

EXPLANTORY NOTE

REMOTE WORKING

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SECTION ONE: GETTING WORK

Chapter 1: How to Stay Focused

A clear line between working and personal hours would help you to stay focused. Here are some tips to stay focused when you're working from home:

1. Establish Working Hours

Establishing "office hours" for working from home (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Lunch Break: 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and define what was and wasn't permissible to do during that period by telling yourself, "would you do this if you were in an office?" This allows you to work on personal things without feeling guilty "after hours."

2. Structure Your Day for Success

To be more productive, you should maintain momentum while working from home.

- **Take regular breaks:** You might try to prove that you're productive at by working nonstop. However, the research indicates that taking breaks is essential for increasing employee's productivity. E.g. you can work for around 52 minutes and then take a 17-minute break, such as a walk, getting some exercise, or stretching before returning to work.
- **Stay connected:** Isolation for a long period of time will erode productivity and motivation. You can schedule daily coffees and meetings with colleagues, customers, and coworkers, and use online networking to keep in touch with people who are far away. It wasn't about your career, but for your mental health.
- **Celebrate your wins:** Take the time at the end of the day to enjoy the accomplishments you've made. You might also keep a journal reflection on the activities of the day and monitor what you accomplished on your to-do list. It assists you in continuing to build a virtuous cycle.

3. Set Boundaries with Others

To make your efforts stick, be clear with the people who might see your work-at-home days as simply days you're at home. You may tell your friends and family that you're working remotely and not available for non-work-related activities. Another suggestion is to find a suitable spot where you can close the door and be out of sight away from anybody else that may be at home, such as an office or bedroom.

If you do accept non-work-related demands during the day, set guidelines about how much time you will have depending on your workplace schedule.

Chapter 2: Thing to Buy, Download, or Do

The right digital infrastructure will help you to work efficiently.

1. Software

- **Document collaboration:** You can use Google Drive or Dropbox as a tool to share files and documents with your co-workers. This will allow you and your colleagues to collaborate remotely on a draft document, report or any related work assigned.

- **Note sharing:** Evernote, a digital diary service, is ideal tool for remote employees because it syncs notes through all of their devices. It acts as handing a file of my notes to a peer, making it easy for colleagues to see the work in progress.
- **Calendaring:** Google Calendar is a useful method for scheduling meetings or appointments for a given time slot during the day or week.
- **Screen sharing:** Screen sharing on a video call is always the most efficient way to demonstrate what you're talking about. It can be done by using Zoom or Google Meet.
- **Instant messaging:** Instant massaging provides benefit of collegiality, and the ability to ask someone a fast question via Telegram or any other available applications.
- **Social networking:** A five-minute break on Twitter or Facebook will help you come up with new ideas or find industry news you would have missed otherwise.

2. Hardware

- **Your own hotspot:** You cannot rely on Wi-Fi all of the time; thus, you must ensure that you have access to your own internet network anywhere, anytime.
- **A great headset:** A pair of headset can let you type while you are talking or doing multilateral tasks at once.
- **A mini power strip:** Having your own power strip will help provides you the non-exhausted electricity for your devices.
- **Extra cables:** Buying extra charging adapter for your devices to prevent you from the stuck without any way to charge.
- **Battery and care adapter:** It is preferable to purchase an inverter that will allow you to plug your laptop into your car without fear of losing power.
- **A lightweight laptop:** It is easier to work anywhere carrying a lightweight laptop.

Chapter 3: Working from Home When You Have Kids

1. Keep A Firm Routine

You should use your remote work setup to provide flexibility that is essential to you, such as doing your child's morning routine while maintaining a strict schedule and routines. Wearing what makes you feel sharp and confident, and keeping breaks as same duration and frequency as at work is recommended to make you feel more professional and in control.

2. Demonstrate Your Commitment

You may send your co-workers emails/messages as a first thing in the morning to declare that you're already up and at it; and let them know that you've read their emails/messages and documentation carefully. It is one of the direct signs to prove your commitment and work ethic particularly during this period. These strategies would make you look prepared, committed, and hardworking.

