



Working *Remotely* SHORT COURSE

STUDY GUIDE

HOW TO WORK THROUGH THIS COURSE

Over the following pages, you will move through a logical, self-paced learning experience that can enlighten and educate you in working remotely.

It is important from the outset to understand that learning about something is not the same as just reading about it. Learning implies a permanent change in what you know and can do.

Anyone can read a book and understand it; but for most people the detail of what you read is largely forgotten.

Reading something once only puts information into short-term memory. It is soon lost if you don't 'work' on it. Studying the same information takes longer, but by thinking about it and processing it you can transfer that information to long-term memory. This way, you will enhance your ability to recall and apply that information for years to come. If you take your time to work through the 7 lessons that follow, you will learn.

Read, Reflect, Research, Revise

Throughout the following pages, you will find not only things to read about, but also things to do:

1. Throughout each lesson, there are suggestions of things to do under the headings "Learn More". These are all sorts of ideas about things you can do in order to explore the subject further.
2. At the end of each lesson, there is an interactive self assessment test (assignment), for you to undertake. When you click on this, your computer needs to be online. You will be taken to our cloud-based online school. The answers you choose will be evaluated immediately, and your results can be seen on completion of each test. You can return and repeat tests if you wish.

Undertaking these tasks will involve reflection, research and revision of the topics you read about. By repeatedly encountering each topic in different ways, your perspective on each subject will broaden, and the commitment of information to longer term memory will strengthen.

You don't need to undertake all of the suggested tasks if you don't want to; but we strongly recommend that you do some in each lesson, and that you take all of the self-assessment tests.

The more time you spend doing these things, the stronger your learning will be.

Completing the Course

After completing all 7 lessons you will be presented with a final assessment which can also be undertaken online.

Do not attempt to do this until you have worked through all 7 lessons, and feel like you have learnt the subject well.

Upon finishing this final assessment you will immediately see your final results, and you can save a pdf copy of those results as a "Certificate of Completion".

Welcome Audio

Click the button below to listen to the welcome audio for this course. This feature is supported by most computers and some mobile devices.



HOW DOES THIS COURSE WORK?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FIRST

<https://vimeo.com/441179158>

THE CONTENTS OF THE COURSE

How to work through this course.....	2
LESSON 1 NATURE & SCOPE OF REMOTE WORK.....	5
Introduction.....	5
Nature of remote work.....	5
Scope of remote workplaces for different goods and service business structures.....	11
Timeframe? Is it a short term decision or long term?	14
Review what you have been learning.....	15
LESSON 2 BENEFITS & CHALLENGES OF DOING BUSINESS REMOTELY.....	16
Introduction.....	16
Productivity.....	17
Impact of remote work on businesses.....	18
Impact of remote work on employees	21
Impact of remote work on the environment.....	22
How different sectors can engage with remote learning.....	23
Review what you have been learning.....	31
LESSON 3 TECHNOLOGIES FOR REMOTE BUSINESSES.....	32
Introduction.....	32
Hardware technologies.....	33
Software technologies.....	36
Review what you have been learning.....	40
LESSON 4 COMMUNICATING REMOTELY.....	41
Introduction.....	41
Face-to-face communication vs. Remote communication	42
Creating a positive share culture in the workplace.....	44
How to effectively use different types of remote communication	45
Review what you have been learning.....	50
LESSON 5 MANAGING & SUPPORTING STAFF REMOTELY.....	51
Introduction.....	51
Managing staff remotely	52
Recruitment & training.....	54
Supporting staff.....	57
Review what you have been learning.....	60

LESSON 6 REMOTE DELIVERY OF GOODS & SERVICES	61
Introduction	61
Examples of goods businesses suited to remote work	62
Managing delivery of goods remotely	64
Services	66
Examples of service businesses suited to remote work	67
Review what you have been learning	72
LESSON 7 ONLINE EVENTS	73
Introduction	73
Review what you have been learning	79
Final assessment	80

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DISCLAIMER: This institution accepts no responsibility for the attitudes or actions of our graduates. The education you receive through this course in no way guarantees your actions in the future will always be as they should be. Your actions in your profession, or in any other situation where you apply what you have learnt here, will be affected by many things other than just the learning from this course. Success or failure of a graduate depends upon not only what they learn in this course, but also, what they learn elsewhere, as well as personal qualities and attitudes.

