

Work from home

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This paper focuses on the important aspects of **remote work**

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Foreword

Dear Friends,

The situation with coronavirus is developing and pandemic has been declared. Being responsible for each other, we want to minimize the risk of the disease spreading among us.

That is why we have decided to encourage you to change the way you work to remote-first. What it means is that we would like you to minimize the need of physical interactions to deliver your work.

For each of us it's something different - maybe you are having some mentees from Neoteric Academy that you need to start meeting online or you need to make sure that online documentation is good enough for employee contracts.

But also, for each of us it's the same as it gives us fewer opportunities to interact with each other.

The culture of freedom and responsibility is based on the fundament of trust. Trust is built when you are accountable for your decisions but you have the freedom to choose your way of work. In times of change, this attitude of questioning the status quo is what's the best in us.

First of all, do not panic. Have faith in the society as we have won with much more severe viruses in the past, follow the instructions from your authorities, minimize physical interactions, and apply the highest hygiene standards by washing your hands often, avoiding touching your face or using your hands to open doors and touch common objects.

Here's a very vivid picture of how the virus spreads in close communities: <https://www.facebook.com/102821637943924/posts/130675555158532/?v=embed>

Unless absolutely necessary, perform your work from your home office. I hope that this short eBook will give you good guidance in organizing your workspace.

It may be hard to be close when you're distant but loving people do that often. Distance relationships are different, not impossible. That's how we started with Anna 🥰 🥰

Stay healthy and safe, loving

Matt Kurlito

Introduction

We want to share some tips and rules on how to embrace remote work and remain productive. If you think this document lacks any information, please let us know, and we will add it as soon as possible. All tips are very important for us.

Principles of efficient work

Before you start working remotely

There are a few things you should take care of before you start working remotely.

Set up your work space

If you have a room dedicated to work, then setting up your own office is ideal, but even if there is no such room, take a corner of a room just for work, where you go to do that and only that. That is your office and the rest of your house is home.

If you need an additional monitor or any equipment, please take it from the office or ask a co-worker to take it if you are not allowed to visit the office (quarantine).

Below, you will find a link to an Excel spreadsheet - please write down exactly what items you took home from the office.

On the monitors and docking stations, there should be stickers with numbers. Please write them down in the column named "Number".

Items that do not have assigned numbers (mouse, keyboard, cables) should be written down in the "Description" column. Write down e.g. what brand of mouse you took, which keyboard, what type of cable.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1PI8B9R4MXHvRPifiQ9QFFCPGpMvKQibnZWePJWV-RRY/edit?usp=sharing>

If you don't have any space to work from home, please contact your leader or Scrum Master and inform them about it.

Inform your housemates

An important aspect of working from home is to provide information about Home Office to your family or roommates.

Let them know that you often work with your camera and microphone on.

Ask for silence and keep calm while on a call. Be aware that even noise from the other room is reaching the microphone, so turn off your microphone whenever you do not speak.

Please make sure that in the area of the webcam, no other family members or friends or objects that may cause you embarrassment will be seen.

When you work at home with your children, divide your working hours for the whole day. Take more breaks, but making the plan of your day, keep in mind when you have meetings and calls.

Set Your Working Hours

One of the hardest aspects of working remotely is concentrating on the task at hand. It's easy to become distracted by the TV, Facebook, visitors popping over or the mound of laundry that's waiting for you. It can also mean you find yourself working sporadically throughout the days, evenings, and weekends, which can negatively impact the work-life balance you are striving for. So set some rigid working hours when you shut everything off (there are apps you can use to block out distractions such as Social Media sites) and focus on the work that needs your attention.

When working remotely

TEAM

Every project and team are different. Your team needs to agree on how you want to cooperate, but there are some basic rules that you can implement in most teams. Please find them below. Remember that rules have to be clear for each team member and everyone needs to be aware of the rules they should follow when working remotely.

1. Communication is the key

The key to being successful in any professional role is communication, but when it comes to remote work, it is even more important of an asset. Make sure to clearly state the progress you've made, which goals you've surpassed, and which projects you've led. When you're not at the office, it can be difficult for your manager to keep your work top-of-mind, so don't be afraid to bring important milestones up on your own. **Join daily**

standups (use Hangouts Meet) and keep your team updated at all times! If you have any important information, don't wait until your daily stand but contact your Scrum Master on Hangouts Chat.

