

Work@Home Checklist for Employers



MAINTAINING BUSINESS CONTINUITY

While it's not necessary to replicate the office setting, here's how you can help your employees to set up a work@home environment that is comfortable and functional – and supported with the right toolkit to ensure business continuity.



STAFF ENVIRONMENT PREPARATION

- Technology toolkit** (laptop/desktop, monitor, headphones, cell phone)
- Furniture** – work surface and chair (with best ergonomic positioning)
- Space** – separate, with a door if possible (noise, privacy, minimize distraction)
- Window/Natural Light** (wellness)
- Privacy screen** for laptop/monitor (security)
- Set boundaries and protocols** with others sharing the space re the physical work environment
- Issue communication** from Occupational Health and Safety on best practices and how to report incidents

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

- Primary communication** – ensure staff access to the organization's Intranet or Blacksite where they can go for up-to-date key messages
- Reporting remote issues** – use collaboration tools to report issues - technical or otherwise - and solicit feedback (e.g. Yammer, Slack); ensure responses are swift and shared
- Checking in** – ask managers to engage staff on a daily basis at first; define expectations for virtual "presence"
- Virtual training on communication tools and usage** – ensure staff know how to use instant messaging and chat apps (e.g. MS Teams, Slack, Yammer, Jabber), and video conferencing (e.g. RingCentral, WebEx, Zoom, GoToMeeting) to help people stay connected and provide peer-to-peer support

ENABLING TECHNOLOGY

- Deploy a technology toolkit** (identify essential tools: laptop, cell phone, headphones)
- Access to needed systems** (security key, network, intranet, email, shared files, collaboration tools, audio-video conferencing)
- Support services** (tech support online via dedicated email, collaboration tools, phone hotline, ticketing system)
- Go digital** (reduce paper usage – use electronic document transfer, repositories, scanning)
- Bandwidth** – rotate server access if needed by introducing an access protocol (e.g. by department, alpha by name, essential/core/non essential access rights etc.)
- Training** – online training for secure logins, accessing files, use of collaboration tools, instant messaging, video conferencing, etc.

MANAGER/SUPERVISOR ROLE

- Exhibit the most important behaviours** – communication, trust, empathy
- Must keep the work of the organization going** by planning in advance the work of each of their team members, helping them figure out how to get it done, and ensuring it gets done
- Manage to outcomes/results** – includes setting goals and measuring performance against these goals and results
- Define expectations** regarding virtual presence, tools usage – how often, when used (e.g. video conferencing, collaboration tools, shared documents)
- Set routines** – e.g. maintain weekly team meetings, one-on-one sessions, etc.
- Ensure equal participation**
- Encourage others to share experiences**, be responsible to maintain connections and the important "small talk"
- Communication is King** – need to be deliberate in connecting with people! Stay connected with the team and don't virtually disappear

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TRAINING

- Managers** - virtual training to teach how to manage change, manage to outcomes, remain connected with their teams, express trust and empathy, and collaborate in new ways
- Employees** - virtual training to teach how to maintain communication, collaborate virtually, keep leaders informed on their work performance, take initiative and practice self-care



REMOTE MEETINGS – BEST PRACTICES

- Remote login** added to every meeting invite at time of creation
- Encourage use of video** (not just audio)
- Establish who is present**
- Speak clearly and reduce background noise** (use headsets)
- Identify yourself when speaking**
- Address people by name**
- Take turns chairing/facilitating** in order to build participant confidence
- Have a back up plan** when the tech doesn't work, move to it quickly



DAILY KICK STARTERS FOR STAFF

- Plan your day in advance**
- Get dressed and be camera ready**
- Check emails** to see if anything has changed overnight
- Set your status** (online indicator)
- Know where/when others are working**
- Connect with your manager/team mates**



PROCESS INNOVATION

- Simplify approval processes** (move to electronic signatures for authorization/approvals)
- Identify candidate processes** to streamline (e.g. through online reviews, using collaboration tools)
- Set up electronic repositories** and file sharing (e.g. Sharepoint, Dropbox)



STAFF SELF-CARE

- Encourage mobility at home** (move around, change seated positions, go for walks)
- Set a work routine** (hours online and available, time for focus work, planning breaks)
- Connect with colleagues regularly** (use collaboration tools such as Yammer or Slack)



POLICY ALIGNMENT

- Review existing policies that touch work@home activities** – e.g. telecommute policy, IT security policy, reimbursable expenses policy, etc.
- Define policy and process for employees requesting equipment and supplies** – ensure recipient(s) of requests are equipped to respond, and action accordingly
- Adjust policies as needed** to reflect the new reality, replacing either temporarily or permanently
- Reissue policies** to all employees, ensuring well communicated, well understood, and in place
- Provide employees contact information** with regulatory authorities to follow up on work@home tax implications



UNDERSTAND EMPLOYEES' EVOLVING NEEDS

- Deploy a virtual workstyle survey** to see how your employees want to work and how they're enabled, as well as the triple bottom line impact to your business
- Issue regular pulse-check surveys** to gauge the temperature of your workforce and identify evolving needs
- Engage staff** in contests and competitions to identify the most creative solutions to remote challenges
- Appoint champions** to monitor remote protocols and their effectiveness and recommend refinements (bi-weekly or monthly intervals)



TRANSITIONING BACK TO THE "NEW NORMAL"

- Recognize aspects of remote working that proved beneficial and incorporate into your organization's "new normal"
- Modify previous protocols, processes and policies as needed to reflect the benefits realization
- Identify opportunities for your physical work environment to support new ways of working
- Solicit staff feedback and seek staff support in implementing the "new normal"



Reduce the chaos as much as possible: provide the needed tools, clear protocols and expectations, stay connected with your employees, show empathy and be real - wellness is as important as being functional for business continuity!

About AWE

AWE (Agile Work Evolutions Inc.) is North America's leading firm of remote work specialists.

For **virtual help** with your work@home strategy or implementation, please contact us at 1-819-712-2646 or info@agileworkevolutions.com.