

# BEING A REMOTE WORKER

## WORKSHOP GUIDE



## CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	2
LEARNING OBJECTIVES .....	3
FEATURED VIDEOS .....	3
FILM 1 – COMMUNICATING .....	4
FILM 2 – TIME MANAGEMENT .....	5
GROUP EXERCISE .....	6

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Many people see working remotely, whether all the time or part-time, as a benefit. It gives you the freedom to organise yourself in ways that suit you best. Unless your manager tries to micro-manage your time (hopefully not!), having your performance measured by achievements rather than when and for how long you are at your desk can be liberating. However, communicating at a distance can often be more challenging than face-to-face communication. It's even more important to communicate regularly and clearly if you are a remote worker; otherwise, you and others can start to feel isolated and left out, and misunderstandings can arise. Additionally, with freedom comes responsibility, and you need to learn to manage your own time efficiently.

At the end of the session, delegates will understand the importance of good communication and time management for effective remote working by seeing the story of Harry. Harry is an ambitious freelance designer working from home and keen to prove himself. When he lands a big job, he ignores the advice to 'keep in touch' and immerses himself in the project. However, by becoming so 'tunnel-visioned,' he makes a few critical mistakes which will come back to bit him. His reflection in the mirror taunts him late at night as cabin fever sets in....

**LOOK** – watch the video and reflect on the content and message

**THINK** – activities and questions linking the video to their own experience and workplace

**REMEMBER** – a summary of the key learning points

Each section relating to the video will last around 15 minutes

**PRACTISE** – At the end of the series of videos there is a practical exercise which will bring the learnings together. Delegates should be encouraged to record any personal development actions on their Personal Action Plan sheet.

## FEATURED VIDEOS

- Communicating as a remote worker
- Time management

## FILM 1 – COMMUNICATING

LOOK (play video, 7 minutes)

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THINK (10 minutes discussion)

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Get the group to think about the challenges of communicating as a remote worker:

- Discuss some of the main communication challenges you face as a remote worker – such as making assumptions about what is going on at a distance.
- How can you ensure you aren't left out of the 'loop' and get all the information you need?
- Why is some small-talk important with your remote colleagues?
- What factors can cause people to drift away from regular communication with head-office/what would encourage greater engagement?

REMEMBER

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- Don't disappear – be involved in email, conversations and chat
- Focus on your own wellbeing.
- Check in frequently to know you're doing the correct work

## FILM 2 – EXPECTATIONS

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

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THINK (10 minutes discussion)

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Managing your time and striking the right balance between regularity and flexibility can be demanding for remote workers. Consider the following:

- How do you currently organise your days? Any things that really work for you?
- Discuss some of the obstacles to keeping on schedule, and how to overcome them.
- What irritates you about how other team members manage time, and what could you do about it?
- What could management do to support you more, and what would be a good way to get that support?

REMEMBER

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- Get organised and set time boundaries - know when your working day ends
- Be upfront about your availability but be flexible with time when working across time zones
- Keep to a schedule, and don't be afraid to ask for managerial support

## GROUP EXERCISE

The objective of this exercise is to get the group to stand back a little and think about being a remote worker in general, hopefully broadening the topic beyond communication and time management.

1. Arrange participants into small groups.
2. Have them work around tables or in break-out rooms if possible.
3. Ask them to do a SWOT analysis of being a remote worker using a ready-made template (20 minutes):

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

4. Bring all groups together again, and each group makes a 5 minute presentation, followed by any questions.