

Team Leadership in the time of remote silence

How remote work changed the leadership model



Why?

Remote Work

- changed the teams
- changed organizations and the business
- changed the role of the leaders

Remote work changed **ALL** of Us



A bit of context about me

- Software Quality Manager at Viessmann Climate Solutions, part of Carrier
- 20+ years in QA/QE, public speaker
- **Tech leader for fully remote team QM in Poland**
- **Single Remote member of QE team in Alendorf, Germany**
- BJJ photographer - remote working with ADCC organization



REMOTE WORK - IMPACT

- remote culture
- new way of working and processes
- new teams dynamics
- meeting over-load
- work - life balance lost
- work - family conflict
- week days vs week ends



How did it all started?

Viessmann when I joined

- **office** focus only (8am-4pm)
- **local** recruitment and talent (Wroclaw and Alendorf)
- independent **sites**
- “management by **walking**”
 - **local** leaders
 - **local** processes
 - **local** events



The Pandemic was just the accelerator for the revolution that was there behind the corner, it forced us to handle it.



Viessmann after revolution

- **remote** talent
- **cross-sites** teams
- focus on **projects** not locations
- **global** roles spread
- “**remote leadership**” model
- **heavy online** communication
- embrace **remote teams, remote processes** and **remote events** on organizational level

VIESSMANN

climate of innovation

My team in our topic context

- **remote team**
- 5 people:
 - 1 visiting office almost daily,
 - 1 working 200 km away - fully remote
 - 1 working 100km away - hybrid visits once a week
 - 2 work inside Wrocław - hybrid work
- **cross-sites** functional management
- local office **line manager**
- Each of us working for different projects, scope (Quality Engineering, Quality Management, Fault Coordination, Operational efficiency), independent stakeholders.

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**We - Viessmann, were
and are not remote first
organization, but there
is no other way..**



- I cannot see EU companies moving back to the office
- Remote capabilities and remote enabled initiatives gets attention
- High remote work pressure from the teams
- Many remote focused team leaders do not see a benefit working with in the office model

What's changed for teams and us, as remote leaders?



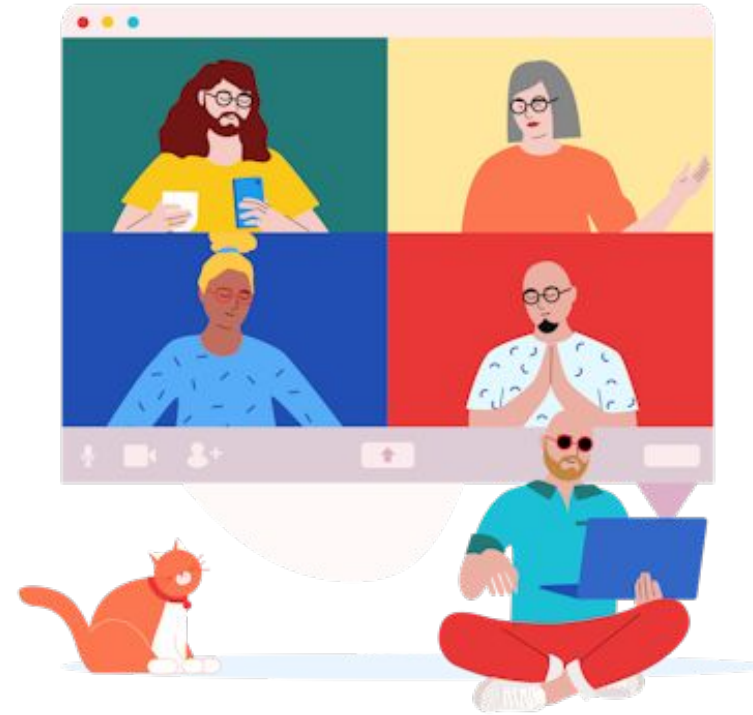
Switching on

- **work at work** - does not work anymore
- **work at home** - means distractions, duties, time management etc.
- I have a **start of the day optional team sync**, team can discuss anything, from world news, company questions, projects, private life, today's mood etc.



