

2018 ANDELA

# Engineering Management Report



## Table of Contents

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE	4
ENGINEERING TEAM MANAGEMENT	6
RESOURCES FOR COLLABORATION	8
LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION	9
TODAY'S ENGINEERING MANAGER	10
METHODOLOGY	12



# The Inner Workings of the Modern Tech Manager

Engineering managers are well-versed in the challenges of modern business. Management demands more, better, sooner—and cheaper. Engineers insist on fulfillment, career development, flexible working conditions—and top compensation.

It's no surprise that recruiting and retaining talent is the top concern for most engineering managers, according to the 2018 Andela Engineering Management Report. But that's hardly their only concern. They reported that their companies could better support them through communication, resources, and flexibility.

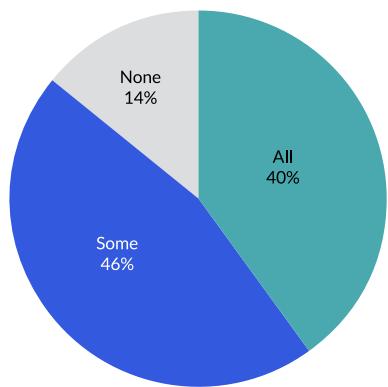
Luckily, remote work may be the key to solving many of these concerns. Managers who work regularly with distributed employees cite remote work as key to improving productivity, communication and the overall success of their teams. Read on for more surprising insights on workforce trends and best practices in engineering management from today's tech leaders.



## I ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

### Remote Work Lives On

#### Overall, how much of your team work remotely?



Although decentralized engineering workforces have recently fallen out of favor in some companies, the practice remains widespread among engineering departments, according to this study. Some employers embrace remote arrangements to offer additional flexibility to existing workers. Others seek new pools of engineering talent in less competitive locations. Some want both.

Whatever the reason, a mere 14% of the managers surveyed reported that the entirety of their team works in the same location. By contrast, 46% of respondents reported having some of their teams working remotely, while 40% said they rely on remote workers most or all of the time.

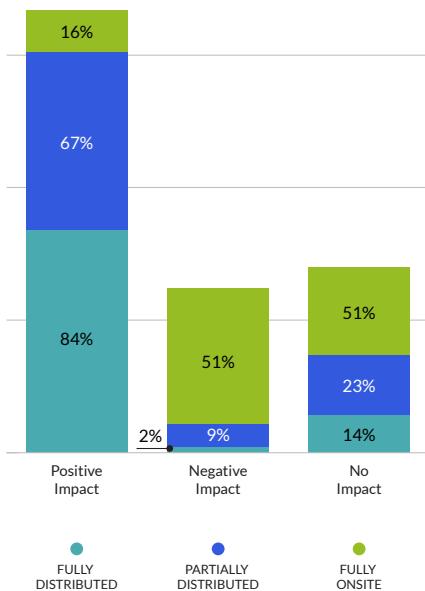
Not surprisingly, managers in companies that relied most

heavily on remote workers overwhelmingly found that the arrangement benefited both the culture and output of their teams. The nearly one in six managers who don't use distributed teams are far more skeptical of the arrangement: about half said having employees work remotely was negative for collaboration and relationship building, and less than a quarter said the arrangement improved success.

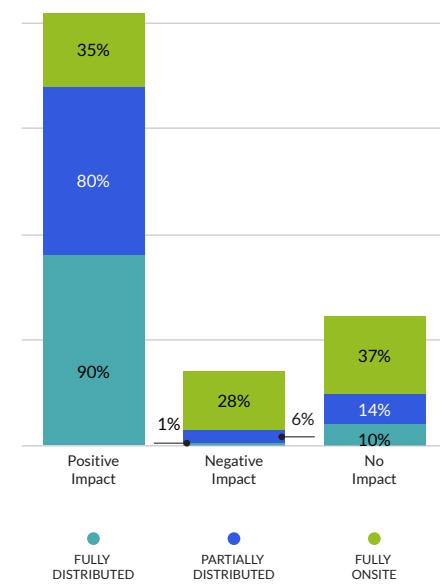
But the most relevant insights are most likely gleaned from managers who oversee a hybrid team, in which some engineers are co-located and others are working remotely. Comprising the largest segment in this year's study, these professionals are in the best position to compare the two arrangements, and this group found the overall impact of a distributed impact



**How does remote working  
impact your management  
experience as it relates to  
COLLABORATION?**



**How does remote working  
impact your management  
experience as it relates to  
PRODUCTIVITY?**



**“GIVE ME THE  
RESOURCES I  
NEED TO EXECUTE  
ON PROJECTS  
AND MEET MY  
COMMITMENTS.”**

#### I ENGINEERING TEAM MANAGEMENT

## The Business Case For Overcommunication

Clear communication about priorities and goals, along with communication through collaboration tools helps managers sort through strained resources to get things done.

