



# Remote Working & Meetings

A compilation of tips and advice

**crisp.**

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**KRY**  **LIVI**

Anders Ivarsson

# Working from home

## Go to “work”

Set the alarm.  
Eat breakfast.  
Watch the morning news.  
Brush your teeth.  
Get dressed.

Do a fake commute - take a walk around the block

As if you're going to work :-)



## Set up a workplace

Create a nice and tidy area where you can focus on work.

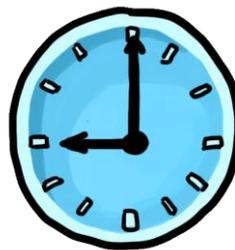
Don't work where you normally relax (such in the sofa or in your bed).



## Regular work hours

Set specific, regular, work hours. And communicate those to your team.

Take a proper lunch break, don't eat in front of the laptop.



## Stop working!

When your working day is over - let work be.

Chill.

Do something else.



# Maintaining personal focus

## Communicate your plans

Summarize your plans for your day in your team's slack channel. This will help you sort out your own priorities and to increase your own focus on the most important things.

Update your team throughout the day as you finish your tasks.



## Pause social notifications

Get off social media. Or at least turn off notifications from Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.

Scroll your feeds during your breaks, or save them to your fake commute home :-)



## Run Pomodoros

Get yourself a timer. Write a list of things you want to do today, sort them by importance.

Set the timer on 25 minutes (one Pomodoro). When it rings, celebrate with a 5 minute break. Before resetting the timer, check your list. You might want to change priorities.



## Take breaks

Make sure to take breaks for lunch, coffee etc. as you would normally do when you are at the office.

When you're having a break - stand up. Move. Walk away from your laptop.

If you run Pomodoros, take a longer break after top 3-4 Pomodoros.



# Teamwork

## Regard each day as one-day sprint

If you feel that all targets are moving and things keep changing rapidly - try having two stand-ups every day to increase communication and collaboration.

**Morning stand-up** - Plan the day.

**After-lunch stand-up** - Sync progress and update each other

Once things have stabilized, go back to one (or two) week sprints.

## Communicate more

Never postpone a question. Ask it immediately. Delays are longer since you don't work physically close to each other. Don't start with a delay from your side.



## Ensure your digital board reflects reality at all time

When working remotely and asynchronous it's more even more important that your JIRA/Trello reflects true status.

Make the tool communicate status for you!

Also make sure the assignee on cards/tasks reflects reality to help everyone see who's working on what. If you're working on something, make sure to assign yourself. If you're stopped working on something, remove yourself.

## Work out loud

Default to communicate in open channels.

But, consider keeping a private team channel for minute-by-minute coordination and team chatter. It's easy to hold back on that when you know 100+ people will read.



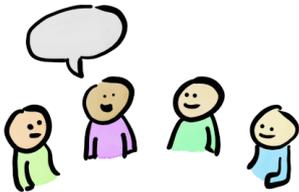
# The Daily Stand-up

## Start with a check-in

Make sure to stay connected as a team and to continue to care for each other even when working remotely. Start with a check-in question and take turns answering it.

Examples:

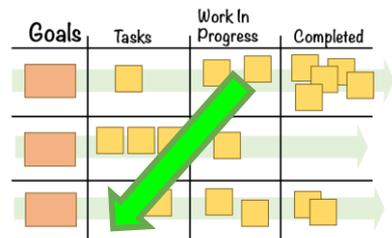
- How are you feeling today?
- What made you happy yesterday?
- What are you looking forward to today?
- Show something to the camera!



## Walk the board (don't do the round)

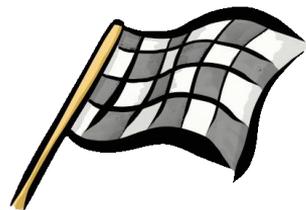
Instead of taking turns sharing your personal plans for the day, walk the board.

Start from the top right ticket/card. What's the status? Who's working on it? Who needs to help out?



## Set a clear goal for today

As a team, define a clear goal for each day - something you really want to have achieved by the end of the day.



## Allow for longer stand-ups

Sharing progress and syncing will take longer.

Also, you really want to allow time for all questions to be raised and addressed.



# Being a good video meeting participant

## Camera ON

Have your camera on so everyone can see each other's faces.

Sit in front of the camera and look into the camera to make the receiver feel like you have eye contact and are in the meeting together.



