Blue North

Remote Work & Virtual Event Tools + Tips

📄 Policy + Best Practices

- [Almanac](#), a knowledge base for teams, has released an [awesome Company Playbook](#) filled with policy templates and checklists.
- [Zapier](#), a platform that connects apps and automates workflows, also provides some great tips in its [Ultimate Guide to Remote Work](#)
- [Wethos](#), a gig-based marketplace for marketing and creative talent, shared how they manage employees across 17 cities with these [process-driven tips for new remote teams](#).
- [Basecamp](#) — a popular tool for startups, creatives, and distributed teams — knows a thing or two about remote work. In fact, they wrote a book about it, [which you can find here](#).
- [Expensify](#) is a great tool to virtually manage receipts, expense reports, and reimbursements.
- Tools like [Freshbooks](#) offer a way to manage timesheets and payments for 1099 contractors.

💬 Communication and Collaboration:

- [Slack](#) is a *very* popular tool among startups and remote teams. It includes the option for in-app phone call and video conferencing capabilities.
  (**Pro tip:** Slack comes with dozens and dozens of app integrations, some of which you may already use, that you can use to supercharge your team's productivity and collaboration while using the platform. [Click here for a list of available Slack integrations](#).)
- If you're looking for something lighter for smaller companies or for individual departments/teams, [Achieved](#) provides another way to keep everyone in sync.
- Use tools like [Miro](#) and [Air](#) to create and share "virtual whiteboards" and other visualizations (digital post-it notes included for my Type-A peeps 💁🏾‍♀️).
- *Getter done* with [I Done This](#) and implement daily status updates.
- For consumer and client-facing companies and teams, [Front App](#) provides a way to make sure that customer communication and support stay on track.

📅 Meetings:

- [Here are some tips](#) from meeting room conferencing startup [Highfive](#) to help you rock those daily standup meetings if you decide to try them.
- [Zoom](#) is a great alternative for in-person meetings. Platforms like [BlueJeans](#) and [UberConference](#) are also solid. If you go with UberConference, turn off the default hold music, *trust me on this.*
  Heads up: As the use of these tools increases, you may find that some features will become limited to users on Pro or Premium plans.
- Looking for a good headset? [Here ya go](#).
- Pre-record presentations, classes, and trainings using a tool like [Loom](#), which recently cut its pricing and now offers a free version for [students and teachers](#).
- [Calendly](#) and [Doodle](#) are great for scheduling meetings.
- If you're using GSuite or Gmail, check out [MixMax](#), which offers embeddable email tools for instant scheduling and more.

🙌 Culture:

- [Donut](#) is a fun tool to give your remote team a sense of community through 1:1 connections. It also plugs directly into Slack. Pretty *sweet*, amirite? 🍩
- Use [Bonus.ly](#) to implement a thoughtful recognition and rewards program for employees to help keep them focused and motivated.

⚡Conferences and events:

- [HeySummit](#) is a plug-n-play platform built for virtual conferences and events. They have a handy [Coronavirus Event Guide](#) and are offering free use of the platform and expertise to any impact events that have been affected by COVID.
- [Switcher Studio](#) is awesome if you're looking for a way to switch to live streams. It plugs directly into popular platforms like Facebook and YouTube and doesn't require a bunch of fancy equipment. It's basically the *Today Show* in an app.
- Use this time to share more virtual educational content with your customers and clients. [Livestorm](#) is a slick platform for live webinars.

💡 Professional Development:

Increases in remote work have brought to light the important role of technology in creating adaptable work cultures and environments. Why not take this time to explore **other opportunities for innovation** in your business or company? Here are some of our favorite ways to learn from well-known innovators.

- [How I Built This](#) is a great podcast that shares the founding stories behind some of the most well-known startups and successful corporations like Home Depot.
- [Here are eight TED talks](#) to help you get creative.
- Today, *every* business is a tech business. This handy [Tech Model Canvas](#) from Google for Startups Coach Shelley Bell will help you think through the best tech tools to use *in* your business.
- Blue North is offering **virtual 30-minute Wayfinding meetings** for those who want to plug into resources in the entrepreneurship ecosystem and **virtual 1:1 Office Hours** for those who want to deep-dive into topics like new business ideas and business models. **Let's get yours scheduled:** [Wayfinding Meetings](#) // [1:1 Office Hours](#)

🤗 Self Care:

Working from home can be isolating and many folks are understandably anxious right now. Here are some ways to take care of yourself while you take steps to stay well.

- [Do Yoga with Me](#) and [Glo App](#) offer great virtual yoga and meditation classes.
- Time can run together easily when working from home and many folks find themselves working *later* than they would if they were working in an office with others. Develop a routine for starting and winding down from your workday. [Here are some tips to help you get started](#).
- Meditation apps like [Calm](#) and [Headspace](#)offer guided meditation with free and paid plan options. [We also like these YouTube videos](#).
- If you need to talk to someone, [Talkspace](#) offers an accessible virtual therapy option.
- [ShineText](#), a tech-enabled self-care community, partnered with Mental Health America to create [this toolkit](#) to help people experiencing anxiety due to COVID-19.
- If you're able to, go for a walk. If you find yourself spending more time indoors, consider ordering a light therapy lamp [like this one](#) to stimulate some good vibes (actually, light therapy does have [real scientific benefits](#)).