MAKING **REMOTE WORK**

Navigating wellbeing and productivity during a global pandemic



unum



WELCOME

Liz Ahmed
EVP, People, Communications, and Corporate Responsibility

I don't know about you, but the past few weeks have been the strangest of my life. Many of us have isolated ourselves physically to protect our friends, our family and others. It's created uncertainty about when and how I can safely venture out from my home for groceries and other necessary errands. And the need to work exclusively from home, while I work to manage a team and support our organization, has forced all of us to adapt to new ways of working.

I'm not telling you anything you don't already know, though. Each of us has seen our worlds disrupted, forcing us to find creative new solutions to engage with our social circles and presenting us with unique challenges to balance our home and work responsibilities. This can have significant impacts on our physical, emotional, mental and financial wellbeing.

At Unum Group (which includes Unum and Colonial Life), we're lucky to have entire teams dedicated to supporting our 10,000 employees and their wellbeing needs. As soon as we transitioned to working from home on March 16, we connected our experts and resources with employees through emails, posts to our intranet and internal social media channels, and live and recorded video chats.

While Unum has the resources to focus on wellbeing and productivity, many of the businesses and nonprofit organizations in the communities we serve do not. So I've asked several of my colleagues to share their tips, knowledge and additional resources about healthy living and engagement in the following pages. We hope this helps you and your employees feel connected and live well as we all navigate this time together.

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WORKING FROM HOME

Michelle Boucher
SVP, Benefits Operations

With everyone's health and safety a top priority at most businesses, millions of Americans are now working from home. But even in the best of circumstances — great technology, perfectly behaved children and generous workplace policies — moving to a work-at-home environment can be extremely difficult.



HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU AND YOUR TEAMMATES MANAGE THIS TRANSITION AND MAINTAIN YOUR PRODUCTIVITY:

- **Pretend like you're going into the office.** The mental association you make between work and an office can make you more productive, and there's no reason that feeling should be lost when telecommuting. When working from home, do all the things you'd do to prepare to come into the office: Set your alarm, make coffee, and put on your work clothes. Pajamas are tempting, but not a great idea if you want to be at your best!
- **Define your work hours.** You'll find that you're most productive if you have a 'normal' work schedule determined by you and your manager.
- **Get comfortable.** Pay attention to workplace ergonomics even when you're working from home. Working from your couch might be tempting but try to set up your workspace to allow you to be your best, most productive self.
- **Include breaks for your brain.** It's not just your body that needs a break. All employees should take meal and rest breaks as well, per your company policy.
- **Stay available.** Make sure your calendar is up-to-date, pay attention to emails, texts or instant messages, and make sure you respond when your manager or colleagues are trying to connect with you.
- **Prioritize your wellbeing.** Make time for activities that allow you to get up and move, eat healthy meals and drink plenty of liquids!
- **Stay motivated.** Working virtually can feel isolating, so be sure to reach out to colleagues or your manager when you feel disconnected.
- **Try to not get distracted by social media or your smart phone.** Consider keeping your personal cell phone or other distractions in another room.
- **Know when to log off.** Working virtually means that you could be working at all hours, but it's important to set a time when you officially 'log off' for the day.
- **Remember, you aren't alone.** Lean on your family, friends and coworkers to support you. Explore the resources your company offers and know this too shall pass. We'll all be back to our normal routine soon.

PROTECTING YOUR DATA

Lynda Fleury
VP, Chief Information Security Officer

In periods of uncertainty and crisis, and especially with millions working from home, criminals and scammers have stepped up their efforts to steal personal and professional data. For the sake of your business and your personal data and accounts, think carefully about how you're making your information available to others.