2. Talk to your team

When communicating, don't just type - talk. Sometimes you need face to face communication to get ideas across quickly. Having a five-minute chat over video can prevent you from wasting hours of back and forth chatting trying to answer questions. **Use Google Hangouts for short calls.** Video provides advantages phone conferencing does not. With phone calls, you're limited to audio. In real life, 93% of communication is non-verbal. **No matter what problems you're having, letting your colleagues know what's happening will let them take into account any drop in output you may have as a result.**

3. Work visibly

When remote, a colleague can't sit next to you to go over a doc, or pair-program as they could do at the office. Having open documents facilitates collaboration and feedback. Other team members can jump straight into your docs or code without you having to send them over emails or messages. **Remember about changing statuses in Jira/Taiga.** It's very important to show the progress that's been made and it's your responsibility to be transparent with the rest of the team. **When you work remotely, daily standups and Jira are the source of truth about your progress.** Please remember to have your tasks up to date and even over-communicate.

4. Join all scrum ceremonies via Hangouts Meet (or other tool chosen by your team)

In our company, we work in Scrum, and the heart of the Scrum framework is a Sprint which consists of all the other Events. Please join these events when working remotely:

- sprint planning
- retrospectives
- sprint reviews (demo sessions)
- refinements
- daily standups

All these meetings should be added in your calendar. If it's possible, please use a camera during every meeting.

Prepare the place where you'll be giving the demo or joining planning. Don't do it last minute! Close any unnecessary apps, run the project,

check whether everything is working properly. Make sure that you feel comfortable with everything that is visible on camera.

Remember that if you share the screen, you can choose two modes (show the whole screen and show the selected window). When you choose the "show all" option, everything that is happening at that time on your computer is visible, including:

- all open tabs (you don't always want to share what you are browsing)
- appearing notifications from hangouts (it's best to turn them off, bearing in mind that we often comment on each other using a messenger when we have a call with a client or you receive private messages that may not be available to other team members and the client).

If you are not able to join, inform your team and your Scrum Master on Hangouts Chat and let them know what your progress is and what you plan to deliver to the next daily standup. Below, you can find a reminder about the proper daily form:

Things we have done since the last daily:

>

Things we are planning to get done before tomorrow:

>

Obstacles that we need to remove:

>

5. Have a schedule/Have your calendar up to date

Please use your calendar on a daily basis (open it at the beginning of the day). Based on calendar events, you can plan your breaks etc. and other people know when you are available. It's even good to add a lunch break so others know that you are AFK (away from keyboard) during these hours. Also, please inform everyone on Hangouts #wfh channels when you are afk for a time longer than 30 minutes.

Please remember about using CLOCKIFY!

6. Get accustomed to the camera

In our company, we believe that communication is the key in every project and cooperation. It's important to build a mindset that we are one team. And how can we do it? For example by using a camera on every meeting, by sharing pictures on the chat, by giving honest feedback to each other. Believe us, this one thing can change much in our relationship. When we see someone, it's easier to think about us as

one team. And after a couple of meetings, it will be natural for everyone that we have a camera on.

7. Make sure that you have good internet connection

Please check your connection and make sure that you are able to work remotely. If you have any problems, contact your supervisor.

8. Use technology to stay connected

Instant messaging and videoconferencing tools can make it easy to check in with co-workers and remind you how your work is contributing to the big picture. As a company, we use mainly:

- Hangouts Chat - Internal communication
- Slack - communication in projects with Clients and external teams
- Gmail - for email communication
- Hangouts Meet - for calls/meetings
- Google Calendar - to schedule events and reminders
- Google Drive - for storing documents and files
- Clockify - for time tracking
- Jira/Taiga - project management
- Teams (often used by our clients, you must be added to Azure to use it. If after an invitation by a client you have a problem with access, please contact the Scrum Master or directly to Łukasz)

Please make sure that you have these apps on your computer or phone to be connected with the rest of the team every day.

9. Take Accountability

If you are unable to complete something remotely, be accountable and transparent about it. Communicate any problems you encounter immediately with your Scrum Master, Client or Team so they can seek extra resources if need be. One more time - Communicate any problems you encounter immediately!

