FLOWLINE / A LITTLE HEAD START

The Remote Team Playbook.

Six small agreements for clearer, calmer collaboration.

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01 / Write the working agreement

Agree on overlap hours, response expectations and what counts as urgent. Distinguish “I need an answer today” from “please read when you start your next day.” Make quiet hours explicit, including each person’s time zone.

02 / Give decisions a home

For each meaningful decision, record the owner, the context, the options and the next step. Link to the supporting material. A teammate should be able to understand the choice without replaying a meeting or searching a long chat thread.

03 / Make handoffs concrete

Write what is ready, what is blocked and what the next person needs to do. Name one accountable owner for each transition and define the exit condition. An owner is responsible for making progress visible, not doing every task alone.

> **A ten-minute exercise**
> Pick yesterday’s slowest handoff. Write a three-sentence note: current state, missing context, next action. Ask the receiving teammate what else they need.

04 / Protect focused work

Group routine questions into a written update. Set a small work-in-progress limit that matches the team’s capacity. Offer an urgent channel with a clear definition, so every new notification does not compete with deep work.

05 / Build connection deliberately

Leave room for informal conversation, pair new teammates with a buddy, and rotate meeting times when shared live sessions are necessary. Check whether communication habits give people in every time zone an equal chance to contribute.

06 / Review the system, not the person

After one week, compare the same outcome, quality and workload measures. Ask what got easier and what became harder. Keep one useful agreement, change one source of friction and record the next experiment.

Your one-week experiment

1. Choose one project and one visible outcome.
2. Write a working agreement and a single handoff template.
3. Name an owner and schedule a 20-minute review.
4. Observe waiting time, quality and workload rather than online presence.
5. Use the project health scorecard as a conversation starter.

> **A useful handoff template**
> Outcome: _____
> Current state: _____
> Decision or help needed: _____
> Next owner + deadline + time zone: _____
> Link to context: _____

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