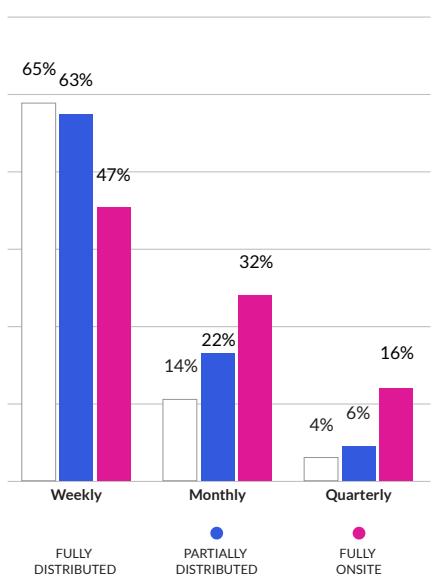
Not surprisingly, communication is most critical for managers with the largest or most widely distributed teams. These leaders have developed a more structured approach to management than those who can see their whole group at a glance. They have also gotten their teams on board to measure productivity and business impact

as performance indicators, while co-located ones focused more on quality.

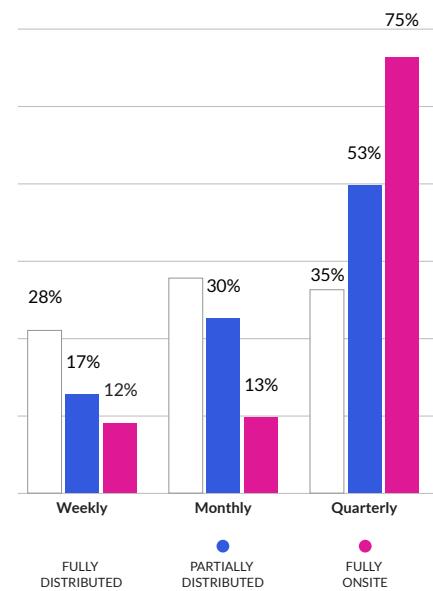
The frequency that managers meet with their direct reports starkly reflects this difference. Surprisingly, those with the largest share of remote workers are the most likely to have daily or weekly meetings with their full teams than those with more centralized groups. They also have more frequent one-on-one meetings and formal performance reviews with their engineers.



**Which best describes how often you have one-on-one meetings with your direct reports?**



**Which best describes how often you have performance reviews with your direct reports?**



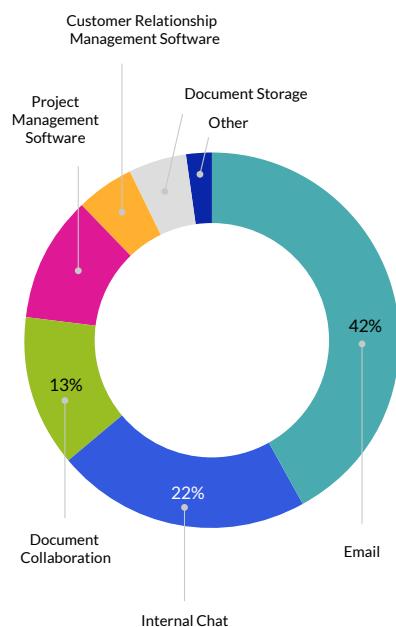
## I RESOURCES FOR COLLABORATION

### Tools of the Trade

Andela's survey asked several questions exploring the technological tools engineering teams used for collaboration. Surprisingly, email remains the top choice of pretty much every group. However, enthusiasm for the medium was lowest among younger managers, smaller companies and those with a lot of remote workers.

The industry may see a decrease in reliance on email as a collaboration tool as distributed teams continue to grow, while business chat services, such as Slack, are on the rise as the next in line.

**Which of the following is the most important tool used by your team to keep remote employees in the loop of new policies, rationale behind decisions, etc.?**



## | LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

# The Case for Location

Companies with largely remote workforces are more likely to prioritize specific skills and experience when hiring, and more likely to offer workers defined career path options and development opportunities. Collectively, these approaches appear to pay off. Managers of largely remote workforces are half as worried about employee turnover than those of onsite-only companies.

When asked what is important in a new recruit, nine out of 10 respondents chose problem-solving and collaboration skills when asked to select multiple factors. Problem solving stayed at the top of the list when the managers were asked to pick the single most

important characteristic. The managers of predominantly remote teams put a higher premium on some of the more disciplined aspects of programming, such as testing and code review. Leaders of onsite teams put human values such as culture fit and ambition higher up.

