

LifeSolutions

Tips for working from home



If you're used to working in an office with co-workers and supervisors nearby and the normal social interaction that brings, working from home for an extended period can be daunting. You might have to create your own workspace. You need to establish a new routine. The conversations and immediate feedback you're used to are no longer as convenient. But don't fret—adjust!

Here are five tips to work remotely and limit the social isolation you might feel:

Create a dedicated workspace. If you don't have the luxury of a home office, carve out a space for yourself. Install your computer there along with items you need for doing your job. Try to limit any distractions, such as a TV.

Build a routine. If you normally shower, make coffee, commute, greet co-workers, log in to your computer, assess the tasks at hand, and make a plan, keep as much of this routine at home as possible. Take breaks at the usual times and leave time for activity bursts, like a quick walk or a cup of tea. Our brains need a break to refresh and renew.

Identify your time management needs. When and how are you most productive? Working from home may give you more flexibility in the actual hours you work. If this is the case, follow a schedule for handling specific tasks or projects—set a timer if that helps. Identify your priorities and specific tasks along with any workarounds you might need. For example, try

digital signature platforms or scanning and sending documents instead of having them signed in person. Think about what distracts you—and how those distractions might be different at home—and plan to manage them.

Negotiate with family or housemates about your work time. Talk to others in your home about when you are available and when you are working, especially if you have children at home. And keep in mind you might not be the only one there having to work from home. Create guidelines for when it's OK to interrupt and how to let you know if you're really needed. You might need to alternate child care with a spouse, partner, or neighbor. And don't forget about pets. They might need to be contained during phone calls so they don't interrupt your work.

Use technology to stay connected. Let your supervisor know your needs regarding access, and discuss as a team how to stay connected. Videoconferencing or conference calls are great for brief check-ins or staff meetings. Don't be afraid to call a co-worker to see how they're doing. You already know each other's boundaries around socializing, so continue that respect virtually.

LifeSolutions is here to help

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