LESSON 1 NATURE & SCOPE OF REMOTE WORK

Although not a new concept, remote work has become more commonplace and there are different ways it can be applied across workplaces in different goods and service industries.

INTRODUCTION

Working remotely has been part of some people's jobs for years, but it is also something which has evolved quickly in recent times. The recent covid-19 pandemic forced many businesses to insist on large swathes of their workforce spending a considerable amount of their working hours conducting work from home. For some this transition was relatively straightforward, but for others it posed a significant challenge. Many workforces were not set up to cope with the difficulties of working remotely, employees may not have had suitable working environments at home, or they lacked the equipment needed.

Since working remotely is likely to be something which continues and expands into the future, many businesses are looking at ways they can adapt to ensure working remotely does not interfere with the daily operation or profitability of their business. While there are some businesses that require on-site labour (primary industries, production), many aspects of secondary and service industries can be completed in a remote environment. Indeed, larger companies with multiple offices have been using remote work solutions for decades.



NATURE OF REMOTE WORK

Before considering the scope of remote workplaces, it is prudent to ask what exactly is remote work? Sometimes referred to as telecommuting, remote work can refer to any work undertaken outside of a business or institution's premises. This can include work undertaken by employees who need to work from home due to other factors (e.g. disability, injury, remote location). It can also include work undertaken away from the premises by employees who attend the premises for some or most of their working hours.

Suggested Tasks: ▼

Throughout this course you will be provided with suggested tasks and reading to aid with your understanding. These will appear in the right hand column.

Remember: these tasks are optional. The more you complete, the more you will learn, but in order to complete the course in 20 hours you will need to manage your time well. We suggest you spend about 10 minutes on each task you attempt, and no more than 20 minutes.

The potential impact of implementing work from home and remote work contracts is large – particularly in the wake of the 2020 COVID-19. The increased flexibility of remote work has

the potential to reduce lost time (e.g. commuting, unfocused meetings) while also increasing focus, productivity, and access to employee talent.



LEARN MORE >>>

Suggested Tasks

Ask two other people how they would define “Remote Work” or “Working Remotely”.

Do this face to face, away from the computer. Also ask them what sorts of jobs are best suited to remote work.

You might ask friends, neighbours, colleagues or anyone else.

The aim here is to reveal similarities or differences between how different people perceive remote work. Spend no more than 10mins on this discussion with each person.

Definition of Remote Work

Remote work is sometimes divided into two types:

Homeworking - employees work from home, though some may also opt to work out of a coffee shop, library, or other space with a focus on maintaining an individual and independent schedule.

Hub working – employees work from hubs in their community where they may work with others and collaborate with workers outside their own organisation. Hubs provide services e.g. hot desks, meeting rooms. Hubs can go by different names e.g. enterprise centres, innovation centres or digital hubs.

For the purposes of this course, remote work is interchangeable with the concept of ‘telework’. Telework has been defined as:

“A form of organising and/or performing work, using information technology, in the context of an employment contract/relationship, where work, which could also be performed at the employer’s premises, is carried out away from those premises on a regular basis.” (European Framework Agreement, 2002).

“To work at home, while communicating with your office by phone or email, or using the internet: He teleworks just two days a week. If you can check your work email from home, it’s likely you can telework.” (Cambridge English Dictionary)

“To work from home while maintaining contact with colleagues, customers, or a central office by the use of home computers, telephones, etc.” (Collins English Dictionary)

In the context of this course, this means that remote work refers to work completed outside of the main company or business site.

