

managing a distributed team

by guest contributor Anne-Marie Lowery

A bit about Anne-Marie, she is a senior HR business leader in the tech industry and also runs a truly innovative coaching company called 'The Inside Out Coach' utilising the power of nature, the outdoors to connect, breakthrough and build new habits. Anne-Marie is a certified Executive and Life Coach and hold qualifications in Fitness Instruction and Personal Training. In addition, she holds a Degree in Communications Studies, a Masters in Human Resource Management and certified through the British Psychology Society for Psychometric Assessments.



Connection & Community

Building connection and community virtually is probably going to be one of the most difficult things you will do as a leader. When in a shared office space, it's easier to catch up as you walk by someone's desk or shoot the breeze and chat about their weekends as you enter into a team meeting. These social connections don't happen automatically while working remotely. Therefore, you need to work at creating this connection and community while you are all based in different locations.

Tips on building connection & community:

- Build in creative ice breaker questions at the beginning of each team meeting
**hint - ask dynamic questions, ask questions whereby everyone learns more about their team mates, ask questions that evoke thinking, ask questions that are fun*
- Create a non-work chat channel
**hint - WhatsApp is great for this*
- Consider your onboarding strategy - how will you ensure that new people on your team feel connected and a part of the community?
- Build a buddy system - perhaps this can be a useful tool for onboarding new talent?
- Create a theme of the day
**ideas - team pets (get creative!), remote working views, question of the day/week, one word check-ins...*

Dozens of awesome IceBreaker questions – you're welcome :

1. What's the best hotel you have ever stayed in and why?
2. If you had to relieve the same day for the rest of your life, which day would you choose?
3. What's the last thing you bought for under 50 euro/dollars that you love and use often?
4. What's your guilty pleasure ?
5. Which season fits your personality?
6. If you could have any fictional character as a friend, who would you choose and why?
7. What's the last random thing that made you smile ?
8. What's your favourite quote?
9. Which famous person have you met?
10. Who are three people you want on your team if there was a zombie apocalypse?
11. What would your rap name be?
12. What's your most used emoji?
13. Which celebrity do you shamelessly follow in the news?

14. What's the worst haircut you've ever had?
15. What's the most embarrassing thing that's happened to you during a date?
16. What's your most powerful and vivid memory?
17. What's the first music you bought?
18. What's one of your pet peeves?
19. What's the best date you've ever been on?
20. What's the worst job you've ever had?
21. Describe your worst date ever.
22. What's the best advice you've ever received?
23. What's something that you will NEVER do again?
24. What activity do you enjoy so much that it makes you lose track of time?
25. When you were younger, what did you want to be when you grew up?
26. What's something you believed earlier in your career but think about differently now?
27. What was your favourite subject in school?
28. What book have you recently read that you would recommend and why?
29. What's the last thing you completed on your bucket list?
30. What's the best gift you have ever received?
31. What show on Netflix did you binge watch embarrassingly fast?
32. If you could buy your dream house, what is one weird room or feature you would have?
33. If you could do anything in the next year, what would it be?
34. If you could have one super power, what would you choose?
35. If you could go back in time, what one thing would you tell your teenage self?
36. If you could compete in the Olympics, which sport would you choose?
37. If you could instantly be an expert in a subject, what would it be?
38. If you could only have 5 apps on your phone, what would they be?
39. If you could live in a sitcom, which one would it be?
40. If you could arm wrestle any historical figure, who would you choose and why?
41. If you could only eat one meal everyday for the rest of your life, what would it be?