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| Cover Image | *Remote* Jason Fried  Crown Publishing Group |

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# *131 notes/highlights*

*Created by Tarang Shah*  – Last synced February 21, 2017

## *The Time is Right For Remote Work*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Lucky for us, the advances in technology that made remote working possible have also made remote culture and living much more desirable.*  February 17, 2017 | [15](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA15.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Your life no longer needs to be divided into arbitrary phases of work and retirement. You can blend the two for fun and profit—design a better lifestyle that makes work enjoyable because it’s not the only thing on the menu. Shed the resentment of golden handcuffs that keep you from living how you really want to live.*  February 17, 2017 | [17](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA17.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When you have dozens, even hundreds, of competitors within walking distance of your office, it should come as no surprise when your employees cross the street and join the next hot thing.*  February 17, 2017 | [19](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA19.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When people hear the term “remote workers,” they often think “outsourcing.” They assume that remote work is just another ploy dreamed up by business fat cats to cut costs and ship jobs to Bangalore. That’s an understandable gut reaction. It’s also wrong. Letting people work remotely is about promoting quality of life, about getting access to the best people wherever they are, and all the other benefits we’ll enumerate. That it may also end up reducing costs spent on offices and result in fewer-but-more-productive workers is the gravy, not the turkey*  February 17, 2017 | [20](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA20.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Money, in fact, is the perfect Trojan horse for getting the bean counters on your side. Make them see dollar signs where you see greater freedom, more time with the family, and no commute, and you’ll both get what you want*  February 17, 2017 | [21](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA21.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It’s easy to feel euphoric about the wonders of working remotely. Freedom, time, money—we get it all. There’ll be honey in my backyard and milk on tap . But calm down, Winnie. Remote work is not without cost or compromise.*  February 17, 2017 | [23](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA23.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It requires a new level of personal commitment to come up with—and stick with—an alternative work frame. That’s more responsibility than may be apparent at first, especially for natural procrastinators—and who isn’t from time to time?*  February 17, 2017 | [24](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA24.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The key is not to think of any of this as exclusively good or bad. Rather, you should just focus on reaping the great benefits and mitigating the drawbacks. We’ll show you how.*  February 17, 2017 | [24](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA24.w.0.0.0.2) | |

## *Dealing With Excuses*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *People have an amazing ability to live down to low expectations. If you run your ship with the conviction that everyone’s a slacker, your employees will put all their ingenuity into proving you right. If you view those who work under you as capable adults who will push themselves to excel even when you’re not breathing down their necks, they’ll delight you in return.*  February 17, 2017 | [29](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA29.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“If we’re struggling with trust issues, it means we made a poor hiring decision. If a team member isn’t producing good results or can’t manage their own schedule and workload, we aren’t going to continue to work with that person. It’s as simple as that. We employ team members who are skilled professionals, capable of managing their own schedules and making a valuable contribution to the organization. We have no desire to be babysitters during the day.”*  February 17, 2017 | [29](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA29.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *if you can’t let your employees work from home out of fear they’ll slack off without your supervision, you’re a babysitter, not a manager. Remote work is very likely the least of your problems*  February 17, 2017 | [29](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA29.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The bottom line is that you shouldn’t hire people you don’t trust, or work for bosses who don’t trust you.*  February 17, 2017 | [30](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA30.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Sir Richard Branson commented in his ode to working remotely: “To successfully work with other people, you have to trust each other. A big part of this is trusting people to get their work done wherever they are, without supervision*  February 17, 2017 | [30](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA30.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Either learn to trust the people you’re working with or find some other people to work with.*  February 17, 2017 | [30](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA30.w.0.0.0.2.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If you’re working on the couch in front of the TV, well, it’s tempting to reach for the remote. If you’re sitting in the kitchen, you may find yourself thinking of emptying the dishwasher. But if you’re sitting in a dedicated room intended for work with the door closed, you stand a far better chance of staying on task. If that’s not possible, or not enough, you can always try working outside the house entirely. Just because you’re working remotely doesn’t mean that it always has to be from your house. You can work from a coffee shop or the library or even the park.*  February 18, 2017 | [31](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA31.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *But in reality goofing off is much less of an issue than people fear. It’s like taking a nice vacation. It’s great to be away from work for a couple of weeks, but there’s only so much time you can spend lying on a beach blanket or exploring Paris before that gets boring too. Most people want to work, as long as it’s stimulating and fulfilling. And if you’re stuck in a dead-end job that has no prospects of being either, then you don’t just need a remote position—you need a new job*  February 18, 2017 | [31](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA31.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *You certainly don’t need everyone physically together to create a strong culture. The best cultures derive from actions people actually take, not the ones they write about in a mission statement. Newcomers to an organization arrive with their eyes open. They see how decisions are made, the care that’s taken, the way problems are fixed, and so forth*  February 18, 2017 | [38](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA38.