10. We will never stop TEAM BONDING initiatives - even working remotely

A team needs to feel as one organism and every team bonding activity gives you an opportunity to build this mindset. We can create dedicated digital spaces for celebrating special days and birthdays or conduct team bonding activities like virtual games or FIFA tournaments.

11. Problems with remote work rules

If you don't know what to do or you don't understand rules and tips on how to work remotely - contact your leader or Scrum Master, and they will explain everything and help you with any obstacles.

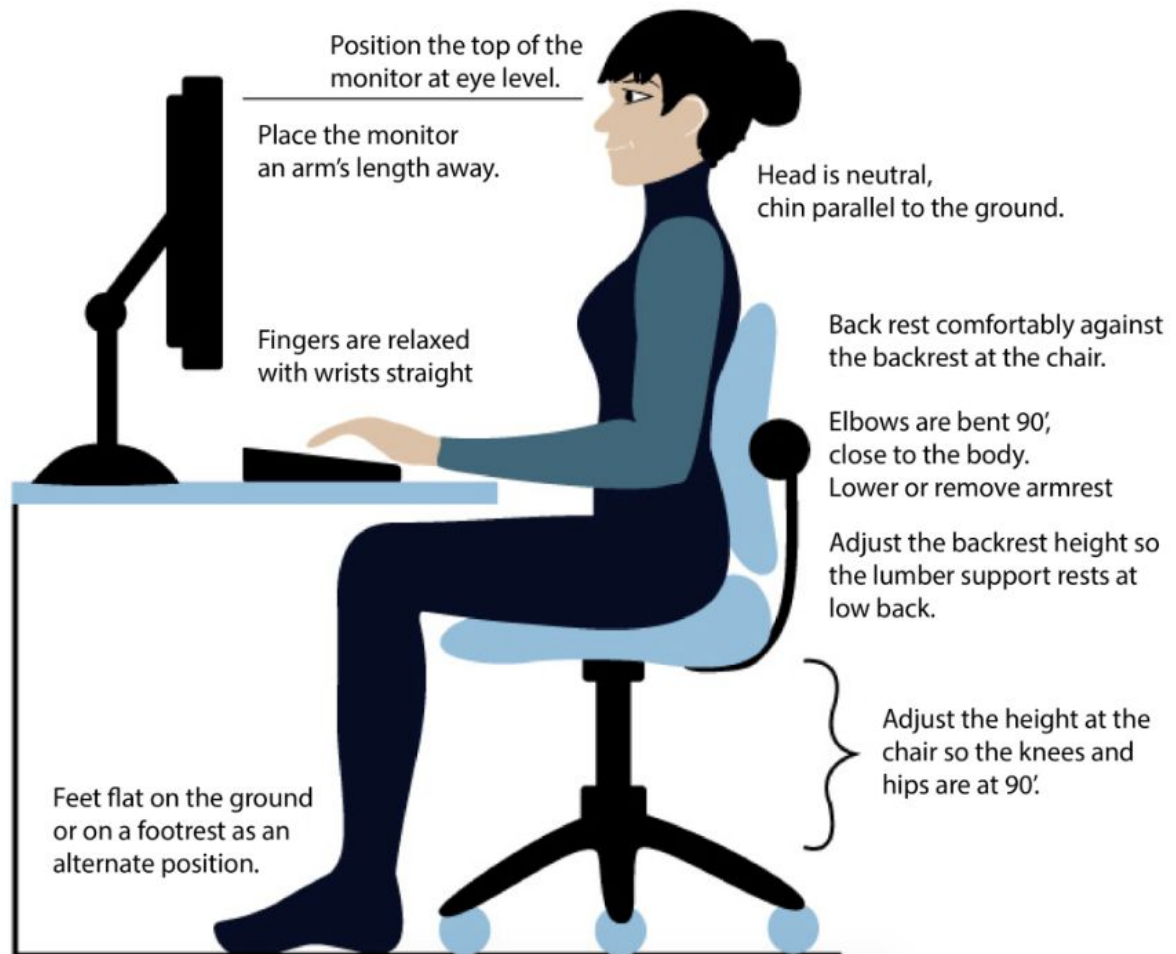
COMFORT

- Take regular breaks to come back with a fresh head. There needs to be a balance between staying focused and not working yourself into a rut.
- Short breaks can help you clear your mind – have a coffee or tea and make sure that you are motivated to continue your work.
- Always have water around to avoid dehydration.
- Remember about adequate distance from the computer. Your eyes also need rest.

