

Tips for Successful Telework

For Managers and Employees



Tips For Everyone

- Other than not being in the office, colleagues and business contacts outside the agency should not detect a difference in your work and work relations that would indicate you are not in the office.
- Forward your office desk phone to your mobile phone number.
- If you do not have a mobile phone, check your voicemail at least once an hour to make sure you do not miss an important message.
- Respond to voicemail and email messages promptly.
- There is no need to change your voicemail greeting stating you are working from home. You will be answering calls on your mobile phone or checking desk phone voicemail frequently and responding as you would if you were in the office.
- Likewise, there is no need to set up an out-of-office email message stating you are out of the office and working from home. You will be responding to email as if you were in the office, so no out-of-office message is needed.
- Start your workday similarly to how you would if you were going to the office. Sure you can wake up a little later because you do not have to travel to the office, but give yourself time to start your day before you start working. Try to keep your normal morning routine the same.
- Dress for work. By all means wear something comfortable, but the clothes you wear will help you get into “work mode.” Sitting around in pajamas all day is not sending your brain the message that it is time to work.
- Keep regular work hours. If you normally start work at 8 a.m. then start your work from home at the same time. Take breaks as you would at the office. Take short breaks from staring at the computer and get up and walk around. Take your lunch break.
- Work on the “honey do” list after your work hours. When you mix work and chores one or both will suffer. When that happens either your supervisor, your spouse or both will be unhappy with you.
- Find a comfortable, quiet space in your home to work. If you do not have a separate office in your home, try the dining room table or someplace with room to work and away from kids and the television.
- Kids at home that need attention or help with homework assignments can complicate telework. Keep your time with the kids and at work separate, do not try to do both at the same time. Take turns being with the kids with your spouse. If your kids can be left alone with something to do for a short time, set them up with games or homework and do your work at the same time.

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Tips For Employees

- Plan your work day. Make lists, set reminders, put things on your calendar, do whatever you need to do to have your day planned and to keep you on track. Do not “wing it.”
- Keep your supervisor informed of what you are working on and what you have completed.
- Use all available electronic means of communications (Email, text, chat, virtual meeting) but also use the phone to talk to your coworkers, supervisor and outside business relations. Having voice conversations is a very powerful means for you and those you work with feel connected. Many people need that form of communication to keep from feeling isolated. It may not be you, but it could be the person you talk to.
- If you do not have enough to keep you busy for an entire work day, ask your supervisor what else you can work on.
- Immediately report problems accessing the systems and files you need.
- Depending on the internet service at home, you may need to turn off other devices connected to the internet for optimal speed.

For Managers

- The only difference in the daily supervision of an employee that is teleworking is that you cannot talk to them face-to-face. Other than that, how you measure whether or not work is getting done is the same. Just being in the office does not automatically mean work is getting done. Likewise not being able to actually see an employee does not automatically mean work is not being done.
- Teleworking does mean a change to how you communicate with an employee when you cannot talk to them face-to-face.
- Use all of the communications technologies available. (Email, text, chat, virtual meeting, and telephone) It may take a bit of trial to see what works best for you and your employees.
- Set reasonable expectations of your teleworking staff. Set your employees up for success.
- Do not pile on work. Workloads should be consistent with when the employee is in the office.
- If you are not comfortable with checking in with an employee by email, set up a daily phone call.
- Set a good example as a teleworker when you telework. Do all of the things you expect out of your teleworking staff.

