

Inc.

COLUMNIST

5 Quick Tips To Master Managing Remotely

Senior executives, business owners, and entrepreneurs in companies of all sizes are learning to work from home, manage others as they travel, and lead teams with members living in other states or even countries.



By [Joelle K. Jay@JoelleKJay](mailto:JoelleKJay)



CREDIT: Getty Images

In [a recent Inc column](#) I wrote about the two traits you need to master to successfully work from home: discipline and self-control, which highlighted that working from home isn't just for small businesses anymore.

For example, I recently worked with a senior level manager at one of the Big 5 tech companies who "managed remotely," meaning that even though he had over 250 people reporting up to him from around the globe, he almost never saw them face to face. Senior executives, business owners, and entrepreneurs in companies of all sizes are learning to work from home, manage others as they travel, and lead teams with members living in other states or even countries. As we get smarter about our use of technology in the global world of business, more and more workers will need these skills.

Leadership always has its challenges, but those challenges are multiplied when you're managing a team from home.

How do you remain productive and keep the team cohesive, when you all may be on different time zones and working out of individual locations? Today, I'm sharing some of the best practices I've seen for setting yourself up to succeed as a leader wherever you are.

Work at your high-energy time. Do you have more energy for productivity in the morning, or at night? Plan your day around your high-energy zones, and you'll get more done in less time.

Have regular hours. It can be tempting to work at off hours when you're always "at the office." But setting a schedule for yourself, whether it's a 9-5 or a 7-3, can offer a sense of separation.

Make your office your office. Give yourself the chance to take a "mental commute," even if your "commute" means just walking down the hall to your home office. Also, make sure the space you choose for your office is only used as an office--that's 100% work space, not where your kids or your spouse hang out and do their own thing. This is important in order to avoid distraction.

Set office hours when it comes to colleagues and clients. For example, make it known to your clients that all of your appointment hours are between 10-2, keeping 2-5 as your quiet productive hours. This allows for action planning to create a to-do list system for projects so you're not tempted to leave the office and do other things.

Use the word "office." When it comes to mentally preparing to work from home, it's important not to neglect the rhetoric you use. When you're working in your home office, you're "in your office," not "at home." Other important vocabulary to exercise include the words "working," "being in a meeting," and "staying offline." Keep all verbiage office-oriented for mental association. Not because you're embarrassed in any way to communicate that you're working from home, but rather to build credibility and accountability. If you think about your work the same way as you would if you are downtown, it will create a similar air of focus.

When you implement these practices, "managing remotely" becomes less about the "remote" status and more about simply "managing." By optimizing your hours based on your productivity, setting

your appointment hours around it, and cultivating your office environment, both you--and the team you're leading--have a clearer focus on the work you're doing, no matter where on earth you may be.

The opinions expressed here by Inc.com columnists are their own, not those of Inc.com.

PUBLISHED ON: JUN 14, 2016

Dr. Joelle Jay is a principal with the Leadership Research Institute, as well as an executive coach, keynote speaker, and the author of *The Inner Edge: The Ten Practices of Personal Leadership*. Joelle specializes in the advancement of executive women, and she is proud to have supported the development of top talent into positions of leadership for many successful companies, including MetLife, Adobe, and Microsoft.