

Essential habits for working remotely

Success as a remote worker begins with developing a few simple rules that will allow you to be engaged and intentional about your work and will create a positive experience.

1. **Your home office:** Ensure your office is in a part of your home that is quiet and away from home and family distractions.
2. **A door is a must:** Have a door and use it. A great way to put yourself in a 'work' mindset is to open and shut your door just like you would if you were going into the office. When you enter in the morning open and shut your door, then upon leaving, do the same.
3. **Get tough with distracting people:** Have a conversation with your family about the rules of working from home. 'When the door is shut, please don't disturb me. When I am on my lunch break, we can talk.'
4. **Dress like you are a professional:** The act of getting dressed for work is important to changing your mindset from home to work. This does not have to mean business casual, but it also should not mean pajamas. Dress for your day!
5. **Setup your desk like the office:** Talk to your firm about setting up your home office desk just like your office. If you have dual monitors, ask for them at home. If you have a scanner, ask for one at home. If you have an office phone, set up forwarding to your home or cell phone. The more you can replicate, the more it will feel like you can work the same remotely.
6. **Set specific work and break hours that are clear and transparent:** Communicate with your supervisor about the work and break hours that will work best for your firm. Ensure that they are clear and then add them to your calendar and/or send a message to everyone. Transparency in this area is necessary for success.
7. **Insure you have a stable internet connection:** Your connection to the office is completely reliant to the internet. Shop around for the fastest and most reliable connection in your geographic area. You may have to invest more, but that is the price that you will be paying for the opportunity to work remotely.
8. **Learn to use Skype, Google Hangout and/or Zoom:** While you may not be able to physically see your team as much as you have in the past, you can still take the time to see them through various video technologies. Talk to your firm about their preference and then learn to become adept in its usage.
9. **Get a headset:** Where a headset was an option before, when working at home with video technology, it is a necessity. Find one that will work with your technology solutions.
10. **Don't mix work and personal life:** Work when you are on work hours and do personal tasks when you are on personal time. Sneaking in a load of laundry or starting dinner at the end of the day is fine but know when to draw the line. Equate your small home tasks to a quick walk to the break room for a glass of water or a chat with a coworker that only takes a few minutes. Do your best to replicate your office schedule when you are at home.