

Working remotely: Tips for employees



When social distancing is necessary, working remotely can allow you to get your job done without the risk of spreading illness around the workplace. But the isolation and potential distractions can hijack your productivity. **Try these tips to stay disciplined, motivated and productive.**

Transition from “home time” to “working from home,” and vice versa. Start a ritual that helps signal when you need to get into work mode—for instance, make a cup of coffee before sitting down to work each morning. At the end of your work day, close your laptop, tidy up your desk and push in your chair.

Make a to-do list. Write it at the end of your work day so that you can begin the next day prepared.

Build in short breaks. Get up and stretch your legs, play with the dog, water your plants, message your coworker online, or grab a healthy snack. This can help you return to your desk refreshed!

Minimize distractions. Set clear expectations with your family, housemates and friends, telling them that when you're working at home, you're working, and provide guidelines on how and when it's okay to interrupt. If keeping your cell phone at hand distracts you, move it away from your desk except when you need it to make work-related calls.

Loneliness getting to you? Call or message your coworkers to check in on how they're doing.

Keep close ties with your team. Using Skype or other tools to communicate frequently with your coworkers in real time can help you feel connected to your team.

Do a random act of kindness. Doing kindnesses for others not only makes others feel good—it also helps you feel good. Some simple ideas include sending someone an email to let them know how much you appreciate them, donating food or supplies to an animal shelter via their Amazon wish list, or putting a basket of prepackaged and individually-portioned snacks and drinks on your porch for your local delivery people.

Feeling anxious? Do some deep breathing, or do something that is frivolous and lifts your spirits like watching a short, funny cat video.

Take time for yourself. During non-work hours, mentally disconnect from work by engaging in self-care activities. Read a book, watch a TV show, call a family member or friend, cook a healthy meal, do some yoga or try meditating, or go to bed a little early.

Have an attitude of gratitude. During a challenging time like this, it's all too easy to focus on the negatives and all that you don't have and can't do. Instead, focus on what you do have and can do. Consider writing down things you're grateful for—even the little things matter!

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