CONSIDER THESE TIPS

- **Follow all of your business security, privacy and data practices.** Sometimes this means NOT sending work product or work emails to your personal email accounts.
- **Create a hard-to-crack home password.** Ensure that your home router password isn't easily guessed and doesn't include your address or personal names.
- **Enable multifactor authentication.** This includes a password plus an additional requirement, such as a text message. Enable this feature whenever you can.
- **Don't let your operating system security get behind.** Keep the security patches up to date for the best protection.
- **Be diligent and aware of online scams, social engineering, and phishing attempts.** Hackers and criminals will likely use concerns about virus spread and the insatiable desire for news to trick people.
- **Avoid sharing personal data.** Limit the amount of personal data that you share on social media to reduce your threat landscape.
- **Share any workplace data via online secure cloud applications.** Be wary of using devices such as USB memory sticks to share data, as they can be easily lost or stolen.
- **Use caution with email links.** Never click on any links in emails before confirming they're sent from an official account.
- **Avoid providing your financial or personal information over on the phone.** Verify the information first, even if the number appears to be coming from a legitimate source.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- Six easy steps you can take to protect your data online: From Forbes magazine
- 101 data protection tips: From Digital Guardian, which offers its own suite of data protection software solutions
- Ten ways to keep your data private: From Norton, which is known for its antivirus software

TAKING CARE OF YOUR BODY

Laurie Mitchell
AVP, Global Wellbeing & Health Management

Here's another strategy to add to your health hacks: exercise. Moderate exercise seems to have a beneficial effect on immune function, which could help protect against upper respiratory tract infections. Plus, it'll make you feel better. Regular exercise helps combat depression and anxiety, relieves stress, improves memory, helps you sleep better, and boosts your overall mood. But ... the gym is closed, classes are cancelled, and your running buddies are keeping their distance.



DON'T DEFAULT TO THE COUCH — TRY ONE OF THESE IDEAS TO FUEL YOUR FITNESS DURING CORONAVIRUS CLOSE-DOWNS:

- **Walk, run or cycle.** These are all easy activities to do on your own or with a household member, right out your front door.
- **Get creative.** No weight-lifting equipment at home? Look around the house and garage for substitutes. Try bicep curls with a gallon of milk, or sumo squats holding your toddler. There are plenty of exercises you can do with just your own body weight, too: planks, push-ups, crunches. Try this total-body workout that only takes 10 minutes and anyone can do.
- **Try using an app.** There's a nearly endless variety of apps for home workouts, from virtual running coaches to yoga to strength training. Some are even free.
- **Channel yourself.** No Peloton? No sweat. Search Facebook Live or YouTube for fitness videos from cardio dance to full-body workouts.
- **Spruce up the yard.** Now might be the perfect time to clean up winter storm debris, weed flower beds or plant your vegetable garden. You can burn 200 to 600 calories an hour, depending on the task.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- Workout for Beginners: This article from Self magazine takes you through several great workouts for beginners to start with
- Tech Radar: Great workouts for your new home life
- Strava: A great tool for connecting with other runners and cyclists
- My Fitness Pal: Free online diet and calorie plan
- Couch to 5K: This is just one of a ton of great apps and websites to help you go from couch potato to active
- Five Parks Yoga: A great free resource on YouTube
- 7 Minute Workout: This app from Johnson & Johnson can keep you moving

BALANCING PARENTING, SCHOOL AND WORK AT HOME

Liz Ahmed
EVP, People, Communications & Corporate Social Responsibility

It became a viral internet sensation when two kids crashed their dad's BBC interview a couple of years ago, and everyone got a good laugh. Now, it's not a one-off instance, as work-from-home parents are doing their 9–to–5 while helping kids "attend" school — all under the same roof.



