10 Tips to Maximize Productivity While Working Remotely

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the stigma associated with working remotely has disappeared. And, as the pandemic continues, working from home is likely to stick around.
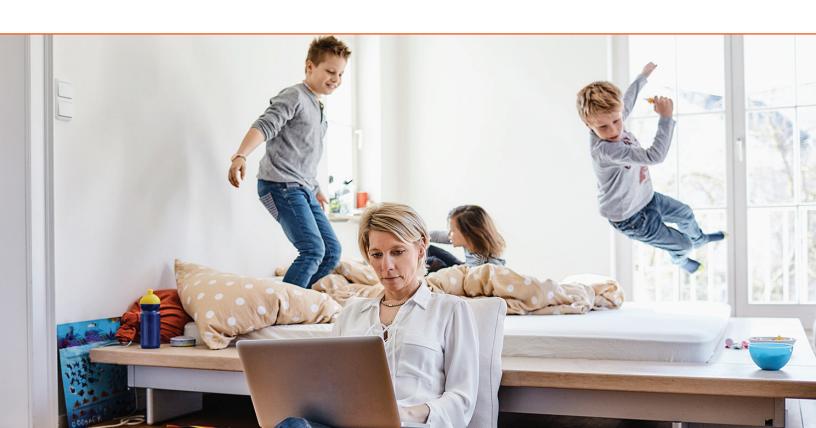
If you haven't already, it's important to assess how you're doing working from home and whether you need to make adjustments. Distractions are all around, regardless of whether you are in the workplace or in the comfort of your home. Both work settings have their own set of productivity killers, and a lot can hinge on an employee's personal ability to avoid distractions.

Common Distractions

Being efficient while working from home can be a challenge. It's up to you to motivate yourself and be just as focused and effective as you would in the workplace. Keep in mind the following common distractions while working from home:

- Roommates, family, friends and pets
- Housework and chores
- Emails, instant messages, phone calls and texts — whether work-related or personal
- Social media and other online browsing
- Entertainment, including television and radio

Distractions and home situations vary, so think about what or who else may be distracting you throughout the workday, and consider how to avoid those distractions during working hours.

Productivity Boosters

Being a productive remote worker comes with responsibility, self-reliance and resourcefulness. Set yourself up for success, and consider these tips to stay focused and efficient while working from home:

1. **Establish a designated workspace.** It might be tempting to work from your couch or bed, but that could impact productivity and the ability to focus. Try to work from a consistent room, desk or chair so you can mentally enter work mode.

2. **Dress like you're at work.** Sticking to a routine and getting ready will trigger your brain that it's time to work, giving you a little energy boost before you sit down.

3. **Plan working hours.** Setting consistent hours keeps you accountable to yourself, your manager and your team. When planning your day, consider doing the highest priority tasks first and tackling the hardest work when you have the most energy.

4. **Set deadlines.** Whether self-imposed or set by others on the team, focus on achieving the deadlines for your tasks. Think of it as a challenge and tackle it.

5. **Don't multitask.** Identify your most important tasks, and address them before the workday is over. Also, be aware of workplace stressors that trigger your time-wasting behaviors.

6. **Manage interruptions.** It's important to set boundaries with kids, pets and other roommates. It's likely easier said than done, but try to encourage them to leave you alone during those designated work hours.

7. **Avoid chores.** It's easy to be tempted by dirty dishes or overflowing baskets of laundry. Save the housework for before or after the workday as switching gears between tasks can lower productivity.

8. **Take care of yourself.** Get enough sleep, and consider dedicating some time for self-care, such as the time when you would otherwise have been commuting to and from the workplace. Start the day with something for yourself and, in turn, set yourself up for success.

9. **Separate work time and personal time.** Try to stick to your workday schedule and log off as planned to prevent burnout. If available, don't forget to take personal days—even if you are just staying at home.

10. **Check in with yourself.** Without being in the workplace, it's crucial to be self-aware. Take note of what you're working on, how it's going and how you're feeling. This exercise may help you identify productivity problems so you can make a change for the better.

Overall, setting clear boundaries with both co-workers and anyone at home will help make the remote workday more focused and productive. If you're feeling burnt out or often distracted while working remotely, talk to your supervisor or manager.