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *First, it takes recognizing that not every question needs an answer immediately—there’s nothing more arrogant than taking up someone else’s time with a question you don’t need an answer to right now. That means realizing that not everything is equally important. Once you’ve grasped that, you’re truly on the path to enlightenment and productivity. Questions you can wait hours to learn the answers to are fine to put in an email. Questions that require answers in the next few minutes can go into an instant message. For crises that truly merit a sky-is-falling designation, you can use that old-fashioned invention called the telephone. With a graduated system like this, you’ll quickly realize that 80 percent of your questions aren’t so timesensitive after all, and are often better served by an email than by walking over to someone’s desk. Even better, you’ll have a written record of the response that can be looked up later.*  February 19, 2017 | [39](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA39.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *So if you’re fighting against someone’s fear of losing control, you have to start small and show that the world doesn’t fall apart if you start working from home on Wednesdays. Not only didn’t it fall apart, but look at all this extra stuff I got done! Then you can ramp it up to two days, and more flexible hours, and before you know it you’re ready to move to another city and the wheels just keep on turning.*  February 19, 2017 | [41](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA41.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Because reptilian resistance is not rational but deeply emotional—even instinctual—the excuse “but I’ll lose control” is the toughest to overcome. Even equipped with all the great arguments in this book, you may still fail. In that case, it just might be time to saddle up and consider another place to work.*  February 19, 2017 | [41](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA41.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *There really are very few industries left in which working remotely can categorically be ruled out. Don’t let “industry fit” be the lame excuse that prevents remote work from happening at your company.*  February 19, 2017 | [45](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA45.w.0.0.0.1) | |

## *How to Collaborate Remotely*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Working remotely, if it is to be successful, usually requires some overlap with the hours your coworkers are putting in. Outsourcing gave remote working a bad reputation for many reasons, but one of the worst was that it could sometimes entail a full day’s delay between communication or turnaround. Yes, working with such a delay is possible, but we don’t recommend it. At 37signals, we’ve found that we need a good four hours of overlap to avoid collaboration delays and feel like a team.*  February 19, 2017 | [46](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA46.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If there’s just no getting around the time-zone issue—e.g., you find a superstar designer in Shanghai and you’re in LA—well, you’re probably going to have to work without a lot of real-time collaboration. That’s not invite the hassle, but access to one-of-a-kind talent just might be.)*  February 19, 2017 | [47](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA47.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Before you know it, you’ll be so used to sharing a screen that starting a call without one will feel pointless. Much of the magic that people ascribe to sitting together in a room is really just this: being able to see and interact with the same stuff. Note that the type of screen sharing we’re talking about is different from video conferencing, where the objective is to see each other’s face. Screen sharing doesn’t require a webcam—it’s more like sitting next to each other in front of a computer or a projector. It’s about collaborating on the work itself, not about reading facial expressions (although that too has a time and place).*  TeamViewer  February 19, 2017 | [48](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA48.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Here’s the key: you need everything available to everyone at all times. If Pratik in London has to wait five hours for someone in Chicago to come online in order to know what he should work on next, that’s half a workday lost. A company won’t waste time like that for long before declaring that “remote working just doesn’t work.”*  February 19, 2017 | [50](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA50.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *As we talked about earlier, this problem of materials and instructions being out of reach is almost entirely solvable by technology.*  February 19, 2017 | [50](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA50.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Basecamp gave us a single, centralized place in the sky to put all the relevant files, discussions, to-do lists, and calendars that keep the workflow ticking.*  February 19, 2017 | [50](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA50.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We pair Basecamp with GitHub, a code depository, so that all our code is available at all times to everyone, including change suggestions that can be discussed in slow time—over a couple of hours or days—as programmers comment on the thread.*  February 19, 2017 | [50](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA50.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We also use a shared calendar, so we know when Andrea’s coming back from maternity leave or Jeff’s going on vacation.*  February 19, 2017 | [50](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA50.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *There are countless tools available these days to ensure everything is out in the open for your team. Some companies manage simply by using Dropbox to share files. Others use such products as Highrise or Salesforce to follow up on sales leads.*  February 19, 2017 | [50](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA50.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The point is to avoid locking up important stuff in a single person’s computer or inbox. Put all the important stuff out in the open, and no one will have to chase that wild goose to get their work done.*  February 19, 2017 | [50](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA50.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Working remotely can provide a terrific boost to productivity. Fewer interruptions, more work done! But all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Eight hours straight of work is not the utopia managers might think it is. We all need mindless breaks, and it helps if you spend some of them with your team. That’s where the virtual water cooler comes in. At*  February 19, 2017 | [52](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA52.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When you and your coworkers are sitting in the same place, it’s easy to feel that you’re up to speed on what’s going on in the company.*  February 19, 2017 | [53](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA53.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Working remotely doesn’t automatically create that flow.*  February 19, 2017 | [53](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA53.