

# Tips for Transitioning to Remote Work



Over a period of three weeks, most of the workforce in the United States found themselves transitioning to remote work. Fortunately, the trend toward digital transformation means that many businesses had already begun to adopt cloud-based tools and policies. However, this abrupt switch to fully-remote work has sent both employees and IT departments scrambling.

Moving an entire workforce home virtually overnight brings unique challenges. Individual employees need to set up home offices, often sharing Wi-Fi with family members. Teams need to develop collaboration strategies over distance. And security personnel must work to protect networks and data in a dramatically broadened attack surface.

## Equipment Essentials for the Home Office

To make working from home a viable solution, employees need the ability to step away from home life and minimize distractions. But perhaps even more important, they need to be able to connect to work quickly and comfortably.

Start with a good internet connection. You will need at least 10 Mbps to handle video conferencing and 40 Mbps for large file transfers. Keep in mind that your Wi-Fi router and the number of users [sharing bandwidth](#) also affect your internet connection. You may need to update your router, move it to a more central location or invest in a Wi-Fi extender.

Additionally, while sitting on the couch with your laptop may suffice for a few hours, extended WFH requires a better setup. Instead of hunching over your laptop, hook up a second screen. Add a separate keyboard and mouse (they come cheap), a quality webcam and a headset with noise canceling.



## Tools to Increase Productivity and Collaboration

Work teams used to gathering in conference rooms or stopping by a coworker's office must find new ways to connect. Fortunately, currently technology facilitates everything from informal one-on-one chats to large presentations. Basic collaboration must have include:

- **Instant messaging** – Use a single, company-wide platform for real-time messaging.
- **Cloud-based file-sharing** – OneDrive and SharePoint, available with [Microsoft 365](#), prove essential for remote work. Users can save files to OneDrive as easily as saving to their C: drive. And SharePoint allows team members to coauthor documents seamlessly.
- **Video conferencing** – Microsoft Teams offers robust and secure [video conferencing](#) capabilities. Conference with a coworker, conduct daily team huddles or hold an all hands presentation for thousands of employees. Teams includes end-to-end encryption and offers the ability to record and transcribe meetings for future reference.
- **Whiteboarding** – With an app such as Microsoft Whiteboard, coworkers write and draw on a shared digital whiteboard.

## Focus on Security While Transitioning to Remote Work

In the rush to move the workforce home, securing the network and sensitive data proves increasingly difficult. Unfortunately, cyber criminals know that you face a growing security challenge, and they will capitalize it. Protect your business with a few basic best practices.

Start by revisiting tried and true security measures. Document and share these policies and procedures so that employees can implement them at home. For instance, reiterate policies for [strong passwords](#) and [healthy email practices](#). In addition, ensure that employees keep apps and devices up-to-date, including antivirus and firewall protection.

Secondly, strengthen your access management systems. Where possible, implement multi-factor authentication. Further, with so many users transitioning to remote work, focus on [endpoint security best practices](#). When you must make exceptions, such as elevating someone's privileges or sharing login information, document them for future reference.

Additional key security measures include protecting the network by providing VPN access and ensuring adequate encryption. Taking the time to implement these measures will improve the employee experience and save you headaches down the road.



## Unexpected Opportunity to Leap into the Future

Sometimes it takes a crisis to move us where we needed to go all along. Organizations that have delayed migrating to [cloud services](#) or updating [mobile security](#) now have exceptional motivation to do so. Use this time of transitioning to remote work to move to the next level.

For instance, take note of security concerns and compliance gaps that arise during this process. Document the steps you take to address them. And as you use collaboration tools more heavily, you will build workflows and policies for the future.

A partner like eMazzanti can help you navigate the challenges and opportunities unique to this crisis. With deep expertise in cyber security, cloud services and Microsoft 365, we will help you survive and thrive.