TRY THESE TIPS TO MAKE NAVIGATING THIS UNCHARTED TERRITORY A LITTLE EASIER:

- **Establish working hours.** With this new normal of working remotely, it's important to communicate when you're working. Let your coworkers and family know the times of day you're available and unavailable. This will both help them and improve your productivity.
- **Create a schedule.** Take the advice of your children's teachers when it comes to a daily schedule. Use the resources they send you and follow the lesson plans they create. Homeschool On offers free printable schedules and the Today Show features a variety of resources and educational videos. Check out Zoom, Loom, Marco Polo, Facebook Live, ABC Mouse and other apps for collaboration, communication and online learning.
- **Take breaks.** At the office you'd probably get up and stretch, get a coffee or refill your water bottle and talk with co-workers. Make sure you're taking those same breaks throughout the day — for yourself and your kids. Go outside if the weather is nice. Treat the weekend like a real break — don't do schoolwork.
- **Lean on your virtual village.** Your kids' friends are in the same boat. Arrange virtual playdates or study sessions so they can help each other with assignments. Have your children participate if teachers schedule Zoom calls, chats and volunteering online to provide free lessons. Schedule calls with family members, and stay connected to friends and co-workers by participating in virtual happy hours.
- **Give yourself grace.** Now is the time to let go of those self-imposed pressures and expectations, define new goals for what you need to achieve in the new environment, and schedule regular connects with coworkers, friends or family. Remember each child is different — what works for one may not work for another. The key is to create some type of consistency, be available to your children and embrace the changes.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- BrainPOP: Free educational resources that include a video, quiz, games and more
- Centers for Disease Control: Messages for parents, school staff, and others working with children
- Managing work and home school: Tips for being productive at home when you're trying to homeschool the kiddos
- National homework hotline: For blind or visually impaired students by Vistas Education Partners
- ADHD and ASD: Homeschooling tips during coronavirus by Total Life Counseling

MANAGING STRESS

Laurie Mitchell
AVP, Global Wellbeing & Health Management

Most of us have stress in our lives, and we've developed tricks or skills to handle or alleviate those stresses. At the same time, sometimes we battle stress with unhealthy behaviors (substance use, acting out, alcohol abuse).



HERE ARE TIPS TO HELP MANAGE AND LOWER YOUR STRESS LEVELS EVEN DURING DIFFICULT TIMES FILLED WITH UNCERTAINTY:

- **Limit your news intake.** Try to cap your news and social media consumption to a couple of times each day to stay informed but not overwhelmed. And make sure you're following credible news sources.
- **Wind down before bed.** Get away from your technology, if possible, and instead read a book and stay in a cool, low-lit room. Visit the National Sleep Foundation for more sleep hygiene tips.
- **Exercise.** A great way to reduce stress hormones and promote relaxation and calm. Exercise can also give you more energy and vigor and promotes creativity and problem-solving.
- **Breathe.** Many of the resources listed on this page have short breathing exercises. This can quiet your mind and bring focus.
- **Rely on your village.** Make a list of the people you can go to for emotional support and stay connected through phone calls, texts, FaceTime or Zoom hangouts.
- **Get in the game.** Put together a puzzle, try your hand at solitaire or Sudoku or connect with friends to play online games.
- **Treat yourself.** Your hair and nail salon may be closed, but you can still practice self-care to manage your stress. Listen to your favorite song, catch up on shows, take a lunch and multiple breaks that may include a walk around your block.
- **Reach out.** Use your company's Employee Assistance Program through phone, email or video. Check in with your family care practitioner — many offer telehealth options so you can check in from your home.
- **Write it down.** Focusing on what you're grateful for and writing it down can help ease the stress you're feeling. Make a list of three to five specific things you're thankful for to keep what you do have in perspective.
- **Virtually volunteer.** You may not be able to serve meals at your local homeless shelter, but you can give back.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- Headspace: A digital mental health program you can use anywhere. Headspace is scientifically proven to cut stress, reduce burnout and increase positivity. Headspace is offering a collection of guided meditations and exercises with free premium subscription services
- Sanvello: On-demand, digital resources for stress, anxiety, and depression including Daily Mood Tracking and Coping Tools
- Happify: Happify combines evidence-based science, technology and gaming to deliver experiences that make people feel better
- Daylight: Daylight is a smartphone application that uses cognitive behavioral therapy to help people handle negative thoughts and feelings
- Simple Habit: Great for busy people, this app helps you to make meditation a habit by introducing meditation only 5 minutes at a time
- Calm: Guided meditation for beginners that includes a sleep timer and calm music
- 10% Happier: Allow yourself to take a small amount of time each day for your mental health and become 10% happier

STAYING CONNECTED

Joanne Abate
AVP, Global Health & Insurance

Periods of high stress combined with isolation from friends and family can lead to a prolonged sense of sadness and even depression. One way to lessen the effects of these traumas is to make sure you're staying connected to friends, family and coworkers during this time.



