Tips and Tricks for Working Remotely
PART 1: Productivity, Fun and Team Dynamics
May 28, 2020

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Special thanks to the Alliance for Water Efficiency and the California Water Efficiency Partnership for past webinars and some slide content: https://calwep.org/remote/
Welcome!

• This webinar will be 90 minutes, including 15 minutes for questions.
• For audio, call in with your phone OR use your computer microphone & speakers (just don’t use both at the same time).
• The webinar phone line will be muted during the presentation.
• Use the chat box to ask questions or share ideas.
• We will also use polling to get your input.
• Let’s walk through how you can use the webinar tools.
Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction
- Icebreaker
- Wrangling Distractions
- Communication Styles
- Team Dynamics
- Fun at Work: Virtual Style
- Home Ergonomics
- Wrap Up and Questions
Poll Everywhere Instructions

1. Open a second browser
2. Type this URL into browser's address bar:
   pollev.com/wefpoll
3. Answer questions when prompted
4. Leave tab open for polls throughout presentation
Wrangling Distractions to Maximize Personal Productivity
Take a Fresh Look at your Remote Work Routine

• Set boundaries: “work times” and “non-work times”
• Decide on a routine: features for starting your day
  • Shower, drink some coffee/tea
  • Get dressed to go to work like you normally would
• Make a realistic list of what you think can be accomplished each day (and week) and communicate it with your supervisor
• Envision a schedule
  • EXERCISE
  • Take a lunch break: cook a meal and/or go outside, if possible
  • End your day: clean your desk and relax
Managing Distractions
Tips and Tricks

Tips

• Make decisions about non-work distractions (e.g., personal calls, texts, chores)
• Expect some trial and error and be flexible
• Exercise is vital – early morning before turning on computer is best
• Pre-plan meals and healthy snacks – don’t skip/indulge

Tricks

• Build in FUN, like “Fun Friday”
  • Early morning coffee chat
  • Virtual lunch/TED Talk discussions
  • Water cooler/happy hour chats
• Consider doing “walk and talks” for meetings, if no visual needed
• Make a comfortable, enjoyable part of your workspace – quieter with music/plants/less stress
• Distance learning ideas/routine

Great TED Talk: “Power of Yet”
The Four Quadrants

Helpful productivity tools and articles: [https://resources.franklincovey.com/](https://resources.franklincovey.com/)
The Four Quadrants (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Urgent</th>
<th>Not Urgent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quad I</strong></td>
<td>Activities: Crisis, Pressing Problems, Deadline Driven</td>
<td>Results: Stress, Burn-out, Crisis management, Always putting out fires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quad II</strong></td>
<td>Activities: Prevention, capability improvement, Relationship building, Recognizing new opportunities, Planning, recreation</td>
<td>Results: Vision, perspective, Balance, Discipline, Control, Few crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quad III</strong></td>
<td>Activities: Interruptions, some callers, Some email, some reports, Some meetings, Proximate, pressing matters, Popular activities</td>
<td>Results: Short term focus, Crisis management, Reputation – chameleon character, See goals/plans as worthless, Feel victimized, out of control, Shallow or broken relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quad IV</strong></td>
<td>Activities: Trivia, busy work, Some email, Personal social media, Some phone calls, Time wasters, Pleasant activities</td>
<td>Results: Total irresponsibility, Fired from jobs, Dependent on others or institutions for basics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Helpful productivity tools and articles: [https://resources.franklincovey.com/](https://resources.franklincovey.com/)
Brainstorm Break: What tasks are “Not Urgent but Important” right now?
Focus on Our Circle of Influence

7 Habits of Highly Effective People video (<4 mins)
https://youtu.be/uj8dmSgQa1c

Tools COVID-19 Support Pack
https://www.mindtools.com/
Virtual Communication Styles

“Luke, you must learn the ways of the force”

“I’m ready, Obi Wan.”

“Oooookay. Let’s see here. After you’ve logged in, you’re gonna want to go to the student portal and click Jedi....”
Baseline Needs and Platforms for Communications

• **Why** – Meet Internal vs. External Needs
  - Inner team manager and staff
  - Community customer/client

• **How** – Online Meeting Platforms
  - Zoom
  - Microsoft Teams 365
  - GoToMeeting

• **How/What** – Program Management Software
  - Monday.com
  - Basecamp
  - Trello
  - Asana

TED Talk: Simon Sinek – *How Great Leaders Inspire Action*
https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action
Navigating Communication Styles

In a meeting
In a meeting
In a meeting
In a meeting
In a meeting
In a meeting
In a meeting

Are you in a meeting?