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *At 37signals we’ve institutionalized this through a weekly discussion thread with the subject “What have you been working on?” Everyone chimes in with a few lines about what they’ve done over the past week and what’s intended for the next week. It’s not a precise, rigorous estimation process, and it doesn’t attempt to deal with coordination. It simply aims to make everyone feel like they’re in the same galley and not their own little rowboat. It also serves as a friendly reminder that we’re all in it to make progress. Nobody wants to be the one to report that “this week was spent completing Halo 4, eating leftover pizza, and catching up on Jersey Shore .” We all have a natural instinct to avoid letting our team down, so when that commitment becomes visual, it gets reinforced.*  February 19, 2017 | [53](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA53.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *One of the secret benefits of hiring remote workers is that the work itself becomes the yardstick to judge someone’s performance. When you can’t see someone all day long, the only thing you have to evaluate is the work. A lot of the petty evaluation stats just melt away. Criteria like “was she here at 9?” or “did she take too many breaks today?” or “man, every time I walk by his desk he’s got Facebook up” aren’t even possible to tally. Talk about a blessing in disguise!*  February 19, 2017 | [54](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA54.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *So instead of asking a remote worker “what did you do today?” you can now just say “ show me what you did today.” As a manager, you can directly evaluate the work—the thing you’re paying this person for—and ignore all the stuff that doesn’t actually matter. The great thing about this is the clarity it introduces. When it’s all about the work, it’s clear who in the company is pulling their weight and who isn’t.*  February 19, 2017 | [54](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA54.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If you’re an owner or manager, letting local people work remotely is a great first step toward seeing if remote will work for you. It’s low risk, it’s no big deal, and worse comes to worst, people can start working at the office again.*  February 19, 2017 | [55](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA55.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *if you’re going to give it a shot, give it a real shot. Try it for at least three months. There’s going to be an adjustment period, so let everyone settle into their new rhythm. You can even start with two days remote, three days in the office. Then, if all goes well, flip it—two days in the office, three days remote. Work up to a full week out of the office.*  February 19, 2017 | [55](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA55.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *while natural disasters are infrequent, personal “disasters” strike with regularity, and at such times the ability to work remotely is essential. In the traditional office scenario, your day is shot if you catch a cold, your child is sick, you have a plumbing issue that requires someone be home to greet the repairman, or any of the other myriad issues that might keep you from leaving the house but not necessarily unable to work.*  February 19, 2017 | [56](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA56.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Being in the routine of remote work helps you deal with these annoyances with less hassle. Whatever the world throws at it, be it a blizzard or the requirement to be home for the exterminator, a distributed workforce is one that can keep working regardless.*  February 19, 2017 | [57](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA57) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *One, you can’t have face-to-face meetings when people aren’t in the office. And two, managers can’t tell if people are getting work done if they can’t see them working. We’d like to offer a very different perspective on these two points. We believe that these staples of work life—meetings and managers—are actually the greatest causes of work not getting done at the office.*  February 19, 2017 | [58](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA58.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Working remotely makes it easier to spot managers drumming up busywork for themselves and others. The act of pulling people into a conference room or walking to their desks leaves no evidence of interruption, and it’s all of the synchronous “drop what you’re doing right now to entertain me!” variety. But when management is forced to manage remotely using email, Basecamp, IM, and chat, its intervention is much more purposeful and compressed, and we can just get on with the actual work.*  February 19, 2017 | [59](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA59.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *M&Ms continue to have a place in the remote-working world, but you’ll be more conscious about how many you consume when everything has a paper trail online. That’s a good thing. We can all do with fewer M&Ms.*  February 19, 2017 | [59](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA59.w.0.0.0.3) | |

## *Beware the Dragons*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Check-in, check-out “Freedom is slavery,” wrote George Orwell*  February 19, 2017 | [62](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA62.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *what happens to remote work if you don’t manage the work-life balance correctly. That can happen, because when you’re set free from punching in at 9am and out at 5pm, it’s easy to don the shackles of working around the clock. It starts innocently enough. You wake up by opening your laptop in bed and answering a few work emails from last night. Then you make yourself a sandwich and work through lunch. After dinner, you feel the need to check in with Jeremy on the West Coast about that one thing. Before you know it, you’ve stretched the workday from 7am to 9pm. That’s the great irony of letting passionate people work from home. A manager’s natural instinct is to worry about his workers not getting enough work done, but the real threat is that too much will likely get done. And because the manager isn’t sitting across from his worker anymore, he can’t look in the person’s eyes and see burnout. What a manager needs to establish is a culture of reasonable expectations. At 37signals, we expect and encourage people to work forty hours per week on average. There are no hero awards for putting in more than that. Sure, every now and then there’s the need for a short sprint, but, most of the time, the company is viewing what it does as a marathon. It’s crucial for everyone to pace themselves. One way to help set a healthy boundary is to encourage employees to think of a “good day’s work.” Look at your progress toward the end of the day and ask yourself: “Have I done a good day’s work?” Answering that question is liberating. Often, if the answer is an easy “yes,” you can stop working feeling satisfied that something important got accomplished, if not entirely “done.” And should the answer be “no,” you can treat it as an off-day and explore the Five Whys \* (asking why to a problem five times in a row to find the root cause). It feels good to be productive. If yesterday was a good day’s work, chances are you’ll stay on a roll. And if you can stay on a roll, everything else will probably take care of itself—including not working from when you get up in the morning until you go to sleep.*  February 19, 2017 | [62](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA62.