



Telecommuting Tips to Boost Your Productivity

Telecommuting Tips to Boost Your Productivity

Telecommuting, or working from home for an employer, offers great benefits for both you and the company you work for. By telecommuting, you can cut down on commuting time and distractions and get more accomplished in the comfort of your own home.

If you telecommute, use these tips for the getting the most out of your flexible work arrangement.

Create the Right Setting

- 1. Designate a workspace.** Ideally, set aside a room to use as an office. Even if you lack a full room, you can create a designated area, such as a desk, in one corner of another room. The important thing is to have a spot that's just for work.
- 2. Select office furniture.** ***An ergonomic chair is your most important investment.*** Try to get an adjustable model with adequate back support. You'll also need a desk that enables you to keep your wrists straight when using a keyboard.
- 3. Optimize your lighting.** Lighting is important for performance and your mood. If you have a window in your work area, position your computer monitor at a right angle to the natural light. Layers of artificial light are also a great option.
- 4. Keep you and your equipment safe.** Use surge protectors and dust covers, and tuck cables away safely. ***Take regular exercise breaks to avoid repetitive injuries and eyestrain.***

Stay in Touch

1. **Set up a regular meeting schedule with your supervisor.** You may be concerned that working at home can be a barrier to advancement if you're less visible to your supervisor. Actually, this is becoming less true as millions of information workers take up telecommuting.
 - Weekly meetings can give you a chance to set goals and review progress.
2. **Let colleagues know the best way to reach you.** Circulate your contact information to everyone at the office.
 - Try to stick to similar hours each day, including starting and ending times.
 - In case of emergencies, advise people whether it's best to reach you by email or your cell phone. Check all messages frequently.
3. **Make outside parties aware of your arrangement.** It's usually easiest to let clients and other callers know that you're working from home. As long as you convey a professional demeanor and provide high quality service, they're likely to feel comfortable with the arrangement.
4. **Attend staff meetings. Strive to remain part of the team.** Make it a priority to attend staff meetings in person. Video calls can be a valuable backup for those times when it's impossible to get to the office.
5. **Socialize.** Social interactions are an important part of relationships at work. Take advantage of office parties and outings.
 - Use breakfast and lunch dates to keep up with your old office mates and get to know new employees.
6. **Network.** Participate in the local chapter of your professional association. Stay on the lookout for continuing educational opportunities and speaking engagements.
 - Networking activities can nurture and expand your connections, increase your knowledge and skills, and reduce any feelings of isolation.

Additional Suggestions:

1. **Negotiate cost sharing.** Clarify which expenses your office will cover and which items you'll pay for. Many companies buy one workstation per employee, whether you use it at home or at the office.

2. **Keep track of your hours.** It's easy to lose track of how much time you're spending on work. Aim for a schedule you can sustain over the long-term. ***You may want to start off small and gradually increase the days you work from home until you find the right balance for you.***
3. **Seek support from your family.** Having your family on board is essential to your success. Ask for their input in creating ground rules for your home office, such as a do not disturb signal.

Telecommuting can reduce stress and help you achieve a better work-life balance. When working from home for your employer, take steps to maintain your morale, stay productive, and keep in touch. You'll both enjoy the results!