3. Control the Controllable

You should pay attention to and set up your physical work atmosphere to assist yourself in being professional, concentrated, and committed. In your video calls, you should use a professional background to hide your child's toys or belongings, or whatever professionally irrelevant, in order to enhance your professional image.

4. Do a Technology Audit

Technology will help you increase your productivity and stay connected with your co-workers and your company. You may collaborate with an IT professional to identify and implement the right technical resources.

5. Allocate 10% of Your Time to Relationship Building

You should ensure that you have daily casual contact with everyone in your company. You may contact one (or more) of your co-workers to see how their days/weekend is going or send an email/message to them to inquire about their major presentation (if any). Greeting and checking in on your co-worker(s)'s days will help you maintain a good relationship and increase your efficiency of collaboration with them.

6. Explain It to Your Kids

Even though it is naturally difficult for children to understand the world of work, still, you should explain to small children that it is a responsibility (although they don't understand what responsibility is) and you work this hard to earn money to take care of the family. In doing so, you are transmitting the value of responsibility, hard work and duty while still demonstrating your commitment to your work and love to your children at once.

Chapter 4: How to Transition Between Work and Personal Time

Physical presence does not always come with mental presence. You may show up at your office but your mind may be pondering elsewhere or still resting at home with some chores. In this sense, switching from work mode to personal mode is so crucial that you have to put intentional effort into the transition when you work from home. It requires your self-commitment.

1. Tell Your Brain It's Time to Work

Whatever works you're doing, try to do those activities in the same way every day and make sure you form it as a routine. For example, at work, you may have a cup of coffee before getting down to business. While at home, you may have your breakfast following some household chores and showering, then sitting down in front of the computer to begin work right away. You can do anything that is workable for you as long as it can signal your brain that it is now time to work.

2. Making a Plan

You must set a clear plan each day to increase your productivity and clarity for your work and personal time. By doing that, you can resist the temptation and do not feel like you have to work during your personal time or vice versa. Those activities may include but not limited to:

- Knowing the time of your meeting;
- Deciding what projects/assignment you will work on;

- Being clear on when you will do the tasks; and
- Designating a time to respond to non-work messages, texts, and calls.

3. Tell Your Brain It's Time to Stop

When it is time to leave the work, you should be fully off the clock by having a wrap-up routine that you're doing, at least 30 minutes, before ending your work so that you won't have a cloud over your head. You should have a clear sense of what exactly you will do and when, including:

- doing a final check on email response before leaving;
- looking over your task list and cross out the completed work; and
- if you haven't finished any works, set a specific time that you need to complete it later.

Chapter 5: Staying Motivated in a Remote Job

A strong motivation is required when working from home since home is usually considered as a relaxing place where you do not want to involve your working feeling at home.

1. Use the Time You Save on Commuting to Read a Good Book

Whatever you absorb usually influent into your work. Reading a good book will bring you a fresh mind-set that you are doing something useful for your life, and that may encourage you to keep it up by doing some other works that is more useful every day.

2. Make Work-Together Dates

When you see your family members are running around with their works, you probably want to do the same because your action and decision are generally reflected by those who surrounded you. Simply, you can ask your spouse or your sibling to work together or to study together in a table. By doing this, you keep each other motivated. No matter how lazy or unmotivated you are, as long as you see the other persons are working, you may not dare to even leave the table to drink water.

3. Make Someone Else Happy

Making others happy is just like making yourself happy because your brain is full of positivity. Happiness will help your brain function well, leading your work result to be efficient and satisfying.

4. Exercise

Exercise keeps you physically and mentally healthy. Exercise is shown to reduce stress, combat fatigue, improve performance and lead to fewer workday absences. Especially, exercising regularly is one of the easiest and most effective ways to reduce stress because you stay at home 24/7. Thus, by keeping yourself sweat, it will improve your immune system, flexibility, concentration, memory, and mood for working remotely.

