Telework and Telecommuting

Darlene Hunter & Associates, LLC.

DARLENE HUNTER

Module One:
Getting Started

For some people, working from home can seem like a dream opportunity. But they may not realize that this kind of position comes with a great amount of responsibility and challenges. Through this workshop you should be able to stay motivated in your 'office' while still feeling connected to the rest of the team.

Teams should be able to act with the same unity of purpose and focus as a well motivated individual.

Bill Gates

Workshop Objectives

- Know the skills required for working outside the office

- Learn keys to proper self-management

- Learn ways to manage time efficiently

- Know different methods of organization and planning

- Identify various forms of communication and their proper use

- Address and resolve challenges that teleworkers can face

Module Two:
Core Skills Required

As with any job position, certain skills and abilities are needed to be a successful teleworker and member of a virtual team. Common skills needed are ways to manage your time and organize all assignments and duties.

All of the top achievers I know are life-long learners, looking for new skills, insights, and ideas.

Denis Waitley

Self-Management

- Make a schedule and stick to it
- Keep a calendar of important dates
- Check in with team members periodically
- Stay in the loop

Time Management

- Knowing how long it will take you to finish a project

- Your manager cannot completely manage your time

- They will give support and offer advice

- Be aware of distractions

Organizing and Planning

- Create a pattern in your day

- Know what assignments or deadlines are approaching

- Use a storage system that can be adapted

Communication

- Difficult to master with a virtual team
- Be open and clear about what you need
- Know how to use various methods

Case Study

Jason is trying to select a new employee for his team of teleworkers.

Module Two: Review Questions

1. Why is self-management important for teleworkers?

   a) They have to work on their own
   b) They have to work odd hours
   c) They have to work in groups
   d) They have a test on it

   Teleworkers often have to work on their own and without much supervision, so having characteristics of self-management is important.

2. What is one tool of self-management?

   a) Creating different stacks of work
   b) Throwing unneeded items in a box
   c) Piling files on top of the desk to do
   d) Writing deadlines on a calendar

   Writing information on a calendar, such as deadlines or important dates, is a form of self-management because it is one way to manage important information and keep focused.

Module Two: Review Questions

3. What is one aspect of time management?

   a) Learning about the assignment
   b) Recognizing deadlines
   c) Completing the weekly reports
   d) Conserving energy

   Recognizing deadlines is an area of time management because it makes the employee focus on assignments and projects and manage their time accordingly to get them done.

4. What is one tool of time management?

   a) Filing reports in a cabinet
   b) Ordering more office supplies
   c) Creating a daily schedule
   d) Changing the copy paper

   By creating a schedule, whether daily, weekly, and monthly, etc., the employee is learning to manage her time and divide it up between necessary tasks.

Module Two: Review Questions

5. What is a benefit of making plans ahead of time?

    a) It reduces errors in plans
    b) It gives the employee something to do
    c) It creates room for chaos
    d) It makes the employee feel more important

    When an employee plans ahead and tries to work things out beforehand, they reduce the risk of making errors and cut down on the chance of something going wrong.

6. What is one form of organization?

    a) Hanging up your coat
    b) Moving files to another desk
    c) Modifying your desk area
    d) Emptying the trash can

    One form of organization is the task of modifying a desk area to make it more suitable and usable. This normally includes moving items within arm's reach and putting unnecessary items away.

Module Two: Review Questions

7. Why is communication important to teleworkers?

   a) They have to talk to their teammates even if they don't want to
   b) They want to make lots of friends
   c) They want to work alone
   d) They must work together although they're separated

   Many teleworkers work in various offices in different locations, so communication is important because it keeps the employees connected across the miles.

8. Which of the following is a common tool of communication?

   a) Scrapbooking
   b) Emailing
   c) Reading
   d) Blogging

   Emails, or electronic mail, are a form of communication that allows people to type letters to each other and send them electronically.

Module Two: Review Questions

9. What position was Jason trying to hire for?

    a) Administration secretary
    b) Virtual team manager
    c) Office manager
    d) Teleworker team member

    Jason wanted to hire someone for the open position on his team of teleworkers.

10. Stacey said she already had what at home?

    a) A home office
    b) Her own copier
    c) A spare bedroom
    d) A filing cabinet

    When interviewed by Jason, Stacey told him she already had a home office set up in her home, which let Jason know she was prepared to be a teleworker.

Module Three:
Self-Management (I)

While self-management can mean different things in different fields, for teleworkers it means being able to manage your job duties and responsibilities on your own, with very little supervision from management.

The first and best victory is to conquer self.

Plato

Solving Problems on Your Own

- Can I do this on my own – or do I need help?

- Can I do this on my own – or do I need help?

- What is the next step I should take?

Being and Staying Motivated

- Establish your goals

- Create a plan of action

- Feel good about your achievements and build on them

- Review any mistakes made and learn from them

You Have More Freedom – Don't Abuse It

- Remain focused on your work

- Company supplies should not be used for personal use

- Manage your time and activities in the same manner as you would in any other office

You and Only You are Accountable

- Accountable for your work

- Cannot fade into a sea of faces

- Focus on all duties and job performance

Case Study

Kathy is a teleworker that
works at home

Module Three: Review Questions

1. Teleworkers can solve problems on their own if they have what?

   a) Resources
   b) Copy supplies
   c) Up to date telephones
   d) A company car

   Employees are capable of handling many problems on their own as long as they have the proper resources to do so. It is important to review possible problems that could happen and ensure that the employee has the resources needed to handle them.

