MAINTAINING WELLBEING AT HOME
YOUR GUIDE TO BALANCING YOUR WORK AND PERSONAL LIFE

During this challenging time, many of you will now be working from home. Working from home may be a brand-new experience for a lot of professionals, and it can be easy for boundaries to blur between your work and personal life or for you to start feeling isolated. This guide will offer advice to help you to maintain your wellbeing while working from home during this difficult period.

If you have any concerns or questions at any time, your Hays consultant remains on hand to help.

WHY IS WELLBEING SO IMPORTANT?

Positive wellbeing refers to us being in a state of comfort, health and happiness. However, with many professionals now working from home, the pressures of family and work life as well as the issues affecting the wider world can have a real impact on your wellbeing.

Therefore, it is more important than ever to take active steps towards maintaining your mental and physical wellbeing while working from home to ensure you remain productive, effective and emotionally well.

HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR WELLBEING AT HOME

1 **Keep to your usual routine:** Make sure you get a good night's sleep, wake up and have breakfast as you would normally to set yourself up for the working day. If you are used to doing so, perhaps consider getting up at your normal 'commuting time' to make time for a physical activity such as yoga. Create a daily routine with goals you want to achieve that day to keep your mind focused and to remain productive.

2 **Create a comfortable workspace:** Designating yourself a workspace, even if it's only a corner of your bedroom, will help to create a boundary between your work and personal life. Choose a spot and set it up so you will be as comfortable as possible for a day's work, and try to only work in this space to maintain that separation between home and work. Make sure it is clear of clutter and distractions, and perhaps consider putting your personal phone on 'Airplane Mode' when you are working to keep focused.

3 **Maintain contact:** While you're working from home, communication with your colleagues is vital to help keep feelings of isolation at bay. Decide which method of communication works best for you and keep in regular contact throughout the day.

4 **Try to talk face-to-face:** You may feel more comfortable speaking to someone over the phone but seeing a person's face when chatting can really make a difference to making you feel more connected. There are many different technologies available to help facilitate this. Before you use a video tool, make sure you're dressed appropriately and check you're happy with what's behind you that will be visible on screen to others.

5 **It's not all about work:** You will of course mainly be chatting to colleagues about work matters, but don't forget to keep up the conversation about other things as you would in the office. Make the effort to begin and end each day with more personal conversations which will help you to maintain relationships through this challenging time. It's natural to feel worried in the current situation, so maintaining the personal side of your relationships at work and talking to colleagues may help to alleviate your concerns.

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Take regular breaks: It can be easy to remain glued to your screen when working from home – 'presenteeism' or working longer hours in an effort to remain visible, can be common for home workers. But taking breaks on a regular basis, be they coffee breaks, a walk during lunch or speaking to a friend over the phone, are important to help you to take a step back from work and remain focused.

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Look after your physical health: Our physical wellbeing has a big impact on our mental health, so will be perhaps more important than ever during this time of uncertainty. Take the time to do some daily exercise either outdoors, if safe to do so, or consider doing indoor exercises such as yoga. Being stuck indoors for long periods can also make it easier to fall into bad eating and drinking habits, so try to stick to preparing healthy and well-balanced meals on a regular basis.

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Remember to switch off: When you have access to your work files from home you may feel the need to regularly check in with your emails, even outside of working hours. However, doing so can quickly lead to burnout, so to help maintain a positive balance between your work and personal life, try to resist this urge and when the working day is done, ensure you fully log off and focus on your personal activities instead.

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Take the time to reflect: At the end of each working day, spending a few minutes reflecting on your achievements and successes can help your mind to wind down and ensure a positive outlook for the next day. Even small 'wins' are worth celebrating and it is good to remember that what you are doing matters.

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Remember, you're not alone: During this unprecedented global situation, it is normal to feel anxious, so it's important to remember that you're not alone and that many others are being affected in a similar way. Don't forget your support network at work – reach out to colleagues and your manager for support, they are there to help, and if you have any concerns or queries regarding a new job then your Hays consultant will be very happy to help.

If you need any further advice or support finding a new job, please contact your Hays consultant.

HOW TO SPOT WHEN SOMEONE MAY BE FEELING ISOLATED

It can be easy to feel isolated when working remotely, so it's up to all of us to support and keep an eye on one another. Here are some things to look out for in yourself or your colleagues which may be a sign they are struggling and could do with some extra support:

1. **Late starting work, joining meetings or hitting deadlines**

2. **Harder to contact than normal**

3. **Changes in behaviour, such as being distracted or short in meetings**

4. **Only talk about business when speaking one-to-one**

5. **Lack of interest in work or new projects**

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