SECTION TWO: NAVIGATING COMMON CHALLENGES

Chapter 6: Working Smoothly with a Virtual Boss

A different set of consideration comes into play, since you'll never casually meet each other in the office.

1. Develop trust between you and your boss

As long as you and your boss have a strong relationship, nothing can break the work apart. You can start texting or emailing your boss regularly how they are doing or you can share him/her with any good articles you read that are relevant to the work. Sometimes, you can also discuss or ask for your boss's suggestion on your current task.

2. Establish Rules for Communication

Connecting each other via teleconferences, Zoom sessions, emails, and the likes are the answer to the problems of distance. The real key to manage the relationship with your boss is to set an appropriate tone of the communications so that you align on the outcomes such as:

- Specify how quickly you both need to respond to emails and call;
- Determine what follow-up steps should be taken so that you never let important issues slip through the cracks;
- Sharing meeting agendas ahead of time; and
- Starting and finishing meetings on schedule.

3. Set Clear Goals and Expectations

Clear goal will motivate you to work in an effective-manner. Think through your personal goals for your work:

- What would "hitting it out of the park" mean in one month, six months, or a year?
- Spend some time reflecting your goals;
- Write down your performance goals and targets;
- Send them to your boss and have her sign off on them;
- Have frequent discussions with your boss to make sure you're both checking in on your progress regularly; and
- Let your supervisor know that you believe that feedback along the way is a gift.

4. Get Personal

The research found that many employees working from home felt isolated or disconnected, making it difficult for them to develop personal relationships and trust. In order to get rid of that we can:

- Text your boss and share them about your current living situation; and
- Have regular personal-professional check-in at the start of the meeting.

5. Be Generous

Go overboard to be of assistance to your boss. Generosity accelerates emotional bonding because it allows you to selflessly focus on your boss's success, which strengthens the relationship.

- Beat a deadline;
- Going beyond your job; and
- Delivery against legacy.

6. Agree to Be Candid

Don't be conflict-avoidant as it is a negative trait that is unhelpful for numerous employers. Both transparency and honesty help build trust, and these two key qualities should be communicated in advance. Let your boss know that you expect and request for honest feedback and the feedback is rather a gift for you. With this working culture, you will be able to prevent minor issue from developing into crisis.

Chapter 7: How to Resolve a Conflict With a Remote Colleague

It is frustrating when you're not in the same office but you are exchanging snarky emails, openly disagreeing on a conference call, or giving each other the silent treatment. Therefore, you should build a strong connection and good relationship with your colleagues by:

1. Appreciate the Upsides

A lot of issues might arise during the work from home. However, you should admit the challenges and try to adapt with the new situation and get through it together. So just start working, stop complaining.

2. Give you colleague the benefit of the doubt

Instead of thinking the worst about your colleagues or mistaken that they are not committing to the work, ask them what else could be going on and how you can help them.

3. Move Away the Conversation from Email

Using email generally increases the possibility of conflict and miscommunication. Instead of keeping an argument via email, you should pick up the phone and call your colleague, or schedule a time to do a video call to resolve the conflict. Both sides have to understand the other's perspective.

4. Focus on What You Have in Common

You may share with your colleagues what you both simply have in common, like your hobbies, educational and professional experiences, or even your perspective of life. Generally, that will focus people on how they're more similar than not and help one to know more about the others. Working as a team requires a strong reuniting; so do not stay selfish.

5. See the Other Side

Perspective taking is one of the key skills for conflict settlement. Instead of getting mad at or quickly react to a person's frustration or clumsiness, you should try putting yourself in the person's shoes, asking yourself what you would do if you were the

person, or how you would deal with it, would you do it better or worse. This will help calm yourself down and understand other people more. Perspective taking is helpful in any conflict, especially in distributed teams; and your colleagues should be encouraged to the same.

6. Consider Culture Differences

Cultural differences can also be troublesome. People normally share different styles of self and emotional expression, which others might not understand or can hardly understand. Consequently, you may sometimes end up clueless about how to solve a problem with a person who speaks different language and share different culture. Hence, you should find someone who can advise and help you, perhaps a colleague in the same office or from the same culture to translate the person's behavior if you're not sure.

