



connecteam

THE ULTIMATE MANAGER'S GUIDE TO WORKING FROM HOME

April 2020

WHERE WORK IS EASY, PRODUCTIVE, AND CONNECTED

Connectteam is the employee management app that connects everything a business needs from field to office, all in one place. In the click of a button, you can connect your staff, manage day-to-day operations, improve employee experience and engagement, and drive your business forward.

Streamline employee communication in a click and from one place for your remote team

Everything you need to collaborate better: live group chat, one-on-one people-centric chat, directory for work contacts, immediate updates with or without comments and likes, employee feedback surveys, suggestion box, live polls, sharing of videos, GIFs, documents, images and more. Connectteam is the collaboration app that moves work forward and keeps your team connected in the tap of a button.



THE RISE OF REMOTE WORK IN 2020

In recent months, the shift to remote work became a direct result of a growing pandemic. Is the transition temporary or permanent? Only time will tell. However, what's clear is that remote work isn't a mere perk or company benefit to lure fresh, top talent. And while it might be mandatory for many companies across the globe, for the time being, the question on how to engage and manage remote employees keeps rising.

Whether you're the type of manager who views remote work as driven by circumstance or is fully embracing the change, when it comes to how engaged and well-managed your team is, it all rests on your shoulders.

In fact, Gallup reported that 70% of employee engagement is a direct result of great leadership.

As such, managers are the direct cause of either motivation and engagement or frustration in the workplace. Therefore, if you're really interested in keeping remote employees engaged, you need to come at it from all angles and on a regular basis. Engagement is not a one time task to check off your to-do list. If you treat it as such, your employees will be looking for the exit.

In this eBook, we highlight everything you need to effectively manage your remote employees. From communication tips to engagement ideas and more, this guide is filled with all the information needed to make remote work a success.



Questions About Remote Work Answered

HOW DO I MAKE SURE MY EMPLOYEES ARE READY TO WORK FROM HOME?

Make sure the infrastructure is in place. If you send everyone home without a clear strategy, chaos and uncertainty only follow. Have a game plan for the following:

Does your team have the necessary technology or access to it? Which employees have a company laptop? For those with a company laptop, do they have all the software and tools needed to work? For employees without a company laptop or even a smartphone, how can you be sure they have access to all the necessary resources to do their job?

Your managers need to efficiently and quickly ensure that every single team member has direct and full access so that no one feels left behind.

HOW DO I MAKE SURE MY EMPLOYEES ADJUST TO WORKING FROM HOME?

First, talk with your employees on a regular basis so you can make sure they have everything they need. Let them tell you what they need from you to successfully work from home without too many bumps in the road.

Second, offer your team some advice! They might not know where to start so they'll look to you for guidance.

Questions About Remote Work Answered

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I, AS A MANAGER, CHECK IN WITH MY EMPLOYEES?

Start with a daily chat with the entire team so that everyone is aligned on what each team member is working on and to raise questions. Use solutions like Zoom or Skype to video chat and solutions like Connecteam or Slack or message in real-time. Find what works best for you. Change the frequency of the check-ins as needed, but remember that more is better than less. And don't just check in on work-related matters. Have a virtual happy hour or a coffee break together. All this keeps the team connected!

HOW DO I KEEP EVERYONE ENGAGED?

Don't skip the watercooler talk. In the last point, we highlighted holding a virtual happy hour or lunch break, but don't forget to reach out to each individual team member. This helps them feel connected and less isolated. When your team isn't following the traditional 9-to-5 workday, use chat to your advantage.

A virtual "watercooler" creates a fun space for your team to engage with one another. Encourage them to chat like they're in a regular office environment – from life updates, movies or TV shows, interesting news, etc.

Questions About Remote Work Answered

WILL PRODUCTIVITY GO DOWN?

Productivity shouldn't go down at all. It can easily be maintained and even strengthened because those pesky office distractions are gone. And your team isn't stressed with their morning commute. Even if you're working at home with your kids or partner, that can all be worked out to your advantage. For example, talk to your boss and create a game plan with your partner that works best for everyone.

HOW DO I MAKE SURE THAT BOUNDARIES AREN'T CROSSED?

