

Career Corner

Do You have the Soft Skills Needed for Remote Work?

The shift to remote work has been one of the most conspicuous workplace trends of 2020 and many believe a significant percentage of work will remain remote. In this new normal, it's important to know which **Soft Skills** are critical for effective remote work and what hiring managers are looking for.

1. Adaptability and Resiliency

“Remote workers have to be prepared to adapt to unexpected situations, like IT issues,” says **Charlene Manning**, *Job Developer, Westchester-Putnam Career Center*. “I myself have had to be adaptable when teleworking. Be prepared for these situations, know who to contact to resolve them, and have a backup plan. The key is to stay calm and continue to be as productive as possible until things get worked out.”

2. Self-Motivation

Remote employees need to be proactive and take initiative without being constantly monitored by managers. “There are a lot of distractions when working from home. We suggest using tools like noise-canceling headphones, as well as keeping an organized workspace with an actual desk and chair,” advises **Nahshon Halevi**, *Job Developer, Westchester-Putnam Career Center*. “Working on a couch and/or with the TV on is not recommended.”

Additional tips include blocking off certain times of the day to dedicate as focus hours, where emails and text messages are deliberately ignored. To be productive it's imperative to work uninterrupted in blocks of 1-2 hours at a time, take a break, check email and then go on to the next block.

3. Communication

Remote work requires excellent communication, but be careful not to over- or under communicate. Employees who are not comfortable with teleworking may mistakenly believe that they need to report every detail of their day or they may be the person who is “missing in action.” Be sure to stay in touch but keep emails and texts concise and on topic. Be considerate of email glut and pick up the phone when it's possible to resolve an issue faster person to person. Also be aware of the time it takes to craft an email, the number of people being cc'd, and the time it will take for all recipients to read and respond to the email. Composing and checking emails creates a façade of “working,” but don't mistake it for productivity. Also make sure your email and messaging has a purpose. For example, if you craft an email with 10 people cc'd, is it clear what action is required and who should respond?

4. Work Schedule

The most successful remote workers are those who maintain a strict work schedule. They don't mix personal business during work hours, and friends and family understand “they are working” even if at home. “Map out the 8 hours you will work with lunch and breaks worked in, just as you would if you were on-site. Be careful to be available when expected and notify your team of when you will be offline so that they understand a delayed response,” concludes **Linda McKinzie-Daugherty**, *Director of Business and Community Engagement*.

THE WESTCHESTER-PUTNAM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (WPWDB) is comprised of leaders and staff of state and county government agencies, non-profits, public education, and the private sector who work together to strengthen the partnerships between business, education, and service providers within the “Career Center Network” to meet the needs for a skilled workforce. The WPWDB pursues funding opportunities and develops model programs and leading-edge practices. The “Network” is made up of four Career Centers (White Plains, Mount Vernon, Peekskill, and Carmel) as well as partner agencies that provide state-of-the-art technology, training, resources, and services to youth, adults and employers. For more information, visit www.westchesterputnamonestop.com.

Follow Westchester–Putnam Workforce Development Board



[Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#) / [Twitter](#) / [LinkedIn](#)

###