



# How to Work from Home 5 Tips from Our Team on How to Do It Successfully

# How to Work from Home

## The change in landscape

*"Working from home, more like shirking from home!", "working remotely, remotely working!"* – are now considered dated attitudes to working from home. Yet, there are still organisations that are either unable to support remote working or colleagues who don't feel comfortable asking to work from home. It's a daunting thought. But times are changing, and fast, and organisations must adapt to change to enable to keep the wheels of business running and this may mean being more open to remote working. So how does working from home become business as usual?

With this change comes challenges, some of us may have never worked from home before. The environment we call "home" suddenly becomes alien... as we're having to work in the same place we sleep, shower, have dinner and watch Netflix! So, we identified 5 key pillars and crafted this guide to help lead you into making working from home a successful reality. Without further ado, here's our Perspicuity team's top tips, all of whom are resident experts at working from home.

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Wellbeing



Structure



Environment



Meetings



Microsoft Teams

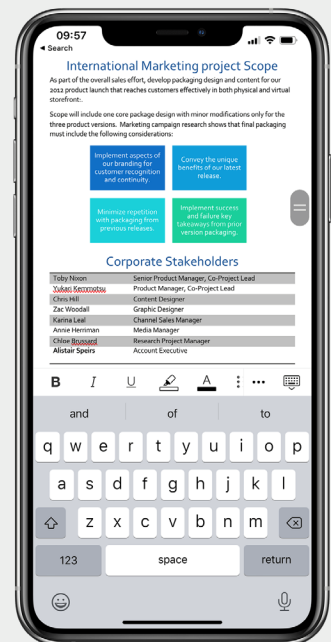
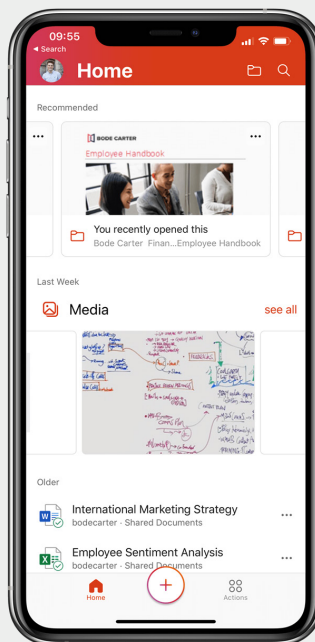


### The Office Mobile App

The essential app for mobile working. The Office app unifies Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Office Lens and more under a single app, creating a single window to view and edit your content on the go.

Discover the Office App

I'm clickable!



# Health and Wellbeing

It's really important that you take a step back and think about your health and wellbeing. It's all about getting into the usual mindset you have when at work and being able to "clock out" the usual way. It's often overlooked and if missed, can lead you to working longer than usual, leading to fatigue and feeling isolated as you suddenly lose that valuable everyday face to face interaction with your colleagues. Alongside a few other things, you can become very bored, uninspired, perhaps even sad...



To combat this, here's the trends our team identified:

1. **Keep to your usual routine** – make your lunch the day before, dress and prep the same way you would if you were going into the office. This'll help set you up for a successful day.
2. **Plan out "break time"** - it's easy to "get lost" in the world of work and suddenly it's gone 19:00... Balance your work / personal life.
3. **Go outside!** - Something so simple yet easily underestimated. It's important to go outside at least before, during and after work. You'll burn out otherwise.
4. **Socialise throughout the day** - As you're not working in an office environment you lose human contact. During lunch, go to the gym or go for a walk (bonus with a dog) and talk to fellow walkers. You'll feel refreshed and ready for the afternoon after.

*"Keep with your normal rhythm, get up at the same time, with your usual alarm, get prepped as you would as if you were going into work, wear clothes you would in the office – it makes a difference to your attitude and you feel ready for work".*

George Belben | Developer



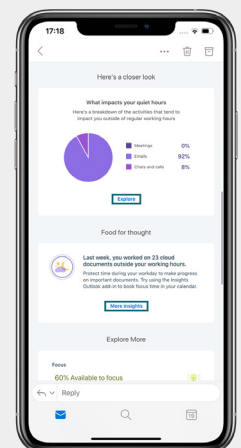
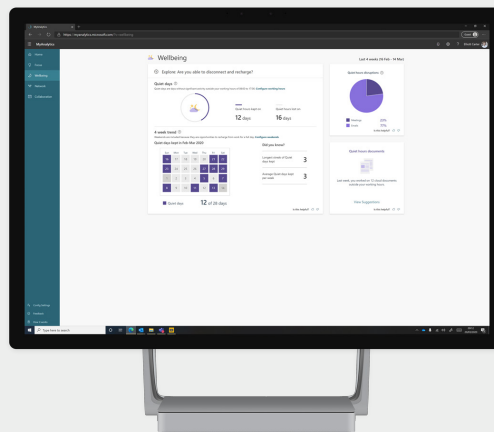
If enabled, keep an eye out for your personalised monthly reports from Microsoft MyAnalytics. The versions of these include the 'Focus', 'Wellbeing', 'Network' and 'Collaboration' editions.