As we hinted above, some of your employees might have kids at home because they're not well or daycare isn't an option right now. If that's the case, you need to work out a solution that works for both parties. We recommend that you allow for more flexibility in their schedule. For example, your employee doesn't have to start work at 9 AM sharp or eat lunch at 12:30. Instead, allow your employees to be more fluid with their schedule and you need to trust that they're doing their very best to get the job done.

In fact, we recommend that policy for your entire team and not just the parents.



HOW TO MANAGE A REMOTE TEAM

- ✓ USE THE RIGHT TOOLS
- ✓ CREATE A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
- ✓ VIDEO CHAT WHEN POSSIBLE
- ✓ ENGAGE IN TEAM-BUILDING GAMES
- ✓ BUILD ON YOUR COMPANY CULTURE
- ✓ BE RESPONSIVE
- ✓ RECOGNITION IS A MUST
- ✓ BUILD TRUST
- ✓ FOCUS ON MEETING GOALS AND NOT ACTIVITY

How to Communicate Effectively



DEFINE GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

Map all communication channels and information flow in the organization, understand where the bottlenecks are and where there is unstructured information flow. Additionally, it's important for everyone to be on the same page, so when you identify and clarify what the common goals are, you will have a large team that is working on delivering said goal. It's important to have everyone in the same mindset.

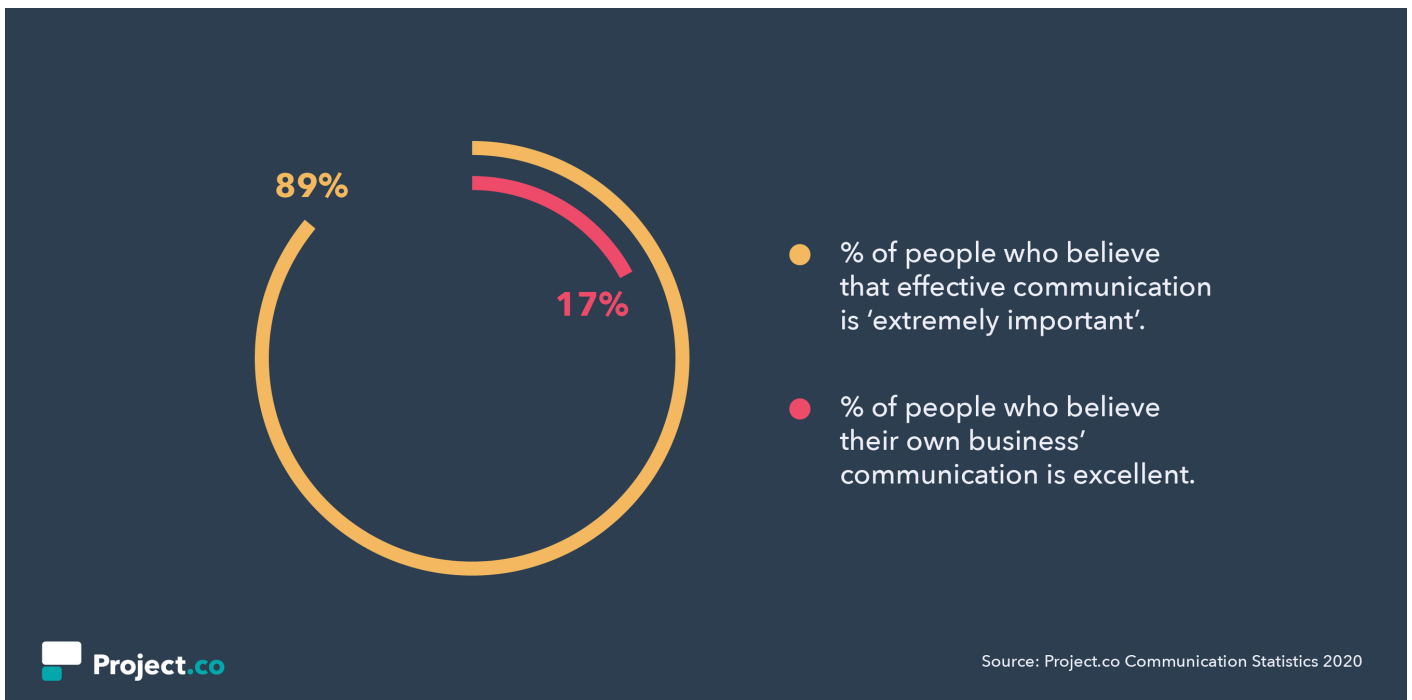
USE THE RIGHT SOFTWARE

Make sure you have the right software to support all channels. Email and Skype are the right solutions if your employees sit behind a desk a majority of the day. But if you have a majority of deskless and mobile employees, you need an employee app, like Connecteam, to be able to engage them instantly. In fact, we recommend that policy for your entire team and not just the parents.

