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WORKING FROM HOME: A GUIDE FOR SUCCESS



Create the "at-home" work space and work flow that gives you the structure, freedom and opportunity to
OPTIMIZE YOUR PERFORMANCE.

FOR THE STRUCTURE

LOVERS:

For those of you who need the support and routine that your work environment typically gives you, the following tips and strategies are for you.

**My goal is to provide ideas to help you create an at-home work environment where you have limited distractions, a strict(er) schedule and a feeling of "routine" in your new norm. **



1) **Create/clear a space in your home that is your designated work area.** Maybe you have a spare room, a section of your basement, an RV, or a heated garage that you could convert into your new "office space". If you don't have an entire room to work with, I suggest you find a table/desk (or make one out of crates and wood slabs!) that can be YOUR WORK SPACE. The focus is on creating an area that can be solely used for business. Yes. This space will only be used for business related activities. I want this space to mean one thing to you- when you spend time here, you are working. (Bonus points to you if you can find a space with a WINDOW!)

3) **Set your office (room or table) up in a way that it mimics your work environment in any way possible.** The priority is ensuring that you have your necessities, but there may be a few additional items that would be helpful to you (ex: a trash can, bulletin board, file folders, a photo of your dog, etc) and help you to work at your best. Make your space cozy, uncluttered & functional!

4) **Deal with potential distractions proactively.** If at all possible, remove distractions from your work space when you are setting the work space up. If you can't remove a tv or stereo to another room, disconnect from Alexa, relocate your pet's bed somewhere else, or any other possible way to proactively get rid of distracting items- please do it.



2) **Create a list of necessities that you require to do your work to the best of your abilities.** Don't hesitate to ask your employer for what you need if it's something you don't have in your home (ex: the right monitor, keyboard, software, etc). They may or may not be able to help a little, but it doesn't hurt to ask! Gather all of your items and, when possible, leave them in your new work space as a permanent fixture.

4) ****If you have a scenario where it's not possible to remove the distractions, get creative with how you can control or limit the distractions.** Depending on your situation, things such as noise cancelling headphones or portable desk dividers could help isolate you in a crowded and busy public space.

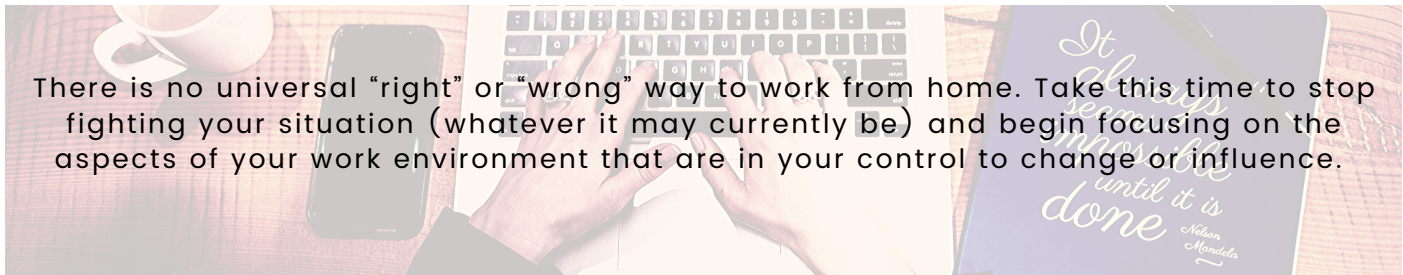
5) Schedule short, 10-20 min “team meetings” with colleagues throughout your week to plan, check in on progress, and maintain a sense of connection with your coworkers.

6) Communicate your needs, boundaries and ground rules to whoever you may be sharing your home environment with. Rather than expecting people to simply understand your work needs, it is helpful to clearly communicate what you’re asking and why it is important to you. We all have to work together in a time like this, and that includes working with your loved ones or roommates on creating a safe, healthy and productive work space (for both you and your new “coworkers”).

9) Try to set up an ergonomically-friendly space. Things to keep in mind: computer monitor at eye level; table/keyboard at a height where elbows are bent at 90°; chair at a height where knees & hips are at 90° & feet are flat on the floor (or a foot rest if you are short like me!); strong lighting; etc. Google tips for your specific setup.

10) Create a time schedule for your days. Include: start time, break times (and duration), and end of day time. Set alarms or reminders in your phone to help hold you accountable to your schedule.

11) Show up to virtual meetings in a professional and helpful manner.



There is no universal “right” or “wrong” way to work from home. Take this time to stop fighting your situation (whatever it may currently be) and begin focusing on the aspects of your work environment that are in your control to change or influence.



7) Continue your regular morning routine. Prepare yourself for work in a similar way to how you “normally” did. It helps to set the tone of your day in a way that triggers you subconsciously to prepare for a day of work.

8) Put your cell phone away! With more people working remotely or not working at all, fewer people have strict schedules to follow and therefore, you are more likely to get friendly texts from people throughout your day. As great as this is for your social life, it can be a huge time-sucker from your work life! If it helps, schedule in designated “cell phone time” throughout your work day.

