ACP ThinManager Tech Notes

Server 2012 for Workgroups

Use the **F1** button on any page of a ThinManager wizard to launch Help for that page.

Visit www.thinmanager.com/technotes/ to download the manual, manual chapters, or the ThinManual.

Windows Server 2012 and Server 2012 R2: Remote Desktop Services Configuration for Workgroups

This is a simplified deployment guide for ThinManager users. Although it was prepared by knowledgeable Windows Server users and specialists, it is merely an aid and not the definitive source for information. Please refer to the official Microsoft documentation for questions and additional details.

Windows Server 2012 and 2012 R2 were designed such that RDS servers should be joined to a domain using at least one Remote Desktop Services Connection Broker.

 All Remote Desktop Servers would then be managed as a Collection using Server Manager and/or PowerShell.

However, Microsoft's Article ID 2833839, entitled "Guidelines for installing Remote Desktop Session Host role service on a computer running Windows Server 2012 without the Remote Desktop Connection Broker role service," describes that, although not ideal, the Remote Desktop Services role can be installed on a server joined to a workgroup as opposed to a domain.

The major drawback to this architecture is that most of the User Interface tools provided to manage and configure Remote Desktop Services are not available to non-domain member servers. The configuration must take place using a combination of local group policy edits and/or PowerShell scripts.

Here are the steps required to install Remote Desktop Services on a Windows Server 2012 or Windows Server 2012 R2 workgroup server (the screen shots should be virtually the same for either OS):

❑ Login to the target server with local Administrator permissions.

❑ Install the Remote Desktop Licensing and the Remote Desktop Session Host role services.

