

# Working Remotely

Inspired People Solutions | COVID-19 Response



**2020**

## A message from Inspired People Solutions

Inspired People Solutions aims to equip you to respond to the rapidly changing external environment with the COVID-19 virus. In doing so, we are deeply committed to the health and well-being of our Community, and that of our Clients, Members and Stakeholders.

On behalf of Inspired People Solutions we are actively working on the most appropriate solutions for our Community. As part of our Business Continuity Plan (BCP) a host of information and support material is available to ensure you are informed, alert and feel safe and supported during this time.

Here's some links to help you stay informed, but also assist you with managing your workforce, team, and for those that have changing environments at home:

[HR & Manager's Information](#)

[PodCast on Remote Ready & Working from Home](#)

[Community Page – this is for Tools, Tips, Tricks but also resources for Employees working at home](#)

We will continue to curate external resources to keep you informed of the latest developments and expert advice. We have a Manager's ToolKit for Working Remotely, and if your Managers are new to having Team Members work remotely, this is a Guide that will assist them.

We will continue to work with you to understand your concerns and needs. A key focus is to empower you to work flexibly and to remain productive for your own wellbeing and as part of a collective effort to limit the impact that the COVID-19 virus. We have worked with our Community to provide you with this Guide to embrace the opportunity to work differently, embrace change and continue to provide value, community, connection and work satisfaction and adaptation to our Community. We are all in this together and Inspired People Solutions' aim is to continue to support, encourage, empower, equip and assist you during this time. This is a Guide to assist you during this time, please obtain your own independent legal advice and use as much of the information provided for your use.

Stay Safe, Healthy & Empowered,

**Helen Butler**

**Inspired People Solutions**

## Empowering Employees to work differently & Managers to manage differently

With the COVID-19 virus impacting how people live and work across the globe, we enter into unprecedented times as a Community. To ensure health and safety of all, we each have a role to play in reducing the spread of this virus.

The arrival of COVID-19 has fast tracked our need to create approaches, systems and processes that enable flexible working. These changes include empowering people to perform their roles in more contemporary and connected ways – including flexible, ways of working, and operating in ambiguous times.

As a first priority is to have you working safely at home. We are here to enable you to work remotely. Firstly with infrastructure: physical & IT and then with connectivity support to enable you to work cohesively with your Team at Home. Following that, we will support collaboration and connection across a remote workforce.

We are enabling these changes at a rapid pace, and we have set up [ highlight your IT capabilities to work from home ] .



## Resources



**Regular COVID-19 updates from your Head of Safety & Head of P&C**



**Online Wellbeing resources** [ insert link to you own internal sources ]



**Our EAP provider [ insert name ] providing support for individuals and their families through virtual counselling**



**A list curated [external resources](#)**



**Guides & Checklists that will support your transition to work remotely**

## Here's a Snapshot to Working from Home

### Team leader guide to working from home

#### Supporting your team

There are a few things you can do as a people leader to keep your team engaged and connected.

##### Clear check ins

Be very clear with your team how and when you expect them to communicate and check in. Sometimes it will be for them to drop a short video in your Group Chat about what they are doing and have planned. Sometimes it will be a hangout all together. Be clear about what you want and have your team participate.

##### Helping your team

Be mindful of challenges people may have. Discuss with each Team Member individually what their current situation is at home. Be flexible to commit to a change in hours, outcomes, job-sharing, project deadlines. Continue to support mental and physical wellbeing at home.

##### Prevent burnout

Some people may end up putting in more hours and working harder when they're at home. Monitor this. Don't let people burn out. Make sure breaks are taken, welfare checks are made by you and by your Team. We would recommend you listen to Amy Phillips PodCast about defining team roles – Do-ers, Thinkers, Carers.

##### Call outs

Let your team know they're doing a good job. Tell them you appreciate their adaptability and hard work.

##### Personal touches

Check in personally with your direct reports and ensure they check in with their teammates too. Not just about work – anything that's important to them. Remember, we have no collective Kitchen anymore – let's start with the Virtual Cup of Team chats with your Team.

#### Opportunities

Can any good come from this? Perhaps. Think about opportunities.

##### 1 Creativity

You could get some amazing creative ideas from your team.

##### 2 Productivity

Less meetings and distractions. Lots of focussed work will get done. Work will be prioritised. We'll focus more on what matters.

##### 3 Self leadership

Team members will need to self-manage and self-motivate. Some will really step up!

##### 4 Less travel

Some people may get two hours a day back without travelling. Less stress – more work for some.

##### 5 Rehearsal

This is a rehearsal for the future of work. It could change us forever.

##### 6 Technology

Those with less appetite for technology may need more support and patience.

## Helpful leader habits

I start my day by emailing my team a quick update on any key priorities and words of encouragement or praise



Even though I have less face to face meetings I'm still using my outlook calendar to schedule my time



We have a regular scheduled 10am Huddle. It's been great to see how my team (and their pets) are keen to be a part of this



Our team has a WhatsApp group that they use to check in on each other



# Self leadership guide to working from home

## Productive home worker habits

These six habits can help your team continually have productive working days.

