Ten simple rules for a successful remote postdoc

Postdoctoral positions are temporary full-time positions typically taken between completion of a PhD and the start of a permanent position. Postdocs are expected to move for short-term positions which can often be problematic for early-career researchers, especially those from under-represented groups in STEM. However, the proliferation of computational research has changed how scientists can conduct science, opening the door to postdoctoral work being conducted remotely. Research activities primarily involving quantitative analysis, modeling, writing, and data collection can take place anywhere and therefore can all be conducted on a remote or semi-remote basis. We offer 10 simple rules for overcoming challenges and leveraging the unique opportunities presented by remote postdoc positions, derived from our experiences as either remote postdocs or the PIs who have mentored them. We believe that not only will these suggestions increase the desirability of remote postdoc positions whenever they are feasible, but that they also contain good practices for facilitating better communication both within labs more generally and in other long-distance collaborations.
Ten simple rules for a successful remote postdoc

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Introduction

Postdoctoral positions are temporary full-time research positions typically taken between completion of a PhD and the start of a permanent position. This period is a key career stage for early-career scientists during which postdoctoral researchers (postdocs) provide critical support to research for many labs. These positions almost universally require postdocs to be physically located in the lab where they are employed. Requiring postdocs to be present where lab resources and personnel are located is logical when research primarily requires specific place-based resources (i.e., field or lab work), or when real-time communication between remote collaborators is difficult. The current expectation that postdocs move for short-term positions (typically 1-3 years) poses a substantial burden for early-career researchers, in particular for under-represented groups in STEM like first-generation PhDs and women.

Short-term moves cost time and money, with long-distance moves often costing the equivalent of several months' salary for a postdoc. Relocations also separate people from their support networks, and can force researchers with families to choose between living separately for an extended period or sacrificing career opportunities for partners and support opportunities for children. These burdens are often magnified for researchers from under-represented groups [1]; for example, first-generation students are less likely to have access to financial resources for moving and counteracting the loss of their support network. Married women in faculty positions are more likely to have a spouse who works full time than married men in equivalent positions and face increased challenges (both real and assumed) in moving for short-term positions [2-3]. Thus, the burden of relocating for short-term postdocs further compounds existing biases that...
members of these groups face when applying for postdoc positions [4] and contributes to the loss of under-represented scientists from academia [1].

The proliferation of computational research has changed how scientists can conduct science, opening the door to postdoctoral work being conducted remotely [5]. Research activities primarily involving quantitative analysis, modeling, writing, and even some data collection can take place anywhere and therefore can all be conducted on a remote or semi-remote basis. In addition, advances in technology, such as video conferencing and other collaboration platforms, mean that the differences between remote work and in-person interactions are rapidly decreasing. However, traditional mindsets of both postdocs and principal investigators (PIs), as well as perceived or existing logistical constraints, can present barriers to making remote postdocs more mainstream.

Remote postdoc positions are not without their challenges, despite the increasing ease and benefits of working remotely. One important role of a postdoc may be to help mentor graduate and undergraduate students within a research lab, which is an important professional development opportunity. New faculty may prefer a postdoc that can help them set up a lab space by assisting with ordering equipment and developing research protocols. It may seem challenging for a PI to gauge the progress of a postdoc who isn’t in the same building; indeed, some mentoring styles may be better suited to regular face-to-face interactions. While remote postdocs may lack the potential for the organic exchange of ideas after seminars, chance encounters in the hallway, and collegial coffee breaks that can build a community of collaborators beyond a PI’s lab. Yet with intentional planning and foresight, many of these obstacles can be overcome.
Here, we offer 10 simple rules for overcoming challenges and leveraging the unique opportunities presented by remote postdoc positions (Fig 1). We derived these guidelines from our experiences as either remote postdocs or the PIs who have mentored them. For rules where different advice is appropriate for PIs and postdocs, we have divided the rule into sections for each group. We believe that not only will these suggestions increase the desirability of remote postdoc positions whenever they are feasible, but that they also contain good practices for facilitating better communication both within labs more generally and in other long-distance collaborations.

**Rule 1: Recognize the benefits of remote postdocs.**

**PIs**

Opening postdoc positions to include remote work naturally expands the applicant pool, attracting more applicants with diverse skills and interests, and increasing the chances of finding the perfect person for the position. Incorporating remote lab members provides the opportunity for the whole lab to engage in and improve their remote collaboration skills, which are essential for collaborations with researchers from other institutions and non-academic partners.