2. What is an example of a problem an employee can handle on his/her own?

   a) A computer crashes
   b) The office catches fire
   c) A paper jam in the copier
   d) The internet server goes down

   Minor problems, such as a paper jam, can be handled by the employee and can be solved without the involvement of management. Bigger problems, such as computer crashes or phone line damage need to have management notified for assistance.

Module Three: Review Questions

3. A lack of motivation in employees can lead to what?

   a) Decreased absences
   b) Decreased productivity
   c) Increased anger
   d) Increased vacations

   When employees lack motivation, they often lose the drive to complete their work on time, or at all, and their productivity can suffer for it. A motivated employee is more confident and displays how they want to do a good job.

4. What is one method of staying motivated?

   a) Writing sticky notes
   b) Taking on more assignments
   c) Taking a vacation
   d) Establishing clear goals

   Employees who establish goals they want to achieve are proven to be more motivated and willing to work toward those goals. Goals help establish a path for the employee to take and allow them to be in control of what they want.

Module Three: Review Questions

5. When management is not around, employees tend to be _____.

    a) Happier
    b) More productive
    c) More laid back
    d) Lonely

    When management is not in sight, employees tend to over relax and are more laid back in their work. For some employees, this can lead to a lack of motivation or drive and abusing their freedom of working independently.

6. Teleworkers should be able to manage their time without what?

    a) A big calendar
    b) A set schedule
    c) A computer
    d) A manager present

    Teleworkers should have enough self and time management skills to manage themselves when a supervisor is not around. Just because they work in separate offices does not mean they are not responsible for their work.

Module Three: Review Questions

7. Only _____ can be held accountable for their work.

    a) The employee
    b) The manager
    c) The coworker
    d) The CEO

    The employee is the only person that can be held accountable for their work because they are the only ones that are responsible for their behaviors and management skills to stay on top of what they need to do.

8. The employee cannot blame _____ for not being accountable.

    a) Themselves
    b) Outside distractions
    c) Their performance
    d) Their time management

    Some employees may try to blame outside distractions, such as friends or family, for their inability to be accountable for their work. However, only the employee is responsible for their work and is the only one that can determine how productive they are.

Module Three: Review Questions

9. What was one instance that Kathy had to handle on her own?

    a) Her phone line went down
    b) Her printer ran out of ink
    c) Her copier stopped working
    d) Her monthly report got rained on

    Kathy said she was used to handling certain situations on her own, such as the time her phone line went down in her office.

10. What did Kathy do to help manage her day better?

    a) Hire a personal trainer
    b) Create a schedule
    c) Wake up earlier
    d) Eat a bigger breakfast

    To better manager her tasks and activities, Kathy decided to make herself a schedule and stick to it.

Module Four:
Self-Management (II)

Self-management can cover a wide range of aspects and situations. Part of self-discipline is being able to realize what has to be done to correctly manage ourselves and succeed.

With self-discipline, anything is possible.

Theodore Roosevelt

Recognize and Remove Bad Habits

- What am I doing that is hindering my work?

- Is this something I can change?

- How does this habit affect me?

Reflect on Mistakes and Learn from Ther

- Will always happen

- Learning tool

- Handle differently the next time

- Continued learning and growth

Establish Good Habits

- Identify what you want to change

- Write reminders

- New actions into your routine

- Ample time to adjust

Be Assertive with Yourself

- Stick with it

- Focus on the task at hand

- Hold yourself accountable

Case Study

Joshua was enjoying his new position as a teleworker

Module Four: Review Questions

1. Removing our bad habits can make us feel what?

    a) Depressed
    b) More bored
    c) More confident
    d) Angry

    When we identify and remove our bad habits, we begin to feel more confident about ourselves and about our choices that we make. It helps us feel empowered that we can change things we don't like about ourselves.

2. What is one way to identify a bad habit?

    a) Wait for someone else to point it out
    b) Make a list of the consequences from it
    c) See if we find them on our own
    d) Do nothing

    Since many of us don't realize when we have a bad habit, one of the best ways to identify one is to make a list of the consequences from it and see what happens when we keep performing this habit. When we see how the habit is affecting us, we are more likely to change it.

Module Four: Review Questions

3. A common myth about making mistakes is that they _____.

   a) Should be done in public
   b) Should be done in private
   c) Should be done all the time
   d) Should be avoided

   Many people believe that to be 'right' that must not make any mistakes in whatever they do. However, the opposite is true. It is better to make mistakes and learn from them because you can learn what *not* to do and grow from there.

4. After making a mistake, the employee should do what?

   a) Reflect on what happened
   b) Try to hide it
   c) Blame it on someone else
   d) Claim it won't happen again

   After making a mistake, the best approach is reflecting back on what happened and what caused the mistake. From this we can learn what we did wrong, how we can fix, and how we can try to prevent it in the future.

Module Four: Review Questions

5. What is the key to developing good habits?

   a) Controlling others around you
   b) Controlling yourself in your environment
   c) To stop making mistakes all the time
   d) To make sure your work is perfect

   One of the keys of developing good habits is about controlling what you do in your environment, such as resisting procrastination at home or accepting more responsibility at work. Only we can develop our good habits and use them to benefit us.