- Open Server Manager

- Select Local Server

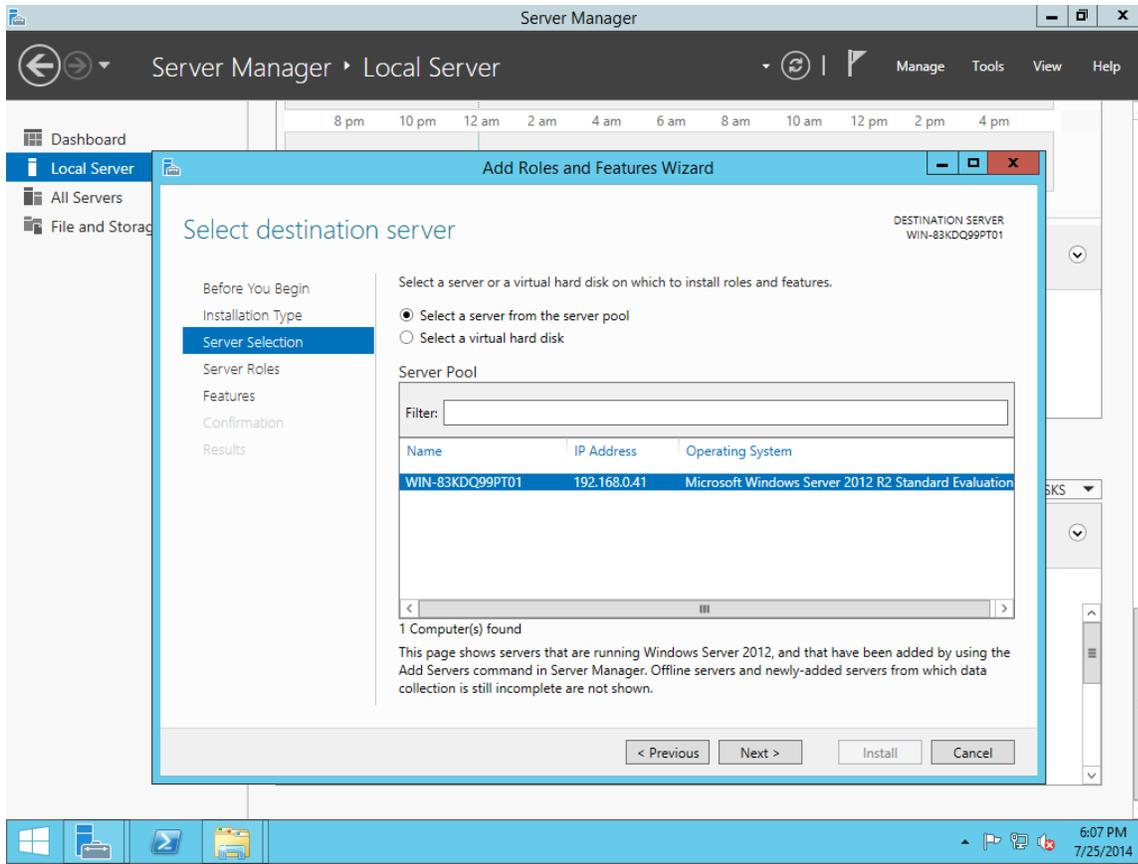- Scroll down to Roles and Features

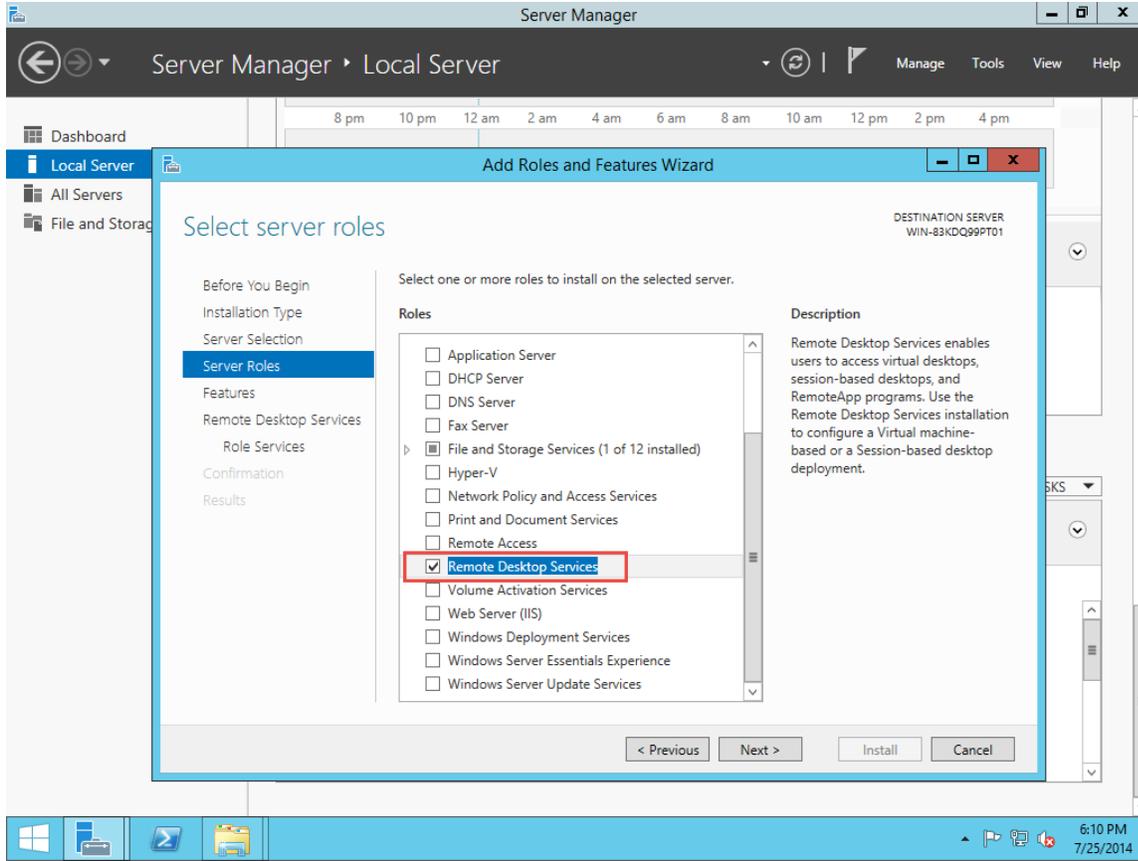- Click the Tasks drop down list

- Select Add Roles and Features

❑ The Add Roles and Features Wizard will launch

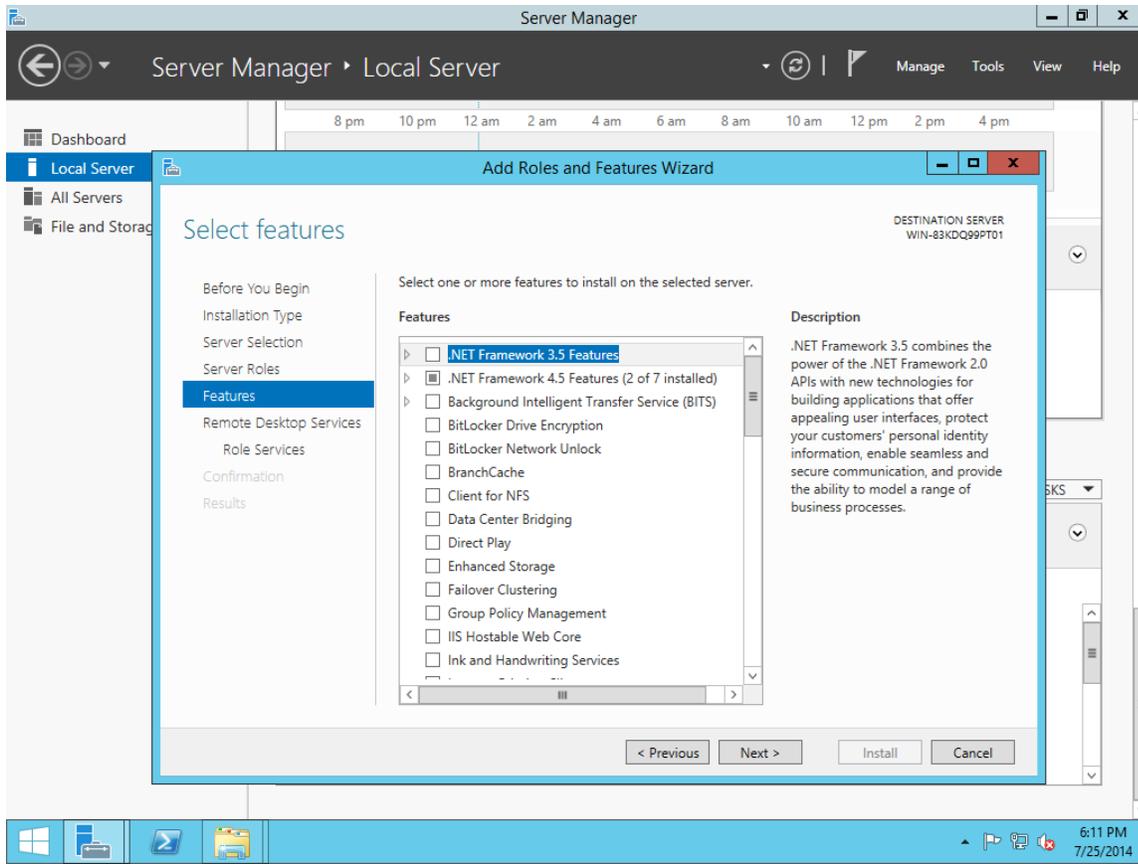❑ From the Before You Begin page, click Next
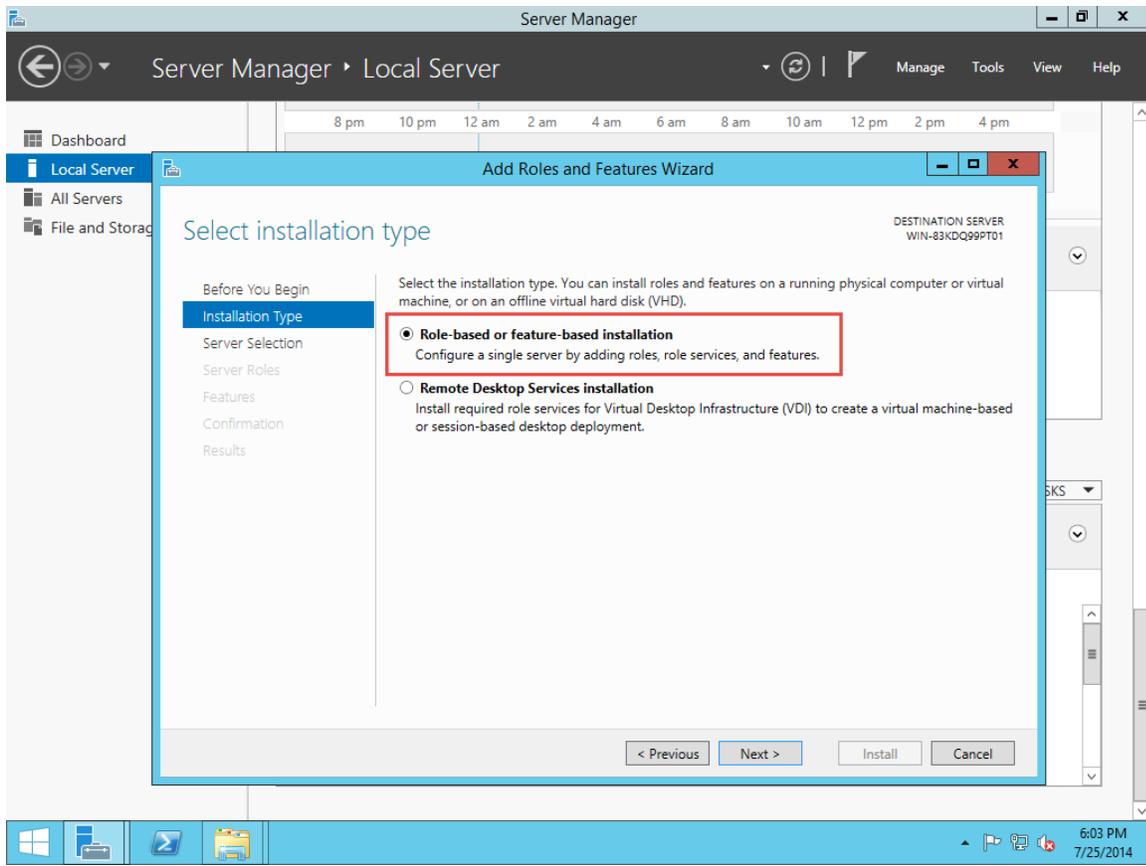
❑ From the Installation Type, select Role-based or feature-based installation
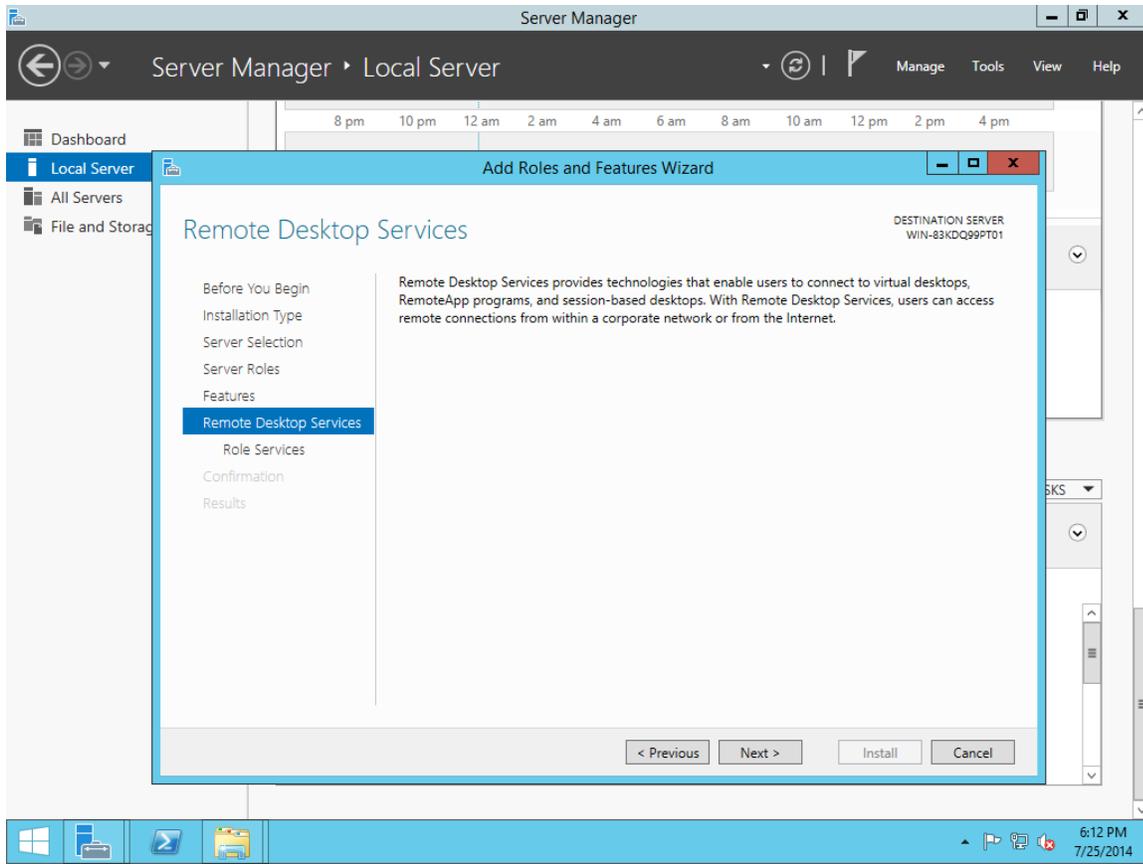
❑ Click Next