7. Being in Someone Else's Shoe if Necessary

You may need to seek help from a reliable third person to intervene on an issue, which could not be resolved between the two of you. The third person should be someone who is not invested in the content of the conflict, to help you reflect and integrate both sides. Likewise, you could also play as a third party to help solve the conflicts of your colleagues in a positive way.

Chapter 8: 4 Ways to Demonstrate Your Value - Remotely

- **Do your work:** When you are adjusting yourself to the work in this environment, you should create a system alongside with the deadline in place, which you can keep track on your progresses and ticking or marking them as "Done" when you finish your work(s).
- **Tell others:** You should share what you have accomplished and some highlights of your works, but don't take credit for other's work.
- **Play nicely:** Don't argue with pointless argument. You should deescalate a situation with your team.
- **Spread positivity:** If you are comfortable, be friendly and funny. Being a laughter and positive energy person will draw teams together and make people feel good being around you and working with you.

Chapter 9: Starting a New Remote Job

- **Schedule a lot of brief check-ins with colleagues:** You should keep in touch with your colleagues via any virtual means of communication to keep the team spirit going.
- **Rapidly assemble your mentoring team:** You should seek out for those within your firm, who know how thing is done or who knew how to navigate variety of procedure.
- **Announce yourself as new:** People is tented to help the new person in the office. This is kind of mindset; you should try to introduce yourself as a new person in office and you can seek for help from other people.
- **Ask for help:** As a rule, when there is something you need, please ask for it.
- **Keep a diary:** You should take notes with whatever problem that occur during your process; therefore, you won't forget later when you ask your co-workers for help.

SECTION THREE: CARING FOR YOUR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Chapter 10: 3 tips to Avoid Work-from-Home Burnout

Burnout is a disease when you feel exhausted and lost motivation to do your work. Lots of research suggests that drawing lines between our professional and personal lives is crucial especially for our mental health. To avoid the burnout, here are some recommendations:

1. Maintain Physical and Social Boundaries

You must strive to avoid engaging in "boundary-crossing activities" during work and personal hours. Before starting to work, put on your work clothes and try swapping your morning commute with a walk to a local park or even just around your apartment for the fresh air.

2. Maintain Temporal Boundaries as Much As Possible

Employees need to find work "time budgets" that fit better for them. They must, therefore, be aware of the fact that some people might work at different times than they do. Employees should set up explicit work time budgets by adding a "out of office" response at specific hours of the day and letting people know that you will be slower than normal in reacting, in order to reduce expectations from others. Furthermore, an employer may hold virtual check-in meetings with employees on a regular basis, or provide them with tools to create virtual coffee breaks.

3. Focus on Your Most Important Work

When working from home, employees who are "on" all the time are more likely to burnout. Many that are dealing with increased workloads should pay special attention to prioritizing important work over immediate work.

Trying to squeeze work and email responses in anytime even if we have a few minutes to spare, such as after a break, on the weekend, or when watching a movie in the evening, is not only inefficient, but also harmful to our mental health. As a result, we all need to carve out some non-work time and mental space.

Chapter 11: Resilience is About How You Recharge, Not How You Endure

Resilience is the capacity to adapt quickly with difficulties or toughness. Resilience does not come up hectic schedule. Overwork and exhaustion are the opposite of resilience. Most people misunderstood the concept of resilience that we are all should become a workaholic and thriving through success. However, that only leads to direct correlation between lack of recovery and increased incidence of health and safety problems.

For example: Just because work stops, it doesn't mean we are recovering. We "stop" working, sometimes at 5 p.m., but then we spend the night wrestling with solutions to problems, talking about projects over dinner, and falling asleep thinking about the tasks we'll do tomorrow.

