



Octopus Deploy

Remote Engineering Management

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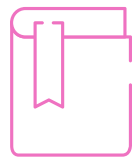
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Last year I worked at two other companies that moved to remote work due to COVID-19. Today I work at Octopus Deploy, a remote-first company.

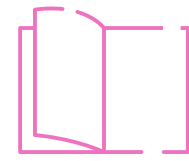
About Me



Octopus: Working remotely before it was cool / mandatory



2017: Went "all-in"
on remote work



Hired remote
employees



Shut the office for
a month



Created the
Octopus
handbook



Now a thriving
company of 150+
people, working
remote-first



Remote-first

Deliberate, with years to transition

Homes are set up for remote work

No plan to return to office

History of hiring for remote work fit

"COVID-remote"

Unplanned and sudden

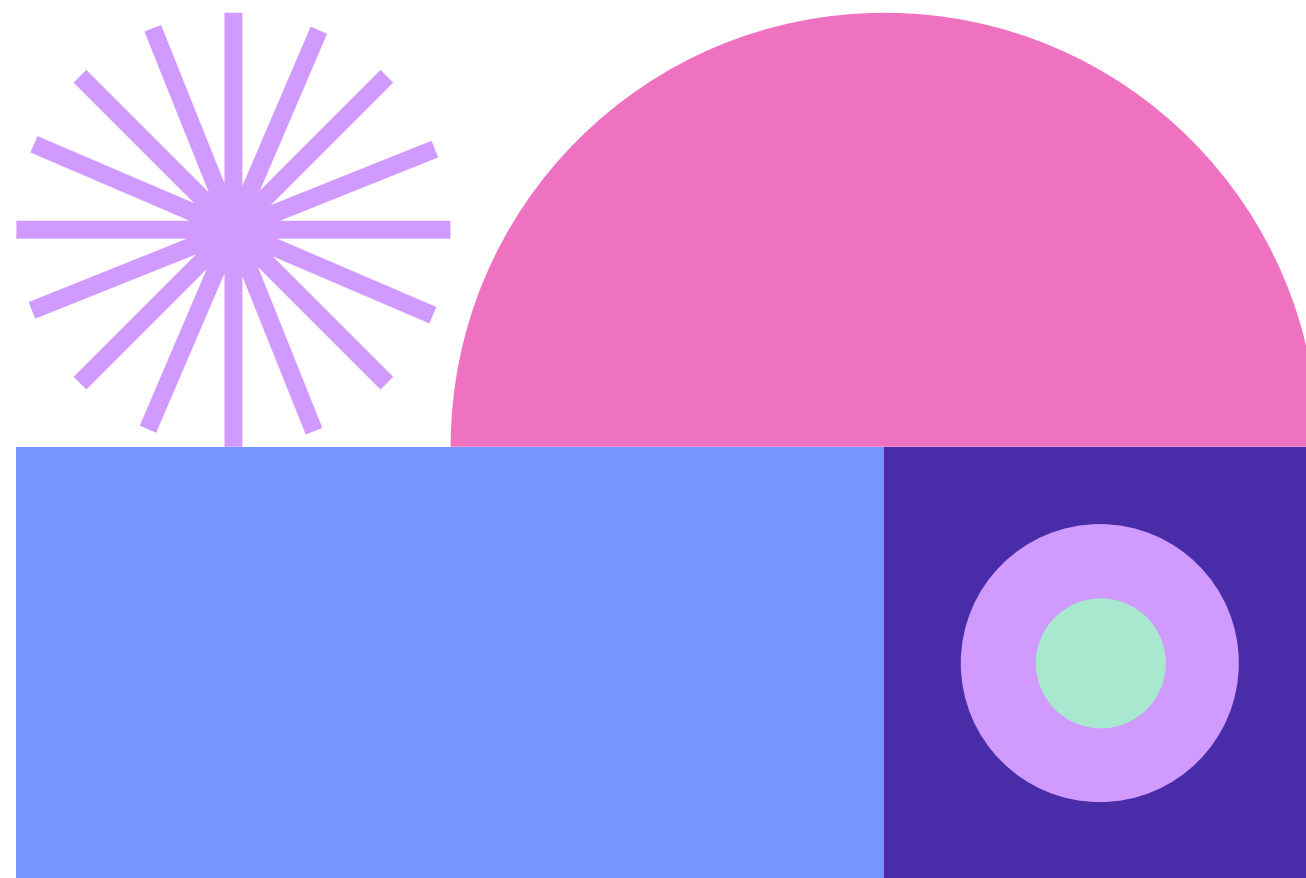
Employees unprepared for remote work

Plan for full/partial return to office

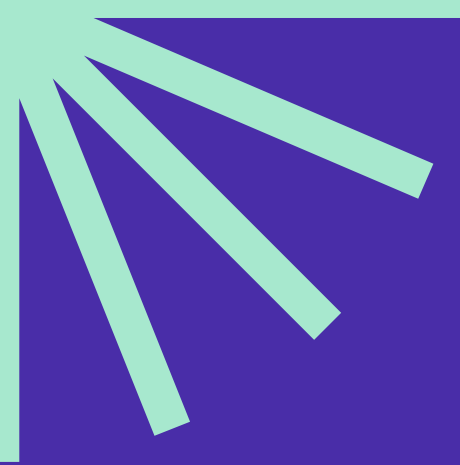
Has never hired for remote work fit

Informal survey results

Common challenges

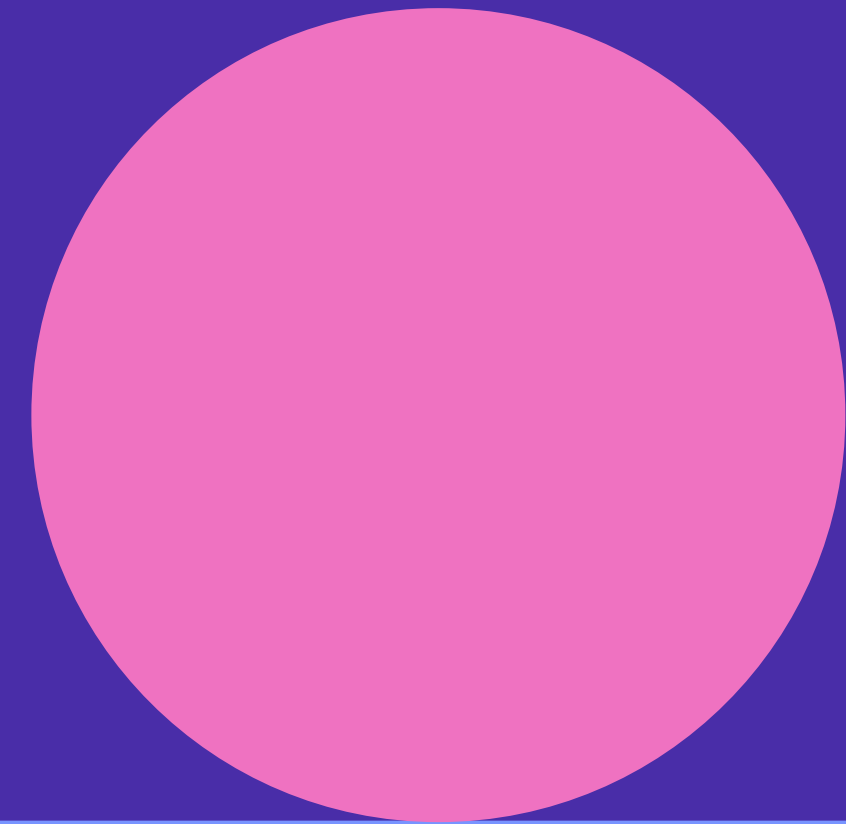


- Teamwork & Culture → "How do you foster a team spirit and not just a place to pick up tasks?"
- Communication & Knowledge Sharing → "Why does it feel like it's harder to keep up with multiple projects remotely than it did in the office, and how to keep up without adding infinite meetings?"
- Onboarding → "If a new person joins, how do you integrate them?"
- Awareness → "Is there a way to pick up the subtle cues that someone is struggling in a remote setting?"
- Leadership → "How do you create a sense of urgency (or lack thereof) in a remote environment?"

