A woman with curly hair is sitting at a wooden desk, working on a laptop. She is wearing a white t-shirt. The background shows a home office with shelves containing books and various items. The lighting is bright and natural, suggesting a daytime setting.

# Remote Work Playbook

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Guidelines and best practices  
to set you up for success



## Introduction

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**A**s many people transition to working remotely, we want to offer some best practices and guidelines. Hopefully it will help you and your businesses make this transition as simple as possible. Many of you have families, have never worked from home, and are facing the potential challenges of sick neighbors and relatives. The current situation is unprecedented in modern day, but together, we can rewrite what it means to stay strong and work together.

*For now, we have to isolate ourselves physically, but it is more important than ever that we keep our goals at the forefront of our work days.*

# For Managers

## Brief Introduction

As many of you transition to working remotely for some time, we wanted to set you up for success to lead your team as proactively and smoothly as possible.

Intentionality, clarity, and communication will serve you well when you're having to work remotely. We hope these tips will help you keep up great work and keep commerce running without skipping a beat.

## Content

- How to Transition Meetings to Remote
- Establishing Clear Remote Communication
- Building Trust with your Remote Team
- Encouraging Remote Teamwork
- Building a Successful Remote Culture

## How to Transition Meetings to Remote

The most productive remote meetings follow the same rules as in-person meetings—they **have a clear agenda**. If you are leading the meeting, be prepared with what needs to be



covered and completed. If possible, email an agenda to those involved so you aren't spending the first 20 minutes talking about what needs to be discussed. This will keep everyone on track and on schedule.

A helpful agenda includes:

- Key topics
- Team members to be included
- Responsibilities of each member
- Key documents and files to reference
- Action items, next steps, or deliverables to produce with clear role assignments

With your meeting set up to be productive, it's also important to remember video conference call etiquette:

- Make sure your phone and computer notifications are silenced.
- If you are in an area with background noise, mute yourself until you are ready to talk.
- For those leading the meeting, introduce new faces or invite everyone to introduce themselves.
- Remind everyone not to speak over people as they are trying to talk.
- Give everyone a chance to contribute by asking for their input.

After the meeting, discuss next steps, responsibilities going forward, deliverables needed, follow-up meeting requests, and re-circulate the meeting agenda with any additional notes that were added.

## Establishing Clear Remote Communication

We all know communication matters, but without the chance of popping into someone's office, everyone needs to be clear and thorough in all communication with employees.

*Expectations and clarity are important in all mediums of remote communication.*

If it's an email or message about a new task, over communicate the details, reiterate the expectations and deadlines, and reattach all helpful files, even if they have previously been supplied. **Always avoid assumptions and strive for clarity.** Your team is going to have to communicate more than they would have to in person, and it will be a smooth transition if you model that as their manager.

Establishing the best mediums for communication are also helpful. If your team knows when it's best to email, call, or set up a meeting, they will be comfortable reaching out and asking questions when needed in the most efficient and effective way possible.



## Building Trust with your Remote Team

To lead your employees well, it's important that you trust them and they trust you. Trust that they are doing their work, not taking an extra lunch break, not cutting corners, and are doing the job you hired them to do. **With a remote team, try to choose trust over suspicion.**