LISTEN TO YOUR EMPLOYEES & OFFER FEEDBACK

Use surveys, have a private suggestion box, give one-on-one feedback, offer positive feedback, have open meetings, etc. Employees need to feel valued and heard otherwise you will only have a high turnover rate year in, year out.

How to Communicate Effectively



ENCOURAGE TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

It's important to listen to your employees but don't just stop there. Allow your team to feel empowered by being comfortable enough to approach you with their concerns, their triumphs, their ideas, and everything in-between.

ORGANIZE TEAM-BUILDING GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

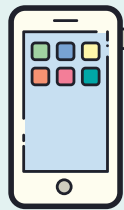
Gallup reported that companies with engaged employees tend to earn 2.5X more revenue. Organizing weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly team-building games can really boost productivity and engagement. However, make sure to include your in-house and remote workers in these games.

Why remote teams need a chat app

If you have remote employees who feel like they aren't being recognized, your company is faced with failing profitability and productivity.

Fewer phone calls

The amount of phone calls goes down which keeps everyone productive and on track to get the job done.



Share files, pictures, and videos

A picture is worth a thousand words. Send information the way that best engages your employees. This makes it easier for your team to find and collaborate on projects in a single space on any device.



History is available

No need to write anything down, all data is stored and you can access it any time.



Robust reporting

Easily gather data and create dynamic reports that are easy to read. Whenever you need a report, it's that easy to get direct access so you can effectively prepare for the next meeting.



Real-time updates

Employees don't need to wait until the next email or meeting to get vital company news, instead, they'll get updates straight to their phone. (You can also enable comment and like capabilities to save valuable time if you don't want everyone to be flooded with a million notifications).



Connect with millennial employees

If your staff is younger or you're looking to bring in more young adults, using a team chat app is perfect – after all, they do check their phone 150 times a day!



Organized groups

Organize conversations into groups or channels. And you can create as many as you need, divide them up by departments, office locations, seniority levels, and more. You can even have a general group so your entire deskless workforce can chat about anything and everything. Additionally, there are private messages that you can send directly to a single colleague.



Creative Ways to Keep Remote Employees Engaged

USE THE RIGHT TOOLS, FIRST AND FOREMOST

If your team isn't using the right tools to communicate and collaborate effectively then you're already starting off on the wrong foot. The market has a ton of chat and collaboration tools to choose from so managing a robust, productive remote team is a much easier task to take on.

COMMUNICATE OFTEN

Create an effective communication strategy so you can reach every employee. For example:

- Hold weekly formal "check-ins"
- Establish performance goals for the month, quarter, and year
- Set clear expectations and requirements for tasks
- Channels should be created for each situation such as one-to-one chats, team meetings, video calls, or open forums for sharing of feedback and ideas
- Encourage two-way communication – get feedback on projects, marketing strategy, customer satisfaction, and more.

"If you, the manager, don't create good, open communication channels, the remote worker will feel, well, 'remote' and forgotten," said Keith Ferrazzi