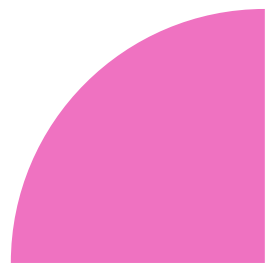


Go all-in on remote-first.*

*If you can!

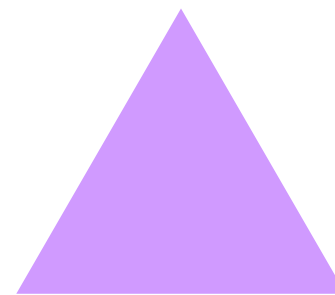


Key things that helped at Octopus



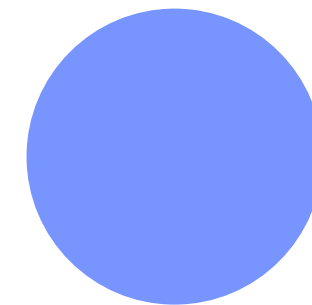
Commit to Inclusivity

"Everyone is a 2nd class citizen"



Set a high bar for communication

Excellent communication skills are a
must-have for Octonauts.

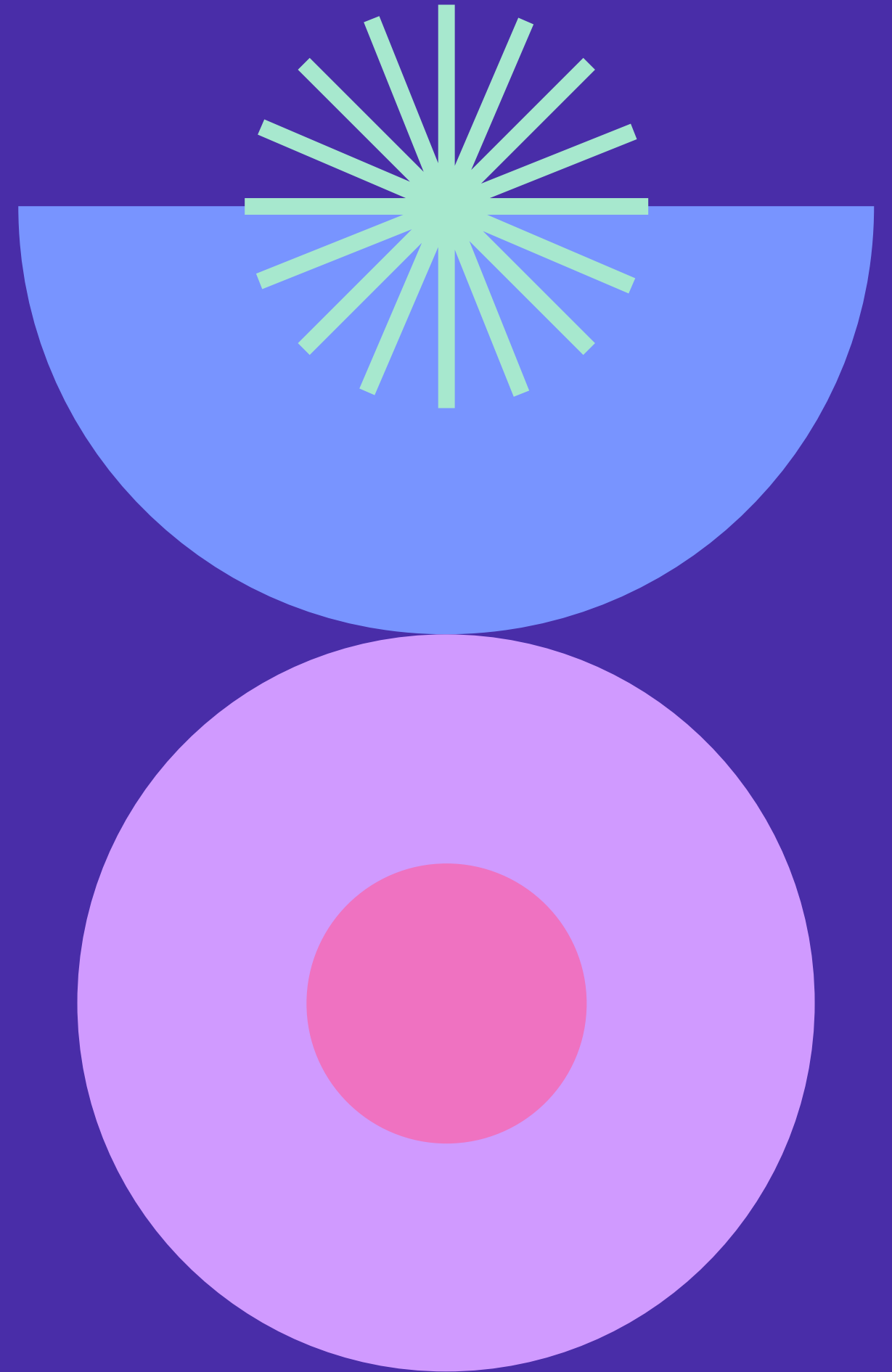


Have regular 1:1s

Octopus 1:1 meetings take place
every 1-4 weeks.

Remote work needs a high bar for communication

Written and verbal communication must be excellent. Good audio equipment is essential. Presentation skills are required for leaders.





