Best Practices for Managers to Support and Motivate Remote Employees

☑ **Set clear goals and expectations:** Make sure each individual member of your team knows what they need to be working on, what you expect from them, and what their short and long-term goals are. Acknowledge that each team member will likely be working on different tasks, and will require different methods of motivation.

☑ **Be Transparent and Explain Rationale:** When team members are not in their standard working environment, it is easy to feel isolated and unsure of what the priorities are. Discuss with them, when appropriate, what you are working on and what rationale is behind your decision-making. If they feel as though they understand the bigger picture, it will help them to recognize how their contributions will support that.

☑ **Reiterate and Share Policies and Processes:** Make sure your team knows where to find necessary processes, procedures, and protocols that will help them within their roles. Highlight specific folders, or email helpful attachments that will provide them tools on how to find their resources.

☑ **Decide on Communication Channels:** Set up a regular communication schedule (daily, weekly, etc.) and keep in touch so you know what your team is working on. Ask each team member if they have a preferred tool for communication and what might make them comfortable. Encourage video communication when possible so that your team can feel less isolated and you can "humanize" interactions. Make sure your team knows how and when they can contact you if they need immediate assistance or have a question that is time sensitive. Ensure you are consistently checking all communication tools so that you are not overlooking any needed contact.

☑ **Focus on the Team AND the Individual:** It will be essential to make sure that you are focusing on each employees needs while also bringing the team together to reiterate the common goals that everyone is working towards. Schedule one on one's with each team member regularly and stick to that schedule – this will allow you to check how they are doing and update them if any priorities or needs change. During that meeting, make sure you ask them how they are feeling about remote work and where they might be struggling. Bring everyone together as a team weekly (or more!) and discuss how things are going. Allow some time for social conversations to allow people to still feel connected and build rapport while separated.

☑ **Think Creatively:** Some team members can transition their tasks easily to work from home. Others may need a more creative approach to ensure that they can be productive while out of the office. If they cannot do their normal tasks from home, think about projects that might be helpful for your department that don't require office tools- for example, creating Standard Operating Procedures, cleaning up system documents, or researching best practices for department responsibilities.

☑ **Celebrate Successes:** The remote work arrangement is likely very new to many of your team members. Recognizing successes and accomplishments within your team will help communicate to employees that they are on the right path while also helping them continue to motivate.

☑ **Model Calm and Competence:** The employees are taking their cues from you so if you are panicked, nervous, or angry, they will mirror those traits. While it is expected that there will be some uncertainty and anxiety, try not to pass those feeling along to your employees. They will model your actions so ensuring that you are productive, positive, and optimistic will assist in your team members acting the same.

☑ **Be Flexible, Empathetic, and Kind:** Recognize that this is a difficult time for everyone and that anxiety and fear are at the forefront of most people's minds. Allow flexibility when possible and adjust things as needed, depending on how employees are responding to certain methods. There will be a need to be more patient with your team as they adapt to the new normal, so make sure to practice empathy with them.