SpencerStuart

Virtual Team Leadership

Supporting leaders in driving individual, team and organizational performance in a virtual world

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At this significant moment in history, leaders are acutely aware that leading virtual teams and geographically dispersed employees can be very challenging. It's more difficult to hold employees accountable, build trust and strong relationships, as well as coach from a distance. Yet organizations need to adapt to a virtual way of working as virtual leadership plays an increasingly critical role in driving overall organizational effectiveness and performance.

Leveraging our extensive research, Spencer Stuart offers a virtual leadership program, which includes a series of nine 90-minute interactive facilitator-led sessions that are delivered in our virtual classroom. The program can be tailored to reflect your company's objectives and business needs.

Program topics include:

No Trust, No Team: Building Trust Virtually

Trust is a crucial factor for effective collaboration on any team. Team members working from a distance rarely see one another in person, and in many cases, they have never even met in person. Physical distance makes it harder to establish the personal relationships that facilitate trust. Virtual teams have a unique challenge in that they initially develop trust at the task level more easily than at the interpersonal level. Task-based trust is the belief that team members will do their job and is developed when virtual team members are responsive, follow through on commitments and take responsibility for results.
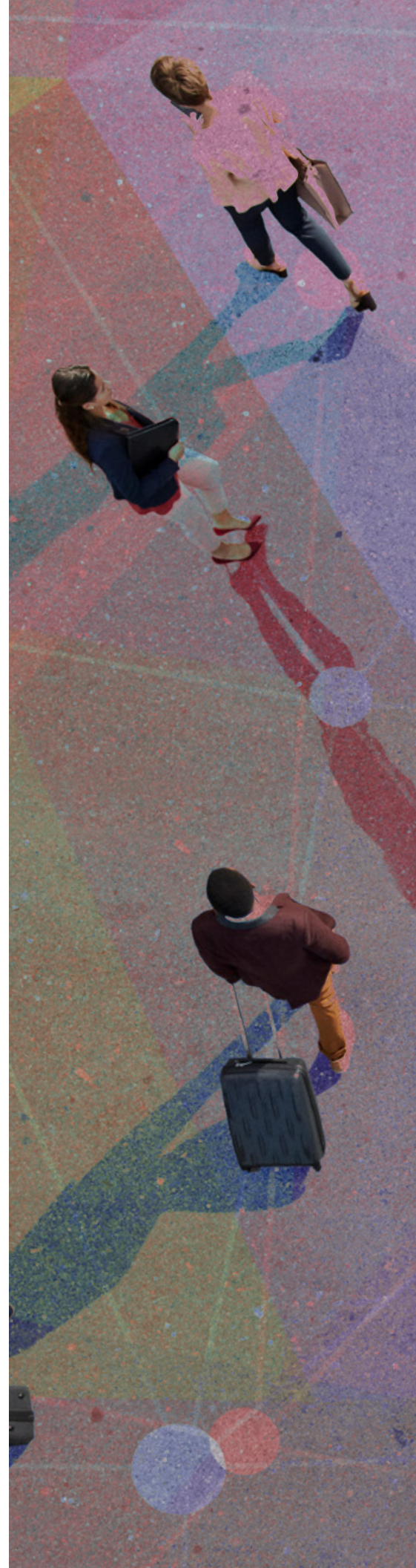
Conducting Effective Virtual Meetings

One of the biggest challenges virtual leaders face is planning and executing effective meetings that engage all attendees. A virtual environment presents a unique set of challenges, such as dealing with team members who multitask, a lack of familiarity with technology tools and time zone differences that impact scheduling.

High-Impact Communication Skills: Creating a "High-Touch" Environment

People who communicate in a clear and compelling manner are more effective at building trust and enhancing relationships with virtual team members and colleagues. Effective communication is also the foundation for managing conflict, influencing, coaching, motivating and decision-making. However, communication is more difficult in a virtual environment, which makes it more important to identify tools and techniques to enhance communication virtually.

Influencing Remotely

Effectiveness in a virtual environment depends on the ability to gain others' support and commitment. However, virtual workers have fewer opportunities to build the relationships and credibility that enable them to successfully influence others. Embracing strategies for overcoming the virtual divide and adapting the most effective influence strategies to a remote work environment enables leaders to become more effective.

Enhancing Your Effectiveness as a Virtual Leader

Leading a team of virtual employees is one of the most difficult jobs in business today. To improve their ability to lead in this environment, leaders should evaluate their knowledge of what it takes to be an effective virtual leader and assess the extent they are using behaviors that differentiate the most effective virtual leaders.
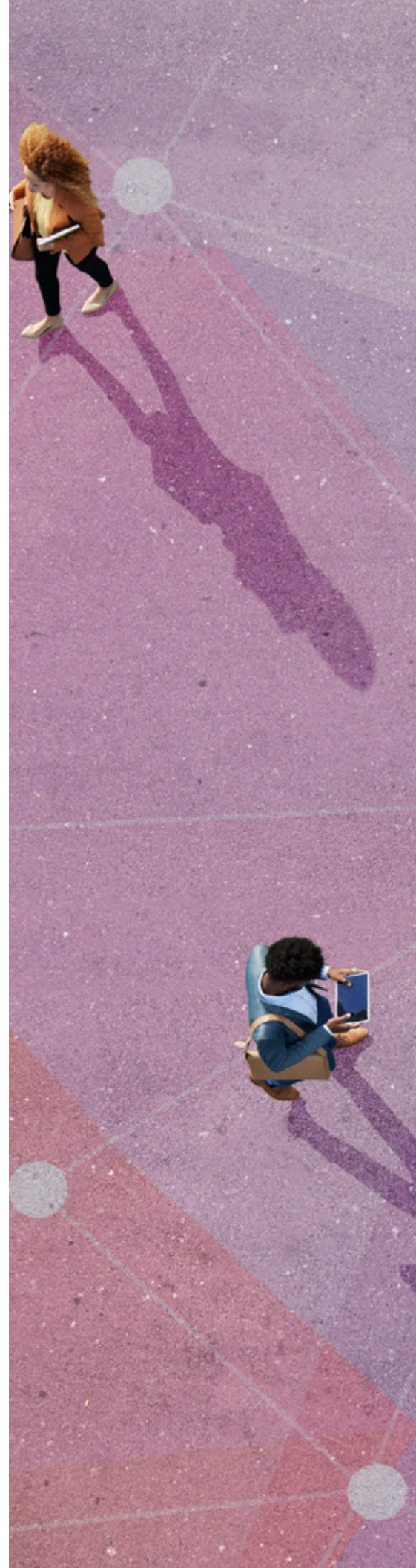
Managing Conflict from a Distance