6. What is the first step to begin developing a good habit?

   a) Stopping the bad habit altogether
   b) Getting someone else to do it for you
   c) Waiting for the right idea
   d) Determining what you want

   To form good habits, the person must first determine what they want to gain (or lose). For instance, the goal is to increase productivity, so the employee creates a good habit of coming in earlier to catch up.

Module Four: Review Questions

7. What is one consequence of teleworkers not being assertive?

    a) They will begin to not like themselves
    b) Their assignments may be ignored
    c) Their coworkers may not like them
    d) They will become bored

    When employees are not assertive enough, they can often ignore the assignments or tasks that need to be done. Without assertion, the employee may not have enough drive or motivation to complete their work.

8. What is one way an employee can be assertive?

    a) Say what you're going to do and then do it
    b) Write their ideas down in a journal
    c) Talk to a friend about it
    d) Email the idea to everyone

    One of the simplest ways to be more assertive is to say what you want to do, such as finish a specific job, and then do. Once we tell ourselves what we want, we must be assertive enough to make ourselves have the drive to go after it.

Module Four: Review Questions

9. What was one bad habit that Joshua had at work?

    a) Leaving early
    b) Taking a nap on his desk
    c) Coming in late
    d) Forgetting to refill the copier

    Joshua had a bad habit of coming in late, even if it was just by a few minutes.

10. What was one benefit Joshua saw after creating his good habit?

    a) More energy
    b) Increased productivity
    c) Less stress
    d) A pay increase

    When Joshua made a good habit to come to work early and stick to his schedule, he noticed an improvement in his productivity.

Module Five:
Time Management (I)

Proper time management is a choice that we all have to make in our professional and personal lives. Managing our time successfully can make the difference between completing projects and falling behind in our duties and activities.

Your greatest resource is your time.

Brian Tracy

Build a Little Flexibility into Your Schedule

- Schedule is not set in stone
- Accept it and move with it
- Control how you react
- Be prepared

Identify and Remove Time Wasters

- Excessive checking of email

- Personal phone calls

- Away from your work area

- Looking for things

Working with Time Zones

- Keep a log or chart
- Make a 'cheat sheet'
- Know your team's time zone
- Know their hours of work

Using Free Time Wisely

- Time is your most valuable asset

- Manage extra time

- Recheck completed assignments

- Offer to help colleagues

Case Study

Alex and Nick were working together on a team project.

Module Five: Review Questions

1. Flexibility is important in any schedule because of what?

   a) Short attention spans
   b) Mean coworkers
   c) Unexpected events
   d) Late managers

   Unexpected events and surprises happen every day, so it is important for the employee to have some flexibility and 'wiggle room' in their schedule to handle them when they come up.

2. Having a back-up plan for when things go wrong can make an employee feel _____.

   a) Frustrated
   b) Empowered
   c) Worried
   d) Happy

   We all face unexpected surprises at different times. But when we prepare a back-up or alternate to follow when they do, it makes us feel more empowered to carry on and not let it stop us from our plans.

Module Five: Review Questions

3. Removing time wasters from our day allows the employee to do what?

    a) Make more time for fun things
    b) Add more things to do to their schedule
    c) Take more breaks
    d) Concentrate on work tasks

    Time wasters can range from large and small, professional and personal. Removing any of them can help stop the employee from feeling distracted and allow them to focus on their work.

4. Which of the following is an example of a time waster?

    a) Checking our cell phone for personal text messages
    b) Filling the copy machine with more paper
    c) Changing the empty ink cartridge in the printer
    d) Add labels to your file folders

    Stopping to take time to check for personal messages on our cell phones is a common example of a time waster because it takes our focus away from what we are doing. Save these types activities for break times or for after work.

Module Five: Review Questions

5. The maximum number of hours difference in various time zones is what?

   a) One hour
   b) Twelve hours
   c) Ten hours
   d) Four hours

   Some time zones range from one to two hours, but the maximum difference between time zones in the world is 12 hours. That's half a day!

6. What is one way teleworkers can cope with working in different time zones?

   a) Try no talking to each other
   b) Moving locations in the same time zone instead
   c) Contacting teammates whenever they feel like it
   d) Keep track of the time difference for teammates

   Teleworkers should learn the locations of their other teammates and make themselves familiar with their time zones. When they do, they will be better prepared to communicate with them (during their hours) and work better together.

Module Five: Review Questions

7. What is one thing employees can do during slow periods at work?

   a) Take more breaks
   b) Surf the internet
   c) Check over already completed assignments
   d) Clean out the refrigerator

   When employees find themselves in slow periods, one helpful thing to do is to double check and go over already completed assignments for accuracy or errors. They can also begin reviewing some of the assignments they will have in the future. The main key is to stay busy instead of just wasting time.

8. If an employee has a lot of downtime, they may need more _____.

   a) Responsibilities
   b) Discipline
   c) Complicated tasks
   d) Time off

   As a manager, if you notice an employee has an excessive amount of downtime after completing their assignments, take a look at their work load and determine if they need more responsibilities and tasks. Some employees will want extra assignments to take on when they continue to quickly finish their previous ones.

