



Adapting to Working Remote

Recently, many of us completed our first full week of working remote. As Colorado embraces new stay-at-home orders and social distancing advice, we are all doing our part to make sure we stem the tide of COVID-19. Like many of you, much of my work life has been based on personal and face-to-face interaction. I was curious as to how we would all adapt to this new way of working. Would we find it tough? Would it be more relaxing or more stressful? What lessons would we all learn?

Monday... A Culture Shock

As I went into Monday, I don't know that I fully appreciated the difference in culture I was about to experience. I initially thought that working remote would be more relaxing, and perhaps a leisurely pace filled with a few meetings, outdoor walks, extra time with the family, etc. What I found was quite the opposite. By the end of that day, as I was talking to some of our team members, we all looked like we'd been through a bit of a storm. And it was... a storm of video meetings, notifications, chats, emails, and text messages.



I knew that we would have to adjust if we were going to be successful.

A New Way of Working

As I approached Tuesday, I was reminded that a friend of mine at EDUCAUSE had recently written an article on [“Transitioning to Remote Work”](#). Ana had been working remotely for years and I was curious as to what she recommended. Her top suggestions were just what I needed:

- Create “Your” Workspace
- Add Personal Touches
- Set Daily Goals or Write Task Lists
- Take breaks, and stand up
- Try to maintain working hours
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Use your video camera
- Ask Questions, and don’t assume



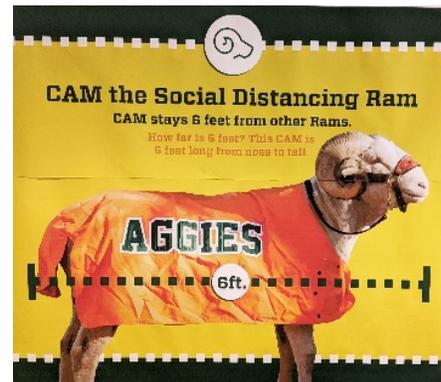
I decided to take Ana’s advice to heart and started to make changes through the rest of my week. I worked on my workspace, started to create new meeting series, and scheduled in some breaks.

If you’re interested in more tips and tricks on working remotely, here are some additional resources:

- [Remote Working: Setting Yourself and Your Teams Up For Success](#)
- [8 Tips To Make Working From Home Work For You](#)
- [23 Essential Tips for Working Remotely](#)

Social Distancing?

As the week went on, I did my best to try and keep up with the national media and learn what I could about our changing environment. The media kept mentioning the phrase “social distancing”, but for me there was a bit of a disconnect. While I heard them saying this, I was seeing more interaction at a personal level than I had ever seen with our team members and colleagues. In one week alone, I had *virtually* been in the President’s kitchen, the Provost’s library, James Cizek’s basement, met Candace Ramsey’s dog, and got to see Josh Clark’s kiddos. For me, it was a bit of a revelation. While this might be physically distancing us, this might have the opportunity to bring us all together in new and different ways.



A Learning Experience

By Friday, I was starting to feel much better about working remote (and I hope you did too!). I had a realization that this was like other changes we all go through. There’s a period where we feel uncomfortable, a phase where we start to adjust and find our way, and eventually a new normal that sets in when we’ve adapted. We often don’t experience so many changes at once, but I think in the end we’ll all be stronger for it. This is helping us flex our change muscle and we’ll get better at all of this as we go forward. And that’s what we’ll do, we’ll go forward.

What We Do Matters

As I wrap up this week's column, I'm reminded of the impact that we have on CSU and how what we do matters.

I think about what these past few weeks would've looked like if we didn't have the technology and the amazing people that we do. We never would've been able to move thousands of courses online, transition an entire workforce to remote work, and convert university operations to a virtual experience. Because of all your hard work, effort, and knowledge, CSU is in a great position to weather this storm and come out of it even stronger than we were before.



In the coming weeks, we will all continue to have learning experiences as we adapt to our environments and new ways of working. We'll find strengths and new opportunities that we'll be able to leverage when the craziness of this pandemic starts to die down. In the meantime, know that we'll continue to move forward for CSU. Know that you and your work are valued. Know that you are making a difference.

- Brandon

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BR' followed by a flourish.