Experience working with researchers outside of one's home network may lead to more demographically diverse collaborations—helping to eliminate barriers to diversity and inclusion in the scientific community. Finally, remote postdocs often bring an outside perspective to a lab through their associations with research and researchers occurring in other locations. This outside perspective allows the remote postdoc to serve as a conduit of ideas between geographically isolated institutions, which may foster new collaborations or add value to existing projects with analytical approaches or tools that may not be available at the home institution.
Postdocs

From the postdoc perspective, recognizing the advantages of a remote position can aid in making a case to a skeptical PI and, more importantly, allows the postdoc to make the most of working remotely. Working remotely fosters the development of independent skills required for success in both academic and non-academic careers (e.g., organization, time management, balancing multiple projects, advocacy, networking). Postdocs interested in working outside academia can further leverage the built-in flexibility of remote positions to foster collaborations with local NGOs, agencies, and private sector entities.

The ability to schedule activities according to your preferred working style can pay dividends for postdoc productivity and quality of work. Remote postdocs have a unique opportunity to schedule hours (or even days) to unplug from email and messaging to focus on writing, coding, and other tasks that require deep concentration and creativity [6]. While it can prove challenging and uncomfortable for an on-site researcher to go “off the grid” for an extended period, remote postdocs can readily build such blocks into an efficient work schedule.

Rule 2: Prepare for success.

PIs

If you’re considering hiring a remote postdoc, open and transparent communication throughout the process is key to a successful experience. You can explicitly mention that you will consider remote candidates in the job advertisement. During interviews, you should lead the discussion of the terms of remote work and provide their expectations for the candidate’s time on campus. Expectations (e.g., communication norms, requirements for fieldwork or mentoring), and limitations (e.g., availability of travel funds) should be communicated early on the process. If
you and a potential postdoc are writing a proposal together (e.g., grant or fellowship), devote
some time to talking openly about the costs and benefits of remote postdoc work and budget in
teach and housing costs if possible.

Just as you would with an on-site postdoc, it’s important to come up with a clear set of
guidelines for regular check-ins and team meetings. These early investments in communication
and mentorship will also ultimately improve relationships across an entire lab group by centering
transparency and structured collaborations.

Postdocs

Postdocs looking for remote postdoctoral positions should be proactive in approaching potential
PIs and negotiating the terms of their remote work. Reach out to potential PIs; even if they do
not have an explicitly remote postdoc position advertised, they may be open to the idea for a
current project or potential proposal. In either case, knowing the benefits of remote postdocs (see
Rule 1) and preparing a body of evidence of your independent work will improve your chances
of convincing a PI that you will be a successful remote postdoc. Self-directed fieldwork, a record
of original research proposals, managing undergraduate assistants, and previous project
management experience all offer evidence of the ability to work independently.

Also, remote postdocs should set expectations around on-campus and off-campus time
during the hiring process/negotiations. How often will you visit? Will you share the costs of
visits to campus? Are there temporary housing options that you can access? If you do not set
these terms early, the coordination and costs will default to you (the postdoc) and may limit your
ability to visit campus as often as you might like.

Lastly, be realistic about and discuss the challenges of working remotely. Unless a PI has
successfully mentored a remote postdoc previously, they will likely have negative perceptions or,
at minimum, concerns about the process. Explicitly address how you will overcome the inherent obstacles to communicating, being a remote citizen of the lab, mentoring graduate students, and learning new skills.

Rule 3: Establish a communication plan

PIs

The importance of communicating does not end with the hiring of a remote postdoc (Rule 2); it continues for the duration of the postdoc position. Setting expectations and norms for communication is a vital facet of all mentor-mentee relationships, but it is especially important for you to establish these with remote postdocs early in the onboarding process. Remote relationships need explicit and up-front terms. Do mentors and mentees prefer email, direct messaging, phone calls, or video calls, and under what circumstances? Emails might be better for working out complex ideas, giving participants time to reflect and compose their thoughts, as well as providing a written archive of decisions. Alternately, video calls facilitate brainstorming, quick updates, and data sharing, while allowing participants to receive and respond to visual cues. Other applications and software may be more appropriate for both local and remote students and postdocs (e.g. Slack). As with in-person meetings, it’s important to establish and follow an agenda on voice and video calls to allow all parties to plan accordingly and keep conversations from getting sidelined. Plans, preferences, and schedules may change throughout a postdoctoral position, so it’s also important to revisit your initial plan at set intervals, perhaps as part of a semi-annual review. Some flexibility in approaches and a willingness to compromise, try new things, or go outside of your comfort zone can help maintain strong communication with your postdoc.
Postdocs

