The Road to Success for Employees: Best Practices for Teleworkers
We cannot hear or see you

Post questions in the Q&A box

Slides and a recording will be emailed out after

Elham Shirazi
WorkSmart Program
Lead Consultant
Teleworking during COVID-19

- Extreme teleworking...not the normal situation for teleworking
- Everyone in the household under one roof
- Working
- Home Schooling
- Providing Childcare
- Cooking
- Baking
- Stressed by the pandemic
Teleworking in the time of COVID-19 conducted first week of April 2020 SHRM

Who are you “co-working” with?

- Pet(s) 55%
- Significant other 55%
- Child(ren) 41%
- Just myself 14%
- Other 6%
- Roommate(s) 2%

Notes: These results are based on 660 responses collected as of Monday, April 6, SHRM
Teleworking in the time of COVID-19 conducted first week of April 2020 SHRM

How many times a day are you interrupted by others in your household?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>66%</td>
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<td>5-10</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>More than 10</td>
<td>13%</td>
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Do you show your face on videoconference calls?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Of course!</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never!</td>
<td>29%</td>
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Where are you set up to work at home?

- Home office: 52%
- Dining table: 34%
- Couch: 14%
- Other: 14%
- Bed: 8%
- Basement: 5%
- Outdoors: 3%
- Garage: 0%

Notes: These results are based on 660 responses collected as of Monday, April 6, SHRM
Take the Time to Prepare

- Plan Daily Activities
- Manage Disruptions
- Stay Calm and Relaxed
- Breathe!
Teleworker’s Role

“Creating a safe, calm and productive work environment given the existing trust in the workplace, established relations and communications strategies.”
Adjustments for Employees

- Impact on teamwork?
- How will my manager know that I am working?
- Increased isolation from co-workers
- Developing good organizational skills
- Dealing with distractions in the home environment
Teleworking through Goal-Setting with Managers

- **Define** Define objectives and deliverables
- **Establish** Establish timeframes
- **Communicate** Send an email or have a conversation on goals and deliverables to get agreement
- **Review** Review status by end of the week or periodically with your manager
- **Improve** Develop a better understanding of what can be done remotely
- **Repeat** Repeat the process on a weekly basis
## Telework Task Schedule

Template deliverable-based form. This can keep you accountable and managers aware of the work that is being done for the period of the emergency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Accomplishment</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
<th>Actual Hours</th>
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King County METRO
Moving forward together
Helpful Tips to get Started

- Have a morning ritual
- Get dressed, not dressed up
- Schedule virtual breaks with coworkers
- Take breaks to get up and move around
- Eat lunch away from your desk
- Go for walks
- Meditate if possible
- Stay away from the news and radio while working
- Have an end of the day ritual
- Take vacation or personal time off
Teleworkers: Getting Organized

Employees should (if possible, given the nature of the emergency):

- Pick a dedicated workspace at their home that provides a safe environment for working
- Establish a routine – start at the same time, take breaks, lunch, and end at the same time (this may vary from employee to employee)
- Organize their work schedule and tasks based on organizational needs
Ergonomic Guidelines

Employees would have:

Desk
- Ensure a comfortable height

Chair
- Adjustable seat, both for height and angle to provide support. An ergonomic chair is preferable (prevents injury)

Lighting
- Light should be directed toward the side or behind line of vision
- Direct sunlight should not be used on work surfaces
**Ergonomic Guidelines**

**Employees would be conscious of:**

**Safety**
- Electrical support needed for equipment when configuring workspace
- Cover interconnecting cables to avoid tripping
- Place equipment close to electrical outlets
- Use surge protectors
- Place heavy items on sturdy stands close to walls
- Provide enough air space around computer. Keep out of direct sunlight and away from heaters

**Noise**
- Work quality and perceptions may be impacted by the sounds of crying children, barking dogs, vacuum cleaners, etc.
Teleworkers: Training Family and Friends

