4 Ways IT Promotes Remote Productivity and Accountability

*by Thomas Douglas, CEO, **JMARK***

JMARK

As businesses continue the shift to remote and hybrid work, we are beginning to see the beneficial effects this change is having on organizations. Remote and hybrid work arrangements enhance culture, aid in recruiting the best talent, and give people a better life balance. Work-from-home (WFH) options also aid in retention; many businesses are finding that top talent will consider a different workplace should a remote option not be available.

For years, JMARK has used a remote-work strategy for many employees, because we know that talent is more important than location. In that time, we learned how to balance quality work performance and accountability. Below are four ways we can help you maintain accountability in a remote or hybrid environment.

1. IT DESIGN

To lay the foundation for successful remote work, we design your IT so that the necessary tools, applications, and resources are available to users no matter where they are. Application delivery, VoIP phone systems, file sharing, forms, templates, and documents are all configured to provide high levels of productivity while never sacrificing security. This is where your VPN (virtual private network) or remote desktop environment come into play, along with file-sharing applications like OneDrive, Dropbox, or other cloud-based solutions. Security also extends to mobile devices, which we can manage so that sensitive business information is encrypted, which protects your data should the device be lost or stolen.

2. COLLABORATION TOOLS

In a WFH environment, video calls become vital for one-on-one meetings, team meetings, and full-company gatherings. Because face-to-face interactions are critical for accountability and relationship building, we can help you find the right tools for your needs, such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Consistently using the same platform allows everyone to know how to quickly jump on a call when needed, increasing efficiency and productivity.

In addition to video calls, the collaboration platform Workplace from Meta has been a game-changer for us at JMARK, and we can help you implement this invaluable tool as well. Through Workplace, company notices, events, and activities can be easily shared with office staff as well as frontline workers. This will help your users know how and where to find necessary information about what is happening in the organization, including information specific to a given location, division, or team. There are also integrations to record and maintain meeting recordings. To find out more about Workplace, check out this link: https://www.jmark.com/workplace/

The next tool every organization needs is a chat application. We use Workplace from Meta for this, but there are many options available. Chat is critical to high productivity in a hybrid environment. (In fact, in today's work environment, this remains true even if everyone is in the office.) Chat allows for quick communication for simple matters and simplifies communication no matter where work is being done. Leaders can use chat to easily contact their team, answer questions, and resolve issues.

With a distributed workforce, good calendar management is also essential. With Microsoft Outlook's calendar sharing, each user can check a teammate's availability to make sure they are not interrupting them with a chat or video call. Clarity goes hand-in-hand with efficiency.

3. COMPANY AND TEAM CADENCE

The next crucial step is to design a routine or schedule, so every employee knows what is expected and what is occurring, even when not in the office. For JMARK's teams, this routine most often involves a daily morning standup of about ten to fifteen minutes. The agenda varies but usually consists of each team member giving a quick summary of accomplishments from the day before, sharing areas of focus for the current day, and identifying any impediments to progress. This helps the entire team stay aware of the work being performed. It also creates opportunities to resolve issues as they arise. There may also be a review of metrics to ensure progress toward goals is being made. These meetings should be structured so that they can be successfully performed no matter where people are located. Someone should take

notes (a rotating responsibility) so that if anyone misses a standup, they can catch up on important information. Whether it is for individual, departmental, or full-company gatherings, JMARK can help you implement the right tools to support both in-person and remote attendance.

4. WORK PRODUCTION TOOLS

To facilitate accountability, JMARK can help you put tools and processes in place that ensure that progress and outcomes can be measured. The objective is to set clear expectations, have the tools in place to record production, and then create a clear report that shows the outcomes. At JMARK, this is done through our ticket management system, project management tools such as Trello, accounting tools, and other applications that vary by team. By listing out work to be done with a timeline of outcomes and then measuring production against expectations, everyone is aligned for success. Additional tools that can help you measure performance include reports from phone systems (inbound and outbound), business intelligence tools, dashboards, and the quarterly business review (QBR) with your JMARK CRM.

Additionally, when accountability is maintained through a team environment, individuals do not have to be "managed" or feel like they are under a microscope. Good people want autonomy and should be given the freedom to do their best work, no matter where they are working from. With the right tools in place, this can be achieved, and every organization can ensure high productivity.

Talk to your CRM to discuss how we can help you facilitate continued success in remote and hybrid workplace productivity and accountability.