

10 tips for working remotely

1. Set up a designated workspace. Separate space for yourself to work in, somewhere you can focus on tasks without being distracted and set up with everything you need for a normal working day – computer, phone, stationery, papers...etc. This may be a simple small in your flat etc
2. Make sure you have all the tech you need. This could include a reliable and secure internet connection, any necessary files, hardware and software, remote access to your organisation's network and, importantly, knowledge of how to get IT support.
3. Get dressed. Changing into working clothes will help you mentally switch to productive work mode. It will also help you distinguish between 'homeworking' and 'home life'.
4. Write a daily to-do list. Set out a list of realistic, achievable tasks to keep you focused.
5. Know when to step away from your desk or table. Be clear about when your working day begins and ends and take breaks to refresh. It's easy to let yourself be 'always on' when your home and office are the same place. When work is over, be sure you switch off to avoid burnout. Think about having 'core hours' which people you work with are around for.
6. Stay in conversation. Contribute regularly to team chats/group emails so you don't drop off the radar. Ask about what people are working on and share what's on your plate. Being physically separated means you miss the 'coffee break moments' so this is a means to keep informed.
7. Foster relationships. Make time for non-work chats as you would in the workplace and use video calling to maintain face-to-face contact.
8. Be clear in your communication. Speaking in person gives you visual and audio cues that help you communicate. Conversing remotely removes a lot of that extra information so make your communications extra clear and concise.
9. Ask for support when needed. Speak out when you need assistance, further training or support. Your manager, colleagues and you are part of a team and should be supporting each other, especially remotely.
10. Make remote working work for you. Change where you sit, put on music, whatever helps you work. And enjoy the perks – no commute or uncomfortable shoes, and all your home comforts!

10 top tips for healthy remote working

1. Put safety first. Try to conduct electronic risk assessments with your team. Make sure all workers know about your health and safety policies. If you supply equipment it must pass relevant safety tests.
2. Know when to step away from your 'work area.' Be clear about when your working day begins and ends and take breaks to refresh. When work is over, be sure you switch off to avoid burnout. Cultivate healthy habits such as taking exercise and fresh air every day.
3. Minimise stress. People managers should set clear expectations about the way employees should deliver and receive communications throughout the working day. This will help alleviate pressure and anxiety.
4. Have a daily virtual huddle. This is essential for keeping connected and a means for managers to check in on their team's physical and mental well-being, and discuss any additional support they need to fulfil their roles from home.
5. Foster relationships. Make time for non-work chats as you would in the workplace and use video calling to maintain face-to-face contact.
6. Show the big picture but prepare to flex. People managers should remind teams of the big picture and how their work fits into it. Review short-term goals regularly and adjust as needed. If some members can't carry out all their usual work, consider other skills they can lend to others to meet team goals.
7. Set expectations and trust your colleagues. Be clear about mutual expectations and trust your colleagues to get on without micromanaging. Focus on results rather than activity. Working relationships can deteriorate quickly and well-being suffer without trust.
8. Be kind. Remote conversations can easily be misinterpreted as it's harder to read body language, tone of voice and other visual and audio cues. Stay mindful of this when delivering difficult messages or feedback. Challenging times call for greater sensitivity and kindness.
9. If you're unwell, take leave and do your best to give an update or handover on urgent work. As a manager or team leader, encourage people to take time off if unwell and model the behaviour yourself.
10. Offer support on well-being.

10 top tips for effective online meetings

1. Embrace video calling. Being present and seeing each other is an important part of keeping connected. Don't hide away or do other work during the meeting.
2. Use headsets or earphones. This will give better sound quality. Speak directly into the mic and remember to mute it when not speaking to limit background noise.
3. Speak clearly and steadily. This will help ensure everyone can understand you. And try to modulate your voice, to keep people interested and engaged.
4. Establish etiquette guidelines. Agree a system to give everyone a voice. Arrange 'hands up' signals to agree who speaks next and use chat functions to allow everyone to contribute.
5. Repeat the question. The chair or presenter should repeat questions they ask or before answering them, to ensure all participants are aware of the original question. Repeating the question in writing within a chat box could provide additional clarity.
6. Use names and give context. When responding to chat comments, repeat the relevant remarks and make clear who you're responding to. Don't just say 'yes, Jane that's right' because others may not have seen Jane's comment and it won't make sense to them.
7. Keep slides simple. Keep to a single thought per slide to help participants understand and focus on what's being discussed. It's better to have more slides with fewer things on them.
8. Keep slides visual. Your participants may be joining from a mobile device and wordy slides will be tough to read. Anchor your presentation on relevant, image-based slides.
9. Engage participants regularly. It's hard to simply listen online for a long time. Invite participants to give comments or ask questions, and use tools like chat or polls.
10. Be explicit about actions and summarise. Spell out clearly any actions that need to be taken and by whom. Summarise meeting takeaways and circulate notes promptly.