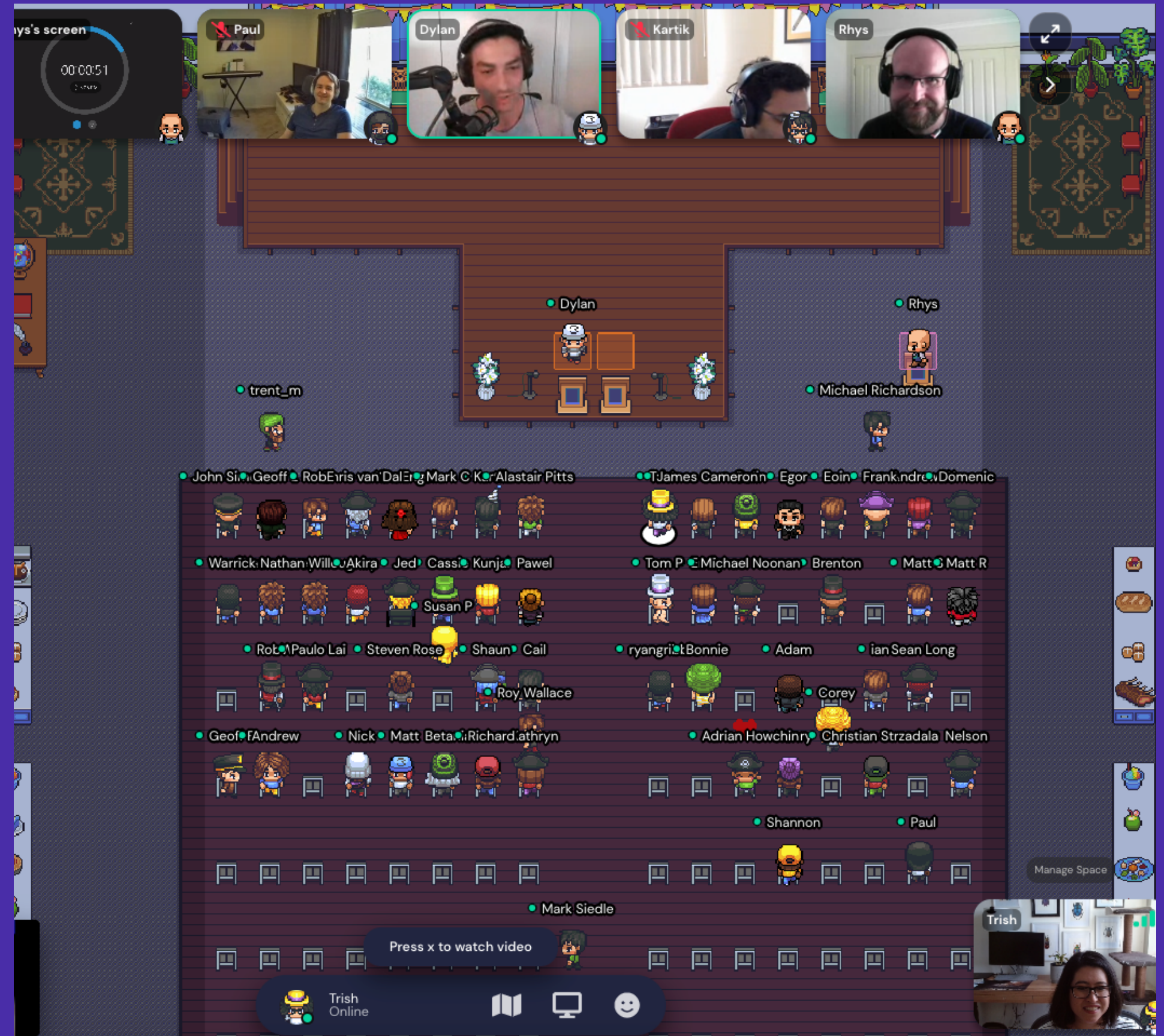
Be deliberate about teamwork

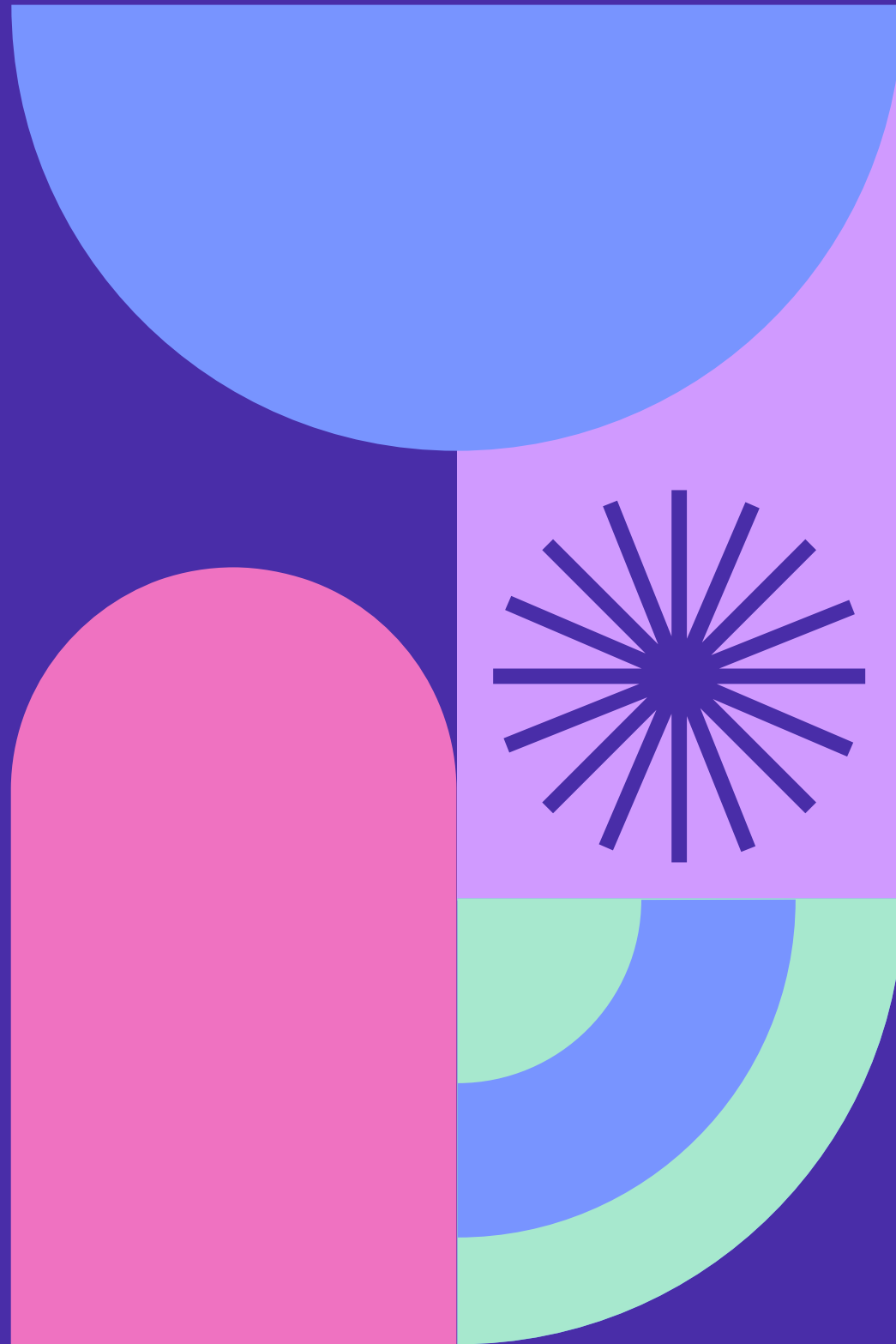
Use pair programming. Don't let people go dark. Look out for each other. Zoom is not just for meetings. Find ways to socialise remotely.

