

**home** 

# Working out our new normal

Your COVID-19 resources pack



**Chapter 2:** How to have a healthy routine at home



# Introduction



**We've decided to publish a new toolkit every week. We'll be sharing practical creative ideas designed to help you tackle your people and communication challenges as they evolve.**

The ideas included will be designed to tackle the everyday challenges we're all facing, whether that's to support employee wellbeing at home or continuing to promote world-class employee experiences from your sofa.

If there's something specific you'd like to see included, let us know. If you're facing a challenge and could do with a bit of fresh thinking, get in touch and we'll bring our team together and think it through. If you just want to pick up the phone and chat, we're happy to do that too.

Our name feels like it's taking on a whole new meaning, and from now on we'd love to be your Home, from home.



# How can we support employee mental health through remote working?

.....

**In any year, 1 in 4 people in the UK will be affected by a mental health condition. Many of us know the importance of routine and structure in feeling mentally well.**

Right now, we're all facing unprecedented times of change and lots of us are getting used to remote working for the first time. Our normal routines are gone, it's more important than ever to support our employees' mental health and wellbeing.

Without knowing how long we will be working remotely, we're starting to seek out what the new normal should look like. We're questioning how we can continue to help our teams get the structure, routine and motivation they need.

We may not be experts in mental health, but luckily, we know a thing or two about creating cultures, positive ways of working and supporting employees to have the best possible work experiences. We hope some of these ideas can help you as you're finding your feet — and routine — in your new normal.



The background is a dark purple gradient. A large, semi-transparent, light purple shape is positioned behind the text. On the left side, there are three teal circles of varying sizes. On the right side, there is a yellow pencil with a pink eraser and a teal band, pointing upwards and to the right. There are also two teal circles on the right side, one larger than the other.

**Creative ideas to  
boost a **healthy**  
routine at home**



# 1 **The creative commute**

How long do you usually spend commuting? Think of ways to put this extra time to good use, get creative and start the day on a positive. You could learn a new skill, language or instrument, or do something energetic like a dance workout.



# 4

## **Active meetings**

Unilever have always promoted active meetings and we can see why. Whilst we may not be encouraged to take lengthy walks outside, try hosting a meeting whilst walking around your house to keep your energy up.



# 2

## **The good morning coffee**

Many people will miss the natural connections they make at the coffee machine or over breakfast. Encourage a pre-work video call to share a coffee with someone outside your team.



# 3

## **The concentrated sprint**

The average British person has an average attention span of just 14 minutes. Think about how much uninterrupted work you can do in that time. Set a 14-minute timer and practice closing everything else down to concentrate on one task at a time.



# 5

## **The store cupboard recipe book**

Encourage employees to film, photograph and share their lunch and recipes, and end up with a virtual company cookbook. Even better if you've got a global team!

# 6

## Through the keyhole

Build in a 10-minute afternoon break to deepen connections with your team. Give them a video tour of a room at home, introduce them to your partner or pets or show them a favourite photograph or object from your home.



# 7

## Think differently afternoon

We need to continue to encourage creativity and innovation, so try setting teams different ways to approach their everyday work. Think about sketching out a solution to a challenge and presenting it back to your team.



# 8

## Everyday recognition

Feeling valued is more important than ever, whatever your recognition programme looks like, encourage your teams to use it to celebrate each other once a day. Even better, forget recognition programmes, and encourage people to simply say thank you. It's back to basics.



# 9

## Close of day skills share

End the day with a sense of achievement and community by encouraging your teams to take part in employee led video workouts, yoga sessions or doing something fun like cocktail making!

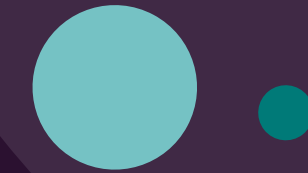


# 10

## The weekly commitment

Ask your team to commit to doing one thing differently and better within the next seven days, the next month and then the next six months. Use the time to develop together.





