

# Leading your teams in turbulent times

LEADS provides us with strategies to lead teams in turbulent times. LEADS reminds leaders to:

## Demonstrate character

**Lead with compassion.** Acknowledge team members' stress and listen to their concerns. Offer encouragement and emotional support.

- Ask your team members "How are you doing?" and listen – look for solutions together and share what is working and what is not
- Be nimble and prepared to adjust the standard ways of operating if appropriate to support the team
- Include a gratitude moment at the start of every meeting

**Model courage and resilience.** Employees look to their managers for cues about how to react to sudden changes or crisis situations. Effective leaders acknowledge their teams' anxiety in difficult circumstances, while also conveying their confidence in their teams.

- Use phrases like "this is tough, but I know we can handle it"
- Emphasize we are all in this together
- Recognize employees for the outstanding work they are doing in these circumstances

**Demonstrate honesty and integrity.** Communicate honestly and follow through on promises.

- If you don't know the answer, say "I don't know but I'll try to find out for you"

## Communicate effectively

**Engage your remote teams** regularly through some kind of communication. It's important that communication is regular and predictable.

- Set up a schedule for individual and/or team phone or zoom calls. This could be one-on-one, if your employees work independently from each other, or a team call, if their work is highly collaborative.
- Include time at every meeting to address any questions or concerns employees may have – work or non-work related

**Provide several different communication technology options.**

- Video conferencing gives participants visual cues; email may be more useful for quick collaboration

## Keep building teams

**Provide opportunities for remote social interaction.** This is essential for employees' engagement and sense of belonging. It's particularly important for employees who have been abruptly transitioned to working remotely.

- Leave some time at the beginning of calls just for non-work items ("how was your weekend?")
- Once a week, host a zoom meeting where you just talk about non-work items
- Consider having lunch together virtually via zoom
- Keep celebrating special occasions like birthdays together

