

Coronavirus

Working at home tips - from someone with 20 years' experience!

- We still need to give a good service. People are more concerned than usual, and will come to us for help – we might have heard their query before, but for them, its personal, and they are worried. They may have tried to research their issue; they may be looking for support or other help. They may just want to chat. Dealing with those who need help is no different at home, than it is in the office.
- Even when you don't feel much like it, try to put a smile in your brain when you answer the phone. Try to put your own stress to one side. When you have a stressful call, call a colleague – don't dwell on it.
- Get up, and get ready for work, as if you were going to the office. I know the old adage 'what I wear doesn't affect the way my brain works' is good for some, who can put in a productive day in their pyjamas, but I can't.



- Plan your work for the day. Estimate how long things will take to do, set aside that time so your day is filled. Also, when you are asked about your day, and what you have done, you can look at your list.
- If you want to put a load of washing in at 11am, do it. You shouldn't sit at your desk all day anyway, so doing something (call it 'thinking time' if you like) practical is good.
- Store the biscuits/cakes in a room as far away from your desk as you can.

- Similarly, if you remember mid-afternoon that you haven't lifted dinner out of the freezer, do it. Peel the spuds while you are in the kitchen, waiting for the kettle to boil.
- Take a lunch break. When the weather is good, and work is quiet(ish) go out for a walk. Get some fresh air (but remember social distancing!), come back with a renewed enthusiasm.



- Call at least one colleague every day. That means you speak to an actual person about life, the universe and everything at least once a day. Don't feel you have to limit that conversation to work either. We are in stressful, worrying times.
- Don't worry if you miss a phone call because you took a break. We all need to move away from the desk every now and then. Call the person back, and apologise for missing their call, but you don't need to explain if you were in the bathroom or something!
- The postie will knock on your door just as you call someone. They will understand when you say 'hang on, there is someone at the door'.
- If you are used to company at work, it can get lonely – especially if you are the only one in the house, so having the radio on is fine. I also find having a person in my house, talking to 'me' is good. Yes, I talk back to them, I'll even ping an email to them every so often to tell them they are taking rubbish. I prefer a music station to talk shows – there's less distraction!
- If you have a flexitime system – use it. If you are up early, start early, finish early. I'll often start early, and finish early - internet shopping is still a go! Similarly, if you fancy a lie in, take one. Start late, finish late.
- Drink plenty of tea/coffee/water etc. Save the gin until you've clocked off!