



# Best Practices for Remote and Hybrid Workers

Remote work is here to stay. Whether you're working remotely 100% of the time or have a hybrid schedule with some days in the office and some days working from home, you'll want to ensure you're taking steps to make it a beneficial experience – for both you and your employer.

**The following tips can help you create a plan for success.**



## 1 - Be sure you understand the parameters of your work environment

To be successful as a remote worker, you must understand the level of flexibility your manager and employer allow. Be sure to ask questions regarding your employer's policy and don't assume anything.

- Are you allowed to flex your work hours to start earlier or later?
- Where and in which state will you work remotely?
- Are there set days for teleworking for your department or employer?

With a hybrid schedule, you may be asked to come into the office if there is a need on a previously arranged work at home day. Keep a copy of the policy and your signed hybrid or remote work agreement.



## 2 - Be accountable

As a teleworker you need to be accountable for the hours you work both onsite and off-site. Long absences may create distrust and the impression that you aren't working. Be sure to inform your manager if there is a good reason for your absence during certain hours, for example, going to a doctor appointment. It's important to meet with your manager on a regular basis to review your accomplishments and your upcoming tasks. If you are required or scheduled to be in the office on certain days, be there. When on site, plan to collaborate and work with others. Team-based brainstorming and 'white boarding' activities are always best in person. It's important to participate in energizing or fun team building activities when you do come together.



### 3 - Know the company culture

Culture is not a place you go to, but it is knowing your organization's mission, goals, timetable, and deliverables. It is also about knowing the level of formality or informality people practice at work. If you are new to the organization, invest time in learning the culture. It is recommended that you read the monthly, quarterly, and annual reports of the organization. If possible, get to meet the leaders of your organization. Sometimes a 15-minute meeting will help you meet their expectations.



### 4 - Communicate your availability through Outlook or another scheduling system

Set regular hours and schedule your availability during those hours. Most hybrid workers allocate the days they come into the office for their in-person meetings and team building, as well as developing their social capital. This is referred to as a **synchronous** day, which means the day is spent coordinating your work with others. Being in the office is about a **purposeful presence**.

Days at home, without disruptions are best asynchronous days, meaning that you are working mostly on your projects and maximizing your productivity as needed in a quiet environment. It doesn't make sense to conduct a Zoom or Teams meeting from the office if the people you're meeting with are also there. The calendar should indicate both categories of 'async' or 'sync' by the hour, with the caveat that you can be interrupted at home if there is business need by a teammate, manager, or coworker.





## 5 - Create an ergonomic office at home

Your employer's remote work policy should establish ergonomics standards for a home or remote office. At the very least, you need a good chair, a sturdy desk, and a quiet area that will allow you to concentrate and be productive. **Other considerations:**

- Make sure your cords and wires are not a tripping hazard.
- Set up your equipment properly.
- If you live with others, set rules about your office space.
- Consult your ergonomics specialist at work for advice. With today's tools, this can be done virtually.
- Don't allow unprofessional disruptions such as noisy children or dogs to impair your professional image.

## 6 - Define your work hours and make sure there is a beginning and an end to your workday

It is easy to fall into a practice of going from bed to desk, but this is never a good idea. For your own health and wellbeing, it's important to set up a morning routine as you would if you were commuting to the office.

Get coffee, take a short walk, do some morning yoga stretches... anything that will help you feel more awake and ready to focus on your work. During the workday, be sure to take breaks and incorporate movement whenever possible. A sedentary lifestyle is not only harmful to your physical health but your mental health as well.

Remote employees frequently report feeling depressed, especially if they live alone. If this is something you struggle with, talk to your supervisor about working onsite more often.

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**For more remote and hybrid work tips and resources, visit the Twin Cities Telework website at**

**[tctelework.com](https://tctelework.com)**

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