

JULY/AUGUST 2021

Remote Work Newsletter

Maximizing Your Productivity While Working Remotely

If you haven't already, it's important to assess how you're doing working from home and to make adjustments as needed. Distractions are all around, especially when you're working from the comfort of your home.

Any workspace has productivity killers, and a lot can hinge on your ability to avoid distractions. In a remote setting, it's up to you to be just as motivated and focused as you would be in the on-site workplace.

Beware of these common at-home distractions:

- **Roommates, family, friends and pets**
- **Housework and chores**
- **Emails, instant messages, phone calls and texts**
- **Social media and other online browsing**
- **Entertainment, including television and radio**

Being a productive remote worker comes with responsibility, self-reliance and resourcefulness. Set yourself up for success with the following 10 tips:

1. **Establish a designated workspace** so you can mentally enter work mode.

2. **Dress like you're at work** to help inform your brain that it's time to work.
3. **Plan your working hours** and tackle the hardest work when you have the most energy.
4. **Set deadlines** and focus on achieving them.
5. **Avoid multitasking** and be aware of workspace stressors that trigger time-wasting behavior.
6. **Manage interruptions** by setting boundaries with kids, pets and roommates.
7. **Avoid chores** and save housework for before or after the workday.
8. **Take care of yourself** and start the day with something you find rewarding.
9. **Separate work and personal time** by sticking to your workday schedule and logging off as planned.
10. **Check in with yourself** and note how you're feeling.

Overall, setting clear boundaries with both co-workers and anyone at home will help make the remote workday more productive. If you're feeling burnt out or often distracted, talk to your supervisor or manager about how they can help.

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Managing Work-from-Home (WFH) Paranoia

The shift to remote work has almost entirely eliminated the social aspects of the on-site workplace, which makes it difficult for many employees to properly communicate with co-workers and managers. As a result, paranoia is common while working remotely.

Paranoia, itself, is a state of distrust, uncertainty or fear in which someone misinterprets an ambiguous situation in a negative way and feels some type of persecution. For example, paranoia while working remotely can be a result of misinterpreting a comment or action from a peer or superior.

WFH paranoia may be caused by a variety of factors, but it's likely rooted in communication. Such situations include misinterpreted feedback, a lack of clarity in communication, or delays in email and chat responses.

Although people might deal with paranoia in different ways, there are some tactics that might help you alleviate it. Here are healthy ways to cope with WFH paranoia:

- **Eliminate the personal aspect.** Try to view actions or comments as constructive and assume they are for the betterment of the

workplace, not for your personal detriment.

- **Write down your anxieties.** At the end of the workday, it is essential to step away from work tasks and focus on yourself and your mental health. As such, write down your anxieties throughout the day, do what you can to manage them and throw them in the trash at the end of the day.
- **Get ample rest.** Make sure you're getting proper sleep so you can complete your daily tasks effectively and energetically.
- **Make expectations known.** If you expect an email response or feedback within a certain amount of time, clearly communicate that. Just ensure it's an adequate amount of time for others as they navigate their own schedules.
- **Talk it out.** If you're feeling paranoid, talk about it with a close friend, family member or loved one so you can get it off your chest and out of your mind.

Taking care of WFH paranoia can be difficult, so openly discuss your concerns with your manager if you have them. If it's still tough to manage your paranoia, consider seeking help from a mental health professional.