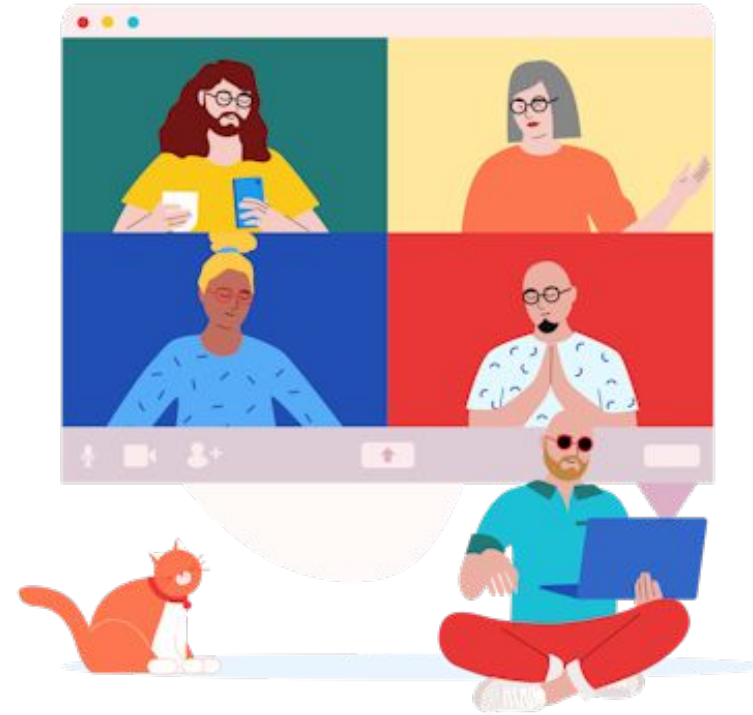
Switching off

- **Support the team members in after work activities:**
 - embrace their exercises and hobbies
 - support spending time with family and friends
 - talk about pursuits and hobbies
 - allow them to speak about their achievements
- loud



Build work-related and off-work relationship

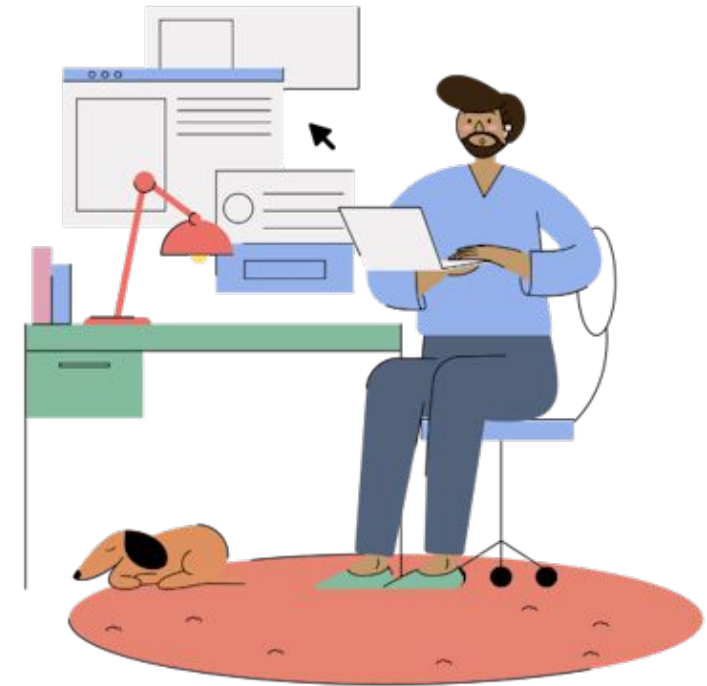
- **Online meeting can be like office kitchen and handle both professional and private discussions**
 - open communication of their feelings and fears
 - be open on the private life topics



Work and Family

- The conflict never got bigger - **You work at home**
- Build the art of detachment
- **Allow people to decide their work time and work balance**

- **Support the team members in:**
 - pushing private things into calendar openly
 - show their time availability
 - support their own work planning

