

## **Office Etiquette**

### **A Guide to Successful Collaboration for Telework and Onsite Staff**

**Below are some best practice and etiquette tips to allow you and your peers to be efficient, productive, and successful while working within a hybrid work environment.**

#### **Scheduling**

- Post your regular work hours in Microsoft Teams using status message feature.
- Use Microsoft Teams to block your time when you will be out of the office or have scheduled meetings and appointments.
  - Including lunchtime, breaks and when you are available.
- Ensure that Outlook reflects actual time away or meetings and not routine tasks.
- Use “Out of Office” automatic email replies in Outlook when you are not scheduled to work.
- Use time keeping software to schedule time off if available or follow your department’s process for time off request and update calendar in Outlook to reflect this time off.
- Review Outlook calendars before scheduling a meeting using the Scheduling Assistant feature.

#### **Expectations of Online Meetings Include:**

- When scheduling any meeting, include a link to the online meeting via Microsoft Teams, so that coworkers always have the option to participate remotely if necessary.
- When sharing documents during the meeting plan ahead and send files to coworkers who will participate remotely, or be prepared to share your screen to virtually share documentation and collaborate when necessary.
- Encourage participation from remote employees.
- Use the raise hand function to speak. If you have something to contribute or missed something that someone said, be sure to raise your hand via teams rather than waiting to be asked as meeting facilitators cannot read your body language and may not recognize the need to pause and invite your participation.
- Manage engagement. When possible, have remote workers lead a portion of the call so that they have an active role.
- If there are several remote workers on the line, ask them to mute their phone lines at the beginning of the call to minimize background noise.
- Employees should expect to use their webcams for virtual meetings unless prior approval or arrangement has been discussed with supervisor.
- If participating in a meeting via webcam, be presentable. Remember, getting dressed for work will help you get in a mindset for work.
- The quality of the webcam and audio should be acceptable. When using a laptop, webcam or phone camera, be mindful of the angle.
- Avoid having additional people/noises in the room to minimize distractions for attendees.
- Mute your microphone during periods where you are just listening to a meeting.
- Be fully engaged and give the remote meeting your full attention. Let team members know of anticipated distractions.

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#### Conference Calls:

- If some team members are physically in the room, make sure they speak loudly enough so people on the conference line are able to hear clearly.
- Be an active listener on conference calls by verbally acknowledging that you are listening, by using short statements to paraphrase the main takeaways, and asking for permission to ask questions.
- Regularly give and receive feedback. When giving feedback to your colleagues, ensure it is specific, constructive, and empathetic. Use your feedback to discuss outcomes and actions.

#### **Communication:**

- **Backup:** There are inevitably instances where physical presence is required and a coworker needs to step in. Coworker backup should be planned. It should also not be burdensome and should be reciprocal. Resulting cross-training has broad organizational benefits.
- **On-the-spot assistance:** Remote workers may occasionally need someone who is physically in the main office to assist them, for instance, to fax or scan a document to them, or to look up information. Again, these arrangements should not be unexpected or burdensome, and they should be reciprocal; a "buddy system" between remote and onsite workers may be the least disruptive solution.
- Keep your manager and coworkers informed of your remote work schedule.
- Keep your calendar updated and share it with your team members.
- Be available via Microsoft Teams during your workday as a means for quick questions and answers. Despite the informal nature of instant messaging, always begin with a greeting, and remain courteous and professional.
- When unable to engage in a chat due to being in a meeting, etc., if possible, reply as to when you'll be available.
- Use email and Teams chat effectively. Use the subject line to alert the reader to the topic, the urgency level, and the required action.
- Be mindful of working times. Respect free and busy times, even if you are working when others are not.
- Avoid sending instant messages while others are presenting.
- Be available and responsive to your team members.
- Agree to communication guidelines to establish a common expectation for responding to queries and emails.
- Choose the most effective communication channel based on the context. For a complex or potentially difficult conversation, have it in person or using a webcam.