

# 40 Remote teams fail without this element

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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## SPEAKERS

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How can we engage motivate remote teams, and there is one factor that will make all the difference. And many articles forget to talk about this crucial element, they tend to talk about communication being the big missing factor or about doing regular check ins mixing communication channels, bringing the informal back and planning that informal, but they don't seem to talk about this one element that will make all the difference. And that's what we're going to cover in today's episode. I'm Murielle, CEO mum and educator, I used to work really hard and sacrifice the important things to me until I lost my motivation. Fast forwards passed many failed attempts and lessons learned. And I found a way to reach great results while working less. Today, I'm obsessed with helping other leaders build meaningful lives. So each week, I'll be sharing inspiration to change your life and organisation. This is rebel leader with a heart. Now, as of March, many of you started working full time remotely. And at first, it was great no traffic jam more time with the kids with your partner less interruptions. But then things started to go a little bit wrong. Now. First, let's start by listening to john story. JOHN is a marketing director and a team leader. His team of eight is composed of men and women of different ages from marketing managers, database experts, social media managers. And he has done many of those jobs in his career and has quite some knowledge, the team is working really hard because the pressure to deliver great financial results is high. And many people from other departments rely on them to reach their revenue targets. They often need to align with those departments and to get all the information they need for a good marketing campaign. And in marketing, things have changed a lot in the last years. And of course, COVID added an extra layer of uncertainty and challenges on top of it. So his team that is now working 100% remotely, is constantly solving issues, changing plans working really, really hard. JOHN needs to solve a lot of issues by himself and his team rely heavily on him to make difficult decisions, they can get frustrated because issues aren't solved fast enough, or because they wait for approvals that never seem to come true. Or they wait for input from other team members are other departments. So They spent their days in virtual meetings and can only work at night or on weekends on their own work. Now, unfortunately, one key member has fallen out is sick, another one decided to quit and change jobs. And two people in his team are not very engaged or motivated anymore. And so that puts pressure on all the rest. So john has decided to take over some of these jobs on top of his work. And it's been over a year now that they solve many issues and are in constant firefighting mode. And now that they are working remotely, it's even worse than before. And he wonders what he's doing wrong or what he could do instead. And he and his team know that they can't keep working like this. It's not fun anymore. It's

not healthy, and it isn't productive anymore. Now, many companies have already decided that even without a pandemic, they don't want to go back full time at the office most will implement hybrid teams that work from home and from the office. And so the question that John and so many other leaders ask themselves is how can we engage, motivate remote teams, and like I said, there is one factor that will make all the difference and I won't keep you waiting any longer because what John and so many remote or hybrid teams are missing is empowerment. If you don't have an empowered team, all the issues that you could compensate in the past by being present will now be exacerbated. They will be bigger. If you are a team that is depending a lot on your managers, or on decisions from others from the management team or headquarters, or on other departments, it will be really, really hard to work remotely. And that's not the only reason why having an empowered team is so important. There are three reasons to increase empowerment within your team or your organisation. And the first one is that the speed of change has accelerated. And it has accelerated at a speed that we have never witnessed before. And with that comes a lot of uncertainties. Things that seem to be true yesterday or seem to be working yesterday or one year ago, don't seem to work anymore, because the situation or the market has changed or we have new technologies or new demands, or whatever. So this speed of change has accelerated. And in the past, we would centralise decisions to benefit from economies of scale. But in this world that is going so fast and so uncertain, that way of making decisions has become too slow. By the time a decision reaches the management team, or even the boss and comes back to the rest of the organisation, things have changed, or sometimes people wait too long for decisions that never come. So the first reason why you should increase empowerment is because of the speed of change. And with that speed of change, what we want is we want HL organisations organisations that are capable of adapting themselves fast enough to all these changes. But for that you have to have speed in your decision making. And for that you need an empowered team that can make the decisions themselves and seize their opportunities or fix their own trends, at least an empowered team for all the operational things within your organisation. Then the second reason why empowerment has become so important is when you work remotely, because when you are working remotely and you are dependent on other departments, or on your bus, or on headquarters to make decisions, well, that becomes really slow. And you can spend your days trying to align and have meetings instead of being able to do really your job. And that's why for remote teams, it is even more crucial to have autonomous or at least an empowered team that can really function together with without being too dependent on other departments. And then the last reason why I believe we should increase empowerment is that research has shown that it increases engagement and motivation. People don't want to rely on other people, they get up in the morning, and they want to be recognised for the great job that they're doing. And they want to be able to organise their work like they see it's best, according to their with them according to the priorities they see. So of course, you need alignment. But when you don't have this autonomy, when you're not empowered, and you're constantly waiting on someone else, to get what you need to be able to do your job or waiting for instructions, or someone who decides for you how you should do your job. That's completely demotivating. And that's when you get this engagement. So the three reasons why I believe you should increase empowerment is speed of change, remote working, and also engagement and motivation of your people. No, just to illustrate this, imagine now that you work in a company that sells clothes in stores. And you were already struggling before the pandemic because of this trend that we call minimalism. People seem to want to buy less clothes, even though they have the money. And I'm sure that when you look at yourself or when you look at your friends you really see this tendency that people they want less stuff and more experiences. But that puts really

