

BUILDING AN
EFFECTIVE
VIRTUAL WORKPLACE

The 4 Rs of an Effective Virtual Workplace



1 | RELATIONSHIP

- Build in social interactions
- Simulate the in-office experience w/ formal & informal conversations



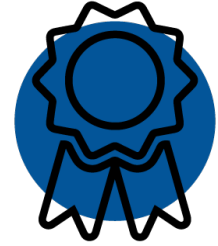
2 | RELIABILITY

- Agree on communication channels, guidelines, and working hours
- Meet expected timelines; communicate delays/issues early



3 | RESULTS

- Establish measurable goals and targets
- Hold regular touchpoints (e.g., check-in and check-out mtgs)



4 | RECOGNITION

- Proactively seek ways to share / solicit feedback
- Build a culture of celebration and collaboration!

C O L L A B O R A T I O N T O O L S

Setting up the Virtual Workplace



MARIE THE MANAGER



TIM THE TEAM MEMBER

- Set up & test internet connection and collaboration tools.
- Establish a workspace at home that is free of distractions.
- Be available during business hours on the Office Tools (Skype, Email, etc.)
- Be responsive / aligned with the hours of your client team – 5 days a week during their business hours (some flexibility for Europe and Asia)

DAY IN THE LIFE OF A VIRTUAL TEAM MEMBER



Formal & Informal Communications



MARIE THE MANAGER

- Create and align on communication expectations with the team (daily, weekly status updates).
- Proactively check-in with your team to ensure they have what they need and to provide feedback where needed (consider daily check-in and check-out mtgs).
- Set up regular check point calls with your team members. This could be 15 or 30 minute calls every other day. Solicit feedback on:
 - What's going well
 - What's not going well
 - How are you feeling
 - When you need help

8am

10AM | TEAM STANDUP

11AM | WORKSHOP
PREP

12pm

1PM | WORKSHOP

3PM | WORKSHOP
DEBRIEF

4PM | MARIE/TIM
WEEKLY 1:1

6pm



TIM THE TEAM MEMBER

- Review the communication expectations set with the team; ask questions/express concerns where appropriate.
- Make sure your manager/counterparts know if you are not going to be available for any period of time during the day.
- Always respond to e-mails within 20 minutes, even if it is just a confirmation that you received the e-mail and are working on it.
- Use the regular check point calls with your manager to share:
 - What's going well
 - What's not going well
 - How are you feeling
 - When you need help

Leading Effective Meetings



MARIE THE MANAGER



TIM THE TEAM MEMBER

- Meeting Facilitation 101 – Recap:
 - Checking – let everyone know who is in the meeting
 - Review the expected outcomes from the meeting and agenda
 - Actively solicit feedback from attendees
 - Is anyone unclear?
 - Does anyone disagree?
 - Are there any questions?
 - Recap Key Decisions and Action Items
- Turn on your video camera and encourage others to have their camera on
- Be present and pay attention
- Don't fiddle with the phone
- DO NOT work on other things
- Share only the application and not the whole screen (to avoid distractions on screen)
- Even if meeting minutes will be sent by someone else, write down your own notes/ actions

Facilitating Workshops Remotely*



MARIE THE MANAGER



TIM THE TEAM MEMBER

- Ensure tools are in place and tested; roles & responsibilities are assigned (e.g., scribe)
 - Leverage video: allows you to read expressions and body language & forces participants to focus
 - Use virtual “whiteboards” to enhance the dialogue: e.g., [MS Teams](#)
- Structuring the Workshop:
 - Break your workshops into even smaller chunks when possible
 - Add small games / brain teasers in the middle of the sessions (e.g., allow time to share fun facts about each other)
 - Simulate “water-cooler” conversations: build in breaks and allow buffer time before and after workshops/meetings for informal information sharing / relationship-building
- Communication with participants:
 - Have someone on your team manage the discussion board.
 - Do people need a break? Does anyone have a question?
 - Silence is not compliance, need to hear from everyone on the phone.
- Feedback for continuous improvement: leverage tools like MS Forms to gather feedback

*Workshops are typically longer meetings with multiple participants

Providing / Soliciting Feedback



MARIE THE MANAGER

- Proactively schedule time for providing feedback after important meetings
- Create opportunities and a safe environment for your team to share feedback
- Good Practices in Providing Feedback:
 - Helpful & Direct: What you say should help the recipient in the long run & be direct about your message to ensure your feedback is clearly understood
 - Private vs. Public: Praise in public, provide constructive feedback in private
 - Immediacy: Provide criticism when the details are still fresh
 - Humility & Good intent: be open-minded and prepared to be proven wrong.



TIM THE TEAM MEMBER

- Be open to constructive feedback and be proactive in soliciting feedback
- Good Practices in Soliciting Feedback:
 - Preparedness: Have a question ready - it can be as general as “How can this team be better” to as specific as “What can I do during tomorrow’s pitch to better convey our value proposition?”
 - Discomfort zone: As you’re preparing to receive the feedback, be comfortable with a few seconds of silence.
 - Understanding: Manage the natural instinct to become defensive when you hear feedback.

8am

10AM | TEAM STANDUP

11AM | WORKSHOP
PREP

12pm

1PM | WORKSHOP

3PM | WORKSHOP
DEBRIEF

4PM | MARIE/TIM
WEEKLY 1:1

6pm

THANK YOU



MICHELLE TARTALIO

Michelle Tartalio is the head of marketing and corporate strategy for Clarkston Consulting. In her role with the firm, Michelle is responsible for the growth strategy, aligning services with industry demand, and strategic thought leadership development.

[EMAIL](#)[LINKEDIN](#)

ABOUT CLARKSTON CONSULTING

Businesses across the consumer products and life sciences industries partner with Clarkston Consulting to enhance strategic decision-making, improve operational efficiencies, implement new technologies, and promote business growth and market diversification. Leveraging deep functional and industry expertise, our people discover, design, and deliver solutions that fit your business, your goals, and your future.

At Clarkston, your purpose is our purpose.

[Clarkstonconsulting.com](https://clarkstonconsulting.com).