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Working from home gives you the freedom to work wherever you want. Maybe you start at the kitchen counter, continue on the couch, and, if the weather is nice and you have a garden, finish up outside while enjoying the sunshine. But if you’re going to make a real go at working from home for the long term, you’ll need to get the ergonomic basics right. That means getting a proper desk (height adjustable?), a proper chair (Humanscale Liberty?), and a proper screen (27 inches in high resolution!). All that stuff can seem expensive, but it’s a great bargain if it means not ruining your back, your eyesight, or any other part of your anatomy*  February 19, 2017 | [64](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA64.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Maybe a chair isn’t your thing. We have employees who work standing up, leaning on stools, sitting on exercise balls, and alternating between all of the above. In fact, variation is often preferable to adopting a single style. Your body wasn’t built to stay in the same position for eight hours a day, but it’s hard to switch things around in most normal office settings. And let’s not forget the ergonomics of sweatpants! When you don’t have to dress to impress, there’s no shame in indulging your inner slob—at least part of the time. Just remember to change before venturing out into the real world for lunch*  February 19, 2017 | [64](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA64.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Modern office culture has never been conducive to a healthy lifestyle. Get up in the morning, commute to work, sit in a chair for eight hours, then return home to the couch and TV—no wonder people have been getting fatter. But it can get worse! If you’re not making a conscious effort to the contrary, working from home will likely afford even less opportunity to hit your recommended 10,000 steps per day.*  February 19, 2017 | [65](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA65.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *At least, by traveling to an office, you have to walk to your car or to the train station or, even better, ride your bicycle. And, of course, in a conventional office, everyone walks around a little, seeking out those in other departments. And there’s always the dash across the street to lunch, and maybe even some steps logged on the way home. (Studies vary, but office workers on average take between two and four thousand steps per day.*  February 19, 2017 | [65](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA65.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *At 37signals, we try our best to encourage our remote workers to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Everyone gets a $100 monthly stipend for a health club membership, and we cover the cost of weekly fresh fruit and vegetable deliveries from local farmers. §*  February 19, 2017 | [65](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA65.w.0.0.0.3.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *You can’t experiment with working remotely by sending one or two people to Siberia. To give it a proper try, you need to set free at least an entire team—including project management and key stakeholders! And then you need to give it longer than it takes to break in a new pair of shoes. This is true even if you’re surrounded by people who are wildly enthusiastic about working remotely (initially, most won’t). It simply takes time to break old habits and get accustomed to new ways. When you’re used to interrupting anyone any time you want, there’ll be severe withdrawal symptoms when you can’t. There’ll be days when you hate it, your boss hates it, and everyone else you’re working with hates it. Just like there are days working at the office where you wish you could just turn everyone else into silent garden gnomes, so you can get a little work done. No work arrangement is without trade-offs.*  February 19, 2017 | [66](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA66.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Give remote work a real chance or don’t bother at all. It’s okay to start small, but make sure it’s meaningful*  February 19, 2017 | [67](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA67.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *There isn’t a secret. But we do have some tips. First, when pitching businesses, let the prospective client know up front that you don’t live where they live. You want to begin building trust right at the beginning. You don’t want to drop the line “Oh yeah, we won’t be able to regularly meet with you face-to-face every week ’cause we’re in Chicago and you’re in Los Angeles” right before you sign the contract.*  February 19, 2017 | [68](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA68.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Second, provide references before the client even asks. Show right up front that you have nothing to hide. Trust is going to be the toughest thing to build early on, so make it as easy as possible for the client to get to know your character by letting them speak with other clients—especially other clients who may be remote*  February 19, 2017 | [68](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA68.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Third, show them work often. This is the best way to chip away at a client’s natural situational anxiety. Look, they’re paying you big bucks for your work, and it’s totally natural for them to begin feeling anxious the moment they send you the deposit. So show them what they’re paying for.*  February 19, 2017 | [68](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA68.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Fourth, be very available. Since you can’t meet face-to-face, you better return phone calls, emails, instant messages, etc. This is basic business stuff, but it’s tenfold more important when you’re working remotely. It may be irrational but, if you’re local, the client often feels that, if worse comes to worst, they can knock on your door. They “know where you live.” But when you’re remote, they’re going to be more suspicious when phone calls go unreturned or emails keep getting “lost.” Stay on top of communications and you’ll reap the benefits.*  February 19, 2017 | [68](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA68.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Lastly, get the client involved and let them follow along. Make sure they feel that this is their project too. Yes, they’re hiring you for your expertise, but they have plenty of their own.*  February 19, 2017 | [69](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA69.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When they feel part of the project, their anxieties and fears will be replaced by excitement and anticipation.*  February 19, 2017 | [69](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA69.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *To qualify as a contractor, someone has to work on self-directed work (a firm can certainly argue this for writers, designers, programmers, consultants, analysts, etc., but it might be harder for a role such as personal assistant). The person contracted either has to have incorporated him or herself or be otherwise recognized as a company in their own right, so that they can send invoices. And they unfortunately can’t partake in the regular regime of benefits offered to local employees. (That exclusion includes health care, but to cover that the contracting firm can always roll in additional compensation as part of the monthly invoice*  February 19, 2017 | [71](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA71) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *This is also exactly how it works if you’re a remote worker wanting to work for a company in a foreign country. Set up that personal company and bill your “salary” as invoices every month. Most countries make it very easy to set up a personal company and, with such a simple invoice setup, taxation is not hard either*  February 19, 2017 | [71](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA71.