

5 Best Practices for Capturing More Time When Working Remotely During COVID-19

Adequately captured time can translate into greater profit for law firms. But when working in a remote office environment, it can be challenging for firm attorneys and support staff to capture each and every increment of an hour. Time management challenges, distractions, and ineffective task tracking practices can frustrate these efforts. But by following these best practices, law firm members can effectively capture time while working remotely during a global pandemic.

Practice #1 – Time Management

Even under normal circumstances, time management can be a challenge for attorneys and law firm staff members. There are always clients to contact, meetings to attend, administrative tasks to handle, and documents to create. It can all become overwhelming pretty quickly. Add in the uncertainties of a pandemic and effective time management can become a serious feat.

Time management increases productivity and efficiency. It also helps relieve stress and provides a sense of accomplishment when tasks are completed. To help with your daily time management, consider these strategies:

- **Establish a Routine** – When working from home, it can be tempting to break away from your regular work schedule. Set a daily routine and follow it consistently. An effective routine helps your mind differentiate between your personal and professional obligations. It also helps you stay disciplined and focused on your daily tasks.

- **Plan Your Day** – Create a daily and weekly to-do list that helps you think through and prioritize the tasks according to importance and urgency. Consult with other firm members and colleagues to make sure your list falls in line with the priorities of the firm and then follow your plan. Having a daily agenda will help to keep you organized and productive throughout the day.

Practice #2 – Manage Disruptions

It's no easy feat to work from home, especially when every member of your family is also at home during business hours. From kids to pets to spouses, it can be difficult to avoid all disruptions. Try to anticipate possible interruptions and set up systems to avoid them – or at least handle them as quickly as possible. For example, build breaks into your work schedule when you can check on your kids or walk the dog. Also, avoid taking on household chores like laundry or cleaning during your work hours.

Multitasking often proves more disruptive than efficient. It can also rob you of valuable billable time and disrupt your train of thought. Focus on work when it's time for work and leave your domestic duties for a more appropriate time.

Practice #3 – Establish and Follow Firm Processes

Every law firm needs processes in place that promote the accurate and complete capture of time. Insufficient tracking wastes time and negatively affects firm profits. If you are a firm leader, think about implementing policies and procedures that further your time capturing goals. For example, legal project management breaks complex matters down into specific tasks, budgets, and timelines. With regular project reviews, firm members can better identify missed billable hours and quickly make changes to capture them.

Mandatory time tracking policies can also prove helpful, including such policies as:

- Mandatory completion of time entries as tasks are completed
- Individual member review of time tracking records on a daily basis to promote accuracy and completeness
- Regular supervisory reviews of time records for the identification of missing time and billing opportunities
- Extensive training for all new firm members regarding the importance of appropriately capturing and billing time

If you are a firm member, make sure you follow your firm's policies regarding the capture of time. Remember that your failure to use best practices leaves the door open to missed billing opportunities and, ultimately, lost money in your firm.

Practice #4 – Track Time Accurately

Accurate time tracking is the most effective tool for capturing and billing more time. Far too often, lawyers finish a gruelling task and then say to themselves, "I'll record my time later today." Especially when working from home, later today can easily become later in the week or even later in the month. By that time, you cannot accurately remember how much time was spent on the task.

When timekeepers fail to track all of their tasks completely and accurately, it causes law firms to lose out on potential profits. Accuracy is vitally important, and memory is unreliable. You need a time tracking tool that is quick and easy to access.

Practice #5 – Use the Right Software

In the highly mobile environment of COVID-19, lawyers need the capability to work from virtually anywhere in order to capture all of their firm's available time. With cloud storage, you can track billable hours no matter where you choose to work – from the courtroom to your living room. The right mobile applications empower you to capture all billable and nonbillable time.

TimeSolv's time tracking software includes an extremely useful mobile app that provides you with the flexibility to work remotely, while accurately tracking time and expenses from anywhere and everywhere. To learn more about all the ways TimeSolv helps you capture and bill more time, click [here](#) to take advantage of a free, no-obligation trial.