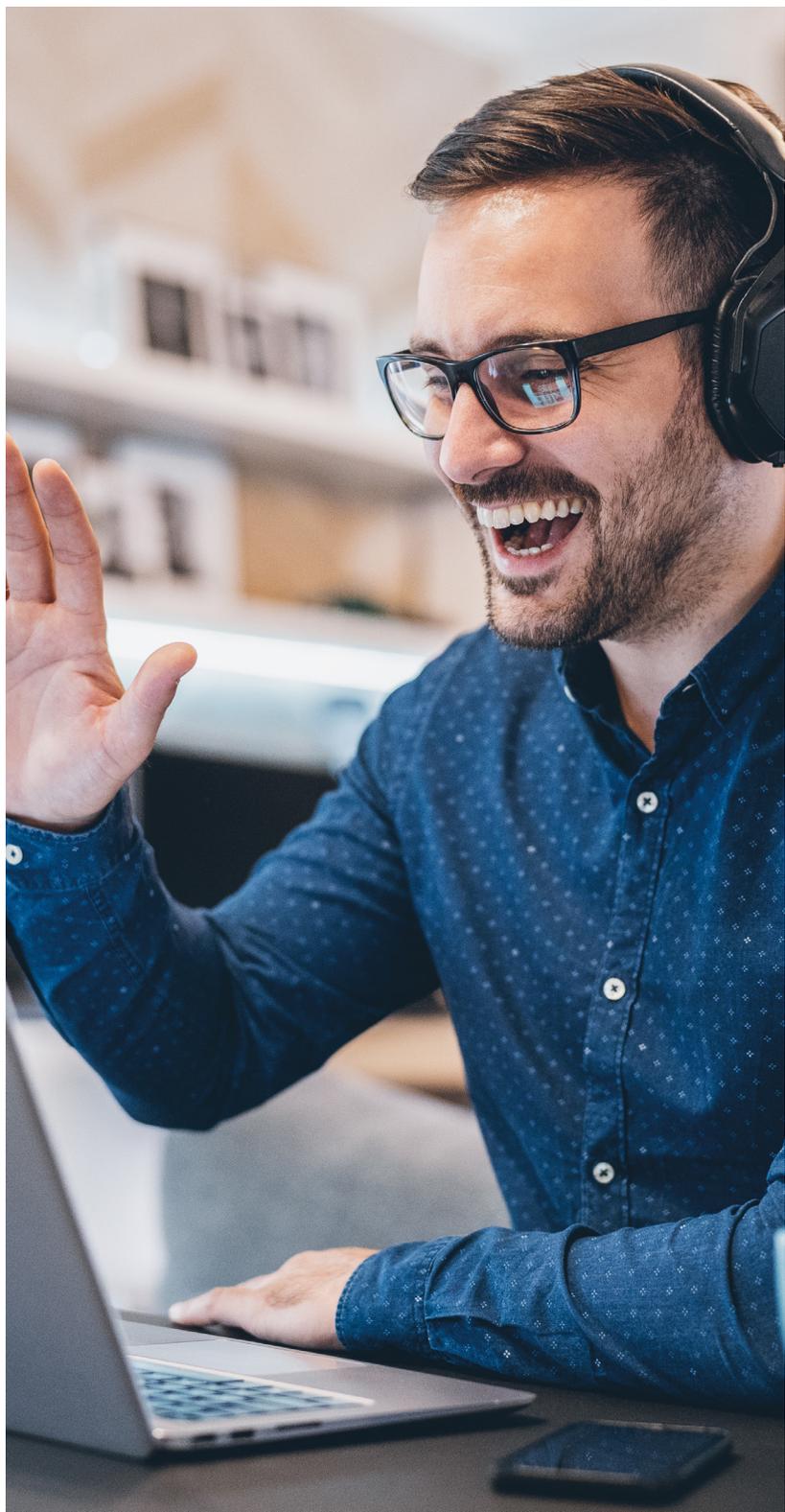


This gives your team the confidence that they need to own their responsibilities and follow through on their tasks.

The best way to build trust is to set clear expectations for the work day. These guides will help you act accordingly if you need to have a discussion about a team member falling short, instead of acting on suspicion.

If you have a preference on how progress is shared, if lunch hour is flexible, when the right and wrong time for a video call versus an email is, set those expectations clearly and stick to them.

If your team has a cohesive and clear understanding of what's expected as they work remotely, they will know how to succeed and keep the ball moving down the field.



## Encouraging Remote Teamwork

When working remotely, it's often a default for people to work by themselves and still stay in communication. As a leader, it's helpful to check in with your team as a whole and encourage them to all communicate together. Some will get distracted, and some will get on a task and forget to let others know their progress. While you can't go down the hall and pick someone's brain, you can still collaborate and work together to ensure that things are not siloed. Remind your team of this.



