

# Lead in Virtual Times with Business Chemistry®

In the jarring shift to virtual that's defining our current reality, many leaders are struggling with the best ways to keep their teams and themselves healthy, happy and productive. Here is our brief guide for using the power of Business Chemistry to thrive in this new world.



## VIRTUAL CHEMISTRY:

### How to collaborate and engage in a remote work environment

Each of the four Business Chemistry types is likely to experience stress and cope in different ways. During this uncertain and potentially isolating period, it is more important than ever to recognize and adapt to the unique needs of each type so that we can tap into their distinct strengths.

#### To start...

- **Acknowledge the unique challenges** that everyone is facing and ask people to share any preferences for where, when, and how work gets done.
- **Design for inclusivity** so everyone can participate in the way that works for them. By making intentional space for different types to contribute you'll get a more robust result.
- **Flex your empathy muscle** to understand your team. This is an opportunity to dial up your own Integrator tendencies. Grant people—and yourself—permission to be human as personal and work lives blend. Just starting with a, "How is everyone coping?" can go a long way to making your team feel supported.



Pioneers are particularly likely to get stir-crazy in this environment, both mentally and physically. Anything that can serve as an outlet for their thoughts and creativity can help harness their energy productively.

#### HOW TO SUPPORT THEM

- Provide brainstorm-friendly environments ("walk and talk" meetings, "draw your idea and send to the team") to give them space to think big.
- Give them chances to move around and change up the scene – think virtual charades or karaoke.
- Set up quick, fun pulse checks throughout the meeting to increase participation and energy.
- Leverage video-conferencing functions for sourcing ideas (annotation, polls, or live chat).

#### IF YOU'RE A PIONEER

- Explore where you may have permission to move on an idea without having all the data and details.
- Reframe your team's environment – what could we do differently or even better than before?
- Encourage your teams to use colors, fonts, drawing capabilities, music, and fun backgrounds.
- Respect times when it is important to focus and get things done.



Virtual collaboration often leads to call after call and, as a result, Drivers may be eager to stop talking and "just get it done." Showing them why an interaction is worth their time and attention can encourage their participation and engagement.

#### HOW TO SUPPORT THEM

- Harness their "take no prisoners" approach to make change, fast.
- Set clear objectives around bold problems and encourage them to develop and test hypotheses.
- Provide them a reason to connect by sharing or requesting information, or entice them with a competition.
- Call out how long you will need them, and remind them that efficiency comes from focus.

#### IF YOU'RE A DRIVER

- Seize this moment and take action! Help the team make quick decisions or define and prioritize goals.
- At the end of a call, recap highlights, what you accomplished, and why it matters.
- Remember everyone works differently. Give team members space to progress on both project goals and interpersonal connections.
- Take care of your own well-being. It is OK not to be OK right now, and everyone has their unique needs and remedies.



Working remotely may be more difficult for Integrators than other types. In this kind of environment they'll likely be eager to connect individually and as a group and will likely serve as the glue across virtual teams as they do in person.

#### HOW TO SUPPORT THEM

- Ask what's going on in their world, share a personal story, and make them feel supported.
- Share context and the purpose behind the work they're doing, as it may be less clear with so much change and uncertainty.
- Enable face-to-face video meetings or provide casual time to socialize and catch up and meet each others' kids and pets.
- Be aware of your body language: Nod your head, smile, look at the camera or their image.

#### IF YOU'RE AN INTEGRATOR

- Reach out to other team members and stakeholders to socialize ideas, get input, and just check in.
- Understand things need to move quickly right now. Still gather multiple perspectives but in rapid-fire fashion.
- Use a fun background, have everyone submit a photo, or ask them to share how they are feeling to break the ice.
- Invite people to use video-conferencing "reactions" to show agreement, applause, or acknowledge people's comments.



Guardians will likely want to understand how they can best contribute as things are shifting. While remote interaction is often real-time, providing an opportunity to process and prepare before being put on the spot may make them more effective.

#### HOW TO SUPPORT THEM

- Give them the space they need to dive into work with fewer interruptions, like heads-down time or shorter calls.
- Provide them an agenda and pre-read materials and allow them time to process.
- Collect ideas in advance of meetings and share how you would like them to participate.
- Encourage use of an in-meeting chat function or smaller group breakout sessions so they have an outlet to share thoughts without fighting for the floor.