## Don't multitask

Be present and active in the meeting.

Don't read email, reply to slack-messages or fiddle with your phone.

Don't turn off the camera and mute your microphone just so you can walk around doing other stuff.



## Mute or not muted?

Don't mute yourself if you are under 5 people in the meeting in order to get more laughs and feelings in the call for it to feel "real and alive".

Mute yourself if you are more than 5 people in the meeting to not interrupt the meeting.



## Help everyone be heard and to contribute

If you know yourself to be one of those who tends to talk a lot - be mindful of it. Give others time and room to speak and share their thoughts and opinions.

If you suspect that you're one of the more silent ones, maybe feeling you don't have much to contribute - remember that it's hard for others to know if you're silently agreeing with what's being said, or if you've checked out. Share your thoughts and opinions.

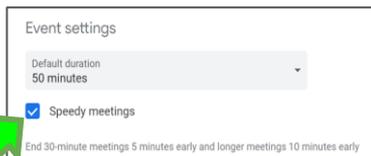
# Being a good video host/facilitator (1 of 3)

## Don't schedule back-to-back meetings

Click the "Speedy meetings" checkbox in Google Calendar Settings.

This ensures everyone gets a proper break before the next meeting.

It's the nice and right thing to do. Check that box!



## Extra clarity on desired outcome and structure

Present the purpose and the desired outcome of the meeting.

To help everyone participate and engage, be extra clear on how you plan to structure the meeting.

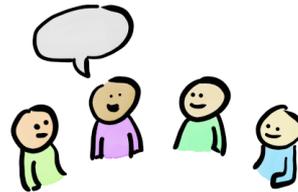
## Have the agenda always visible

During the meeting, have the agenda visible (or at least frequently return to it). This will help the participants focus and understand where we are in the process.

## Do a check-in round

Example questions:

- What are your expectations?
- Most important question to get resolved?
- What will you bring to this meeting?



## Set Working Agreement

Clarify meeting etiquette and roles. Agree upon which principles and values to honor while communicating and collaborating.

## Choose a tool for shared working space

Build a shared memory of the meeting. Select a tool for collaboration or notetaking of the meeting.

This can be a shared Google Doc, slides, Jam Board or other tools. The simpler, the better.



# Being a good video host/facilitator (2 of 3)

## Break up in smaller groups

Good conversations in bigger group is hard, even more so when having them through video.

Increase energy, engagement and depth of conversations by allowing for timeboxed breakout-sessions.

For example, you can pair up participants and ask them to call each other on video on slack.

## Summarize and Review

For long meetings, pausing and summarizing and review what's been discussed and agreed upon so far. This can be valuable and help everyone be on the same page.



## Take breaks

Focusing drains energy. Don't forget to take breaks for long meetings.

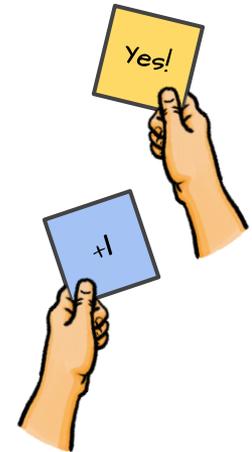
## Distribute air time

Make sure everyone gets a chance to talk and share their perspectives and opinions.

Alternate between discussions, structured rounds where participants take turns talking and breakout sessions. Be clear on timeboxes and talking time boundaries.

## Use visual cues

Try using hand-signals or cards for participants to participate without speaking.



# Being a good video host/facilitator (3 of 3)

## Do a controlled closure of the meeting

Don't lose track of time so that you have are forced to abruptly end the meeting.

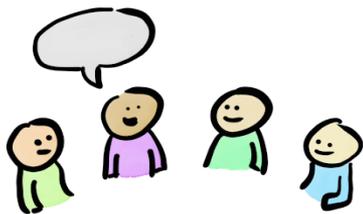
Make sure you have at least 5 minutes to properly close the meeting.



## Do a check-out round

Do a check-out round, giving participants a chance to reflect and to digest what's been said and discussed. Have everyone briefly comment on a questions such as:

- What's your key takeaways?
- What will you do now immediately after this meeting?
- What new questions have arisen for you?



## Summarize decisions, actions and next steps

To strengthen commitments and memory of the meeting, wrap up with a summary decision, actions and agreements.



## Share meeting notes

Once the meeting is over, share the presentation, documents created, the jamboard or notes taken to the participants.