These are either available from your mailbox (delivered monthly) or check online in the Office 365 portal ([myanalytics.microsoft.com](https://myanalytics.microsoft.com)) to understand and improve your work patterns - gaining uninterrupted time to focus, being able to disconnect and recharge, and enabling networking and collaborating effectively.



## Microsoft MyAnalytics

Explore your work patterns with MyAnalytics and learn ways to work smarter—improving your focus, wellbeing, network, and collaboration.



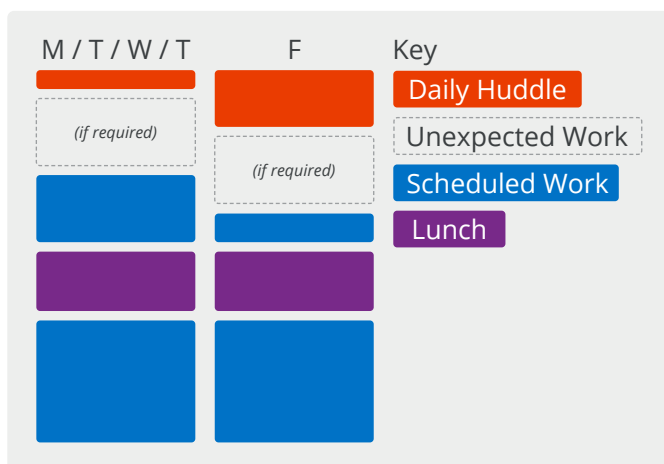
# Structure your Workload

Ideally you'd structure your weeks a week ahead – plan out your tasks / goals for your mornings and afternoons. Naturally, book out time for the unexpected, so you can implement a plan that enables you to meet your business goals and have time for the tasks that you don't expect.



Building on socialising from 'Health and Wellbeing', keep in touch with colleagues.

"At such remote times it's important to pull together" - introduce 'Daily Huddles' with your immediate team and provide an overview of what you plan to achieve that day and outline any issues that you've got / may occur that your team can help out with – don't spend more than two minutes per person. The point in these huddles is to be precise and brief. At the end of the week have a 'team weekly meeting' detailing what you've achieved in the week and what you forecast to achieve the following week. Example schedule below:



*"At such remote times it's important to pull together. The daily and weekly huddles with my team enable us to properly plan and get the support we need to keep the wheels of the business turning".*



Steve Clements | Head of Development

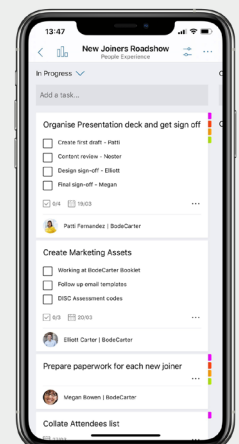
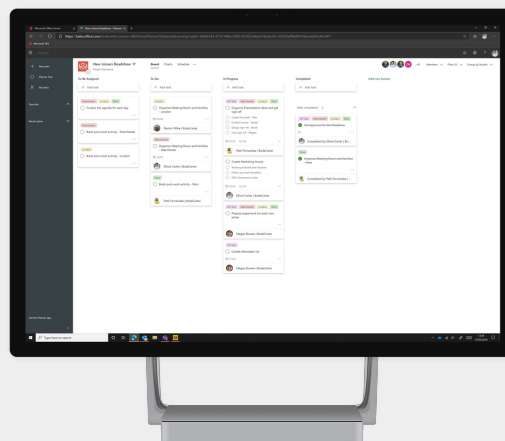
## Key Takeaways:

1. **Book out time in your calendar and keep to it** - utilise services such as Microsoft To-Do or Microsoft Planner.
2. **Don't forget to factor in breaks** - get away from your desk too. It's important to separate from that space.
3. **Commit to doing more** – everything takes longer than you think, but your list will challenge you. The longer the list, the more you'll achieve – helps keep you honest when at home.
4. **Keep in touch with your team** - with daily & weekly huddles.