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *So, to sum up, there’s a little more work for the remote worker living in a different country, and there’s a little more work for the company that is hiring them. And technically, whether you’re a company owner or a worker, you are kinda running with scissors if you don’t hire an army of experts to cross every “t” on the arrangement. But enterprising companies do this all the time and so do we at 37signals. It’s worth the risk to have access to the best people in the world.*  February 19, 2017 | [71](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA71.w.0.0.0.3) | |

## *Hiring and Keeping the Best*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *it helps you catch all those little things—like the calendar week starting on Sunday in the United States, but on Monday in much of the rest of the world. That’s pretty important if you’re designing a digital calendar*  February 20, 2017 | [74](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA74.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The old adage still applies: No assholes allowed. But for remote work, you need to extend it to no asshole-y behavior allowed, no drama allowed, no bad vibes allowed*  February 20, 2017 | [79](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA79.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *This method of identifying the best and the brightest is hogwash. The correlation between people who are really good at solving imaginary puzzles and people who best fit your company is likely to be tenuous at best, even with respect to engineering positions. And while there may well be some matches, there are likely to be far more false negatives.*  February 20, 2017 | [82](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA82.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The cost of thriving As a company owner looking for a way to reduce payroll, it’s tempting to recruit from places with a lower cost of living. In some industries with low margins that approach may well be worth pursuing, but it’s not the interesting part of remote working for most knowledge-based companies. Instead of thinking I can pay people from Kansas less than people from New York , you should think I can get amazing people from Kansas and make them feel valued and well-compensated if I pay them New York salaries . If your entire workforce is located in a hot hub and you pay market salaries, you’ll be under constant attack from poachers. People are naturally more inclined to change jobs when it’s a level playing field*  February 20, 2017 | [84](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA84.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Being a good writer is an essential part of being a good remote worker. When most arguments are settled over email or chat or discussion boards, you’d better show up equipped for the task. So, as a company owner or manager, you might as well filter for this quality right from the get-go. This means judging an application by its cover … letter. Yes, the CV might list all sorts of impressive stints here, there, and everywhere, but let’s be honest—it’s usually embellished and not a great indicator of how the candidate will perform*  February 20, 2017 | [87](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA87.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *No, the first filter that really matters is the cover letter explaining exactly why there’s a fit between applicant and company. There’s simply no getting around it: in hiring for remote-working positions, managers should be ruthless in filtering out poor writers. Most applicants would probably be surprised if they knew how ruthless hiring managers are these days. We’ve had openings that have attracted 150 responses. How long do you think we spend going over applications with the big comb? Less than thirty seconds per application. Sometimes less than ten seconds. When a manager has to whittle down 150 to maybe 10–15 for a second look, that’s the only approach that works. And it’s the writing in the cover letter that decides which applications live or die.*  February 20, 2017 | [87](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA87.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Thankfully, becoming a better writer is entirely possible. Few people are born with an innate talent for writing; most good writers have practiced and studied their way through. Besides, it’s not as if you need to be Hemingway or Twain. But you do need to take it seriously. You should read, read, and read some more. Study how good writers make their case. Focus on clarity first, style second.*  February 20, 2017 | [88](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA88.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Are there any remote workers who can get away without strong writing skills? Sure. If your work truly doesn’t involve a lot of collaboration or back-and-forth, you might be able to get away with less-than-impeccable writing skills. There’s a place for people who just excel at crunching numbers in solitude or sales people pummeling resistance through the phone. Good writing skills still help in those cases, but they can take a backseat to other great qualities.*  February 20, 2017 | [88](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA88.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Test project It doesn’t matter if someone is local or remote—we still want to judge their work, not their résumé. A lot of companies base their judgments on work already done. We do some of that too. But what’s tricky about that is that work already done is hard to account for.*  February 20, 2017 | [89](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA89.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The best way we’ve found to accurately judge work is to hire the person to do a little work before we take the plunge and hire them to do a lot of work. Call it “pre-hiring.” Pre-hiring takes the form of a one- or two-week mini-project. We usually pay around $1,500 for the mini-project. We never ask people to work for free. If we wouldn’t do it for free, why would we ask someone else to do it? If the candidate is unemployed, they get a week. If they currently have a job, they get two weeks, since they usually have to carve out time at night or on the weekends to do the project.*  February 20, 2017 | [89](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA89.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The project depends on the job they’re applying for. A designer might be tasked with redesigning one screen from our website or one of our products. A programmer might be tasked with building a tiny app from scratch in a week. If you’re hiring a writer, have them write something.*  February 20, 2017 | [89](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA89.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *What we usually do is narrow the field to about two or three final candidates. Then we’ll fly each in for a day. Since we already know we like their skills (otherwise they wouldn’t have gotten this far), the in-person meeting is to determine if we like the “person.” The meeting is informal—usually over lunch. And since we have a large part of the team in Chicago, we often let the candidate go out with their potential team coworkers instead of their manager. The prospective hire is going to be working with their teammates a lot more than their manager, so it’s important that the team get a good feel for this person. After the candidate gets back from lunch, they’ll sit down with the manager, shoot the breeze a bit, and then they’re invited to hang out at the office the rest of the day. They can work, observe, whatever. We want them to see if they feel comfortable with us, and we want to see if we feel comfortable with them.