### 1 Prepare

Prepare as you would for a normal work day.

### 2 Exercise

Make sure you get outside for some exercise.

### 3 Take breaks

Take breaks as and when required (we highly recommend every hour).

### 4 Work station

Set your workspace up the best way for you, remember the screen on your laptop should be eye level.

### 5 Make lists

Write a to do and done list and share it with a colleague/team.

### 6 Keep productive

Split your day up into 'productivity chunks' of 45/90 minutes.

## Working remotely as a team

These six tips can help your team be productive, motivated and connected.

### Catchup online

Meet online via Skype, Trello, FaceTime, Messenger, Zoom etc to create community and share perspectives.

### Talk

Don't just rely on email – if people live alone they may not talk to anyone all day.

### Check ins

Don't forget to share non-work things and check in team mates' wellbeing.

### Music

Use music to create a productive and calming atmosphere at home.

### Scheduled breaks

Schedule a time for everyone to take a break.

## Helpful team habits

I've set up a WFH desk in our spare room and enjoy the productivity of being away from shared living spaces



I use my calendar to block time and schedule case reviews or QAs with colleagues as I would normally do



If I have to work offline I let my team know so that they can text or call me if they need something



Sometimes family commitments pop up, I work around this by keeping my manager up to date and tailoring my work hours to fit



## A change to how you think about working flexibly

There are some common misbeliefs and assumptions about how we work from home or flexibly.

We need to challenge the widespread perception that “face time,” “presenteeism,” or visibility in the office automatically equals productivity. Below are examples of these assumptions:



- People won't work as hard if they are at home alone
- We won't get as much done if we aren't all in the same room
- It's unprofessional if people have family members or kids at home
- We won't be as productive if we aren't all together as a team

If we examine this idea of 'getting work done', research on working flexibly typically demonstrates a 30% uplift in productivity.

At Inspired People Solutions we would encourage you to manage by output, not how long someone is at their desk for. Let's recalibrate WHAT we do with HOW we do it. Managing to KPI's prove its not all about presenteeism.

Working remotely presents great opportunities and efficiencies in new and productive ways of working.

It's time to develop a fresh mindset about flexible work, to develop mutual trust with your Manager and Team, and to take a results driven approach to your role and contribution to your Team.

We have flexible working arrangements in place already and refer you to our Working From Home Policy.

This guide will provide practical information to working virtually, the ground rules we use at Inspired People Solutions and encourage feedback conversations, healthy routines and collaboration within your Team and the organisation as a whole.

## The 'ground rules' of working remotely

Working remotely, whether from home or another location, can be an effective alternative to office-based work. To make this work, we need to be clear about our expectations and 'rules of the game'. There are four key elements to ensure:



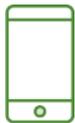
Recognise that a relationship of trust, respect, open communication and clearly defined deliverables is essential for success.



Accept that the success of remote working will be the shared responsibility of Employees and their Managers.



Encourage remote workers to disengage at the end of the work-day and maintain appropriate work-life balance.



Proactively leverage evolving collaboration tools and technologies to effectively team when being onsite in an office location isn't possible.



## Staying connected to your team

Connect regularly with your Manager and Team, and develop a shared understanding of your operating rhythm as a remote team.

This should include being clear on how you will agree on availability and response times, including an understanding of what is 'urgent' versus 'important'.

If you have regular times when you will be unavailable (i.e., caring responsibilities, morning run) let your team and leader know.

Think about the right channel for the type of communication and connection you want, and use a mix throughout the day. Most people like to have morning stand-ups or huddles. Everyone should check in on this meeting, and if some can't, leaving a video message with your update is important.

For example, for quick questions use the Instant Messaging (chat) feature on Skype, Messenger, Slack or Trello, rather than sending longer emails or phone calls. For deeper discussion, pick up the phone to a team member. It is critical during COVID-19 to talk more than ever. Picking up the phone and chatting to your Team Members will be critical for collaboration, consultation and also, increase team cohesiveness and output.

In your virtual meetings, consider how you can use different tools, like Trello, Zoom, FaceTime, Messenger or Skype and make sure you use the mute feature when you are not speaking to reduce background noise.

Encourage all team members to contribute to discussions. Respect all voices. Keep up your regular 1:1s with your leader and prioritise your feedback conversations.

You can get creative and use virtual technology for team building activities or celebrations as well (e.g. team birthdays, recognition and 'magic moments' for a job well done).

For tips on how to manage remotely, listen to our [PodCasts](#) who talks about role definitions and the strengths to play to within a Team and how to work remotely successfully.



One last tip when working from home. You do not need to take your Laptop or Phone into the bathroom whilst you're on a Group Call or any call for that matter, video or otherwise 😊

## A healthy routine

Set up a routine that works for You, your Manager, your Team and your Stakeholders/Customers. Outside the traditional office structure, your day may feel more fluid. Be proactive in planning your tasks, responsibilities and communication.

Ensure there are regular 'check ins' with your Manager and Team each week or day. Ensure you and your Manager are clear on exactly what and when you will be delivering. Being aligned on expected outputs will be important when you are working in different locations.