The real resilience at work are:

- Do not become a workaholic;
- Recharge your body first by eating healthy and enough sleep;
- Rejuvenated and ready to return to the performance zone;

- Rather than having lunch at your desk, spend time outside or talk with your friends but not about work. This is the internal recovery that you have a shorter periods of relaxation that take place within the frames of the workday; and
- Do not force yourself to swimming upstream, instead go out on weekend or vacation while not touching your work. This is External recovery refers to actions that take place outside of work.

Chapter 12: 5 Tips to Reduce Screen Time While You Are Working at Home

- **Don't default to video call:** Video call are wonderful tools when you are trying to replicate in-person interactions as closely as possible; but the level of intensity of calling offer isn't necessary for many communications.
- **Limit your meeting time:** If you find virtual meetings draining, this practice is even more essential for you as you work remotely. Block out time on your schedule when you are not available for meeting so that you can temper how much virtual communication you have each day.
- **Choose physical over digital:** To deal with the increased time in front of a screen both on and off the clock, look for ways that you can take the low-tech route. E.g. using papers for notes or brainstorming, exercise etc.
- **Move as much as possible:** You should take a walk to the kitchen to refill your water or coffee. When you need a quick break, do a few simple movements like rolling your shoulder to get better blood circulation.
- **Take tech-free breaks:** You should have more physical activities. This includes walking, doing yoga, gardening, or anything that gets you active. This splits from the digital world, refreshing your brain and helps to create some separation from the end.

Chapter 13: How to Combat Video Call Fatigue

- **Avoid multitasking:** It's easy to think that you can use the opportunity to do more in less time; but research shows that trying to do multiple things at once will reduce the productivity.
- **Build in breaks:** Take mini breaks from video during longer calls by minimizing the window, moving it behind your open applications, or just looking away from your computer for a second.
- **Reduce on-screen stimuli:** If you're on a call with five people, you may feel like you're in five different rooms at once. You can see their furniture, plants, and wallpaper. To combat mental fatigue, you can encourage people to use plain backgrounds or agree as a group to have everyone who is not talking turn off their video.
- **Making virtual social even opts-in:** After a long day of back-to-back video calls, it's normal to feel drained, particularly, if you're an introvert. That's why virtual social sessions should be opt-in, meaning that whoever owns the event, makes it explicit that people are welcome, but not obligated, to join.
- **Switch to phone calls or email:** Check your calendar for the next few days to see if there are any conversations you could have over instant message or email. If 4 p.m. rolls around and you're Zoomed-out but have an upcoming one-on-one, ask the person to switch to a phone call or suggest picking up the conversation later so that you can both recharge.

- **For external calls, avoid defaulting to video:** You may feel obligated to send out a video chat link. Yet, a video call is fairly intimate and can even feel invasive in some situations, especially if you don't know each other well.

SECTION SIX: SOLVING THE PROBLEMS ON A REMOTE TEAM

Chapter 25: How to Collaborate Effectively If Team is Remote (Rule)

- **Don't conflate brief communication and clear communication:** You should not expect the receiver of your message could understand or get what is intended. Plus, don't make a long email or SMS, you should make it short yet contain all necessary information for the task.
- **Don't bombard your team with messages:** Don't use a lot of medium to deliver your message. Abusing this can be a form of digital dominance, a relentless and uncomfortable form. The medium you choose creates different demands on the time of the receiver.
- **Establish communication norms:** Remote team needs to create new norms that establish clarity in communication. Norms can bring predictability and certainty to virtual conversation. The norms can also exist on an individual level, such as people's preferred response time, writing style and tone.
- **See the hidden opportunities in written communications:** The absence of body language doesn't necessarily mean that we're not giving away more than we intend to when we communicate remotely. There's still a great deal of meta-communication and virtual leakage that happens in digital environments and it only takes paying attention to read between the line.
- **Create intentional space for celebration:** Creating virtual spaces and rituals for celebrations and socializing can strengthen relation. As more and more of our interaction happen digitally, we will continue to experience new forms of miscommunication and misunderstanding. The solution is in understanding the new rule of engagement.

REFERENCE

Harvard Business Review Press. (2021). *Hbr guide to remote work*.