Module Five: Review Questions

9. Nick lives in a time zone that is _____ hours behind Alex.

    a) Two
    b) Three
    c) One
    d) Four

    Nick and Alex are teleworkers in different time zones, and Nick lives in a time zone that is 2 hours behind Alex.

10. Alex removes what from his desk because it is distracting to him?

    a) Colorful pens
    b) Scented candles
    c) Food items
    d) Old reports

    Alex knows that any kind of food item that is on his desk will distract him from his work, so he removes them when he begins working.

Module Six:
Time Management (II)

Effective time management can have many benefits for any employee. Teleworkers and virtual teams can benefit even more from these skills since they are responsible for managing their own time and assignments.

Until we can manage time, we can manage nothing else.

Peter Drucker

The Urgent/Important Matrix

Do it now

Keep up to date

Manage efficiently

Schedule for later

Setting and Sticking to Deadlines

- Set reminders for yourself

- Structure and balance

- Write it down

- Sense of accountability

The Glass Jar:
Rocks, Pebbles, Sand and Water

Rocks – Important tasks

Pebbles – Urgent tasks

Sand – Routine or maintenance

Water - Time wasters

Recognize When You Are Procrastinating

- Making excuses
- Delaying work
- Self-sabotaging
- Tricking ourselves

Case Study

Angela was feeling very overwhelmed with her stack of assignments that were about to be due.

Module Six: Review Questions

1. How many boxes are used in the Urgent/Important Matrix?

   a) Three
   b) Four
   c) Eight
   d) Six

   The matrix uses four boxes, or quadrants, to help plot activities, assignments, and tasks by priority.

2. How does the Urgent/Important Matrix help us with time management?

   a) It takes time out of our day from doing other things to create it
   b) It creates a chore list for us to follow
   c) It helps us decide what is important and what is not
   d) It allows us to see what needs to be done and when

   The Urgent/Important Matrix allows us to see a range of jobs that need to be done in a period of time and helps us determine how quickly or urgently we should accomplish them.

Module Six: Review Questions

3. Setting deadlines for ourselves provides us with what?

   a) Discipline
   b) Boredom
   c) Free time
   d) More friends

   Setting deadlines for us to follow gives us a sense of structure and discipline when trying to complete our work. It is also another way of being assertive with ourselves.

4. One way to help stick to your deadline is to do what?

   a) Try to remember on your own
   b) Rely on a friend to remind you about it
   c) Set a reminder system
   d) Write a sticky note about it

   Setting a reminder system helps us remember important dates and information. Some examples include setting alarm clocks, sending email reminders, or simply writing them down on a calendar.

Module Six: Review Questions

5. What is said to go in the glass jar before anything else?

   a) Tiny pebbles
   b) The sand
   c) Our 'big rocks'
   d) The water

   In the glass jar exercise, the big rocks go into the jar first. These rocks symbolize our big problems or tasks and show that we should take care of them first.

6. What is the last item that goes into the jar in the glass jar exercise?

   a) Sand
   b) Water
   c) Pebbles
   d) Rocks

   In the glass jar exercise, the last thing that goes into the jar is the water. It symbolizes how even though we think the jar is too full, there is always room to handle our problems.

Module Six: Review Questions

7.   Procrastination can be hard to recognize because why?

   a)   We can see the consequences right away
   b)   We like it so much
   c)   We don't have time to stop and think about it
   d)   We make excuses why it's alright

   It can be hard to recognize when we are procrastinating because we often make excuses why it's alright to delay our work. We give ourselves enough reason and excuses that we don't see it as procrastinating, but simply 'getting to it later'.

8.   What is one classic sign of procrastination?

   a)   Waiting to start on a project
   b)   Researching a future project now
   c)   Changing the ink in the printer before it runs out
   d)   Finishing an assignment early

   One classic sign of procrastination is waiting to start on a project once it has been given to us. We tell ourselves we have plenty of time to finish it and put off starting on it until a later time.

Module Six: Review Questions

9. Why was Angela feeling overwhelmed?

   a) She had a big meeting coming up
   b) She had to deliver a speech in front of an audience
   c) She had to write a long essay
   d) She had several projects due

   Angela was feeling very overwhelmed and anxious because she had a stack of assignments that were about to be due and she felt as though she may not finish them in time.

10. How did Angela decide to manage all of her assignments?

    a) Write them down in alphabetical order
    b) Create a list and prioritize them
    c) Finished each project at random
    d) Asked a coworker to help her out

    Angela needed to manage all of her work, so she made a list of what she needed to do and then prioritized them by how urgent or important they were. This helped her determine which assignments to tackle first.

Module Seven:
Organizing and Planning (I)

Keeping track of our office activities helps us make efficient use of our time and can keep us focused throughout our assignments. For teleworkers, organizing and planning their work days plays a big part in their time management.

Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now.

Alan Lakein

Plan for Additional Stress

- Something goes wrong

- Plan for it

- Identify situations

- Wiggle room

When to Seek Help

Look for help when…

Projects are piling up

Job quality begins to decline

Deadlines are missed

Being Proactive – Not Reactive

- Recognize areas
- Prevents problems from worsening
- One step ahead

Establish Priorities and Attainable Goals

- Start small

- Decide what to change

- What's in your power

Case Study

Sheila was brand new to the teleworkers team and was feeling anxious about starting some new assignments.

