

Top 11 Documentation tips from the Supermanagers podcast

Introduction

With [58%](#) of people having the opportunity to work from home, documentation is more important than ever before. Whilst working from your couch is more comfortable, it also means you cannot run over to your manager's desk to ask them how to do things. Today, companies must make guides, documents and videos to share best practices. This is not only important to introduce your employees to their role but to encourage them to upskill. For some companies, this can seem like an impossible task, so continue reading as we reveal 11 tips from industry-leading experts on how you can implement documentation in your business.

The tips

Job Van Der Voort, CEO at Remote.com

Job Van Der Voort explained in episode 39 that documentation is particularly important for distributed teams to complete asynchronous work. He explained that Gitlab's documentation culture of answering a question with a link to a documented resource shaped how Remote.com encourages documentation. He believes one of the primary benefits of documentation is limiting the back-and-forth of calls, which is both inefficient and practically impossible for teams in different time zones.

Job believes that any information relevant to other people than yourself should be documented. This can include policies or even frequent sales prospect requests or the process.

Listen to [Job Van Der Voort on episode 39 of the Supermanagers podcast here](#)

Johnathan Ronzio, CMO and Co-founder at Trainual

In episode 37, Johnathan Ronzio discussed how documentation has encouraged company growth. As a documentary filmmaker, Johnathan was used to recording important moments, but

when it came to his company, he was reluctant at first. Now, Johnathan credits documentation with his company's success.

Trainual uses videos and screen recordings to document best practices, allowing company leaders to make the best use of their time. Johnathan also believes that documentation has encouraged employee progression by giving them access to new skills quickly and easily. This means Trainual is constantly growing as company leaders have more free time and employees are consistently gaining new skills.

Listen to [Johnathan Ronzio on episode 37 of the Supermanagers podcast here](#)

Eli Fathi, Chairman of the Board at Mindbridge

To Eli Fathi, documentation is key to maintaining a healthy work culture, morale and productivity. In episode 64, he explained that a company should share information in a well-structured communication system to ensure all employees are active and included. This goes hand in hand with his 'carrots, not sticks' management style, where instead of telling employees what to do and how to do it, he motivates them to use their initiative.

This structure, says Fathi, will not only ensure that everyone is included but will encourage employees to find the solutions to issues they face, creating an able and proactive team.

Listen to [Eli Fathi on episode 64 of the Supermanagers podcast here](#)

David Hanrahan, Chief Human Resources Officer at Eventbrite

In episode 97, David explained how documentation helped Eventbrite to evolve after the pandemic. He explained that company changes throughout Covid-19 led to a demoralized workforce, so documenting more 'compassionate' practices helped them to bounce back.

For example, David explained that the company had to establish a standard around employee working hours in different time zones. The company realized that some employees were working much longer hours than others due to remote working, so they documented a working hours standard to benefit all employees, regardless of their geographic location. In a remote working environment, it is also important to be able to [share contracts and waivers securely](#), this

is integral to Eventbrite's compassionate practices and commitment to helping their clients and employees.

Listen to [David Hanrahan on episode 97 of the Supermanagers podcast here](#)

Kevan Lee, Vice President of Marketing at Oyster

To Kevan Lee, documentation can either be push or pull, he explained in episode 79 of the Supermanagers podcast. Push is when managers push information out to employees. In contrast, pull is when employees can seek out information themselves to upskill and learn independently. He described the importance of having lots of different 'pull' platforms, from using Google Docs for asynchronous collaboration to Asana for project management.

Kevan believes the 'pull' method of documentation is key to creating a calm and responsible working culture.

Listen to [Kevan Lee in episode 79 of the Supermanagers podcast here](#)

Scott Williamson, Chief Product Officer at Gitlab

In episode 88, Scott Williamson described how documentation helps his team to work on long-term projects. For Scott, documentation means capturing the team's latest thinking so that you can understand the progression of a project. He does this by sharing large Google Docs with his team, where everyone can contribute their thoughts throughout the evolution of a project. This helps the Gitlab team to have clarity and direction on big, long-term projects.

The Gitlab product officer also revealed he uses documentation to prepare for big projects. This allows him to develop his thinking and create high-quality output.

Listen to [Scott Williamson in episode 88 of the Supermanagers podcast here](#)

Colin Bryar, Former Vice President of Amazon

In this episode of the Supermanagers podcast, former Amazon VP Colin Bryar revealed that the company would not be where it is today without documentation. He explained that standardizing and documenting their 'Bar Raiser' hiring standards propelled the small business to become the [sixth largest](#) company in the world. It was the company's first scalable and repeatable process, enabling them to consistently hire high-quality candidates.

Amazon also used documentation in narratives instead of PowerPoints. Narratives are used to present new ideas in an in-depth document format to enable deeper understanding and better decision-making. This also means that clients feel they are getting a personalized experience, which can often be difficult when working to deadlines. However, nowadays programmes like Salesforce and PandaDoc can help with their [collaborative proposals](#).

Listen to [Colin Bryar in episode 70 of the Supermanagers podcast here](#)

David Hoang, Product Design Director at Webflow

To David Hoang, documentation is about remembering your successes and boosting morale, he explained in episode 46. At Webflow, team members keep 'Hype Docs' where they record important moments for their team, such as a colleague getting a promotion. This is not only an important tool to use in performance reviews, according to David but a way to motivate employees by commemorating and celebrating important moments in their teams.

'Hype docs', said David, also help to highlight the human side of someone's career progression. Unlike a CV or resume, a hype doc is a place for memories and helps to create a positive work environment.

Listen to [David Hoan in episode 46 of the Supermanagers podcast here](#).

Jennifer Goldman-Wetzler, CEO of Alignment Strategies Group

In episode 85, Jennifer Goldman-Wetzler discussed how she has integrated documentation into her daily routine to improve her business and her life. The CEO revealed she keeps a 'nightly reflection document', where she journals all her lessons, thoughts and feelings from that day. An exercise in mindfulness, Jennifer explained that the ritual helps her to hold herself accountable and to learn from her experiences.

If you would like to try your hand at Jennifer's nightly ritual, she recommends asking yourself: 'what am I grateful for today?' and 'what did I feel like today?'.

Listen to [Jennifer Goldman-Wetzler in episode 85 of the Supermanagers podcast here.](#)

Liam Martin, Co-founder of Time Doctor and Running Remote

In this episode, Liam Martin described his 'rule of three' for documentation and information sharing. For Liam, the first and second you do something is a trial run, but the third time, you have nailed that skill. Moreover, because it is new, you will remember every detail, so now is the time to document it.

According to Liam, you should share this with your colleagues, so 'everyone has the same informational advantage as the CEO'. He even suggested that employees complete a 'how to do my job' guide within their first three months of employment so that their tasks can be delegated in an emergency. To share documents, it's important to be able to convert file formats when needed, for example, changing a [PDF into a WordDoc.](#)

Listen to Liam Martin in [episode 106 of the Supermanagers podcast here.](#)

Hamza Khan, author of 'Leadership, Reinvented' and 'The Burnout Gamble'

Have you ever thought of keeping a 'happiness audit'? In this episode, Hamza Khan discussed how keeping track of his happiness has helped him to achieve success.

A happiness audit is a document where you describe your perfect day and compare it to your current situation. This helps you to assess your goals and progress so that you can make the necessary changes to reach your ideal life. Looking back in 2021, he described the audit as a 'humbling' experience which he has decided to reboot to reassess his goals and vision of success.

Listen to [Hamza Khan in episode 81 of the Supermanagers podcast here.](#)

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