

## Strategic corporate culture for managing risks in virtual project teams

**Olena Bielova,**

*Ph.D. in Economics, Associate professor  
Associate Professor of the Department  
of Marketing and Behavioral Economics  
«KROK» University, Kyiv, Ukraine,  
e-mail: bielovaoi@krok.edu.ua,  
ORCID: 0000-0001-9359-6947*

**Oleksandr Bielov,**

*Ph.D student of Management Technologies Department  
«KROK» University, Kyiv, Ukraine,  
e-mail: bielovoy@krok.edu.ua,  
ORCID: 0000-0002-4976-5501*

**Vadim Belsky,**

*Ph.D student of Management Technologies Department  
«KROK» University, Kyiv, Ukraine,  
e-mail: belskyivy@krok.edu.ua,  
ORCID: 0009-0002-1194-9070*

Managing virtual project teams poses a complex challenge for modern organizations, especially in a globalized, digitally transforming, and often unstable environment. While virtual teams unlock valuable opportunities, they also introduce a range of risks that require strategic insight and a well-structured approach.

One primary risk involves fostering trust and cohesion. The absence of physical presence can make team members feel isolated, diminishing their sense of engagement and belief in the project's importance, ultimately impacting motivation and work quality. Here, corporate culture must be strategically oriented to cultivate trust and provide the necessary emotional support to bridge gaps created by a lack of direct interaction.

Communication barriers are another critical concern. Virtual teams frequently face difficulties in maintaining clear and effective communication, which can lead to errors, misunderstandings, and conflicts. The challenge is compounded by time zone differences, which hinder synchronous meetings and limit real-time problem-solving. Addressing these issues requires a strategic corporate culture that promotes transparent communication and nurtures intercultural competence to reduce risks of information misalignment.

Accountability is also a significant challenge in virtual teams, as a lack of managerial oversight can lead to self-management issues and inconsistent task completion. Corporate culture should underscore the importance of responsibility and self-discipline, empowering employees to stay organized and productive without direct supervision.

Cultural differences present further risks, especially in international teams, where members may have varying values, work expectations, and communication styles. These differences can escalate misunderstandings and conflicts, emphasizing the need for a corporate culture that values diversity, tolerance, and constructive conflict

resolution.

In a remote work setting, diminished opportunities for professional development and employee engagement may also arise. Organizations should strategically develop programs that facilitate continuous learning and skill-building to sustain motivation and expertise among remote employees.

Moreover, maintaining productivity in virtual teams can be challenging due to the lack of physical supervision. Team members may struggle with self-discipline and time management, and the home environment may introduce distractions. A strategically aligned corporate culture should reinforce productivity standards and provide resources for effective time management, such as regular check-ins, project management tools, and self-management training.

Data security is a further risk, as virtual teams rely on various digital platforms, making them more vulnerable to cyber threats. A cohesive corporate culture should prioritize cybersecurity through regular training, clear data handling policies, and adherence to security protocols to build resilience against cyber risks, ensuring trust among clients and stakeholders.

Finally, professional conduct and appearance remain essential, even in virtual settings. Professionalism in online interactions affects team dynamics and external perceptions of the organization. A commitment to maintaining professional standards in virtual communication reinforces the organization's image and fosters client and employee trust.

Each of these risks demands a deliberate approach to corporate culture as a strategic asset. Modern organizations aiming to remain competitive must adapt their cultural strategies to align with the demands of digitalization and globalization. A corporate culture grounded in trust, flexibility, and openness to technological advancements will enable organizations to mitigate risks, sustain productivity, and thrive in challenging conditions of global instability.

**Ключові слова:** Strategy; Strategic management; Virtual team; Project; Project management; Risk; Project risks.

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