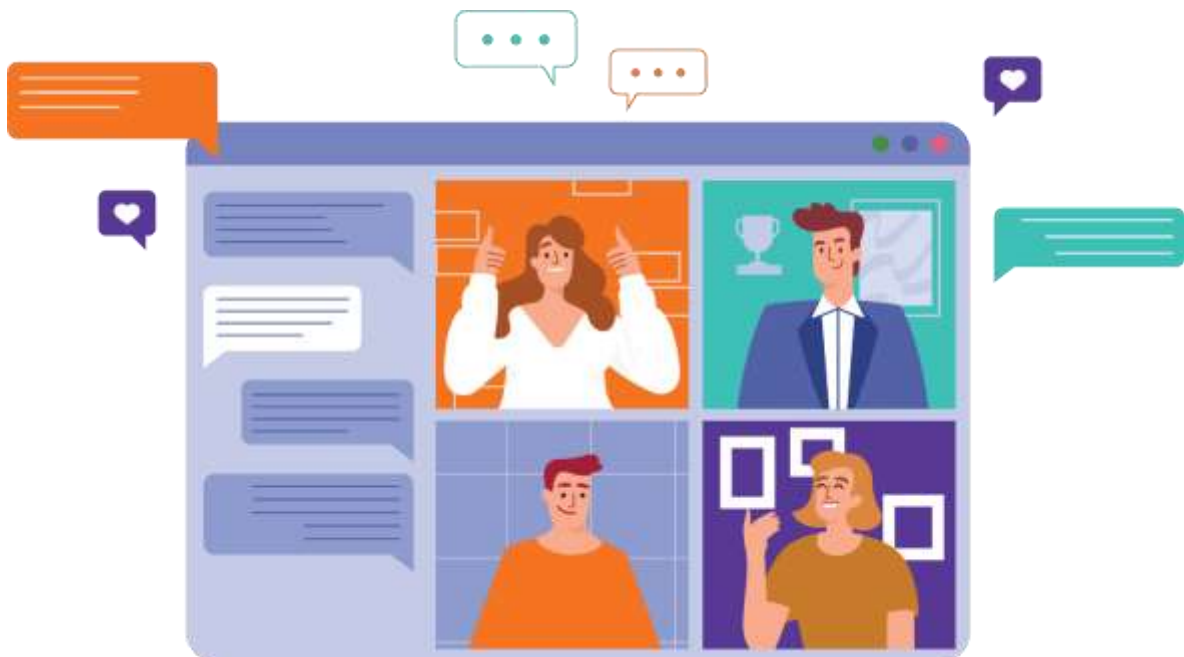




# In-Service training course for VET professionals

## Virtual Team Leaders

### Module 1



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## Overview of the training

### **Introduction**

Working remotely is growing faster than ever and shows no sign of slowing down. It's the future of work with benefits for both employers and employees. This training aims to help team leaders of eWorkers to adopt a positive attitude and advance their employees' wellbeing to promote performance.

This project aims to combine specific virtual team leadership competences with digital skills and wellbeing and engagement practices. The training tools included in the following modules have been especially designed to be applicable in any professional industry settings and will enable all Leaders to follow and cultivate and/or acquire invaluable capacities that will help them flourish both personally and professionally.

With this training course team Leaders/Managers will be able to acquire the skills and competences of working remotely and/or managing virtual teams, with an emphasis on wellbeing and engagement.

### **Training objectives:**

The aim of this training is to empower and equip team leaders with skills that will enable them to support eworkers and individuals in working remotely.

Through this training team leaders will be able to acknowledge the importance of digital skills and wellbeing practices in maintaining healthy and productive virtual teams.

More specifically, its objectives include:

- (1) the development of appropriate competencies in team leaders to better manage virtual team wellbeing and productivity and
- (2) enrich Virtual Team Leaders' capacity to use the appropriate technological tools.

## Learning outcomes

Which learning outcomes are addressed by the training?

