



1. Intro

Coronavirus COVID-19 has forced businesses and organisations around the world to ask employees to work remotely and from home.

At the Vodafone Foundation, flexible and remote mahi have been part of our way of working for a long time, but we appreciate that for some of our community partners this sudden change might not be as easy. We also appreciate that there are tons of information about shifting to remote working at present and as you try to respond to this emergency, it can be hard to know where to start.

We hope that this simple guide can help our partners enable remote working and grow your online collaboration skills wherever you are in your digital journey. It shares best practice and some popular tools to keep you productive and connected while we keep our physical distance from one another.

Remember that 'physical distance' does not mean 'social distance' and staying connected is essential, especially during challenging times.

2. Covid-19

The amount of information currently shared around Covid-19 can feel overwhelming too. While it is perfectly okay and necessary to keep up to date, take breaks from watching and reading the news (including social media) and be sure to only check the official sources like the [Unite Against Covid19](#) and [Ministry of Health](#) websites.

How to talk about Covid-19

The Workshop's [short guide](#) helps communities and organisations use a narrative that provides hope and brings people together.

Navigating the pandemic together

Ara Taiohi's [Digital Youth Sector Hub](#) supports people who work with young people with a central space for good information for their mahi. Covering key messages and resources for rangatahi, self-care tips for youth workers and resources to cope with anxiety and stress.

Talking to your children

Dr Michelle Dickinson (aka Nanogirl) explains coronavirus for kids in this [video](#). And the Child Mind Institute shares [expert advice](#) about how to approach this korero.

3. Tikanga and Hauora

We are practicing physical distancing to protect whānau, hapū and iwi - particularly those who are more vulnerable.

However, 'physical distance' does not mean 'social distance' and it is more important than ever maintaining our social and cultural connections and caring for one another. With that in mind, we have a list of suggestions from our Foundation whānau to help you through these times.

To help you with connectivity and tools...

You will need devices, connectivity and tools.

1. **Make sure you're connected!** There are a range of [plans](#) out there to help meet your needs, including [support](#) to keep you going through financial hardship.
2. **Set up your home office.** Create a work environment that looks and feels like your office to you and that is pleasant. Or if you need to use one of your shared spaces, headphones (ideally noise-canceling) can be useful to avoid distractions and signal that you're not to be disturbed.
3. Decrease reliance on on-site solutions by **moving to Cloud applications** where possible - this will enable your team to access your data and applications from wherever they are.
4. Choose the **right tools and platforms** and make sure everyone knows how to use it – see section 5 of this toolkit.
5. **Send TXT's!** Many mobile plans come with unlimited TXT and this is a quick and easy way to get a quick and easy to read response.

To help you with connectivity and people...

6. **Look after yourself.** Create a dedicated space for you to work within your whare (house), to help you get in and stay in the zone. Change into your “work clothes”,

they don't have to be the nicest clothes, just not your pyjamas 😊 Take regular breaks and don't forget to eat!

7. **Look after your whānau (family).** Routine is important as we settle into new ways of working. Come up with a daily schedule that includes your work time, whānau time and personal time. It may mean your working hours need to become a bit more flexible as a result.

Caring for kids while working? Firstly, be flexible. How much work might you realistically get done?

- Make a plan for their education and entertainment (toys, books, puzzles).
- Explain to them when you are available and when you are not (“When this door is shut I am at work and you need to find your other parent”).
- Make time in your day to be present for them - use your breaks and lunch time to spend quality time together. More useful tips [here](#).

8. **Look after your hāpori (community).** Daily check-ins with your team can help you maintain social connections. 15 minute check-ins over video calls to cover off how everyone is doing today, what you did yesterday, what you're doing today and any barriers you need help overcoming helps keep everyone productive.

It's not all about the mahi

Connect with your team and share a coffee on Monday morning or some drinks on a Friday afternoon - share bits of your personal life and 'new normal' with your team, cheering each other will help keep your team together.

To help you with connectivity and purpose...

9. **Look after your tinana (body).** Head out into the Māra (garden) for your lunch break to connect with Papatūānuku (Earth Mother) or try an online fitness (like [Les Mills](#) or [DownDog](#)) or a mindfulness class. Click [here](#) for some free resources.
10. **Look after your hinengaro (mind).** Working from home means you're always connected. Make sure you schedule yourself breaks – including digital ones – and try and stick to your routine.

It is perfectly normal to feel anxious at this time and below are some resources that can help look after your wellbeing. Above all, please monitor your mental health and ask for support if you are not ok.