This difference can also be seen sharply in the answers leaders gave when asked how they evaluate the importance of experience with a particular language or technology stack when hiring. More than 55% of leaders of mainly remote teams said specific experience was very important compared to only 16% of those with local teams.

Fully Distributed		Partially Distributed		Fully On-site	
Problem-solving	28%	Problem-solving	30%	Problem-solving	37%
Testing	11%	Programming language proficiency	14%	Collaboration skills	13%
Collaboration skills	10%	Collaboration skills	11%	Culture-fit	13%
Code review capability	8%	Code review capability	9%	Ambitious	6%
Programming language proficiency	8%	Proactive	7%	Programming language proficiency	4%

ONLY 55% OF  
THE MANAGERS  
STRONGLY  
BELIEVE THAT  
THEIR COMPANY  
UNDERSTANDS THE  
VALUE OF THEIR  
TEAM.

## I TODAY'S ENGINEERING MANAGER

### A Cry for Support

Andela's survey tried to determine if respondents felt supported by their companies, and the results painted a mixed picture. Only 55% of the managers strongly believe that their company understands the value of their team. And less than half (44%) were sure that the engineering team was seen as a strategic partner of the C-suite. One dramatic difference was that both leaders of larger teams and leaders of teams that mostly work remotely felt significantly more valued. Asked whether the CEO of their company understands the value of their team, 71% of those who lead teams of more than 20 members strongly agreed compared to only 42% of those leading teams of 10 or fewer engineers. As for those who lead mostly remote

teams, 56% strongly agreed that they have the resources they need to succeed as a manager at their company, vs. 44% of those that have no remote workers.

This striking result, combined with much of the rest of the study, begins to describe a path that many engineering managers have taken: distributed workforces. With this tool, they can search more widely for talent and do more to keep the engineers fulfilled. To make this work, these managers have learned that crisp communication, structured management and attention to career development are keys to satisfaction.



## **How could your company support your development as a manager better?**

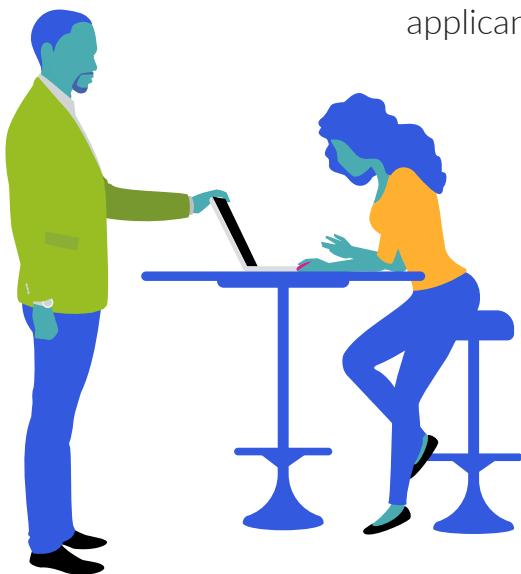
“Better communication and more technological based resources. We have a diverse team and that needs to continue, but communication is key.”

“Hire the right fit, and provide good packages to talents so that we can retain them.”

“My current company does not understand employee development as a process. We need to start from the ground up in making a system that supports employee development at all levels.”

“Provide better resources to hire more people and allow permanent ability to hire remote workers.”

“Provide resources to filter out recruitment and offer hiring apps to help with filtering and finding the right applicants.”



## I METHODOLOGY

# About the Andela Engineering Leadership Report

SOME EMPLOYERS  
EMBRACE REMOTE  
ARRANGEMENTS TO  
OFFER ADDITIONAL  
FLEXIBILITY TO  
EXISTING WORKERS.  
OTHERS SEEK  
NEW POOLS OF  
ENGINEERING  
TALENT IN LESS  
COMPETITIVE  
LOCATIONS.

The 2019 Andela Engineering Leadership Report is an in-depth look at the views and behaviors of the people who manage teams of IT engineers in the United States. It is based on an extensive survey of 503 managers at U.S. companies, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies, ranging in size from 100 to more than 10,000 employees. It was conducted online between October 15 and October 26, 2018, by Market Cube. Nearly

one in four (23%) of respondents hold the title of vice president or higher, while 27% are director level and 50% are managers or team leaders.

By age, 58% of respondents were millennials (born in 2000 or later), with 42 percent older. By company size, 49% worked at companies between 100 and 999 employees and 51% worked at companies larger than that.



## About Andela

Andela has helped more than 150 companies embrace distributed work by scaling their engineering teams with the top developers from the African continent.

Find out how Andela can help you hire smarter, faster – different.  
[andela.com](http://andela.com)

