EBOOK

A manager's guide to leveraging PI in a remote work environment

Addressing the unknowns of remote work

As a leader, managing a remote workforce comes with its own challenges. A team that performed well in an office setting may encounter unique roadblocks working from home. Communication can break down, and team dynamics may shift. You may need to come up with new ways to keep these employees engaged and motivated.

For those new to remote work, these unknowns may feel scary. Thankfully, a data-driven approach can provide the insights to address and tackle them. By using objective people data and the tools available in the PI software, you can demystify the following relationships:
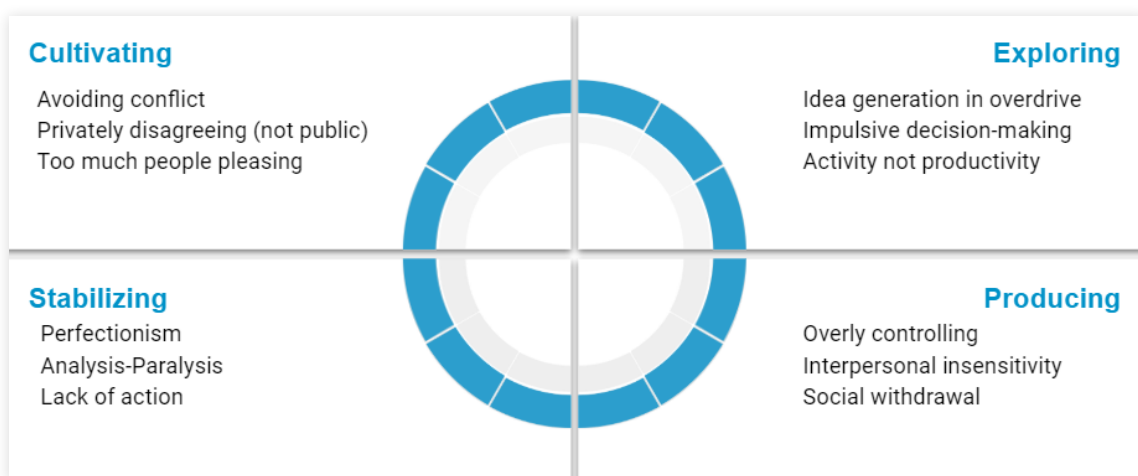
1. **ME:** Develop a strong awareness of your natural superpowers as a leader. From there, anticipate how others on the team will respond to your leadership style. That way, you can tailor your leadership to fit their needs.

2. **ME + 1:** Understand the needs of individual team members. Learn how to effectively manage and coach them based on your behavioral relationship. This helps ensure you give them the support they need to be their most productive selves.

3. **ME + TEAM:** Understand the needs of the collective team. Then determine where these needs may conflict—and how to address these issues. Doing so will improve team dynamics, strengthen communication, and help the team work effectively.

Understanding your own leadership superpowers

Manager self-awareness contributes directly to employee engagement. When you're self-aware, it means you understand your own natural behavioral tendencies. It also means you have the powerful ability to adapt your leadership to the needs of others. Do this successfully, and you can motivate and get the best out of your team members.

In times of stress or pressure, we all revert back to our most natural behavioral tendencies. It's an instinctual "fight, flight, or freeze" response. For example, some may become aggressive decision-makers (fight). Some may shy away from conflict (flight), while others struggle to take action altogether (freeze).

The image below shows where an individual or team might find themselves in a time of crisis (such as COVID-19). To find out which behaviors you may exhibit, plot your behavioral pattern within Team Work Styles. Then, check to see which of the below quadrants you naturally belong to.

Cultivating
Avoiding conflict
Privately disagreeing (not public)
Too much people pleasing

Exploring
Idea generation in overdrive
Impulsive decision-making
Activity not productivity

Stabilizing
Perfectionism
Analysis-Paralysis
Lack of action

Producing
Overly controlling
Interpersonal insensitivity
Social withdrawal

Embracing your natural strengths—and addressing any gaps

By understanding where you fall in terms of your natural tendencies, you can lean on behaviors well suited for remote leadership. You can also curtail behaviors you may be in danger of overemphasizing. You can even identify leadership gaps where you may "stretch" yourself to fill a team need.

For example, say you fall within the Exploring quadrant. In times of pressure, you may come up with some great initiatives to keep the team productive. But if you aren't careful and take this too far, you could spread your team too thin. In this case, you may make a conscious effort to track your ideas—and ease off the throttle when the team has a full plate.

