



AMICÜS

Work From Home An Emergency Guide

Zoe Sharan | Version 1 | 16.03.2020

This Guide

WHY I'VE PUT IT TOGETHER

At a time like now so many of us in HR are working on the same things (coronavirus comms, updating our safety policies etc).

So, rather than separately working on the same things, let's save each other the from identical googling and all come together as a network and community to freely share helpful and useful information.

My contribution is this emergency guide around getting onto working from home initiatives, if you don't know where to start.

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATION

Start with the end in mind – It's 2020 and if working from home isn't an existing option for your people, it should be.

This isn't my personal opinion, it's extensive research i.e. two or three days WFH days per week appears to be the right amount of WFH time in "normal" world circumstances.

So think where this could go, and plan for it to go there. The times of the most disruption are the most opportune times to create progressive changes (let me know if you'd like elaboration!)

AND THEN ...

This is my first draft.

I would LOVE feedback on:

- What's missing?
- Suggested tips to include next tip?
- What doesn't make sense?
- Alternate views?

And ... ask me for more info about anything that's in here! Links, articles, anything else.

Start with the end in mind

WHAT I MEAN BY THIS

You may be putting together an emergency Work From Home plan however, think about what it could link to in the long term (i.e. strategy and initiatives) if it goes past Covid19. Examples:

- Wellness programs
- Social Impact Initiatives
- Corporate Responsibility Initiatives
- Support for Carers
- Domestic Violence Initiatives
- Your EVP and employer brand

Language and Policy

Does a name really matter?

QUESTIONS

- We're talking about 'Work From Home' (WFH). But, will your employees be only working from home? What about a café? What about a library? What about a co-working space?
- Should your employees work location up to them or up to you?
- Do you imagine all employees have a quiet space in their homes to get work done? Or might they have people who live with them coming and going making noise while the employee is focusing on their work?

SUGGESTIONS

- Answer this from a Covid19 perspective and also answer this from a long term perspective if WFA sticks
- Consider a 'Work from Anywhere' (WFA) Policy vs 'Work from Home'
- Solve today and plan for the future



Other language to be across

WORK TERMS TO BE ACROSS

- Flexible Working
- Agile Working
- Activity Based Working (ABW).
Note: This is not Hot Desking

WORK TYPES TO BE ACROSS

- Deep work
- Shallow work
- Collaborative work
 - *Could be more!*

SUGGESTION

- So there's no confusion down the track, aim to get consistent use of terms in your communications plans



Here's our Policy

HERE ARE THE HEADINGS WE USE

For us Work From Home falls into Work From Anyway and it sits within ABW. Included in our Policy are these headings:

- This Policy and Amicus Values
- What is ABW at Amicus
- Working Remotely
- In the Office
- Amicus Time and GreenTime
- Team Connectivity
- Performance
- Safety
- Technology

Policy and wording

ABOUT

- The way policies are worded are a company's message to its employees about how they see them
- So many policies are police-like and controlling that they may as well say "you're all bad people so here we are, ready to catch you out, with this policy"
- So many policies also skip the part of tying in companies values

SUGGESTIONS

- Design the policy for the majority of your well intending people, not the minority that might go and catch a movie
- Assume positive intentions and go with an approach that's about creating an environment of mutual trust
- Create a values alignment. This is the difference between WFA being something that's a workaround (for coronavirus) verses it being about enabling productivity
- Remember, sometimes a "rule" can really backfire

ABW Policy

These guidelines have been developed to outline the principles of Activity Based Working (ABW) at Amicus and provide practical tips for when and how we apply them. This will help to ensure we balance our work and personal responsibilities holistically.

