



Top 5 Strategies for Working From Home

Stay focused on collaborating with best practices for telecommuting.

Take on Telecommuting with Tactical Tips and Strategic Oversight.

Due to COVID-19, you've likely had to make the radical shift from a centralized corporate location to working from home (WFH), literally overnight.

Whether you're a newcomer to the telework scene or already telecommuting, **take advantage of the key WFH strategies found in this guide outlined below:**

Are you an IT Manager planning to launch a telecommuting program?

Contact us to discover how:

learnmore@yorktel.com



Environment



Tools



Preparation



Security



Balance

WFH Strategy #1:

Be mindful of your environment.

- ✓ **Pick a noise-free room.** With schools closed you don't want the kids playing directly above your home office. Choose a dedicated workspace that will keep you focused and productive.
- ✓ **Find the right background.** Remember, when using video try to have a single-color background, such as a solid color wall behind you. It's OK to show 'character' or add color with plants but keep it professional. At a minimum, avoid clutter or distracting artwork.
- ✓ **Lights, camera, action.** Lighting is critical when setting your work stage. Windows can overwhelm your camera if they're either behind you or to your side. Most digital cameras will adjust for low light but make sure to shine light on, and in front of, the star of the show — you.
- ✓ **Check your internet speeds.** You should have 1-4 MBps for your internet up and down. Any less and you will have challenges. If you work in a creative industry and you are looking at high definition content-sharing or streaming, you may need as much as 5-8 MBps. Boost your Internet through your ISP if your current speeds aren't up to snuff.
- ✓ **Check your router health.** If your router is over 5 years old, now is a good time to upgrade. Newer, multi-band routers allow you to segment your wireless network into two — 2.4 GHz and 5GHz — and are also good at managing wireless throughput on your home network. If you don't have a new router, make sure your current router is running the latest version of its firmware, which will also address any security issues.



WFH Strategy #2:

Use the 'right tools' to get the job done.

- ✓ **Have a dedicated work computer** solely for telecommuting. You won't want to be mixing personal and professional devices, and your company might not allow use of a personal PC for security reasons.
- ✓ **Get a universal docking station.** A docking station or USB hub will give you enough ports to expand your connectivity to accommodate multiple displays to increase productivity.
- ✓ **Buy the right monitor... or two.** Having the right-sized screen can have a huge impact on productivity and is easier on the eyes. Make sure your displays are eye-level. Just because you're WFH doesn't mean that ergonomics, and ultimately your back/neck, should suffer.
- ✓ **Choose the right webcam and headset.** Having the right equipment will streamline your video conferencing experience and productivity. Test run them before a call to make sure all is in working order. It's great to have good equipment, but if they can't hear you, it doesn't work. Poly and Jabra make great wireless headsets, but if you want to be simple and certain during uncertain times, get a good old-fashioned wired headset.
- ✓ **Same goes for your keyboard and mouse.** Pick a combination that is designed for your type of work. Wired or wireless? Multi-device connectivity? Gamer options?

Check broadband speeds with your ISP. Providers are lifting broadband service caps to accommodate the increased demand due to COVID-19.

Say Cheese!

Not to state the obvious, but remember – when you're on a video call, people can see what you're doing.

Don't answer your email, text your friend, or get distracted by the latest social media while you're on a call. Close down all windows except the one your video conferencing app is running.

WFH Strategy #3:

Come prepared — trial before you dial.

- ✓ **Be familiar with how to select cameras and microphones** on your device. This usually happens when you join the meeting. It is best to have any external mics or cameras plugged in before you access the meeting.
- ✓ Try joining your desktop client **ahead of time** to make sure you're up and running by your specified meeting time. Set up a test call with a colleague and practice muting and unmuting.
- ✓ Content-sharing is always a challenge. Get on a call with a friend, share content with the app, and familiarize yourself with sharing your screen or just one window on your device. **Be a native before you get on your first call** so you don't share something you didn't intend.