Module Seven: Review Questions

1. Planning for additional stress means allowing what?

   a) More problems
   b) More discipline
   c) A lunch break
   d) "Wiggle room"

   It is important to plan for additional stress and give ourselves some "wiggle room" so that we can be flexible enough to hand the extra stress while still trying to stay on schedule with the rest of our activities.

2. What is one way to prepare for additional stress?

   a) Ask someone else what they think
   b) Identify situations that could cause stress beforehand
   c) Dive into projects without planning
   d) Take more time off

   By taking the time to identify situations that can cause us stress in the future today, we can prepare ourselves for any additional stress that we know will come from them, if we cannot prevent them altogether.

Module Seven: Review Questions

3. When we need to seek help, we must know what?

   a) Who to contact
   b) What color car the manager drives
   c) What the other coworkers are doing
   d) Where to send office reports

   One of the first things to address when seeking help is in knowing who we need to contact first. Employees need to know who they are supposed to reach when they need help and how to get a hold of them quickly.

4. What is one sign that could mean the employee needs to seek help?

   a) They finish the project early
   b) They try to take on more assignments
   c) They don't understand the content of the assignment
   d) They take too much time to finish assignments

   If an employee is unfamiliar with any part of the assignment and is unsure how to proceed, that is a sign they should seek help from their manager or other supervisor for clarification.

Module Seven: Review Questions

5. What does it mean to be reactive?

    a) Act after a problem happens
    b) Examine a problem beforehand
    c) Know the consequences of a situation
    d) Take time to prevent something from happening

    Being reactive means that you are taking action only after something has happened to cause you to do this. This reaction usually does not prevent the problem from happening, but will face it once has come up.

6. What does it mean to be proactive?

    a) To award your top team performers
    b) To fix a problem when it come up
    c) To act before a problem happens
    d) To support your team players

    Being proactive means a person does not wait for something to happen before they take action. This is usually seen as some type of preventative measure.

Module Seven: Review Questions

7. Establishing priorities helps the teleworker do what?

    a) Work faster
    b) Finish projects on time
    c) Set clear goals
    d) Communicate with teammates

    When the teleworker is able to establish their priorities and what is important to them, they are able to set clear goals as to what they want to achieve. Their priorities help them determine what to pursue first.

8. What is one tip for setting attainable goals?

    a) Include your coworkers
    b) Start small
    c) Ask the manager for help
    d) Plan big

    If an employee sets their goal too big or too high at first, it can seem impossible to reach and they may give up. So when setting attainable goals, it is best to start small and work the way up to the big goals. Accomplishing smaller goals to reach the big one will be more successful for the employee.

Module Seven: Review Questions

9. What is one way Sheila prepared herself for working on the teleworkers team?

    a) Created a new home office
    b) Established new goals and priorities
    c) Made friends with the other teammates
    d) Decided to transfer positions

    Sheila was feeling nervous about starting a new position, so she created a list of priorities and goals for her to achieve.

10. What is one thing Sheila did that was proactive?

    a) Made a list of assignments to do
    b) Bought new uniform clothes
    c) Redecorated her office area
    d) Ensured she had plenty of supplies to work with

    Being proactive means taking action before a problem comes up. Sheila was being proactive when she made sure she had enough supplies to work with – before the supplies actually ran out.

Module Eight:
Organizing and Planning (II)

Organizing our home office or other work space can have great benefits for our productivity. When we organize our workflow, our productivity runs smoother and we're able to accomplish more in our workday.

Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it's not all mixed up.

A. Milne

Setting Up Your Home Office

- Layout and design your home office

- Items within your arm's reach

- If possible, setup a backup system

- Reduce time spent looking for items

Remove Unneeded or Distracting Items

- The smallest item can make you lose focus
- Ensure that it is a professional area only
- This can be hard to do when working from home

When Technology Fails

- Emergency contacts for managers and team members

- Office locations for other team members

- Project/assignment/client information

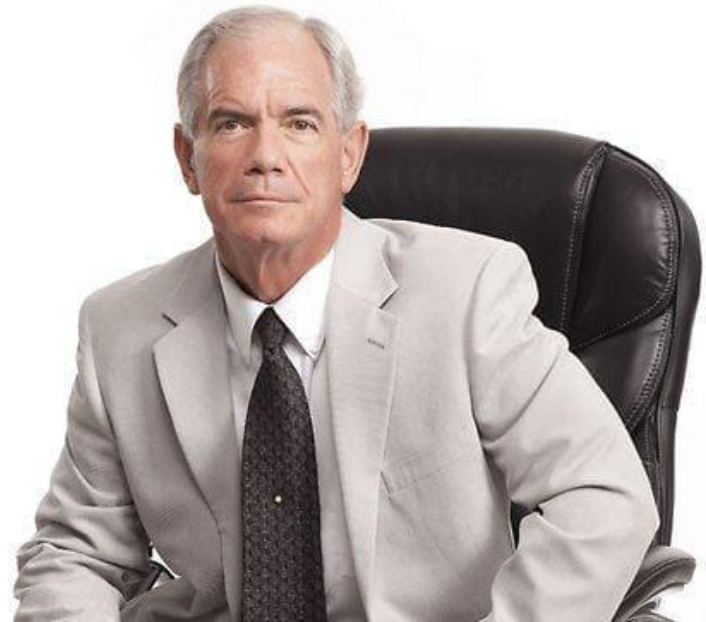- Alternate work schedules or shifts needed

Develop a Normal Working Day

- Routine
- Normal tasks
- Schedule
- Surprises
- Adaptions

Case Study

Phillip has changed offices and is now a teleworker that is working from home.

