

Strategies for managing virtual teams

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Rapidly changing business dynamics have made it critical for organizations to adapt to the changing market trends in order to survive and retain its competitive edge. Managers are increasingly realising the role training and development can play in pursuing new strategies and enhancing employee productivity. “ Innovative companies not only try to hire creative people, they also try to develop in ways which will increase their creative output” (Christiansen, 2000).

Training and development plays a critical role in managing virtual teams owing to the wide range of complexities of the operating environment. The multi-cultural and social environment poses new challenges to team members and providing them with a comprehensive knowledge of the existing protocols does eliminate misunderstandings. “ Managers can unlock an individual’s ability and willingness to perform at high levels in many ways – for instance, by translating long-term goals into step by step plans, clearly stating expectations and holding people accountable” (Holbeche, 2005).

Leadership qualities displayed by the team manager can have a strong bearing on the task outcome involving individuals from distant locations. Leaders are employed to get a job done with the assistance of a team of people over whom he has control. The team comprising of people is an important aspect of leadership. An effective leadership style stresses the importance of people in the overall scenario – since without people participation the leader cannot achieve anything.

The virtual team makes this task a little difficult for the manager but the effective use of collaboration tools and establishing a constant communication protocol can ease the level of interaction and create

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an ambience for trust and confidence within the team members. Banking corporations and financial institutions having global offices and branches to service their customers better and to promote specialized units catering to various banking functions have adopted the policy of outsourcing operations to countries like India and China.

This has created virtual teams that p global borders and the banking institutions use web-enabled collaboration tools to keep constant tabs on the work processes, desired levels of performance, and data interchange. Specific work guidelines, objectives, standards, and communication protocols are established and communicated to the team members across the globe to avoid any kind of confusion.

A good communicator needs to identify the overall purpose of the communication process, what is the message that needs to be conveyed, possible ways of communicating (email, meetings, telephonic calls), why the communication is necessary, who are the people that will be impacted by the information, what is the best time to communicate the message, and what impacts can be expected. These are some of the parameters of an effective communication process. It should be noted that effective communication needs clarity, consistency, and reinforcement.