Actively engage with your PI to create a communication plan that works for both of you, schedule regular meetings (frequent or otherwise), and adhere to them (see Fig 2 for real-world example). The effort to cultivate a mentoring relationship remotely will likely help you to understand better and improve your own communication and help you reflect on what kind of feedback and direction is most useful to you. As you would with any new adviser, it is critical to discuss mentoring styles; if the frequent direction from a hands-on adviser does not suit you, being remote will not eliminate the conflict in approaches. When creating a communication plan, carefully consider the differences among remote communication tools. While messaging platforms offer an efficient and streamlined mode for sharing information, terse messages do not carry the non-verbal information of a video chat and can be easily misconstrued. Check in often to make sure your communication set-up continues to work for both parties, and adjust accordingly.

Postdocs should also plan out how to communicate with other members of their lab.

Email lists can help to keep a remote postdoc in the loop but also increase the volume of irrelevant information (i.e., about local events). It is especially critical to consider team communication when leading a project remotely, where emails from team members can quickly become overwhelming. Collaboration software (e.g., Slack) can allow for project- and task-specific channels offer efficiency in organizing and filtering information, and may be a better choice for remote projects.

Rule 4: Invest in and use video conferencing.

PIs
Video conferencing is an increasingly effective way to replace in-person meetings, and there are dozens of available platforms, including free and subscription-based tools, many supported by your university. Being able to see rather than only hear those you are interacting with allows for more subtle communication, to read body language, and improves the establishment of rapport.

Video conferencing can be used to replace some in-person (one-on-one) meetings, and video attendance should be supported for all group, lab, and project meetings (see Fig 2 for real-world example). Lab processes should be developed to provide full value to video participants like remote postdocs. For example, when local participants present slides during meetings, they should share their slides by screen sharing through the video conferencing software rather than pointing a camera at the screen. Shared screens or presentation views can allow your lab to conduct practice talks, trouble-shooting code in real-time, share data, or live-collaborate on papers.

While good video conferencing can be a great way to interact, bad video conferencing can be frustrating due to poor sound, poor video, and other technological issues. Therefore, it is important for both you and the postdoc to have access to good video conferencing setups, so check that your remote postdoc is well-equipped. Invest in a video conferencing system for your lab (good systems are surprisingly affordable) or find and schedule rooms at your university that are equipped for remote participation. Become familiar with university resources for teleconferencing, including license agreements for video conference software packages (you might have free access as an employee and not know it). Wired internet access is often more stable than a wireless connection, particularly in remote locations.

Postdocs
As the remote postdoc, you should have a good camera and microphone and private space from which to participate in remote meetings. Work with your PI to determine how these up-front but crucial costs could be shared. If you are occupying lab or desk space at a local university, ask your host if you can gain access to video conference software packages or video conferencing rooms. Just as important as good hardware is using video conferencing software that makes connecting easy and provides good smooth connections. Familiarize yourself with the ins and outs of teleconferencing software, as it is your responsibility as well as the PIs to troubleshoot any issues; taking the lead when technology inevitably fails will demonstrate competence and courtesy.

Rule 5: Normalize remote interactions & cultivate digital spaces for the entire lab.

PIs and Postdocs

Digital collaboration on writing, coding, and discussion is increasingly central to productive collaborations. While these approaches are essential to remote collaboration, they are also incredibly useful for local collaboration. Even within the same institution, people may have different work schedules, things that prevent them from coming into the lab, or frequent travel requirements that limit in-person interactions. Digital spaces allow lab members to interact seamlessly regardless of whether they are remote or local. For example, this manuscript was written entirely through a remote collaboration using email, Slack, and Google Drive.

Integrating digital spaces into the everyday lab practices also reduces the differences between local and remote members and lowers the barriers for interaction. Because digital collaboration tools like Google Docs (for manuscript writing), Git/Github (for code writing and project management), and Slack (for intra-group conversations about lab activities) store
activities and conversations as they happen, they allow people to see issues that others are
struggling with, learn from conversations that happened earlier, and engage and make them a
core part of your lab environment.