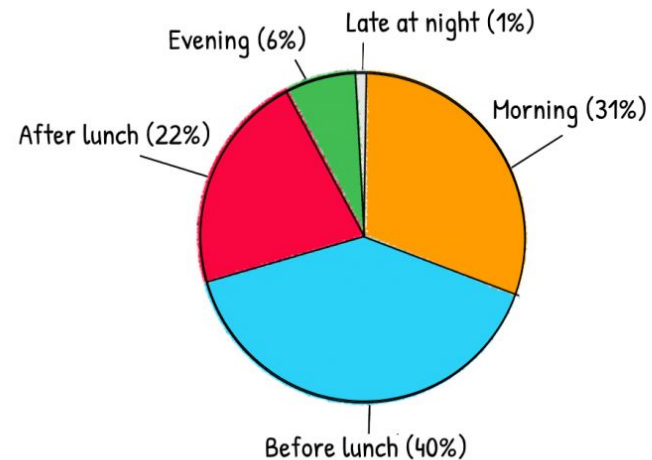


Weekdays vs Weekends

- it is **not 9 to 5 work any more**
- The weekdays and weekends is a part of the “**old world**”
- give freedom to the team to decide the work days and work time
- I try to focus on **40 hours weekly not hours and days of the week**
- Require the team members to be transparent



During what time of the day do you reach **your productivity peak?**



Source: TalentLMS Remote Work Survey

F-2-F vs 1-2-1

- **For me**, F-2-F in in person, 1-2-1 is online
- I try to do them on weekly basis
 - my team member is the **owner of content**
 - **they decide** how to spend that time
 - I try to give them opportunity for F2F in the office, but 1-2-1 online is also okay
- Be open for alternatives:
 - remote walks
 - visits in new cities - Yours or Your team mates
 - meeting in the half way
 - lunch/dinner jump together



Office vs Home

- I had accept that my company did not provide us with a remote setup
 - we were asked to take laptops and had options to take monitors
- Be respectful that some people work in shared rooms
- Not everyone has the same capabilities and **this is their HOME as primary objective, WORK is the secondary objective**

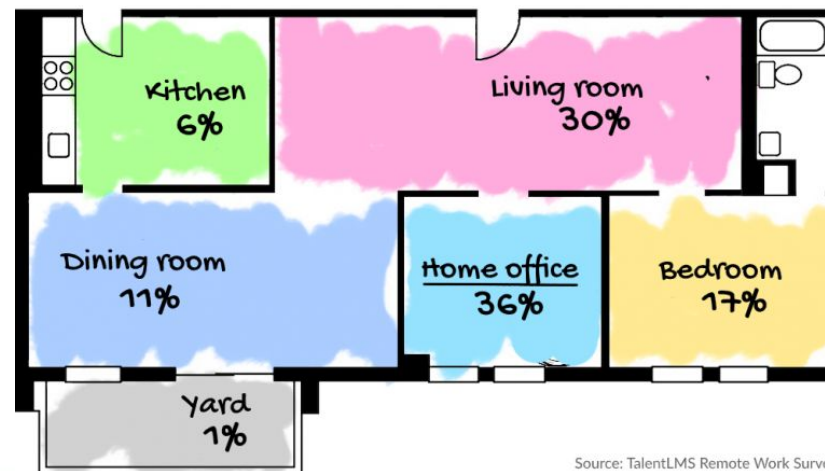


Working space challenge

- not all of us can build or create additional room
- understand Your people situation, accept family members - children on the meeting/in the room
- do not build unachievable expectations
 - Trigger Your company to support team members in building some work spaces solutions



What part of their home do remote workers work from?

