

PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

April/May 2020

**How to stay
productive
while working
from home**

**Job searching
tips during
COVID-19**

**How technology
can help you
survive lockdown**

**How workers are adapting
their homes into offices**

**Best ways
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**Sunday night
anxiety: tips for
ensuring a good
night's sleep**

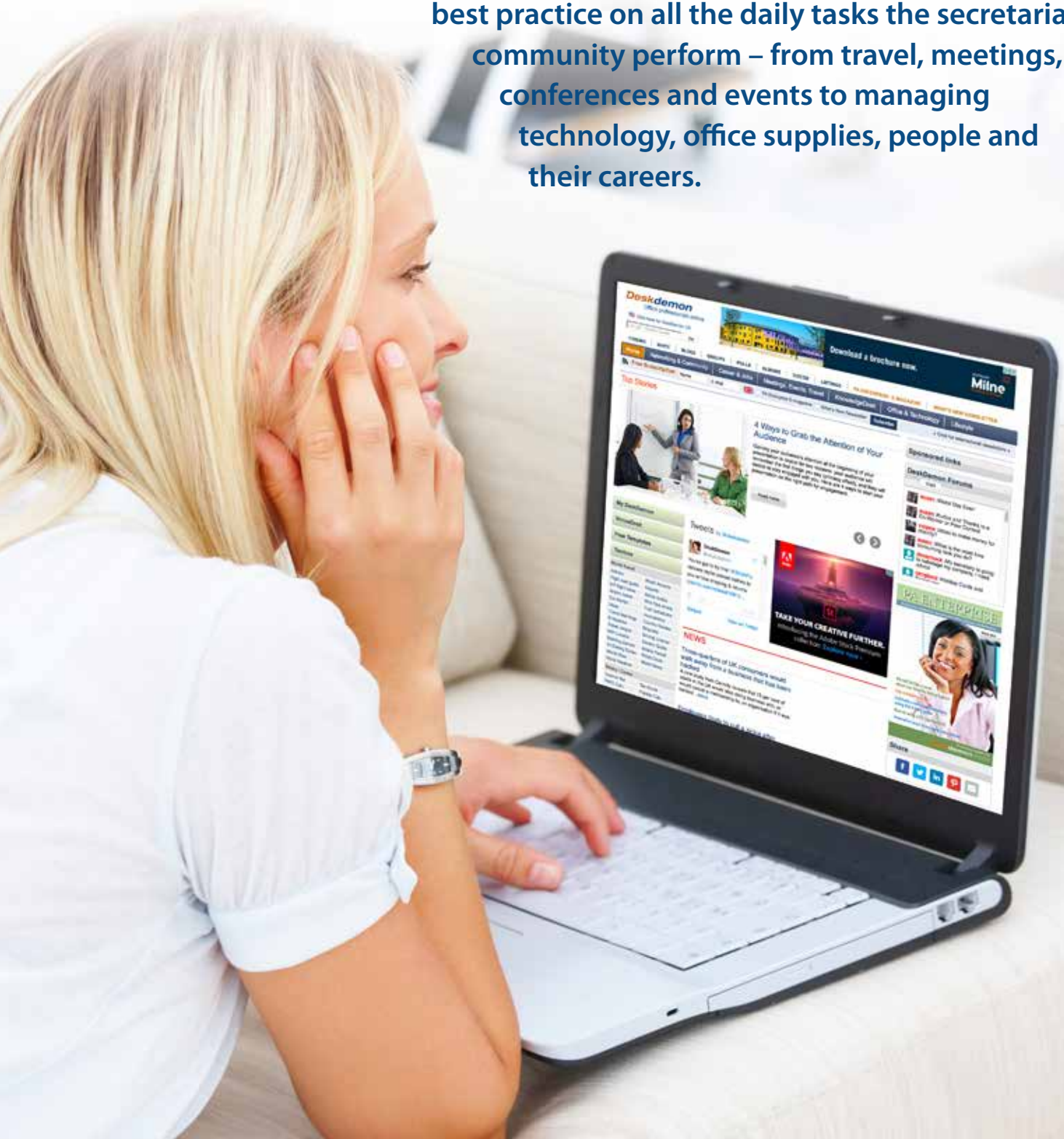


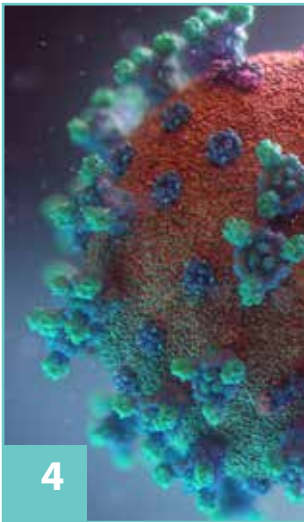
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As an office worker, where do you go for information, advice, tutorials, vital tools, training and relaxation?