Creative Ways to Keep Remote Employees Engaged



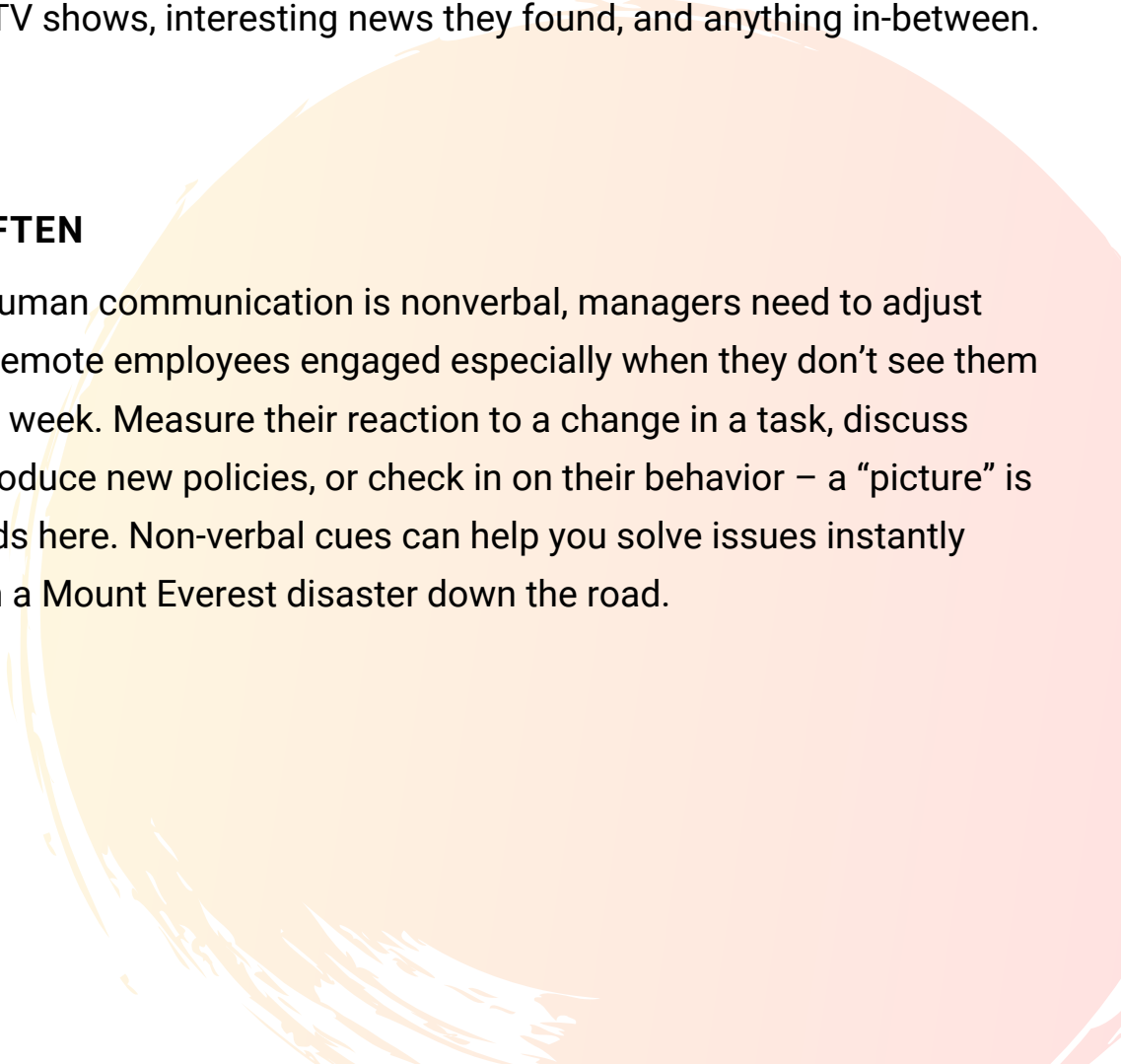
WATERCOOLER TALK IS A MUST

When you aren't following a 9-to-5 workday, chit chat needs to be used to your advantage. It shows that you value socialization and human interaction, and not just number crunching and productivity.

A virtual "watercooler" platform creates a space for your team members to engage with one another that isn't directly related to work 24/7. Allow your workers to chat as they would in a regular office environment so they can share life updates, talk politics, chat about movies or TV shows, interesting news they found, and anything in-between.

USE VIDEO CHAT OFTEN

When over half of all human communication is nonverbal, managers need to adjust their strategy to keep remote employees engaged especially when they don't see them from 9-to-5 five days a week. Measure their reaction to a change in a task, discuss their performance, introduce new policies, or check in on their behavior – a "picture" is worth a thousand words here. Non-verbal cues can help you solve issues instantly instead of dealing with a Mount Everest disaster down the road.