- [ ] From the Server Selection page, select the target server on which to install the Remote Desktop Services role
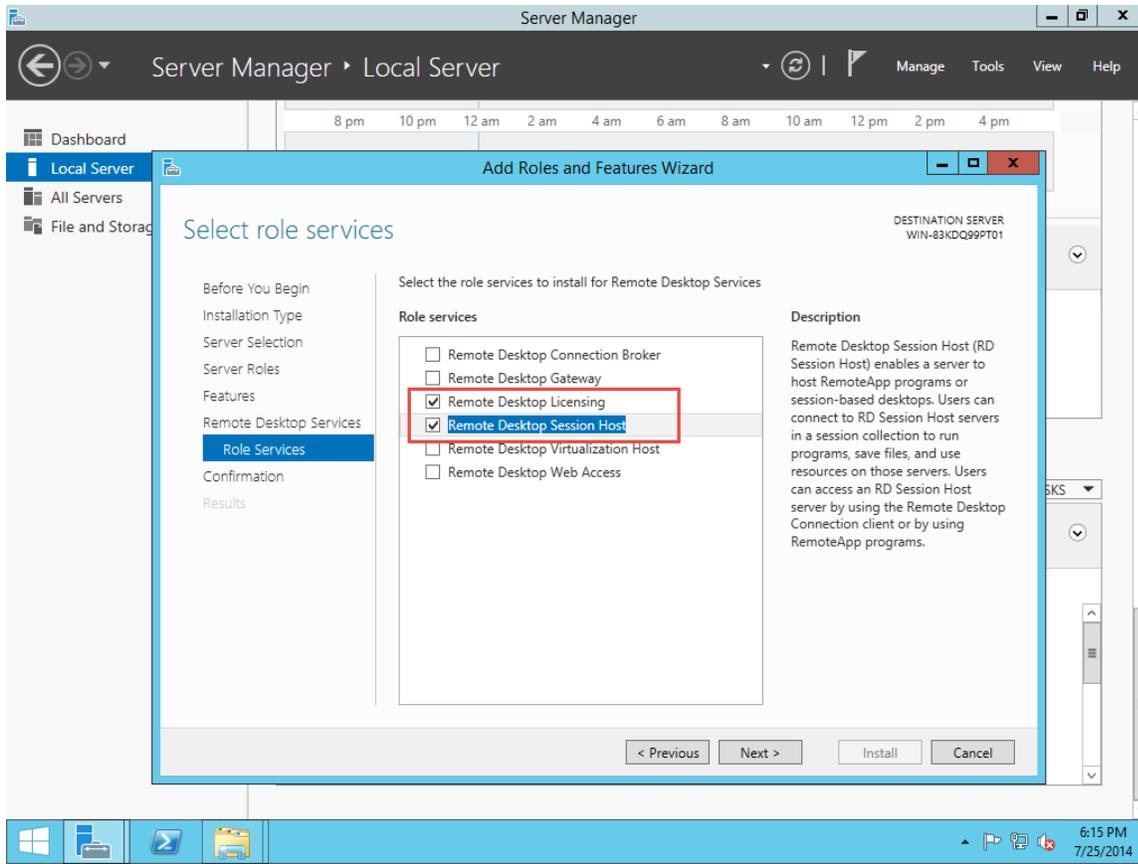
- [ ] Click Next