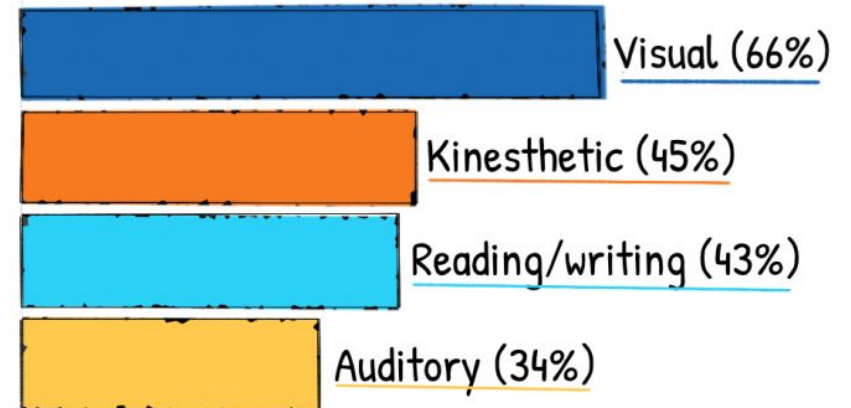


Source: TalentLMS Remote Work Survey

Trainings offline vs online

- We did not find best solution for that
- All depends on learning preferences - research
Your own team
- Learning platforms sometimes are just an illusion, that we will have the time for them

What type of learner would you categorize yourself as?



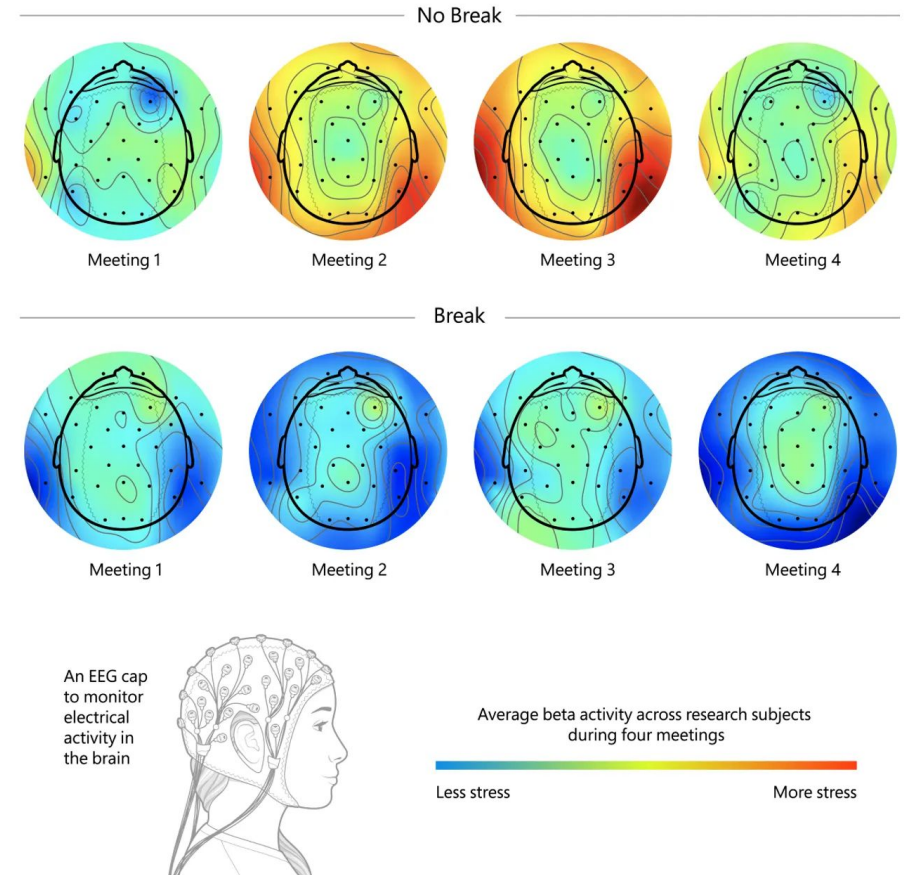
Source: TalentLMS Remote Work Survey

Meeting overload



Meeting overload

- Online meetings have no limits on room or time capacity
- **Make breaks between meetings**
- We get invited to many many topics and have to be selective
- Ask the team to push as much as possible to calendar (incl. focus time, breaks, private stuff)



