Setting yourself up for success – at home

It is hard to distinguish home and office when you are at home. But to the extent possible, create a space at home that looks and feels like your office to you.

- Create a healthy workspace – good light, comfortable temperature, ergonomic adjustable chair, computer keyboard, and mouse suited to your needs, etc.
- Create a safe workspace – ensure power cords are secured to avoid a tripping hazard, liquids are positioned to avoid spillage on your equipment, and your computer is protected when not in use.
- Make sure your files are accessible in the cloud, desktop, or on a memory stick (back up materials).
- Create a plan if you lose the internet.
- Establish ground rules for work hours, interruptions, noise, etc. and communicate your expectations with family members, significant others, etc.

Develop rituals and have a disciplined way of managing your day.

- Prepare for work every morning as if you’re physically going into work. Get dressed even if it is not clothing you would typically wear to work, do your hair – whatever you normally do, then get started on the day’s activities.
- Schedule a start and end time.
- Set a timer or mark your calendar for taking time for breaks, eating lunch, and turning off your work. Go for a walk, change your venue, and take a breather.
- When your workday ends, put away your work equipment and change into your evening or lounge clothes to signal the shift to personal time.

Incorporate movement within your day by making it a point to move around periodically throughout your day.

Prepare your meals the night before and try not to eat within reach of your workspace.

- Set caffeine boundaries and increase hydration – keeping water easily accessible.
- Keep healthy snacks ready.

Stay connected

If you are accustomed to a lot of contact and collaboration with others, make sure that it still happens.

- Embrace connecting virtually so you can see your colleagues via Zoom.
- Click on the link below to learn how to set up a free account: https://berksiu.org/zoom
- Set up regular check-ins with your team or supervisor to not only provide progress updates but also sort through any problems or brainstorm ideas.
- Use Zoom to schedule an online social time to have conversations with no agenda.

Be proactive with your communication and resolve issues as they arise.

- Clarify work expectations with your supervisor.
- Update your email, voicemail greeting, staff calendar, etc. regularly with a schedule, availability (or not), and contact information.
- Speak up when you need a break or extra support.

Check all communications platforms and voicemail frequently.

- If you are experiencing technical difficulties or connectivity challenges, contact your supervisor so that alternative solutions may be considered.
Manage your work and preserve time for life

Finds ways to “disengage” from work and have quality personal time when traditional boundaries between work and home life are no longer clear.

- Set reasonable limits to work hours and determine how to meet work requirements and still preserve personal time.
- Designate some places as work-free zones.
- In the morning spend your unnecessary commute time for self-renewal or family time, not work.

Effectively working from home when you have kids

Create a schedule – each morning, have the kids wake up, eat breakfast, and get dressed at the same time they would have if they were going to daycare or school.

It is okay to be transparent about the fact that you are juggling the needs of your kids.

Set boundaries with your children (and significant others).

Tell your kids when you need to be in “do not disturb” mode and perhaps have a physical sign on the door with a thumbs up, thumbs down, or whatever works as a signal for when you genuinely cannot be interrupted.

During your breaks, walk around and engage with your kids.