



TELECOMMUTING & TIME MANAGEMENT



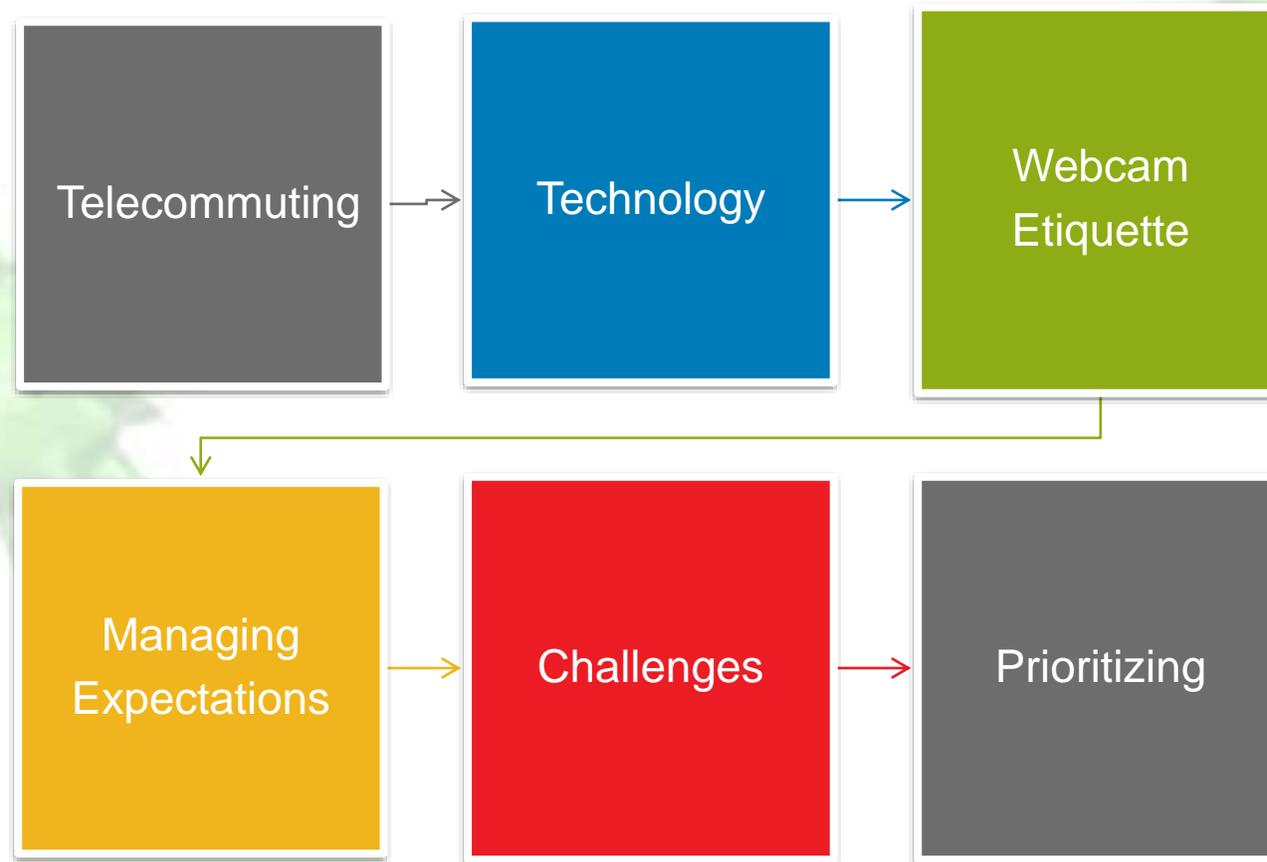
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Learning Objectives

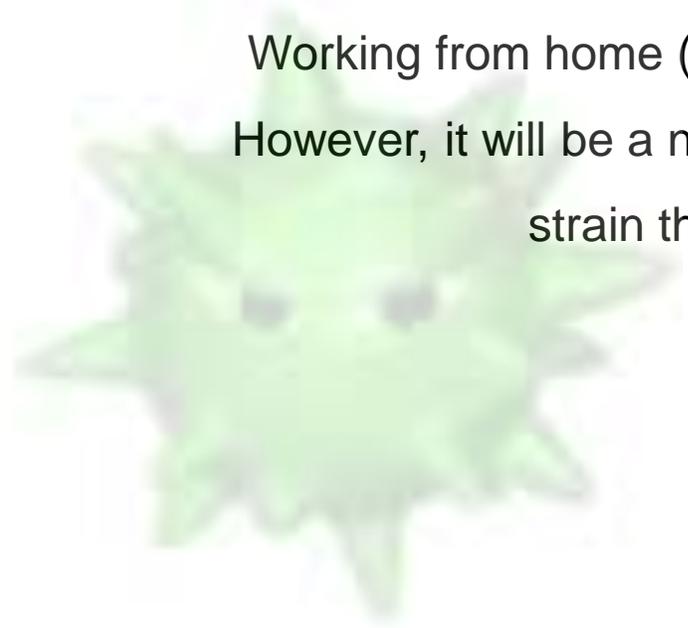


Telecommuting

As COVID-19 continues to spread across the United States, it is anticipated that a large portion of the workforce will be asked to work from home for their own protection and for the protection of others.

