

Tips and Tricks for Working Remotely



For many of us, this is the first time that we are performing our jobs remotely for an extended period of time. Below you will find some tips that can help you stay focused and productive during this transition.

- Take advantage of technology to stay connected. Use the video feature of Zoom or WebEx for meetings and check-ins.
- Check-ins, which may include daily conference calls, Zoom meetings, and Skype messaging, should be scheduled and intentional. The social aspect of going to work is not insignificant; so use the check-in as an opportunity to stay connected with your colleagues.
- Create a schedule that works for you and your team. While having a schedule can assist with productivity, be flexible and change your schedule as needed so that your work day doesn't become monotonous. For example, on some days you may want to start with a morning meeting and on others you may want to reserve that time for projects and emails.
- Consider using time tracking apps. If you find you are struggling with sticking to your schedule or maintaining productivity while working remotely, try a free time-tracking app such as Harvest, ATracker Time Tracker, Toggl, or RescueTime. A time tracking app can help you discover which periods of time during the day you are most productive so that you can shift your tasks and projects accordingly.
- Dress and groom professionally. Your morning prep routine plays a large role in determining your mindset for the day. It's tempting, but avoid rolling out of bed to join conference calls in your pajamas. Instead, establish a morning routine in which you get dressed and brush your teeth. This can do wonders for transitioning into a mindset to begin work.

- Create a set workspace. Working remotely does not necessarily mean that you can be productive working from anywhere in your home. It is important to find and designate a quiet space to use daily as your workspace. Organize the space and have the items you frequently use nearby. Create rules for your workspace such as avoiding doing non-work related tasks at your work station. A dedicated workspace can help you stay more focused throughout the day.
- Remember that business protocol still applies even though we are not physically located in the office. You are still required to communicate with your manager on a regular basis. Time and attendance policies also still apply, so time off requests must be made for sick days, doctor's appointments, and vacation time, etc. Be sure to keep your online work calendar updated so that your manager and colleagues know your schedule availability.
- Make time to take frequent breaks and time off of screens when working remotely in order to maintain a healthy balance. During your breaks, spend a few minutes stretching your limbs and muscles to ease any tension.
- Prepare for interruptions. Everyone recognizes that we are under unusual circumstances, so be easy on yourself and on others if meetings or calls are interrupted by a barking dog, a crying child, or a package delivery. We are all working hard to balance these unforeseen circumstances, so don't be concerned when these things inevitably occur.
- End your workday with a routine. As important as a morning routine is for the start of your day, it is also essential to create a habit to close the business day. This habit could be something as simple as creating your to do list for the following day and shutting down your computer.
- Remember to reach out to NYS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) if you need additional support at this time. You can contact our EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson at 518-442-5483 or bseckerson@albany.edu. You may also contact the NYS EAP hotline directly at 518-486-9769. Please consider visiting the [EAP Website](#) for additional resources.