

Building a Successful Remote Team

Gregor Vand
Co-founder @ pixelcabin



pixelcabin ▲

shopify plus

NET-A-PORTER



Wool & Prince

Who is **remote** full-time?

What is a **remote** team?







Why did we go **remote** at
pixelcabin?

What are the challenges of a distributed team?

Communication
Team Dynamics
Hiring
Clients
Mental Wellbeing
Management

Communication

Team Dynamics

Hiring

Clients

Mental Wellbeing

Management

distributed == **resilient**

Develop a culture around
asynchronous communication

Allow your team to understand **when** you're available

< Workspace Directory



Michael Shannon 

 In a meeting Until 09:00

[Clear](#) | [Edit](#)

[Edit Profile](#)

...

Display name	michaelrshannon
Timezone	08:46 local time (change)
Email	michael@pixelcabin.io
Role	Owner of pixelcabin
Location	London, UK
Normal work hours	8am-5pm
GitHub	 @michaelrshannon
Twitter	 @michaelrshannon
Instagram	 @michaelrshannon

Write knowledge down



Add Discussion

Pixelcabin Handbook

Welcome to the Pixelcabin Handbook!

This will act as our primary source for documenting best practices, workflows and guidelines, and should capture any question relating to how we try to do things.

Company

- [Working Remotely at Pixelcabin](#)
- [How to Slack](#)
- [Video call etiquette](#)
- [Paid Time Off](#)
- [Appraisals](#)
- [Sick Leave](#)
- [Maternity/Paternity Leave](#)
- [Additional Budgets](#)
- [Team Retreats](#)

Operations

- [Time Tracking](#)
- [Code Review Guidelines](#)
- [Using your calendar](#)
- [PagerDuty](#)
- [Security Protocols](#)
- [Expenses](#)

Style Guides

- [Ruby](#)

Misc

- [Our Stack](#)



5. Interruptions

Slack's DND (Do Not Disturb) feature is key to being able to focus - feel free to use liberally. If someone still needs to notify you, they can send you a DM, at which point Slack will ask them if they want to break through your DND.

It can also help to set its schedule to align with your regular work hours - that way it will enable automatically while you're away from your desk.

6. Threading

As channels can quickly become confusing when multiple conversations are happening at once, threading can be a useful way to keep a sub-conversation contained. Additionally, if you want to be notified about further activity in a thread, you can choose to follow a thread, even if you weren't the original poster, and haven't been mentioned.

7. @channel vs @here

Including **@channel** in a message will notify everyone who's in the chat room, but using **@here** will only notify the people who happen to be online at that moment. Therefore, limit use of **@channel** to messages that everyone should see, even if they're currently offline.

For example, if you're looking for an immediate response to something, **@here** is better.

For something that is important for every channel member to know, **@channel** is better.

8. Reply by end of day

How fast should you expect a reply to a question or request you made of a teammate on Slack? You can expect a reply **by the end of their normal workday**, assuming:

- You've reached out to the teammate specifically by @-ing them (or sending them a DM if the content is sensitive)
- You didn't share a specific deadline (always do this when you can!)

Remote communication is **hard!**

Greater demands of **clarity and empathy**

Make time for ‘coffee break’ chats,
And personal issues

Communication **Team Dynamics**

Hiring
Clients
Mental Wellbeing
Management

It can be **hard** to build strong
connections remotely

Pixelcabin

⌚ Set Monday to Friday weekly at 08:00 5 team members



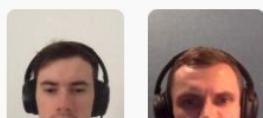
Wednesday

Wednesday, October 17th, 2018



Tuesday

Tuesday, October 16th, 2018



Team Retreats



Emphasis on time with the team than
‘doing work’

Communication
Team Dynamics
Hiring
Clients
Mental Wellbeing
Management

Highlight that you're hiring for a remote position

Discuss their understanding of working
remotely

...

And outline your processes around
remote work

If you use **technical tests** - build in a way
to test their remote skills

Communication
Team Dynamics
Hiring
Clients
Mental Wellbeing
Management

What is the **client's** experience working
with a remote team?

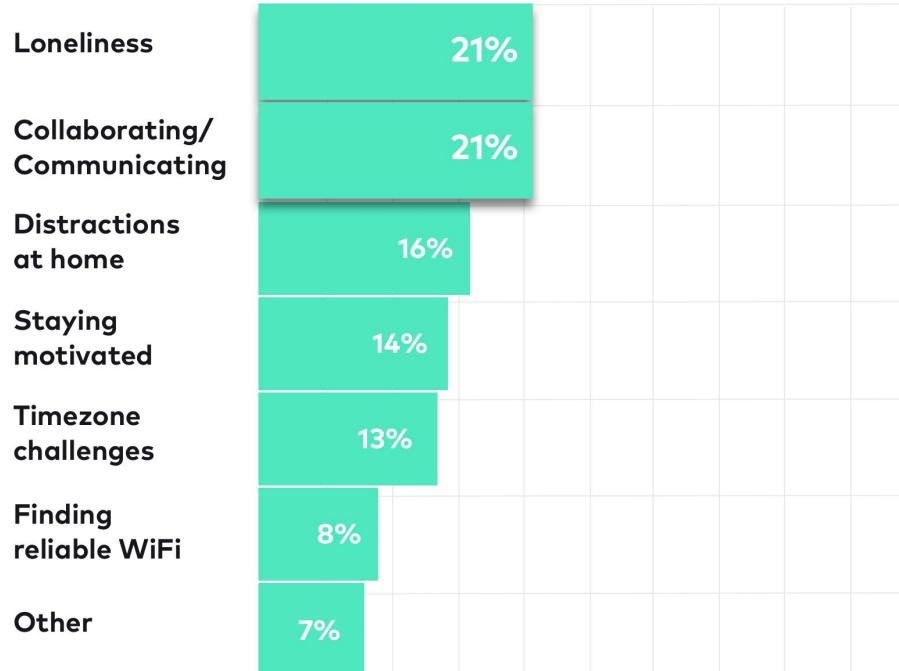
Become a remote part of **their**
organisation

Leverage remote for their advantage

Communication
Team Dynamics
Hiring
Clients
Mental Wellbeing
Management

Work/Life **Boundaries**

What's the biggest struggle with working remotely?



Communication
Team Dynamics
Hiring
Clients
Mental Health
Management

Budget to **support** their remote needs

Output vs **Input**

How can you start to take
your team remote?

Our toolkit

- Slack
- PagerDuty
- Standups.io
- Pivotal Tracker
- GitHub
- Google Drive
- Toggl
- Notion
- InVision
- StackOverflow for Teams
- Zoom
- FreeAgent

Remote has opened up a lot of opportunities for the company, and for team members individually

thanks!

Q & A

gregor@pixelcabin.io