REMOTE MISSION
A Working Revolution

A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO REMOTE WORK

Everything You Need to Know!

REMOTE MISSION

Acclimatising to a new job is never easy, but it can be especially difficult when you are not in a familiar working environment.

Remote work can be very different to the traditional 9-5 working model we are used to and have come to expect. Therefore, for a lot of us, it is uncharted territory.

But congratulations, you have done the hardest part and secured the job!

You may still be feeling a little nervous, but fortunately, **there are several things you can do now to help prepare for your new role.**

We at Remote Mission have compiled a guide for those new to remote work to help them successfully settle into their new roles.

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Before you even start, make sure you have

A Comfortable Working Space.

Make sure this is a quiet space, with good lighting and with room for your computer. Also, consider if it has available power outlets.

It doesn't matter if you don't have your own home office, instead utilise the space you do have. You could use your kitchen table for instance!

If you live with others or work in a shared space, it is a good idea to discuss your schedule and the times you can't be disturbed.

If possible, get yourself a good office chair and try to position your computer at eye level to avoid backache and the tendency to slump.

For video calls you want to be sat with a window or light source in front of you or to the side not directly behind you, otherwise, you risk becoming a dark shadow on the screen.

Most companies should offer you support and send anything you need directly to you before your first day.* If you are using your own persona laptop, make sure your manager is aware of this beforehand.

*__This is something that should be discussed before taking the role in the recruitment process. During this process you will often be asked if you have any questions, this is the prefect time to ask about expenses incurred by office supplies, internet costs, certain computer software etc and how they are expected to be covered.__

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It is important you always check your connection and test your computer speakers, camera and microphone. Do this before your first day and regularly before video meetings to check that all your equipment is working.

Tech problems do happen (and are expected) so it's important to be prepared and stay calm!

Prepare for Your Remote 'Onboarding'.

*the process of introducing a new employee into an organization.

Usually, on your first day, everything you will need to know about your role and learn for your position will be delivered to you via a virtual meeting using a video communication platform such as **Zoom, Microsoft Teams** or **Google Meet**.

If you haven't heard anything from the company ahead of your first day, it might be a good idea to reach out to them and ask what the agenda will be. That way, you can prepare for anything you need to.

Onboarding can be a little overwhelming at the best of times but especially remotely, more so if you are using unfamiliar tech and tools in your new job.

Therefore make sure you read through any documents you're sent and walk yourself through them. If you do find anything you don't understand - don't be afraid to ask for help.

*In these initial meetings, it is a good idea to take notes to help you remember names, log in details and general tips and advice.

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Get to know your colleagues.

In your first week, don't be afraid to reach out to your colleagues.

Email them and ask for a short introductory meeting.

If this is a daunting task, you could try asking your manager to send out an email introducing you to your colleagues and inviting them to set up welcome calls, so you can get to know who you will be working with.

In these first meetings, it is a good idea to ask your colleagues questions. This could be:

What do you do day-to-day?

What projects are you working on?

Is there anything you think I should know about the organisation?

A danger of remote work is isolation and losing those opportunities for face to face engagement to email conversations and instant messenger.

Therefore, it is important that, if you don't already have regular meetings, you make time for video meetings, or **phone calls** if you are less comfortable being on video, with your colleagues to keep yourself feeling engaged and connected.

Learn How Your Team/Colleagues Communicate.

It can be useful to find out which form of communication is best to use with different colleagues.

For example, certain team members may be easily contactable on the company chat platform but tend not to respond to emails as promptly.

Everyone works in different ways.

Picking up on this and also simply asking what form of communication is best for each colleague can help you feel more comfortable with your new team and better understand how they work.

Ask for Help.

Whether you are stuck on a piece of work or are struggling to understand something, don't be afraid to ask for help and advice.

It's far better to learn by asking questions than to waste time trying to figure something out yourself and risk getting it wrong.

It won't make you look like you don't know what you're doing. When starting your first job, contrary to what most of us believe, you're not expected to know it all!

*If you have numerous questions, try to prioritise them, asking the most important question first. You can then keep a running list of non-essential questions to ask another time.

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Understand Expectations.

Since you're not in an office, there will not be the opportunity to pop to your manager's desk to ask a question or grab a colleague as they are walking past.

So it is essential and easier for you in the long term to be proactive in understanding what's required of you in your new role.

Everything should be explained during your onboarding meeting. However, **it's still expected that new employees will have questions and need some extra support!**

During your first few weeks, embrace the extra support you're given and use it to learn!

To help you with this, initially, you should check certain things with your manager/line manager, such as:

- **Which systems you should be using?**

- **What tools you need to be familiar with?**

- **When projects are due?**

A one-to-one video call with your manager should be part of your onboarding, but if it's not, don't be afraid to ask for one! You could also ask for regular scheduled catch-ups, so you can keep up to speed with everything.

