Tips for starting a new job or remotely

It's not just the recruitment process that's gone online due to the pandemic, there's a good chance you could be starting your first job working from home! Here are our ten top tips for making a great start remotely:

1. Perfect your home workspace

Whether it's a dedicated home office or just a kitchen worktop, make the best of what you have and earmark an organised space where you can avoid interruptions and distractions. Set your chair and screen for optimum comfort.

2. Resolve to have structure in your day

Set out to divide your time with intent. Stick to prompt start and finish times, build in breaks and a lunch hour to stay fresh and productive. Finish on time and put your laptop away, otherwise it can feel less like working from home, and more like living at work! There's often a temptation to overwork at home, but you must set boundaries.

3. First impressions are still important

Be mindful about how you want to come across in your initial online interactions and think about your surroundings, how you dress and your body language. Keep your communications professional and neutral from the start. Hold back on those smiley emojis until you find out what the culture is for less formal communication!

4. Don't be shy about introducing yourself

You won't be casually bumping into co-workers as you would normally, so look out for opportunities to let people know who you are in meetings, emails and work forums. Introducing yourself early and letting people know you're new will encourage connection and offers of support. Consider setting up virtual coffee breaks so that you can get to know people and begin to make work friends.

5. Talk to your new colleagues as much as possible and ask questions

Without the opportunity for natural interactions in open plan offices or chats around the photocopier, you're going to have to make an extra effort to talk to colleagues, so you can assimilate the work culture and understand what's going on more quickly. Be proactive about setting up meetings and calls with your colleagues to understand their work, as well as your own, and clarify any queries.

6. Find a mentor

Your new company may set you up with a mentor or buddy to help you settle in, but if they don't it's a good idea to ask for one. This will be your 'go to' person for guidance and support on how the company works and who you need to know.

7. Clarify what's expected of you and how to communicate

Be clear about what's expected of you in terms of tasks, timescales, and deliverables with your line manager and your team. Reach out for help and information but do check

colleagues' communication preferences; whether that's email, chat or video call; ad hoc or by appointment.

8. Familiarise yourself with the online platforms and sharing tools

Whether it's Teams, Zoom, Google Hangouts or Trello, get used to the collaboration tools used by your employer, and get training if you need it. Ensure you know how to access shared workspaces and how to contact your tech support team.

9. Keep a diary

Make regular notes about what you've learned and your accomplishments, who you've met and their roles, and keep track of any queries or unresolved issues to follow up at later meetings.

10. Don't be too hard on yourself!

It's not the easiest thing in the world to start a job from your living room! Expect a few bumps along the way. But be patient, keep things in perspective, ask for help and realise you are not alone. Everyone finds working from home tricky at times!

19/02/21