TRY SOME OF THESE HELPFUL TIPS

- **You don't need a meeting invite to reach out to someone.** Pick up the phone. Frequent check-ins — at times expected and unexpected — can significantly lessen the feeling of distance.
- **Be intentional about reaching out.** Don't 'ghost' those you're used to seeing frequently. Think about your co-workers who may typically sit near you, walk the same hallways as you, use the same entrances/exits as you, and even park near you.
- **Schedule a virtual lunch, coffee chat, or happy hour.** You don't need to be in a restaurant or coffee shop to enjoy a latte or a meal with someone. Agree to a date and time, then dial up an audio or video conference with your food and beverage. Have fun sharing what everyone is eating/drinking on the other side of the screen while catching up.
- **Make eye contact.** When you finally see your colleagues in person or online, try to maintain eye contact with them for a few seconds longer than usual. This helps convey they have your undivided attention at that moment. It's a small but meaningful gesture that helps others feel seen and heard.
- **Express delight and well wishes.** When you find yourself in a face-to-face interaction with a colleague, tell them how happy you are to see them, ask how they're doing, and wish them well.
- **Welcome kids, pets, and significant others.** Working remotely is a juggling act for many individuals and families. For some, it's impossible to carve out long periods of uninterrupted time, especially when other family members are also working and learning remotely. If confidentiality isn't at risk, be understanding of different voices, noises, and faces nearby during calls or videoconferences. When appropriate, introduce your loved ones to your team if they happen to be near you during a virtual meeting. The more, the merrier!

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- Zoom: It's not just for your kids and their classwork. It's a great way to stay connected with family and friends when you can't get together.
- Skype: Connect with friends and family all over the globe.
- FaceTime: Talk to friends and family members like they're sitting right beside you.
- Google Duo: A simple way to connect via voice on this Google platform.
- Houseparty: Maybe not the best choice for your work sales call, but a great way to connect with friends and family.

SUPPORTING YOUR EMPLOYEES

Kimberly Bowen
VP, Global Talent Management

In the absence of social interaction, it's easy to begin to feel disconnected from not only your colleagues but also the broader goals of your team. Remember, virtual work arrangements are all about communicating with others from a distance. But truly successful virtual work models are all about ***connecting*** with others from a distance.



TRY THESE HELPFUL TIPS TO FOSTER CONNECTION:

- **Establish a dedicated HR response team.** Provide employees with a way to access consistent and up-to-date information using a dedicated human resources team that can respond to employees' questions and concerns as quickly as possible.
- **Allow employees to work from home (if you can).** People with underlying health conditions like heart disease, diabetes and lung disease are at higher risk of getting sick from COVID-19. If employees need to report to the office, take extra measures to put distance between employees to prevent spreading germs.
- **Communicate regularly and clearly.** Communicate as often as you can in simple, nonmedical language to assure employees you care about them, their health and welfare. Directing employees to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization websites can help ease concerns and dispel confusion.
- **Direct employees to virtual health resources.** Employee assistance or leave programs and virtual doctor resources can help people stay out of doctors' offices and the emergency room. Promoting care and guidance from home can put employees' minds at ease and help them avoid public areas.
- **Be open and honest.** No one has all the answers during this uncertain time — and it's okay to be honest about that. Establish trust and reassure your employees that you're in this together.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- Centers for Disease Control: The latest updates and guidance from health professionals on caring for yourself and your employees during this time.
- World Health Organization: A global look at the pandemic and health officials' expert advice on where we go from here.
- American Psychiatric Association recommendations: Authoritative and timely resources for working remotely during COVID-19
- How to respond effectively to the coronavirus crisis: Set of practical steps by Dr Russ Harris, author of The Happiness Trap, using the principles of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)