*When you start your new job, it is likely your manager or team leader will set up weekly meetings to check how you're getting on. Yet if you find yourself confused at any time before that, don't hesitate to drop them a message or email.

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Looking After Yourself

Remote workers have different needs from those who work in traditional working environments. Therefore as a remote worker, you must be aware of the difficulties you may struggle with and how you can combat them.

Set Boundaries

When working from home remotely, it can be hard to separate your work life and home life, particularly if you have new tools and skills to learn or work to catch up on. However, **maintaining a healthy work-life balance is what will ensure you succeed.**

To help you with this,

- Think of your workspace as 'the office' - separate from the rest of your home.

- If you work 8 hours a day, try to stick to this.

- Once you've finished work, switch off your computer and mute your notification until the morning.

Remember that getting into the habit of overworking is easy and very common, but it can negatively impact your health and personal relationships.

Breaking an unhealthy working habit can be more challenging than first thought. So when starting your new job, be especially aware of this. **Creating and sticking to a sustainable and productive routine here will help.**

You should also be aware of your colleague's boundaries. Don't send work emails or messages in the middle of the night and don't bombard your colleagues with questions 24/7. **Remember to be respectful and considerate.**
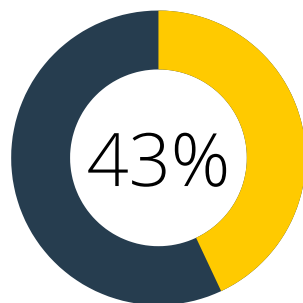
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Get outside and get moving

Try and get some fresh air each day. Going for a walk is perfect here as it also gives you the opportunity to stretch your legs and move your body.

Studies* show that walking can help reduce anxiety and tension and well as increase creativity and energy levels. Walking is also great for your overall health and wellbeing.

43%

*Of over 1,000 men and women those who walked at least 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week, had 43% fewer sick days than those who exercised once a week or less.

Being outside is equally important and beneficial as it can boost your vitamin D levels, increase your mood and overall brain function.

It can also allow you to feel more at one with your local community, which can be vital when you work remotely as feelings of isolation and loneliness are common.

Take Regular breaks

As much as you want to make a good impression, **don't spend the first few weeks of your new job glued to your computer,** as this will only encourage stress, tiredness and potential burnout.*

*Recent research has shown that those who keep their cameras on during meetings **feel more tired and drained at the end of the day.**

The study conducted by Professor Allison Gabriel McClelland also shows the effects are often stronger for women and newer employees due to 'self-presentation pressure.'

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Women and newer employees are more aware and conscious of their presentation and how they are coming across on camera.

Therefore it is suggested turning cameras off during virtual meetings could reduce fatigue.

Speak to your employers about the requirements of having your camera on. Most employers will currently require you to have your camera on in meetings - but it is still worth making your case.

However, there are ways you can reduce your time on camera. For example,

- **Turn** less important video calls/meetings into phone calls.

- **Engage** with colleagues on messenger (e.g. slack) rather than having a video call.

It's important to pause, take regular breaks throughout your working day.

You wouldn't be expected to sit at your desk for the whole day if you were in an office. It's okay to get up and take a coffee/tea break. Especially as regular breaks help you stay more productive, and less distracted during the day.
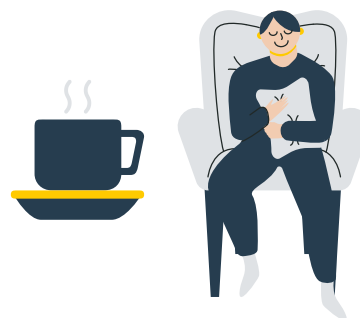
If possible, keep your phone away from you during your working day and limit the time you allow yourself to scroll mindlessly through social media and various apps.

Try to avoid using screens all together in your breaks and let this be a screen free time!

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Don't forget!

Remote work is new to you, so don't worry if it takes you a while to get into the swing of things!

Give yourself time to build relationships with your colleagues, and most importantly, be patient with yourself and your co-workers.

Finally remember, **Remote Work is new for many people, and it takes time to adjust.**

Here are Some Links to Some Useful Resources to Further Help You on Your Remote Work Journey:

https://www.remotemission.com/blog/8-of-the-best-tech-tools-for-working-remotely

https://www.remotemission.com/blog/4-ways-to-stay-sane-and-happy-as-a-remote-worker

https://www.remotemission.com/blog/4-ways-to-stay-sane-and-happy-as-a-remote-worker

https://www.digitalnomadsoul.com/remote-work-apps/

https://slack.com/intl/en-gb/blog/collaboration/ultimate-guide-remote-meetings

https://eachother.org.uk/can-your-employer-cut-your-pay-for-working-remotely/