Best Practices for Remote Work

The following tips for successfully working remotely came from the Utah Extension course as well as eXtension Foundation's on line resources.

- **Work Day**- First, plan your day and when you work. The simple process of writing down what you need to get done holds you accountable. When you see what's expected of you, you're more likely to stay focused and stick to your plan. Plan times throughout the day when you can get away from your workspace. This might mean taking a lunch break, going for a walk, running an errand or anything else that gets you up and moving. These breaks keep your energy levels up and your mind active. Telecommuting creates a new set of distractions than what you are used to. Yes, there aren't coworkers chatting your ear off, but there is a television full of your favorite shows in the next room.
Everyone has an end of day routine like rinsing out your coffee cup, closing all the tabs on your computer, or even driving home. This is more difficult for people who work and live in the same space. Create your end of the day process to divide your workday and the rest of your evening. Change into different clothes, go for a walk, reward yourself anything to create the mental barrier between your work and your home.
- **Workspace**- Designate a specific place to work. This helps to set physical boundaries of where you work and where you relax. When selecting where your designated workspace will be it is important to find a quiet space with some physical barriers so that the others can visually see when you are working. It is also important to have a good computer set-up including space for your equipment and adequate connectivity.
It is also important to consider what your working environment would look like when using Zoom. It should be aesthetically pleasing and should appear "professional" when the video is on! And, it is important to use the video feature so that you are engaged in the Zoom meeting not distracted with other tasks.
- **Communication**-This has been identified as the number one challenge of remote workers. At KSU we have access to several tools that will aid in communication. These include Zoom and Microsoft Teams and OneDrive. Take some time to explore these tools and try them out. It is important to set times to communicate with your co-workers. However, it is just as easy to spend too much as it is too little time using electronic communication tools as it is in person socializing in an in person office setting.
- **Teamwork**-Identify an electronic tool that your entire office team can use to communicate and organize workflow including timelines. This allows everyone to know what each other are responsible for on team projects and reduces duplication of efforts. A regularly scheduled team meeting on Zoom is also important. The frequency will be different for each office team.
- **Compliance**-Make sure that you are complying with all of the guidelines set by the university or county government related to equipment and protected information. This is especially important related to being on a secure internet connection. Also, if requested, it is important to keep a log of projects completed and hours worked.

Prepared by Trudy Rice, 3/16/2020