

Home Working:

From Flexibility to Necessity



Contact andrew@penker.co.uk to obtain your **FREE Guide to Homeworking** and register for the **Homeworking toolkit** that will optimise home working for your company.

Provided by: <https://andrewpenker.co.uk/>
Trusted HR Advice



“Homeworking, also called Telework can be defined as the use of smartphones, laptop, tablet and desktop computers – for the purposes of work, outside the employer’s premises i.e. at home and at all places of work outside the employer’s premises”

Eurofound and the International Labour Office – ILO (2017), Working anytime, anywhere: The effects on the world of work Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, and the ILO, Geneva.

Does Working from Home, Work?

Hear **Professor Nicholas Bloom, Stanford Uni.**, whose **research at Ctrip in China** noted:

13% increase in Productivity
\$2k cost savings (per employee)
50% labour turnover reductions
But, also increased feelings of loneliness

1 in 5

In the EU 28 are Homeworking

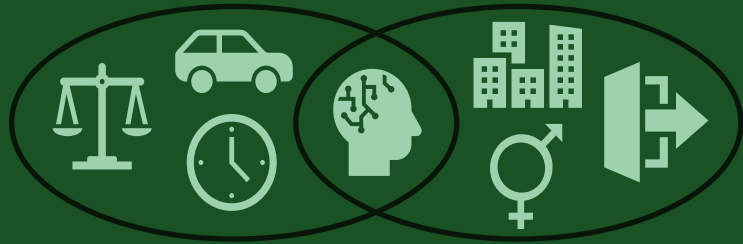


1 in 10

In the U.S. are Homeworking

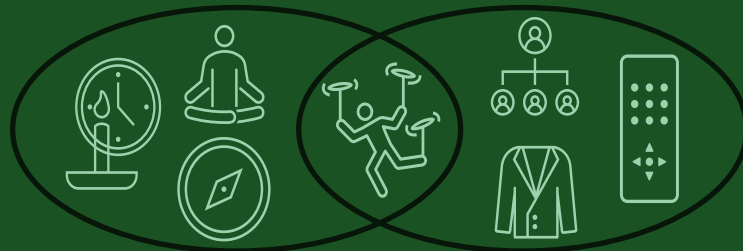


Advantages and disadvantages of Homeworking



Work-Life; Commuting time & costs;
Flexibility (working time);
Productivity & Efficiencies;
Office space & costs; Diversity;
Labour turnover

Longer working hours;
Work-Home interference;
Work intensification;
Wellbeing (Physical, Social);
Blurred work life boundaries



Homeworker Wellbeing Survey Interim results April 2020

75%



No risk assessment of home working arrangements

67%



enjoying greater work autonomy

20%



feeling lonely and isolated

71%

In the UK are Homeworking due to COVID-19



IES Homeworker Wellbeing Survey Headlines

Top 10 Tips Home working from Flexibility to Necessity

It's hard enough keeping staff productive, engaged and happy under normal circumstances, but enforced home working adds even more complexity.

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R **Risk Assessment.** Ensure workspaces are suitable. Think about the physical and emotional wellbeing of remote workers. The [IOSH Information guide to Managing Remote working](#) is really useful.

E **Equipment.** Consider all aspects of a home office, not just the laptop and mobile phone i.e. desk, chair, lighting, mouse & mat, keyboard, printer/scanner. Get ideas from [Top 6 Remote work equipment must haves](#).

M **Morale.** The ability to recognise stress early when remote working is vital. How will Managers know staff are coping? What are the signs of stress and what is causing the stress? The [IOSH Stress toolkit](#) is a useful starting point.

O **Open Communication.** Lack of face-to-face contact for staff may lead to disengagement, boredom and confusion. How will feedback be given/received? How frequently? And by whom? Want to know more? – contact andrew@penker.co.uk

T **Treatment.** Treat everyone the way they want to be treated. People may behave differently with change. Contact andrew@penker.co.uk and gain insights on your people by using the [PPA profile \(sample report\)](#) with a remote working report.

E **Engagement.** Remote workers may need different challenges to stimulate their attention. How engaged were they before and how are they now? How will everyone keep up-to-date with what's going on at work?

Contact andrew@penker.co.uk for more Top tips on:
Setting up for Remote working, and Managing Remote workers and teams
Coming soon: xsectormentor.com – **the global, virtual mentor programme**



*Don't let your home be your office.
Create a home office.*



W **Wellbeing.** Consider physical, emotional, financial and social wellbeing. Reminding staff to take breaks is still important but don't forget to promote your EAP (Employee Assistance Programme). Want to set one up? – contact andrew@penker.co.uk

O **Output.** Don't track working hours. Agree deliverables including learning outcomes and arrange time to catch up and chat/feedback on how staff are performing. The [IOSH Coronavirus - page 4 Managing Remote workers guide](#) is really useful.

R **Room to learn.** Encourage the learning and development of new skills and ways of working. Time is a gift – how can it be used to get better at what you do? Try [OU Openlearn Free courses](#), [Futurelearn Free courses](#), [Edx Free courses](#)

K **Know yourself, your team and your Manager.** Invest time getting to know people better. How can you use time on video calls to discover what skills your colleagues have and how you can learn from, and work together better?