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PA ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE

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The most common Coronavirus Scams and how to protect yourself

Amid the fear and confusion of the current Coronavirus pandemic, scammers are out taking full advantage of scared and vulnerable people. Over £800,000 has been lost to Coronavirus scams since February 2020, according to reports made to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau. The NCSC has also removed over 2,000 online scams related to COVID-19 in the last month.

In a time where most of us are heavily relying on technology to work or to stay in contact with family and friends, scammers are using this to their advantage and cyber security is more important than ever. Most of these scams are online and are coming in the form of phishing emails, malicious social media adverts, fake online sellers and hacking of video conferencing websites.

This article will outline the details of some of the Coronavirus scams that have been reported so far so you can keep your money safe.

Phishing Emails

You've probably received many emails related to COVID-19 from businesses, your children's school, your employer and other well-known companies. This makes it even easier for phishing emails to slip through the net.

'Names of patients revealed'

In this phishing attempt, scammers are posing as representatives from the World Health Organisation (WHO) or the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and offering to release names of those infected with COVID-19 in your area in exchange for payment. They may

ask you to perform a bank transfer or ask for a payment in Bitcoin or other cryptocurrencies.

The email will contain a link which you are urged to click on so you can make the payment. You will be asked for your bank details as well as personal information such as your name, address and date of birth.

'Get the latest statistics'

This is another phishing email where the scammers pose as The World Health Organisation (WHO) but this time they are offering you up-to-date Coronavirus statistics and all you have to do is follow a link. However, the link will infect your device with malicious malware of viruses that could lock you out of your computer, take control of your computer, or access your personal and financial details in order to commit identity theft.

'Coronavirus safety measures'

Scammers are sending out phishing emails where they're offering medical advice and various 'safety measures' you can take in order to protect yourself from Coronavirus. Again, they ask you to follow a link or to download a PDF file which will infect your device with viruses or malware.

SCAM

ALERT

HMRC tax refund'

Some scammers are posing as HMRC and saying that tax refunds are part of the government's action plan to help people cope with income shortages amid the crisis. This is not part of the government's plan and HMRC will never, under any circumstances, contact you via email, text or phone call to offer you a tax refund. This is an attempt to steal your personal information and bank details.

'Donate to the cause'

This scam involves fake donation pages set up by scammers. You will be urged to click on a link in the email which will take you to a fake website where you'll be asked to make a donation to help find a cure to the Coronavirus. This website has actually been set up to steal your money as well as capture your personal information and bank

details. There has only been one fund set by The World Health Organisation and that can be found on their official website – they will not email you asking for donations.

How to avoid Coronavirus phishing scams

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) have stated on their website that they will never ask for your personal details or password via email, they will never send email attachments that you didn't ask for and they will never ask you to go on to a website outside of www.who.int. WHO say that you can verify whether a form of communication is legitimate by contacting them directly using the contact details on their website.
- Verify the sender by checking their email

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CORONAVIRUS

address. If they're claiming to be from WHO and the email address ends in anything other than '@who.int', it is a scam so do not click on any links in the email.

- Never give personal information to someone you don't know, or to someone you haven't initiated the contact with. Use some common sense and decide whether it's an appropriate reason for this person to be asking for your details. You shouldn't have to give anything to access public information.
- If you see a scam, report it. This is essential in helping you and others.

Video Conferencing Scams

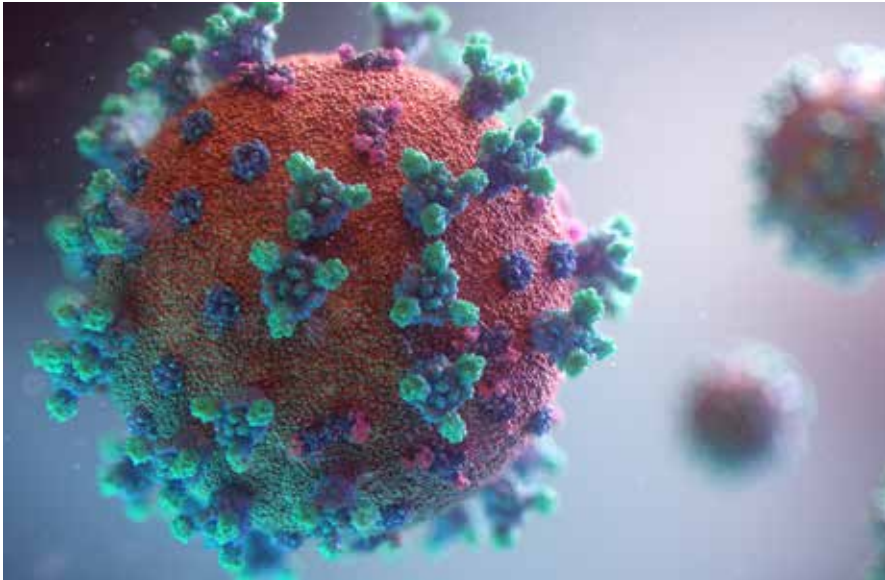
Many people are taking to video-conferencing in order to work from home or to stay in touch with family friends during the UK lockdown. And some are doing this for the first time, so it's very important to be aware of how to stay safe.