❑ From the Server Roles page, select the check box by Remote Desktop Services

❑ Click Next

❑ From the Features page, accept the defaults and click Next

❑ From the Remote Desktop Services page, click Next

❑ From the Role Services page:
- Select the Remote Desktop Licensing role service
- From the ensuing popup window, accept the defaults and click the Add Features button
- Select the Remote Desktop Session Host role service
- From the ensuing popup window, accept the defaults and click the Add Features button

❑ Click Next
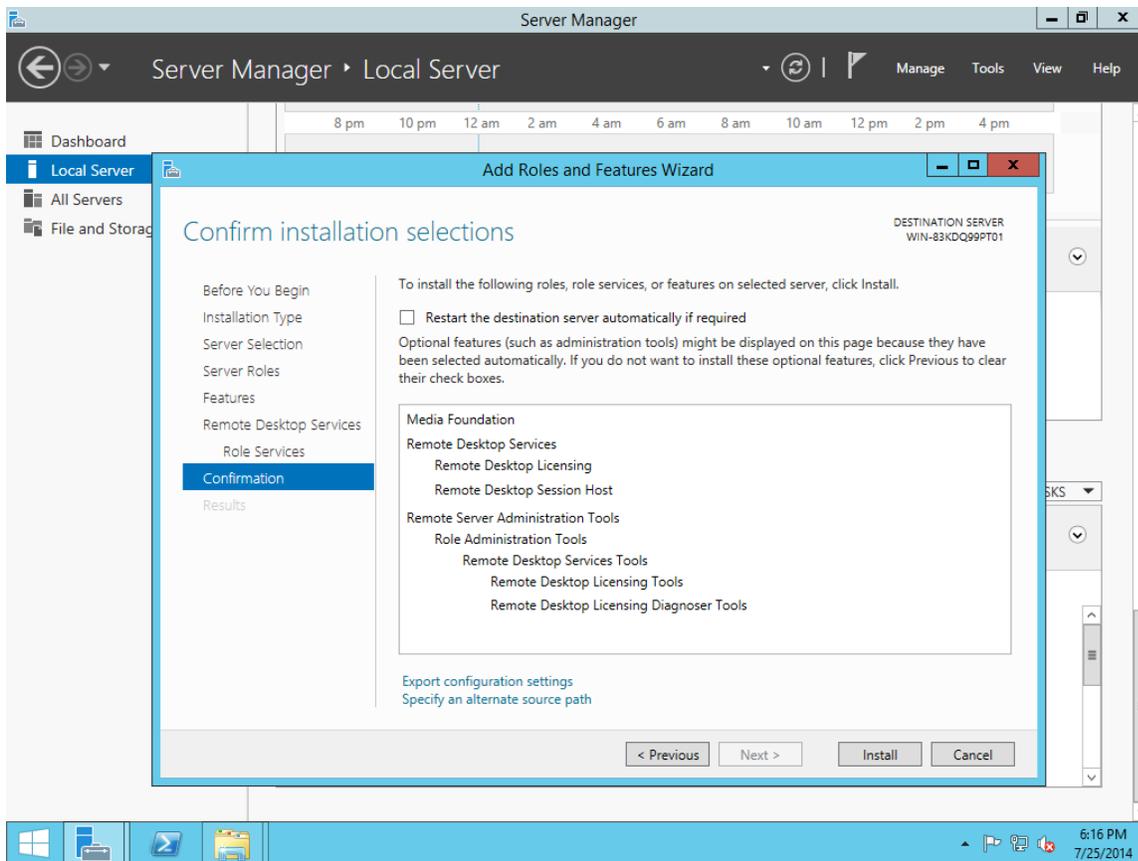
❑ From the Confirmation page, click Install
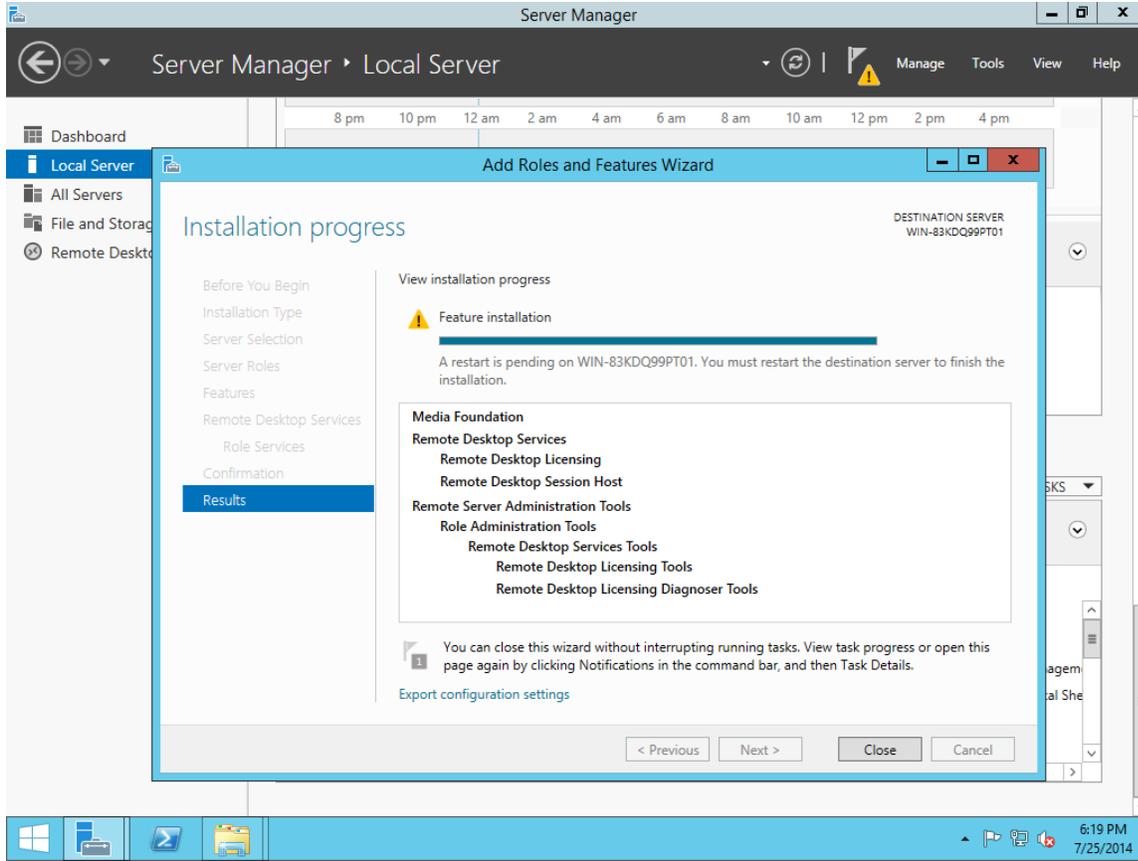
❑ Once the installation is complete, click the Close button