The training for Team Leaders Training aims to address the following learning outcomes:

- Help Team Leaders understand and develop the skills required to effectively manage a virtual team
- Help Team Leaders understand the usefulness of wellbeing practices in teleworking
- Help Team Leaders build engagement and trust with members of their virtual team

- Effectively use technology and tools to support communication within the team
- Improve their communication and feedback approach with their virtual team
- Track progress and performance management of team members to achieve success
- Assist leaders in making their virtual teams able to achieve the full benefits from this style of working

## Module 1 - Wellbeing practices for teleworking

### *Short overview of the module*

Module 1 intends to provide virtual team leaders with a compact and comprehensive list of practical activities that can apply to support the wellbeing of remote workers.

### *Objectives of the module*

This module aims to give virtual leaders a better understanding of what wellbeing is and introduce them to some wellbeing practices for teleworking. It aims to provide them with skills that will enable them to safeguard and promote eWorkers wellbeing, including setting a self-care strategy, enforcing work life balance, and allocating fairly workloads to eWorkers. Participants will also be introduced to ways in which they can help eWorkers feel less lonely and isolated. Such activities can help promote eWorkers psychosocial wellbeing.

Upon successful completion of this module eWorkers should be able to develop their own action plan on how to safeguard their wellbeing.

## Learning outcomes of the module

MODULE	After the completion of the training, the participants are expected to ...		
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>MODULE 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand what is meant by wellbeing</li> <li>• Explain what burnout is and identify early signs of it</li> <li>• Learn the importance of self-care</li> <li>• Understand the importance of social connection for eWorkers' wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn to identify the early signs of burnout</li> <li>• Create self-care strategy</li> <li>• Allocate fair and balanced workload to eWorkers</li> <li>• Learn ways to stay socially connected with eWorkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciate the importance of wellbeing in the workplace</li> <li>• Treating self-care as a necessity and not a luxury</li> <li>• Appreciating the importance of social connectedness with their team members</li> </ul>

## Module Content

### Session 1: What does wellbeing mean to you?

Employees' wellbeing is the foundation of a strong and engaged team.

Working remotely has many advantages but research also shows that **nearly half of remote workers feel less healthy mentally** working from home (Nuffield Health, 2021).

It is essential then for leaders to support and care about their eWorkers wellbeing.

**Step 1.** Watch the short video "What is wellbeing" provided below and take notes during the video on what wellbeing means.

[What is wellbeing](#)

**Step 2.** Take a few minutes and note down your own understanding of wellbeing- What does it mean to you?

Although there is no consensus around a single definition of well-being, in the present module we will be focusing on the **psychosocial dimension of wellbeing**. Psychosocial well-being refers to a state of mind where an employee experiences **positive emotions** such as **happiness and satisfaction**, and is able to develop and maintain **meaningful relationships** with others and fulfill his/her need for belongingness.

**Step 3.** What factors can impact your eWorkers wellbeing? Watch the video below and note down possible factors that might impact the wellbeing of your team.

[The remote-working revolution: how to get it right | The Economist](#)

**Step 4.** After watching the video, you could arrange a 1-2-1 meeting with your team members and discuss the following questions.

1. How would they rate their satisfaction with their overall wellbeing on a scale from 1-5 (1- not satisfied at all to 5 - very satisfied)
2. What factors impact their wellbeing while working remotely?
3. Are they able to work productively in their remote-work environment?
4. How well does the team work together?
5. What are their needs? How could you as a leader help with their wellbeing?
6. How strongly do they feel valued/appreciated at work?

## Session 2: Familiarize yourself with the early signs of burnout

***86% of employees who work from home full-time experience burnout (Gallup, 2022).***

**Excessive and prolonged emotional, physical, and mental stress can lead to burnout. Burnout happens when you're overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to keep up with life's and work's demands.**

**Step 1:** Dimensions of Burnout - Watch the short video "What does it mean to have Burnout?" and note down the three dimensions of burnout.

[What Does It Mean to Have "Burnout"?](#)

**Step 2.** Take some time to reflect on the video you just watched.

Can you relate to the description of burnout?

Do you believe that any of your team members would relate to this description of burnout?

