

Working From Home

A Guide for Employees

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Introduction

Transitioning to working from home when you are adapted to the daily routine of going to work to a traditional office is not exactly easy. Making an emergency transition, as factors out of our control shift how organizations are working globally — now that is a higher-level challenge!

The most important factor in transitioning to working remotely from home, particularly in a time of crisis, is to have a healthy work/life balance with defined boundaries that will help you to be engaged in the work, be physically and mentally healthy, and allow you to enjoy the rewards of working from home. This guide serves as a means to support you in your new way of working.

What To Do First? Take Care of Yourself!

Here are some ways you can ensure that you are taking care of yourself:



ROUTINE

Always start your day with a positive attitude and create a daily routine to help you build small but efficient habits. For example: wake up at a similar time; get dressed with clothes that make you feel prepared for work; plan for your usual workday schedule.



DESIGNATED WORK SPACE

Not everyone has a designated home office, but it's critical to identify an area of your home where you can have the most private, quiet space for your work. If you can, separate your work area from your personal spaces and use it just for work, not for other activities.



TAKE INTENTIONAL BREAKS

Make sure you follow a schedule where you set time for breaks, stand up and go for a walk, grab a coffee, call a friend, etc.



BOUNDARIES

Maintaining a work-life balance is important for your health, happiness, and your overall wellbeing. When you are home, it is difficult to see the lines where work starts and ends. Stop after your usual regular working hours — if you get email on your phone, turn off notifications. Log off your computer. Try and separate yourself from work. If something is urgent, someone can call you.



SOCIALIZATION

Stay social! Interpersonal connection is important, even if it is done virtually. Schedule face time with your peers — everyone is in this together. Setup some time to connect and check-in on each other! Check-in with your team frequently. Use different technologies to stay connected and support one another.



STRESS RELIEF

Find ways to relieve stress — for some people, this is challenging, but try to look into different ways that may work for you. Now is the time! Some activities include exercising, watching

funny online videos, listening to music, and lighting candles. Get some rest — make sure to get plenty of rest and sleep. This is one of many ways to keep healthy. Have a good nutrition plan, exercise regularly, and pay attention to your condition.

How to Stay Engaged with the Work

There are many ways to stay engaged and productive while working remotely. Each and every person is different. The first thing to remember is that if you are struggling with working remotely, speak up! Call your supervisor, your colleagues, or anyone who can support and assist you in transitioning your work with ease. Here are some tips:

- **Hold your normal meetings** – if you have one-on-ones with your supervisor or team meetings regularly, be sure to hold those meetings as you would as if you were in the office. See below for some ways to communicate with technology.
- **Prioritize your tasks** – create a to-do list using software of your preference or even just a paper and a pen! Prioritizing your tasks will help you be more productive and create a sense of accomplishment during the day.
- **Keep your calendar up-to-date** – make sure to schedule items on your work calendar to keep you on task, but also to let others know when you are not available.
- **Minimize distractions** – This is a tough one when everyone is home! However, speak with your household members to help you keep concentrated in your work as much as possible.
- **Communicate with your supervisor** – keep constant communication with your supervisor to discuss priorities and updates.

Ways to Communicate - Leverage Technology

There are many ways to communicate while working remotely and everyone favors different approaches. It is important for employees and supervisors to have a discussion with each other and their peers about these preferences. Various forms to communicate remotely are:

- **Instant Messaging** – such as Microsoft Teams or Slack
- **Email** – the most common form in and out of the office
- **Webcam** – there are many types of software to use for this such as Google Hangouts, Go To Meeting, Skype, or FaceTime.
- **Telephone** – this is much easier than webcam and works well for a quick chat, but it is not recommended for meetings or longer conversations.

It is more important now than ever to hold your regular one-on-ones with your supervisor and team meetings. We even recommend increasing the frequency of these meetings. Be sure to keep all lines of communication open.

Looking to Stay Busy?

With this transition, some people may be busier than others. If you are very client-focused, but your clients have closed temporarily or their work slowed, your workload may have decreased. What can you do if you want to stay busy?

- **Communicate this to your supervisor** and let them know that you may be available to work on other projects or assist your colleagues. Offer your help!
- **Organize online files** – is your team's folder a mess? Have you sorted through your email messages? Now is a great time to work through them.
- **Professional Development** – Need to brush up on something? Looking to gain a new skill? Conduct a Google search for virtual trainings or sign up for newsletters in your field.
- **Process Mapping** – have some processes that seem antiquated or rundown? Try designing new processes that could benefit you or your colleagues upon returning to the office!
- **Create new tools for you or your clients** – think about your work and how you can improve it or make it more effective. Also think about your client's experience. You may be able to create tools that would benefit them in understanding your work better.

Remember, you can always connect with your supervisor or your Human Resources department for any questions or guidance.