#### IF YOU'RE A GUARDIAN

- Help the team stay grounded by providing stability and offering practical and reasonable solutions.
- Find the silver lining(s). Might new processes make things more effective, efficient, and sustainable going forward?
- Remember that at times, "good enough" may be better than "perfect".
- State your needs: more time to process, more pre-reads, more options for communicating. Others may not know if you don't speak up.

## VIRTUAL CHEMISTRY: How to collaborate and engage in a remote work environment

Embracing the virtual workplace may be a necessity, but it doesn't need to be a struggle. So how *do* you effectively engage with one another?

### Before any virtual interaction...

#### HUNCH.

Apply your knowledge of Business Chemistry to hunch who is on the other end of the phone, email, or video call in order to understand their needs and how to best engage them.

#### BALANCE.

Working with a group requires flexing in different ways than working with an individual. Each type needs different approaches to feel seen and heard. Strike a balance of modalities in your communications to engage with each type.

#### ADJUST.

Check in with the audience to determine how things are going, and be prepared to make changes when necessary. Minor adjustments can make a major difference.

# THE UNIVERSALS

These approaches for virtual meetings are likely to resonate no matter who is on the other end:



## KNOW YOUR PURPOSE

Be explicit about why you need a meeting and what you want to accomplish. Engage participants pre-meeting with agendas and/or materials to initiate focus even before kick-off.



## SET EXPECTATIONS

Clearly state the objective of the meeting at the beginning and establish norms for engagement and participation. If you're using tools that may be new for participants, provide a time before the meeting to make sure technology is working correctly, and give them an opportunity to practice. If people feel comfortable before the meeting even starts, they'll likely participate at the level you want.



## NAME DROP

Try to address everyone by name more than usual. Identifying who is present and referring to individuals throughout establishes trust and increases attention. If they know you're watching they're less likely to use your meeting as an opportunity to multitask.



## USE DIFFERENT ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Don't be afraid to use video – it can make people feel more connected. But also don't overdo it. Sometimes a normal call or email is fine, and may be preferable for certain objectives or for certain types. The key is to flex for the different needs of your group, provide different modalities and meet them where they're most comfortable. During your meeting integrate as many different methods as possible – switching things up every few minutes keeps people involved.



## MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM

Be explicit about next steps, and share expectations about continued commitment and engagement beyond the meeting. Leave them with an activity to complete after your meeting to extend involvement, or provide a follow-on discussion opportunity for the group.



## SHOW YOUR BEST SIDE

Test your video and play up what you want people to see – experiment with the lighting and camera angles that work for you. Learn what styles enhance your appearance as appropriate for the audience. Minimize background distractions; consider engaging with a thematic virtual background and encourage team members to do the same!



For more information about Business Chemistry, please contact your local administrator or email [ChiefChemist@deloitte.com](mailto:ChiefChemist@deloitte.com)  
Visit us online at: [deloitte.com/us/businesschemistry](https://deloitte.com/us/businesschemistry)

#### ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This presentation contains general information only and Deloitte is not, by means of this presentation, rendering accounting, business, financial, investment, legal, tax, or other professional advice or services. This presentation is not a substitute for such professional advice or services, nor should it be used as a basis for any decision or action that may affect your business. Before making any decision or taking any action that may affect your business, you should consult a qualified professional advisor. Deloitte shall not be responsible for any loss sustained by any person who relies on this presentation.

#### ABOUT DELOITTE

Deloitte refers to one or more of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, a UK private company limited by guarantee ("DTTL"), its network of member firms, and their related entities. DTTL and each of its member firms are legally separate and independent entities. DTTL (also referred to as "Deloitte Global") does not provide services to clients. In the United States, Deloitte refers to one or more of the US member firms of DTTL, their related entities that operate using the "Deloitte" name in the United States and their respective affiliates. Certain services may not be available to attest clients under the rules and regulations of public accounting. Please see [www.deloitte.com/about](https://www.deloitte.com/about) to learn more about our global network of member firms.

Copyright © 2020 Deloitte Development LLC. All rights reserved.