An Employees Guide to

Remote Readiness Best Practices

SLASSCOM

THE IT-BPO AND KNOWLEDGE SERVICES INDUSTRY CHAMBER

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With the pandemic outbreak almost every organization has to rethink the way they operate, it could be from digital transformation, flexible work, working from home strategies and how the organizational structure would look like beyond pandemic.

It is evident that remote work is productive, and it's the best alternative in the current pandemic, since Sri Lanka is experiencing the second wave of the Covid pandemic presently. In addition working from home has been adapted not only in the IT-BPM sector, also with other sectors such as banks, government offices, apparel sector etc.

In this context SLASSCOM HR forum has carried out a survey to understand work from home dynamics in relation to the Sri Lankan workforce. Survey was carried out to gauge the perspectives of employers and employees. In this report it covers both survey findings and the best practices of remote working to be adhered by employees and employers.

1 Remove Isolation, Increase Collaboration in relation to Work

Embrace technology tools for collaboration. Frequently communicate with your manager and team members regarding work.

Allocate time with your team members to have informal chats and catch up in a similar way you would do at office. Have specified times for informal social interactions to take place.

Remain contactable by colleagues, clients and business partners. Remember to communicate openly with clients

Also, when communicating don't rely too much on email/ instant messaging, try to directly call using the phone, teams or google hangouts.

2 Work Station and Work Environment

Designate a workspace to be utilized in your home, in home office space, this will help compartmentalize work and home.

Workstation should be close to access plug point/ extension cords where you can charge electronic devices.

Have good daylight coming into the room and also good ventilation is vital.

It's good to have an acceptable wardrobe for meetings with clients/ partners which requires video.

3 Managing Stress

Take a break once in two hours, move away from the workstation. Look around for green and sunlight whenever possible.

Resting, getting enough sleep, drinking less caffeine, and getting sufficient exercise each day is beneficial.

Work towards mini goals and also spend time on your preferred hobbies which can be done from home which can help elevate mood and reduce stress in general.

Set Up Your Home Office

Having a space in the house purely for work can help you get into the right mindset. Working in leisure spaces like the bedroom or the couch can hamper productivity because the brain associates it with sleep or rest.

4 **Worklife Balance**

Develop a daily routine with set on and off times of work as much as possible to avoid burnout. Try to set and communicate clock-in and clock-out times.

Prioritization is key, balancing professional and personal commitments both should be given attention even though remote working is being carried out.

5 **Productivity Hacks**

Ensure to block "working time" since remote working might increase the number of meetings held.

Have regular updates and discussions with team leaders and colleagues.

Utilize the project management tools given by the employer and regularly update the same.

Update the work tracking and time sheets regularly as instructed by the employer to adhere to set HR processes and productivity checks.

Plan and organize daily, weekly work tasks, have a work tracker, to do lists and have weekly chats with the team leader to communicate the work plan and the current projects undertaken.

6 **Staying Healthy and Fit**

When working from office there will always be a certain amount of walking (lunch, meetings and co-workers' desks) which is absent when working from home.

Make an attempt to walk a few steps during working hours. It is also beneficial to have allocated exercise time in your schedules.

Setting and allocating time for meals and not skipping/ delaying meals is critical to stay healthy and fit.
Eg ; Nike Fit is a free app which anyone can sign up to train yourself

Stick to Your Regular Work Hours

Take breaks too when it's indeed break time. Stretch, grab a snack, and enjoy the brief time of doing nothing.

Use Productivity Apps

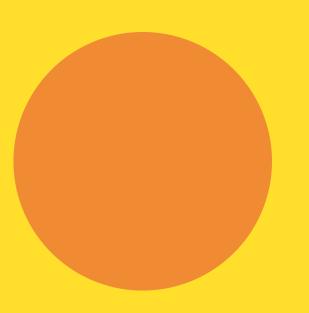Focus on your tasks and manage your distractions well

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THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE

Choose a task on your list, set the timer for 25 minutes, and work on the task until the time is up. Take a break. After four pomodoros, reward yourself with a longer break.

FOREST CHROME EXTENSION

It curbs your need to check your social media accounts by letting you plant a seed, which will grow into a tree after 30 minutes. Concentrate on your work and share your tree with friends. There are plenty of similar apps you can try.

Align Work Schedules with Your Family

Remote working can all of a sudden can be major adjustment.
Coordinate with your partner, children, or roommate on work schedules and designate chores equally.

Communicate with your colleagues.

1 In the absence of face-to-face interactions, it's important that everyone is across on company decisions and to-do's.

2 Continue conversations and encourage usual feedback and discussion through email, instant messaging, and your company's assigned meeting app.

Remember Everyone Works Differently

For some, working from home is a huge adjustment. Empathize with your colleagues and be patient as everyone settles in.

It is the responsibility of both employer and employee to facilitate trust, empathy and self-disciplined especially in a remote working environment. Empathy brings out the best in people. In most cases, physical separation from office and co-workers can breed these complications. Because we are not in physical proximity, it is sometimes forgotten that we are working with people who have their own lives, families, problems etc.

Get ready like you're going to the office.

✓ Set your alarm, take a bath, and wear nice clothes.

✓ Plan your day while making yourself a good cup of coffee too.

Remember

At the end, it's all about empathy, trust, and ethics

During remote working only the physical work place is shifted to a home environment whereas processes, policies remain unchanged. It is the responsibility of both employer and employee to facilitate trust, empathy and self-disciplined especially in a remote working environment. Empathy brings out the best in people.

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Trust is a virtue that need to be with both employee and employer especially in a remote working environment. Both parties need to be transparent in what is been said and done. Moment this is weak from either party conflicts arise where it could tarnish the employer - employee relationship.