## Microsoft Planner

Take the chaos out of teamwork and get more done! Planner makes it easy for your team to create new plans, organise and assign tasks, share files, chat about what you're working on, and get updates on progress.



# Environment

As touched upon earlier, working from home can make a very alien environment out of somewhere you usually find so comfortable. To successfully work from home, you can't do it in the same room you sleep. You need to set up a permanent environment you'll call the "work zone". If possible, make sure you've got enough natural light and fresh air and personalise your area as if it was your desk at work. At Perspicuity, you'll find plants are the trend to desk aesthetics – they make a notable difference to mood! Building on mood, music is key. Create a playlist – nothing too loud or distracting, just background music to help break the eerie silence. Final note, you'll also need to set clear expectations with anyone at home i.e when you're working, you're working!.. and not available to be disturbed.



1. **Separate your work / life areas** – mentally it'll make a difference.
2. **Create a comfortable working environment** – natural light and fresh air, background music. And plants.
3. **Set clear expectations with others at home** - when you're working, you're working!

*"Ensure you've got the essentials right. Will your internet suffice? Do you need additional monitors? a separate keyboard? a Surface Dock? Then it's about ergonomics, are your monitors at the right height? If not, get a monitor stand. Does your chair support you properly? You need to ensure you're comfortable - your employer has a duty of care so they should help out. Finally, then personalise - I find plants are key. They bring the outdoors, indoors, and genuinely boost my mood".*

Samantha Gower | Legal Counsel



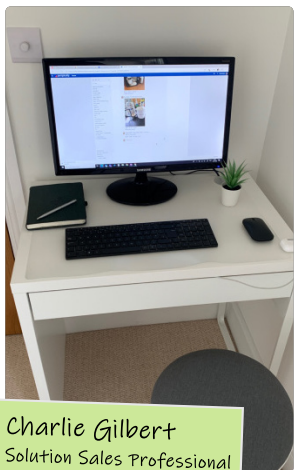
Steve Clements  
Head of Development



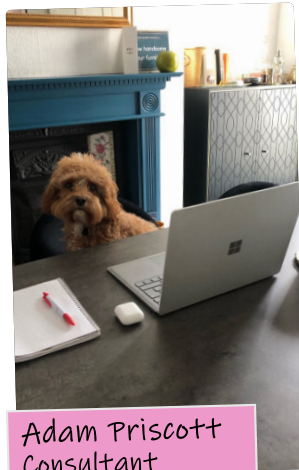
Samantha Gower  
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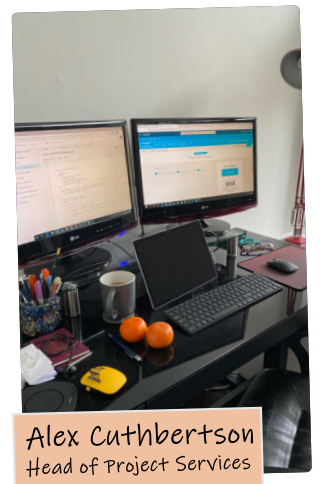


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# Meetings and Calls

At Perspicuity it's a mixed bag of who's working from home and who isn't. But what isn't a mixed bag is the experience of talking to us. You (probably) couldn't tell the difference when calling us as to whether you're speaking to someone working from home or being in the office – dog barks don't count, they're also allowed in the office! This is down to equipping our colleagues with great quality headsets and a few tips from peers as to how to behave when on the phone. Here are the headliners:



*"Being both on the road and home I find headsets are key to quality calls. If I'm having to pitch up at a coffee shop, a good headset minimises the background noise enabling me to concentrate. When at home it's easy to just use your PC's microphone and speakers but for anyone else on the call it's not a great experience - use headsets and when not talking, the mute button!"*