It is vital that remote interactions are normalized throughout the lab, not just for the
remote postdoc. Electronic lab or research notebooks, wikis, project management software, and
cloud storage also improve institutional memory, create an archive of activities, help with project
management, and ensure long-term, secure data storage, and thus provide many advantages even
in addition to supporting remote work. Remote participation in meetings can be useful for local
participants as well, allowing for work to continue when traveling, working from home, feeling
ill, transportation issues, childcare constraints, etc. (see Fig 2 for real-world example). You can
support this culture by normalizing remote meeting attendance for the lab in general, which
fosters an environment of inclusion and support and makes the remote postdoc seem like less of
an outlier.

Rule 6: Treat remote postdocs like full members of the lab.

PIs

While there may be constraints or differences in your mentoring approach with a remote postdoc,
don't think of them as separate from the rest of the lab. Treat them the same way you would an
on-site postdoc, with individualized mentoring plans, regular communication, and involvement
in lab activities. Some things may be different, but for the most part, you can replace in-person
activities with digital interactions and video conferencing. Remember to include your remote
postdoc when you share opportunities, celebrate accomplishments, and plan lab activities, just as
you would with your local lab participants. Get used to thinking of them as part of the lab,
because they are! In so doing, you will model good collaborative behavior for the other members of your lab, and normalize remote interactions that will be increasingly prevalent as students and trainees progress in their careers.

**Postdocs**

In the absence of opportunistic interactions, it’s important to be an active member of your lab and work to develop remote mentorship opportunities. Think of your roles and responsibilities in the way as if you were local. Read manuscripts, chapter drafts, or code for your labmates (see Fig 2 for real-world example). There are many ways to be a mentor, and you do not need in-person interactions with graduate students and undergrads in the lab to offer collaboration, support, and advice. By using the tools suggested above, leading a project that involves other members of the lab is a useful and productive way to integrate yourself, mentor graduate students, and provide more opportunities to connect with lab members. Other ways to be a full member of the lab is to actively part in day-to-day lab duties that are possible to do remotely, which can include planning lab celebrations, organizing lab meetings, and taking part in journal clubs.

**Rule 7: A little in-person interaction goes a long way; maximize it by being creative.**

**PIs**

One to two in-person, on-campus interactions a year can provide a lot of value to you and your postdoc. You can also minimize opportunity costs by inviting your remote postdoc to give a department seminar, nominate them to speak at an on-campus symposium, or ask them to serve on a committee that meets only a few times during the semester or can handle remote work (e.g., honors thesis committees). With some foresight, you can leverage these opportunities to
subsidize a campus visit and then strategically schedule lab meetings, social activities, and networking opportunities during your remote postdoc’s visit. Search through the calendars for on-campus groups and adjacent departments to identify seminars, lunches, and meetings that may add value to your postdoc’s visit, even if they are “off the beaten path.” Will there be a Story Collider show or a reading in town by a popular science communicator? Is your campus women in STEM group hosting a workshop for allies? Does the college town bakery have fresh doughnuts at the local farmer’s market on certain mornings? Facilitating a visit for a remote postdoc and helping them fill their schedule with a mix of academic, social, and networking opportunities can bring the entire lab closer together and sharpen your skills for inviting and hosting campus visitors in the future, from senior researchers to faculty candidates. Creating an atmosphere of fun and celebration around a remote postdoc’s visit can also help bring the whole lab closer together and promote collegiality. Another way to get more in-person time is to organize lab meetups at conferences and workshops which may allow for an intensive time to work together in person and build community within the lab.

Postdocs

Maximize the benefits of your time on campus. Do your best to create opportunities for professional growth but don’t underestimate the social aspect of visits to your institution (see Fig 2 for real-world example). Informal gatherings are as important as giving seminars and setting up professional meetings. These opportunities, in addition to being fun and integrative, can help you rest and recharge to take full advantage of a short visit. Make connections with your lab mates by asking where the best coffee on campus is or when it is safe to run on the local trails. Eduroam (global Wi-Fi roaming for academics) is another tool that makes it easy for postdocs to work
from different campuses and move seamlessly from one place to another. Also, brainstorm with
your PI about ways to bring them to you - it doesn’t have to be a one-way street!