pressure on the clothing business. So people in that company are already afraid of losing their job because revenues are declining. And then the pandemic hit them. And they were then not only afraid of losing their job because of the declining revenues but also afraid of getting infected too. So they urgently needed some protective measures. Like masks, protective, Plexiglas, stickers, so gel, all the things so that people in the stores are protected, but also the customers. So the people in the stores give the message to their district manager and talk that district manager talks about it. In his marketing meeting, the buying departments needs to be involved because they do all the buying of the stuff in the company, finance need to be involved, because there was no budget for that expense. And so we need budgets, but finance cannot decide. So the CEO needs to give his approval. And he's already in a bad position with his board because of the disappointing results. And then he wonders at the beginning of the pandemic, like a lot of people were wondering, but how long is this going to last? Is this only for two weeks? And is that this virus really deadly dangerous? And don't forget, this is March when we didn't know as much as we do today. So he was wondering how can he break the news that they'll have to make more costs and will probably decline even more in revenues. And so all this process to get that protective equipment takes way too long. And in the meantime, some store people quit orders called in sick because they were afraid or really getting sick, the union threatens to stop working and go on strike in these conditions, because they think we cannot work in these conditions, it's too dangerous for us and for the customers. So the CEO gives a budget to the buyer to buy the gear and the buyer tries to find a solution. But his budget is so low that he cannot find anything because, of course, he's not the only one looking for this kind of material. And so the prices have gone up. And then he needs another approval, because he's not allowed to make this expensive decision all by himself. And so just to sum up, as a result, it took weeks for the stores to be equipped. And when the Plexiglas finally arrived, it was too big for their counters. So it took even more time more costs to make. And in the meantime, revenues went down even more, because there weren't enough salespeople in the stores anymore, because the customers preferred going to the stores that had better equipment. And at the end, they were among the last stores to be equipped. That is what I mean when you have these slow decision processes. Because with an empowered team, they could have acted so much faster. And yes, of course, the protective equipments would probably have cost it's more, but maybe the revenue dropped might have been smaller and the motivation of the people higher, and the image of that store would have been better than being the last the last one to get this equipment. And so centralising decisions to benefit from economies of scale is often counter productive in fast, uncertain times, because of different hidden costs. First of all, the hidden costs of alignment all these people that had to align, to store people with a district manager with the marketing with the buying department with the financial director with a CEO with his headquarters and back and forth, that has a big costs, it costs a lot of money, because it costs a lot of time, then also the hidden costs of disengagement, because of the waiting and waiting are bad decisions like like, giving this these plexiglass that doesn't fit on the counter or the stores. And the other hidden costs is of not answering the needs of the customers are the needs of the employees fast enough. And so all these hidden costs will often counter the economies of scales. And the problem is that the benefits these economies of scale, the fact that you buy your protective gear in this example, at a much lower price. If you do it all together. Well that price you can immediately see it in those great excels that we all use in companies, but all these hidden costs are often not visible in the Excel sheets. And then also for all these people that spend their day in virtual meetings from sometimes from eight o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening and then your own work piles up and you only have the evenings or at the lunch or the weekends to do your own work? Well, you can