Charlie Gilbert | Solution Sales Professional



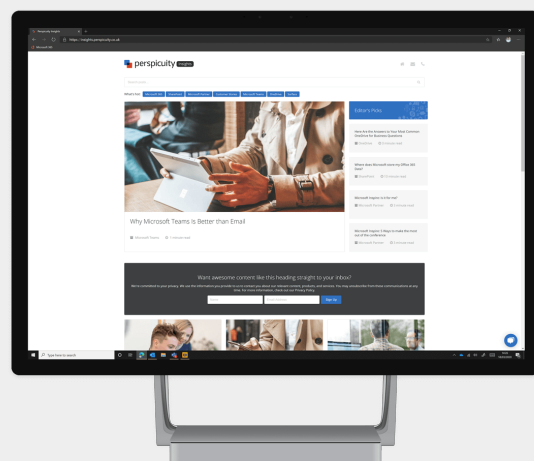
1. **Use headsets** – just relying on the microphone built into your device and speakers may be convenient but doesn't provide the end caller a great experience.
2. **Use video where possible!** – if you're in a Teams meeting using video creates a more organic flow to conversations, you're able to see expressions and the face you're talking too – just as if you were face to face! Just ensure there's nothing – tasteful? – in view...
3. **Go into DND (do not disturb)** – virtually, utilise Windows 10 Focus Assist to block notifications and switch on 'Do Not Disturb' in Teams. Physically – particularly when using video - shut doors and again set expectations with others from home.
4. **Be interactive** – if you're having to replace long meetings (2-4 hours) virtually, it's more difficult to keep engagement. Create polls / games to keep your attendees engaged. Here at Perspicuity we use Kahoot! to create more interactive experiences with our customers.
5. **Be prepared** – be comfortable, have the drinks you need to hand and have your screens / notes open and ready to share as appropriate. Give yourself time to switch back into work mode if you're stepping away from household activities in order to join your call.



## Get in the know

Better understand the value of Microsoft Cloud and get best practice tips right from our consultants, all at Perspicuity Insights.

[Visit Perspicuity Insights](#)



# Microsoft Teams

Building on our previous point, Microsoft Teams has some great in-built tools to make remote calls a breeze. Using features like “blur background” on video focuses the attention of attendees to the presenter / speaker and not on what’s going on behind them. If you’re in a more “mobile” mood you can also opt to “Join by Phone”, enabling you to use your mobile as your access point to the meeting, and you can also share your mobile screen in Teams meetings if connecting via Wi-Fi not cellular – don’t forget, use headphones. Sharing your PC / Mac screen? You can also opt to only share a certain application / window, ensuring that if you have pop-ups or email notifications coming through, they won’t display when presenting your PowerPoint or window.

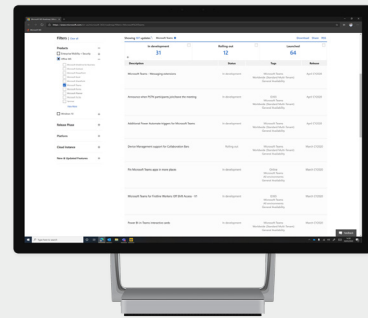


1. **Use blur background** – keeps attendees focused and avoid background blunders.
2. **Dial in if you’re mobile** – you don’t have to rely on Wi-Fi.
3. **Move away from email** – use the chat functionality within Teams to speak to colleagues, even better, video call!

## Microsoft Teams Roadmap

Microsoft Teams is a rapidly developing tool with new features being added monthly. You can view the full roadmap (including previously launched features) for Microsoft Teams online on the Microsoft 365 Roadmap

[View the Roadmap](#)



*“Most organisations we’ve worked with deploying Microsoft Teams have noticed a drop in internal email and a rise of instant messaging. This is no coincidence, Teams is a very efficient communication and collaboration tool that’s enabling organisations to do more, more efficiently, and to do it anytime, anywhere”.*

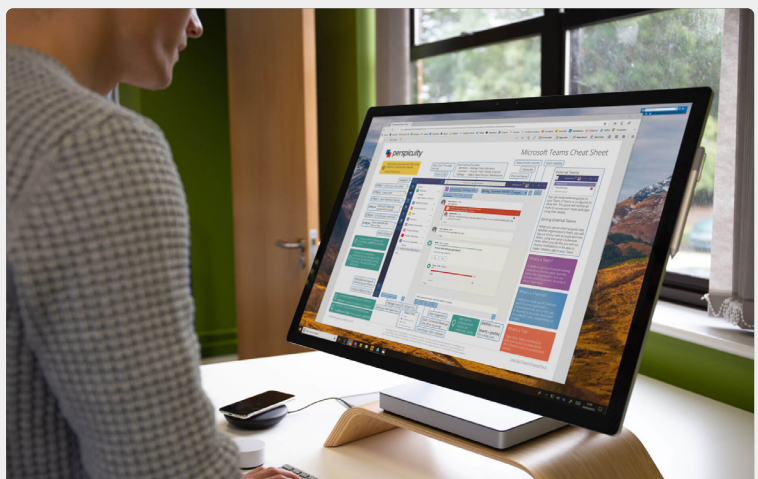
Stephen Port | Principal Consultant



## Microsoft Teams

Invite everyone you work with to chat, meet, call, and collaborate all in one place, no matter where you are. Get started with our Microsoft Teams Power Pack (*includes 200+ icons!*):

[Download the Power Pack](#)



# How to Work from Home

Working at home can be a breeze if you set yourself up for success. Ensure you create a healthy work / life balance, keep in touch with your other remote colleagues, structure your days and following weeks to keep on top of your workload, create a comfortable working environment to keep yourself inspired, ensure you're sufficiently setup to handle day to day work and calls and utilise the technology available to you. Below is a summary checklist for each topic we've covered - use this and you'll be on your way to remote working success!