**Step 3.** Read the following reviews article [“Burnout Symptoms and Treatment”](#)

### Session 3: Prevention and Treatment of Burnout & Stress

Burnout is reversible. A leader can help an eWorker who is feeling burned out to make some changes to their work environment and daily routine. Below you will find some tips and suggestions.

**Tip 1: Encourage your team to create self-care strategies.**

Self-care looks different for everyone and that is okay. It can vary from going to the gym to having dinner with your family.



**Step 1:** To get a more in-depth idea of what self-care is watch the TED video below on “Self Care: What it really is” [Self Care: What It Really Is | Susannah Winters | TEDxHiltonHeadWomen](#)

**Step 2:** eWorkers wellbeing starts from the top. Make sure you and other leaders are taking care of themselves so they can take better care of their teams. Reflect on what self-care practices you apply to yourself.

**Step 3.** Help your team create their own self-care strategy by playing online **self-care bingo** [here](#).

This online tool can help you with encouraging your team members to engage in self-care activities in a fun and interactive way. Example of activities that you can include in your online self-care bingo can be found in the image below



**Tip 2. Prioritise and enforce work life balance (please see [Module 6](#))**

Below are some simple ways that you can promote eWorkers' work life balance:

- Value vacations and time off
- Offer flexible schedules
- Set clear boundaries between your professional and personal life
- Help them with managing their time more effectively and prioritising their tasks

**Tip 3. Allocate fair and balanced workloads to eWorkers.**

Pay attention to how you are delegating and balancing workloads across the team. Especially for remote teams, it can be difficult for leaders to have clear insight into the work people are doing day-to-day. That is why regular team check-ins, one-on-ones, feedback systems, and project management tools are so important. Ensure that your team is properly staffed to accommodate the amount of work required. As a leader your role is also to clarify performance goals regularly and revise as needed to meet organisational requirements.



## Session 4: Ensure that out-of-sight doesn't mean out-of-mind.

eWorkers often feel **isolated and lonely**. Especially extroverted personalities may suffer from this as they are used to gaining their energy from those around them. Such feelings can make eWorkers more **vulnerable to stress** and have a negative impact on their **psychosocial wellbeing**. Leaders need to be proactive in ensuring that eWorkers do not feel lonely while being away from the office.

**Step 1.** Stay connected with your team by **effectively using ICT's**.

Review the toolkit section on tools for effective communication when teleworking.

**Step 2.** Be proactive in reaching out, connecting, engaging and interacting with your team members.

Instead of simply waiting for scheduled meetings, sometimes it is helpful to have that “virtual” coffee break or an informal chat with an eWorker.

You never know, they may be feeling somewhat isolated and will appreciate your making the effort to interact with them. This could eventually lead to reduced feelings of loneliness and improved psychosocial wellbeing.

Review the following article: [Virtual Happy Hour: Everything You Need To Plan a Fun Event | Hoppier](#)

**Step 3.** Encourage your team to create social support networks.

Social support networks enable eWorkers to establish a network with whom team members can **discuss and provide mutual assistance, discuss challenges** that they might be facing, or even **best practices** for working remotely.

There are many **LinkedIn groups** for remote workers, and most of them are active and engaged. It's a great place to connect with other remote workers, ask for advice, and learn from other people's experiences.

In this short video [Joining LinkedIn Groups](#) you will learn how to search and join groups on LinkedIn.

Some common and large groups for remote workers are:

- Remote Work Professionals (over 190,000 members)
- The Virtual Workplace (over 160,000 members)
- The Work-At-Home Woman (over 50,000 members)

**Step 4.** In this article [How to Find Support Communities for Remote Workers](#) you can find some of the **best online communities for remote workers**, and **tips** on how to join them and get the most out



of them. In your next 1-2-1 meeting with an eWorker of your team, present them with possible online groups for remote workers and tips on how they can join and get the most out of it. This could eventually lead to reduced feelings of loneliness and improved psychosocial wellbeing.



## Bibliography

- **Suggested Reading**

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- **Further Resources**

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