

Remote Work: A Guide for MMRMA Members

Membership Services

April 2020



Remote employees... the stats:

According to FlexJobs.com:

In 2015, 3.9 million U.S. workers worked remotely.

In 2017, 4.7 million or 3.4% of the U.S. population worked remotely.

Remote workers grew 159% between 2005 and 2017 according to Flex Jobs.

Working remotely is not so common among MMRMA member entities.



So you're new to working remotely?

- It's an adjustment!
- Bumps in the road are normal.
- Communication is critical – over communicate.
- When communicating, it's okay to talk (briefly), about nothing, like sports, or a favorite TV show or the latest movie...just as colleagues do at the proverbial water cooler.
- It is about establishing a proper workspace and an effective work style.
- It's about taking breaks throughout the day to stretch muscles, to re-energize and yes, to get a beverage!
- We have to take care of ourselves too! Physical fitness, mental health, nutritious eating and practicing good ergonomics.
- It's important to know when to turn the lights off!
- For other tips, please visit www.thinkwithgoogle.com/marketing-resources/organizational-culture/work-from-home-tips/



Working remotely – Tips for Success

Communication is critical for remote workers

- Host virtual meetings with managers, and encourage managers to meet virtually with coworkers:
 - Set a regular schedule and use software or apps that will enable several employees to join in a meeting and that enables people to see each other, which can brighten the day! Also consider ways to share working documents, budget preparation, etc. Popular virtual meeting tools include Zoom, Go To Meeting, Skype for Business and WebEx.
 - Create an agenda.
- Track work progress:
 - Routine work
 - Projects
 - Extraordinary or unforeseen tasks
 - Problems in completing assignments (the boss isn't a mind reader)



Tips continued...

Create a dedicated workspace. Encourage employees to consider:

- Space that is free from personal clutter so employees are not daily moving stuff to make room for work materials.
- Ample lighting, computer monitors can create eye strain, natural lighting may lighten an employee's mood.
- Adequate room to set out papers or files, a pen, notepad, and a cup of coffee.
- Practicing good ergonomics. This includes setting the computer monitor at eye level, support for arms, a comfortable chair; see www.ergo-plus.com for more information on ergonomics and creating physically comfortable workspace.
- The couch is probably not the best place for a home office.



And still more tips....

Minimize Distractions

They're here and they're real ... TV, Facebook, Twitter, children, pets, that pile of laundry, the refrigerator. So what can be done?

- Hours. Work during regular business hours. For most, this will be a temporary remote work situation. Keeping regular work hours will help transition back to normal operations.
- TV. It goes without saying that the TV should be turned off during the virtual work day.
- Email. Expect an increase in work correspondence via email. Encourage employees to check it frequently.
- Cell phones. While this will be a secondary and important form of communication, encourage employees to avoid looking at cell phones every 5 minutes (or even every 10 or 15 minutes).
- Home chores. Employees are expected to be working. Suggest that chores be done after work hours.
- Family. Other family members may also be working from home, and kids may be home from school. See if there's a way for everyone to have private space. As for really little ones, encourage employees to focus on their most complex tasks when babies or toddlers are napping or, if possible, when another family member can care for them for awhile.

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In closing

- The Coronavirus/COVID-19 global pandemic is:
 - Unprecedented
 - Scary
 - Worrisome
 - Continuing to evolve
 - The end in sight is not yet known
- Be realistic:
 - Allow employees time to adjust to working remotely.
 - Help employees to set priorities.
 - Advocate for “to do” lists.
 - Keep plugging along to complete daily tasks and assignments.
 - Communicate with other managers and coworkers regularly.



Remember: this is temporary, and we're all in it together.

The MMRMA team is working remotely to serve members. Please reach out to us if you have questions or need assistance. Call or email your contact(s) on the MMRMA team or find us here:

734-513-0300

www.mmrma.org



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