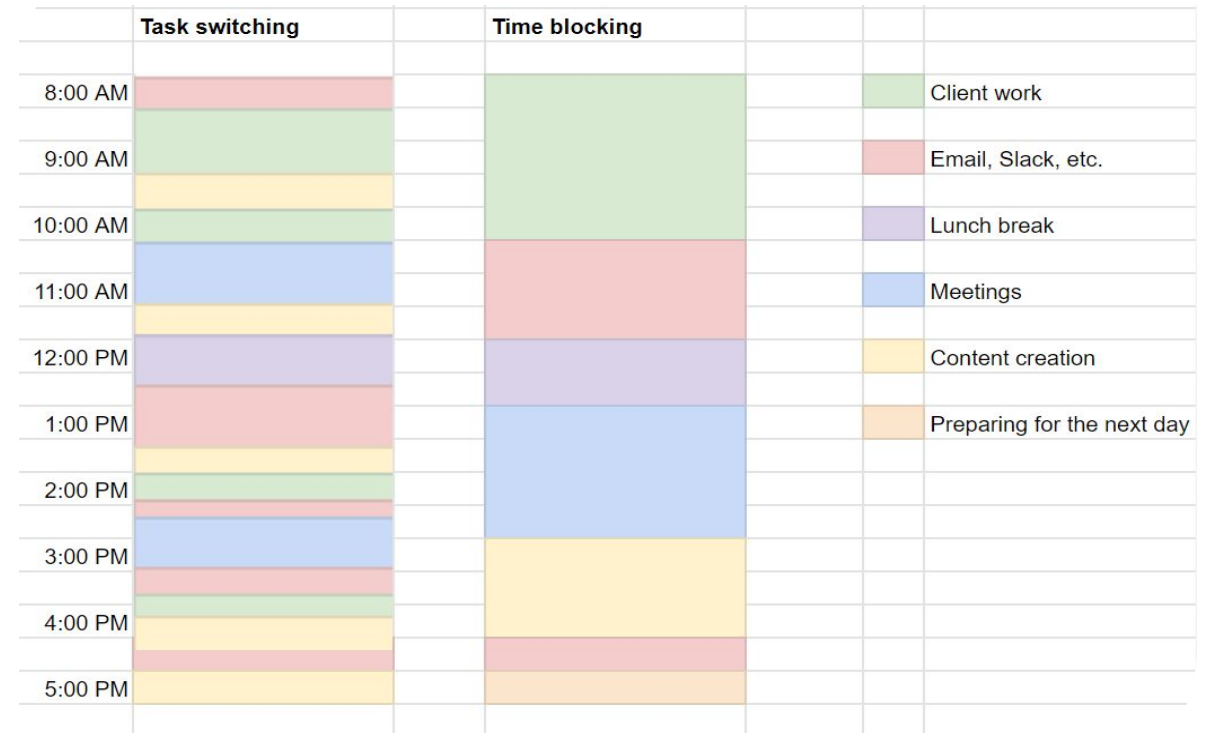
Deep focus

- Ask the team to be transparent
- They need to reserve slots in the calendar or will lose it due to meetings
- Be **respectful** to the “deep focus” plans
- **Deep focus does not have to happen by the computer**
- Deep focus might be a training exercise of an individual



Calendar management

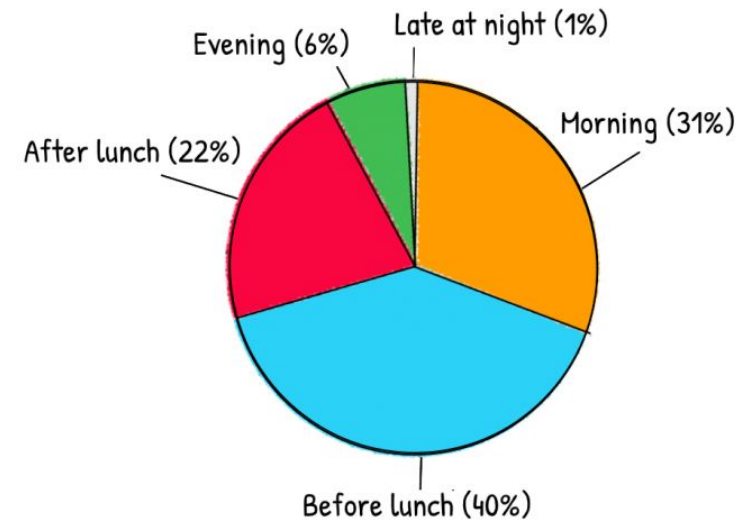
- **Calendar is Your main tool** for time allocation and plans communication - **Schedule more than just meetings**
- Support pushing there also private and outside of work plans - **Colour-code your calendar**
- **Share our calendars with each other !!**
- Mark and embrace **the breaks and breathing space**