On the following page are two PI tools that will help you assess your behavioral strengths and weaknesses.

Behavioral report

Your [Behavioral Report](#)provides a detailed look into your personal drives, needs, and behaviors. The report includes your behavioral pattern, along with a summary of your personality. It also includes a list of your most prominent traits (e.g., detail-oriented and precise).

When viewing your Behavioral Report, check the "Management Style" box. This will provide additional bullets highlighting your most natural managerial tendencies. Perhaps you're cautious with taking risks and prefer handling important tasks yourself. Or, you may regularly delegate details and have a high tolerance for risk.

Manager Development Chart

Once you have a firm understanding of your natural leadership style, make use of the Manager Development Chart. This tool helps you learn how to use your behavioral strengths to manage your team. Or, you can use it to identify potential blind spots.

The Manager Development Chart also provides you with personalized self-coaching tips. Use these tips to identify where you can adjust your leadership style to fit the needs of your employees.

For example, if you're a detail-driven leader, one tip may be to avoid overthinking decisions. By contrast, if you prefer the big picture, a tip may be to seek out additional data to support any decisions.

Manager Development Chart

Very extroverted

Thoughtful delegator
People oriented
Builds team cohesion
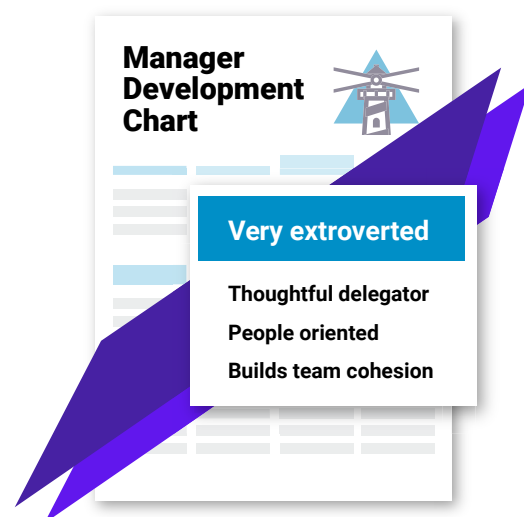
ME + 1

Maintaining strong 1-on-1 relationships with direct reports

To guarantee your team's success, you must understand the needs of your employees as they pertain to remote work. You'll likely need to manage certain team members differently than others.

Start by giving yourself a high-level overview of your team's needs. Download the behavioral pattern of each of your direct reports. For each employee, review their individual factors (i.e., A, B, C, D), noting whether each is "high" or "low." Then, refer to the chart (found on the next page) to learn how you can tailor your approach to fit these behavioral needs.

From there, use the following PI tools to dig deeper with individual team members.

Factors and needs in a remote setting

	Low	High
A **Dominance**	• Offer this team member encouragement and reassurance where possible. • This individual values being praised as part of a collective team. Take time on group video calls to recognize the team for a job well done. • Don't make this person compete with other team members. Give them opportunities to collaborate with others on projects.	• Avoid micromanaging this team member. Give them autonomy over their daily activities and routine. • Regularly talk to this individual about the bigger picture. Make sure they understand how their role fits into it. • Give them challenging goals, and make sure they have an opportunity to be competitive. • Make sure you take time to recognize them for a job well done. Let them know how their work impacts the larger organization.
B **Extraversion**	• Provide an agenda for meetings ahead of time using email or Slack. Give this team member time to think about what they would like to share ahead of any scheduled meetings. • Be sure to encourage their input in meetings, so the agenda isn't dominated by more extroverted members of the group. • Don't expect this person to brainstorm in the middle of a meeting. Instead, invite to follow up with thoughts and ideas over email or instant messaging after the call has ended. • Offer them individual, private recognition for a job well done.	• Schedule regular video call check-ins with this team member. Give them an opportunity to discuss their ideas and feelings. • Recognize this individual publicly for a job well done. Ideally provide this praise in front of other team members, such as on a group video call. • Arrange opportunities for this person to interact with other colleagues and team members. Consider arranging a team happy hour, book club, or other virtual get together.
C **Patience**	• Keep this team member busy. Make sure they have a variety of work to be doing. • Avoid giving this person repetitive tasks. • Regularly check in to ensure they have enough different priorities to handle. • Remove blockers for them. Allow them to make decisions and take action quickly.	• Give this team member time to adapt to their new remote situation, especially if new to them. Sudden change can be disconcerting to them. • Make sure you protect this person from rapidly shifting priorities. Give them the ability to work at a steady pace. • Rally the team around this individual, and make sure they feel supported. • Be sure to explain the ""why"" behind any new changes. Take the time to make sure they understand this reason and feel both comfortable and supported.
D **Formality**	• Give this team member the freedom to get things done in a flexible manner. • Avoid weighing this person down with too much structure or process. • Offer them help with the finer details. Consider pairing them with a more detail-focused team member on collaborative projects.	• Make sure to communicate expectations clearly and ensure they know what they are working on. • Provide detailed, clear instruction on tasks. • Provide them with opportunities to build expertise in a given area. • Give them a clear process and structure to follow. • Allow them time to get things done correctly and don't rush them to provide work they will perceive to be in ""draft"" or ""unfinished"" form.

