Tips on Staying Productive When Working from Home

Maintain Regular Hours
Set a schedule, and stick to it...most of the time. Having clear guidelines for when to work and when to call it a day helps many remote workers maintain work-life balance. That said, one of the benefits of remote work is flexibility, and sometimes you need to extend your day or start early to accommodate someone else’s time zone. When you do, be sure to wrap up earlier than usual or sleep in a bit the next morning to make up for it.

Create a Morning Routine
Deciding you’ll sit down at your desk and start work at a certain time is one thing. Creating a routine that guides you into the chair is another. What in your morning routine indicates you’re about to start work? It might be making a cup of coffee. It might be returning home after a jog. It might be getting dressed (It’s recommend you get “dressed for work”, but that is not for everyone).

Dedicated Office Space
Confining your workspace to a specific area in your home so your job doesn’t intrude into the lives of other household members and you can concentrate. Have a space that you designate as your workstation instead of checking emails, voicemails or texting in front of TV or spreading work out on the kitchen table. Make your space a quiet, stress-free zone of solitude where you can concentrate. If you don’t have a separate room, find an area with minimum traffic flow or a corner of a room off from the main area.
Don’t be Afraid of Your Webcam
Now that we’re all isolated, employ your video communications more than you normally would. Stay connected with team members or office mates by being available for video calls and teleconferencing. If you start to feel lonely, consider setting up a support group of friends and colleagues. Start a virtual hang out and share creative ways you’ve adjusted to the new situation.

Set Ground Rules With the People in Your Space
Set ground rules around your designated workspace that is off-limits for those you share your space with at home. Treat it as if it’s five miles across town, and ask house members to consider it as such (e.g. no interruptions from another room when you’re engrossed in a project unless it is an emergency). If possible, only go to your designated space when you need to work. Stick to a regular schedule, and keep your work space at arm’s-length after hours. Try to maintain the same hours you log in at the office so you don’t get swallowed up by the workload.

Schedule Breaks
Give yourself adequate time during the day to walk away from the computer screen and phone. Don’t short-change yourself during breaks, especially your lunch hour. You can use an app, such as Smart Break for Windows, to lock yourself out of your computer for 60 minutes. Or you can just launch a simple clock or timer on the screen when you take a break.
If you return to your desk after only 40 minutes, walk away for another 20. If you are non-exempt, you must still comply with TN DOL regulations to take a 30 minute lunch. Best practices recommend every one take at least two breaks per day in addition to lunch.

Set a quitting time
After a reasonable day’s work, put away your computer just as you would store carpentry tools after building shelves or baking ingredients after making a cake. Keeping work reminders out of sight keeps them out of mind and helps you relax and recharge your batteries.

Get outside
Try to leave your home at least once a day. Your body needs to move. Mounting research shows that spending time in nature lowers stress, helps you relax and clears your mind. Take a walk. Weed the garden.

Get some exercise
Working out is often a great way to de-stress and a good way to keep your immune system in shape. Besides the health benefits, it’s also good to stay active to ward off going stir crazy from being cooped up for an extended period of time. There are lots of ways to exercise at home, and a ton of classes you can access online. What about starting your day with 20 minutes of yoga? Find a friend or co-worker to stay accountable.

Stay Postive
Keep your attitude in check. Above all, be creative and don’t let your confined circumstances dwarf your tranquility, happiness, or productivity. Your greatest power is your perspective. It can victimize you or empower you. When you look for the upside in a downside situation and figure out what you can control and what you can’t, it’s easier to accept whatever is beyond your control. Your best ally is to find the opportunity in the difficulty during an uncontrollable situation instead of the difficulty in the opportunity. Take advantage of this restrictive time to clear clutter out of your basement, pull weeds in the garden, or get caught up on fun hobbies you’ve neglected for a while.

Join the Community
As the COVID-19 crisis continues, more questions go unanswered. To combat the uncertainty of these times, XSOLIS is supporting hospitals and health plans by continuing the conversation. While we don’t have all of the answers, we do have the ability to create a platform — to build a community — of nurses, doctors, and healthcare workers, where we can all ask questions, share stories, give advice, and work to tackle COVID-19 together.

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