

COVID-19 Communications Series

Introduction:

I wrote a series of “blog-like” emails to help the team feel connected. Here are the first two in the series.

Initial email to entire team, sent the first week stay-at-home measures were enforced:

How are *you* doing?

We know this has been a tough time, and it gets tougher the longer the quarantine lasts.

It's okay not to be okay right now. It is natural to feel a little lost in the wilderness when treading unfamiliar waters - some of us may even feel completely stranded. If that's you: *you are not alone*. We are here and will be here to support you.

We put together this survey to check in on every one of our MacuLogix family members. We'd like to know how you're feeling, what support you need, and give you an opportunity to share your concerns. Your responses will be anonymous and completely confidential.

Remember: We are here and will be here as we collectively navigate through unprecedented circumstances.

Be well. Be calm. Be safe.

Cheers,
Ingrid

Follow-up, to highlight working from home best practices:

Greetings and salutations!

Can you believe it has been only one week since physical isolation measures were put in place? Feels like forever, doesn't it?

Thanks to everyone who responded to yesterday's “survey” questions. It was both fun and insightful to read your answers. Though not exactly scientific, here are some key findings from yesterday's research:

Top three challenges

While responses included very valid points such as no lounging at Starbucks, ping-pong withdrawal, lack of tea kettles in the workplace, and family leaving dishes everywhere, most common issues were:

1. Anxiety – fear of the unknown in regard to the current pandemic, worrying about elderly and at-risk relatives

2. Work/life balance – getting the family to buzz off while trying to work, staying engaged, knowing when to disconnect, and working full-time while home schooling
3. Missing face-to-face interactions – with customers, colleagues, extended family, and friends

Needless to say, going stir crazy at home, having no “me time,” and actively trying not to kill your spouse/children were also top concerns.

Is working from home all it is cracked up to be? What are three things that help you stay focused and connected?

Some of us are more comfortable working from home than others, yet we all experience similar bah-humbug moments from time to time. Some tips and tricks from the trenches include granting yourself grace as you navigate through changing circumstances, locking yourself up in the garage to ride your brand-new Peloton during breaks from work (and for your family’s safety), and switching up work by watching training videos. Most notable tips include:

1. Having a dedicated workspace – an area you can work in without interruptions and walk away from at the end of the day. It can help you stay focused and set boundaries with your family.
2. Scheduling your time – over-used as the term might be, try a “new normal.” Get up at the same time, establish a routine, and keep “office hours” when you are most productive. Among those lines and extremely helpful, is setting goals for the day. Not only will it provide structure, but also a sense of purpose and accomplishment.
3. Stay connected – if ever there was an appropriate time to make the most of our communication tools – this is it! Have video calls with customers and “coffee talk” Zoom meetings with your team. Heck, have virtual happy hours with friends (not during office hours, of course).

Other advice included staying hydrated, exercising, taking breaks, getting up early, getting enough rest, and “dressing for the office.” (Personally, I prefer working in pajamas while wearing bunny ears. It is certainly up to you to figure out what works best for you.)

Bonus: How do we make working from home fun?

In my case, other than wearing bunny ears, I like to make my area comfortable and homey. My workspace is my fortress of solitude, where I have funny signs and all I need to work my magic: my favorite gel pens, purple note pads, music, a stash of dictionaries, and even a love seat to take breaks *a la* Mad Men. I make very strong espresso in the morning and my scheduled breaks might include quick visits with my furkids – who can resist a cute rabbit? – and sending funny memes to friends. Competitive as I am, I set goals for the day with deadlines. Granted, I am only competing with myself and my imaginary friends, but it is still fun to have a challenge.

How do *you* make working from home fun? I’d love to hear your thoughts.

Stay connected. Stay productive. Stay positive. Be safe.

Cheers,
Ingrid