- These [LinkedIn videos](#) will help you manage stress and the impact of adjusting to your new work environment
- [Anxiety boosting hacks](#) from LifeLabs, while you're checking this article take a look around the site for some research based 3-5mins power lesson
- [Top tips](#) from the Mental Health Foundation
- [Practical steps](#) to support your child's mental health from Kids Health

11. **Look after your wairua (spirit).** If you don't already, why not try a daily karakia (prayer) or waiata (song) with your team. Flick a song on YouTube up and get

everyone to sing along with it (while on mute if they need to!) to keep your energy and spirits up.

And remember to be kind to yourself and others. Aroha mai, aroha atu, means love given is love received

4. Best practice

Once you have your tech sorted and a plan to look after yourself and your people, it is a good idea to think about how you are going to master remote working and embrace virtual meetings.

Working from home

1. Create a healthy routine

As humans, we need a routine to feel comfortable and safe. Moreover, if you have kids with you, they will benefit from a consistent daily schedule too.

Make this new routine as simple as possible for you and your family. In addition, set clear boundaries for your working day so that your work and home time don't merge together.

2. Recreate your office rhythm

Your work already has a rhythm to it, try to recreate the best of that structure and culture in a digital way. You might have weekly team meetings, regular one on ones with your Manager, and of course breaks, chats with coworkers and time to eat lunch... Find a way to do those from home.

3. Be flexible

With everyone balancing working from home with looking after children and other challenges, make sure you schedule your meetings at a time that is most suitable for everyone. And when possible, keep a regular schedule for meetings.

4. Communicate clearly and regularly

When we are all working remotely and as we adjust to this 'new normal', it's more important than ever to ensure everyone stays briefed on the mahi and kaupapa.

5. Manage expectations

Discuss with your manager/team what can be accomplished while working from home in the current environment, agree on the priorities and the tools you will be using the keep in touch and work together. Remember that this will be an ongoing conversation.

6. Remote management

As a Manager, it is important to trust your team, prioritise wellbeing and ensure that your team has the tools and support that they need. Tips from [Forbes](#), [WorkDesign](#) and [ZDNet](#).

7. Embrace video calling

Use the virtual space to hold your one-on-ones, bigger meetings and brainstorming sessions.

Seeing each other live retains connections and replicates your normal office face-to-face conversation. And of course, a great way to keep in touch with your loved ones too!

8. Stop working

When the workday is over, it's over! Tell your team you're signing off and do it physically too: exit your home office or clear away your work area, take a walk for your "commute" and put your notifications on silent.

9. Enjoy the benefits

Appreciate the benefits that do come with remote work: you're not commuting, you're able to make your own lunch and you have more control over your schedule and more time with your family. Let's focus on whatever positives we can find!

New to working remotely? LinkedIn has made a number of [LinkedIn online courses](#) focused on working virtually available for free to everyone. Or check out these guides from [Medium](#) and [Zoom](#).

Attending a virtual meetings

Again, embrace video calling - there's a bunch of communication which is non-verbal.

- Turn on your video when you are talking to your team. You can occasionally show off your pets, kids or any other interesting things - those little things make us feel more human and connected.
- Mute your mic in big meetings, in small meetings it's up to you – remember that background noise can be very annoying
- If possible/acceptable, you could consider recording meetings / training sessions if anyone needs to catch up after the fact
- "Read the room" more - body language can help us sense if someone is joking, smiling, or upset about something
- Ideally your connection is robust enough to videoconference, but if not you could often shut off the video (keep a profile pic) and participate with audio only

Virtual facilitation tips

1. Test your tech before the meeting

Sound working? Do you know how to turn on video? Mute yourself? Share your screen?

2. Design the flow according to your purpose

Pure reporting? Information dissemination? Brainstorming? Discussion?

Again, recreate what you normally do – will you open and close with a karakia?

3. Assign roles

Once you have the agenda, consider if you could benefit from a moderator, note taker, tech support or a timekeeper. If you need a friendly heads-up sign to move on, you can leverage the "[ELMO](#)" (enough already let's move on) technique.

Icebreakers help participants relax and ease people into a group meeting. You could ask the virtual team to do a 'show and tell' - any pets, cute kids or creative office set up? Ask them to share it.

Create a line for participants to follow

Be clear on how you are calling participants. By alphabetical order? Or how they show up on the screen?

Embrace techniques for virtual brainstorming, voting, and feedback.

Again, it can be boring to simply listen to someone talk. Give your participants something to do to stay engaged. This [article](#) from Lucid Meetings has some great ideas.

4. Follow up with meeting notes

Summarize action items or conclusions at the end of your virtual meeting, giving your participants to hear it and respond if need be before closing the meeting. Follow up with a concise email with the key takeaways and actions.