This Policy and Amicus Values

Team Builder

- Amicus Leaders operate on trust and look to evaluate performance on outputs, not input

Accountability Driver

- Amicus allows and expects employees to use intelligence and sound judgement in their decisions about their work locations

Positivity Machine

- ABW aims to provide a finely-tuned workplace platform from which we can pursue our core objectives in the most employee-centric way possible

Working Remotely

At Amicus we support working remotely, be it from home, at a café, on the train, on the bus, anywhere really as long as you choose the right place for your work at that time. Working remotely may be occasional, regular or part of an ongoing flexible working arrangement. Some roles/tasks/meetings can be performed effectively from an offsite location, whilst there are other roles which are not suited to offsite work. Where it is not practical to achieve your goals then working remotely is not supported. The following tips achieve success when working remotely:

- Have clear objectives in place when you are working remotely so your leader knows what you plan to achieve for the day (use the daily huddle to communicate this).
- There will be times when you need to be in the office and your leader has every right to ask you to come in on a day you might ordinarily work remotely for certain meetings, projects and team connectivity.
- Hold yourself accountable and be organised and effective with your time management.
- We expect that if you are working remotely that you are free from distraction and have a quiet space where you can do your best work.
- It is your responsibility to arrange care for dependants. It is not suitable to use working remotely as a substitute for care.
- New Starters may need to limit remote work initially while getting to know their team and Discovering Amicus via their Induction Program.

Illustrate it

ABOUT

- Don't assume people know how to do WFA, and be a team player, if they haven't before
- Your policy could benefit from illustrative examples. In saying this, illustrative examples shouldn't only live in policies
- Amicus could go on for hours about moments and the trifecta that creates them. Let me know if you'd like me to elaborate! Or attend a free Change Actually session (it's not a sneaky sales pitch. It's useful)

ILLUSTRATING A MOMENT YOU DO WANT

- For example "Jenny and Tuan have a proposal due at 5pm tomorrow. They're both working on it, but separately from home so they phone each other at 10am, 12pm and 3pm to ask each other questions that have popped up so they can meet the deadline without a last minute panic"

ILLUSTRATING A MOMENT YOU DON'T WANT

- For example "Jenny and Tuan have a proposal due within the hour. They are communicating by email only. They have more emails coming in about last minute changes that they cant keep up with. They both start emailing their Leader complaining about each other's last minute changes which creates 3 people having an unpleasant and unproductive experience."

Team Connectivity

ABOUT

- In the interest of promoting collaborative work relationships, it is essential that a reasonable amount of time be spent talking to and seeing each other
- It's not just about work, it's also about people not feeling isolated i.e. a wellness piece

SUGGESTIONS

- Daily team huddles can keep each other up to date, informed and in the loop.
- Still ensure schedules overlap within teams as much as possible
- Connectivity doesn't always need to be about work. Try virtual lunch dates, virtual Fridays drinks etc. These can be great ways to keep connections up.

Note: Image to the right too amusing to not include. It's from when we took our VC to the next level to enable remote collaboration →



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Performance

ABOUT

- WFA should be about outcomes and achievements above all else
- It should be BAU for people and their Leaders to have catch ups to ensure people are tracking to goals and discussing progress and results, despite them WFA

SUGGESTIONS

- Ramp up employees taking ownership and accountability for their roles
- Ramp up Leaders having a structure to setting individual goals, team goals and company goals
- Leaders to also have a structure to balance acknowledging achievements, and providing support to help their people achieve their goals
- In addition to talking about performance, Leaders to also talk about energy levels and gather feedback on what is (and isn't) working about WFA



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Safety

ABOUT

- Whether people are working remotely or in the office, employers have an obligation to ensure there are safe working practices in place as we know

SUGGESTIONS

- Read this:

Title: If you're working from home during the coronavirus outbreak, who's responsible for your safety?

By: Sophie Meixner

Source: ABC News (online)

Link: [click here](#)

ABC NEWS

Just In Politics World Business Analysis Sport Science Health Arts Fact C

If you're working from home during the coronavirus outbreak, who's responsible for your safety?