Creative Ways to Keep Remote Employees Engaged



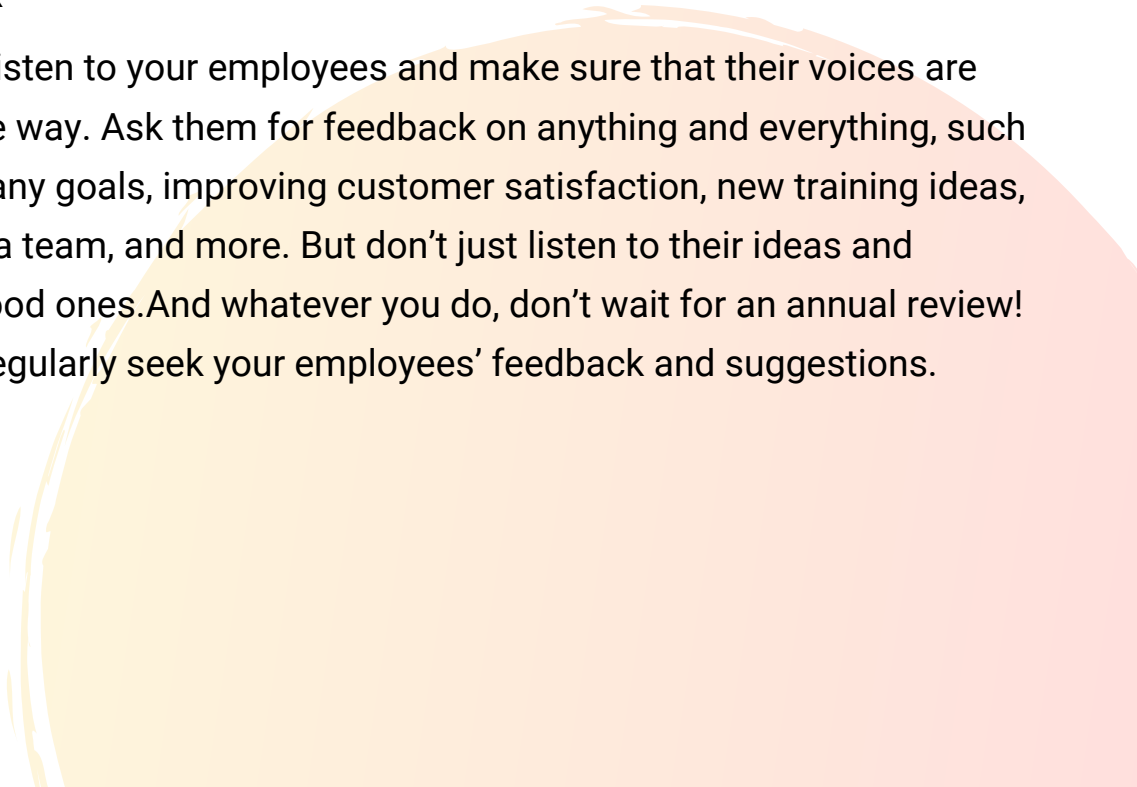
ESTABLISH AND BUILD TRUST

One, allow your managers' room to embrace risk whenever trying new things. From time to time, they will need to get creative – from holding a conference call outside, creating new procedures, sending care packages, playing team building games and more. Allow your managers the leeway to act however they view best.

And two, trust that your employees are getting the job done. Always make sure that you're providing feedback to solve issues and problems before they spiral out of control. Keeping remote employees engaged also makes them productive, engaged and motivated to be a top employee.

ASK FOR FEEDBACK

This is why you must listen to your employees and make sure that their voices are heard every step of the way. Ask them for feedback on anything and everything, such as how to meet company goals, improving customer satisfaction, new training ideas, fun activities to do as a team, and more. But don't just listen to their ideas and opinions, act on the good ones. And whatever you do, don't wait for an annual review! Instead, actively and regularly seek your employees' feedback and suggestions.



Creative Ways to Keep Remote Employees Engaged

GIVE RECOGNITION

"Being generous with public praise and acknowledgment of remote employees helps make sure their work is recognized and is a signal to coworkers that they're pulling their weight," Mark Mortensen

Showing your appreciation is a simple, yet effective way, to really motivate and engage your remote employees. Studies show that workers are less motivated by money and are more motivated by the "little things" like the acknowledgment of their ideas and suggestions and suggestions, opportunities to grow, and more responsibility.

