

20 Essential Work-From-Home Tips for Managers and Employees

The best way to prevent the spread of a communicable illness is to prevent exposure. Telecommuting is an effective way to do this, but it can impact employee productivity if not managed properly. Here are 20 essential tips for both managers and employees to make the most out of working from home.

For Leaders

1. Test Your Systems

Ensure your systems have the capacity for everyone to connect remotely. Have everyone work from home one day as a test of your systems. Products such as Log Me In and TeamViewer work great for remote access.

2. Keep Teams Engaged

Maintain engagement through daily emails and phone calls. Regular communication helps keep the team connected and aligned.

3. Share Contact Information

Ensure you have the preferred contact information of each employee and have the teams share them with each other (cell phones, home phones, text, etc) OR utilize tools such as the Tempest Gateway which provides a company directory where employees manage their own profiles and contact info.

4. Use Virtual Workplace Tools

Utilize virtual workplace tools such as Skype, Webex, or Facetime to encourage interactions among employees and teams.

5. Schedule Daily Team Meetings

Schedule daily team “stand up” meetings via conference call where everyone can report on what they are working on, what they accomplished, and what support they need.

6. Set Clear Expectations

Set clear expectations for the work employees should be doing while telecommuting, including meeting deadlines and providing daily status updates.

7. Be Responsive

Ensure managers are responsive to their employees when needed. Prompt responses help maintain workflow and morale.

8. Provide Necessary Tools

Ensure employees have access to all of the tools, SOPs, and information they need to do their job and be a part of the team. Cloud-based tools such as Google Drive and the Tempest Gateway are excellent resources.

9. Encourage Work-Life Balance

Promote a healthy work-life balance by respecting employees’ personal time and encouraging regular breaks.

10. Offer Flexibility

Provide flexible working hours to accommodate different home environments and personal responsibilities.

For Employees

11. Reduce Distractions

Reduce distractions at home by setting up a dedicated workspace in a room separate from the goings-on of the house such as an office, den, or even bedroom. Avoid turning on the TV or attempting to multi-task.

12. Set Ground Rules

Set ground rules with the people in your space. Establish 'break times' when you can help the kids with homework or assist your significant other with dinner, and re-enforce them.

13. Maintain a Routine

Maintain your typical workday schedule. Wake up at the same time (ok, you can sleep in a little bit), take lunch at the same times, etc.

14. Use Phone Calls

Don't rely on email alone. If you would have stopped at someone's desk to discuss a subject at work, call them instead.

15. Keep Contact Information Handy

Ensure you have contact information in a company directory (available in cloud applications such as the Tempest Gateway) for those who you work with the most. Call them at least once a day to 'check in.' Socialization is an important element of job satisfaction, and in the absence of being face-to-face, voice-to-voice is better than email.

16. Set Daily Goals

Set daily goals and check in at the end of each day to see your progress. Discuss these goals with your manager.

17. Communicate Your Schedule

Tell your manager and your team what your schedule is and stick to it. This will create accountability and help you stay on task.

18. Take Breaks

Remember to take regular breaks to rest and recharge. Short breaks can help maintain productivity and focus.

19. Stay Active

Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine to stay healthy and energized. Even a short walk can make a difference.

20. Find What Works Best for You

The most important thing is to figure out what works best for you and your company. Building and maintaining a structured day can be a challenge with all the distractions and comforts of home, but following these tips can help maintain and even enhance your productivity.

Final Thoughts

By implementing these strategies, managers and employees can ensure a smooth, efficient, and productive remote work experience. The key is continuous communication, clear expectations, and a supportive work environment. Whether you're a leader or an employee, these tips can help you navigate the challenges of working from home and achieve success.

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