Module Eight: Review Questions

1. The _____ can affect how a home office is organized.

    a) Equipment
    b) Layout
    c) Supplies bought
    d) Wall color

    The layout and design of a home office can affect how well it is organized. If items are too crowded or two spaced out, the employee may not be able to function very well and may find themselves wasting time trying to get around in their own office.

2. One aspect of setting up the home office is what?

    a) Installing computer equipment
    b) Moving shelves
    c) Stacking paper in the trays
    d) Installing the carpet

    One aspect of setting up the home office is installing any computer equipment needed, such as a desktop computer, printer, fax, copier, etc.

Module Eight: Review Questions

3. Which of the following can be considered an unneeded item in a home office?

    a) Photo printer
    b) Filing cabinet
    c) Supply cabinet
    d) Personal utility bills

    Utility bills that are for personal use (the home) should not be in the home office. They do not contribute to the business need in the office and are therefore unneeded.

4. Which of the following can be considered a distracting item in a home office?

    a) Wall art
    b) Colorful pens
    c) Television set
    d) Excessive books

    While some employees enjoy having a television in their office, others find it very distracting and can take focus away from what they are doing. If the latter half is true for you, remove the television right away.

Module Eight: Review Questions

5. Teleworkers can face challenges when the technology fails because why?

   a) They depend on it for everything
   b) They don't like traditional methods
   c) They have to start from scratch
   d) They have to do everything manually

   It can sound dramatic, but teleworker do rely on technology for almost everything, including communication, research and even simple copies and print outs. When technology fails, it can be a challenge to teleworkers who have come to rely on it for so much.

6. When creating a hard copy back up plan, which of the following should be included?

   a) A number to the local pizza place
   b) A list of nearby hotels
   c) A list of emergency contacts
   d) A list of alternate work to do

   Many offices have a hard copy back up plan, usually in a notebook or folder, which includes information such as emergency contacts, alternate work locations and back up file/project/client information.

Module Eight: Review Questions

7. What is a benefit of building a daily routine at work?

    a) The employee finishes work sooner
    b) The day goes by faster
    c) The work seems more fun
    d) The work flow runs smoother

    When employees build a daily routine to follow, their work flow tends to run smoother and with little complication. They can usually predict any problems they may encounter and stop them before they start.

8. The key to building a normal working day is what?

    a) Knowing what needs to be done
    b) Scheduling the time right
    c) Having the right tools
    d) Starting on the right day

    An employee cannot establish a normal working day until they know what it is they need to do each day. Once they make a list of things to do each day, it is easier to make a routine and work to accomplish them all.

Module Eight: Review Questions

9. Phillip removed items from his home office that could be distracting, such as _____?

    a) Shelves
    b) Laundry baskets
    c) Pens and pencils
    d) Alarm clock

    In planning and organizing his home office, Phillips removed items that were unneeded or could be distracting, such as personal bills or laundry baskets.

10. What is one thing Phillip did to prepare for a technology failure?

    a) An electronic phone book
    b) A back up computer
    c) A notebook of contacts
    d) A written calendar

    Phillips created a notebook of contacts and file information to keep in the office in case something happens, such as a power failure or computer shut down.

Module Nine: Communication (I)

Communication is one of the most important tools in the workplace. With so many options available in the workplace (email, instant message, phone calls), the team should be aware of the best way to communicate.

Electric communication will never be a substitute for the face of someone who with their soul encourages another person to be brave and true.

Charles Dickens

Stay in the Loop

- It is a challenge

- Connect with your colleagues

- Check in periodically

Use the Correct Medium

- Use the appropriate channel
- Informal or formal
- How urgent is the message
- What kind of response are you looking for ?

Be Clear and to the Point

- Don't beat around the bush

- State your point from the beginning

- Follow up

Virtual Communication Can Be Impersonal

- Emotions can be misread

- Harder to build trust

- No body language or visual cues

Case Study

Zach was communicatin with one of his teleworkers, Bob, about upcoming projects and assignments.

Module Nine: Review Questions

1. Staying in the loop of the virtual team can be difficult why?

    a) Employees don't usually like each other
    b) Communication can be too hard
    c) Managers don't do enough to help
    d) Employees are in many different locations

    Since teleworkers work in different locations, they cannot communicate as often as they'd like. A lack of communication can make employees feel as though they are out of the loop and not as connected.

2. One method of staying in the loop is to do what?

    a) Send letters or emails
    b) Hold individual meetings
    c) Have regular group meetings
    d) Create an office newsletter

    As a manager, you can help your team stay in the loop by holding regular, scheduled group meetings. These meetings help employees stay in touch and socialize with each other, which makes them feel more in the loop of the group.

Module Nine: Review Questions

3. One tool of to use for formal communication is what?

   a) An email
   b) A group meeting
   c) A fax message
   d) A telephone call

   A group meeting is a form of formal communication because people are speaking face to face, requiring eye contact and a response from the other person.