**Rule 8: Actively work to combat isolation.**

**PIs**

Distance can exacerbate feelings of loneliness or isolation that are rife in academia, and postdocs may be especially vulnerable. Maintaining proximity to family and friend networks can reduce the financial and personal toll of a postdoc position. For many, the postdoc stage is contemporaneous with new challenges like starting a family, caring for aging parents, financial instability, and the loss of strong social connections built during college or graduate school. As members of an often-neglected career stage (i.e., many institutions don’t have central postdoc offices or support services), postdocs may feel isolated, which can be especially hard when dealing with life transitions, imposter syndrome, or the stress and uncertainty of the job market.

Remote positions offer postdocs the choice to live where they are best supported. While the quality of life benefits are worthwhile in their own right, reduced stress and time spent managing logistics can also lead to better work [7].

By fostering an inclusive atmosphere even for remote lab members, you can set your postdoc up for success. Encourage remote postdocs to be part of group projects that involve regular interaction with other lab members. Many of our day-to-day interpersonal interactions can be done remotely. For example, remote postdocs can lead lab meetings, participate in journal clubs, offer “office hours,” review the writing and coding of other lab members, serve on committees, and even participate in social events (either calling into the event itself or helping in the planning process). To make up for the lack of incidental “water cooler” interactions or
opportunistic group lunches, your remote postdoc may appreciate it if you replace spontaneous
interactions by sharing funny articles or interesting opportunities. You could also check in via
social media or a messaging application from time to time (following your established
communication norms, of course!). Finally, it may be beneficial to use your connections in the
academic community to identify a local host institution (desk space) for your remote postdoc.

Postdocs

Finding a second academic home. Lacking the built-in interactions of an onsite position, remote
postdocs must actively cultivate their academic and social connections. One effective strategy is
for the remote postdoc to find a second (local) academic home. Joining a lab at a local
institution, even informally, provides a platform to talk about your work with a knowledgeable
audience, to receive feedback on writing or presentations, to discuss papers, and to practice
mentoring graduate students (but be wary of overcommitting!). For future PIs, the postdoc stage
is a chance to develop as a colleague and an adviser so interacting with scientists of all career
stages is critical practice. Depending on your relationship with the local institution, remote
postdocs may have access to a workspace, network, library, and recreational facilities (see Fig 2
for real-world example). Local institutions may also have seminar series’ that are relevant to
your discipline, offering inspiration and the chance to cultivate relationships with potential
collaborators. If a group or organization doesn’t exist, consider starting one!

Make self-care a priority. While not necessarily unique to remote postdocs, depression, anxiety,
and mental health issues are common among graduate students [8]. Given the potential for social
isolation, while working as a remote postdoc, this may exacerbate the mental health condition of
those who are already struggling. Therefore, it is vital to prioritize social support and self-care.
For postdocs that remain in a location where they have lived previously, take advantage of an
intact social support network. Even if your physical location is new or temporary, remote
postdocs should cultivate and maintain connections in their local community.

**Rule 9: Develop adaptive problem-solving skills.**

**PIs**

There are clear benefits that come with having a remote postdoc in your lab, but there are also
real tradeoffs. Some of these tradeoffs can be managed by applying the rules we have described.
However, each situation is different, and novel challenges or obstacles are likely to arise for both
you and the postdoc. When hiring a remote postdoc, be prepared to be flexible in your thinking
and adaptive in how you deal with challenges and obstacles, or even exciting opportunities that
might arise. As a PI, your experience in navigating the hiccups that inevitably occur in the
process of conducting research is an important resource to draw on when an unexpected situation
arises. Maintaining an open and creative approach to managing the tradeoffs of having a remote
postdoc will likely lead to benefits in other aspects of your lab, career, and collaborations.

**Postdocs**

For a remote postdoc, being adaptive to novel obstacles starts with an open communication
channel, and we cannot emphasize communication enough—see Rules 2 and 3. Discuss
challenges with your PI as they emerge and *before* they become intractable. As an early career
researcher, it can be easy to fall in the trap of ‘dealing with it’ on your own when unexpected
situations arise, and your PI is busy, right? Remember: part of their job description is helping
you to navigate sticky situations during your postdoc. Second, be creative about overcoming
distance challenges. For example, CMM successfully mentored an undergraduate project and led
a journal reading group solely via remote interactions (Fig 2). Being creative about problem-
solving means that you don’t have to replicate the standard postdoc position to gain many of the
same experiences. Finally, take advantage of existing academic relations or networks that can
provide creative opportunities to fill the distance between you and your remote lab community
(see Fig 2 for real-world example). With open communication and creativity, the postdoc and the
PI can develop dynamic problem-solving skills that will benefit both throughout their careers.