By Sophie Meixner

Updated about 6 hours ago



PHOTO: Employment law applies whether the employee works in the office or at home. (Supplied: Unsplash)

Technology

ABOUT

- If you don't have your technology, portable devices and VIR tools set up ... how do I say this ... you may be screwed ... if I was you, I would urgently get onto this
- This is a whole guide within itself! Cue Jon Gracie to enter stage right as he's played with everything and has views on what's-better-for what

SUGGESTIONS

- Urgently talk to Jon (I can put you in touch with him)
- Think about a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Policy if you don't already have one
- Think about keeping your data and systems safe from hackers, scams and IT security breaches by understanding IT and infrastructure security needs when people WFA
- Have solutions for people that don't have adequate internet connection (NBN or Broadband)



Developing Leaders for WFA

You will soon find out your Leader's capabilities

A true leader can lead through anything. I have plucked out some capabilities that (I believe) will determine a Leader's effectiveness of leading people remotely through WFA. I would suggest that you do some capability upskilling (webinars perhaps) in the areas most likely to trip up your leaders. Here is a way to assess this.

CAPABILITY	LOW SKILL SO UNLIKELY TO SUCCESSFULLY LEAD REMOTELY	TALENTED SO LIKELY TO SUCCESSFULLY LEAD REMOTELY
Trust Creator	Expects the team to trust them but it's not visa versa; does surprise check-in calls hoping to catch ppl out; believes employees need rules. Freaks out and micromanages when they cant "see" ppl	Assumes their team members have positive intentions; creates an environment of mutual trust; looks for opportunities to create values alignments
Team Connector	Team doesn't see/hear from Leader ordinarily so it's now weird if the leader starts regular catch ups during WFA period	Uses a variety of connecting techniques such as daily team huddles; has both formal and informational catch ups
Can Motivate Others	Has little insight into what motivates others	Knows what motivates different people and aligns work accordingly; makes people feel their contributions are visible and valued. All despite WFA
Communication Guru	May inform but lacks follow-through; may either hoard information or not see informing as important; may only have one communication mode – verbal or email.	Pre-empts the information needs of others; uses a variety of informing techniques; adapts information and style to each audience
Team Performance Conductor	Doesn't set individual goals, team goals and divisional goals; doesn't create a common mindset or challenge; skips anything to do with recognition; doesn't recognise or reward at all levels (individual, team, divisional); doesn't shape and distribute work in a way that encourages teamwork	Rallies others behind common team goals; focuses on outcomes and achievements above all else; has a structure to acknowledge progress, achievements, results and provides support where needed

Note: if a leader has just 1 direct report this can still be achieved

Question: Does anyone have anything official/better on this as this is 'the world according to Zoe'.

Continued ...



CAPABILITY	LOW SKILL SO UNLIKELY TO SUCCESSFULLY LEAD REMOTELY	TALENTED SO LIKELY TO SUCCESSFULLY LEAD REMOTELY
Delegates Appropriately	Provides incomplete or vague instructions; delegates work to people without giving them sufficient guidance; sets goals and objectives so easy to achieve that people are demotivated in the process; saves high-profile tasks for self.	Conveys clear performance expectations and follows up consistently; sets stretch goals and objectives, pushing individuals or teams to perform at higher levels; delegates work in a way that empowers ownership
Manages and Measures Work	Gathers little information about how things are going; provides inadequate feedback; fails to help others adjust course midstream.	Assumes responsibility for the outcomes of others; enforces individual accountability; works with people to establish explicit performance standards; tracks how work is progressing without meddling; is completely on top of what is going on and knows where things stand; provides balanced feedback at the most critical times
Wellness Creator	Skips anything to do with morale and belongingness; is so focused on tasks and outputs during WFA they miss signs of people feeling isolated, disconnected and alone	Frequently checks-in on energy levels; elicits feedback and ensures people feel safe to give it
Agile Learner	Uses same style and approach regardless of the situation; expects others to adjust to working their way; negative comments and thinking about WFA; struggles to learn in new situations.	Enjoys the challenge of WFA; experiments with numerous ways to make WFA work; where WFA doesn't work – views it as an opportunity for further experimentation and learning