To keep collaboration and teamwork going, you can:

- Schedule a video call to discuss ideas
- Communicate through group threads instead of 1 on 1
- Invite your team into a place where you're stuck and ask for their ideas
- Use collaborative documents, such as Google Docs, where people can comment and suggest things

*There isn't a water cooler to meet around anymore, and initiating social online communication will help make collaboration feel more natural.*

# Building a Successful Remote Culture

Culture is always referenced when your company is together in a physical space, and when you're not physically together, it's more critical than ever. It's not as easy to connect when you're not in person, but there are a few things you can do to create a culture that promotes productivity and connectivity.

## Celebrate successes.



No matter how small, celebrating successes together will encourage your team and provide a connection that is often missed when you're communicating online.

## Check in with your team.

Checking in on how they are feeling about the transition to remote work, if there is anything you can do to move roadblocks out of their way, or if there is anything they feel was a win from the week are all great ways to stay connected with your team.

## Connect as a team.

Put a weekly team video call on the calendar to catch up on project timelines, see how collaboration can be helpful, and connect on a personal level. These meetings are helpful when they are informal and short. They also provide a touch point for your team to catch up and build their professional relationships.



# For Employees

## Brief Introduction

Many organizations have asked their employees to work from home because of the coronavirus outbreak. If you've never worked from home before, this can be challenging.

We've laid out some helpful tips and tools to help you acclimate to your new work environment.

## Content

- Setting Up Your Workspace
- Building a Routine
- How to Stay Motivated
- Staying Connected with Others
- Family Time
- Grab a seat at the virtual table
- Staying Healthy

## Setting Up Your Workspace

### Create your space

Set aside a dedicated workspace. It will be easier to make the transition from home life to work life if you only use that space for work.

### Set boundaries

If you have family at home or share your living space with a housemate, creating boundaries is very important. The ideal situation is a workspace with a door (maybe use a spare bedroom) so you can control interruptions and concentrate more easily. If a spare bedroom or closed-off space isn't doable for you, find the most out-of-the-way spot in your home and make it your own. Ask your family, if possible, to avoid interrupting you if the "office door" is closed.

If you don't have a spare room, grab a pair of noise cancelling headphones, or put white noise in your current pair of headphones, and ask your family or roommates to avoid interrupting you if your headphones are in.

### Get the tools you need to succeed

Get a dedicated phone charger, some pens, notepads, your headphones, some water, coffee or tea, and settle in. Some people have even ordered lap desks for their work from home season so they can create an "office" out of their favorite chair in a quiet corner.



Once you've created your perfect home-office setup, download the software you'll need to communicate with your team.

## Building a Routine

### Keep a clock nearby

Set your own schedule and stick to it. Family and friends may show up at your door or call, thinking you're on vacation from work. You may find that in your industry there is more to do now than ever. The chances of being interrupted at home are significantly higher than those working in an office.

### Plan Ahead



Planning your week ahead of time is a great way to ensure you won't be interrupted. Schedule meetings and work time, and be proactive about reaching out and getting anything you need to on your calendar. If it's on your

calendar, rather than a to-do list, you're far more likely to complete the task.

Another way to plan ahead is to meal prep. When you're at home, it's easy to get distracted by the pantry, rather than the usual break room at work. Prepare your lunch, just as you would for work, and stick to eating that, and any other healthy snacks you want.

### Communicate your schedule

Keep in touch with coworkers. If you have a meeting or an appointment during work hours, let everyone know when you do have to be away from work.

Also communicate to your family and friends about your work hours. If they know you are busy during certain times, they are more likely to respect your work time.

## How to Stay Motivated

### Start the day right

The biggest temptation newly remote workers experience is to sleep in. While working from home may seem like a vacation, it's not. Use your new-found freedom to wake up early and get a head-start on your day. Read a book, exercise, or go on a walk. You can always roll right out of bed and grab your laptop, but creating time for your mind to wake up will help you stay focused for the rest of the day.

