

Julián Pérez • May 2020

📷 Tokyo Skytree as seen from Bunkyo City Hall (2016)

Remoting for Humans

(According to my own experience)



Agenda

27 slides • ~45 min.

1. Analyze Pros and Cons, Is it for me?
2. Prepare Physically, Technically, Mentally, Legalities
3. Hunt CV, Searching, Applying, Interviewing, Offers
4. Work Expectations, Day-to-day, Momentum
5. Thrive Motivation, Work-life balance, Self-improvement

Summary

AMA



PDF with these slides

About me

julianperez.me

- BE-CS Univalle (2009)
- Python, Web apps, APIs, Start-ups
- 3 yr. at local enterprises, then quit and tried my 1st start-up (2012)
- 2 yr. as remote freelancer + remote employee of a digital agency
- 6 yr. as remote employee of 4 US start-ups (since 2014)
- 1 around-the-world travel, 2 cats, 3 beers today
- Currently using my own advice to get a new job



My website

Analyze

1. Analyze

Pros and cons of working remotely

- You get to decide *everything* –where, when, how many hr.
- No more commute or traffic, dress code, rigid break times
- Split your days how you please and find your most productive self
- You will feel lonely –you will, eventually
- You may lose some perks
- Struggle for a non-interrupted environment

1. Analyze

Is it right for me then?

- It *is*... if the pros excite you and you can overcome the cons
- It *is*... if you are aware of the challenges and plan how to conquer them
- It *is*... if you're willing to invest and prepare
- It *is not*... if you're happy with with your current role and conditions
- It *is not*... if you prefer face-to-face social interactions
- It *is not*... if your job is not suitable –you can still give it a try anyway

Prepare

2. Prepare

Physically -(home) office setup

- A solid Internet connection is a must –use your mobile phone as back-up
- Get the best chair+desk combo you can afford
- Get a solid headphones+mic combo –get a 2nd pair as back-up
- Get as much light and ventilation as possible
- Using external devices help your body and make you more productive
- A notebook + pen or a whiteboard can be useful
- Arrange and change everything until you feel comfortable

2. Prepare

Technically –skillset

- Setup your local environment with relevant apps, frameworks, libraries
- Learn in-depth about your future tech stack –e.g. do X language tutorials
- Reserve some time to study and improve your CS skills
- Solve algorithm challenges on a regular basis
- Learn how to automate things via scripting
- Stay up to date with relevant sources –websites, blogs, education platforms

2. Prepare

Mentally –mindset

- It will get lonely –embrace it and don't let it drag you down
- You will need more discipline –no one ‘checking out’ if you're working
- You will need to optimize your time better –prioritizing things
- You will need to be more proactive
- You will need to be better at splitting your personal time off from work time
- It can be uncertain, especially to begin –prepare for that in all fronts

2. Prepare

Legalities

- Get advice on local regulations to double-check your tax implications
- A US or European bank account will make things easier –get one if you can
- If working for a US company, have your W8BEN form ready
- Let your employer know that you will handle your own healthcare and taxes

Hunt

3. Hunt

Preparing a CV

- One-page is best –fight the urge to add more info
- Recommended sections:
summary, experiences, education, languages, talks, remarkable achievements
- Summary:
personal statement about yourself, highlighting skills (present), your overall experience (past) and your interests (future)
- Elaborate while interviewing, not on your résumé
- Keep it always up to date



My CV

3. Hunt

Searching for opportunities

- Keep a list of remote jobs websites:
angel.co/jobs –for startups
remoteok.io
weworkremotely.com
stackoverflow.com/jobs
- Your LinkedIn network is a solid source as well, referrals matter a lot.
Keep it clean, with relevant people –e.g. founders, CTOs, heads of HR
- Discover new sources and check them weekly
- Don't discard internships, if you can afford them –it can get you a future job

3. Hunt

Applying

- Do your research and take notes:
company's product, business model, team, key people, industry, competitors
- Personalize your cover letter, always
- Have an updated CV and reference websites –LinkedIn, GitHub, personal
- Write follow-up messages to stay in touch
- Track each company you apply for and check references –Glassdoor, OSS contributions, tweets, HN
- Repeat until you have interviews

3. Hunt

Interviewing

- Keep polishing your CS skills and do mock interviews if possible
- Prepare answers for possible Qs and design your own Qs to them
- Do your research and update your notes:
interview steps, people involved, company's values, mission+vision, biz health
- Don't panic: each interview prepares you for the next
- Again, write follow-up messages to stay in touch
- Try to align all processes' timing as possible
- Repeat until you have offers

3. Hunt

About offers

- Only written offers count.
Get everything written down: salary, equity, vacations, perks, bonuses...
- Try to align all offers' timing as possible
- Set a deadline for you to decide and communicate it
- Pick the one that aligns with *your goals* the most
- If asked, don't hide a company's offer from the others.
It's a negotiation, it can help you –get your new 'wins' written down
- Send a 'Thank you' note to other offers and ongoing processes

Work

4. Work

A day in the life

- Imagine you're in a regular office –wake up early, bathe and dress properly
- You will have a schedule –most likely a relaxed one, but still a schedule
- Within that schedule, find and establish your *working hours* and enforce them
- Create a routine around it and stick to it
- Communicate as much as possible with your teammates
- If you feel stuck, it's OK to take breaks and try again later

4. Work

Finding momentum

- You are more productive on some parts of the day –seize them!
- Allocate those times for the intellectually-challenging activities and concentrate
- Let the other times for emails, messaging and websites
- Split your tasks as much as possible to score several wins a day
- Avoid interruptions
- Turn off notifications as much as possible

Thrive

5. Thrive

Motivation

- Having top-performance everyday is impossible
- You're gonna have bad days –accept it and manage them
- It's all about maximizing your *good days* and minimizing your *bad days*
- Find the things you enjoy the most at your current role and pursue them
- *Boring* things are also inevitable.
Accept it as well, tackle them fast and move on.
- The moment you stop enjoying, identify what needs to change and *do it*

5. Thrive

Work-life balance

- Allocate time for non-work-related activities you enjoy, or get a (new) hobby
- Remember to enforce your *working hours*. Especially with yourself and with your partner, family and friends.
- Go outside when possible
- Take vacations and travel when possible
- Stay in touch with you loved ones –hopefully in person
- Don't disconnect from the world

5. Thrive

Improve yourself

- Invest in tools that make you more productive and healthy
- Your physical *you* matters –exercise, go to the doctor, eat and sleep well
- Your mental *you* matters –meditate, read books, detox, find peace
- Your emotional *you* matters –your relationships with yourself, others and the world
- Learn, learn and keep learning –e.g. a new language like Elixir or Portuguese
- Don't get stuck in your comfort zone

Wrapping up

Summary

- Working remotely is not for everybody
- Not as easy as it looks –requires preparation
- Getting a job is an exhausting, time-consuming task –plan accordingly
- Find your momentum, one day at a time
- Stay motivated, value your time, invest in yourself

AMA



Last chance to get the PDF!



Or to see my website

Thanks!

Feel free to ping me afterwards:
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