The Trust Factor

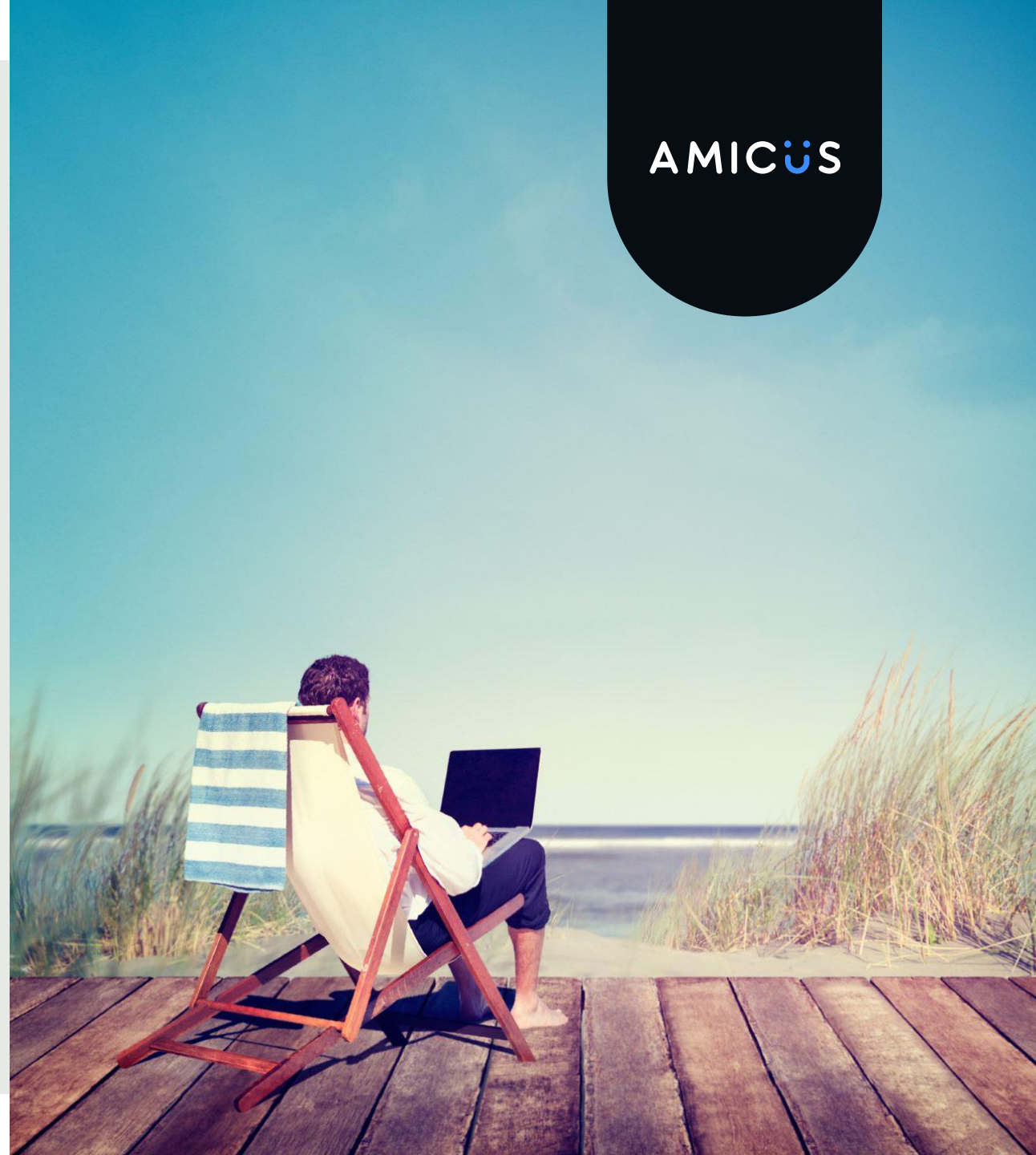
ABOUT

- There is a business case to trust people to keep WFA post coronavirus. Compared with people at low-trust companies, people at high-trust companies report: 74% less stress, 106% more energy at work, 50% higher productivity, 13% fewer sick days, 76% more engagement, 29% more satisfaction with their lives, 40% less burnout. This data was reported in HBR's 2017 article, The Neuroscience of Trust by Paul J. Zak

