

Wellbeing. Done Well.



Successful Teleworking

Staying Safe.
And Staying
Connected.



The COVID-19 pandemic is prompting employers to mandate telecommuting whenever possible. One of the most common concerns—for both employees and managers—is flow of communication. Fortunately, there are many simple collaboration tools available, many of which you may already be using. Check with your employer for tools and best practices that may already be in place.

While there is no one size fits all for communicating in a virtual environment, here are a few suggestions that will help keep the lines open.

 **Stay connected.** Communication is key when you are a remote worker. Stay connected with your manager and co-workers to review work in real time, update each other on specific projects, and discuss new opportunities. Answer your phone and reply to emails promptly. Not only is it important for clarity and collaboration, it also serves as a reminder that you are fully engaged and taking initiative.

 **Be prompt and clear.** If you have an issue, communicate with relevant parties in a timely manner. Be clear. Working in a virtual environment doesn't allow for interpretation of body language.

 **Be present at meetings.** Being in attendance is important. Meetings are a place to share ideas and learn about company happenings and operations—and to keep you in the loop.

 **Be aware of time zone differences.** If your team is spread out over states or even countries, consider everyone's time zones when setting up meetings. If time differences are too extreme, arrange to have someone share information with those who are unable to attend. Tap into [Every Time Zone](#) to check the time where your coworkers are located.

Take Care of Yourself

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can be stressful. Here are some tips to help you manage stress and anxiety.

- Practice good self-care
- Minimize exposure to media/news
- Get facts from reputable sources
- Acknowledge feelings
- Eat well, go for a walk, talk with family and friends
- Focus on things in life that are going well and what you can control
- Practice relaxation techniques

Check out Concern's **Coronavirus Resources**. Go to [employees.concernhealth.com](#) and login with your company code.

When to get help

If you're feeling overwhelmed and stress is interfering with your everyday life, consulting with a counselor may be beneficial. For a consultation with Concern, call 800-344-4222 or visit our website at [employees.concernhealth.com](#)



Be flexible. Learning your coworkers' schedules can help with communication. But be flexible, as things can come up at home that might not happen in an office environment.



Use Collaboration tools. There are many easy ways to communicate, including using tools that you may already be familiar with, such as conference calling on your phone, email, and scheduling meetings. The key is to keep it simple. Here are a few examples.

- **Email** is still an effective tool. While the response may not be instantaneous, it's a good way to organize conversations and file them for future reference. Examples: [Google Gmail](#) or internal company email platforms
- **Document Sharing.** Being able to share documents, presentations, and spreadsheets quickly, easily—and often in real time—is a real time-saver. These apps allow you to store documents where they can be retrieved, edited and saved by anyone who has been given permission. Examples: [Google Drive](#), [Dropbox](#)
- **Video Conferencing.** Video apps can help keep you connected. All you need is an active internet connection, a webcam, and a microphone and speaker. Examples: [Zoom](#), [GoToMeeting](#), [Google Hangouts](#)
- **Project Management.** Work management platforms help you track, organize and prioritize projects from start to finish. Examples: [Trello](#), [Asana](#)

- **Instant Messaging.** Using an instant messaging service will allow for real time communication, just as if you were in the office. While email is effective, instant messaging is often instantaneous and lets coworkers know you are available. Examples: [Slack](#), [WhatsApp](#), [WeChat](#)

A number of tech companies are offering their software for free in response to the spread of the coronavirus. For more information, go to <https://www.computerworld.com/article/3530322/coronavirus-prompts-collaboration-tool-makers-to-offer-wares-for-free.html>

For more information about planning and processes for effective remote work, check out <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/columnist/2020/03/06/how-remote-work-from-home-amid-coronavirus-best-tech-tools/4967078002/>

As a telecommuter, communicating with teammates, coworkers and management is just as important now as it was in the office.

While some of these suggestions may feel awkward at first, the key is to keep at it until you settle into your “new normal.” It will get easier.

Note: Be sure to check with your network administrator before using any new software. Some organizations, do not permit the use of certain tools due to security and privacy concerns. For example, hospitals and other healthcare organizations may restrict instant messaging apps because they are not considered HIPAA compliant.

Employees and eligible dependents can request Concern counseling and work/life services 24/7 by calling or visiting our website.

Call: 800.344.4222
employees.concernhealth.com