Remote Social

Using Gather town for a company Kickoff event

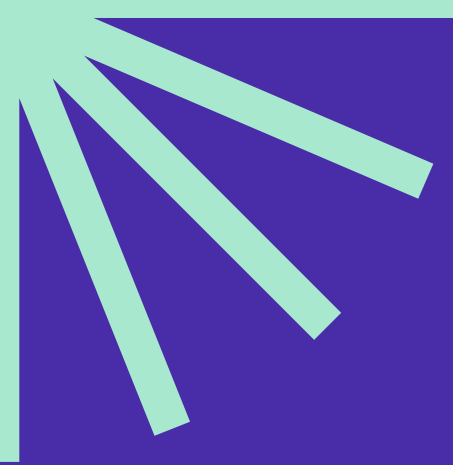
<http://gather.town>





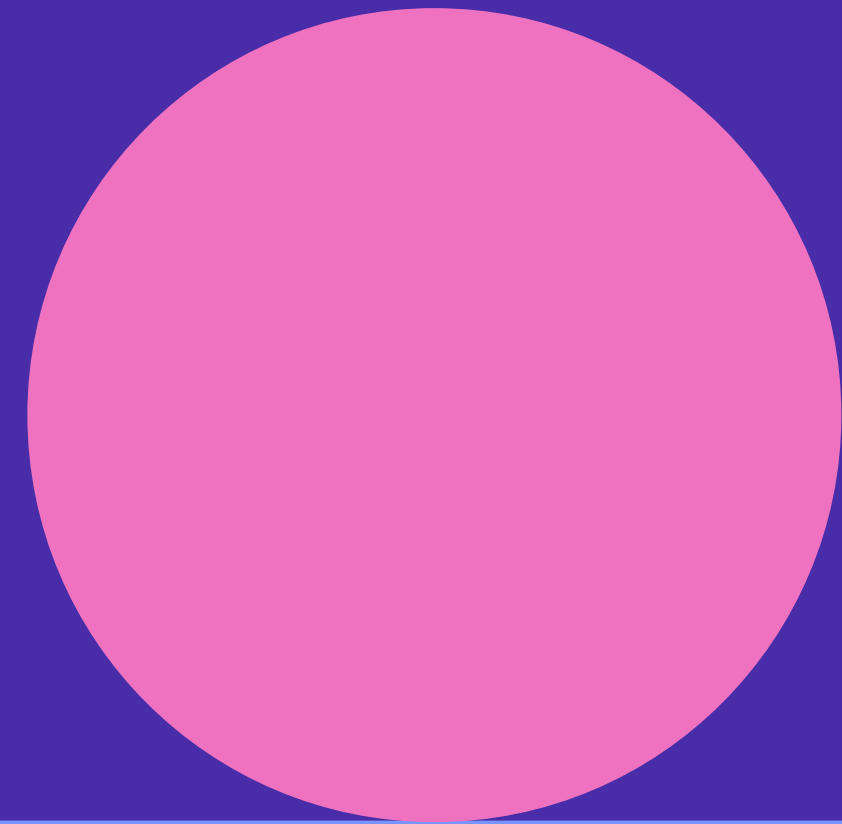
Trust creates awareness

Remote-work needs a high-trust environment. Hire for fit. Look out for each other. Have regular 1:1s.



