

## Tips for staying focused

The tools of the trade don't guarantee success—you'll also need some strategies to help you stay focused.

- **Start working at the same time.** Treat telework days like regular workdays: get up, get dressed, and be "at your desk" at the usual time.
- **Establish a schedule.** Keep work hours similar to the ones you would keep if you were working at your office. Your manager and your co-workers will appreciate knowing when you'll be available.
- **Plan ahead.** Take the appropriate work home. Some work may be better suited for the home office than other work, so be sure to plan the telework a day ahead.
- **Focus on objectives.** Work with your manager and colleagues to define clear goals and objectives against which your performance can be objectively measured.
- **Limit distractions.** Be careful not to replace office-based interruptions with home-based ones (such as children, neighbors, televisions, and friends).
- **Take breaks.** Plan time to get up and move around. Consider going for a walk or a run during your lunch break to keep your mind fresh.

Telecommuting is not for everyone, but if your job lends itself to working remotely and you are self-disciplined and highly motivated, you can reap the rewards of working effectively at home or remotely. Using the information presented in this column, you can take advantage of the opportunity to work efficiently away from the office while remaining in touch with your colleagues and customers.