Tips for Employees Working Remotely

Define your workspace

It can be easy to sit on the sofa with your laptop and expect to get work done. Keep in mind that we are creatures of habit and most of us are used to lounging with our laptops to read the news, watch TV, play games and chat with friends and family. Establishing a workspace, even if it is your kitchen table, gives your brain a cue that it is time for work.

Master the basics

A few steps to get you started:

- Add your schedule to your email signature line and/or place it on your calendar for others to see.
- Forward your work phone to your personal cell phone or home phone.
- Learn how to remote into the UNMC network and access other online tools you regularly use. Visit https://info.unmc.edu/it/services/pandemic-preparedness/keep-working/index.html for more information.
- Check out Teams or another instant messaging client to stay connected to your colleagues.
- Plan for video calls/meetings by making sure you know how to turn on your computer’s camera and microphone and being aware that your colleagues may be able to see the background behind you. All UNMC faculty, staff and students have access to Zoom, which allows for meetings of up to 300 participants.

Set daily goals, track them and share your progress

You may be surprised by how differently the workday passes without normal office interruptions that break up your day or influence what you do next. Start each day by writing down what you need to achieve and then track your progress. Pay attention to how long tasks take you and start adjusting your daily goals to match your current rhythm. Communicate with your supervisor and/or colleagues if you think your plan needs to be adjusted.

Eliminate distractions

If home is where your heart is then work from home can mean pets, children or a favorite hobby are only a few feet away. Depending on your living arrangements, you may need to hang a “do not disturb” sign so you are not interrupted. Pets often need a closed door to keep them away and headphones can help block out noise.

Prioritize privacy

Whether you are in your home or a common area, take five minutes to assess the privacy of your workspace. Can someone standing behind you read your computer screen? Are your windows open so your neighbor can hear your phone call? What information do you need to secure before grabbing a cup of coffee or heading to the restroom? Your personal privacy matters too, so see if there is anything around you that would not want visible during a video conference with others.

Stay connected

Many people say they do not call or instant-message colleagues who are working remotely because they don’t want to bother them. Remember, they are working too. You should feel confident about calling or messaging a fellow employee who is working remotely anytime you would walk to their office or call them.
if you were working on-site. You can even keep your daily coffee run – simply plan to call or video chat with a cup in hand at the time you and your colleagues would normally walk to your favorite spot.

**Dress for work**

Just like sitting on the couch can make us feel a little too relaxed, wearing pajamas all day makes it hard to get into work mode. Dressing casually is definitely a perk of working at home but getting “ready for work” is a daily ritual that many who work from home swear by.

**Maintain a Consistent Schedule**

Replicate your office experience as closely as you can at home. Structure your day exactly as you would a typical workday by keeping your starting time, lunch/breaks, and ending your day around the same time you normally would.

1 Adapted from University of Florida website [https://hr.ufl.edu/covid-19/tips-for-employees-working-remotely/](https://hr.ufl.edu/covid-19/tips-for-employees-working-remotely/)