❑ Restart the server
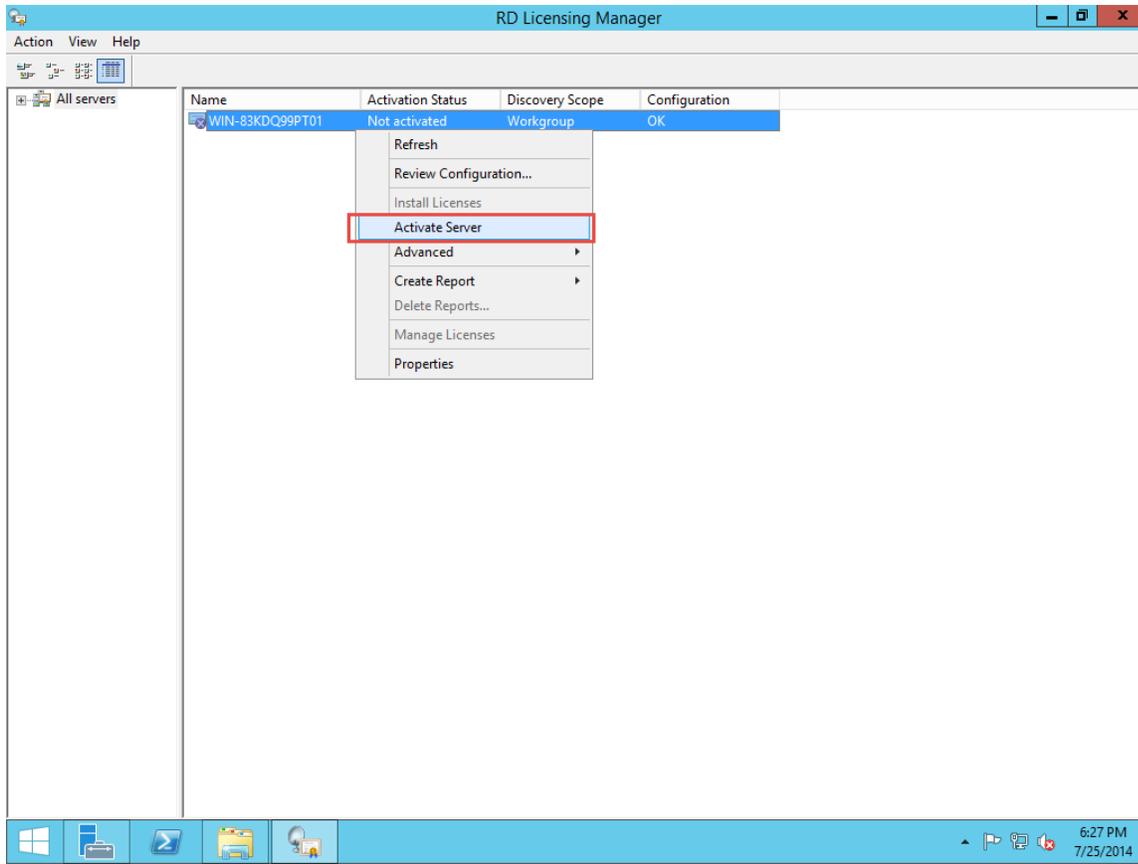
❑ Log back into the server with local Administrator credentials