Employee recognition is key

- Less than 1 in 3 employees feel strongly valued at work
- Employees who feel valued at work are more likely to give their direct supervisor a high rating
- Feeling valued is the top correlated factor to on-the-job happiness
- Employee recognition will improve productivity, enhance loyalty and promote collaboration



Team Building Games for Remote Workers



REVEALING QUIZ

Send polls and multiple-choice questions – anything with a quiz format to spark a conversation and complete this Revealing Quiz.

Match the fact to the colleague (the more unusual or unexpected the better), Would you rather?, Themed trivia, etc.



PHOTO OF YOUR LIFE

Set time when you and your students can touch base and have them prepare questions they had during the exercises.

Make use of video conference tools that allow for multiple people to dial in.



VIRTUAL GAMES

There are plenty of options online that you can download, such as Pictionary, Charades or Draw the picture.

Set a timer for 30 minutes, or less, so that everyone can join.



THREE TRUTHS AND A LIE

Host a video conference and ask each employee to tell 3 truths and one lie about themselves. Keep the lie realistic so it won't be easy for everyone to guess. The other employees guess which was the lie and whoever guesses right gains points.

WORDS WITH FRIENDS

Download the app and pair up employees to have matches against one another. Each player gets tiles with letters and they need to combine the letters to create words. The player with the most points is the winner. (It's an online version of Scrabble!)



MOVIE NIGHT

Have employees vote on what movie they want to watch and stream the movie through a video conference call.

Keep the instant messaging open so that team members can make remarks while watching the movie.



How to boost morale

Business Insider reported that 50% of the workforce will work remotely by 2020 and with the COVID-19 pandemic sweeping the globe, this is becoming the norm. However, the methods you're using to motivate your in-house team won't exactly work for your remote team. Most remote workers feel disconnected as remote work can be isolating at times. More often than not, they feel out of the loop, voiceless, and even lonely.

As a manager, you need to find ways to help your remote team members feel motivated and appreciated.

Here are just a few examples of how you can make this possible:

- Streamline communication & be transparent
- Create clear communication channels
- Encourage feedback
- Include remote workers in announcements and updates
- Use a communication app
- Make scheduling easier to connect remote and in-office workers
- Be clear on expectations
- Implement remote team building games and activities
- Focus on performance
- Trust that they'll get the work done, don't micromanage
- Create a positive company culture
- Give recognition



Why Connecteam is The Best Communication Tool for remote employees

From the very beginning, our goal was to create a one stop shop for all the communication tools a company needs – we know it's more than just adding features, it's providing the full-package that makes communication effective (and fun!)

Bottom up communication so your employees can reach you when they need.

Top to bottom communication so you can share announcements, updates and everything in-between with all your employees no matter where they are.

Targeted communication so you can easily send the right information to only the relevant people in a click.

Structured data communication so receiving data straight from the field, like reports or ticketing, is easy.

Measurable communication so you can tell what's working and what's not, and you know who received your message and who didn't.