Scammers are creating their own fake versions of well-known apps and websites in order to steal peoples' personal and banking information. They are also hacking into public video calls in order to

try and obtain sensitive data about individuals.

How to avoid Coronavirus video conferencing scams

- Make sure you only download apps and software from trusted sources like your app store or from the provider's official website. Never click on links which have been sent to you in the form of unsolicited emails, SMS messages or on social media messaging platforms or adverts,
- Use a strong and unique password so scammers who are trying to hack into your account can't guess it easily or find it out from your social media profiles. You should also set up two-factor authentication if this is an option as it adds an extra layer of security and stops people from being able to access your account even if they know your password.
- Do not make your calls public meaning anyone can join. Only connect with your colleagues, friends, or family directly from their information in your address book. Some video conferencing services allow you to set up a



password which people must enter before they can join the call which adds an extra layer of security. Never share this password publicly.

Fake Social Media Adverts

A lot of online scammers are taking to social media to post malicious adverts. Most of these promote miracle cures and treatments for the Coronavirus and try to create a sense of urgency by saying things like 'Buy now, very limited stock'.

There are two possible bad outcomes for clicking on a malicious advert. Number one, it could download viruses and malware onto your device or, number two, they may allow you to purchase one of these fake products, but nothing will turn up and the fraudsters disappear with your money and personal details.

Avoid anything on social media that advertises things like this and is clearly trying to profit out of the crisis. Only go to trusted sources like the NHS or government websites for information.

In-person Scams

Offer to do shopping

Recent reports have revealed that some particularly nasty fraudsters are attempting to steal money from elderly and vulnerable people by offering to do their shopping for them. These criminals are posting on social media community pages offering anyone who can't get themselves

to the shops to go for them. They ask for the cash upfront in order to pay for the shopping but disappear with the money and never return. They will usually post the messages on social media under a fake name so they can't be traced or arrested.

If you are in a vulnerable position and you are having to stay at home in isolation, only trust people you know - neighbours, friends, and family – and ask them for help. Don't turn to somebody you don't know. Some people do genuinely want to help and will offer genuine services like this, but it's not worth the risk.

Door-to-door testing

Some scammers have been knocking on people's doors claiming to be from the NHS and offering Coronavirus tests for a small fee. These tests are not real, and the scammers are targeting vulnerable and elderly people. You should call the police if someone knocks on your door and offers you a COVID-19 test.

What to do if you have fallen victim to a Coronavirus scam

The NCSC and the City of London Police have recently launched a new suspicious email reporting service which can be used if you receive anything that looks fraudulent. You must forward any dubious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk so the NCSC can look into it and remove any fraudulent websites. More information about this can be found on the NCSC website.

If you have lost money because of a Coronavirus scam, you must report it to your bank and to Action Fraud UK.

How technology can help you survive lockdown

The huge adjustments we've had to make to stay at home to help limit the spread of coronavirus are necessary, but are also having a detrimental affect on our physical and mental health. Spending large amounts of time indoors, working from home, sitting for long periods and general isolation can quickly start to take their toll.

By Antony Leather

I've been working from home for eight years and know all about these issues and thankfully I have a few tips to share to help your time in lockdown takes less of a toll and technology is at the heart of all of them

Keep active, keep stretching

This is the single most important piece of advice I can give and everyone should be getting out for half an hour a day where possible. As soon as you cut out that morning commute, you'll be cutting the calories you burn eat day, potentially leading to noticeable weight gain over several months. I can highly recommend removing those snacks and cookies from the house too. You'll also be less fit, but there's a more sinister issue, which will eventually lead to back pain. In fact, there are plenty of reports of increases in back pain already and the vast majority of these will be down to inactivity. Anyone that's switched to working from home or is not working is particularly vulnerable.

The problem stems from your muscles and how they can shorten - especially your legs - and

can become tense if you're sitting all day and not doing much exercise. This can lead to an increased risk of back pain and back injury as well as stiffness, especially in the lower back and pelvic region - something I know all about and it can be incredibly painful and make your life miserable. Some simple stretches done every day can help to prevent it.

I found the best recourse for this, as with nearly everything else, was YouTube and following some simple stretches from Pilates teachers such as London-based Michelle Lane helped enormously in preventing back pain and my advice is to run through videos like hers (see below) several times a week, or even just doing ten minutes every day.