SUGGESTIONS

- Check out one of my previous blogs "Workplace Flexibility - It's a Matter of Trust". It shares 5 simple things that work for us which any company could immediately implement

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Train Leaders to lead Remote, Flexible and Virtual Teams

ABOUT

- Not all Leaders have looked after people remotely before so may not have the know-how to lead from afar
- It's not just about better written communication skills and avoiding the 20,000 reply-alls that could replace face to face meetings
- There are employees who could feel isolated and lose a sense of belonging if working from home goes for an extended period

SUGGESTIONS

- Jump onto offering Leaders webinars on how to lead remote or virtual teams. There are some free ones currently going around (ask me if you cant find them)
- There are also great articles on this (ask me if you cant find some)
- Equip leaders to deal with WFA and then flexible working requests down the track



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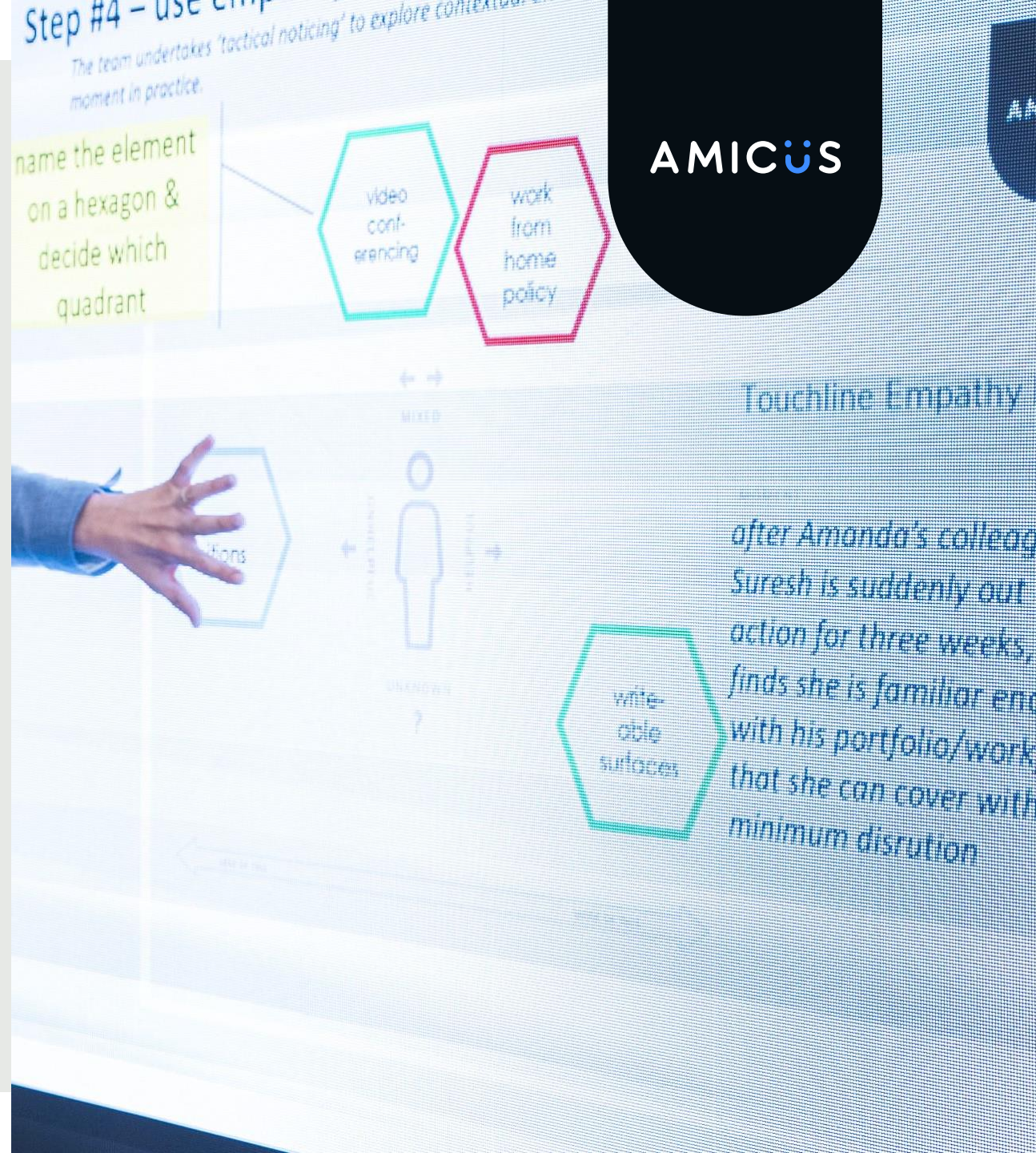
Do some persona work

