

*At Connect the Dots Consulting, we are committed to providing practical and timely leadership coaching and development. At a time when leaders are stretched to the limit, we want to share a Toolkit for effective “Work from Home” Leadership. These tried-and-true leadership practices are worth a reminder in these volatile times.*

### Work-Life Integration During a Pandemic



For years, there has been much discussion about work-life integration. Many of us who spent our days at the office and our evenings at home longed for that ability to achieve the perfect balance. We concluded it was a myth only available to those lucky few who actually worked from a home office.

With the pandemic, we learned quickly how wrong we were! Work-life integration is hard no matter where we work. And working from home has introduced new challenges most of us

have not previously encountered. Steffanie Wilk, Ph.D., a Professor of Management and Human Resources at The Ohio State University, has identified several strategies to help navigate work-life integration when working from home.

#### ***Know your work style preference***

- Are you a “segmentor”—someone who likes to keep your work and personal lives separate? If so, be sure you have a dedicated space in your home just for work.
- Are you an “integrator”—someone who likes to integrate all aspects of your life? If so, you can work from anywhere. Just be sure you are able to signal your brain (and others) what you are doing. For example, if you like to work at the kitchen table, the signal for work time is the laptop on the table and open. When it is personal time, the laptop gets put away.

#### ***Create meaningful transitions***

Although most people don’t miss the commute to and from work, it was an effective way to transition from work to home and vice versa. Transitions allow us to be present in the moment without worrying about the future or rehashing the past. Without natural transitions, we need to create them:

- Keep set hours for work and non-work as much as possible
- Have a routine for your day
- Schedule breaks in your day and hold to them
- Consider space boundaries—close the office door, put the laptop away, charge the cell phone in a different room

#### ***Give yourself time to recharge***

This is essential to avoid burnout and lower productivity. Ways to recharge include:

- Sleep: quality and quantity of sleep are essential to ensure a good night’s rest
- Physical exercise
- Relaxation: watch tv, take a bath, listen to music, read a book
- Connect with others: pick up the phone and call a friend, schedule a family zoom get together
- Serve others: shop for an elderly neighbor, check in on someone who is alone
- Learn a new skill

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*We would appreciate hearing from you as to the strategies that are working or not working in your virtual workplaces. Please drop us a note, follow us on [Linked In](#) and [Twitter](#), or check out our [website](#).*