Tip Sheet: Productively Working From Home

- Clearly define expectations (roles, deliverables, deadlines) and standards (get your work done, return messages within 24 hours, text urgent matters) with supervisor.

- Set up a dedicated work space which facilitates concentration, organization, and work/life balance (e.g., when you’re not in that space, you’re not working).

- Keep the temperature between 68-77 degrees F. Productivity suffers if warmer.

- Work during your most productive hours of the day and during this time, avoid tasks (like email) that can be done during less productive hours.

- List your 3 most valuable priorities before you end each day and start the next day working on these priorities.

- Identify what distracts you and triggers procrastination, and develop a prevention plan.

- Try the Pomodoro Technique to power through distractions and get things done in short, timed work intervals.

- Take frequent breaks, which research has shown improves focus and performance.

- Communication is vital
  - Never let your supervisor get sideswiped; if there is a potential issue, be sure you tell them about it first
  - Keep your team up-to-date on the status of your work
  - Assume positive intent and if needed, spend time resolving misunderstandings
  - Provide context to ensure your email feedback conveys intent
  - Use the right technology for the conversation (e.g., video provides non-verbal cues and encourages team member interactions; phone calls provide tone of voice)
  - Effectively facilitate video conferences and webinars

- Prioritize social connections with co-workers. This could be virtual synchronous coffee/lunch/happy hour, or small talk before/after meetings.

- Schedule social interactions with friends during the work week to prevent isolation and loneliness.

- If you’re feeling "down in the dumps," read Mind Tools Top 10 Personal Morale Boosters to put the spring back in your step.