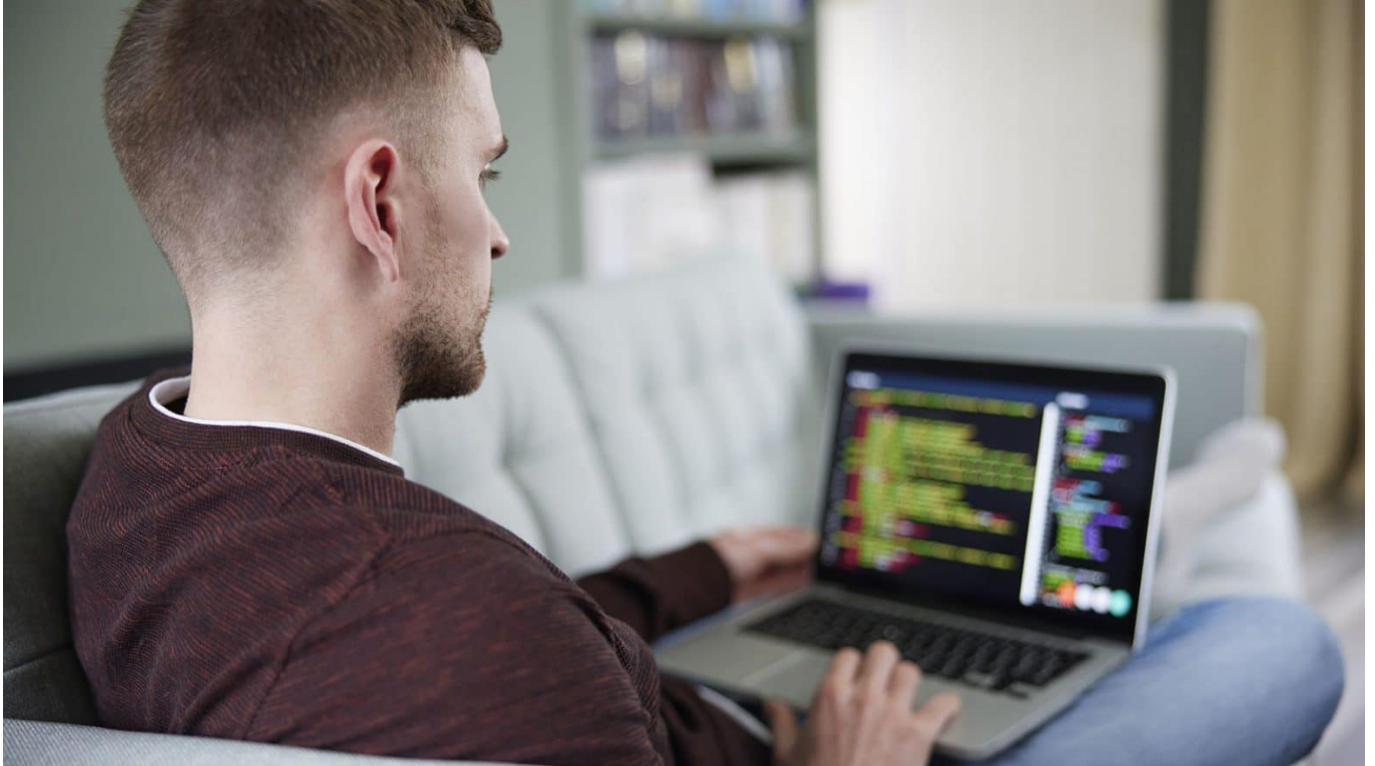


How technology can assist with supervision of junior lawyers



Along with many young lawyers, I have been working from home since March this year. As a paralegal apprentice a large part of my learning is 'on the job' and being required to stay at home was at first a real concern. In particular, how could I be supervised from home?

However, as time has ticked on I have realised that, to a large degree, technology has the answer.

Here are some of the applications I find helpful for remote supervision.

Version control and track changes functionality

Saving precedent documents and initial drafts of documents as different versions will assist you and your supervisor in feedback sessions as you can use the compareDocs application to track changes between the various versions. This is due to compareDocs having the ability to access items/documents saved in a document management system.

Also remembering to create new versions, when making substantial changes to documents after negotiations with the other side and receiving client instructions, help supervisors track the progress of matters and tasks in your care.

The creation of a new version also allows junior fee earners more freedom in marking up legal documents without fear of improperly agreeing any amendments to the detriment of the client's best interest. After a junior fee earner has made their suggested amendments they can run a comparison using compareDocs and discuss



their proposed amendments with their supervisor without the need for both supervisor and junior fee earner to be in the same location. This allows the junior fee earner to 'have a go' first and for the supervisor to provide some practical feedback.

Practising good file management by creating new versions throughout the course of a matter also allows for a new supervisor or junior fee earner to get up to speed on the status of the matter with ease. This is particularly helpful if one of the people involved in the transaction becomes ill and another team member needs to step in.

Video conferencing software

Whilst the novelty of social Zoom calls may be waning off, Microsoft Teams has been the biggest factor in our ability to remain connected with our colleagues from the safety of our chosen remote working location.

Discussing feedback and workload capacity with your team on a Teams call has proven just as straight forward as doing so in person with the added advantage that you don't need to book a room. And helpfully the Teams calendar links directly to your Outlook calendar.

Teams helps assist further in keeping us connected, by possessing a 'screen share' feature. It allowing us to literally be on the same page as our supervisor during a feedback session, on drafted documents or research notes, thus adding depth and clarity to feedback/comments provided.

Call quality can vary online of course but I have invested in a headset and this has been a great help.

I can't wait to meet my colleagues again in person once we are allowed to return to the office, In the meantime, I am very grateful that technology is enabling me to continue with my on the job learning albeit I am at home.