*  February 20, 2017 | [90](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA90.w.0.0.0.1) | |

## *Managing Remote Workers*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *So start early if you can, but if you can’t, start small. Take a tiny step with a few trusted current employees. Let them work outside the office a couple days a week. See what happens. It’s low risk and you’ll immediately start learning whether the policy makes sense.*  February 20, 2017 | [94](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA94.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The job of a manager is not to herd cats, but to lead and verify the work. The trouble with that job description is that it requires knowledge of the work itself. You can’t effectively manage a team if you don’t know the intricacies of what they’re working on. That doesn’t mean every programming manager has to be a programmer (although it helps) nor that every design director has to design every screen (but again, it helps if they’re able to). No, it means they should know what needs to be done, understand why delays might happen, be creative with solutions to sticky problems, divide the work into manageable chunks, and help put the right people on the right projects. Well, that and about a million other things that will ensure work proceeds with as little bother and as few obstacles as possible.*  February 20, 2017 | [95](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA95.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Just because you don’t have a permanent office, or not everyone is working out of one, that’s no reason not to get together every now and then. In fact, it’s almost mandatory to do so occasionally.*  February 20, 2017 | [96](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA96.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The fact is, it’s just easier to work remotely with people you’ve met in so-called “real life”—folks you’ve shared laughs and meals with. Meetups are especially important as a way to introduce new people to the rest of the team. Since we finished our nice new office in Chicago, we’ve held our meetups there, but in the past we’ve picked such places as Kohler, Wisconsin; San Diego, California; and York Harbor, Maine.*  February 20, 2017 | [97](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA97) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *As important as it is to have the entire company get together, it’s also a great idea to occasionally do a sprint with a smaller group to finish a specific project. If the company must make a mad dash to meet a deadline—with the unreasonable hours and pressure that implies—it can be nice to slave through the ordeal together.*  February 20, 2017 | [97](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA97.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We’ve done this in the past when we’ve launched a new product or finished a particularly gnarly feature in our software, or when people have simply wanted to top off on some social interaction. Going to an industry conference is another good opportunity for team bonding. You’ll learn something new together, and you usually have the evenings free to socialize. Just because you work remotely most of the time doesn’t mean you have to, or should, work remotely all of the time. Fill up the camel’s back every now and then with some in-person fun.*  February 20, 2017 | [97](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA97.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Would-be remote workers and managers have a lot to learn from how the open source software movement has conquered the commercial giants over the past decades. It’s a triumph of asynchronous collaboration and communication like few the world has ever seen.*  February 20, 2017 | [98](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA98.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *production. If people can manage to build world-class operating systems, databases, programming languages, web frameworks, and many other forms of software while working remotely, you’d probably be wise to look more closely at how it’s done.*  February 20, 2017 | [98](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA98.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The key ingredients of this success follow much of the other advice in this book, but let’s look at a few anyway: • Intrinsic motivation: Programmers working on open source code usually do it for love, not money. Often the money follows, but rarely does it take the place of motivation. To translate: working on exciting problems you’re personally interested in means you don’t need a manager breathing down your neck and constantly looking over your shoulder. • All out in the open: Much of open source is coordinated on mailing lists and code tracking systems like GitHub. Anyone who’s interested in helping out can because the information is all out in the open. You can self-select into participating, and the people with the most knowledge about an issue thus get easy access. • Meeting occasionally: Most successful open source projects eventually grow to the point where they can support their own conferences or, at least, sessions at general ones. This gives contributors a chance to meet in person to top off on social interaction—much like meetups and sprints do for companies. But it’s not a requirement, it’s a nice-to-have.*  February 20, 2017 | [98](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA98.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If you treat remote workers like second-class citizens, you’re all going to have a bad time. The lower the ratio of remote worker to office worker, the more likely this is to happen. It’s the normal dynamic and it won’t get solved unless you tackle it head-on. Feeling like a second-class worker doesn’t take much. Case in point: a roomful of local people and a shitty intercom system that makes it hard for the remote worker to hear what’s going on and even harder to participate. There’s also the annoyance of having every debate end with “John and I talked about this in the office yesterday and decided that your idea isn’t going to work.” Fuck that. As a company owner or manager, you need to create and maintain a level playing field—one on which those in and out of the office stand as equals. That’s easier said than done, but one way to better your chances is to have some of the top brass working remotely. People with the power to change things need to feel the same hurt as those who merely have to deal with it*  February 20, 2017 | [100](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA100.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *This doesn’t mean managers have to move to another city to feel the same hurt. Just have them work from home a few days a week. They’ll get at least some sense of what it’s like to wear a remote worker’s shoes. Even better, though, than having managers occasionally work from home is having them actually be remote.*  February 20, 2017 | [100](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA100.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The mechanics of leveling the playing field are pretty simple: Get great intercom systems, use shared desktop apps like WebEx to ensure everyone is seeing the same thing while collaborating, and hold as many discussions as possible on email and other online messaging platforms. Above all, think frequently about how you’d feel as a remote worker.