WFH Strategy #4:

Take measures to minimize security risks.

- ✓ **Talk to your IT team.** Do they have approved tools in place today that you can leverage?
- ✓ **Perform a complete technology audit.** Your IT team will understand the nuances to **getting your home office tech exactly correct**. Take advantage of their knowledge and ask for help to get where you want to be.
- ✓ **Are you adhering to your company's security policies?** Find out what they are and ensure you're compliant. You don't want to be the security weak point falls victim to malware or hackers.
- ✓ Make sure your antivirus and anti-malware applications are enabled, up-to-date, and actively monitoring your home office devices.
- ✓ **Does your company use a VPN?** Use it for ALL business collaboration and communication. And make sure other telecommuters have the correct privileges to use it.
- ✓ **Do you know how to phish?** Make sure you know how to recognize, act and report any scam/phishing attempts.
- ✓ **Repeat. Talk to your IT team.** Not all telecommuting tools are equal. Some are encrypted, some are not, and some companies don't care. Assume your company does care. Ensure your work from home experience **conforms to all workplace policies**, especially any new ones that have been announced as part of your new telecommuting program.

Does your company use multi-factor authentication?

Many companies are expected to trend toward implementing additional automated encrypted connections, permissions, and access reviews as a means of boosting security during this time of transition.

WFH Strategy #5: Maintain your work-life balance.

When you're not on a call, focus-friendly music can help you ignore distractions and keep your attention on the task at hand. Avoid music with lyrics/ words or play some white/pink noise.

- ✓ **Keep distinct boundaries.** Moving work into your home can blur the lines between work life and home life. Dedicated boundaries will help you stay present in each realm.
- ✓ **Step away. Grab some coffee. Go for a walk.** Remember to take breaks during the day and practice self-care. Lift your eyes from your desktop every 20 minutes and focus on an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds to give them a rest. Wouldn't you take a break if you were in the office? Home shouldn't be any different.
- ✓ **Stay connected with colleagues.** Telecommuting can be isolating. Leverage today's Modern Workplace tools that encourage instant chat and videoconferencing. Take advantage of these ways to keep close to colleagues.
- ✓ **Log off all the way at the end of the day.** Turn off your home office device at close of business and don't look at it again until the next morning (barring a fastball project or pressing deadline). The temptation to check in and be "always on" can blur the distinction between work life and home life.



Looking for support from an Enterprise Collaboration Partner?

Let Yorktel be your trusted advisor for telecommuting. We've supported remote working for over 30-years and partnered with industry leaders:

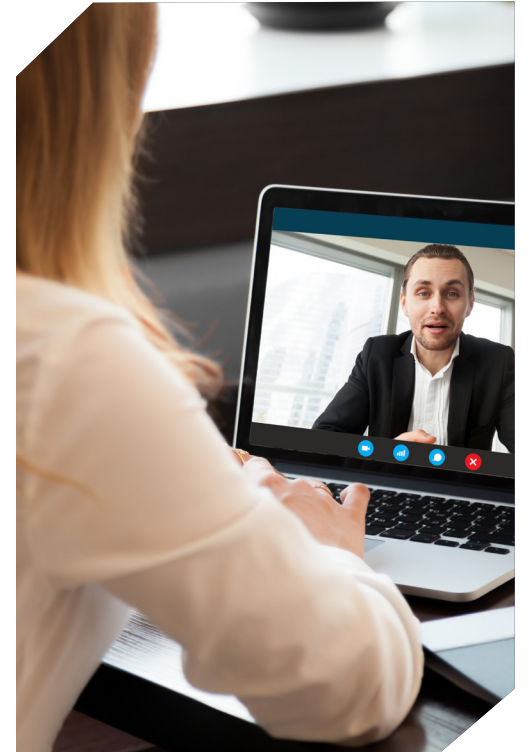
BlueJeans

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 Microsoft Teams

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to launch a
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to discover how we
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