Tips and Tricks for Working from Home

Get Organized!
- Create a schedule and “rules” for family and others sharing your space. For example, when are interruptions allowed and not allowed. What hours are you “available”.
- Dedicate a space for yourself to work - office, kitchen table or side room.
- Plan to provide frequent updates and communicate status, so everyone stays informed.
- Keep all meetings up-to-date and add Zoom or Google Chat.
- Add clear agendas and send out post-meeting minutes to ensure everyone has access to information.
- Do you have a backup or surrogate if you get sick or are not available? Document a plan ahead of time, just in case.

Move.
- Plan 5-minute breaks to walk your house, stairs and stretch.
- Stay hydrated.
- Get some fresh air.

Have the right equipment.
- Work laptop
- Charger
- Mouse
- Headset/camera, if available
- Verify your VPN works!
- Use meeting apps/computer first before using people’s cell numbers
- Keep your phones charged

Communicate!
Frequent and transparent communication is more important than ever.
- Set meetings to help everyone manage their time because “drive-bys” are less available
- Document your progress on items using your 1-pager from Greg/Dustin/Adam, or your own checklist
- If you have not already done so, provide access to documents, and your work, for those that will be your back-up or would benefit from the information to do their job. Use Google folders. You can create a new team folder to grant restricted access.
- Email when necessary. If it needs an urgent response, indicate that in the subject line.
- Consolidate emails and outline actions when possible to provide clarity and help the reader.
- Try a call instead of an email! The social interaction is healthy during times of social distancing.
- Connect with coworkers and your core teams daily.
- Set-up your voicemail with additional information, and forward your calls if you can.

Effective video conferencing.
- If hosting, join the meeting through your Zoom account. Sign in a few minutes early to ensure you are in the meeting before your attendees.
- Use a camera if you are comfortable doing so. (Turning on your video enables you to utilize non-verbal communication cues and increases personable interactions.)
- Start the meeting by having each participant unmute and speak to test audio to ensure everyone is able to participate in the conversation. One way to do this is have each person introduce themselves and their title.
- Start the meeting by sharing the intention and agenda and ask if anyone else has topics or questions they would like to discuss.
- Remember to mute if you’re not talking.
- Do not eat while on camera or attending a virtual meeting, if you can help it.

Need support?
- 1-Help is still available remotely. (6123014357)
  - it.umn.edu - is a great resource for all things IT
- Stay informed by checking email regularly and asking questions.
- Use messenger first. Then, if you need to reach someone, a call may work.
- If you are feeling anxiety, stress or increased concern due to COVID-19, use official resources like the CDC website, the University’s Safe Campus site, or contact HR.
  - You can also contact our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to discuss options for working with a professional.