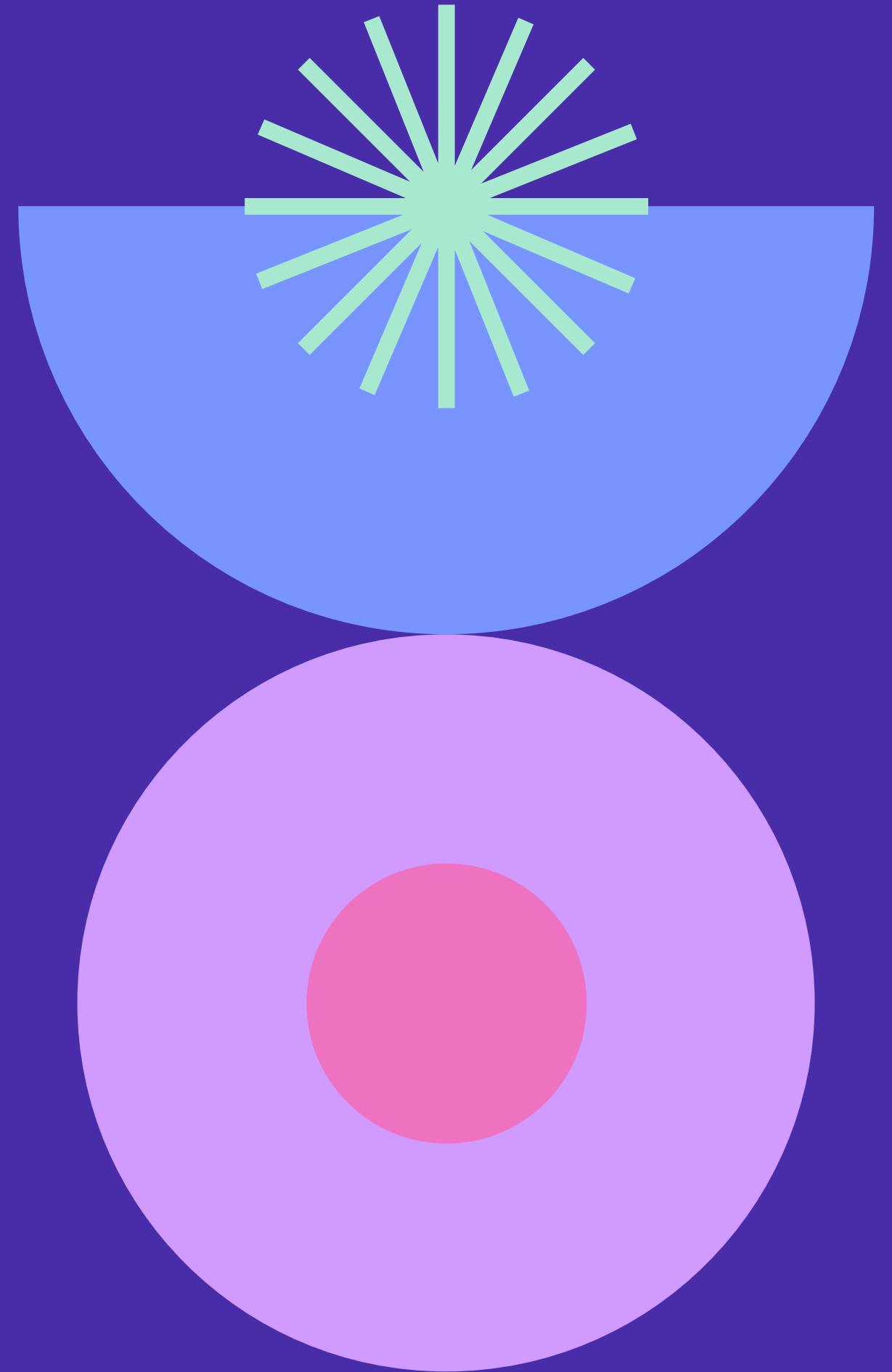
Create remote support for onboarding

Use an onboarding Trello board or similar. Write documentation and keep it up to date. Assign a buddy. Find work to do independently.



Lead asynchronously

Record meetings of importance. Use visual tools and documents to create alignment. Use meetings strategically. Trust, and hold people accountable.





But remember...

**Go all-in on
remote-first.
Everything else
will follow.**

Read more about how we work in our Octopus
Handbook:



handbook.octopus.com