

# PRAESTA

## Leading Virtually Requires Deliberate Communication

**With an increasing number of individuals working virtually for part or even all of their time communication becomes more than ever.** Key is being mindful of people's emotional need for Clarity, Control, Connection, Celebration, and Empathy.

**Clarity** isn't easy for leaders to give if the broader context is changing day by day. But it helps enormously to tell people what you know and what that means for their role. Short regular bulletins through an appropriate mix of virtual channels give reassurance and a sense of direction, which in turn build trust. Judge what might work for your audience, and act on their feedback.

**Control** is important because people who feel powerless can easily despair. Each person needs to feel that their efforts contribute to the overall goal. Working remotely makes it even more important for them to feel part of a group or team with a clear remit and reporting line. This gives them a sense of shared purpose, and a reason to be in regular contact with others in the group.

**Connection** isn't only about the IT – it's about leaders sharing their own humanity. and connecting people to each other when they may be feeling isolated. The leaders who inspire trust are real people who tell personal stories. They always look for reasons to encourage others and to smile.

**Celebration** applies to every achievement, every day. You can't overdo it.

And **Empathy** is the thread running through all of this. Even people who are used to remote working may feel cut off from social interaction at work. We need to recognize this in the way we communicate, and the expectations we set. This includes people's need to go offline sometimes, provided you know they are doing their best to contribute. If we can provide help when they're struggling, we are much more likely to keep their trust and commitment.