



rock your remote workspace

by Morgan Miller, AgCareers.com 2020 Marketing Intern

DURING THE COVID-19 GLOBAL

PANDEMIC, the normalcy of your daily life was more than likely altered in some way. For many, this means working from home, schooling from home, staying at home. As much as you always loved coming home at the end of a long day, having no choice but to be home creates some less pleasant feelings. It has proven hard for many people to feel motivated, to separate life from work, and to see the level of productivity you would see in the office. Employees with AgCareers.com and Texas Tech University Career Center offered their advice for combating these issues and rocking your remote work.

HAVE A DESIGNATED WORKSPACE

Separating your work area from the rest of your living area will help to simulate the idea that you are going to work.

Tori Coleman, Program Coordinator for the Texas Tech University Career Center, said having a designated work area has proven very helpful. "If you designate a space, you aren't constantly clearing away or sharing the space for other purposes and can be fully focused when you are 'at work.'"

She said it will also provide some much-needed distance from the bed you'd rather be sleeping in and the couch that keeps calling your name. Coleman said the best-designated workspace is one that is out of the bedroom, away from the clutter, and in a well-lit area.

TAKE BREAKS

Donna Srader, Assistant Director of Texas Tech University Career Center, said working from home requires extra discipline she never considered before.

"I have to force myself to stop and take breaks each morning and afternoon," Srader said. "A short walk or 15 minutes spent outside reading can make a positive difference in my level of energy and enthusiasm."

ACT LIKE YOU'RE IN THE OFFICE

Jessica Bartow, Talent Solutions Specialist with AgCareers.com, said it is important to act like you are going to go into the office. She said she wakes up early, does a workout, enjoys some quiet time, and dresses like she is going to work even though she works from a home office.

"If I were to roll out of bed right before 8:00, I wouldn't be physically or mentally ready to tackle the day," Bartow said.

STAY CONNECTED TO COWORKERS

"Be intentional," Bartow said. "Catching up about daily life can be more challenging when your coworker isn't right next to you, physically."

It may be more important than ever to check in on people. She said reaching out to coworkers gives them a chance to talk about how things are going outside of work.

CLARIFY WORK EXPECTATIONS

It can be especially difficult to navigate work hours when working from home. Every resource you need is at your fingertips 24/7. Does this mean you are expected to utilize those resources at every waking moment?

Bartow said she would recommend talking with your boss about remote workplace expectations. If your normal workday is from 8 to 5 but your office phone is at home, do you answer it outside those hours?

Communication has always been important, but when working remotely, it is vital. Don't be afraid to ask hard questions. Make sure you and your employer stay on the same page.

Working from home presents unique challenges that you must recognize and work to solve. It sounds nice to be able to stay at home every day until you must separate work from life in the confines of one building. Having your office just feet away from your bed can make "let me lay down really quick" a constant thought.

Adjusting to stepping away from work when it means literally step, not get in your car and drive, can be hard. Finding the motivation to get ready is inherently difficult. Rocking your remote workplace means finding what is best for you and sticking to it. **AG**