Add them to your mobile device's bookmarks or smart TV and get into the habit of doing it every morning and if you have time, the evening too. Many local instructors are doing online courses now as they can't offer the usual group and private classes in person, so their YouTube channels and online classes are a great replacement for now.



Depending on where you live, there may be lockdown rules that prevent outdoor exercise and if you live in an apartment, getting enough exercise can be difficult, especially if you have no

equipment and relied on gym visits. However, there are plenty of videos on YouTube that offer fat-burning alternatives to stretching that you can do from the comfort of home so they're worth checking out and doing regularly too.



Building muscle at home can be tricky with limited space and tools and press ups can get tiresome, plus there are lots of areas of the body that really do benefit from those gym weights. A fantastic tool that can provide some resistance and takes up very little space is a sand bag. These can be found with handles and in various weight amounts depending on your lifting ability, but they're flexible enough to offer a compact alternative to a range of weights. You'll want to get online as most fitness-related stores will be closed and check out Amazon, eBay and any local online fitness stores - these have proven very popular but there are some still available.

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Get ergonomic

If you've just started working from home, then chances are your new 9-5 desk isn't set up for long term use and can quickly make it very unpleasant to use for long periods. If you're using a laptop and not a height-adjustable PC monitor, then you're going to find you have a very stiff neck after just a few hours too.

If you don't have a fully adjustable chair, you can use cushions to raise your body so your legs make right angles with your body and floor. You should also add support for your lumbar area - the small of your back, to prevent lower back pain.

I can highly recommend a laptop riser too. I'm never without one when I work from hotels on trips. These can lift your laptop up so that it sits





more in line with your eyes. This will reduce neck strain from tilting your head down and can improve the airflow to your laptop too, making it less likely to sit and whine all day. They're cheap, work with all laptop sizes, readily available from popular online stores and the one above folds down so it can fit in a rucksack too.

Stay in touch

Working from home or self-isolating can take its toll mentally too. Lack of interaction with other people goes against what a lot of us are used to. It's amazing what a quick trip to my local coffee shop for a few hours used to do for my own mental health and it's something I tried to do several times a week before those shops closed recently.

If you are able to get outside for exercise, this is a great way to avoid the same four walls and feel like you're still in touch with the outside world. Clearly, mingling and chatting with others isn't possible, but even the odd smile or greeting can help from passers-by. If you have friends in the same situation, apps such as Strava can help keep

in touch and follow each other's walks, runs and bike rides.

Try to have daily calls with people, or even better, make use of this wonderful thing called the Internet and do video calls using Skype, Whatsapp, Zoom or Facebook. It's important to not go too long without chatting to people, but even if you're isolating with friends or family, it can still help to see different faces occasionally and a different dynamic to conversations. Even if you dabble in online gaming occasionally, dust off that console, headset or laptop, get online and start chatting. There are thousands of games out there that can connect you with other people too. Even if you just have a PC or laptop, check out the Steam store. There are lots of free and paid-for games that help pass the time.

Antony Leather is a freelance technology journalist covering the latest tech and all things PC hardware-related. You can follow him on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

How to stay productive while working from home

The coronavirus pandemic has brought on a range of government restrictions and guidelines to help keep people safe. One of them is only going to work if you absolutely have to. As a result, many companies have implemented voluntary or mandatory working from home policies; which means many workers are dealing with an unusual challenge – a sudden (and extended) shift from office life to home life. To help you maintain productivity during COVID-19, here are our top tips on how to stay productive while working from home





Recreate your commute

OK, so we're not suggesting you literally commute to work and back. That would be counterproductive, not to mention downright dangerous during the current pandemic.

However, your commute does more than get you from A to B. It also mentally prepares you for the day. To make sure you're getting the same level of preparedness at home, it's a good idea to carve out an equivalent routine that'll help ease you into your workday.

Outdoor activity may be a no-go right now, but that doesn't mean you can't carry out exercise at home that emulates your walk to work.

Other common commuting activities to incorporate could include listening to music, watching Netflix, reading, taking a free course, or if you're extra organised, writing a to-do-list for the day. Whatever you used to do on your commute, set aside an hour to do it while you work from home.

The same goes for your would-be journey home. Going straight from work-based tasks to cooking dinner or doing chores is a big leap – and gives you no time to switch off from work and unwind.

If you're not careful, you'll end up burning your lasagne because you're still busy wondering whether Tim from Accounts has replied to your email. No one wants that.

Establish boundaries

When you're working from home, it can be all too easy to blur the lines between your work life and your personal life.

Before you know it, they've blended into one; you're working on spreadsheets, on a conference call, cleaning the kitchen, and feeding the dog all at the same time. Seems impossible, right? That's because it is.

