

1. Set Goals

Goal setting is even more important when you are working from home. It will enable you to build a shared understanding with your line manager and team about where to focus your efforts:

- ♣ Ensure your goals are communicated so that you, your team and line manager know what you are working on and when.
- ♣ Make sure you know the priority of your goals and the steps to achieve them.
- ♣ To start with your goals may be around adapting to home working and balancing home and work responsibilities.



2. Switch into business mode

The thought of staying in your pyjamas all day might be appealing, here's our top tips for being mentally prepared for the day ahead:

- ♣ Set yourself a start time and stick to it.
- ♣ Wear business casual clothes to make a good impression on web conference calls.
- ♣ Get into the right frame of mind by creating a structure to your day with a mix of business tasks based on priority.



3. Create a workspace that works

Creating a workspace where you'll enjoy spending time is essential if you want to stay on track and get things done:

- ♣ Make it a separate area so that you can shut the door of the 'office' when you leave work.
- ♣ Are you sharing the space with family? Identify a quiet zone that you can take turns in to help with everyone's productivity.
- ♣ Ensure you are able to sit and work comfortably. It is worth considering investing in a high-quality office chair to minimise back and neck strain.



4. Get organised

Start each day as you mean to go on:

- ♣ Dedicate the first 15 minutes of your day to focus on what tasks you need to get done and prioritise these tasks.
- ♣ Once a task is completed, tick it off your list, the act of doing this will keep you motivated
- ♣ At the end of each day clear down both your physical and virtual desktop.



8. Work/life balance

Being able to keep work and home life separate is challenging:

- ♣ Use your unused commute time for exercise instead.
- ♣ Avoid missing out on breaks or working longer than you would in the office; we all need downtime.
- ♣ Agree an end time to your working day and stick to it.



7. Take charge of communications

It's easy to feel disenfranchised from the team when working alone from home but there are so many ways to stay in touch:

- ♣ Experiment/establish which communication tools you will be using to keep in touch with your peers and team members.
- ♣ Find appropriate times to 'check in' avoiding your or anyone else's 'golden times'.
- ♣ Make time for online team meetings and ensure each session has an agreed agenda.



6. Minimise distractions

Pinpoint your major distractions and eliminate them before you settle down to work:

- ♣ If an untidy room plays on your mind then tidy it, this leaves you with a clean mind (and room) allowing you to focus on work.
- ♣ Consider wearing headphones to dampen background noise or play soothing music to act as a distraction.
- ♣ Allocate time slots in the day to dip into social media. Setting these time slots means you don't get distracted every time you get a notification.



9. Reward yourself

Working remotely can be tough so find ways to make each task more enjoyable and rewarding in itself:

- ♣ Use mind maps, creative thinking tools such as related world and brainstorming with colleagues to avoid staring at a computer screen for long periods of time.
- ♣ Ask for feedback from colleagues about what's working well, what isn't working so well and how things can be changed going forwards.
- ♣ Give yourself 'treats' when you've completed a task successfully, it will keep you motivated for the day ahead.



10. Keep motivated

Not everyone works in the same way, so take note of what works for you and build on it:

- ♣ Remember the importance of daily contact with colleagues you work with.
- ♣ Give and receive, the power of feedback is often underestimated and will help everyone stay on track.
- ♣ Keeping fit - exercise will keep you alert even during times of the day (like straight after lunch) when it can be a struggle.



How to stay focused working from home?

A Treehouse guide to better home working.

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