Leveraging Remote Talent to Optimize IG

For today's post, we spoke with a Senior Business Analyst in a large bio-pharma company about leveraging remote talent to optimize IG (information governance). She functions remotely in the role of Tech Systems Owner for Quality Systems with shared IG responsibility.

Prepare, Prepare, Prepare for Remote Meetings

Unfortunately, remote IG team leaders, including some high-level directors often run ineffective meetings. Frequently, they show up unprepared, assuming everyone is on the same page when many participants don't have a clue. Siloed meetings also waste hundreds of hours in duplicated effort.

Preparation is the key to running effective remote meetings. Therefore, before any remote meeting:

- Prepare an agenda and a basic slide deck.
- Think about who will be in the meeting and who you have working on the project.
- Anticipate the questions and the level of influence you need to use to get them moving towards the target you've established.

Knowing if team members understand the material you present becomes harder in remote meetings. To keep attendees on track, try checking in on their knowledge by asking them to repeat information back to you—in a way that isn't condescending.

Running a governance team, you have an idea of your objectives and a collection of people you must influence to get everyone on the same page. Sometimes that's not possible, and you have to think how far you are willing to compromise on the end goal. That's all part of the preparation—know the boundaries, the people and the issues before going into the meeting.

Clarify Responsibilities

To further optimize remote meetings, bring up the hard questions first, such as why people are there. Clarify responsibilities and task assignments. With remote workers, you don't want to have that awkward conversation six months down the road. Being prepared and clear about their tasks, explaining duties explicitly, will optimize their performance.

Otherwise, it will take longer to figure out the things that don't work. Make yourself and your team successful now by preparing, checking in, and coordinating assignments. This will optimize meetings and other communications for effective information transfer.

Schedule Open Meetings for Critical Activities

Much IG development and validation work is done remotely by production IT professionals and others working off-site at various hours. When facing a quick turnaround, reaching people from other departments to resolve questions and issues for validation activities becomes more challenging.

Try mitigating the problem with an all-day open meeting, assembling people in the same virtual room until needed. Instruct them to log in and do their other work until called upon.

Some high-profile leaders and executives can't miss other scheduled meetings. So, you might have to work with an assistant and be creative in obtaining their input. On the other hand, many remote workers get excited about the collaboration and shared objective.

Empower Remote Managers and Workers

WFH employees generally want to be conscientious. When you give them more freedom, they take more responsibility.

For example, many companies find that employees take fewer sick days when they have unlimited sick time. That policy helps the people who truly need it and it saves the company money while allowing them to be generous.

The same thing applies to people working from home. When you give them more freedom, they become more diligent and work more hours. To best empower WFH employees, allow each department to set its WFH guidelines.

Empower managers to deal with the exceptions and things like doctor's notes. Teach them to become leaders and manage people. Empowering managers gives them a stake in the company. This works much better than setting a lot of rules structured for the masses, especially for the high performers.

Challenge Top Talent

Top employees want to be engaged, challenged, and rewarded. Remote work makes it easy to forget your best performers. Managers should focus a larger portion of their energy on the top 10%, as well as bottom 10%, or they will lose them.

Make a conscientious effort to reach out individually to them. Find things to praise and keep them interested. Give them feedback and more challenges to keep them happy. As face-to-face conversations have become more important, keep up on your one-on-ones remotely.

Reduce On-Site Activities

Be creative to minimize on-site activities, such as issuing computers. Give employees an allowance to purchase their own computers and set them up with secure virtual desktops. Also find remote ways to solve hardware problems.

In the current climate, you can have entirely remote employees. It's exciting to solve all these new problems and it's making things better for remote workers. We'll always have buildings for labs and in-person activities. But, our IG expert estimates that 60% of all workers can be 100% remote.

More Time, Flexibility and Empathy

Currently, IG team members have less or no commute time, hence, more time to work. For this and other reasons, they now work more hours at home than previously in the office. Not having an endpoint, it's easy to just keep working.

Being remote, they also enjoy the flexibility to work whenever time permits and according to their own rhythms. Few people fit the 9-5 paradigm. Some experience more creative energy in the morning or evening or wake up in the middle of the night with an idea.

Working from home and seeing other employees' workspace, families and pets also adds a level of bonding that we didn't have before. That has changed business and made employees more empathetic.

IG and Remote Technology Expertise

With decades of IG experience, Messaging Architects guides organizations on IG policy and technology, including work from home technology. Business leaders turn to our IG consultants to solve current problems and map future achievements.