ABOUT

- How u is Mary in Sales going to use WFA? What about Joel in Accounts? Harry in Marketing? Sally in IT? What are the common challenges they'll all face? Where are the nuances based on roles?
- What about Leaders? Leaders who think that WFA will come at the expense of something (e.g their team's recognition, being able to "see" what's going on etc) need different tips to other Leaders who have done WFA before

SUGGESTIONS

- Get to the bottom of mindsets, ways of working, and culture. Do some persona work to guide people on how to make WFH actually work vs being simply a thing about quarantine (google persona + workshop + ideo)
- Think about doing a team charter and/or examples of the mindsets you want people to have



Other Stuff

Go Cross Country

ABOUT

- When I've worked for large globals and attended regional or global conferences, one thing I learned is usually we were all working on the same things, but didn't know each other was working on the same.

SUGGESTIONS

- Check in with your colleagues in other countries ... who's working from home and nailing it? Can they share their stuff with you?
- The countries with the most 2020 ways of working (not as in vision/sight, as in the year we're in) are NZ, Finland, Singapore, and Luxembourg if you have contacts there.



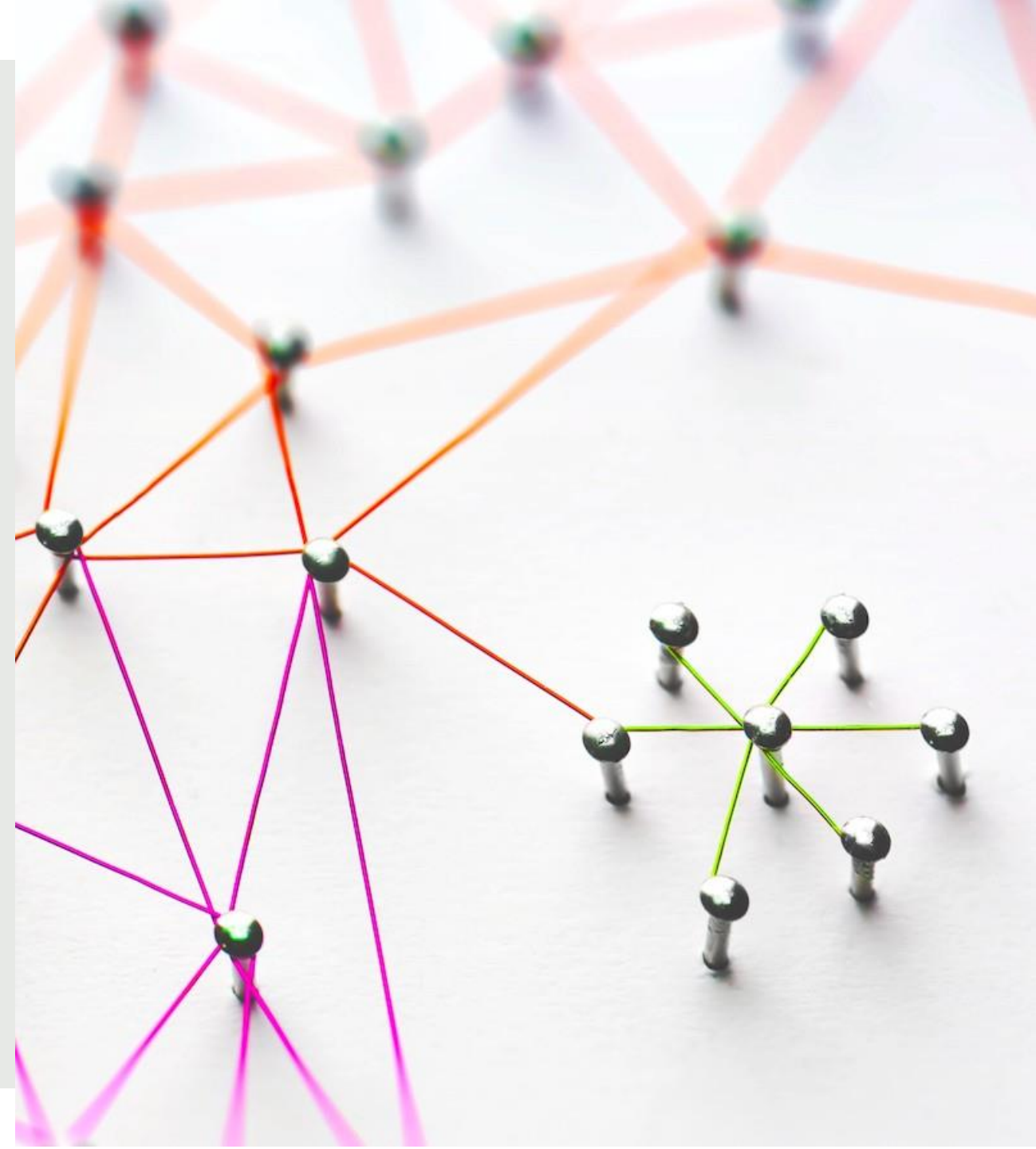
Network network network

ABOUT

- We all love a paid conference as we get quantities of info, connections, ideas. But, you don't need to wait for these for great info when there are people who are willing to share everyday – get to know who they are.

SUGGESTIONS

- If you know a workplace that does WFA or Flexibility well, ask someone from there to come and share with you or your team.