RETHINKING COMMUNITY

Cary Olson Cartwright
AVP, Corporate Social Responsibility

The economic impact of the pandemic is going to reach your employees, your communities and the organizations that support your communities when unexpected moments arise. Now is a great time for companies and nonprofit partners to rethink how we work together in our communities to support the educational, physical and financial needs of our neighbors.



HERE ARE TIPS FOR BUSINESSES AND NONPROFITS TO STAY BETTER CONNECTED:

- **Reach out to key community partners.** See how they're doing, what they need and how you can help. Simply saying "we're here for you" makes a big impact during a time of anxiety and uncertainty. This communication also ensures you're providing the right kind of help.
- **Connect with other funders and leaders in your community.** Share best practices. Look for ways to amplify your impact by working together.
- **Find creative ways to volunteer.** While in-person volunteer events may not be possible during this time, employees still want to give their time — it helps maintain a sense of normalcy. Some ways you can do this are recording messages of support for students and educators and conducting mentoring meetings.
- **Flexible funding.** Consider paying grants early to help with cash flow challenges. Work with your partners to redirect grant funding to meet urgent needs where it makes sense.
- **Follow up.** Check back in on your community partners to see if needs have changed or if there are additional ways you can help.
- **See the big picture and look for connections.** We're all glued to the news cycle right now, and that can be a great way to stay up on what current needs are and look for inspiration in what other companies and organizations are doing.
- **For nonprofit organizations:**
  - Don't hesitate to ask for what you need. You're the boots on the ground and the subject matter experts. Tell your community partners how they can best help.
  - Keep your donors and networks in the know with timely, high-level updates.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- Forbes: Creative Ways Companies Are Giving Back During The COVID-19 Crisis
- Ideas for virtual volunteering opportunities: Points of Light or YourCause
- COVID-19 resources for nonprofit organizations: National Council of Nonprofits

ENGAGING YOUR TEAMMATES

Karen Bradbury
VP, Learning and Development

Managing a team can often be challenging, even for the best leaders. But this period of uncertainty leads to a unique set of challenges and problems.



HERE ARE TIPS TO KEEPING YOUR TEAM ENGAGED AND INVOLVED, EVEN IF YOU DON'T SEE EACH OTHER EVERY DAY:

- **Communicate often.** Send a chat message to engage employees throughout the day. Be sure to answer emails promptly so no one feels alone or ignored.
- **Create a team culture.** While it takes the entire team to create a positive culture, it starts at the top. Cultivate an open and judgment-free environment where employees can feel comfortable sharing their opinions and ideas. Celebrate individual and team wins and highlight those successful partnerships.
- **Be honest about challenges.** Acknowledge the new normal and the challenges it brings. Encourage employees to share what they're facing. Be open to new ideas to make them more effective.
- **Take advantage of technology.** Don't rely on email for all communication. Pick up the phone now and then, and use video conference calls and group chats.
- **Stay connected.** Offer to supply a daily or weekly update outlining what folks are working on, challenges the team is facing and what's being accomplished.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- HR Trends podcast: HR Trends provides insight into the critical issues of HR management that can benefit managers and company leaders alike. From the HR Trends weekly podcast, to periodic webinars and other content, HR Trends brings together viewpoints and analysis from leading industry experts and national HR thought leaders.
- SHRM: Great tips and suggestions from the Society for HR Management
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce: Guidance on how to conduct business during COVID-19 from the leading business organization in the country

MAINTAINING YOUR INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Wade Hinton
VP, Inclusion & Diversity

Building a culture of inclusion and belonging isn't limited to onsite work models. In fact, inclusion and belonging become especially important in remote work environments because it's easy for employees to feel overlooked and unheard.