Office hours vs elastic work time

- Be open and supportive
- Use it as preparation for Multi-timezones support
- Understand the home and family conditions that might impact the daily plan
- Leave people some time to actually work
- Understand Your teams specific needs and daily routine

During what time of the day do you reach **your productivity peak?**

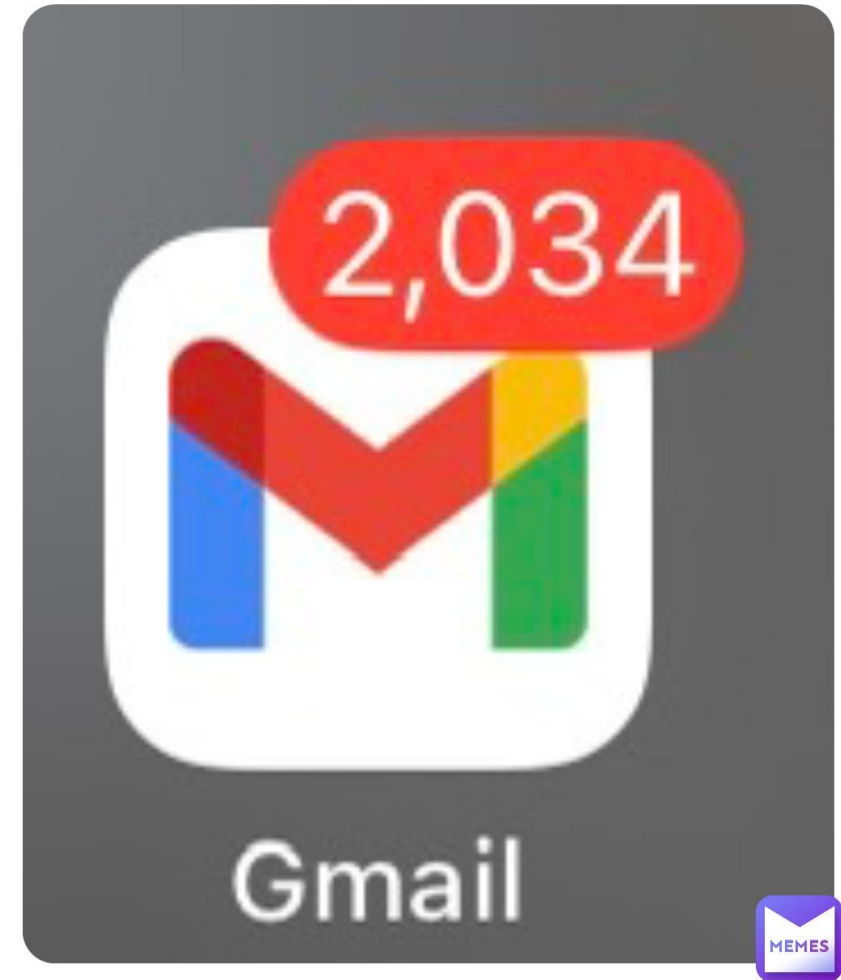


Source: TalentLMS Remote Work Survey

Sync vs A-Sync communication

- Sync is the new A-Sync
- Old A-Sync is forgotten
- Do not expect immediate response, if it's urgent just call them
- Some of us **check email once a day, week, month...**
- Gmail for business is not an Outlook Express, many of us are missing messages/calendar meetings, and being worse in workload management

Nobody:
People with gmail



Team building

- **This is Your task now**, forget the HR/company organized integrations
- Company wide integrations and office integrations are a symbol of the past
- Be creative !!
- Be open for **off-site**, sometimes **off-days**
- Remote teams can have **remote team buildings !!**



Thank You

Any questions?

