videos of pets, hobbies, mystery household item, new recipe they tried, a playlist or funny news story, have a changing theme
- Virtual tour of home workspaces
- Virtual coffee breaks, team quiz, team lunch or after work happy hours online
- An online buddy for a week
- **Staff networks**
- **Yammer interest groups**

Team communication approach

Agree with your kaimahi (team members), when and how the team will communicate. e.g. *"We use Skype videoconferencing for daily hui at 2pm, but we use phone call when something is urgent. A team chat on Microsoft Teams is available all day and you can come in for a virtual coffee/tea chat at 10am and 3pm."*

Take time together regularly to review how it's going and change if needed.

Let your kaimahi know the best way and time to reach you for work, and ways to contact you if they need to kōrero (talk) urgently.

Things to remember

- Your team is your # 1 priority
- Communicate more than normal
- Use multiple communication channels – Skype, MS Teams, phone, emails, Yammer
- Don't forget that kaimahi (team members), might be juggling whānau (family) and mahi (work) so let them choose what works.
- Check everyone is comfortable with communication technology, and get help for those that aren't

One to one catch-ups

- Be considerate / kind. Tune into individual needs and adjust your communication to suit
- Consider using video - it gives visual cues and feels more personal
- Check on hauora (wellness), successes, clarity of expectations and deliverables, challenges and support needs
- **Whakarongo (listen) actively**, give **great feedback**, and recognise delivery and positive behaviours
- Schedule regularly, and do ad-hoc

Team hui

Have an agenda which you share with the team will help you stay on track.

Try beginning with karakia to uplift the spiritual goodwill of the team, foster a sense of calm and align the team's focus to the kaupapa (matters for discussion). Not all karakia are religious – See the **Kete Kōrero app** for suggested karakia.

Allow time for informal korero (chat) and check-in at the start – try using an Ice breaker pātai (question) like What's streaming in your house?

Prompt input with pātai like: What's something this week you feel proud of? or What did we do as a team that worked great?

Allocate someone to keep an eye on the chat comments, and make sure everyone gets a chance to contribute to the kōrero (discussion) – find ways to sequence who talks next.

If someone is having a technical issue or not participating, Check-in with them afterwards

Team updates

- Check Kotahi and Outlook, and take time to reflect, daily to identify what is important for your team to know
- Provide regular, short, clear, informative and positive pānui (updates)
- Aim to remove uncertainty and possible misunderstanding, and ensure everyone has understood all important messages.

He ora te whakapiri – There is strength in unity