12) Stay connected to your work community! There are a lot of options out there to help you still feel connected and supported throughout this time of self-isolation/social distancing. Schedule a zoom coffee break or lunch date if you are missing your coworkers! Warning: This can also end up serving as a distraction, so set a timer to help remind you of your schedule!

13) Set up an accountability buddy to check-in with and/or report your daily activities to. It can be an adjustment to not have someone/others around to monitor your progress or to keep you accountable to working on relevant tasks. By adding an accountability buddy to your new norm, it can help you to put forward a little extra effort where you may otherwise have let yourself slack off (a bit!).

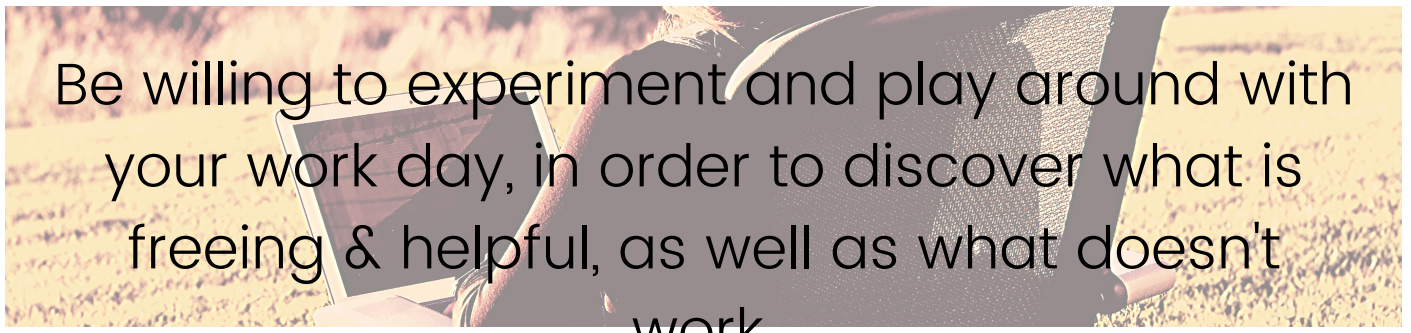
FOR THE CHALLENGE

TAKERS:

For those of you who want to make the most of this shift to working from home and are willing to step outside the structure that is normalized in society. The following points are suggestions or challenges for you to experiment with; they may not all work for you.)

**My goal is to provide you with a home work environment where you are productive rather than “busy”, and where you are able to get your work done yet still take advantage of the benefits that come from working at home! **

3) **Put emphasis on what you accomplish rather than on the time that you spend at work.** Working an 8-hour work day doesn't mean that you are necessarily your most productive; it simply means that you are at work for 8 hours. Be willing to experiment with your productivity! Play around with focusing on what tasks you need/want to accomplish in a day, and create a work flow for the day that fulfills them. Then, end your work day! **This feels strange at first, but it can actually be such a motivating approach!



1) **Work outside the conventional 9-5 work hours.** If you are your most creative/productive/energized in the morning, go ahead and work from 5:30am-12:30pm! If you're a night owl, work at night! Other than certain tasks that need to be accomplished during regular work hours, allow yourself the freedom to set up your working hours at a time that works for you!

2) **Fill your breaks with something meaningful.** If you want to take a 30 min break to walk your dog, play with your kids, bake a cake, take a bath or call your mom just to visit- do it! Take advantage of this time at home (without allowing yourself to get distracted and completely avoid work) to enjoy some of the little things in your life that bring you joy or that you never “have time for”.

4) This one is for the ladies- **TAKE YOUR BRA OFF!** Who here is with me?! I don't have to explain this one; if you know, you know.

5) **Take a nap!** Yes, you read that correctly. If you feel yourself dragging because of fatigue, go and take a 10-30 min nap (or simply rest with your eyes closed) I'm a big believer in naps, and science agrees with me (or maybe I agree with science) that they can be such a positive booster to your day- for many reasons!



6) **Treat yourself and make work feel like a treat!** I personally, do this all the time, in so many different ways! Find little ways to transform work from “I have to...” into “I get to...” by mixing a work task with something that brings you joy (and that doesn’t detract from your productivity). Ex: take your computer or papers outside and work with the sun on your face, take a phone call while walking in the park (maintaining your social distancing), listen to music that makes you energized WITHOUT headphones on (I have a playlist of some of my favourites that I’ll be sharing in the future),

make a tasty beverage (I would encourage mocktails or other tasty alcohol-free choices BUT also, we’re all adults- and sometimes, let’s be honest, it just feels good to have a beer or a glass of wine while doing some work!), walk on the treadmill or ride a stationary bike while reading a report- be CREATIVE! Find some activity to enjoy while getting your work done!



If you are wanting additional help in OPTIMIZING YOUR PERFORMANCE, schedule a FREE coaching call to get you started:

<https://calendly.com/paigelawrence/consultation>

For more FREE RESOURCES, visit:

<https://www.paigelawrencecoaching.com/free-resources>

**Paige
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PERFORMANCE COACH