**A communicators  
guide to enabling  
healthy conversation**

# 1



## **Communicate a unifying message**

You might already have an internal rally cry or core message that your people get behind. We recommend complimenting it with a positive unifying message, statement or hashtag specific to today. Show your people that you're with them and that you're stronger together as a business. Think about the sentiment of 'we've got this' or 'we're in this together'. Your people will start to recognise the message as a positive call to action throughout a time of change and disruption. Create a conversation around it.

# 2



## **Set out your intent**

We've all been in the midst of crisis comms and reacting to daily change and for lots of our professions it's still all-consuming for the moment. For your people who have started working remotely, set the intent that you're finding a new normal and be clear about what that looks like for your business.

Think about creating 'the ultimate guide to remote working at ...' – Launch it alongside your unifying message.

# 3



## **Create weekly and daily structure**

Your communications activity can start to provide a new routine for people at home. Set a weekly calendar of positive opportunities for interaction.

Why not try setting a daily company thought or idea of the day for everyone to get involved with?

# 4



## **Create connections**

We're all making a huge effort to connect with our teams, but what about those people in our business who we enjoy interacting with over lunch, at the watercooler, or coffee machine? Ensure your communications content promotes connections with people outside their immediate network and project work.

Think about a buddy system for daily or weekly check-ins.



# 5



## **Equip people with tools**

Your line managers might be new to hosting virtual team meetings - think about publishing weekly meeting formats and ideas to keep conversations fresh. Let's not spend weeks with teams going through their to-do lists.

**Instead, equip line managers with tools to solve long-standing challenges and guides to having great virtual team meetings.**

# 6



## **Ask 'how are you?'**

It sounds obvious, but are your communications really doing this? We see so many businesses putting out incredibly warm and supportive messages, but less running central campaigns to boost discussion of how people are feeling.

Understanding employee feeling will both shape your ongoing strategy and promote healthy, open communication within teams.

# 7



## **Show your people you trust them**

Remote working is terrifying for a micro-manager. The good news is, nobody needs to be that. All of a sudden, people need to be their own leaders, take initiative and create their own structure. That's a huge silver lining to our current reality. We're going to watch a whole new wave of self-leadership.

**Use your communications to encourage motivation, healthy routine, and leadership at all levels.**

# 8



## **Promote good mental health**

It's healthy to talk. It's a concept we all know well, but it's taking on a whole new meaning. We're now dealing with a huge remote population, so we need to update our messaging for that.

**Ensure you put out at least weekly communications on mental health, encourage open conversation through dial-ins, team sessions and webinars.**

# Weekly challenge checklist?



Motivation is a huge challenge. All of a sudden, many of us have been thrust into a whole new working environment. All the advice on keeping mentally well whilst working at home focuses on creating a work-friendly environment, but we know that setting achievable goals is also a big factor.

Try using our – or create your own – weekly challenge checklist to help motivate your remote teams. These work great as a social tool for Instagram to encourage everyone to get through the challenges together.



## Challenge checklist

	Score	Goal
Connect with someone outside your team		5
Make your meetings active		3
Solve an everyday challenge		2
Think about something good that's happened this week	10	
Recognise a team member	5	
Learn something new	2	
Connect socially with your team	3	
Take an hour long break	5	

# Ask your people what they need



**It goes without saying that we should still be seeking feedback and listening to our employees, just as we always would.**

We're all just starting to work this out and we know we won't get everything right in the first few weeks of remote working. Some of us will feel isolated, unproductive and unmotivated. We'll lack the healthy routine we need. Let's keep listening and learning and evolving as we go. We'll work it out together.

Try putting out the questions on the following page to your employees once a week.



# A sample survey

How are you doing today?



Feeling great



Pretty good



Not sure



Not so great



Having a bad day

How supported do you feel?



Extremely supported



Fairly supported



Not sure



I could do with some more



I need a lot more support

How connected to your team do you feel?



Really well connected



Quite connected



Not sure



A bit disconnected



I feel isolated from my team

Is there anything you'd like to hear more about?

How connected do you feel to the wider business?



Really well connected



Quite connected



Not sure



A bit disconnected



I feel isolated from my team

Which is your favourite comms channel at the moment?

Do you have all you need to feel healthy and productive at home?  
If not, how can we help?

**Thank you**