TOP TEN TIPS FOR HOME WORKING

Some advice we've found helpful working from home and with remote teams. These are just ideas, things that have worked for us, and there are many more ideas out there!

If you try other approaches that work, please share them with everyone so we can all make the most of WFH ☺

STAYING CONNECTED

1. Use Zoom chat to keep daily, informal connections going without filling up email inboxes. As a team, set up a team chat channel and connect there every day for informal, daily, shared communications and check ins.

2. Agree a team Zoom meeting link that is easy to "drop into" without having to schedule meetings. Get comfortable reaching out to team members and asking for a quick chat on Zoom, in the same way you would pop by someone's desk to chat with them.

3. You can also try working together on Zoom – so a Zoom link is open, you can chat and interact, but you're working on your own projects

4. Consider setting up scheduled Zoom drop in slots in your diary, where anyone from your team (or beyond) knows you will have your personal zoom link open and can come and speak to you.

5. Protect social space, e.g. having lunch or coffee with your team over Zoom every couple of weeks, sharing online course, podcast, film and book recommendations, setting a team learning/try something new/creative challenge each week, taking the first ten minutes of team meetings for a team building conversation using a fun question e.g. "what would you do with your 15 minutes of fame?" Pleas share your great ideas with other teams too! ☺

6. Working virtually can make it harder for your colleagues and line manager to "read" how you are doing, as they are missing cues they may be used to, like your body language and energy levels. This can mean you need to be more ready to articulate these things directly. If you can find this hard, talk to your manager and agree a communication channel/mechanism to make it easier to start those conversations (e.g. share with your manager how you are feeling on a scale between 1 – 10 in terms of a) wellbeing b) workload c) job satisfaction each week)

7. If you are using more written communication than you usually would, particularly instant messages which tend to be short and without much context, it can be easy for tone and intention to be mis-interpreted. Re-read messages putting yourself in the other person's shoes (which leadership mindset are you using?!) before sending. If in doubt, pick up the phone/jump on a Zoom call

8. Try recording 5 minute video updates on Zoom and sharing them instead of sending emails sometimes! Loom is also great for this (and there's a free version)

9. Want to workshop some ideas collaboratively? Try a digital whiteboard like miro

10. Remember colleagues and volunteers are based across time zones, and it's easier to lose a sense of time when you're based at home! Use timeanddate to plan meetings, doodle to help with scheduling

HAPPY HOME WORKING

1. Set up a workspace where you can work comfortable and safely. Try somewhere you can see out the window, away from domestic distractions

2. Get ready each morning as if you were going to the office

3. Make a schedule for your day with regular breaks and clear start and finish times. Put them in your calendars so colleagues know, and set alarms to help you keep to them!

4. Pay attention to when you're most productive and when your motivation/energy naturally ebbs and flows each day, and establish work patterns around that. Maybe try using your mornings to get through projects without distractions, and book calls in the afternoons when you may be tired or want to talk to people.

5. Stay healthy – stop every hour to move your body, even if that's just walking around the house. Use your breaks to get away from the computer. Eat nourishing food and keep your water bottle to hand, and get some fresh air at least once each day. It's easy for time to drift by when working from home

6. Be kind to yourself – you'll probably be more aware of when you are and are *not* focusing when working from home compared to in the office, so don't give yourself a hard time. Instead, try different strategies to help you focus, like listening to different [sounds](#) or [types of music](#), switching to taking notes with pen and paper etc.

7. Give yourself permission to feel like you are fully at work. Just because you're at home, it doesn't mean you have to fit lots of chores into your day.

8. If you live with other people, talk to them about your home working, so they understand what it means and how they can support you

9. Prioritise meaningful connections - with colleagues, friends and family, At the same time, try to log out of/manage your team on social media to avoid impulse browsing or binging on negative news.

10. Protect time for self-care during the day, whatever that looks like for you. And if you find you're struggling, talk to your manager, HR, or someone you trust.

MANAGING YOUR WORK

1. Take 20 minutes to write down some realistic goals at the start of each week, and sense-check them for urgency and importance.

2. At the beginning of every week, share on your team Zoom chat how you are doing and what your week's priorities are, just in a few bullet points. It helps get a sense of the team's week ahead, and helps build accountability.

3. If it helps, try using simple task management apps or have a shared document for tracking priorities. Some people like time tracking, and there are plenty of free tools you can use to help with this like clockify. Or try the pomodoro technique! Find what works for you.

4. Check you have a 1:1 with your line manager scheduled for every 1-2 weeks, according to your regular pattern, and a simple rolling agenda for these.

5. If there are weeks where you don't have 1:1s, set a 15 minute appointment in your diary to send your manager a bullet update on these weeks, e.g. key points under a) things to celebrate: key achievements/milestones reached, b) Challenges/barriers you're facing, c) action needed: anything you need your manager to act on so you can do your work, d) strategic updates: anything your manager needs to be informed about

6. If you're struggling with a task or thinking something through, invite colleagues for a quick brainstorm on Zoom

7. Keep your calendar up to date so that people know if you are around, and consider blocking out time for deep thinking, research, planning etc, so your days don't get swallowed up by meetings!

8. Feedback and encouragement is important to help us stay motivated and feeling good about work. Be conscious of not letting this slip, both in giving feedback and asking for it, even in small ways over team chat.

9. Don't feel under pressure to *prove* you are working your hours when working at home. Instead demonstrate your work through your impact, achieving your agreed tasks and keeping open communications with your manager and colleagues

10. You also don't need to prove you are always online and connected. WFH can be a great opportunity to switch off from communicating and get on with deep work, which we often don't protect enough time for (or stop multitasking long enough to make possible!) Try checking your emails at set times each day but leaving them closed the rest of the time, or telling your team you're going offline to work on something for a few hours.