

At Connect the Dots Consulting, we are committed to providing practical and timely leadership coaching and development. At a time when leaders are stretched to the limit, we want to share a Toolkit for effective “Work from Home” Leadership. These tried-and-true leadership practices are worth a reminder in these volatile times.

## Leading with Emotional Intelligence

**Now, more than ever, it’s important to use Emotional Intelligence when engaging with your team.**

Your team members are navigating things they’ve never experienced before: Their home and work lives have collided with stay at home orders. Unemployment is at an all-time high. As a result, your employees may be experiencing a variety of emotions: fear, stress, loneliness, anxiety, isolation, worry, depression, overwhelmed, frustration, etc.

Effectively addressing these feelings with **Emotional Intelligence** can help to foster greater productivity and engagement. Here are steps you can take:

1. **First, check in with your own emotions.** Are you managing your own stress, responding with empathy, and making sure that you are balanced? Put your “own mask on first” before reaching out to help and support others.
2. **Next, ask employees how they are doing.** Really ask how they are handling things and feeling. You may need to ask a few times. Remember, not all employees will feel comfortable opening up. That’s OK. Don’t push too hard. They will know you care and are there for them if needed.
3. **Ask more questions to understand and gain clarity.** Something like, “You hesitated and sighed before answering that last question, is there anything else you are thinking about?” This will also help them name the emotion they might be feeling and gain clarity.
4. **Use open-ended statements to encourage more conversations.** Something as simple as “Tell me more about that” will go a long way to help someone feel safe sharing.
5. **Validate feelings through reflection.** For example, “I can’t imagine how stressful it is to keep up with your job and manage school assignments with your children.”
6. **Reassure when you can.** Obviously, you can’t guarantee someone won’t get the virus or confirm a position won’t be eliminated. You can reassure them that we will get through this together and you are there to help and support them.
7. **Be transparent.** Share your own feelings. Provide information as you can.
8. **Brainstorm with them to help them problem-solve.** What ideas have they already tried? What worked? What didn’t? What ideas do you have?
9. **For serious issues, rely on resources available through your benefits plan,** such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
10. **Keep the communication going.** This isn’t a “one and done” conversation, but an ongoing one.

### What is Emotional Intelligence?

A set of **emotional and social skills** that collectively establish how well we:



Perceive and express ourselves



Develop and maintain social relationships



Cope with challenges



Use emotional information in an effective, meaningful way

We would appreciate hearing from you as to the strategies that are working or not working in our virtual workplaces. Please drop us a note, follow us on [Linked In](#) and [Twitter](#), or check out our [website](#).