



Facilitating homeworking for extended periods

Recommendations and guidelines

March 2020

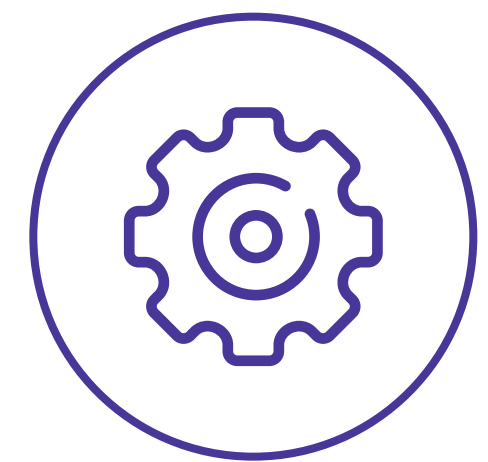
Introduction

In times of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), large numbers of employees are working remotely.

This poses challenges to staying connected and productive and maintaining a healthy work culture.

Modern social and engagement platforms can help make sure we continue to collaborate, messages are heard, leadership is visible and practices are shared.

In what follows we share with you some **tips & tricks** on:



**Working around
logistical
challenges**



**Staying connected
as a team**



**Enhancing
emotional
proximity and
wellbeing**



Tips for leaders

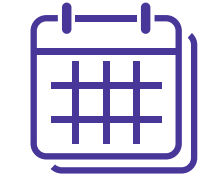


Working around logistical challenges



Set up a **designated space for your work.**

Update meeting invites with
the **remote collaboration tool information.**



Know how to use your ADSL for **VPN** (some companies run out of data on their mobile subscriptions).

Test technology before meetings to
ensure functionality.



Remember your **power supply and headset.** A headset allows you to focus on the discussion.

Make sure your VPN and other security measures are up-to-date for a **secure workspace** – be observant of phishing attempts.



Save files to the **cloud / shared drives**, so you can coauthor and share with your group.

Share links rather than attachments in email to make sure everyone is using the latest version of a document



As always, **respect time zone differences and business hours**

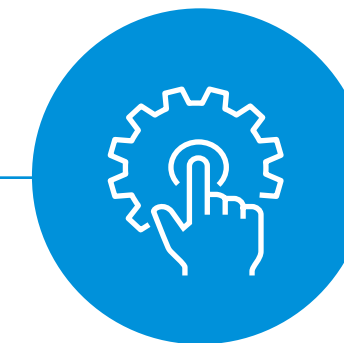
Staying connected as a team



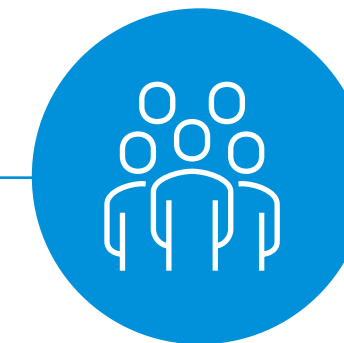
Keep **regular business hours**.



Communicate often – arrange formal digital meetings several times a week, as well as informal talks via call, chat, Skype or WhatsApp.



Use **collaboration tools** (e.g., Teams, Zoom, Jira) and be available on instant messaging.



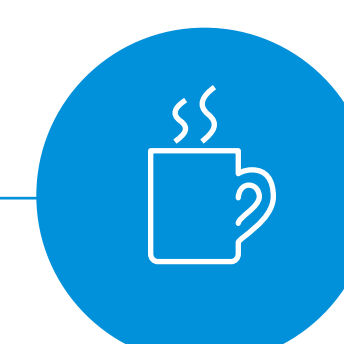
Reinforce a **project mindset**: limit emails, set up virtual coffee break, promote one team spirit.



Agree on how to store and share documents, etc. and how to use collaboration platforms like Microsoft Teams and check that people stick to the agreement!



Agree with your team which technology is your **communication channel** (it allows you to mute notifications of other channels when you need to focus).



Make up for missing hallway talk: arrange informal digital meetings for colleagues to come together without a specific agenda, such as virtual coffee chats or set up group chats.

Staying connected as a team

Our guidelines for productive virtual meetings



- ▶ Be early and welcome everyone



- ▶ Stay focused on the purpose of the meeting



- ▶ Have a clear structure & agenda for your meeting. Be precise about the goal of your meeting.

Add the agenda and relevant documents to your calendar invite



- ▶ Agree how you deal with questions
Appoint a moderator who can actively monitor questions, timing & activities

Use the chat to add your question or idea



- ▶ Mute when listening to avoid unwanted background noise



- ▶ Turn on the cameras – get face time to feel connected.



- ▶ Shake it up! Create exercises, polls, votes to get interaction from attendees. Consider white boarding for brainstorming inputs

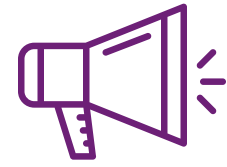


- ▶ End the meeting well – smile and thank each other after a good meeting!



- ▶ Don't forget to record important meetings, so those that are double-booked can watch them later!

Enhancing emotional proximity and wellbeing



► Reach out whenever you need it!



► Have frequent check-ins with people in your team. Increase the frequency of communication (team meetings, company-wide emails).



► Create a space for people to connect on a personal basis.



► Do something fun together – there is a wide array of digital tools to help you: games, quizzes, etc.



► Schedule “work time” and “off time”. Have a routine for lunch, breaks, etc. Keep them!



► Stay healthy: eat, drink (avoid alcohol), get fresh air, move.



► Share articles, learning videos and other material with your team to keep up the personal development.



► Schedule “focused work time” (no e-mail, phone, ... interferences).



► Plan something fun that breaks up your day and gives you energy.



► If you force yourself to smile for ten minutes – warm blood will reach central parts of your brain and you will feel better.

In times of COVID-19, everyone is at home so have an **open discussion** about which timings work best for people with kids.

Tips for leaders



1

Ensure each member of your leadership consistently communicates the **same mantra**, day after day to reinforce the message.

2

Follow a **step-by-step approach**. Reassure employees, assess the situation and take decisions that are centered around the wellbeing of your employees, customers and stakeholders.

3

See what is possible within your role and take responsibility with the collective good in mind for eyes. Make an impact on those areas that are within your reach.

4

Be **present** in (virtual meetings) and **lead by example**.

5

Connect with your teams on **a regular basis**. Listen to what they need right now.

6

Create time and space for people to connect on **a personal basis**. Ask open-ended questions.

7

Now is **not the time to micro-manage**. Agree on clear expectations and trust your team to deliver.

8

Be empathic – you may not know what your team members are going through or how they are impacted by the current state of affairs. Allow people to adapt to this new way of working.

9

This period might be an ideal opportunity to **work on things that are important**, but not urgent: working on your vision, education & training, longer term planning, proactive maintenance, etc.

10

Be a **motivator** and bring **energy** to the table.