Routine is an important part of work. And it doesn't become any less important because you're working from home. That coffee you make at 10am every day in the office? Do it at home. The lunch you take at 1pm? Put it in your calendar. That task you unconsciously do while chatting to your colleague on a Monday morning? Keep doing it.

Creating a routine will not only allow you to take breaks (and avoid inevitable burnout),

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it'll also allow you to uphold the same level of productivity that you had at work. If working from home is a brand new experience for you, this could also be a great way to maintain some normality.

And at the end of the day? You actually go home (metaphorically). As tempting as it can be to lose track of time and keep working over your office hours, doing this in excess could have a negative impact on your mental health, not to mention

the quality of your work.

So work set office hours (whatever they may be for you), have regular breaks, and switch off at the end of the day. Your productivity will thank you.

Limit distractions

'I am so ready to have a productive work day – just after I watch the rest of this TV show. Oh look, that's a nice pigeon outside. I wonder if I could

have a pet pigeon. I'm hungry. I should clean. Time to bake some cookies. Wait, what was I doing again?'

Sound familiar? If you're easily distracted (or just a human), working from home without getting sucked into everything around you can be a tricky task.

After all, you're used to home being a haven for free time and relaxation – not for work time. The challenge now is to distinguish between the two, and switch off from one while you're doing the other. And the key is just that. Switch. Off.

No matter how good you are at multitasking, you're not going to get your best work done when you're trying to focus on Whatsapp, the TV, the news, and the pigeon outside all at once. When it comes to maximising productivity, the first step is to identify your triggers – then do what you can do to minimise them.

For example, if you're likely to get distracted by a messy living room, make sure you clean before you start work. If your phone is what keeps you from living your best work life, mute it. And if you're often overcome with the urge to cook, surround yourself with pre-prepared food.

Stay on the grid

Working from home can make you feel isolated. It can also take some getting used to.

That's why it's absolutely vital to stay connected with your colleagues. Everything from one-on-one video calls and group conferences, to phone calls, emails, and IM chatting, will allow you to stay in touch with the people you work with remotely in the most in-person way possible.

And it doesn't have to just be about work.

Whilst keeping in touch with your manager and colleagues about your tasks, duties, and accomplishments will help you to stay motivated, it's not the only reason to communicate.

It's also a good idea to emulate those 'water cooler' chats that you'd usually have in the office.

Yep, small talk is important. So set up video calls to catch up on your weekends, arrange virtual pizza parties at lunch time, or even organise Friday night beers over video chat. It's basically like the pub, just with less people and cheaper beer (silver linings).

Without these regular interactions that you'd usually get on a daily basis in person, your morale is likely to drop over time – with your overall productivity taking a hit too.

Focus on self-care

COVID-19 is affecting all aspects of the world – meaning you're probably in a constant state of worry about your family, friends, and your job, all on top of whether you'll ever be able to buy toilet paper again.

It's normal for what's going on around you to affect your mood. But this could also have a knock-on effect on your productivity.

That's why it's important to avoid getting so wrapped up in the news or stressed about your workload that you forget to take care of yourself. Self-care looks different for everyone, but the most important thing is that you pay attention to the signs, and do what makes you happy.

After all, the drastic switch from office life to working from home life can make you forget about the things you used to do to keep sane and healthy; you know, like eat, sleep, and exercise. And we're not just talking about frozen pizzas and copious amounts of coffee.

We're talking about lots of water, three solid meals a day, and, most importantly – fruit and vegetables. You know the drill.

Additionally, reminding yourself of what's good in the world, or even just spending some time (outside of work hours) on your hobbies – will all help to maintain a positive mindset. There are also a number of wellbeing courses on offer, that are designed to boost your mood.

And if you have an off day? Don't beat yourself up. Rest, reset, and try again tomorrow.

How workers are adapting their homes into offices



According to the results of a recent survey conducted by OnePoll on behalf of Citrix Systems, work has a completely new look as employees around the world adapt to the realities of working from home. Beds have become desks, bathrooms serve as conference rooms, kids and pets crash virtual meetings and cameras thought to be off capture awkward moments and sounds. Yet, workers remain as, if not more, productive and engaged.

With their daily commutes reduced from hours to minutes, the majority of the 2,000 US workers who participated in the OnePoll research – comprised of office workers currently working from home due to the Coronavirus outbreak – are adapting their daily routines. While 24% get up at the same time as they did when commuting to an office, the vast majority say they are working around a new clock:

- 25% sleep in a little more
- 22% sleep until the last possible moment they need to be online

They've also adjusted their personal routines and spend less time getting ready for work:

- 34% shower every day
- 26% continue to do hair/makeup/other grooming
- 15% shave less

And 25% of respondents say they can focus and get work done more quickly as a result.

