



## Starting a new job remotely

Starting a new job remotely can be extra challenging, but if you prepare well and ask the right questions, you'll be off to a great start.

Starting a new job remotely might not seem ideal and may present extra challenges, but if you can handle this, you can handle anything. Perhaps you've even wondered whether it was such a good idea to accept a new job, when the job market seems so uncertain.

Maybe it's not as uncertain as you imagine. A recent study by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development found that one in five organisations said they intended to recruit more people during the current crisis. Changing jobs during a pandemic may not be as unusual as you think.

### You've taken control

By accepting your new role, you've taken charge of your future. You've taken the initiative to further your career. You've impressed your new employer so much that they've offered you the job. That's a clear demonstration of their commitment to you. Yes, you might feel a little nervous, but recognise your own achievement and you'll go into your new role feeling more confident and positive.

### Before your first day: how to prepare

In the run-up to your first day it's important to be proactive. This means:

- **Researching your new company.** Hopefully you'll already know a fair amount about them from your interview prep, but it never hurts to be really informed. Use their website, social media networks, industry associations, news, LinkedIn and, of course, a quick Google search to dig deep.
- **Perfecting your home working set-up:** make sure your computer, video conferencing and WiFi connection are working properly and that you have a comfortable (and quiet) place to work. For video conferencing, make sure that you choose a tidy background that's up to professional standards.
- **Upskilling yourself** by taking advantage of any free online learning that will help you in your new role.
- **Becoming familiar** with the collaboration and communication tools your new company uses - such as Slack, Microsoft Teams or Trello.

### Your first week: what to find out

Your new employer might have an excellent remote onboarding process that covers everything you need to know. However, not every employer is super-organised (after all, remote working might be new to them too) so, when in doubt, don't be afraid to ask. You'll no doubt have a line manager who will be your main point of contact and be able to help you. Some key issues to ask about are:

- **Equipment:** What equipment will you need at home to help you carry out your role? What kit will your employer provide and what do you need to provide?



- **Policies and procedures:** What do you need to know? Your line manager should give you access to all the usual policies and practices like health & safety, email and internet policies, codes of conduct and inclusion policies.
- **Training and development:** ask if there's any training that you need to do. Some larger companies provide digital training to help you get to know them or special issues concerning their industry.
- **People:** Who do you need to know? Find out who you need to contact for IT problems or who you'll be working with in your team or other departments.

## Working with your line manager

When you know what you're supposed to be doing, you can relax into your role and get the job done. Your line manager will help you with this, so make sure that you have regular discussions so that you can:

- Understand what's expected of you (and them) each day.
- Know what you're working on and your weekly schedule of work.
- Update them on your progress, and any challenges that you're facing. Regular chats mean that you can solve little issues before they become big problems.
- Agree achievable goals and suitable timeframes.

## Establishing yourself

Remote working can make even long-serving team members feel invisible and out of touch, and it's even harder for new recruits to make themselves known and established in the team. It takes initiative and courage, but there are ways to establish yourself. Chat with your line manager first, and, if they think it's appropriate, try:

- Sending the team an email, introducing yourself. Tell them that you're looking forward to working with them, and would love to chat with them directly. If you're nervous about doing this, tell them that you want to get to know a bit more about everyone – if you don't ask, you don't get!
- Organising a series of one-to-one video chats with team members. Research them on LinkedIn first, for background. Apart from asking them about their role, you could try more in-depth questions such as what they like about working at the company, what their challenges are, and what they'd change if they could. Remote working video chats are perfect to get to know other people's homes - so if you see a pet or a child, it's a perfect conversation starter.
- If you're invited to online social events like company quizzes - take part!
- If a buddy scheme is offered - accept.

Changing jobs while working remotely can be challenging, but with a lot of preparation, a little courage and bags of initiative, you'll soon feel comfortable in your new role.