❑ Activate the Remote Desktop Services Licensing Server

- Click the Windows Start button

- Click the Administrative Tools tile

- Double Click the Remote Desktop Services folder

- Double Click the Remote Desktop Licensing Manager

- Right click the target server and click Activate Server

Note the Discovery Scope is Workgroup

❑ Complete the Activation wizard

❑ Install RDS Client Access Licenses if desired

Remote Desktop Services Licensing Server should now be activated
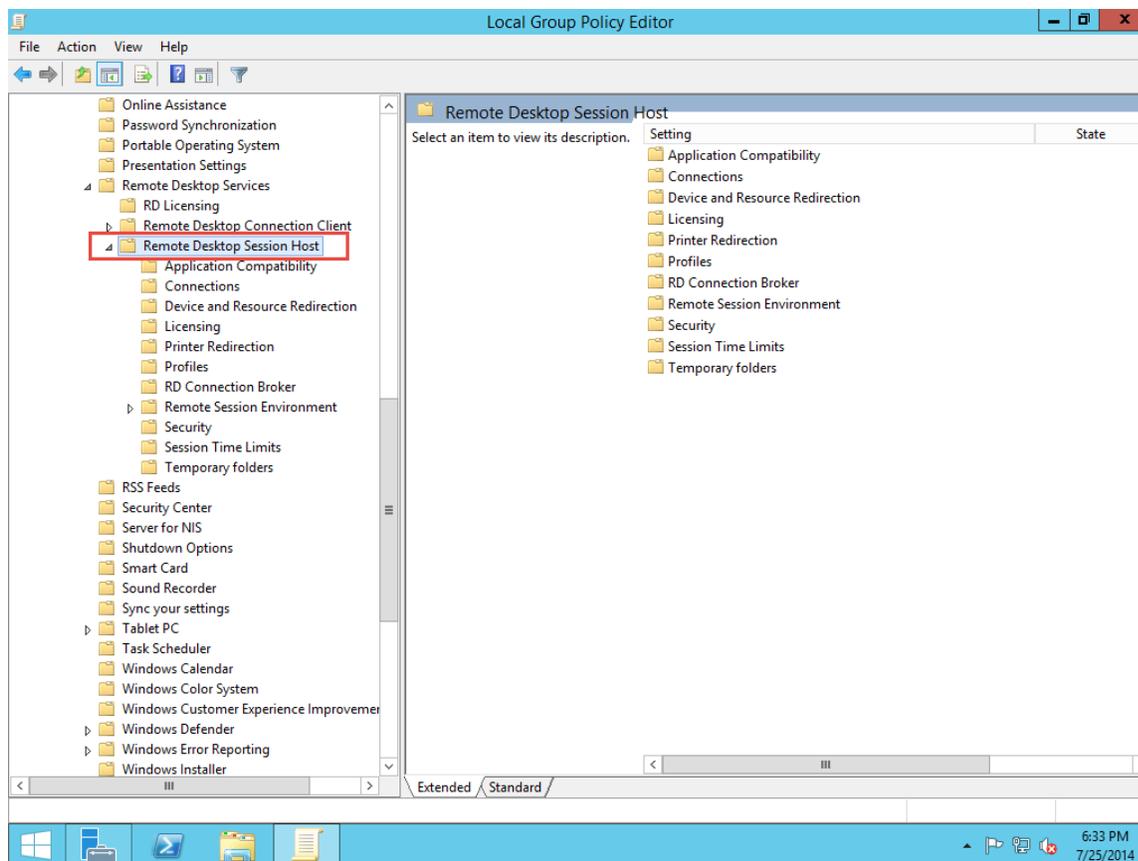
Configure Local Group Policy

❑ Hit the Windows-R key combination to open the Run dialog box

❑ Enter "gpedit.msc" (without the quotes) followed by the enter key

❑ From the Local Group Policy Editor window, drill into the following location: Local Computer Policy | Computer Configuration | Administrative Templates | Windows Components | Remote Desktop Services | Remote Desktop Session Host
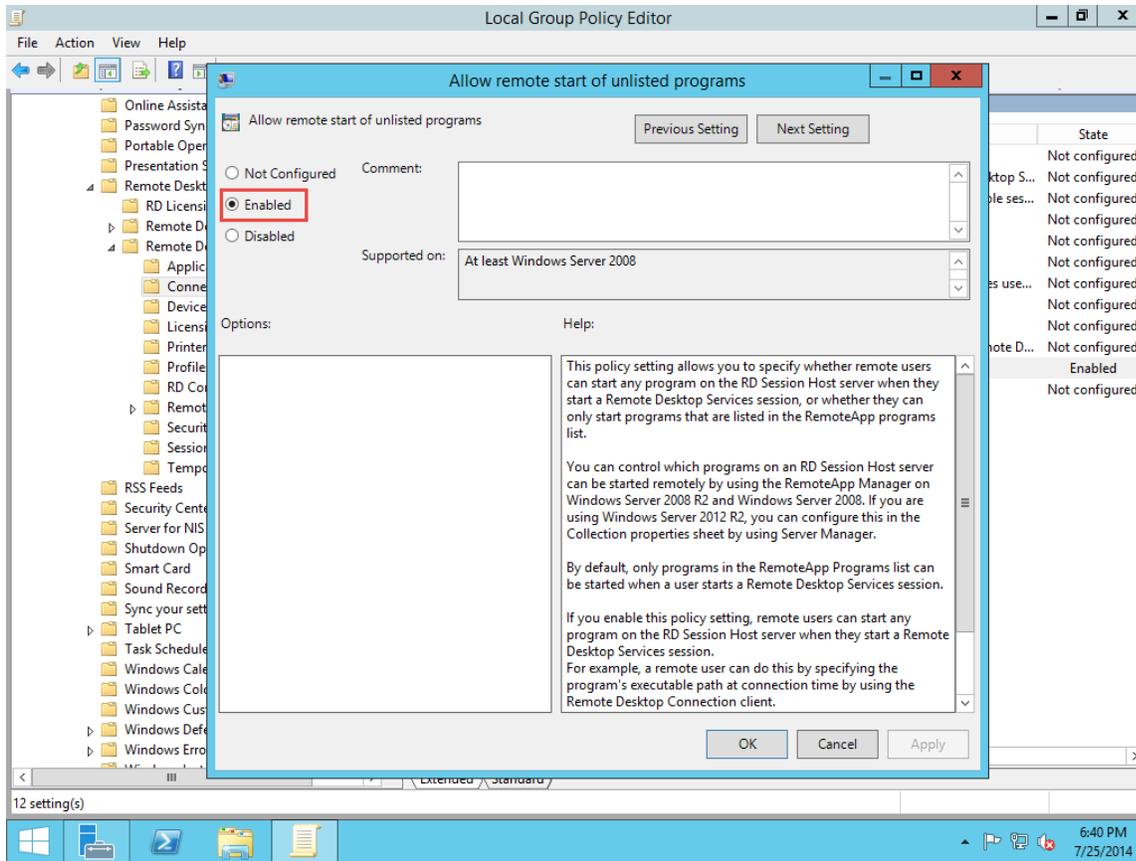
Since the normal Remote Desktop Services management user interface tools are dependent on the target server being a member of a domain, the typical RDS configuration must be done through the Local Group Policy Editor for servers that are not joined to a domain (some can be performed via PowerShell scripting as well). The steps below will walk through the basic configuration settings typically required.
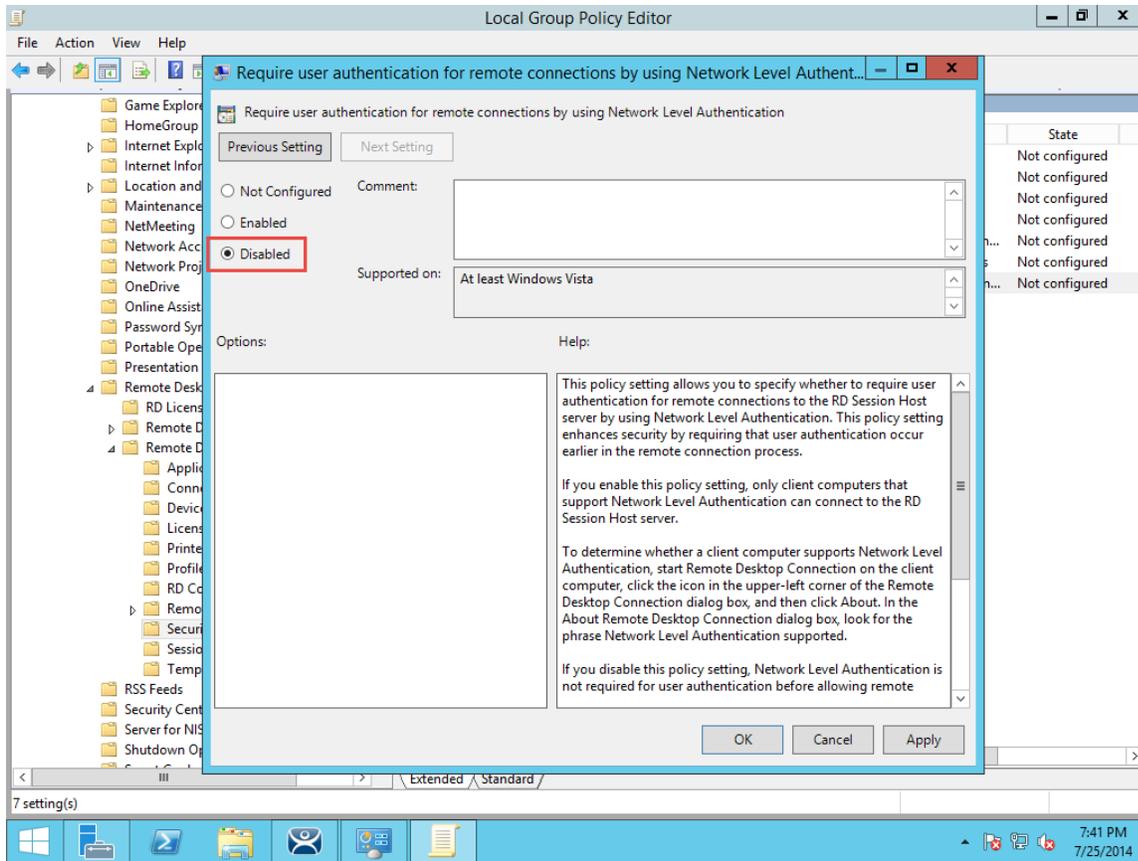
❑ Click the Connections folder