Most hang-out spots are closed and social distancing is the new way of life, so taking a break or starting your day can feel a little lost without the normal social activities. Plan ahead what you will do when you get off of work for the day, or the next morning, so you aren't feeling lost when you do have free time.



### Turn off notifications

Turn off notifications from social media. Apps such as SPACE, AppDetox, and OFFTIME are excellent tools to help you stay focused on work. If you have an Apple product, you can set a "do not disturb" notice. Set a timer, and every few hours, check your messages if you need to.

### Get dressed

The saying, "Dress for the job you want" has never been more true. Working in your PJ's might seem like a comfortable option, but it can have an effect on the quality of work you produce. You will feel more confident and more productive when you dress for success.

# Staying Connected with others

It will be easy to isolate during this time of social distancing, but **human connection is important**. We've laid out some of the creative apps available to stay connected to friends and family during this time of seclusion:

- [Houseparty](#) - a face-to-face, social networking app that alerts you when friends are on the app and ready to chat. Houseparty has games, chat rooms, and one-on-one video.
- [WhatsApp](#) - a free, international messaging app that lets users share text messages, images, voice notes, audio files, documents, and videos.
- [Mix](#) - Previously StumbleUpon, Mix is a news aggregator social media site that lets users curate their favorite content from around the web and add it to their "Collections." This includes articles, images, music, and videos. They can also view content curated by their friends and subscribe to their Collections.
- [Nextdoor](#) - a private social network for dedicated neighborhoods. You can enter your street address and find a community of people living in your area.
- [Flixster](#) - another niche social media site with a focus on film. It's an American-based site where film enthusiasts can connect with like-minded people and share their film reviews and watching experiences. The site also updates them with new and upcoming films.
- [Words With Friends \(2\)](#) - a multiplayer word game developed by Newtoy. Players take turns building words crossword-puzzle style in a manner similar to the classic board game Scrabble.



\* NCR IT Services does not support these applications. They are shared here in the spirit of helping you stay connected. If you have support needs for these applications, please contact the support team of the specific app directly.

## Family time

If you have a family, working from home can be difficult. Follow these tips and suggestions to contain the chaos and keep a healthy work/life balance.



If you have children, set them up for success by creating a schedule for them.

Try to engage them and allow them to have a voice when creating the family schedule. Have them do school, learning, or reading activities while you work. Set concrete work hours, with minor breaks in between

projects or tasks. During the “brain breaks,” you can take a walk, have a snack, check on your children, or get in touch with a coworker. Creating a schedule that allows you to work while children sleep (whether in the morning or during nap) is also very conducive to at-home productivity.

Having a family and working from home can be tough, but it does not have to be an uphill battle. With a little creativity and planning, you can be very productive while social distancing.

## Grab a seat at the virtual table

Show up at work in a way you never have before—be engaging and communicate with others. Good communication can go a long way. By using various communication tools, you can let your managers and



