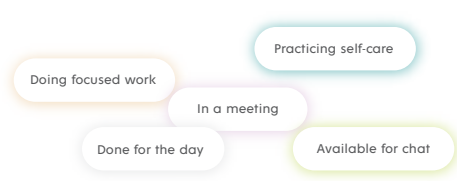
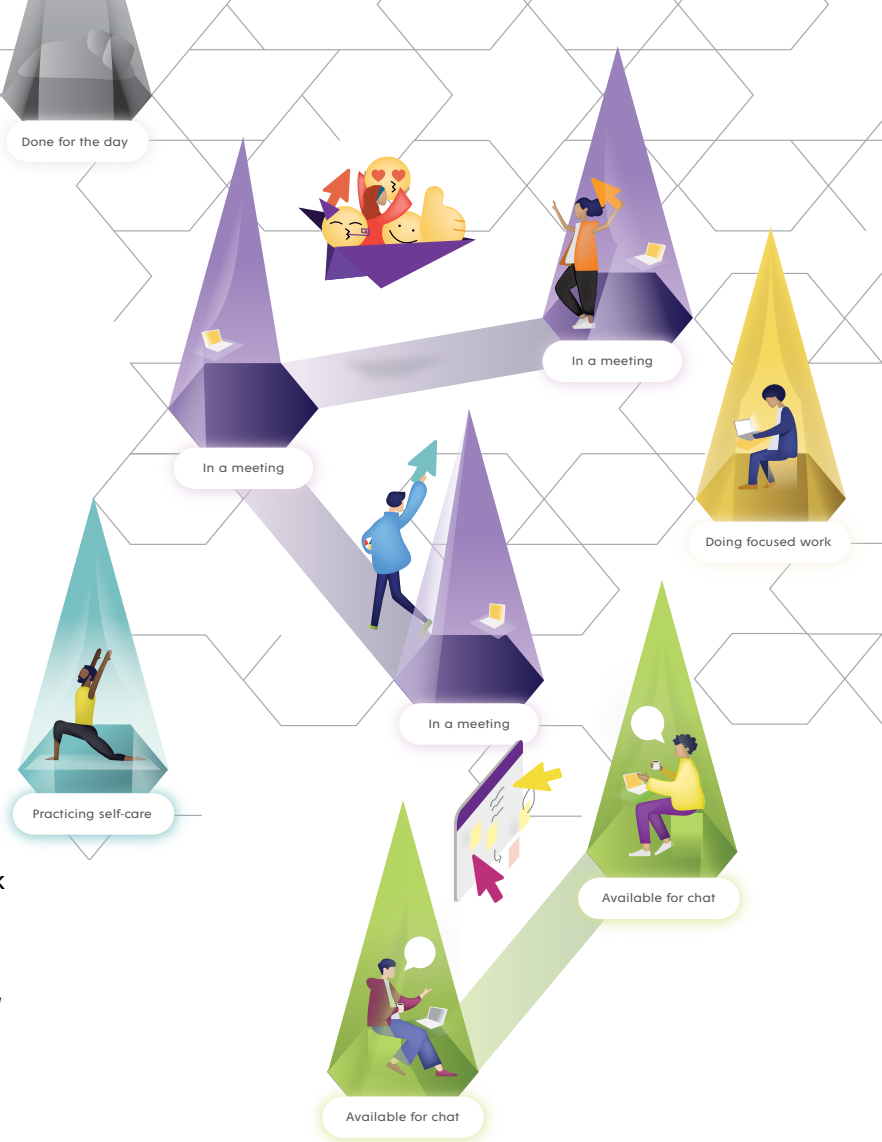


# Tips for building a remote workplace that cultivates community, collaboration, and engagement

For many of us, the transition from in-person to remote work is a challenge.

At Bridgeable, we've been experimenting with processes and tools to help employees maintain focus and productivity while balancing life and work responsibilities and adapting to new technologies. Here are five tips we've found helpful for creating a remote work environment that cultivates community, collaboration, and engagement.



## 1. Set expectations on availability

Proactively communicate your availability using digital tools. At Bridgeable, we do this in our shared [calendars](#) and by choosing options from our customized [Slack](#) status menu. This lets our coworkers know our working hours and protects time for productivity.

## 2. Check in frequently

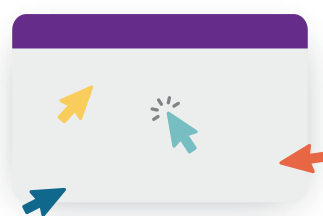
Schedule frequent real-time check-ins with your teams and direct reports throughout the week. At Bridgeable, many of us are using daily 15-minute touchpoints by phone, [Slack](#) chats or calls, or videoconferencing (e.g., [Zoom](#), [Google Hangouts](#)) to help strengthen engagement, improve morale, and maintain productivity.

## 3. Add a human face to your communications

Convey emotions or show support for your coworkers in digital channels with emojis. At Bridgeable, we're doing this with "Bridgemojis"—customized, animated Slack emojis that represent our core values and add nonverbal cues to our chats. When a coworker posts a new process on [Slack](#) that improves one of our internal processes, for example, we might recognize their embodiment of Bridgeable's "Always make it better" value with the corresponding Bridgemoji. You don't have to use customized emojis, though; [standard emojis](#) can similarly help communicate subtext and highlight key messages.

## 4. Facilitate random connections

Maintain organic social connections by finding ways to replace the spontaneous watercooler conversations that take place throughout the day in the physical office. One way we're doing this is through [Slack's Donut](#), which randomly matches 3–4 employees every week for a video "coffee and donuts" session. Another is through setting up [Zoom](#) to automatically, randomly assign participants to [breakout room](#) sessions during large-group meetings. These unexpected touchpoints help us stay in touch with coworkers who are not on our team.



## 5. Socialize by doing things together online

We've definitely been getting together to have video chat "happy hours." But our team has also been aiming to go beyond chatting to do things together. To celebrate March birthdays at Bridgeable, we collaborated on [MURAL](#) to build creative mood boards representing each honoree and then assembled for a virtual [Zoom](#) party to share them. Another recent social saw us spend an hour split into teams playing [Geoguesser](#). Both activities added some structure and gave us non-COVID-19, non-work conversation topics.