Employee Assistance Program

Tips for the New Teleworker

Many circumstances may cause an entire organization or individual to transition to a work-from-home setting. Some may welcome working from home while others may not. Working remotely requires you to pace yourself, have self-discipline and manage your time well. Even if you are already well organized, disciplined, and flexible, this transition requires all of us to make some adjustments.

Here are some habits that can optimize your success in working remotely:

- **Maintain Your Work Day Routine** - Even if working from your home, it is key to maintain your preparation for work routine. Wake up as scheduled, get dressed, eat breakfast, brush your teeth, etc. All of these routines help prepare you for a productive day and put you in a professional mindset. Keep a consistent work schedule that mirror your traditional one. Create a list of realistic goals and objectives you want to accomplish for the day and monitor your progress towards your target completion dates. Ensure you allot break times and set an end time.

- **Create a Dedicated Workspace** – Even if you do not have a dedicated office, find a quiet space away from distractions that you only use for work. Take note of what distractions are in your work environment and eliminate them. Doing this will help you stay focused and productive during work hours. Try to keep your work-life and home-life separate. It would be best not to make the couch, TV room, or your bed your dedicated workspace. The rules of office ergonomics apply to your home office setting as well.

- **Prioritize Tasks** – What tasks are urgent and/or important to your success or the success of your organization? Develop a plan for the day identifying which tasks need to be completed. Create a reward system for when specific projects or tasks are completed. Rewards could be a walk, stretch or phone call with a friend or coworker.

- **Set Clear Work Boundaries** – Setting up a dedicated workspace and having a clear daily work schedule will aid in setting clear work boundaries. Even though you are home, family and friends need to understand you have to be productive, meet deadlines, and maintain your job responsibilities. It is okay to ignore non-emergent calls or other personal requests from family and friends during your scheduled workday.

- **Optimize Communication and Collaboration** – Working remotely can seem isolating. To reduce the feelings of isolation, communicate frequently with management, your work team, and colleagues. Take advantage of technology available to you such as email, video conferencing, and other virtual communication methods. Screen sharing and video-conferencing are great resources to ensure your team are all visualizing the same information and capable of providing immediate feedback.

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