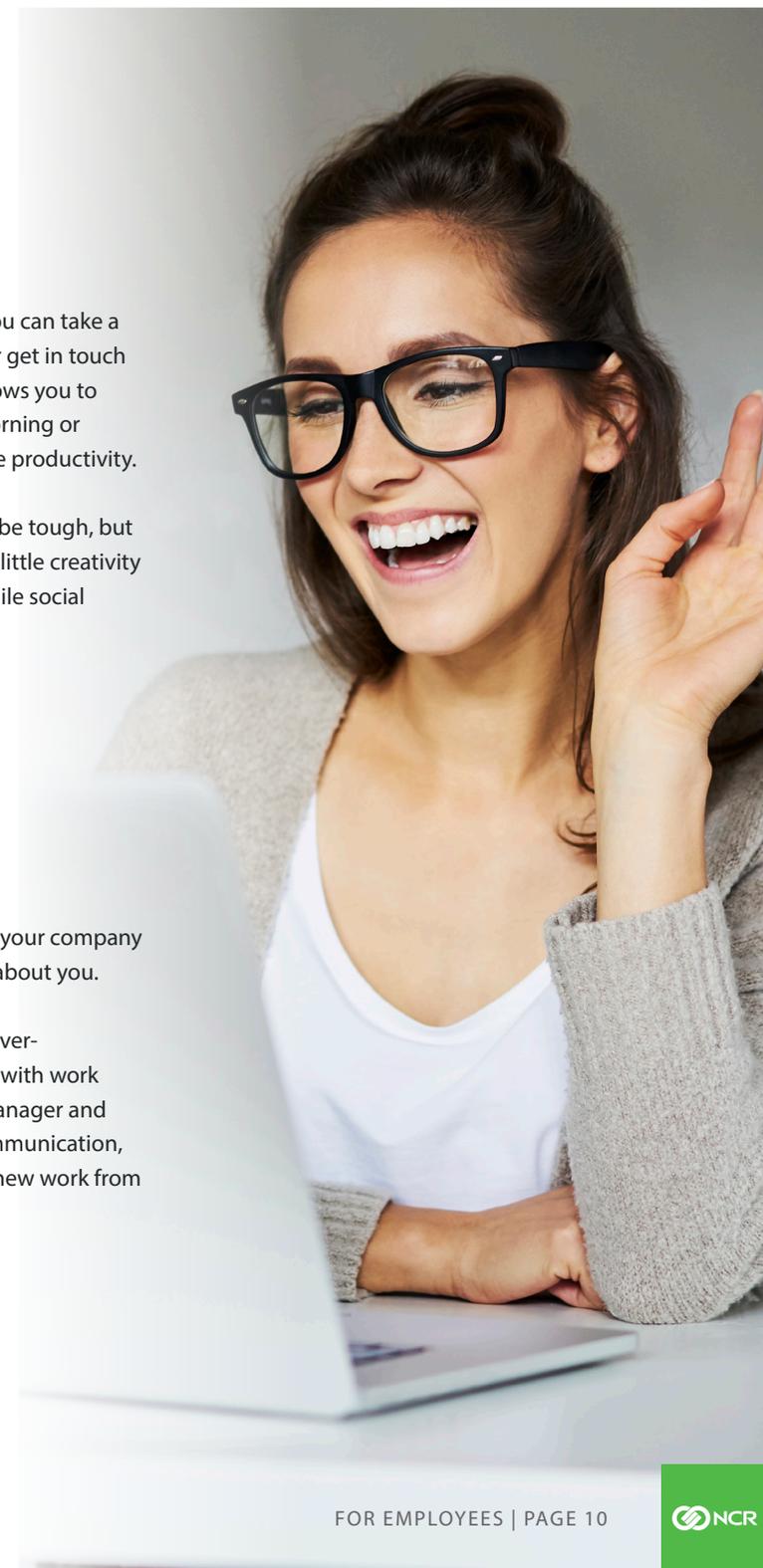
coworkers know what you’re working on and what to expect from you.

Proactively reach out to coworkers, leaders and clients. Don’t rely on them to connect with you or ask you what you’ve been working on.

Set reminders to connect with people within your company so you don’t forget, and so they don’t forget about you.

Since this is a new experience for everyone, over-communication is not a bad thing, especially with work progress. Sending regular updates to your manager and clients will be key in establishing healthy communication, especially in the early, confusing days of the new work from home scenario.

*When you’re working remotely, people need to know that you are thinking of them.*





## Staying Healthy

Setting reminders in your calendar to engage in healthy work habits can help newly remote workers stay well and boost their immunity.

### Take brain breaks

Try hopping on a video chat with a friend or co-worker to give your brain a break. Set reminders to drink water, stretch, or take a short walk. It will be easy to get distracted while taking a break, so make sure to set an alarm for the time you need to jump back into work.

*By taking short breaks throughout the day, you will experience less fatigue and a more sustainable work flow.*

### Take body breaks

During those brain breaks, or before or after work, engage in some physical activity to stay healthier. Yoga, meditation, walking, or some in-home workouts on YouTube can do incredible things to boost your short term and long term physical and mental health.



# Thank you for reading

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With your help, we can rewrite what it  
means to stay strong and **work together.**