

Teleworking/Remote Working Tips for Employees

Define Your Workspace ... Limit Distractions ... Set Boundaries

As a telecommuter working from home, you should set aside a defined workspace to help you get in the right frame of mind for your work, and to separate professional time from leisure time. The best option is a room with a door that you can leave at the end of your shift and that can help shut out distractions. If you don't have a separate room to work from, just pick a place that will allow you to work comfortably with minimal distractions.

A dedicated office space will also send a clear message to others in your household that you are doing work. It's important to establish ground rules with other people in your home or who share your space for when you work.

Maintain Regular Hours

Set a schedule with your supervisor and stick to it as much as possible. Having clear guidelines for when to work and when to call it a day helps many remote workers maintain work-life balance.

Take Breaks

Studies have shown that taking breaks to pour a cup of coffee in the kitchen, grab a snack, or stretch your legs is important to give your mind and eyes a chance to rest and feel rejuvenated. So be intentional and remember to take some breaks during your work schedule. If you had designated break times when you worked from your Iowa State office, try to stick to those when you're working from home. Don't short-change yourself during breaks, especially your meal breaks.

Master the Teleworking Tech Basics

- Add your teleworking schedule and info to your email signature so people know you're working remotely.
- Set up call forwarding and know how to access your voicemail from home.
- Know how to [remotely access](#) the Iowa State networks, programs and tools that you will need access to.
- Use Microsoft Teams to stay connected to your colleagues.
- Prepare for video/audio meetings by making sure you know how to turn on your computer's camera and microphone.

Set Daily Goals, Track Them and Share Your Progress

You may be surprised by how differently the work day passes without the comings and goings of an office to break things up or influence what you do next. Begin each work day by writing down what you'd like to accomplish and then track your progress. Pay attention to how long tasks take you and start adjusting your daily goals as needed to match your new teleworking schedule and rhythm. Communicate with your supervisor and/or colleagues if you think your telework plan needs to be adjusted.

Prioritize Privacy

Whether you work from home or a common public area, be sure to assess the privacy and security of your workspace. If you deal with sensitive or confidential information, it's imperative that you keep that information private. Can someone standing behind you see your computer screen? Are you using an unsecured wireless network or your neighbor's Wi-Fi? Don't leave your computer or laptop unattended in public places, and don't let anyone else have access to your work computer or any confidential files.

Just like when you're in the office, make sure to always protect your passwords and safeguard your devices.

Stay Connected

When you work from home, it can be a challenge to remain in the loop with co-workers and feel included in key projects and decisions. To combat any feelings of isolation and to feel more connected, try using video calls when possible — not just for meetings. It also helps to pick up the phone more. When you speak to someone verbally, even if just for a moment or two, there's a higher chance of making a connection that can't be duplicated through emails or text messages.

Dress for Work

Just like sitting on the couch or working from an easy chair can make us feel a little too relaxed, wearing pajamas all day makes it difficult to get into a work mindset. Dressing casually is a definite perk of working from home, but getting "ready for work" is a daily ritual that many teleworkers recommend highly. When you're dressed for work it sends a message that you're ready to work, and it will likely boost your productivity.