4. One tool of to use for informal communication is what?

   a) An email
   b) A board meeting
   c) A phone call
   d) An employee evaluation

   An email is an example of informal communication because it allows people to speak with relaxed language and does not require eye contact.

Module Nine: Review Questions

5. When communicating with teammates, it is important to do what?

   a) Clearly state your point
   b) Give lots of hints
   c) Compliment them
   d) Use small words

   Much communication is lost over technological methods, so it is important to speak clearly and get to the point when communication with other teleworkers. Don't try to beat around the bush or hold out lengthy conversations or you may lose the other person's interest.

6. As a manager, when communicating with your teleworker team, it is important to do what?

   a) Contact employees by phone
   b) Follow up to ensure comprehension
   c) Speak in small sentences
   d) Talk with an accent

   As we've said, information often be lost or miscommunicated through technology. As a manager, when you are speaking with your employees, be sure to follow up with a few questions or comments to make sure the information was received and the employee understands.

Module Nine: Review Questions

7. Virtual communication can seem impersonal because of what?

   a) The emoticons
   b) People can use different methods
   c) People do not have to see each other
   d) The length of electronic conversations

   With virtual communication, participants do not actually have to see each other and do not have cues from the other person to go from. There are no tones or voices, so information can seem flat and unappealing at times.

8. Virtual communication has a lack of _____.

   a) Fonts
   b) Methods available
   c) Clipart
   d) Body language

   Virtual communication can be seen as impersonal because the communicators do not have any body language or body cues to refer to when speaking and cannot tell how the other person is feeling or responding.

Module Nine: Review Questions

9. How did Zach deliver projects and assignments to Bob?

   a) Over the phone
   b) By email
   c) In person
   d) By written itinerary

   When first delivering Bob's first projects and assignments, Zach delivered them in person so he could go over each one and allow for any questions.

10. What was one concern Bob had about working so far apart from everyone?

    a) Having too much work
    b) Not knowing how to use email
    c) Having too little work
    d) Feeling left out

    Bob expressed that since he was working so far apart, he is concerned about feeling left out and isolated. Zach decided to help by creating ways they can stay connected.

Module Ten: Communication (II)

When we want to reach out to our teammates, it is important to determine how we do it and how we can get the results we need. We can't be afraid to open up or share.

Communication--the human connection--is the key to personal and career success.

Paul J. Meyer

Open and Frequent Communication

- Schedule regular conferences or one-on-one phone calls

- Virtual team needs to stay in constant contact

- Provide the best time and ways to reach you

Share Your Information

- Builds trust

- Open communication

- Team will be connected

Have a Collaborative Attitude

- No "I" in team

- Embrace a collaborative attitude

- Builds trust

- Improves communications

Setting Expectations with Family and Friends

- Create some ground rules

- Separate business from personal matters

- Explain the need for structure

Case Study

Sandra is working with three of her teammates on a project for a new client.

Module Ten: Review Questions

1. What is one way to have frequent communication with employees?

   a) Send a mass text to the team
   b) Make regular phone calls
   c) Send an email every now and then
   d) Call employees randomly

   Keeping open communication involves making regular contact with your employees, whether by phone, email, or text. It does not necessarily have to be on a schedule, but it should be on a fairly regular basis

2. Why is it important to stay in open communication with employees?

   a) To keep an eye on their behavior
   b) It lets them know you are always around
   c) To show support for each other
   d) It gives you something to do

   When you stay in have open and frequent communication with employees, it shows that you are there for them and that you are there to support them if needed.

Module Ten: Review Questions

3. When teammates share information with each other, they what?

    a) Feel annoyed with each other
    b) Feel bored with each other
    c) Feel more like family
    d) Feel smothered by teammates

    When teammates come together to share information, ideas and opinions, they begin to feel comfortable with each other and will start to feel more like a family than just a team.

4. How can teleworkers build social skills among each other?

    a) Sharing ideas
    b) Send more emails
    c) Share demographic sheets about each other
    d) Talk on the phone with teammates

    Teleworkers that are open and share their opinions and information will learn to build better social skills while communicating with their teammates that are so far away. They begin to feel as though they are a part of a team rather than working all alone.

Module Ten: Review Questions

5. Collaboration between team members encourages what?

   a) Hostility
   b) Frustration
   c) Tardiness
   d) Communication

   When teammates collaborate together on projects and assignments, it encourages communication in many different methods among teammates to not only gain information from the other person, but give information to others as well.

6. Although teleworkers often work very far apart, collaboration helps _____.

   a) Bring them together
   b) Keep them apart
   c) Work independently
   d) Transfer offices

   Collaboration is a team effort and takes every participant to make it work. Although many of the teleworkers are in different areas, collaboration helps bring the group to one spot and work together toward a common goal.

Module Ten: Review Questions

7. One guideline to establish with family and friends about the home office is what?

    a) They must have an appointment to come in
    b) Not entering the office during work hours
    c) They cannot bring food into the office
    d) They should not knock before entering

    Many friends and family may not understand the boundary between personal and professional, so one example guideline to set with them is to not allow anyone personal into the office during the business work hours. This keeps both sides separated and the balance even.

8. Setting expectations for friends and family adds what?

    a) Anger
    b) Chaos
    c) Structure
    d) Harmony

    It is important to establish guidelines for friends and family to follow while an employee is working in the home office. These guidelines allow structure in the office and will help the employee focus more on work rather than outside distractions.

