Telecommuting During the COVID-19 Corona Virus - Part 2: File Sharing/Cloud Storage

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File Sharing / Cloud Storage

Our next item to discuss is file sharing. While you can access your files on the work computer using TeamViewer remotely; you may have an easier option to work remotely. If your work is primarily using documents such as word or excel; and you have that installed on your home computer – then Teamviewer may not be necessary. Instead you can save your files "on the cloud". "The Cloud" is simply a marketing term that means on the internet. There are a number of services that work really well for making files available anywhere you have internet access. Some of these are OneDrive (by Microsoft), Google Drive, DropBox and Box.

The concept for these services is fairly simple. You install the program that creates a special folder on your computer. Anything you put in that special folder, automatically gets uploaded to their server. Once it's on their server that file then is accessible anywhere via a website, or the app installed on another system. My preference for this is OneDrive; so we will use that for our example.

Installation:

1. Go to OneDrive.com [1]
2. If you have a Microsoft account already, sign in with that. If not, create one.
3. Once logged in you'll see your web-based OneDrive files.
    1. If you have Windows 10 – click start then type "OneDrive". You just start typing and it will go into a search, you don't need to click in any search box.
    2. If you have Windows 7 or any other OS, you may need to download and install OneDrive [2]. You can get that from the link on the bottom left of the OneDrive website ("Get the One Drive App [2]").
4. Follow these same steps on your second computer you want the files to be accessible to. Be sure to sign in using the same username and password – so that your files will match.
5. On either computer – simply MOVE (not Copy) things into your OneDrive folder. Be sure to create folders so that you can keep things organized.

As a side note – some services actually download a copy of the file into your computer; while others don't. There are pro's and cons to each method – and all of the software allows you to choose which method you prefer.

- Having files downloaded to your computer allows for faster access AND off-line access. If you are on a flight, and the files have been downloaded, you can still work with them. Once you get connected to the internet again, your files will be updated to the cloud storage. This however does take up space and if you have a small, or nearly full hard drive might be a problem. That's rarely an issue though.
- Having the files stored in the cloud only, and not downloaded saves hard drive space; however you won't have the ability to work with them if you are not online.

That covers the core functionality of you being able to access files from work at home. You can also

do some more neat things with cloud-based storage systems. You can right click on the files or folders and choose "share". When you do this, a link gets copied into your computers clipboard (the memory). You can then paste that link anywhere your heart desires; in an email, word documents, chat programs etc to allow friends/family or co-workers to have access to those files/folders. You can't email your sister 200 pictures of your vacation; but you can share a OneDrive link that would allow your sister to view and download them. You can even choose an option to allow those that have the link to edit said files/folders, which is useful if you are collaborating on a project.

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Links
[1] https://www.OneDrive.com [2] https://products.office.com/en-us/onedrive/download [3] https://www.pccomputerguy.com/Tech-Tip-Article-Telecommuting-Overview-COVID-19-Corona-Virus-PART-1-REMOTE-ACCESS [4] https://www.pccomputerguy.com/Tech-Tip-Article-Telecommuting-COVID-19-Corona-Virus-PART-3-Web-Browser-Sync [5] https://www.pccomputerguy.com/Tagged-Items-Under-Tech-Tips [6] https://www.pccomputerguy.com/Tagged-Items-Under-Tech-Tips-Articles [7] https://www.pccomputerguy.com/Tagged-Items-Under-Tech-Tips-Videos