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for being infected), employees don't waste time commuting, save on transportation costs and can be more productive. Plus, they are able to work at their own pace.

Mar. 13, 2020



The trend toward telecommuting—aka working from home—has certainly been increasing in recent years, But now millions more will be homebound during regular workdays as both private companies and public entities shut down physical locations due to COVID-19 fears. So now working from home is the new norm.

How will it work out? It remains to be seen and each situation is different. But

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resulting in reduced productivity. And it may be more difficult for employers to supervise employees, not to mention security concerns relating to remote locations.

Therefore, it's likely a mixed bag in most cases, but here are seven tips for making the most of the situation.

1. **Rely on advanced technology.** Check with Internet service providers about faster data service. The same applies to cellphones. If connections are disrupted, seek an alternative like adding a landline, switching carriers or using Skype.
2. **Maintain top security.** Place data on workplace servers and access it remotely through a Virtual Private Network (VPN). VPNs offer secure web access for through PCs and smartphones, even for the smallest businesses
3. **Stay in touch.** Telecommuters must maintain regular and periodic contact throughout the workday. Don't let emails pile up and minimize the number of voicemails. An instant messaging system ensures accessibility.
4. **Put in your time.** It may be tougher to stick to regular working hours, but it is easy to work late hours or weekends from home. Spending more time working may help offset employer reservations against telecommuting.
5. **Create a separate work space.** Working on a laptop on your couch or in an easy chair isn't conducive to an office environment. Establish a dedicated area for working. It does not have to be an entire room, but find a place that is strictly for business.
6. **Get comfortable.** Keep necessary items, such as writing utensils and a keyboard and mouse, within easy reach. Station an ergonomically-sound chair at the desk. Try to replicate your office environment.
7. **Take breaks.** Telecommuting from home can be confining, so break things up by doing odds and ends or just taking a brisk walk outside. Stretch at various times during the day to remain refreshed.

It's uncertain how long current practices reacting to the COVID-19 outbreak will stay

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