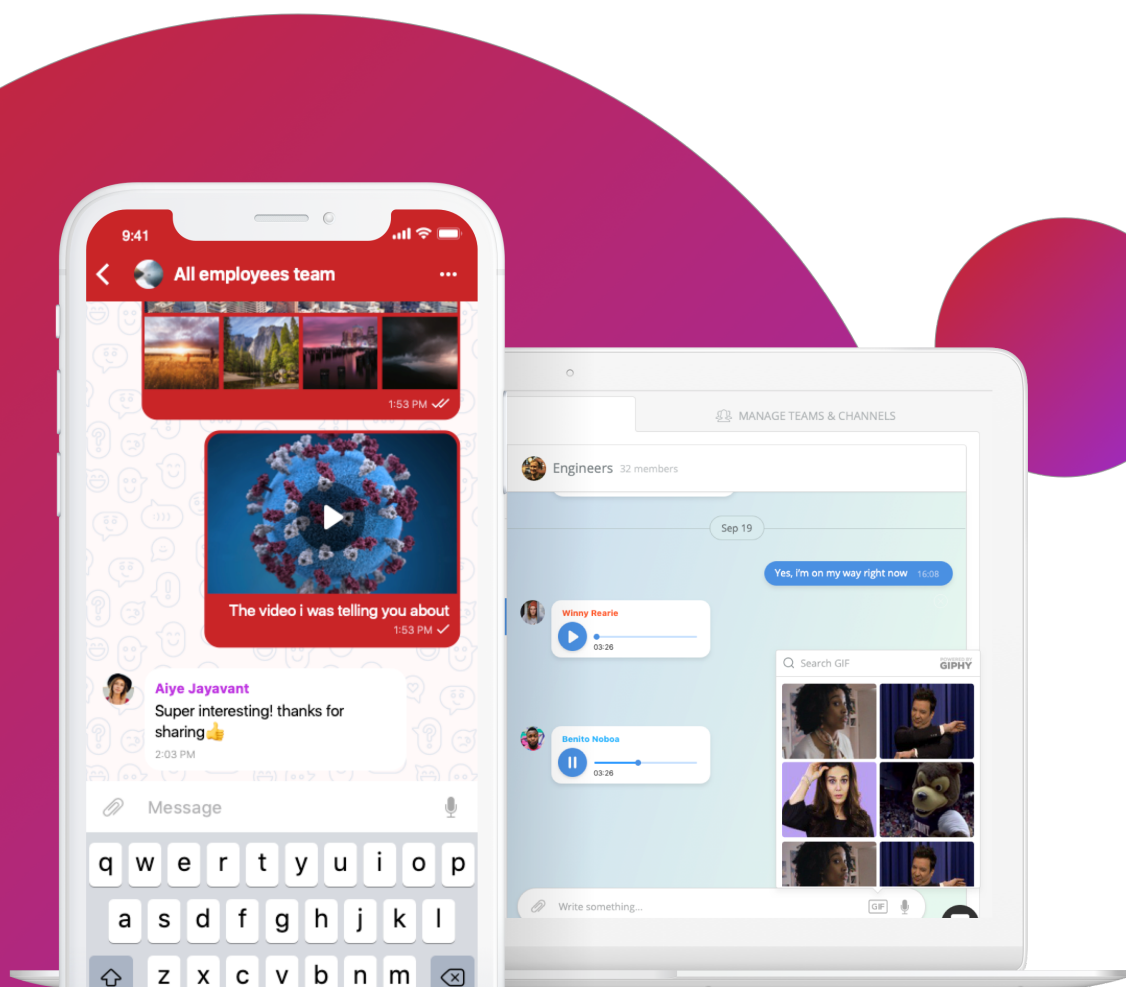
All media types for communication includes sharing of photos, files, images, GIFs, voice notes, location and more.

We took it a step further and added features like a knowledge base and workflow so you can decrease the amount of irrelevant information being sent to all your employees. Our goal was to create an affordable product for all business sizes so you can adopt it to the way you work and your specific needs.

How one retailer, FOX Group, saved 90% of its communication budget

Running a big, complex operation, and managing an extensive workforce is not an easy task, and it starts with robust, timely and ongoing communication. FOX Group communicates everything to its employees from updates on seasonal deals and offers, to visual marketing instructions and all the way to working protocols and procedures.

But communication comes with a cost: cost of design, cost of printing and cost of delivery and distribution. Whether it's the new sale guidelines or an update to an existing protocol, it takes time to distribute and involves a significant expense.



How one retailer, FOX Group, saved 90% of its communication budget

The digital leap that resulted in 90% cost reduction

FOX Group turned to Connecteam looking for a better way to communicate with 7,600 employees in multiple locations. They were on the hunt for a communication solution that would allow them to target a specific audience of their employees, whether it's an entire brand chain, a specific store, or just the leadership teams or the full-workforce.

Shortly after subscribing to Connecteam, FOX Group started communicating daily with their teams. Communication became fast, efficient and trackable and served different parts of the organization: The visual marketing team sends guidelines to store managers, HR updates employees and managers alike and addresses frequently asked questions, training leads communicate materials, tips and guides, and the leadership team sends out high level updates.

Cost reduction didn't lag behind: only two months later(!) FOX Group experienced a 90% saving on its communication budget resulting from eliminating almost completely the need for printed and distribution of communication materials, and transforming its employee protocol book to digital.

Where work is easy, productive, and connected

All the tools your team needs under one roof: Communicate, operate, track hours, create schedules, onboard, and train your deskless employees with Connectteam's all-in-one employee app. Easy to use, customizable and scalable like no other.

BOOK A DEMO WITH OUR EXPERTS

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