Top Tips for Working from Home

1. Designate a place to work

This should be a separate space for you to work in where you can focus on tasks without being distracted and where you can set up everything you need for a normal working day.

2. Make sure you have all the tech you need

This includes a reliable internet connection, required hardware and software, access to your company network, any files and importantly, knowledge of how to get IT support. Use online training to guide you to learn new skills where needed. See the FAQs on Remote Working on izzi.

3. Get into a routine

Its important to get up and get started, to take regular breaks including a lunch break, and to finish working and turn off at an appropriate time. No matter how tempting, avoid working in your pyjamas all day. This is likely a big change already so try not to lose all your daily routines at once. When you are done for the day, pack away your work things or leave your work area at the end of the day.

4. Ask for support when needed

This is a challenging time for all of us – and whether we are at work or not your employer can provide support. Speak out when you need assistance, further training or support. Your manager, colleagues and you are part of a team and should be supporting each other, even remotely. Make use of the existing support mechanisms such as the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and new ones that have been introduced.

5. Try and set clear tasks for the day

Set out a list of realistic, achievable tasks to keep you focused.Three major decisions or activities is a good day's work - but keep an eye on ongoing tasks too. You won't always get as much done at home - but you might get loads done. One tip is to have a **WEB** list: W – what you **want** to achieve, E – what you **expect** to achieve and B – what you had **better** achieve that day. This helps prioritise.

6. Balance work with looking after others

If you are home-schooling and/or looking after children or family members whilst trying to work, have a conversation with youtr manager about those realities. Try and set up a routine whereby you have distinct times for working and for helping with school time for example. Dividing your attention may leave both things suffering and being there for others offering undivided attention at these uncertain times is very important.

7. Keep up the formal and informal flow of work

It's really important that structured and unstructured connections with work and colleagues carry on whilst people are working remotely or flexibly. Consider having break or lunch buddies to encourage you to take a break or a lunch break - or check in with your team at the end of the day to update on what you've done - work and otherwise that day. Contribute regularly to team chats/group emails so you don't drop off the radar.

8. Take care of yourself

If you have self-care techniques that work for you, try and make sure that you have what you need. You may need to think differently - for example doing exercise workouts from videos instead of attending classes. You may want to consider looking at mindfulness practice or finding ways to help others in your community. Self-compassion, and support for others is going to be very important. See the Looking after your wellbeing page on izzi.

9. See opportunities for growth and development alongside crisis planning

Consider whether there are tasks that you can do if regular business is disrupted e.g. planning and catching up on admin jobs are all possible things that can be done that increase your readiness to resume business as usual later. If you are able, you could support local food banks and connect to volunteering opportunities and community support schemes if appropriate.

10.   Embrace video calling and online meetings

See the calls and virtual meetings page on izzi for guidance on how to do this. Follow-up video chats or calls with a quick note with a summary of the actions to take, or your understanding of the major points to ensure that things are clear. Have a look at this useful video on the BBC website: Seven tips for successful video meetings.

These tips are taken from Looking after your mental health while working during the Coronavirus outbreak on the Mental Health Foundation's website and from Newham's Top Tips: Working Remotely