No, why?
Upfront Communication is Critical

**Set team norms. Experiment to find a good fit.**

- Focus on organization and forms of communication
- Streamline communication tools, so not too many
- Ask your team members: Which type of communication do you prefer?
  - When is it best for you to email?
  - When is it best for you to call?
  - Does someone prefer text messages?
  - Excuse background noise if family, homeschooling, pets, etc.
- Seek to use online meetings, as needed
  - Power team meetings (who needs what/when)
  - One-on-one meetings
  - Project/task-oriented meetings (with clear priorities)
Tips and Tricks

Tips

- Heighten need for respect and appreciation – body language is missing (80% of communication)
- Power team meetings
  - Weekly, 30-45 mins
  - Only info full team needs
  - Everyone has opportunity to participate
  - Focus on any needs from other teammates
- Don’t be shy about picking up the phone
- Call to discuss if not meeting expectations or timing needs

Tricks

- Chance to infuse positive energy
- Take the 5 Types of Language of Appreciation (handout/online quiz)
- One-on-one meetings – frequency tied to leadership style and individual teammate
- Seek the Third Story (difficult conversations)
- Video chat or phone call for personalized feedback on work performance related to team needs (better than email or text messages, use the power of the word “Yet”)
Trust is earned in the smallest of moments.

www.brenebrown.com
Team Engagement Virtually
Tips and Tricks – Virtual Team Calls

Tips
• Team dynamics 100% supported
• How to engage the team (buy-in)
  • Voice, video/webcam, screen sharing, hand-raising, chat
  • Add structure, build in two-way communication, pre-think leading questions, take pauses
• Agenda
• Live call summary notes
• Online Meetings/Software
  • Learn from short video trainings:
    • [https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials)

Tricks
• Different types of primary accounts to switch back and forth (if stuck or absence, use a master sign-in list)
• Currently having bandwidth issues with log-on and call-in (i.e., dropped calls)
• Most employees can benefit from screen sharing
• Consider free hosting accounts for occasional “meet now” options, when primary accounts are booked
  • Fewer features
  • Shorter times
Tips and Tricks – Managing Team Calls

**Tips**

- Online meeting options
  - Common
    - Zoom
    - GoToMeetings
    - Microsoft 365 Teams
    - Skype
  - Less common
    - BlueJeans
    - Google Meet
    - Webex

**Tricks**

- Call in early, if you are host, to work out any technology issues
- Have enough capacity available for number of attendees
- Have a backup if web meeting is not working (due to bandwidth overload), such as email attachments
- Be sure to check in frequently and take turns so all team members feel “seen” and “heard”
Tips and Tricks – Managing Team Action Items

Tips

• Program management software options
  • Custom
  • Monday.com
  • Microsoft Teams
  • Basecamp
  • Asana
  • Wrike
  • Slack
• Prioritized “To Do List” helps encourage productivity for multiple days at a time

Tricks

• Need for written/verbal/visual instructions, maybe all of the above (different uptake/learning styles)?
• Organize calls with short breaks
• Maximize Outlook features or other calendar/email software
• Block time for tasks and put on Do Not Disturb for an hour or so, if possible
Team Dynamics/Work Flow

Need defined/request

Focus on the “WHY”
- Agree on “HOW” it’s going to be done
- Task effort (scope)
- When (schedule)
- How much effort/time (budget)

Populate in the PM software to start tracking

Review Priorities (Quadrant 1 or 2)
- Populate “WHAT” details in PM software
- Detailed project/task schedule if larger project, more than a month
- Assign to staff in PM software ordered priority and deadlines

Managers delegate to staff

Communicate About Work Effort
- Written task email with links to exact files on server (possibly attached files)
- Call to discuss via web meeting
- Check-in web meetings for questions

Follow-up and wrap it up

Complete Effort
- Status updates in PM software (by staff person)
- Complete projects/tasks Marked “DONE” and archived in PM software
Team Productivity Tricks

• Essential virtual file sharing (preserving your files and work)
  • Less email – issues with large file sizes
  • Dropbox, Box, OneDrive, Google Drive, SharePoint
  • FTP sites
  • Servers with organized protocols
    • VPN access (not always stable)
    • Save down to your desktop
    • Electronic document trail (date and initials, draft and then “Final” or “Submitted”)
    • “Old” folder for back-ups in each folder
Team Productivity Tricks