As the distance between colleagues increases, the potential for misunderstandings and conflict also rises. When team members are not working face to face, differences that interfere with work can become more frequent and more difficult to resolve. Moreover, conflict can become harder to detect when working virtually, which can damage productivity and negatively impact interpersonal relationships.

## Managing Accountability and Coaching in a Virtual Environment

Accountability is a critical differentiator of an organization's success and it is even more challenging to hold people accountable in a virtual setting, where leaders are working from a distance with fewer opportunities to observe performance. In addition, virtual leaders frequently need to coach and enhance accountability with team members who do not report directly to them. This program provides virtual leaders with the knowledge, skills and tools to increase accountability and effectively coach people from a distance.

How Great Leaders Inspire Action and Motivate others from a Distance

In a virtual environment, people are more likely to feel disconnected and isolated. In addition, working on virtual teams or task forces is often outside the scope of people's day-to-day roles. It is also more common that virtual leaders need to motivate people who do not report directly to them. That's why it's so important for virtual leaders to be able to create a sense of community and engage and motivate people from a distance.

Building Great Virtual Teams: A Blueprint for Success

Organizations that proactively plan structure for their virtual teams and understand "what good looks like" will see a better return on their investment. What can you do to increase the likelihood that your virtual teams — whether they are in the formation stage or have been operating for a few months — are set up for success? Building Great Virtual Teams will help you ensure virtual success.
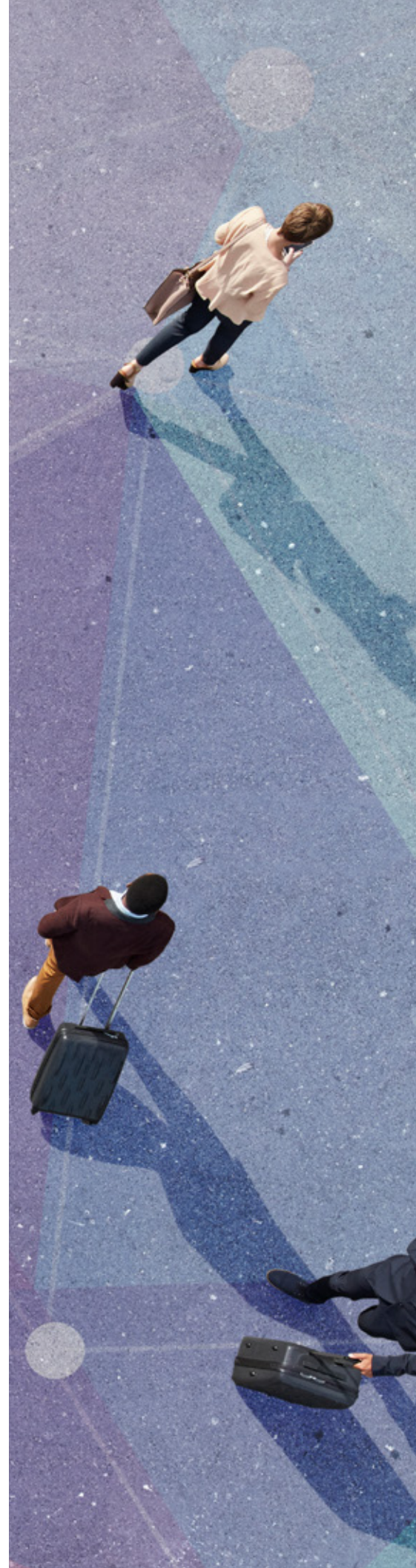
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ABOUT SPENCER STUART

At Spencer Stuart, we know how much leadership matters. We are trusted by organizations around the world to help them make the senior-level leadership decisions that have a lasting impact on their enterprises. Through our executive search, board and leadership advisory services, we help build and enhance high-performing teams for select clients ranging from major multinationals to emerging companies to nonprofit institutions.

Privately held since 1956, we focus on delivering knowledge, insight and results through the collaborative efforts of a team of experts — now spanning more than 60 offices, over 30 countries and more than 50 practice specialties. Boards and leaders consistently turn to Spencer Stuart to help address their evolving leadership needs in areas such as senior-level executive search, board recruitment, board effectiveness, succession planning, in-depth senior management assessment, employee engagement and many other facets of culture and organizational effectiveness. For more information on Spencer Stuart, please visit **www.spencerstuart.com**.

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