



Staying productive at home

According to a recent Gartner Inc. survey of U.S. human resources departments, nearly 90% of companies have encouraged or required their employees to work from home. This is a new reality for most employees who are now learning how to work outside the office and stay productive and healthy. And, many have to adapt to working with kids who are home from school and daycare.

When all or most of your team is remote, it's important for leaders to provide direction and flexibility, and trust that your employees can still be successful. Leaders who manage remotely need to set clear boundaries with their team:

- Help your team determine availability, such as when they'll be working, how they can be reached and how they'll address challenges, such as child care and WiFi problems.
- Share new and measurable metrics of success with your team.

Communication is also essential for leaders. According to a Harvard study, 46% of remote workers say the best managers check in frequently, are good listeners, show trust and respect, and inquire about work progress without micromanaging. Connection is also important when your team is off-site. If your employees feel disconnected or lonely, their productivity and engagement will decrease.



Working from home provides different challenges around healthy lifestyles and productivity compared to working in an office. Here are some ideas you can share:

- Designate a work space so the job doesn't intrude into others who are home, and so you can concentrate while working.
- Stick to a schedule and try to maintain the same hours you'd log at the office so you don't get overwhelmed with the workload or allow it to seep into your personal downtime.
- Avoid cabin fever. Get outside during the day. After work, enjoy other areas of your home where you don't work.
- Focus on your health. It's easy to let things slide when you're working from home.

Many people working from home also have children there. The added responsibility of caring for or teaching kids can throw productivity off, but there are some ways your employees can minimize the disruption. Share these tips:

- Maintain a routine.
- Be up front with your boss about what's going on at home.
- Be up front with your family about your work needs.
- Set up virtual babysitters.
- Plan activities that don't need supervision.
- Split the home care with your partner if he or she is at home, too.
- Take mini breaks.

Sources: [gartner.com](https://www.gartner.com)*, [facilityexecutive.com](https://www.facilityexecutive.com)*, [forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com)*, [cnbc.com](https://www.cnbc.com)*, [psychologytoday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com)*

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