- Offer yourself up in return to talk about some thing your company does well. Don't underestimate yourself. Just last week I rocked up to chat to a group about what helped us be a Great Places to Work winner. I thought it was a lovely chat - apparently what I shared was useful. There should be more sharing more often.



Measure it if you must

QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES

- In your engagement survey there will be a question for sure that WFH could tie to. When the next annual survey is complete, see if the needle has been moved. Or, run this as a pulse check question when we return to business as usual for comparison.

QUALITATIVE APPROACHES

- Share stories - What worked about WFH and why? Where didn't it work and how was it fixed? Or, what didn't WFH work and how did it get back on track? You can still spot patterns in stories – which is data.

Reads and Resources

FOR DATA

If you ultimately need a business case to make WFA a permanent option, these organisations offer great data:

- Jacob Morgan
- Gartner
- FlexJobs
- Leesman Index
- LinkedIn
- Harvard Business Review
- Business Insider
- Josh Bersin
- Korn Ferry
- HCA Mag
- CEB Global
- World Economic Forum
- CEB benchmarking reports
- HRD Australia
- Gallup
- McKinsey
- FlexCareers
- HRM Online
- Bain & Company

Note search “work from home”, “flexibility”, “work anywhere”

Reads and Resources

FOR CASE STUDIES

To accompany your data, great case studies are available on the following companies transitioning to flexibility which included Work From Anywhere:

- PWC
- PepsiCo
- Microsoft
- AGL
- Amicus Workspaces (as in where I work)

FOR WAYS OF WORKING AND OTHER TIPS

- Great Places To Work winners – check out the list of who's on their and check their websites or ask their contacts there for how they do flexibility. If they've won this award, they'll do flexibility.
- LearnX – there's an award decided to Flexible Work. Check out who's won it, their website, their blogs etc

Thank you