Management Strategy Guide

When managing remote team members, it can be easy to misread people's emotions. Without the body language and vocal cues you get working in an office, you may believe a team member is engaged when they're really not. So using behavioral data to understand how well you're motivating someone can be very powerful.

We recommend generating a Management Strategy Guide for you and each employee. During your next 1-on-1 meeting with these teammates, take time to talk through the contents of the report. Here's a suggested process for this:

1. Ahead of a video meeting, you and your direct report should complete the Management Strategy Guide independently.

2. Be honest with yourselves. Agree to check off only the areas that you feel are being fulfilled.

3. In the 1-on-1 meeting, compare your scorecards and discuss areas of misalignment.

4. Create an action plan for how you will adjust your management style to address the areas of misalignment. You can use page two of the Management Strategy Guide as a reference.

5. Make a plan to come back together for the same exercise every 90-180 days to review progress toward these goals. Book the meeting today.
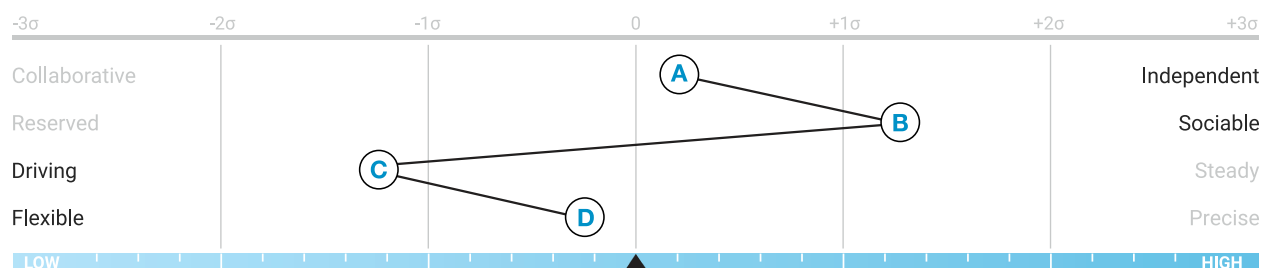
Coach with Self-Concept

The self-concept pattern depicts an employee's behavior at a specific moment in time. This pattern can evolve over time if there are changes to the employee's environment (e.g., their job or team) that cause them to alter their behavior.

Whether a direct report is new or accustomed to working remotely, the Coach with Self-Concept report helps you understand how they're currently feeling in their role. The report provides critical insight into engagement—especially following change.

Use the Coach with Self-Concept to compare the team member's current workplace tendencies with their natural ones. From there, start a conversation with the individual. Ask whether they feel like they have to stretch themselves unreasonably to fit the current requirements of their role. Then discuss what steps need to happen to make the role more manageable.

By talking through the contents of this report, you can address any anxiety or discomfort your employees feel due to rapid changes. This helps ensure they don't feel isolated or frustrated while working remotely.

Self-Concept

| -3σ | -2σ | -1σ | 0 | +1σ | +2σ | +3σ |

Collaborative — A — B — Independent
Reserved — Sociable
Driving — C — Steady
Flexible — D — Precise

LOW ▲ HIGH

Coaching Guide

Your employees may be remote, but they'll still want to demonstrate mastery in their roles and move to new ones. So it's important that you as a leader coach them to become higher performers and progress their career.

The Coaching Guide compares an employee's behavioral pattern to the Job Target of a specific position within the org. The guide then gives you questions to help coach the employee to more closely match the behavioral benchmark of this role.