- The message to family and friends is that you are at home **working**!
- Decide what interruptions are OK – emergencies, etc., typically they are the same as those OK in the office
- Set rules for office materials
- Understanding that many employees will have children home during this time, agree upfront how your staff can balance time during the day
Teleworkers: Managing Work

- Maintain contact with coworkers
- Follow company protocol for security of information
- Stick to deadlines
- Keep managers informed of problems and progress
- Attend scheduled meetings by phone or electronically
- Schedule meetings with coworkers and others as needed
Establishing Communications Standards

- Assess current communication practices - How might teleworking change communications?
- Impromptu communications will have to happen by phone or electronically.
- It’s OK to interrupt!
- Expect more e-mails, IMs, texts, and calls.
- Assess if flexing the beginning and end of the day is possible.
- Define to the degree what are the core hours.
Impact on Teamwork

- Get clear direction from management: when attendance is required by phone, electronically, or through videoconference
- Conduct 15-minute team huddles as needed
- Make sure that you are adequately trained on collaborative technology
- Use tutorials and ask for time to learn the tools
Teleworkers and Communication

- Be accessible
- Call or contact manager if needed
- Make sure that your electronic calendar is updated
- Work & meetings
- Personal non-available time
Working from Home Burnout
Millions around the globe have made a sudden transition to remote work amid the COVID-19 pandemic. What employers should be concerned about is a longer-term risk: employee burnout.

Research has shown that workers often unintentionally make it hard for their supervisors, colleagues, and employees to maintain boundaries. In five studies involving more than 2,000 working adults, we found that senders of after-hours work emails underestimate how compelled receivers feel to respond right away, even when such emails are not urgent.
Red Flag Warnings

Burnout Red Flag #1: Avoiding Work

Burnout Red Flag #2: Declining Performance

Burnout Red Flag #3: Apathy or Exhaustion

Burnout Red Flag #4: Inability to Disconnect

What can Employers, Managers, and Coworkers do to help one another cope?

- Maintain physical and social boundaries
- Maintain temporal boundaries as much as possible
- Focus on your most important work

https://hbr.org/2020/04/3-tips-to-avoid-wfh-burnout
Burnout Busters

• **Set Office Hours** - Implement office hours by silencing notifications and activating an out-of-office response outside of certain time blocks. This way, no matter if you’re on the road or on the couch, your brain (and your clients or coworkers) knows that it’s time for you to relax.

• **Take Time Off** - A little counteraction goes a long way. Refresh your clarity and enthusiasm for work by stepping away from it for a little while. Whether you decide to travel or just enjoy some time at home, make sure that you completely unplug. Turn off all notifications (or even your entire device – gasp!), forward your inbox and tasks to a co-worker or virtual assistant while you’re away, and make a rule to not talk or think about work at all. After a few days, you’ll feel recharged and ready for action.

• **Have a Hobby** Intense work needs to be balanced with intense play. If work is the only thing that you feel passionate about, it’s time to discover other parts of your personality.

• **Update Your Job Description** If you’re feeling stuck in a rut, steer yourself out of it. Schedule a meeting with your supervisor or mentor to discuss what you do and don’t like about your current role, and brainstorm ways that it could be updated to better cater to your strengths and interests.

• **Tell Your Team** Hiding your concerns will only make them worse. If you’re feeling burned out, tell your boss and coworkers as early as possible.
Zoom Fatigue is Real

If you’re finding that you’re more exhausted at the end of your workday than you used to be, you’re not alone. Over the past few weeks, mentions of “Zoom fatigue” have popped up more and more on social media, and Google searches for the same phrase have steadily increased since early March.

Zoom fatigue is sneaky and can be triggered in people just like you who spend copious amounts of time on virtual meetings, trying to compensate for the loss of face to face interaction.

https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-to-combat-zoom-fatigue
Why are Video Calls so Draining?

In part, it’s because they force us to focus more intently on conversations in order to absorb information.

