

Working from Home – Top 10 Tips

With many businesses now encouraging or even mandating that employees work from home millions of people can expect to have their daily routines and work styles impacted.

But not everyone is accustomed to working from home, and getting into work mode from a space that's not your regular one can be a huge adjustment with challenges, including loneliness, staying connected, and unplanned distractions

Here are some top Tips to help you adjust and balance work and working from home

Tip 1

Look at subscribing or downloading a free video conferencing app, many are available and the right one will depend on your budget and requirement.

The benefit of these apps is that in most cases you will be able to see the people you are talking to which helps in the communication process but also allows you that essential window into the outside world. If you are installing free software, you may need to check with your employer/IT dept that the software is compatible and/or allowed.

Tip2

Do you have the right broadband set up? You may have limited usage, with working from home this may be quickly used up, do you need to upgrade and if so, how will this be paid for? The same goes for your mobile phone. Can you forward your office number to it and will there be a charge? As with the broadband do you need to review your call plan to take into consideration the possible increase in call and data traffic?

Tip 3

Eliminate distractions: Maybe you want to designate a room that people know is now your office and when you are in the room not to disturb you. If you don't have a specific room, try looking at a temporary divider such as a screen or curtain to separate your space can help.

Tip 4

If you are one of those people who puts on their business attire and in doing so switches from family mode to business mode you may want to consider some of the clothes you'd normally wear to the office to trigger your mind you are now in work mode. For others dressing down may be seen as one of the benefits of home working, it's your choice and do what works for you.

Tip 5

Act like you are in the office. Proactively take breaks every hour to avoid burnout and don't forget lunch breaks as when you work from home you may find without the office prompts time will move on without you realising it.

Tip 6

Don't feel guilty taking time away from work during the day. Do remember to take the dog for a walk, put in that load of laundry, or spend 15 minutes outside with the kids (they'll love it, too!). Remember you can extend your working day to accommodate both work and home activities especially if you are not taking the time to commute.

Tip 7

Remember to look after your body, many of you may be working at your kitchen table or on your sofa, none of which were designed for office type working so stretch, take a lap around the kitchen or lounge in between emails and calls.

Tip 8

Use your work calendar to let people know your availability, this will help you not only manage your workload and tasks but will allow your colleagues to see when you are busy and when if required set meetings for you to attend (virtually).

Tip 9

Avoid isolation and loneliness: Many people need that personal contact with their team, so it's helpful to have daily team stand-ups and check-ins. If not a formal check in, you may want to do this informally with selected team members.

And finally

Everyone will recognise that you are not working in a library, everyone on your team is most likely to be in the same boat. A dog barking, a doorbell ringing and even your children walking in unannounced (who can forget the BBC reporter live on BBC news) while in a meeting isn't the end of the world.

Do your best to prepare your workspace, adjust to your new routines and work setting, and shrug off the little things. In these changing times, adapting and keeping a sense of perspective will serve us well.

Good luck and keep well

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