Working from home (or telecommuting) is not a new concept.

However, it will be a new transition for employees and possibly strain the resources of a company.



Technology

The most important asset step in remote work is getting your technology in order. If you don't have a work laptop and you'll be spending a long time remote, ask if your supervisor wants you to take your desktop computer home. Then there's the software. Make sure you have the right applications. Lots of remote workers are leaning heavily on Slack, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Zoom or GoToMeeting.

Hardware & Software

Peripherals

IT

Speed
Test

Test
Applications

Strong
Access

Software

Bandwidth

Many in-person meetings and almost all nonessential work travel are being canceled right now. As a result, many organizations are utilizing online video conferencing, which requires a good Internet connection. Make sure you have bandwidth.

Make sure the internet access is robust enough at home to allow you to video conference.

If connection strength is low, it may cause staggering or latency effects while trying to communicate with teams.

Be sure to have hard wiring capabilities just in case.

Webcam Etiquette

Though we are in the comfort of our homes and sounds leisurely, remote working isn't always as easy as it seems. Conference calls can be tough there are time delays, not knowing who's talking because you can't see the person, and multiple people talking at once.

Appearance

Active Listening

Volume/
Voice

Patience

Manage Expectations

It's wise to have a discussion with your boss about what can actually be accomplished from home. Ask your manager what the priorities are, and discuss how tasks will get done. This should be an ongoing conversation.

Tracking
Progress

Making
Connections

Setting
Expectations

Discussions

Meeting
Coordination

Remote Challenges



Over-exertion

One of the reasons many managers don't approve of remote work is they fear employees will slack off without that physical, in-person oversight. But, in fact, the opposite tends to be the reality: remote workers are more likely to overwork. When your personal life and your work are both under the same roof, it's harder to switch off. Working too much is also on the biggest concerns of healthy organizations. Time management is critical during these times to employees and employers alike.



Avoiding Over-work

Set appointments on your calendar for the end of the day to get yourself out of your home office. Maybe it's an "appointment" to go to the gym or go grocery shopping or just take a walk around the block.

Be clear with your team on when you're leaving—for example, by making a quick announcement in Slack—and then actually shut down your computer.

Create physical boundaries between you and your workspace. Turn off notifications on your phone and computer so you're not pulled back into work after hours.

Prioritizing Workloads

Remote workers need to be self-motivated experts at time management because we don't have others constantly overlooking our work or managing our time for us. Then there's the constant temptation to watch one episode of your favorite show during your work break, tidy up the kitchen when you're procrastinating on a project, or take your dog for a walk because of their pleading look. All of a sudden, it's evening and you have nothing to show for the day.





Limit
Tasks



Limit the number of tasks you plan to do each day. Use the Eisenhower matrix to avoid unnecessary time-wasting tasks. For example, try 1 big thing, 3 medium things, and 5 small things per day, the “1-3-5” rule

Install
distract
tools



Working from home at time like this can produce large amounts of distractions. Develop ways to minimize those distractions to maintain your productivity.

Manage
Energy



Your energy waxes and wanes during the day, so tackle tasks according to how much of your bandwidth they'll take and how much you'll be able to focus at different times during the day.

Hurdling Interruptions

Set up a kind of signal that lets others know when you're in focus mode. Maybe it's a do not disturb sign on your door or when you put on your headphones.

Explain why it's important for you to avoid interruptions—that they break your concentration and make your work ten times harder.

Train your kids and significant other to be self-sufficient and occupy themselves.

Keep consistent work hours. Simply don't answer calls during work and perhaps even invent meetings if you have to.

Escape. If all else fails, try working out of a co-working space, the library, or a coffee shop.



Virtual Team-Building

It's one thing to create an atmosphere of trust and a feeling of camaraderie between employees when they're all in the same building 40 or so hours a week. It's different when all or the majority of the organization is working remotely. Developing creative methods of virtual team building exercises are a great way to keep employees engaged, revitalize moral, and retain a sense of cohesiveness.





Don't Cut
Dialogue



Personal chit-chat that helps employees relate to each other. When working remotely, team members don't have a chance to make small talk with their neighbor in the next cubicle or discuss weekend plans by the coffeemaker. Remote teams have to build time for small talk into group meetings. Try to spend a couple of minutes at the start of each meeting discussing personal, or department updates.



10 Things
About You

Coffee &
Learn
Sessions

Wednesday
Bonfires



30-min
Chatroulette

Gaming
Sessions