

Your New Office: Work From Home Tips

a. **Create a dedicated workspace - Build your home office – Get your technology in order**

Work from home provides greater flexibility in how we work, but that can sometimes come at the cost of productivity. We are still responsible for our normal day-to-day work. Setting up a space in your house that functions as your office, even if it's just the kitchen counter, can help you maintain a sense of normalcy each day.

- i. *Slack, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Zoom or GoToMeeting*
- ii. *Good headset*
- iii. *Reliable internet connection*
- iv. *DocuSign*

b. **Make a schedule and stick with it**

It can be tempting to blend the lines between work and personal time when at home. Resist the urge. Not only does a dedicated schedule help with communicating to your team members, but it also helps you stop at the end of the day and enjoy personal time. Don't give in to the temptation to keep working all throughout your evening. Keep your regular hours!

c. **Take frequent breaks and minimize distraction**

Having a dedicated workspace and making a schedule can help you with the next two tips: minimizing distractions and taking breaks. Taking frequent breaks bears repeating. In office we remember to get up and get coffee, tea, or snacks. We walk to meetings and to chat with our coworkers. Recreate these rituals. Set a timer for regular breaks. Get up and stretch; connect with coworkers on Slack; play with your pets.

d. **Over communicate to make up for the lack of face-to-face interaction**

Remember too, that tone and meaning can often be lost in email or Slack/chat communication, especially in stressful situations. If you feel like a situation is escalating, jump on a phone call or video meeting. Often, hearing the person's voice will deescalate the situation quickly.

e. **Make the extra effort to connect with coworkers**

The importance of connection during times of change and isolation can't be overstated. Take the extra time to set up meetings with video turned on. Check in on your coworkers. Be the calm for those around you, and if you can't be the calm, reach out for help.

f. **WFH does not mean WFH with coworkers: stay in your own home to minimize exposure**

Finally, to stop the spread of the virus, WFH means working from your own home without additional coworkers there. Do not work in groups. Protect yourself and others.

g. **Know thyself (and thy WFH weaknesses)**

If you're distractible, get ready for work every morning like you are going to physically go into work. Dress up, do your hair — whatever you'd normally do. This puts you in a professional mindset

h. **Embrace the webcam**

Conference calls are tough — there are time delays, not knowing who's talking because you can't see the person, people getting interrupted on accident. Webcams can solve a number of these issues: the sense of isolation and that confusion

i. **Stay connected**

To fill the gap, some co-workers are scheduling online social time to have conversations with no agenda. Use Slack chats and things like that if you miss real-time interaction