Few employees were ready for the abrupt shift to remote work that the coronavirus pandemic has forced. And while 82% of those who participated in the OnePoll survey said their companies were "completely" or "fairly ready" and had the technology and infrastructure in place to enable it on short notice, they cited a number of issues that make working from home tough:

- Strict security protocols and lack of single sign-on, requiring multiple passwords and two-factor authentication to access apps (33%)
- Slow home broadband/WiFi (33%)
- Lack of access to all the apps needed to get

work done (23%)

- Slow Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection (16%)

Home comforts

When it comes to remote work, technology is only a piece of the work-from-home puzzle. And the OnePoll data shows employees are getting creative in doing so, as most are sharing space with others who have also been forced to work or learn from home, including:

- Partners (64%)
- Infants aged two and under (28%)
- Young children aged 3 to 12 (56%)
- Teenagers (13-17) (41%)
- Adult children (18 and over) (22%)
- Parents (23%)
- In-laws (19%)
- Elderly relatives (15%)
- Roommates (15%)

In addition, 14% of office workers reported temporarily working from their second/vacation home, 13% at their parents' or in laws' house and five% are even sheltering in a hotel.

To accommodate the schedules of their new office-mates and minimise distractions, respondents to the OnePoll measure said they have taken calls in unusual places:

- Their bedroom (33%) or their child's room (25%)
- Bathroom (29%)

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- Garage (24%)
- Basement (23%)
- Closet (17%)
- Attic (15%)
- Outside (14%)

But this hasn't prevented interruptions. Of those polled who said their children and pets have made appearances on video calls:

- Children (24%)
- Pets (13%)
- Both children and pets (29%)

Video life

The widespread use of online meetings can also lead to some awkward moments. Roughly 44% of workers have signed on to video meetings and not realized their cameras were on, only to be caught:

- Doing chores – cleaning, folding laundry, emptying the dishwasher, etc. (44%)
- In the bathroom (41%)
- Cooking (40%)
- Working out (38%)
- Eating (37%)
- Lying in bed or on the couch (33%)

Many have also experienced embarrassing moments thinking they were on mute when their microphones were actually on and they could be heard:

- Making awkward noises (41%)
- Talking about someone on the call (37%)
- Talking to someone else in the room with them (28%)

What does working from home look like?

- 29% of those polled wear slippers or no shoes
- 28% get dressed in the same attire they would wear to the office
- 25% wear sweatpants or pyjamas
- 25% get half-dressed so they can “look nice on video conferences”
- 24% wear workout clothes

And will it persist once the pandemic subsides?

- 37% of employees surveyed think their organisations will be more relaxed about working from home and 32% say they plan to do so more often
- 33% are eager to return to the office
- 28% indicated they will actively look for a new job that allows them to permanently work remote

Job searching tips during COVID-19

Has COVID-19 turned your job search upside down? You're certainly not alone. These unprecedented times have affected employers and professionals across the nation. In fact, many businesses have had to adapt to operating remotely; and some have had to close altogether.

As a result of this, some employers have temporarily slowed down their hiring efforts; while others have had to learn to conduct their recruitment strategy digitally, to abide by social distancing rules. But just because COVID-19 presents some challenges to your job search, you shouldn't give up.

To help you through these uncertain times, here are six top tips for job searching during the coronavirus outbreak.

Attend virtual events

Just because it's no longer possible to attend events in person, it doesn't mean they aren't taking place. Several providers have now taken their careers fairs online to provide a virtual experience for job hunters.

For example, Talent Fest 2020 and STEM Women, both have virtual events coming up that enable job hunters to access career advice and opportunities, as well as watch talks from employers and industry leaders.

So, log on to careers sites within your industry and book onto as many fairs, courses and live chats as you can!

Consider a different industry (for now)

If you are unable to find any inspiring roles in your industry, why not consider choosing a different sector for the time being?

Supermarkets, warehouses, farms and care homes

are just a few of the types of organisations that are desperate for workers right now.

This doesn't need to be a permanent career path. Merely a temporary solution which enables you to keep earning money, fill the gap on your CV and show you were willing to take on a new role during the fight against COVID-19.

As well as showing future employers that you've got an incredible work ethic, these roles can also equip you with a stronger set of transferable skills to shout about on your CV, cover letter and during interviews.

Continue to boost your CV

As a result of the ongoing lockdown, it's likely that you've found yourself with more time on your hands than ever before. So why not use this wisely to continue boosting your CV?


Consider taking an online course, learning a new skill set or even starting up a new hobby. The good news is, there are plenty of free or budget-friendly resources out there that you can use.

For example, apps like Duolingo are ideal for learning a new language, while online courses are in abundance across a multitude of sectors. In addition, there are thousands of YouTube tutorials available at the tip of your fingers.

Work on a side hustle

Similarly, with more downtime on your hands, now could be the perfect opportunity to start a side hustle or do some freelance work. This will provide you with both an income and more experience for your future CV; it's a win-win.