Share a summary of decisions and actions in relevant slack channels or email if appropriate.



# Hosting bigger meetings

## Really test your tech!

Make sure you have ample of time before the meeting start to test all equipment.

Nothing makes you more stressed than having a lot of people observing you sorting out tech issues.



## Question in chat

Answering questions is hard in large remote meetings.

As a facilitator, ask that any questions are posted in the chat for the meeting.

Keep track of the questions and ensure they get answered in the end, or post them in Slack and follow-up on answers.



## Keep track of speaker

For bigger meetings, if necessary, set up a protocol for how participants flag that they want to be put into the queue of speakers.

Do they raise their hand? Write their name in the chat?



## Create engagement with Mentimeter

Engage the audience by having them reply to questions using the app Mentimeter. The results of polls or word clouds can easily be shown in the presentation.



# Have your tech in order

## Test your tech before the meeting

Check that your camera and microphone is working, before joining the meeting.



## Use cord instead of bluetooth

To have as good conversation as possible, and to not talk past each other - you want as little lag as possible. If you experience lag with your bluetooth headset, try connecting it with a cord.



## Proper lightning

If it's too dark it's hard for others to see you. Place yourself in a bright area or rig a lamp to shed some light on you.



# Selecting your channel

## Face-2-Face

For problem solving, ideation, debating and creative discussions, meeting face to face beats everything else.

Conversations flow easily, everyone can gather in from of the whiteboard and it's easy to read the expressions of others.

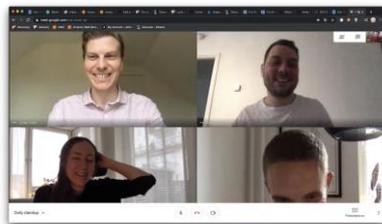


## Video

When it's not possible to meet face-to-face we resort to video conferences.

With proper shared workspace tools, more discipline (and a little bit more patience) video can be as great for problem solving and discussions.

Video is also a great tool to maintain your social relation with your colleagues.



## Slack and Email

Slack and email is great for:

- Coordination
- Announcing news
- Sharing information
- Asking questions



## Jira, Trello, Google Docs

Online collaboration tools such as Jira, Confluence, Google Docs, Jamboard, etc are perfect for:

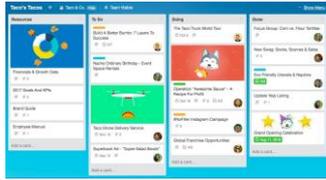
- Planning
- Tracking progress
- Document decisions
- Policies and Guidelines
- Knowledge base



# Online Collaboration Tools

These online tools are all accessible through your browser. Multiple user can access and edit at the same time and updates are immediately reflected for everyone. In order words, perfect for collaboration!

## Trello



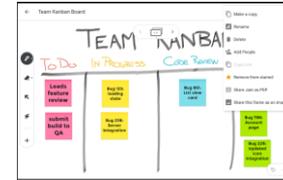
Simple but powerful todo-tool. Cards can have checklists, images, tags and can be assigned to persons.

## Google Docs & Slides



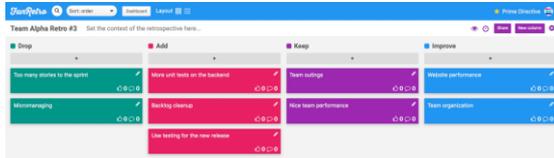
The most simple tool is sometimes the best one. Google Docs and Google Slides allow for several people to collaborate at the same time. If you've never tried to pair-write something, try it as soon as you get an opportunity.

## Google Jamboard



Super simple Whiteboard and Post-it simulator. Perfect for brainstorming and workshops.

## FunRetro



Looks like Trello, but is tailored and simplified for Retrospectives.

## Miro



Miro is a powerful virtual whiteboard. Advanced features for creating mind maps, roadmaps, Kanban boards, and much more.

# Continue to be social

## Video company

Have a video link open to a friend or to your team, just for the sake of company. It also makes it easy to reach out to each other if you have questions or want to bounce ideas.



## Fika together

Schedule social activities over video. For example, have a video fika/coffee break together everyday at 3 pm.



## Be random

Don't forget to have those silly random social conversations about nothing and everything.

Create dedicated "frivolous" slack channels for social mucking about.



## Have some fun

Share photos of your home, your cat, your coffee mug, your odd pair of socks, etc. in your team's slack channel.

Don't forget to have some fun :-)

