



Adjusting To New Ways Of Working

Concordia, like many organizations, is experiencing a changing working environment. For many of us, it is our first time experiencing working remotely and relying on technology to remain connected and productive. In many cases this also means having to manage the reality of our personal lives, such as, elder care responsibilities, family members working remotely, studying or even playing in the background.

Working remotely for an extended period requires a significant mental shift, this includes acknowledging a sudden loss of socializing with colleagues at the workplace. Adjusting to a change typically requires a certain amount of time, so be indulgent with yourself and others as you try to adjust to this new reality. Here are some tips to help you adjust to working remotely.



Maintain your routine

Maintaining a routine is important and can help ground you in the change. Try to do what you would normally do on a typical workday (i.e., get up at the same time, exercise, shower, dress, have breakfast, etc.).

Create a workspace

Having a dedicated space to work (ideally a separate space) is helpful. If you do not have a designated workspace or office, try to create a small spot in a room where you can be comfortable, and that ideally allows for some natural light to come in. In addition, make sure you have a supportive chair and that your computer (laptop, tablet, etc) is positioned ergonomically.



Refer to the **Office Ergonomics Manual** to set up your space:

https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/services/safety/docs/ergonomic_manual_english.pdf



Let the members of your household know when **you need some privacy to work** and **indicate for how long**.

If you share a working space, **have a designated spot for each individual**, no matter how small. If you have phone calls to make or video meetings to attend, try to **coordinate your schedules** as much as possible.



Set up your computer or other equipment and collaborative tools:

<https://www.concordia.ca/it/support/learn-teach-work-from-home.html>

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Family and children

If you have children, other family members or pets at home and you must participate in a conference call, do not hesitate to inform your manager, colleagues, clients, etc. that you may be interrupted.

Inform your children and other family members about your schedule and set rules (i.e., when you are working vs. when you are available to them, etc.). You can even set an alarm, or play some favourite music as a cue that you are now available, etc. Keep in mind that while you are working remotely during this trying time, it is important to carve out some quality time for you and your family. Should you be facing personal difficulties that make it problematic for you to work remotely, contact your manager.

Plan your work and avoid isolation

Your manager is there to support you. Communicate regularly with your manager to inform them of your technical and personal requirements/needs, and to keep them informed.

Maintaining regular contacts with your colleagues is essential; many of us enjoy the interaction of the daily workplace and working from home can result in feeling isolated. You can keep the workplace professional and have social interactions by adjusting channels of communication. Concordians have access to a variety of digital tools such as Skype for Business, Zoom and Microsoft Teams to facilitate interactions with your colleagues.



Take breaks during the day

Plan your day as if you were at the office. This includes taking your regular breaks and your lunchtime, which should contribute to maintaining your focus throughout the day.

Take some time to stretch, do some exercises, meditate or interact with your family members before diving back into your work.

Look after your mental and physical health

Avoid falling into the trap of working too much at the expense of your health. Working remotely does not mean working 24/7. Establish a regular schedule with your team that makes sense for the work and to understand expectations. Exercise flexibility when needed. Aim to maintain and/or adopt (new) healthy habits that will promote a positive psychological state and physical condition (e.g., go for a walk, meditate, cook healthy meals, etc. – whatever works for you).



If you are feeling stressed, you may **contact Concordia's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** at 1-800-663-1142 (English Services) or 1-866-398-9505 (French Services). Remember that all contact between you and your EAP counsellor is confidential and at no cost to you.

You can also visit the following website:

<http://www.concordia.ca/hr/benefits/eap.html>



Concordia's COVID-19 updates

<https://www.concordia.ca/covid19info.html>

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Additional references

Please see below for additional links and references.

- Working from home for the first time? Here's how to make it a success**
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/coronavirus-remote-work-work-from-home-1.5502294>
- 10 conseils pour un télétravail efficace**
<https://brioconseils.com/publications/10-conseils-pour-un-teletravail-efficace/>
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) : conseils psychologiques et informations au grand public, Ordre des psychologues du Québec**
<https://www.ordrepsy.qc.ca/coronavirus-covid-19-conseils-psychologiques-et-informations-au-grand-public>