Location, Location, Location

Offices once provided a way to centralise information; this centralisation, and the needs of an office building, drove many businesses into city areas. As a result, city real estate is at a premium – the cost of an office in a central location or CBD is significantly higher than the cost of real estate in the suburbs, or the cost of maintaining a basic ‘work at home set-up’ for many employees.

In the 21st century, information is available from almost anywhere in the world. Cloud services allow employees to access material from home; the internet provides a rich source of data for research, testing, and more. Communication channels can be passive (email, which can be read asynchronously) or active (phone calls, video calls). Meetings can be held in several formats and across time zones. Together, this means the general need for an office is reduced.

Of course, this does not mean all office spaces are redundant – many companies still require a physical space for client meetings or showing materials. While people can buy kitchen fixtures unseen, many still prefer to touch cabinetry; similarly, many people prefer to meet colleagues or clients before

they sign up for larger contracts. A well-designed office can also help create a positive impression while providing an optional workspace for employees.

The On-Going Shift Toward Remote Work

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has hastened a shift to remote work around the globe, the concept of remote work for white collar jobs has been slowly edging its way into the mainstream. Before the advent of home internet and email access, remote work was limited to people with access to multiple phone lines, a fax machine, and perhaps a mobile phone. Until the late 1990s, this technology was prohibitively expensive for the average worker. Prior to the 1990s, remote work was so uncommon for the average household that a well-to-do home might have additional family space or a den, but rarely a home office.

Of course, this does not mean home offices were previously unheard of; wealthy estate owners often maintained an office in their homes through the 18th and 19th centuries. Storekeepers and merchants may have used a backroom desk or had a desk in the home. The work as we think of it in the 21st century – the type of work that takes place in city centres, offices, and other hubs such as retail centres – is still quite new, a post-war, industrialisation-driven shift that likely occurred due to the necessity of maintaining a centralised information source and access to necessary (and often expensive) technology.

In short: technology drove the initial shift to working in an office; today, technology is driving the shift toward working outside of the office.

“Traditional” Forms of Remote Work

Although idea of working remotely may seem relatively new, there have always been some jobs with offsite aspects.

Jobs which have traditionally involved off-site work include:

- Nurses doing home visits
- Door-to-door sales representatives
- Long distance truck drivers
- Trade workers (e.g. plumbers, cabinetmakers)

It is important to note, however, that the off-site or remote component of these jobs is essential to the actual job – a home nurse cannot complete her tasks without visiting patient homes. A plumber cannot fix an individual bathroom in their workshop; instead, they must travel from their base to each client home. The necessity of travel to these types of work has made their off-site nature acceptable; few office employees would say “wow, I really envy how you don’t have to work in an office everyday” to a plumber, home nurse, or sales rep.

Industry and Employment

Many types of work already occur remotely; every time some piece of work is contracted to an outside service, people engage in remote work. Think about a small to medium enterprise (SME). Few SMEs keep a lawyer or chartered accountant on staff. Some may have a small marketing department but contract independent

graphic designers, while others may have graphic designers on-staff but contract social media marketers. The nature of most work requires a mix of skill, training, and experience, which means that many specialist or boutique firms have popped up to fill specialised needs.

All this means that while remote working may still feel quite new, we’ve been skirting the edges of it for decades. The true difference in the 21st century employment landscape is that rather than exploring remote work in a contractor context, where contractors are also working in an office, we’re now exploring remote work as an option for all, with staff working outside of an office context.

Although some industries require on-site work, it is rare that all jobs in a specific area require on-site work. The Australian National Skills Commission groups work into the categories listed below:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing
- Mining
- Manufacturing
- Electricity, gas, water, waste services
- Construction
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Accommodation and food services
- Transport, postal, and warehousing
- Information media and telecommunications
- Financial and insurance services
- Rental, hiring, and real estate services
- Professional, scientific, technical services
- Administrative and support services