You can do some exercise:

- looking at an object far away and at a close object – for a change
 - tired eyes can be relaxed by practicing directing the eyes up and down, left and right and rotating your eyes
 - open and close your eyes from time to time.
- Ensure proper air circulation.
 - If you need it, look for some short exercises that will allow you to relax. Find some examples here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knYi6qp6A_A
 - Do not sit at the desk all the time. Standing up (while working) is an alternative. You can use it to take a break from sitting at the desk.
 - Remember to have access to daylight. It has a big influence on your mood.
 - Take care of your physical health. Remember that you're not alone. You can rely on your whole team and your Scrum Master.
 - Don't change your morning routine – keep your habits and dress to work as usual. This will help make you feel like you are at work :) Mark my words!

Ergonomics for the Computer Workstation



<https://www.eliteptandbalance.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Elite-Physical-Therapy-Wrist-Week-Image-3-1024x873@2x.png?fbclid=IwARINMzwsbocCkzAuucacATqVilK9cM0hNg3FAQYr4I5X3IWcic2xY5IH5c>

The video below will also show some tips for ergonomic computer work:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8_ME4VwTiw

After work

- Remember to take a break from the computer
- If you don't need to go out, stay at home
- Read books, watch movies, play video games - remember to rest!
- Get enough sleep
- Try to avoid excessive information from the internet and television
- Do not panic :)

Healthy habits

Please remember that being at the office, we move a lot more during the day. We walk to the kitchen, bathroom, for coffee or dinner.

Let's try to move as much as possible and as often as possible at home - all daily stand ups must be done standing up :) as Scrum orders

Remember:

1. Take breaks of 5 minutes after each hour of working at the computer.
2. Perform a few simple exercises as often as possible (it's worth getting into habits).



https://web.pip.gov.pl/ergonomia/ergonomiczne_st.html

Services

Communication services

Hangouts chat

It may feel weird to use chat for conversations we used to have in person. But it is not impossible to have a fruitful conversation using the chat only. It does mean using more emojis these days, but isn't that what we used to do on #irc when the internet was as fresh as the air is these days.

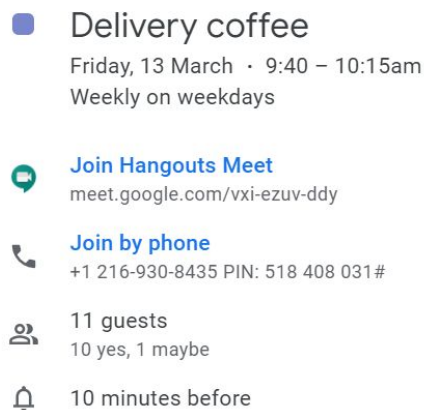
If you are used to sharing your daily tasks with a friend over coffee, drop them a line that you are making coffee - maybe you can jump on a call and have it together.

Some of us love smileys and use them a lot, some prefer the grumpy type and that's okay too. But even if you are not a great fan of emojis, don't try to force your friends to your style of communication. After all, we are better because we are different.

TIP: Add Google Drive bot to your chat. It will inform you about important notifications from GDrive.

Google meet

Google meet is a tool where all online meetings take place. Links to individual meetings can be found in Google Calendar.



The screenshot shows a calendar event titled "Delivery coffee" with a blue square icon. The event details are: "Friday, 13 March · 9:40 – 10:15am" and "Weekly on weekdays". Below the event title are three options to join the meeting: "Join Hangouts Meet" with a green speech bubble icon and the link "meet.google.com/vxi-ezuv-ddy", "Join by phone" with a red phone icon and the number "+1 216-930-8435 PIN: 518 408 031#", and "11 guests" with a red person icon, indicating "10 yes, 1 maybe". At the bottom, there is a red bell icon and the text "10 minutes before".

Just click on **Join Hangouts Meet** and connect to the meeting.

In addition, you will find information how to give a demo there.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XDZ9idIbZu9FtyeofcSCC5NCw3UBUXeWQeg8P-Ornr4/edit?usp=sharing>

Rules are applicable to all video calls!

Google Calendar

While working remotely, the rules for using the calendar do not change, but we encourage you to use it often.

Administration

Signing documents

Signing documents will be difficult and discussions are currently underway on how this will happen. You will be kept informed.