*"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail"*

Benjamin Franklin

## Health and Wellbeing

- Keep the rhythm:** Make lunch a day before? Make it! Go to the gym / workout in the morning? Do it!
- Schedule breaks:** Book out time in the day to have breaks - head outside if you can
- Socialise:** Ensure you're keeping in touch with your peers, book in end of day catchups

## Structure your Workload

- Plan, plan, Planner:** Utilise tools like Microsoft Planner to keep yourself and your team on target
- Book your time:** Use your calendar to book out time to work on your assigned tasks and to help you plan ahead for the following week(s)
- Huddle:** Book in daily and weekly huddles with your team

## Environment

- Find your "Work Zone":** Decide where you're going to setup. Bonus: good natural light and air
- Make it work:** Ensure your setup will work for you. Do you have a strong, reliable internet connection? Enough monitors? Screen(s) at eye height? Comfortable supporting chair? etc.
- Personalise:** Once the basics are complete, personalise to your taste. Bonus: plants!

## Meetings and Calls

- Equipment:** Do you have a good headset that is clear? (call your colleagues and try out!)
- Video:** Check there's nothing *untoward* in the background... use 'Blur' in Microsoft Teams
- Be interactive:** Get creative and find ways to make your meetings more interactive





Ryan Clark  
Senior Consultant

Music that doesn't have lyrics is much better for focus - many 'focus' playlists are available on Apple Music / Spotify... also keep a decoy keyboard on your desk if you have cats! 🐱



George Belben  
Developer

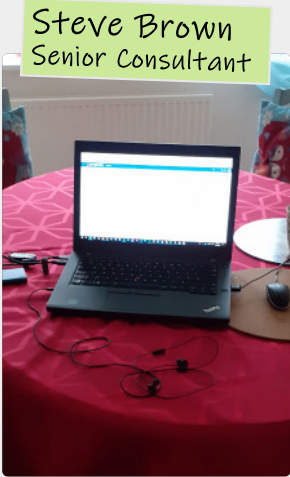
Chocolate and coffee. Never run out. Ever. Also a wireless headset that reaches the door, fridge and coffee machine ☕



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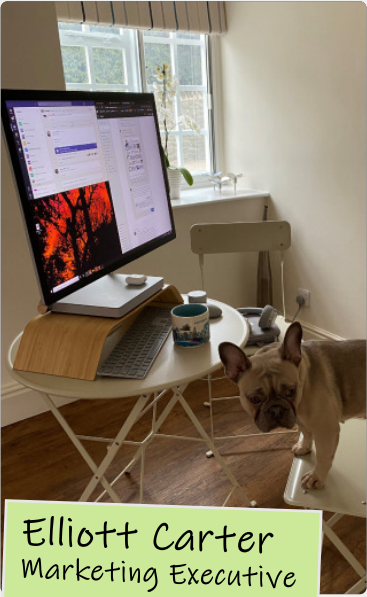


James Parsons  
Senior Consultant

Unplug your doorbell and let your neighbour take on everything.... just me?



Charlie Gilbert  
Solution Sales Professional



Elliott Carter  
Marketing Executive

When in calls shut your pets, children and partner outside 😏

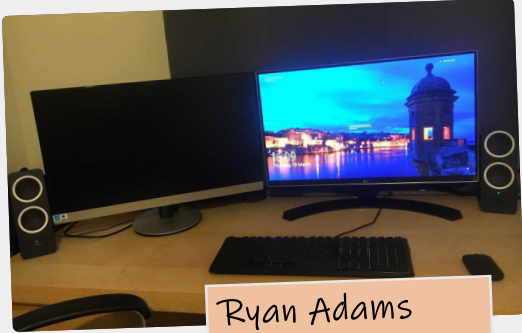


James Parsons  
Senior Consultant

Get dressed before you start work...



Alex Cuthbertson  
Head of Project Services



Ryan Adams  
Senior Technical Specialist

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Have suggestions? Get in touch!