- Importance of polling for input/feedback via online tools
  - Zoom polling: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-Meetings
  - SurveyMonkey or Google Docs/Forms/Sheets
- Enhanced calendar sharing
  - Respecting the shared work environments (work times/non-work times vs. door closed)
  - Settings in Outlook (busy/not busy vs. walking by an office)
  - Color coding (breaks, free vs. busy vs. out of office)
  - Private
  - Routine breaks (i.e., schedule into your routine)
Team Building: Personality Test

https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test
https://www.appreciationatwork.com/work-personality-test/
https://www.discprofile.com/
Managing “Zoom Fatigue”

Cause

• Increased temptation to multitask
• More difficult to recover from distractions – even more distractions at home!
• Increased screen time with decreased human time
• “Constant gaze” can be uncomfortable
Managing “Zoom Fatigue”

Possible Solutions

• Avoid multitasking
• Build in breaks
• Reduce onscreen stimuli
• Make virtual social events opt-in
• Alternate between video, phone, and email
Fun at Work: Virtual Team Building

- Take a SurveyMonkey for ideas or use Google Forms
- Virtual coffee/lunch
  - Mavens presents on a 5-10-15 min topic (volunteers email host for invitation, any PC topic)
  - Favorite 5 photos (family, pets, trips, sports, etc.)
  - Virtual birthdays
  - Bring a joke (favorite memes)
- Team fun list (input in program management software)
  - Free workouts
  - Books
  - Movies
  - Podcasts/TED Talks
  - Remote Learning

TED Talk: Choice, Happiness and Spaghetti Sauce
Team Fun: Picture Lunch
Grab your lunch and share your favorite pictures
Team Fun: Weekend Warriors!
Share pictures about weekend adventures

Local adventures...

Home improvement projects...
Team Fun: Games
Team Lists – Fun, Appreciation, Innovation
Home Ergonomics
Your Physical Workspace

- Experiment to find your productive workspace style
- Designated space for work (declutter as much as possible)
- Flexible for more than one person (coordinate timings)
- Quieter space (or noise canceling headphones)
- Poorly set up workspaces lead to fatigue and possible injury
- Design to feel in a productive mindset (i.e., dress for the day)
Ergonomics...Seriously!

Review OSHA Work Station Checklist:

- General Concepts
- Work Station
- Seating
- Keyboard/Input Device
- Monitor
- Mobile Devices
- Accessories

Take breaks to look up from screens, stand up, walk around, and stretch throughout the day – set reminders or alarms on phone!
Ergonomics...Seriously!

If it hurts, take action to fix it!

• Hand, wrist, or shoulder pain
• Reaching for mouse
• Hand position on keyboard

https://sites.tufts.edu/lifeguardno5/2018/03/09/blog-4-quick-introduction-to-ergonomic-keyboard/
Real-life Home Office Example

Alternate between sitting and standing
Incorporate Movement

Move around. Take a second to stretch. Drink water. Rotate your joints. Get your heart rate up...etc.

Consider steady movement...
(mini-stair stepper = $40 or used)

Or intervals of movement...
Set Goals and Try New Things

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes!

Explore FREE apps for:
• Stretching
• Drinking water
• Body weight exercises
Find Your Perfect Spot...Everyday

Go mobile!

Enjoy the freedom!

Enjoy the weather!
DIY Standing Desk Ideas

Racket ball + Olympic weight = $10 balance board
DIY Standing Desk Ideas

Practical and cheap


Very natural

https://www.instructables.com/id/Standing-Tree-Desk/
Sneak Peek for Next Week
Virtual Presentations/Training – Tips and Tricks

Tips
• Keep their attention
  • Way more visual
  • Photos and interesting graphics
• Plan for engagement
  • Think through participation needs
    • Quizzes
    • Polling
    • Pausing
• Maintaining attendance
  • Change up speakers
  • Provide breaks

Tricks
• IT support
• Recording (ask permission/notify)
• Extra attendance
• Log in and out with Plan B
• Understand mute function
• Have support to manage chat box
• Watch for videos (easily can fail due to bandwidth issues)
• Slow down verbally and visually due to lag in video sharing
Checking In...PART 2

Growth Mindset.
Work Hard. Play Hard.
Be Generous.

We want to hear from you.
Special Thanks to the WEF YP Team!

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