Other resources: [Facilitation Playbooks](#) for nonprofit meetings.

5. Tools

There are many powerful tools to help us work remotely and stay connected. We've compiled a short selection of platforms that our team uses and others that are popular.

1. Instant messaging

Start by implementing a chat for your team and use it as the main way of internal communication (everyone will appreciate having less emails in their inbox!).

- [Slack](#) – allows you to have different channels for different things and adding different members from the team, great for collaboration! ([free plan options](#) for nonprofits)
- [Microsoft Teams](#) – your virtual office, offers instant messaging, calls and virtual meetings ([currently free](#) for six months)
- [Google Hangouts Chat](#) – deeply integrated with the rest of the Google suit, so a great option if you are already using Google Docs and Sheets.
- [WhatsApp](#), a popular app that many of us already have
- [Basecamp](#)

2. Virtual meetings

- Zoom very popular, easy to use and can host up to 100 participants ([free option](#), currently lifting the 40min limit).
- [Skype](#) (free video calling for up to 50 people)
- WebEx unlimited usage up to 100 people ([currently free](#))
- GoToMeeting (currently 3 months of [remote work tools free](#))
- [Google Hangouts Premium](#) is free through July 1.
- And Microsoft Teams and Google Hangouts as per above and [currently free](#).

Remember to explore the additional features (like screen sharing, recording meetings...) and how user friendly and accessible they are from all your devices.

3. File sharing

If your platform doesn't include file sharing, consider using

- [Dropbox](#) great system for storing and sharing big files (3 months of free [Dropbox Premium for](#) essential nonprofits)
- [WeTransfer](#) and [Google drive](#)

It's best practice to share links rather than attachments to make sure everyone's using the latest version.

4. Collaboration and task management

- [Trello](#) card-based tool for basic task management (free)
- [Asana](#) takes things to the next level (free 30 days premium trial)
- [Mural](#) and [Miro](#) are digital workspaces for visual collaboration, inspiration and innovation - think of digital sticky notes! (free 30 day trial)

5. Board papers

- [Stellar](#) and [BoardPro](#) (currently free for 6 months) ensure clarity across the board and allows you to access board papers and important information across multiple devices

6. Other useful tools:

- [Doodle](#) – will help you schedule meetings and check everyone's availability
- [Google Forms](#) to organise volunteers or survey people
- [DocuSign](#) and [HelloSign](#) for electronic signatures
- [Loomio](#) for Board decision making
- [Houseparty](#) and Video conference and gaming
- [Oskar](#) helps you prevent isolation and track your team's happiness on Slack

But this just a short list, you can read about other virtual tech tools [here](#) and [here](#).

7. Virtual events

[Everydayhero](#) shares the benefits and some resources about virtual fundraisers. We came across [Act2Help's virtual events](#) with some creative ideas.

Thanks and additional resources

Thank you to everyone who provided recommendations, insights and feedback on this guide.

And we hope this guide can be of help to our partners with their remote working journey.

If you have any questions or feedback on this guide, please email us at vodafonezfoundation@vodafone.com with the subject line: “Community remote working toolkit”.

Training

If your team has extra capacity during the lockdown, you could consider investing in their professional or personal development with some online courses.

One of our partners, Zeal, offers a comprehensive toolkit to transform your skills in youth mental health support. The Live For Tomorrow Guides are for people to learn, practice and reflect on how to have empathetic and supportive conversations with young people struggling with their mental health.

Normally it's NZD \$24.99 a month, but during this time Zeal wants to offer it to anyone on a pay-what-you-can basis, even if that's nothing. There's 8 hours of content delivered across 13 modules, using brief video lessons (<10mins), practice with EmpathyBot chatbot, conversation animations, online community and certification. Contact Elliot directly if you are interested: elliott@zeal.nz.

Additional resources

The [Coronavirus Tech Handbook](#) is a crowdsourced resource for technologists building things related to the pandemic and has a long list of resources about tech tools and a comprehensive [remote working guide](#) and [resources for virtual events](#).

References

Beth's blog www.bethkanter.org/

Clairification How Nonprofits Can Connect Virtually During Trying Times
<https://clairification.com/2020/03/09/nonprofits-can-connect-virtually-trying-times/>

Wired Impact Coronavirus Nonprofits resources <https://wiredimpact.com/blog/coronavirus-nonprofits-resources-for-covid-19>

Kirstin Te Wao's original Technology and tikanga work tips to thrive in times of survival
www.linkedin.com/pulse/technology-tikanga-work-tips-thrive-times-survival-kirstin-te-wao