Use the Coaching Guide to help with the following:

Performance: Perhaps you see an opportunity for an employee to improve their performance in a given role. You can use the Coaching Guide to gauge how well this individual's behavioral makeup matches that of a typical top performer.

Career progression: Likewise, say an employee wishes to move into a new position. This could be a vertical promotion or a lateral move. In either case, use the Coaching Guide to compare their behavioral pattern to the Job Target of the desired role.

# Using PI to foster healthy remote team dynamics

Your team members likely won't get the same opportunities for face time when working remotely as they would in the office. Without the ability to work side-by-side, communication issues can arise and behavioral styles may clash.

You can use the following PI tools to help your team work best together.

Team Work Styles

Running a Team Work Styles report will let you visualize the behavioral makeup of your team. You'll be able to identify where team members share certain behavioral tendencies—and where there are differences. In doing this, you'll see where behavioral differences may lead to lapses in communication or decision-making. From there, you can take action to strengthen relationships and address any team concerns.

Once you've plotted your team's behavioral patterns in Team Work Styles, schedule a video meeting to discuss the results as a group. Be sure to frame this conversation in the context of the team's current tasks and key objectives.
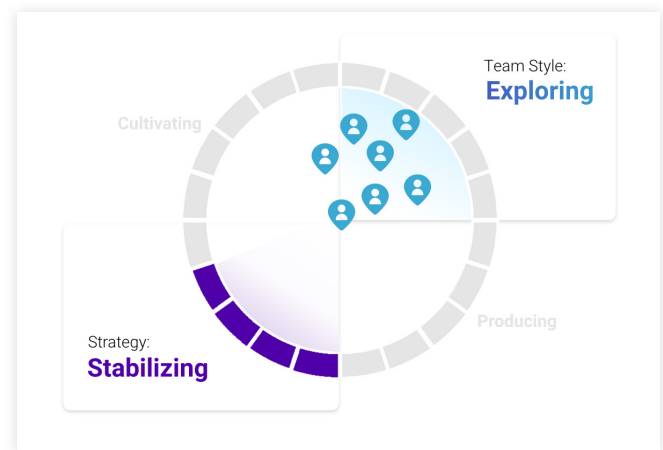
A productive Team Work Styles session should focus on these two areas:

1. **Differences in communication style:** Identify any potential areas of friction and create a plan for how to communicate effectively as a group. Identify what means of communication you will use in different circumstances to meet the needs of the team.

2. **Differences in decision-making:** Discuss the different decision-making styles of each team member. Then create an action plan for how to address these differences in a way that best accommodates the entire group.

When facilitating these conversations, consider using the STOP, START and CONTINUE structure. These are the steps:

STOP: What must we *stop* doing to be more effective as a team?

START: What should we *start* doing that we don't currently do?

CONTINUE: What do we do well that we should *continue* to do?

Relationship Guide

Whereas Team Work Styles provides a high-level look at team dynamics, the Relationship Guide shines a light on 1-on-1 relationships.

Use the Relationship Guide to teach employees how their behaviors influence daily interactions. This can enhance existing working dynamics between colleagues—and improve the team as a whole.

Here are two recommended ways in which you can use this resource with your team:

1. **Team pairs:** Create a Relationship Guide for two team members and send a copy to each of them. Encourage them to look over the guide and reflect on their behavioral similarities/differences.

   During the next team meeting, encourage the pair to discuss what they've learned about each other. Also ask them to share how they can cater to each other's natural styles moving forward—and avoid potential friction.

2. **1-on-1 meetings:** Prior to your next weekly 1 on 1 with a team member, send them the Relationship Guide for each other member of the team. Ask them to read over each in preparation for the 1 on 1.

   In the meeting, talk with this individual about their major findings. Who on the team is most similar to them behaviorally? Who's the most different? Walk through these different relationships, and encourage the team member to think of how they can cater to each person's needs in the future.

Lead remote teams with confidence.

Remote work may not be something you're used to. That doesn't mean you can't prepare for it.

Using people data and PI's tools, you can predict how remote work will impact team dynamics and manager-employee relationships. You can also tailor your leadership to set your team for success—regardless of geography.

We hope you've found this e-book helpful. If you have any questions on the contents found here, please reach out to your PI consultant.

THE PREDICTIVE INDEX