*  February 20, 2017 | [100](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA100.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *While we advocate frequent check-ins with all your employees, it’s a good idea to check in a bit more frequently with remote workers (since you’ll bump into people in your office as a matter of course anyway). At 37signals, our schedule is a bit irregular, but we try to pick up the phone and talk with every remote person at least once every few months. In a perfect world we’d do it every month, but every few months has served us well*  February 20, 2017 | [102](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA102.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *, workers at 37signals needn’t ask permission to go on vacation or specify how much time they’ll take. We tell them: just be reasonable, put it on the calendar, and coordinate with your coworkers. If you let them, humans have an amazing power to live up to your high expectations of reasonableness and responsibility*  February 20, 2017 | [104](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA104.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *This might sound like an employer’s dream: workers putting in a ton of extra hours for no additional pay! But it’s not. If work is all-consuming, the worker is far more likely to burn out. This is true even if the person loves what he does. Perhaps especially if he loves what he does, since it won’t seem like a problem until it’s too late.*  February 20, 2017 | [105](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA105.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It’s everyone’s job to be on the lookout for coworkers who are overworking themselves, but ultimately the responsibility lies with the managers and business owners to set the tone. It’s much likelier to breed a culture of overwork if managers and owners are constantly putting in He-Man hours*  February 20, 2017 | [105](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA105.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When something’s scarce, we tend to conserve, appreciate, respect, and value it. When something is abundant, we rarely think twice about how we use or spend it. Abundance and value are often opposites.*  February 20, 2017 | [107](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA107.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *So go on—make face-to-face harder and less frequent and you’ll see the value of these interactions go up, not down.*  February 20, 2017 | [108](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA108) | |

## *Life As A Remote Worker*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Building a routine*  February 20, 2017 | [110](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA110.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If nothing else, the standard 9am–5pm job with a commute at least has a solid routine going for it*  February 21, 2017 | [110](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA110.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If you don’t have to be anywhere at a certain time, you can easily end up lying in bed until close to noon, just casually working away on the laptop. Or you can let work drift into that evening you’re supposed to share with your spouse and kids.*  February 21, 2017 | [110](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA110.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *While some might be able to juggle that floating lifestyle, most people need some sort of routine—something they can stick to at least most of the time.*  February 21, 2017 | [110](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA110.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *In the same way that there’s a benefit to creating a separation between personal and work computing, it can also be helpful to separate the clothes you wear, depending whether you’re in work or play mode.*  February 21, 2017 | [110](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA110.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Simply looking presentable is usually enough. One of our employees, Noah, likes to demarcate using his slippers: he has both a work set and a home set!*  February 21, 2017 | [110](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA110.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Another hack is to divide the day into chunks like Catch-up, Collaboration, and Serious Work. Some people prefer to use the mornings to catch up on email, industry news, and other low-intensity tasks, and then put their game face on for tearing through the tough stuff after lunch.*  February 21, 2017 | [111](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA111) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Finally, you can use the layout of your house as a switch. Make sure that real work only happens when you’re in your dedicated home office. No checking work email or just getting a little more done in the living room or your bedroom.*  February 21, 2017 | [111](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA111.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Different strokes for different folks, so consider all these suggestions for how to build your personal routine as merely that—suggestions. If you’re getting everything you need to get done just freewheeling, more power to you. But most people will need some semblance of structure to get the most out of working remotely. Find what works for you, pants or no pants!*  February 21, 2017 | [111](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA111.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *As we’ve said elsewhere in this book, remote isn’t all or nothing. Some people can be local, some can be remote. Or some days can be spent in the office, and some outside of the office.*  February 21, 2017 | [112](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA112.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Flexibility is your friend here. Remote isn’t binary. It’s not here or there, this or that. In fact, for many, the hybrid approach is the right place to start. If you still want people in the office every day, change that requirement to every afternoon instead. Then let your troops have their mornings to themselves. You may be surprised to find out more work gets done this way*  February 21, 2017 | [112](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA112.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The gray line between work and play can be hard to see on the best of days, but almost impossible when you use the same computer for both. Sure, you could make sure to quit your programs for chat and email when you’re off the clock, but you know you won’t. That sort of discipline is not for mere mortals.*  February 21, 2017 | [113](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA113.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *A more plausible, human strategy is to separate the two completely by using different devices: simply reserve one computer for work and another for fun. This works doubly awesome if your fun device can’t even run the programs needed to do your real work. Programming or designing might be technically possible on an iPad, but certainly not desirable*  February 21, 2017 | [113](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA113.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We’ve found that using a completely different device—say, a tablet instead of a laptop—also brings a healthy change of scenery. If you sit in front of a keyboard all day long, it’s great to “gear down” in the evening by using just taps and gestures. It makes computing feel like something other than work.