❑ Double Click the Allow remote start of unlisted programs item on the right hand side

❑ Click the Enabled radio button

❑ Enabling this setting will allow any application to be launched as an Initial Program on the Remote Desktop Services Host (required for Application Link to function properly)

❑ Click OK
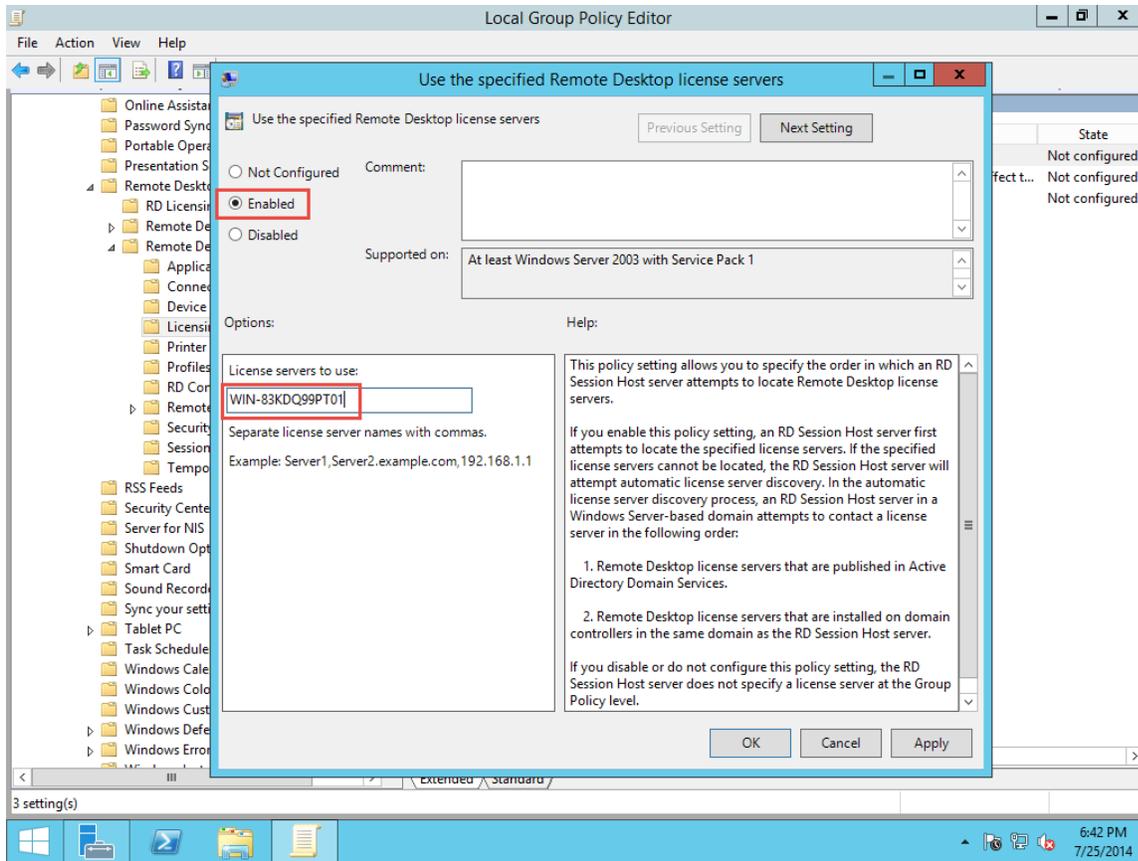
❑ Click the Licensing folder

❑ Double Click the Use the specified Remote Desktop license servers item on the right hand side