By Andrew Fennell, cv-library.co.uk



Sunday night anxiety: 5 tips for ensuring a good night's sleep

We all know that Sunday night anxiety feeling. After a fun-filled weekend at home, the last thing we want to do is go to work the next morning. But, for some, this feeling goes beyond just wishing for one more day off.

By Phil Lawlor cv-library.co.uk

In fact, many Brits suffer from 'the Sunday night fear': a dread for the week ahead that makes you unable to switch off and fall asleep. Sleep deprivation can then lead to a lack of focus and mood swings; this can then affect your performance at work and make your anxiety worse.

There are many factors that can cause Sunday night anxiety; from a lack of job satisfaction, to a difficult work environment. But, it's important to do all you can to ensure you can get the best night's sleep possible.

Below, I'll give you my five expert tips to help you beat 'the Sunday night fear' and get some much-needed rest.

1. Finish on a high note

Let's face it, you're probably eager to get out of work on a Friday evening so you can get home and curl up on the sofa. But, try to avoid leaving tasks unfinished. If there's anything that might cause you worry over the weekend, address it before you leave the office; it'll give you peace of mind.

For the tasks you can't complete just yet, write yourself a reminder and leave it on your desk or computer. Over the weekend, if you remember new tasks to do in the week ahead, write them down in your work diary or on a post-it, then leave it to pick up on Monday.

If you find your thoughts drifting back to the task, tell yourself that there's nothing you can do about it now. You've given yourself a reminder and you'll deal with it once you get back into the office. Don't let it fuel your Sunday night anxiety!

That way, you're not going to spend your whole weekend creating a to-do list in your mind; and you're free to spend time doing what you enjoy.

2. Relax your mind and body

If you find that you're still struggling to take your mind away from work, it can help to do something relaxing just before bed. Reading a book, taking a warm bubble bath or drinking a

mug of soothing herbal tea can all help to clear your mind and relax your body.

Essential oils and pillow sprays with a lavender or chamomile scent are also effective for calming nerves. You could try some relaxing yoga as well; but avoid anything too strenuous. This can only wake your body up more.

3. Develop a routine

One of the best approaches you can take to tackling Sunday night anxiety and improving your sleep health is to develop a routine. That's because your body has its own internal clock, known as the circadian rhythm.

This uses light from the sun, along with some other external factors, to tell your body whether you should be asleep or awake. By waking up and going to bed at the same times each night, you're helping to keep your circadian rhythm in check.

Sure, staying up an hour or two at the weekend won't make much of a difference to your sleep pattern. But, staying up until the early hours can disrupt it for the week ahead. So, try to develop a good routine and stick to it (even on weekends). You might find yourself dropping off a lot easier.

4. Create the perfect environment

Good sleep health relies on more than a proper routine. Everything from the temperature of your room to the sounds you can hear can affect your quality of sleep.

Ideally, your bedroom should be between 16–18°C and free of any light or sound that might keep you awake. Blackout blinds and curtains are great for blocking out light from outside. Plus, you should unplug any chargers or devices that might emit even small amounts of light. If the sound of traffic is keeping you awake, earplugs should help block out the noise.

Although you might be tempted to check your work emails over the weekend, try to stay away from devices at least an hour before bedtime.

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The artificial blue light that your phone screen emits can trick your brain into thinking it's daytime.

Not only will this throw your circadian rhythm out of sync, but you could find it a lot harder to drift off, thus fuelling your Sunday night anxiety.

Of course, your bed is also very important. You want to be comfortable and feel like your mattress is supporting you in all the right places. The firmness of your mattress depends entirely on your preference and sleeping position, but a medium firmness is the most universal.

5. Alter your lifestyle

It's not just your night-time habits that can have an effect on your sleep. Activities you do during the day, like smoking, eating rich foods and drinking alcohol or caffeine, can all cause a lower quality of sleep.

This is because cigarettes and caffeine are stimulants that can keep your brain awake and might even heighten your Sunday night anxiety. Similarly, eating rich foods and drinking alcohol before bed means your body will be working harder to break them down.

So, you should try to avoid nicotine, cut down on

caffeine four to six hours before bedtime and stay away from heavy or rich foods at least an hour before you go to sleep.

Exercising during the day is also great for your sleep health. This is because it can help to wake you up and reduce stress; meaning you're more likely to feel tired at night and ultimately fall asleep quicker.

If you know you're likely to suffer from Sunday night anxiety, try doing a bit of exercise over the weekend to help distract your mind and give you an energy boost.

Don't let Sunday night anxiety hold you back

If there are serious work problems that are causing you anxiety, such as workplace bullying or being overworked, it might help to speak to your boss. Alternatively, you may have no choice but to find a new job in a company where you'll be happy going in each morning.