*Does your office environment work with maximum efficiency & effectiveness?
Is everyone at work fully engaged and driven to perform 100% of the time?*

Most organisations are always considering how they can make improvements and work more productively in their office environment and if remote working is to realise its potential, at least the same level, if not more, of investment is required.

Please contact Andrew Penker for trusted advice on Remote working and for advice on the use of psychometric profiles or setting up an EAP.

<https://andrewpenker.co.uk/>

*Andrew Penker Chartered FCIPD, MSc is an independent HR Consultant
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Top 5 Tips Setting up Home workers

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Set up.

Ensure workspaces are suitable otherwise your home will become an office when what you need is a home office.

Consider the room you'll work from – is it well lit, ventilated, free from distractions?

[HSE Display Screen Equipment \(DSE\) Checklist](#)

[IOSH Information guide to Managing Remote working](#)

Recognise stress early by being aware of the signs of stress and what is causing the stress? The [IOSH Stress toolkit](#) is a useful starting point.

Equipment. Consider all aspects of a home office, not just the laptop and mobile phone i.e. desk, chair, lighting, mouse & mat, keyboard, printer/scanner.

Get ideas from [Top 6 Remote work equipment must haves](#).

Also review your broadband and router and whether you are using a PC or a laptop.

[Working from Home \(Technology & Equipment\) - article](#)

Treatment.

Everyone will react differently to the prospect of remote working for a long period.

Consider what you need from your colleagues and your Manager, not what they think they you need. Treat everyone the way they want to be treated. People behave differently especially with change, so if you want to know each other better, try the [PPA profile \(Thomas International\)](#) with a remote working report.

If in doubt, communicate. It's the way to stay informed, be clear on what is happening at work and how everyone else is doing.

Tax.

If you are working from home and perhaps need to buy some new equipment, refer to Justine's advice: [ICAS - Tax advice for employees working from home](#)

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U

Upskill and reskill.

Think about your learning and development of new skills and ways of working.

Time is a gift – how can it be used to get better at what you do and what interests you?

Try [OU Openlearn Free courses](#), [Futurelearn Free courses](#), [Edx Free courses](#)

Learn how to video call either for work - [12 tips for video conferencing while you work from home](#)

or for your family - [BBC - How to video call](#)

Invest time on getting to know people at work. How can you use time on video calls to discover others' skills and how you can work together better?

Perform.

As a Remote worker, you may need different challenges to stimulate your attention.

Working in isolation can affect your levels of self-motivation and engagement and it can

also test your skills of time management. Talk with your manager about how you

will give and receive feedback and how you can keep up-to-date with work?

Don't track your working hours but do agree deliverables including learning outcomes whilst you are remote working.

Your physical wellbeing is important but so is your emotional and social wellbeing.

So, take breaks, agree your workload and the quality and quantity of your output

with your Manager and keep communicating!

P

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Top 6 Tips Managing a Home-based team

It's hard enough keeping staff productive, engaged and happy under normal circumstances, but enforced home working adds even more complexity.

As a Manager or Supervisor, managing a team can be challenging and hugely rewarding but you need to focus on certain aspects more specifically when managing a home-based team. If you want to manage more effectively then this trusted advice is for you and your organisation!

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M

Meet up.

Whilst face-to-face is the most optimal for team-building, schedule virtual team get-togethers instead. Getting to know each other personally and professionally is helpful especially when determining the guiding principles for how the team will work together. Schedule an individual 1:1 meeting first and then agree with the team the frequency and duration of future meetings. This is not about what suits you as a Manager but all about what the individuals and team needs and wants.

A

Agree Tasks and processes.

Whilst goals, roles and responsibilities are relevant, it is how the team will co-ordinate that is more important in a virtual setting. Simplify the work and give accountability to smaller groups of 2-3 individuals to complete. This provides support, communication and interaction to the team. Remember and conduct 'post-action reviews' to check on progress, make adjustments as necessary and identify training requirements that may have been identified.

N

Needs.

Communication is top of the list. A 'Communication Charter' with the team will ensure that less frequent comms with few visual cues won't lead to no one individual dominating conversations and the whole team feeling involved.

The charter should also consider the communication methods (email, video conference, telephone), your team will use to ensure the most appropriate method is adopted and in the right circumstance.

A

Arrange.

Think of an orchestra with a range of musicians all wanting to contribute at the highest level and at the right time. In order to be effective takes practice and connection. It is not about being the fastest at playing or being the only one who knows what the tune is. There needs to be a shared agenda and a shared understanding of phrases and expressions, especially relevant for multi-national and multi-cultural teams who may feel, at times divided by a common language.

G

Group meetings.

You don't have a coffee machine in this virtual environment, so start every meeting with an individual update on what individuals have been doing, how they've been getting on and how others can help if there are any obstacles that have arisen. Add some humour and enjoyment to the proceedings by doing some virtual icebreakers and think about how social networking applications might help too.

E

Evaluate.

Define deliverables and tracking. Consider how you can involve others in leading the team and perhaps even coaching one another and teaching each other new skills. The key to evaluation is through your 1:1s especially in a virtual team. Schedule time and stick to it. Focus on outputs and not the hours of work of individuals.

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