Module Ten: Review Questions

9. What is one way Sandra and her teammates stay in touch?

    a) Steady emails
    b) Instant message
    c) Lots of phone calls
    d) Reading blog sites

    Sandra and her three teammates stay in frequent touch by communicating over instant message and sometimes by video phone call.

10. What did the group do to exchange ideas and opinions about the project?

    a) Sending emails
    b) Writing them down in a journal
    c) Draw them on a dry erase board
    d) Hold daily meetings

    The group held daily meetings in order to exchange opinions and ideas about the project and stay up to date.

Module Eleven:
Additional Challenges

Many factors such as communication and organization can cause problems on a team of teleworkers, but there are many other things that can cause a challenge in the 'office environment'.

Accept the challenges so that you may feel the exhilaration of victory.

General George Patton

Building Trust and Rapport

- Be open and honest

- Share opinions and ideas

- Listen to others opinion

- Will take longer to build

- Show an interest

Feeling Isolated

- Can cause a loss in productivity

- Check in with your colleagues often

- Provide updates and status changes

Always in the Office

- Tends to blend together

- Try not to mix business with personal

- Look for a relaxing place to get away

Lack of or Less Feedback

- Make a schedule when to deliver feedback

- Prepare feedback in advance

- Determine how the feedback should be delivered

Feedback

Case Study

Cheryl is working with her newest teleworker, Deb, and is trying to get her accustomed to working in a different type of office.

Module Eleven: Review Questions

1. When employees know they can trust each other, they do what?

   a) Act like a team
   b) Work by themselves
   c) Carry on as normal
   d) Go out to eat together

   When employees know that they can trust the people that they work with, they will begin to work and act like a team. They will feel comfortable with people they can trust and won't hold back on ideas and opinions.

2. What is one way teammates can build trust with one another?

   a) Buy lunch for everyone
   b) Play trust games
   c) Offer advice and opinions
   d) Talk online more often

   By offering advice and/or opinions with their teammates, employees will show that they are comfortable sharing their thoughts and information. When they are open, other members will follow suit and begin to open up to other teammates.

Module Eleven: Review Questions

3. Teleworkers can feel isolated from the group because of what?

    a) The large group of people
    b) The separate offices
    c) Their lack of talent
    d) The lack of management

    When teleworkers have to work in separate offices from other group members, they can begin to feel isolated from the group and may not feel like a member of the team.

4. What is one way a manager can help prevent the feeling of isolation in teleworkers?

    a) Email them once in a while
    b) Fill them in on meetings they may have missed
    c) Transfer them to a new office
    d) Include them in more group activities

    As a manager, you can help teleworkers feel less isolated by including them in more group conversations and activities. This can include group meetings, video calls, or simple mass email letters.

Module Eleven: Review Questions

5. Teleworkers can feel as though they are always in the office because why?

   a) They love their job
   b) They work where they live
   c) They have to work weekends
   d) They work on holidays

   Teleworkers often work from home, which means 'the office' is in the same place they call home. Sometimes these lines can run together and the employee can feel as though they are always in the office rather than at their home.

6. What is one way employees can feel separated from both work and home?

   a) Use two different computers
   b) Sleep in a separate house
   c) Take breaks and lunches away from the home
   d) Move the office somewhere else

   Since teleworkers can feel like their office is blending with home life, it is encouraged that employees take a break or lunch outside of the office and the home if possible to fully separate themselves from the area. If not, simply close off the office and do not return until break is over or until the next day to go to work.

Module Eleven: Review Questions

7. If the manager delivers a lack of feedback, the employee can begin to feel what?

    a) Hopeful
    b) Proud
    c) Bored
    d) Unconfident

    Feedback is a great tool to suggest improvements or give praise. When it is delayed or not delivered at all, employees can begin to feel unsure and unconfident about their performance and productivity.

8. What is one way a manager can ensure timely feedback to the employee?

    a) Prepare feedback ahead of time
    b) Deliver feedback once a year
    c) Keep the feedback short
    d) Type it up in an email

    When a manager prepares feedback ahead of time, the information is ready to be presented and does not have to be delayed. Managers do not feel as though they will need to take extra time to gather the information. This often works best with scheduled feedback sessions or evaluations.

Module Eleven: Review Questions

9. What was one problem Cheryl was worried about Deb facing as a teleworker?

   a) Having too much work
   b) Feeling bored
   c) Feeling isolated
   d) Having trouble with computers

   Cheryl knew that teleworkers can often feel isolated and lonely, so she took extra time to communicate with Deb and help her in her adjustment.

10. What was one tip Cheryl gave Deb in order to help her as a teleworker?

   a) Take breaks outside the office
   b) Work long hours
   c) Email teammates often
   d) Buy comfortable furniture

   Cheryl advised Deb to always take her breaks outside of her office area in order to feel like she can separate herself from the office and get away once in a while.

Module Twelve: Wrapping Up

Although this workshop is coming to a close, we hope that your journey to improve your Telework and Telecommuting skills is just beginning.

The secret to winning is constant, consistent management.

Tom Landry

Words from the Wise

Margaret Carty: *The nice thing about teamwork is that you always have someone on your side.*

Henry Ford: *Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is a success.*

Babe Ruth: *The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime.*