Stay connected with your team all day through [ Skype, Zoom,Trello etc ].

One of the traps people fall into when working flexibly or working from home is that they do not take proper breaks. We would encourage you to set your alarm for every hour at a maximum. Please stand up, stretch, take your dog for a walk around the block, go and get a cup of tea and stretch!

Here's some links to help get you through the day.

- [5 Minute Desk Yoga](#)
- [Desk stretches guide Desk stretches](#)

If you have Kids at Home with you through CVOID-19, here's some stretches and interaction you can have with them during your breaks.

- [Hip Hop Dance](#)
- [Yoga for Adults & Kids](#)



## A healthy routine – Practical Tips

### What you can do to ensure you're a productive remote worker

**Keeping healthy boundaries is really important.**

Working remotely means some of us will work at different times of the day, including evenings. This makes sense as you are not commuting or entering and leaving work anymore. Do what works for you but let your Manager and Colleagues know your pattern of work.

**Be mindful to 'switch off'.**

We already live in an 'always on' world with our smart devices and email. Inspired People Solutions encourages you to create healthy boundaries between your office set up at home and your private time. Here are some tips to help you along the way.



I use my Apple watch to remind me to stand and take breaks otherwise I'd sit for 10 straight hours!

Our team have set ourselves a step challenge to take at least 6000 steps in a day.

My kids are home and my husband's sick. My team are really understanding and know I'll get things done later in the day.

My Wi-Fi is failing so I'll work offline this morning. People text or call me if they need something and I've let my leader know what I'm working on.

## Customer focus, support and connection

As COVID-19 forces more and more of us to work flexibly and remotely, some of your Stakeholders and Clients will value more interaction with you. If you can add value with them on tips and things that have helped you set up working remotely, we would encourage you to do so. Now is the time for connectedness, a personal touch goes along way. Ask them how they are going with the change and transition.



### Key Messages for Customers

- ✓ Business as usual
- ✓ We are here to support our Community
- ✓ We are considerate and calm in listening to their needs and solving their problems
- ✓ We are caring and empathetic

Our Stakeholders and Clients are also navigating uncertain times, it is important we give consistent messages in our response to the current COVID-19 situation.

Let's be proactive, caring and set expectations to ensure you maintain their trust and support.

## Setting up your virtual office

Identify a focused workspace in your home, with good ergonomics, light and sound. Find a space away from 'high traffic' zones in your house if possible especially if you have family members or house-mates coming and going. If you live with others, using signals to show you're in focused work time is useful, even if this is just closing a door.



With enhanced flexibility comes enhanced responsibility to ensure that we each continue to practice good security behaviours will all of our data and information. There are simple things you can do to make sure you practice good security when working remotely.

1. Ensure your computer has the latest updates installed.
2. Take your laptop, power adapter, headset, mouse any ergonomic requirements home with you each night. Leave monitors, cables, adaptors in the office.
3. Read and understand Inspired People Solutions' IT, OHS and Working from Home Policy.
4. Learn how to use our digital collaboration tools.
5. Know how to connect to Inspired People Solution's Virtual Private Network (VPN).
6. You will need to have access to our shared drives.
7. Ensure you have appropriate data, and wifi access at your home. During CVOID-19, if you require more data, follow this link to your Telco to arrange to have an upgrade in data, if so required. Also, please feel free to touch base with our IT Business Partner, Jay Cooper of Phat Pixel who will help you with your IT needs. <https://www.whistleout.com.au/.../every-telco-COVID-19-corona...>

## Working Remotely | A Checklist for Implementation

Lastly, consider sharing the following tips and resources with Managers and Employees to help them be successful while working remotely.

- Designate a workspace for focus in your home
- Develop a daily routine | Write your To-Do List and chunk out your diary for allocation of those Tasks | DO NOT forget to set your Timer for every hour to ensure you get up and stretch at those times.
- Embrace technology tools for collaboration
- Communicate frequently with your Manager & Team
- Communicate openly with your Clients
- Do not over-rely on email/instant messenger – use the phone to ring your colleagues
- Remain contactable
- Block your calendar for “working time” and set targets for productivity
- Dedicate time for informal social interactions
- Regularly review your performance with your Manager



Inspired People Solutions has a Guide for Managers on how to manage a flexible workforce. If, during COVID-19, you move to renegotiating hours, flexible working arrangements with your Team, please let us know as we can provide you with Checklists, How-To Guides and information to make this transition an easy one for you.

## External resources

### Working remotely

[Working remotely without going stir crazy](#)

[Getting Started with Remote Working](#)

[Webinars on Working Remotely](#)

### Exercises

[Best Stretches for Office Workers](#)

[10 Best Stretches for Office Workers](#)

[29 Exercises You Can Do At \(Or Near\) Your Desk](#)

[Stretches for office workers](#)

[‘Workout in Your Workplace’](#)

### COVID-19

[Cognitive bias and impact of COVID-19](#)

[Coping with Coronavirus anxiety](#)

[Beyond Blue](#)

### Working with Kids @ Home

[Community Help & Resources](#)

[Education Resources](#)

[Fun & Activities](#)