Tips for managing a remote work team

ESTABLISH STRUCTURED, FREQUENT CHECK-INS
While this will vary by team, this could include either daily 1:1 calls with individuals or entire teams. Feel free to change up the format; phone calls, zoom meetings or daily email briefing all help to keep team members connected and engaged.

CREATE A SPACE FOR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS
This is one that can get overlooked, but is important to sustain camaraderie and culture. Think about creating virtual coffee breaks or book clubs where colleagues can come together socially through Zoom or Teams meetings. Think outside the box for ways your team can connect in different ways!

OVER-COMMUNICATE
Communicate, communicate, communicate!

Remote work requires that we be more intentional, more thoughtful and more frequent in our communication. We won’t bump into each other in the hallways or casually walk into our team mates office, so we have to reach out even more by email, chat or call.

ESTABLISH YOUR TEAM NORMS
Set team norms for the frequency, means, and preferred timing of communication; i.e. videoconferencing might be best for daily check-in meetings, but we use IM when something is urgent. We all have different situations right now and some team members might do better working at different times. Help team members share their preferred way and time to be reached in the workday (e.g., “I tend to be more available late in the day for ad hoc phone or video conversations, but if there’s an emergency earlier in the day, send me a text.”)

ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHALLENGES, BE FLEXIBLE
Create a safe space for teams to acknowledge challenges they are facing. We didn’t have time to prepare for this huge transition to remote work and it’s important to acknowledge the hurdles and help our team work through them. This could be a Q & A session once a week or just a call where the team discusses what is and isn’t working for them and asks for help to solve their problem.

SUPPORT THE WELL-BEING OF YOUR PEOPLE AND YOURSELF
Pay attention to changes in productivity or behavior, it could signal that someone is in need of additional resources. Be sure to share the Bowdoin HR page on COVID 19 employee resources and information about EAP to all staff periodically.