

LifeAdviser Special Edition

Tips for Telecommuting Success

In response to the coronavirus outbreak, more and more organizations are asking their employees to work remotely.

While telecommuting has become more common, there are distinct challenges associated with it. Telecommuting requires a significant work alignment and entails a considerable lifestyle change. Here are some tips that can help you thrive while working remotely.

Establish a designated work area. It's important to carve out a dedicated space that helps gets you into work mode and keeps you there. This is where you organize the tools and materials you need to do your job. If you work from home, it will also help you establish boundaries with family or roommates. Let them know that when you are in this space, you are working and can't be interrupted.

Create a schedule that works for you. Start and end your workday on as much of a routine as possible. Set aside strategic times for email, meetings, projects and so forth. Keep your calendar up to date and available to your colleagues. Having a structure will help keep you on track, energize you throughout the work day, and just as importantly, help you clock off when it's time.

Take regular breaks. Whatever schedule you choose, plan to work no more than 90 minutes at a time before taking a quick break. Get up from your desk, stretch, maybe take a short walk, have some lunch, and then return to your job duties feeling focused and refreshed.



Don't work in your pajamas. Wake up at a decent hour and get ready as if you were going into the office. While it may be tempting to work in your PJs, research shows that what we wear does affect our mindset. Getting into day clothes serves as a signal that rest time is over and it's time to go to work.

Manage your distractions. While remote workers don't have to deal with office-based distractions, they are still exposed to their own unique set of productivity killers. The dog is begging for a walk. Clothes are piling up in the laundry room. The car is due for service. While it's tempting to take care of those pesky details in the middle of the day, you'll be far more productive scheduling personal tasks before or after work.

Organize! Having an orderly workspace helps you stay focused and boosts productivity. Make sure that everything has a place and take the time to put things away before you end your work day.

If you feel overwhelmed and unable to function or perform basic activities of daily living, a licensed mental health professional can assist you in developing appropriate strategies to move forward.

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Don't forget face time. Telecommuting can become isolating unless you proactively build and maintain relationships. While virtual meetup tools, and videoconferencing are helpful, make it a point to get together in the physical world— schedule social gatherings and other events when possible.

Over time, you will acquire new skills and create processes that work for you and your employer. Successful telecommuters are self-motivated, tech-savvy, disciplined, organized, and have strong time management and communication skills.

If you don't have all of those traits, don't worry. By cultivating them into your daily routine, staying focused, and developing positive habits, you will learn to master each trait and position yourself as a confident and successful telecommuter.

If you have questions or if you are feeling overwhelmed, you may wish to consult with a counselor. Please contact Concern at **800.344.4222** for a referral, or visit our website at **employees.concernhealth.com**

Employees and eligible dependents can request counseling and work/life services 24/7 by calling or visiting our website.

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