



6 Tips for Working Remotely from Folks Who've Done It for Years

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For many, working from home can feel like being on house arrest, but it doesn't have to be that way. Here are six of Rhudy & Co.'s favorite tips to stay engaged, connected and energized about working remotely.

1. Carve out space.



Find a nook to work and set up shop. A kitchen or dining room table or guest room will do. Look at your space differently and don't hesitate to move around furniture. Keep in mind your significant other might be working remotely and your college and school-age kids might be needing their personal workspace as well.

As my co-worker shared, *"If all else fails and you can't find a quiet spot in your house to do a call or can't afford to have dogs barking in the background, sit in your car in the driveway. It is guaranteed to be quiet."*

2. Develop your routine.

Set boundaries between work hours and "off" hours. If you have small children at home, learn to use naptimes and movie times for phone calls. In 2017, millions smiled watching this viral video of a [work-from-home dad](#) being interrupted by his kids during a live BBC interview, but no one likes to be interrupted in the middle of a call.

Carve out time to eat lunch with your family, if they're home too. Celebrate small successes.

If you're having trouble staying motivated, find an accountability work buddy – not your boss or maybe not even a co-worker – for an early-morning check-in call to spend 15 minutes mapping out your day.

3. Master the tech.



If your employer uses a virtual private network (VPN) for you to connect to the mother IT ship, then test it now. Remember a hardwired, Ethernet connection can be up to 10 times faster than using Wi-Fi.

Figure out if your cell phone also can serve as hotspot, as that can be an alternate internet connection in a pinch.

Call your IT helpdesk now to help you map your home printer to your work computer.

4. Use a headset and mute.



Invest in a Bluetooth headset or AirPods. Your neck will thank you.

One colleague told me, *"Learn to use the mute button on your phone like a ninja. It works well for barking dogs, tearful children, and all the other noises of life."*



A free way to connect remotely thanks to Microsoft

Tech giant Microsoft has stepped up in a big way to make Office 365 Teams products available for free to companies large and small. The free version supports up to 300 participants with guest access, one-on-one, and group video and audio calls. The technology also supports file and screen sharing as well as online document collaboration.

For organizations requiring more services, Microsoft is offering a free six-month trial of the paid version, including full meetings, collaboration and workflow capabilities. [Learn more.](#)

everyone is on a call multitasking and no one is truly listening. How effective would that remote meeting be?

Encourage your co-workers and boss to keep calls as brief as possible, so as not to create conference call fatigue.

6. Truly connect with others.



Your new relationship with your co-workers, boss and clients is now like a long-distance relationship. You must work harder at it.

Take time to understand their personal situations with their kids and aging parents. Make that call to see how they're really holding up or send that text with your wacky Bitmoji.

As one co-worker told me, *"Tend your connections because those few moments of sharing make your work discussions, brainstorming, creative work and problem-solving so much more meaningful."*

5. Actively listen.



Zoom. Skype. BlueJeans. Webex. Whatever the platform, audio and video conference calls can help keep your work moving.

When you're participating remotely, be an active participant. Try not to multitask. Just imagine, if

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