HERE ARE A FEW WAYS TO ENSURE YOUR INCLUSION JOURNEY CONTINUES WHILE WORKING REMOTELY:

- **Offer ways to connect other than technology.** Make your virtual meetings and communications equitable by offering more than one way to connect. Audio? Video? Source options that require wi-fi and others that don't, then decide on only one platform for everyone to join. Remember, a good old-fashioned phone call is still a great way to connect.
- **Create space for everyone to contribute.** Make sure all meeting participants have access to shared documents or communications, and a way to contribute to the meeting (phone, computer mic, chat). Keep in mind, this way of working is new for a lot of people, and some may need a nudge from you to speak up and engage in the conversation.
- **Be consciously inclusive.** Acknowledge that the best ideas can come from anyone, no matter their function, level, location, or diversity factors. This also means not relying on the same "go-to" individuals out of familiarity and comfort. Take extra care to make sure your team members don't feel excluded.
- **Be mindful of language.** Coronavirus, novel coronavirus, and COVID-19 are all appropriate names for this pandemic. Referring to this pandemic by names that reference specific locations, cultures, and populations can be offensive.
- **Continue to respect religious obligations that require time away from work.** Without knowing how long the virtual work model will be in place, allow your team members to take time off to honor religious commitments as you would in your usual onsite work model. Don't use this time to substitute for time away from work.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- How to Be an Inclusive Leader Through a Crisis: Tips for prioritizing inclusive leadership while in crisis mode to support effective communication, mitigate bias, extend empathy, and run inclusive meetings
- 2020 Religious Holiday Calendar: Download the religious holiday calendar to stay mindful of how religious traditions and practices can impact your team member's work schedule
- Inclusive Meetings: Tips for running inclusive meetings.
- Reducing Stigma: Center for Disease Control resource on avoiding COVID-19-related social stigma discrimination toward certain people or places
- Remote Working, Disability Support and Anxiety – Six Tips to Managing Staff In The COVID Crisis: Quick tips for managers during the COVID-19 crisis

PROTECTING YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE

Carl Gagnon
AVP, Global Financial Wellbeing

If working at home has a silver lining, you're probably not spending as much on gas, lunches out and fancy coffee. But watching the news each day can tie your stomach in knots with the wild swings in the stock market, and reports of millions losing their jobs and filing for unemployment. Millions of us will feel the strain of financial stress in the coming months, but there are ways to gain better control of your financial future.



CONSIDER THESE HELPFUL TIPS:

- **Don't touch your 401(k).** Borrowing from retirement should be the last resort, as it often leads to penalties and tax implications that can be more damaging to your finances. Only touch your 401(k) with contributions and investments. Make future contributions to more conservative, stable value or treasury-based investment products, but leave your current balances and funds alone.
- **Add to your savings.** It may seem counterintuitive, but many experts suggest that periods of downturn can be a great time to invest and save more.
- **Contact your bank/creditors**. If you're having trouble paying bills, many utility companies are offering clemency.
- **Spend reasonably.** Don't overbuy supplies and don't use your credit card unless necessary.
- **Use your company sponsored Employee Assistance Program.** Review the resources available if your employer offers this program.
- **Take advantage of government programs.** Review the federal and state programs and protections available to you and your family.

LEARN MORE

View these resources for more tips, tricks, and information.

- Fidelity: Get financial planning advice and retirement investment advice from Fidelity financial advisors and access to the employee COVID-19 resource center
- Ameriprise Financial: Get financial planning advice and retirement investment advice from Ameriprise financial advisors
- Protecting your finances during the Coronavirus Pandemic: From the U.S. government's Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
- NerdWallet: Ideas for using your stimulus funds smartly
- The U.S. Department of Education: Provides guidance for relief that benefits student borrowers and a link to some pertinent questions and answers for student borrowers