

Best Practices

- Keep your daily routine and groom and dress for a casual day at the office. Don't jump out of bed and start working in your pajamas.
- Learn how to use your video camera (if any) and how to turn it off and on. When attending web conferences, be aware of any cameras on your device and what they may show. Many cameras have features to blur the background and just show you.
- If a video camera is available on your device, consider using it to keep the human touch.
- Check that you have the office supplies you need.



Technology – Best Practices

- Set aside a workspace in your home away from as many distractions as possible.
- Ensure you have the technology you need to successfully work from home.
- Your firm's technical support will most likely be available. Find out the different ways to contact them (email, chat, direct dial).
- Have the proper instructions to log in and out your work environment.
- Mobile devices may need security apps for user verification.

- Observe all security policies when working remotely.
- Contact your internet provider to check that you have the necessary internet and WIFI speed. Home devices connected to WIFI will affect performance.
- Do not use public WIFI.
- Do not use USB sticks. They are known to be infested with viruses (malware).
- Lock your devices and screens when not in use.

Technology – Hardware

- If you only have one monitor, consider purchasing a second monitor. Used monitors are inexpensive.
- Your keyboard should have function keys. That is the top row of keys named F1, F2, F3, etc.
- A printer is necessary. A scanner is very useful. Many phone apps can serve as a scanner; you should comply with your firm's security policy when texting or emailing documents from any app.

Security

- Follow all privacy and compliance policies. Your family and any visitors should not have access to any work information.
- Do not have work conversations where others can overhear, especially when discussing confidential subjects.

Remote Conferencing Tools

- Know what your firm's web conferencing tool of choice is.
- Learn to use other web conferencing tools such as WebEx, GoToMeeting, Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Skype. Clients may use these tools, or they can serve as a backup for your firm. Many have free trials and inexpensive subscriptions.

- Many web conference tools are stretched to capacity at this time, and the audio quality may not be as expected. Use a firm conference line as needed for audio, and a web conference tool for screen sharing.
- Mute yourself when you enter the conference.
- If using PC audio (a headset or a microphone and speakers), do not dial in as well. This causes noise interference.
- Learn to use the chat feature to communicate with host and other attendees if muted.
- If the conference has echoes, the host should know how to mute all participants at once.
- If the group is a manageable size, the host can unmute one by one to find out who the culprit is and leave them on mute.
- As a last resort, hang up and have everyone dial in again.

Take Care of You

- Take scheduled breaks.
- Go for a short walk in the fresh air.
- Stretch and hydrate often.
- Invest in a stand-up desk if needed.
- Follow all ergonomic recommendations.

Ergonomic Considerations

- Work surface and chair.
- Dual monitors or an ultrawide monitor.
- Reach and position.
- Noise.
- Lighting and ventilation.
- Natural light is recommended.

Distractions

- Explain and set expectations with your family as to your work schedule. They should be supportive.
- Small children will need childcare. Coordinate with other adults in the household or look for alternate arrangements.
- Stay off social media. Use your cell phone sparingly, and set aside break times to text with family and friends.



Common Challenges

- Isolation.
- Loss of office services.
- Never leaving the office environment (live at work v. work at home).
- Family problems.
- Falling into bad habits at home.

Skills Self-Assessment

- Can you work independently and manage your time?
- Are you self-directed and disciplined?
- Are you organized?
- Do you have adequate job knowledge?
- Are there any training gaps?
- Do you focus on results?
- Do you communicate well?

Focus on Results

- Understand the priorities and direction of your work group.
- Know what is expected of you.
- Have well-defined goals and deadlines.
- Establish clear work hours and timeframes.
- Agree on an acceptable response time.
- Working remotely means you're working and available.

Focus on Relationships

- Share information as needed.
- Help create an atmosphere for open and honest communication.
- Be concise and clear.
- Be a good listener.
- Be accessible and respond in a timely manner.
- Call when an issue needs discussing.
- Three emails rule: Call if still unclear or unresolved after three emails.
- Build trust by keeping your promises.
- Balance work and family.

Focus on Relationships – Your Manager

- Agree on a remote work schedule.
- Set up regular 1:1 meetings.
- Agree on when you will communicate (daily, weekly, bi-weekly).
- Be prepared with action items and updates.
- Follow up on actions after 1:1 meetings.



Focus on Structure

- Mentally prepare and get ready for the day.
- Plan and prioritize each day.
- Stick to a schedule suited to your strengths and needs.
- Set reminders to start on a new task.
- Know your motivators.
- Focus on important tasks during your peak hours when you are most productive.
- Set up a support system with family, friends and neighbors.

Remote Teams

- Stay connected with your team.
- Participate in meetings, and use video to stay connected.
- Share experiences and expertise.
- Provide updates as needed.
- Provide ideas and suggestions when possible.
- Collaborate and build team cohesiveness.
- Acknowledge team members.
- Model behaviors and values.

Trends in Remote Work

- 44% growth in remote work over the last 5 years.
- 91% growth over the last 10 years.
- 159% growth over the last 12 years.

Source: *Flex Jobs and Global Workplace Analytics*

“Telecommuting will be the most important workplace trend in the new century” *John Challenger*

Mental Health

- [Coping with COVID19 – Managing Stress](#)
- [Coping with a Traumatic Event](#)
- [Coping With Stress During An Outbreak](#)
- [Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#)
- [Coping After a Disaster Activity Book](#)