Working Virtually

Creating your workspace
• Comfortable seating
• Ample light
• Limit distractions to ensure productivity
• Keep a supply of notebook paper, pens, pencils, paper clips, etc.
• Learn how to use video conferencing tools (Zoom), and wear a headset (i.e. see your manager)

Managing your workday
• Begin your day at your normal start time
• Take periodic breaks
  ✓ Short breaks will help keep you energized throughout the day
    ▪ Ex. Stretching and taking deep breaths
• Have lunch
  ✓ It’s easy to work through lunch, especially when working from home
  ✓ It’s important to stop and have a healthy lunch
  ✓ Staying hydrated helps maintain focus throughout the day

Additional important information
• Providing care for children and/or adults, and working on any non-Harvard project during paid work hours is not allowed.

Conference call best practices
• Dial in to meetings 5 minutes before start time
• Put dial in number on speed dial (when the same number is used regularly)
• Place your phone on mute to limit background noise
  ✓ Remember to take phone off mute when speaking
  ✓ Typing, coughing, whispering, etc. can be heard
  ✓ Never put the conference call on hold! Music maybe playing
  ✓ Speak up and clearly so everyone can hear you
  ✓ Stay concise and on topic
Managing Teams with Flex Work Arrangements

Moving away from traditional office space also means changing some traditional management practices. Here are strategies to assist you.

Use Communication Tools
• Tools like Zoom (video conferencing) or other University supported tools give your virtual team an efficient way to communicate when working remotely.
• Ensure you and your team are educated on using the tool.

Schedule Regular Team Meetings
• Maintaining routines is essential.
• Hold team meetings and one on one check ins as scheduled.
• Effective routines give the team something they are used to and familiar with, which puts the whole team at ease and reduces stress.

Define Clear and Detailed Expectations
• Sharing detailed descriptions of what’s expected is much better for staff working remotely.

Leading Virtual Conference Calls
• Send out the meeting agenda and any files that will be discussed in advance
  ✓ Use Teams or other University supported tools whenever possible, making it easy for staff to locate relevant files
• Dial in 10 minutes prior to the start of the call (ensure equipment is working and troubleshoot if needed)
• Welcome meeting members, paying special attention to announce staff participating virtually
• Be sure to ask virtual participants for their input, periodically throughout the meeting
• Summarize decisions and action items
• Don't be afraid to pause in order to give those on the phone an opportunity to speak

Model the behaviors you want to see or expect!