❑ Click the Enabled radio button

❑ Enter the server computer name in the License servers to use text box

❑ Click OK
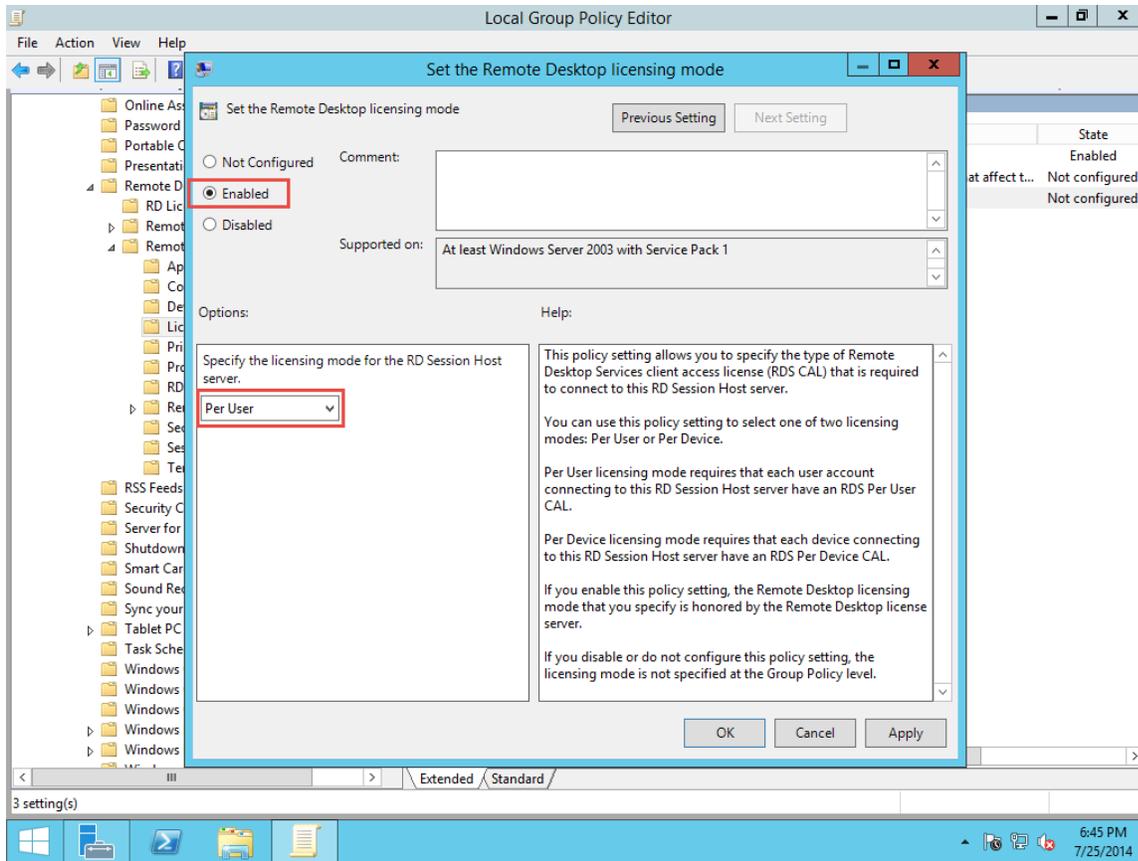
❑ With the Licensing folder still selected, Double Click the Set the Remote Desktop licensing mode item on the right hand side

❑ Click the Enabled radio button

❑ Select the licensing mode from the drop down list (Per User in the screen shot below)

❑ Click OK

- ❑ Click the Security folder
- ❑ Double Click the Require user authentication for remote connections by using Network Level Authentication
- ❑ Click the Disabled radio button
- ❑ Click OK
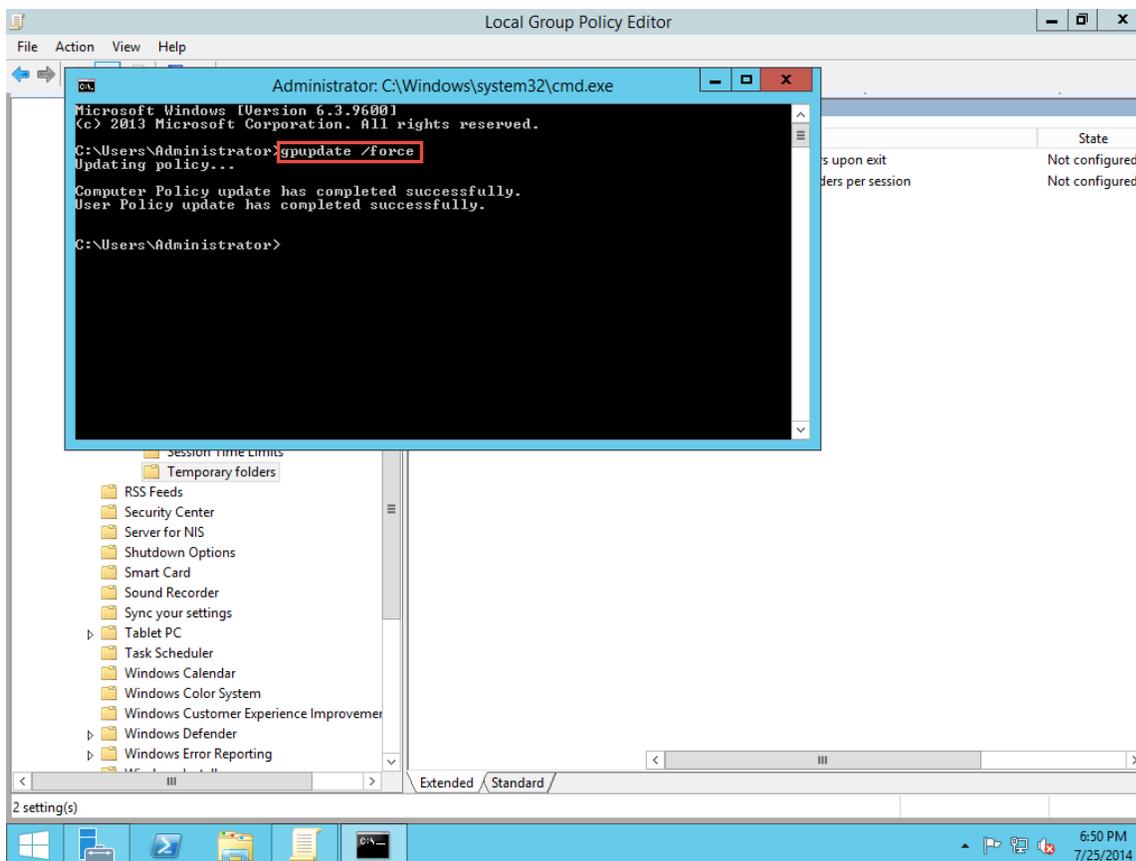
- ❏ To apply the local group policy changes without restarting the server, hit the Windows-R key combination to open the Run dialog box

- ❏ Enter "cmd" (without the quotes) followed by the enter key

- ❏ Within the command prompt, enter "gpupdate /force" (without the quotes) followed by the enter key

- ❏ Once the user policy update has been completed successfully, close the Command Prompt and the Local Group Policy Editor window.

This should allow you to run your Windows 2012/2012 R2 Remote Desktop Server in a Workgroup instead of a domain.