also wander at a certain point, is this the life I had imagined for myself. And of course, you can get a dopamine rush from solving all these issues, and from bees being busy all the time and from getting things done. But what is the costs of this? And so for all these reasons, I believe that empowerment is really the way to go. And I know that a lot of organisations have understood this, and have made a priority of empowering the people, but unfortunately, only few succeed. And they fail because they often approach empowerment in a similar way. They believe that empowerment is only about a team that takes on more responsibility. And if it doesn't work, it's because of that team that doesn't take a lot of responsibility, or because of the manager that doesn't seem to trust his team and have to let go. And of course, these two elements are really important, taking more responsibility and learning to trust and let go. But this is only one little step of all the empowerment puzzle. And in fact, there are so many different elements that will allow you to increase empowerment, and that will allow you to succeed in that. And also, because this question often came up the question of how can I engage and empower my remote team more? And I believe, of course, I cannot answer this question in a very short podcast. So we have decided to develop a whole new course about this topic. But before having this whole new course, I want of course to help you, I don't want you immediately to go to the course. Well, you can, of course, but it's not available yet. But we have developed two things to help you increase empowerment, especially in remote teams. And the first thing is that we have developed a short empowerment quiz. by answering a couple of question, you get an empowerment score for your team, and personalised lessons to help you. And the best way to do this is to do it with your whole team. So ask everyone in your team to take this quiz. Because what I tend to see is that the team leader of of the team will often be more optimistic than the team members. And I know because it's like that for me also, we always have the feeling that we are further than what we truly are. Unfortunately, that's why it's really great to take this quiz with your whole team. So you can find this free quiz in the show notes of this episode on [www.rebelleaderwithaheart.com/40](http://www.rebelleaderwithaheart.com/40) or on our Qileader website. So [www.qileader.com/empowerment-quiz](http://www.qileader.com/empowerment-quiz). And on top of this quiz, we will also offer a free masterclass, so, a free webinar that we call the three secrets to inspire, engage and empower your remote teams in fast digital and uncertain times. You can also find the link if you want to participate to this free masterclass in the show notes of this episode or on [www.qileader.com/empowerment-masterclass](http://www.qileader.com/empowerment-masterclass). So, I hope this episode has inspired you to increase empowerment within your team. And if you are a team member, be sure to send this episode to your boss because you know that if you want to have a greater moments within your team, a greater job, more autonomy, more freedom, less meetings, you will have to have an empowered team and only you and your boss can do something about that as well. So if you want to have a great remote team, don't forget to first boost empowerments because it's a win win for everyone. As a manager, you get to focus more on strategy and coaching your team. Your team gets more autonomy and more motivation you become more agile and can answer your customer needs much more rapidly. And so at the end your revenues and profits increase which makes your shareholders happy to so it's really a win win win win win for everyone. No. In my next episode, I'll share what one Big element is that I learned from empowering many different teams. So be sure to tune in because I will share that element. And I will also describe what I did with my team. That might probably be a great exercise also to do with your team. So thank you for listening to this podcast. Don't forget to subscribe and please, if you can leave me a review leave me a five star review or maybe a little comment that will help me to stay motivated to do this podcast and also help others to discover it. Thank you. Yeah, you finished another episode of rebel leader with a hearts if you want more, go to [rebelleaderwithaheart.com](http://rebelleaderwithaheart.com) for show notes and past

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