The problem isn’t helped by the fact that video calls make it easier than ever to lose focus.

“Zoom fatigue” stems from how we process information over video. On a video call the only way to show we’re paying attention is to look at the camera.

If we are with several people online at the same time, we are simultaneously processing visual cues from all of those people in a way we never have to do around a conference table.

https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-to-combat-zoom-fatigue
Techniques to Combat Zoom Fatigue

- **Take**
  - Take a few moments before clicking “Start” to settle and ground your attention.

- **Take**
  - Take the time to truly greet whoever is in the room with your full attention.

- **Reduce**
  - Reduce onscreen stimuli.

- **Choose**
  - Choose “speaker view.” In Zoom, one can choose Speaker View or Gallery View, you might opt for Speaker View so that the one person who is speaking has more of your attention.

- **Block**
  - Block self-view feature.

- **Resist**
  - Resist the urge to multitask. Try to take measured breaks between sessions. Build in breaks.

- **Make**
  - Make virtual social events opt-in.

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https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-to-combat-zoom-fatigue
https://www.mindful.org/zoom-exhaustion-is-real-here-are-six-ways-to-find-balance-and-stay-connected/
https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/351091#:~:text=To%20combat%20the%20fatigue%2Csmoothly%20as%20the%20last%20one.
Techniques to Combat Zoom Fatigue (cont.)

Switch
Switch to phone calls or email.

Avoid
For external calls, avoid defaulting to video, especially if you don’t know each other well.

Create
Create an itinerary.

Switch up
Switch up your set up.

Remind
Remind yourself periodically that this is a new place between presence and absence that we will have to learn how to accommodate as we go forward into the uncertain future.

Let
Let’s see if we can simultaneously refrain from high expectations without dismissing the clear benefits of online communication.

https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-to-combat-zoom-fatigue
https://www.mindful.org/zoom-exhaustion-is-real-here-are-six-ways-to-find-balance-and-stay-connected/
https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/3510918
Communication

Integrate your coworkers in innovation exchanges such as brainstorming exercises using technology.

Face time helps build relationships.

If you have access to videoconferencing, once a week try to schedule video meetings with your manager to have a more personal and fruitful exchange.
More Tips for Employees

Consider conducting short team meetings and share personal experiences

Build trust through interactions so that you and your manager can talk about problems, and find solutions
Tips for Teleworkers

- Avoid burn out
- Make sure that you have work life balance
- Ensure that you are problem-solving issues as they arise
Ideas for to Boost Morale and Collaboration

- Birthday celebrations
- Water cooler get togethers
- Virtual ice-breakers
- Virtual Town Hall, detailing same and having a Q and A
- Weekly small group chats, communication weekly with company personnel
- Managers check in, happy hours, pet days, and more virtually
- T-shirts, Incentive PTO, remote worker games, remote happy hours, weekly leadership team meetings, regular employee communications, saying thank you very often and being visible

* Survey of over 150 executives, in-house attorneys, and HR professionals from clients of the law firm Blank Rome. The responses came from C-Suite executives, in-house attorneys, and human resources professionals from a diverse array of businesses across various industries and geographies conducted from April 18 to April 24, 2020.
WorkSmart Free Services – One on One Consultation

- Lead you through every step to put a program into place
- Assess potential and necessary steps for customized program delivery
- Assist with overcoming concerns
- Develop custom presentations and marketing materials
- Consult on technology needs
- Develop policies, procedures and agreements
- Train managers and employees
- Provide evaluation guidelines and strategies
- Help meet CTR goals
Contact

- Elham Shirazi
- [www.kingcounty.gov/worksmart](http://www.kingcounty.gov/worksmart)
- [elham@e-planning.com](mailto:elham@e-planning.com)
- 213.248.0030
- [www.e-planning.com](http://www.e-planning.com)
- [worksmart@kingcounty.gov](mailto:worksmart@kingcounty.gov)