*  February 21, 2017 | [113](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA113.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *A similar effect is achieved by separating work and home accounts for email and cha*  February 21, 2017 | [113](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA113.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If your work email is available 24/7 on your tablet and phone, you probably won’t be able to resist the temptation. These days, having a second or third computing device in the house is so cheap that there’s little excuse.*  February 21, 2017 | [113](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA113.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *. Certain remote workers will find, though, that it’s actually harder to get into the flow when they’re sitting in complete isolation. If that resonates, here’s a simple strategy: Take your laptop and head to the nearest coffee shop with WiFi. There you’ll get to work alone with no interruption from coworkers, but still enjoy the buzzing white noise of the crowd*  February 21, 2017 | [114](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA114.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It sounds counterintuitive, but the presence of other people, even if you don’t know them, can fool your mind into thinking that being productive is the only proper thing to do*  February 21, 2017 | [114](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA114.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Staying motivated Motivation is the fuel of intellectual work. You can get several days’ worth of work completed in one motivation-turboed afternoon. Or, when you’re motivation starved, you can waste a week getting a day’s worth of work done.*  February 21, 2017 | [115](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA115.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Trying to conjure motivation by means of rewards or threats is terribly ineffective. In fact, it’s downright counterproductive.*  February 21, 2017 | [115](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA115.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Rather, the only reliable way to muster motivation is by encouraging people to work on the stuff they like and care about, with people they like and care about. There are no shortcuts. At first, that’s a hard nut to swallow. Especially for managers. “Work is not all fun and games” is a common objection. Perhaps. But why can’t it be challenging, interesting, and engaging? Characterizing pleasure in work as “fun and games” belittles the intellectual stimulation of a job well done.*  February 21, 2017 | [115](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA115.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If a worker’s motivation is slumping, it’s probably because the work is weakly defined or appears pointless, or because others on the team are acting like tools.*  February 21, 2017 | [115](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA115.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Most people suffering from a lack of motivation will blame themselves first. “Ah, it’s because I’m such a procrastinator!” “Why can’t I just get myself together?” The truth, more often than not, is that you are not the problem; it’s the world you’re working in. If that’s the case, the hard part is not just forcing yourself over the hump but having the courage to speak up and turn de-motivating work and environments into the opposite*  February 21, 2017 | [115](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA115.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Motivation is pivotal to healthy lives and healthy companies. Make sure you’re minding it.*  February 21, 2017 | [116](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA116.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Remember, the work doesn’t care whether it’s being done on a bench in Maui or a boat off the coast of Tampa (3G and LTE connections are plenty fine for most purposes). That said, you still have to respect the laws of remote collaboration, such as overlapping with your teammates enough to ensure real-time communication (see “Thou shalt overlap”). But unless you travel to the other end of the world, that’s immensely doable.*  February 21, 2017 | [117](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA117.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Routine has a tendency to numb your creativity. Waking up at the same time, taking the same transportation, traveling the same route, plopping down in the same chair at the same desk in the same office over and over and over isn’t exactly a prescription for inspiration. Changes of scenery, however, can lead to all sorts of new ideas*  February 21, 2017 | [118](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA118.w.0.0.0.1.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *While nobody on their deathbed wishes they’d spent more time at the office, many sure do wish they’d spent more time with their family.*  February 21, 2017 | [120](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA120.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Not everyone has a spare bedroom to turn into a home office, but that doesn’t mean you can’t work remotely. As we’ve discussed, working remotely doesn’t have to mean working from home. There is a wealth of options available to anyone looking for an office away from the office. The simplest, as we discuss in “Working alone in a crowd,” is to use cafés. Plenty of people work full-time from an array of coffee shop*  February 21, 2017 | [121](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA121.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *you can also look into renting just a single desk from another company*  February 21, 2017 | [121](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA121.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *There are two fundamental ways not to be ignored at work. One is to make noise. The other is to make progress, to do exceptional work. Fortunately for remote workers, “the work” is the measure that matters.*  February 21, 2017 | [122](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA122.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

## *Conclusion*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It’s so hard to predict tipping points that most people find it easier to pretend they’ll never happen. But a tipping point for remote work is coming. It may not be that the office completely ceases to exist, but its importance has peake*  February 21, 2017 | [123](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA123.w.0.0.0.1.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Life on the other side of the traditional office paradigm is simply too good for too many people*  February 21, 2017 | [124](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA124) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Remote work has already progressed through the first two stages of Gandhi’s model for change: “First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.” We are squarely in the fighting stage—the toughest one—but it’s also the last one before you win*  February 21, 2017 | [124](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA124.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Or as Harvey Dent from Batman said: “The night is darkest just before the dawn. And I promise you the dawn is coming.”*  February 21, 2017 | [124](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=eQQJCwAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA124.w.0.0.0.4) | |