Rule 10: Accept and own having / being a remote postdoc.

PIs

Embracing remote work as a legitimate working model will require a shift in how we think about
postdoc research. In our experience, the perception that remote postdocs contribute less to their
labs is both common incorrect. We should actively confront this and other negative perceptions
to offer a new mindset for remote postdocs, their mentors, and the broader academic community.
First, we should challenge the idea that remote postdocs are inaccessible to, and isolated from,
their academic colleagues. As noted above, video conferencing and collaboration tools make
isolation from a home institution unnecessary, and physical presence at an alternative location
can actually enhance opportunities for connection with local academic resources. Second, while
remote postdocs can miss out on the kind of unplanned interactions that characterize on-site
presence, such interactions can be detrimental to concerted focus. Remote postdocs have
increased control over the volume and timing of external distractions and commitments, leading
to improved efficiency, creativity, and quality of work [6]. Third, the perceived inconvenience of
remote collaboration represents an opportunity to integrate emerging tools into the lab. For
example, KEI (a remote postdoc) is currently leading a lab project that is serving as a test case
for making GitHub the lab standard for collaborative coding. Deciding to have a remote postdoc
can be an active choice rather than a compromise—it can work to everyone’s advantage in terms of professional development and growth.

**Postdocs**

It is important for remote postdocs themselves to recognize that they participate and contribute as much as (and sometimes more than) local researchers. Furthermore, not being at the lab/office can lead remote postdocs to feel like they are always “on the clock.” In response, some may compensate by working unreasonably long hours, making themselves constantly available, or taking fewer breaks. One strategy for combating this tendency is to log your hours and use work/time tracking applications to illuminate effort and progress. Communication once again comes into play here; be explicit with your PI and collaborators about your schedule and availability. With good planning, integration, confidence, and communication, fantastic science and scientists can emerge from remote postdoc arrangements!

**Conclusions**

We have provided a set of guidelines for facilitating successful remote postdoctoral experiences from both the PI and postdoc perspectives (Fig 1). The core of this advice is to "treat this person as you would a coauthor/collaborator/co-PI from another institution" (e.g., [9]) and embed tools that facilitate remote collaboration as a core component of how a lab operates. Because so much modern collaboration happens virtually or involves relatively few in-person meetings (e.g., working groups), the skill sets needed to communicate and work this way already exist. We just need to apply them to postdocs.

Given recent transitions in how science is conducted and the technology supporting remote interactions, there is an increasing number of situations in which postdocs can work effectively without being physically located at their PI/advisor’s university. This opens the
possibility of increasing numbers of remote postdocs, which could reduce the often substantial burdens associated with moves for short-term positions. Like all innovations, the remote postdoc model has advantages and disadvantages when compared with onsite presence, and it may have more utility for some scenarios than others. There may also be circumstances that call for a blended model that includes both onsite and remote periods of work, which can be negotiated between the PI and postdoc, specific to the needs of the project goals and the constraints under which the postdoc and PI operate. While there are some trade-offs to working remotely, with some thought and creativity, many of these limitations can be overcome.

While implementing these guidelines will require some effort, the benefits of doing so will extend far beyond the postdoc for which they are initially developed. Following these rules and tailoring them to each lab’s specific circumstances will improve the group's ability to interact with colleagues at other institutions, improve communication among lab members (including local ones), support the participation of introverted lab members, and provide flexibility for lab members juggling multiple obligations. Indeed, many of these approaches improve collaboration among lab members in general, allow parents to work around childcare responsibilities, and support the participation of lab members with illnesses or disabilities that make commuting to campus difficult [10]. PIs need to be aware of the potential challenges of working with remote postdocs (compared to onsite postdocs), so they can actively engage in the work necessary to support their success [7]. By making the necessary and often minor changes, they will make their labs better for everyone. The time has come to view remote postdoc research as part of a diversity of viable models.

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**Figures**

**Figure 1.** Summary of the ten simple rules in approximately chronological order from advertising for a remote position to establishing a productive working environment and maximizing remote opportunities.
Figure 2. Simple rules for remote postdocs (green) applied to several common postdoc situations (pink). Quotes are from authors with direct experience of the associated rule and situation.