

# TIPS FOR SUPERVISING STUDENTS *Remotely*

Let's face it, motivating and keeping your team on track while working remotely can be a challenge. For students on placements or work-terms it is also a time where they may feel unsure about how to connect and contribute to the team in a meaningful way. With a little effort and intention, supervising a student while working remotely can be a very rewarding experience for all. Below are some tips to help get you started.



## COMMUNICATE OPENLY AND OFTEN

- Start the day off on the right foot with regular morning meetings to set the tone for the day.
- Follow-up in the afternoon with a meeting to help answer questions and discuss any obstacles the student may be facing.
- Ensure lines of communication are open throughout the day (if not by phone, through live chat or email). This does **not** mean micromanage – give the student the opportunity to learn, be successful and take ownership of the tasks/projects you have set out for them, however be there to support the student when things trip them up.
- Provide on-going feedback and guidance to ensure the student is on the right track and feels supported.



## GET ORGANIZED

- Create and follow a structured work plan so the student understands the expectations and next steps. This will empower the student focus on goals to work toward throughout the work term.
- Investing in technology to help with communication and progress on the work plan may help especially in a work-from-home arrangement. There are many affordable project management tools available online including Planner available through Microsoft 365.



## BE PREPARED

- If you do not have an on-boarding process, create one before the student begins their work-term or placement.
- This should include work hours and terms, job responsibilities, and systems tutorials and/or manuals.
- Also include provisions on how students will receive the technology they will need to work remotely and consider creating a New Student Checklist.
- Modify existing processes where feasible as this can assist the student in making a smooth transition into your organization.
- Create video tutorials or conduct video conference training sessions via online platforms including Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Go to Meeting.
- Create a list of several projects and tasks for the student to work on as this will enable them to remain productive should a project be temporarily delayed.



## HAVE EMPATHY

- Accept that working from home is not necessarily an ideal situation and situations change from day to day. Know that the student on the work-term or placement wants to contribute the best they can to the overall organization's goals.
- Understand that students may already feel unsure about themselves as they enter a new workplace. Working remotely may add to this stress and lack of confidence.
- Focusing on your team culture will help to make the student feel as though they are part of the larger team.
- Schedule regular check-ins with your larger team and include the student so they get to know their new colleagues.