

# ***A Surprising Factor***

***(Which No One Talks About!)***

***That's Essential for  
the Health & Happiness  
of a Remote Team***



**ADVOCATION**

# Hi!

# I'm Shauna.

I've spent my career helping companies operate more efficiently.



The catalyst moment for Advocation began years ago when I found myself facing a serious case of burnout and a health crisis. My doctor gave me an ultimatum—get a handle on your stress or you could be bedridden in six months.

I was committed to finding a simpler and less stressful way to work. Now, we help other teams do the same.

A close-up image of a hand holding a pair of dark sunglasses. The hand is wearing a ring and a bracelet. In the background, a black folder with the text "STANDARD IS NOT GOOD" is visible.

*Shauna Nuckles*

Founder & CEO of Advocation





## WHAT ACTUALLY KEEPS TEAM MORALE HIGH?

Team morale is important not only because it contributes to the health, happiness, and success of an organization, but it's critical for ensuring teams meet their goals. Morale also gives us indications of how well our companies are operating. It's especially important in fast-paced businesses, where tight deadlines, all-hands-on-deck projects, and high-stress situations are best handled when the team is running like a well-oiled machine. Managing morale in the remote work environment poses new challenges that many leaders are still navigating.

There's one surprising factor that few talk about when it comes to keeping team morale high, yet it's essential for any great workplace. That factor is creating psychological safety.

Psychological safety and morale are directly related. To begin understanding how to make an impact, we first need to understand what causes low morale inside a company. At the most foundational level, it's when employees' basic needs aren't being met. A great way to break this down is to refer to Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and consider how they apply to the workplace.

# Maslow's Hierarchy of needs



**Basic survival needs.** This is pretty self-explanatory. An employee needs to feel like a job is providing them the means to take care of their basic needs of housing, food, etc. This is compromised when power is abused and statements like “you’re lucky to have a job” are shared with team members.

**Safety and security.** Everyone needs to feel safe and secure at work. A variety of factors can make employees feel insecure in their jobs. For example, inconsistencies that leave people never knowing what to expect can leave employees feeling on edge and unsafe. Distrust can also lead to an employee not feeling secure in their role and often manifests from micromanaging or a lack of transparency among the team.

**Belonging.** Everyone wants to feel like part of the team. Isolation can often result from

a lack of communication, which causes an employee to feel unvalued and like they don’t belong.

**Esteem.** It’s important to recognize employees for their work and the job they are doing. We’ll take it a step further and say that it’s also important to give employees the tools, resources, and feedback they need to do a great job and continuously improve. Without the tools to succeed and the recognition when they do, employees won’t feel valued in the workplace.

**Self-actualization.** Ultimately we all want to feel like we’re a part of something greater than ourselves and working towards something of importance. Meeting the needs we listed above allows employees to reach the ultimate goal of self-actualization.

# THE SIX

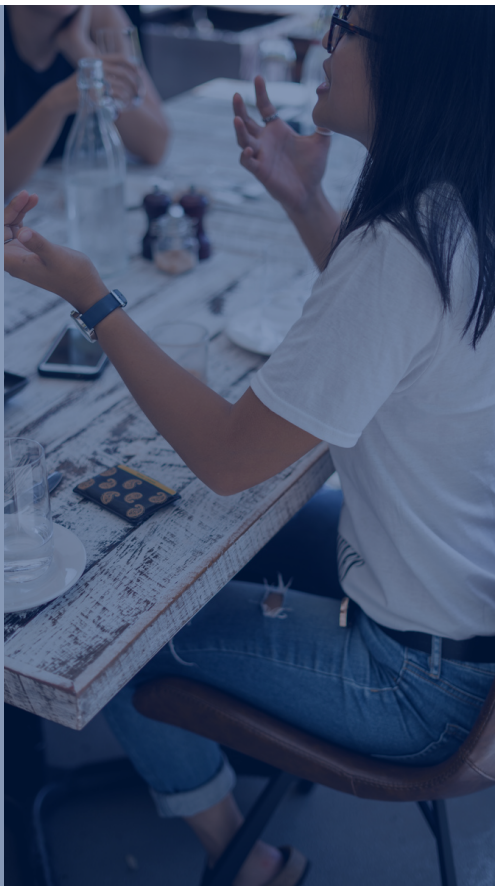
## STRATEGIES THAT COMPANIES CAN USE TO ENSURE THEY'RE MEETING EMPLOYEE NEEDS



There are a few important strategies that company leaders can use to ensure you're meeting your employees' needs and ultimately creating the type of psychological safety that keeps morale & motivation high in a remote work environment.

1. **Set clear and realistic expectations**
2. **Be a clear communicator**
3. **Provide opportunities for growth and development**
4. **Give credit where credit is due**
5. **Open channels for honest feedback**
6. **Learn from your mistakes**





# 01

## SETTING CLEAR AND REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Everyone needs to know the expectations of their job to be successful. Setting your employees up for success by making sure expectations are realistic and clearly communicating those expectations to the team will empower them to reach their goals.

In a remote environment, it's easy to get lost in the day-to-day without checking in with the team. A five-minute check-in at the beginning of each day can ensure that everyone is aligned on expectations.



# 02

## SETTING CLEAR AND REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Communication is a two-way street. Clear communication not only means communicating your needs and expectations effectively but also listening and understanding what is being communicated to you. In a remote environment, it can be helpful to restate what you're hearing to ensure that it aligns with what the person is trying to communicate and leave space for others to ask for clarity.

# 03

## PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

No one wants to feel stagnant in their job. Find ways to take the traditional lunch and learn that used to happen on the first Tuesday of the month in the conference room and convert it to a remote setting. That may mean allowing each employee to sign up for one continuing education course each year or offering a project typically handled by a more senior employee to have an opportunity to learn the ropes. In some instances, it may be as simple as asking a question like, “How do you hope to grow and how can I help you get there?”

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# 04

## GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

We may not all be in the office to cheer at the conclusion of a successful campaign, so it's more important than ever to shout out a job well done. This can be an agenda item on the weekly meeting or a “hooray” email that goes out every time you feel that someone deserves recognition for their work. You can even set up a Slack channel for all employees to praise each other for a job well done. More is more when it comes to recognizing employees for their hard work.

# 05

## OPEN CHANNELS FOR HONEST FEEDBACK

Just like clear communication, this goes both ways. It's crucial that you are able to give constructive feedback to your employees and they are able to share feedback with you. In a remote work setting, this can be overlooked since we don't have the opportunity to "pop in" to each other's office to chat.

Make time for this by either scheduling regular one-on-ones with your team or opening a time block on your calendar once a week for anyone who wants to schedule time with you.



# 06

## LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES

You will never do all of these things perfectly and neither will your employees– we're all only human after all. Being able to learn from our mistakes and even better, communicate what we have learned to the team, is a great way to build trust within your company and grow as a leader.





It's important to point out that even when all of these strategies are implemented to perfection, there will be disagreements among your team. You can disagree in a productive and healthy way by listening to the other person's point of view, explaining yours without trying to convince them to see it your way, and being willing to compromise.

By implementing these simple and effective strategies, your business will feel the difference in team motivation and company culture—even when working from afar!

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[Learn more about us here](#)

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