The tips in this guide should help you ease your Sunday night worries and get a better quality of sleep. But, if you're still finding yourself unable to sleep from overwhelming Sunday night anxiety, book an appointment with your GP to rule out any other cause.

How to manage workers remotely

Remote working is no longer a choice – it's a necessity... This means that managers all over the globe are now being faced with a brand new challenge – managing an entire team remotely. If this marks your first time in a remote working environment, you're probably wondering how to maintain productivity, whilst boosting morale in a tough time. To ensure you and your team remain on track throughout the coronavirus pandemic, here are our top tips on how to manage workers remotely.

Communicate regularly

Working remotely may make you and your colleagues feel isolated.

Not only are you missing the casual interactions you get at the office, you're also having to carry out all your work meetings virtually – which let's face it, isn't quite the same as real life.

That's why maintaining regular communication while working from home is absolutely essential. Whether it's to catch up on their progress, discuss tasks, or simply boost morale and motivation, both you and your colleagues will benefit from daily check-ins – by phone, email, IM, or video call.

It's also a good idea to encourage casual conversations as well as work-based ones, both one-to-one, and as a team. This will help colleagues feel included and involved, and will give them the much-needed contact they are likely lacking in this difficult time.

Scheduling recurring team meetings via video conference, for example, will help the group as a whole to communicate, share, and collaborate effectively. You can also arrange casual chats, group lunches, and even virtual quizzes – all

through video software.

At the very least, you'll all get to see each other's pets via webcam; and that's one way to make a Monday.

Utilise remote working tools

2020 might not be working out well in many ways. But when technology is concerned, it's totally got our backs.

With remote working tools and software available in abundance – whether they're used to share files, update workstreams, or communicate in real-time – remote team management is much easier than it would've been ten or twenty years ago.

OK, you can't talk face-to-face. But what you can do is pretty close.

Communication tools like Slack, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom provide the perfect way to keep in touch in the most human way possible, allowing you to incorporate tone of voice and facial expressions into your conversations.

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You can also organise and share files easily via Google Drive or Dropbox, whilst other useful remote working tools include task organisation software, such as Trello or Jira.

Thanks to these, you can communicate with your colleagues in a more streamlined way – not to mention view, organise, and prioritise your workloads entirely online.

Set realistic expectations

Working from home can be tough for some people, especially if it's their first time doing it. They may feel out of the loop, or that they're lacking the direction they'd usually get daily in an office environment.

Your role is to help combat this, by not only helping them to understand their tasks, duties, and deadlines, but also to make sure they know

why they're doing it.

In addition to giving your colleagues a sense of purpose and accountability, knowledge of how you'll measure success will also help them to produce the best work possible – that's in line with your expectations and creates the best results overall.

And remember: managing expectations applies to you as well. Define the scope, goals, deadlines, and deliverables (both short-term and long-term) for each team member and project, and ascertain where you come in.

Lastly, make sure what you're asking for is actually realistic. Working from home can blur people's working hours, and cause them to work overtime without even realising it. Check that your team is on track by monitoring their progress regularly, making a note of any other

work they may have acquired, and ensuring they have the time needed to complete their tasks.

Put outcomes above activity

Due to COVID-19, it's likely that your entire team (including you) is now working from home for the foreseeable future. This probably gives you a lot less visibility on how they spend their time compared to what you may have had previously.

However, you can't (nor should you) manage every move your team makes.

When it comes down to it, the effectiveness of remote working relies heavily on trust. All you can do is give your colleagues tasks, and be confident that they have the skills and expertise needed to carry them out effectively. You've done all you can – it's up to them now.

This means no nagging. No micromanaging. And no getting too involved.

It also means focusing on measurable outcomes instead of activity or hours worked. Sure, they're there, sitting at their makeshift desk or home office. But are they really there?

After all, the end product is the most important thing, and interfering with the process beforehand will only distract or throw your team off – not to mention make them feel like they aren't trusted to do their job without constant hand-holding.

Nobody wants that.

Acknowledge the circumstances

Let's face it, we're living in unprecedented times.

Everyone who is used to working amongst their team, in an office, is now being forced to work remotely. On top of that, the world is in a constant state

of panic.

Parents now have to juggle childcare and home-schooling alongside their work, those with pets are forced to refrain from inevitable dog-based distractions, and every single one of us has to create a quiet and productive environment to work in; which likely doesn't have all the office comforts we're used to (R.I.P. multiple screens).

Depending on the individual circumstances, this drastic switch in working environments might also mean that standard office hours and routines are a thing of the past.

As a manager, it's your job to be understanding of each individual situation, and help your colleagues devise a flexible timetable that works best for them.

And above all? Acknowledge that things are tough, but remain positive and supportive. Your team will be looking to you for affirmation and assurance during this difficult time, and if you communicate stress or helplessness – you'll only be deflecting those same feelings onto them.

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