

The YEBDC Small Business Information Column

by Sue Gingerich, Business Advisor

"Isolation And Staying Motivated in a Home-Based Business"

One of the advantages of being a home based business is a more relaxed work environment. This however, can be a double edged sword. Distractions, feelings of isolation, and the feeling of never getting away from your work can very much negate the more relaxed work environment.

If this sounds like you, what can you do?

First of all, plan your work environment carefully. Try to create a work space that is just for work. Choose an area of your home that is bright and easy to go to, away from loud noises and also separate from the rest of the home. It could be a corner of a room, but it is your corner and only yours. This will hopefully keep you from seeing all the personal things waiting for you to do.

Give up certain personal responsibilities. For example, hire a babysitter to watch the kids while you are working. Hire someone to do your cleaning for you, so you can relieve yourself of that responsibility. Along with this, you also have to develop some resolve. The babysitter must know that when you are in your office, you are off limits. And YOU must not allow yourself to "just clean this one little thing". Giving it up means it's no longer your job.

Plan your work schedule with motivators built in and distractions built out. Have the cleaning lady come on days when you are not at home. This serves two purposes. One you won't be tempted to help her and two, you will come home to a clean home. (Now that's motivating!) Build in regular time out of your office. Maybe you need to go out for lunch. The advantages of this are twofold. One is that you get out and get a change of scenery and maybe change of perspective along with it. The other benefit is you won't have dirty dishes distracting you later.

Other things you can do are: have smart ring installed on your phone, so that you can have a separate number for work calls, and let your answering machine get personal calls during the day (and vice versa at night), build in breaks with motivators, such as going for a fifteen minute walk in the middle of the afternoon.

If you force yourself to do nothing but work, you won't be happy and ultimately will allow distractions to woo you away from work. If you build motivating things into your schedule, (like allowing yourself a half an hour in the afternoon to fold laundry while you watch a TV show) you are more likely to enjoy your work and work harder when you do work.

So take advantage of that more relaxed work environment, just don't let it take advantage of you!

If you have a small business and have a question that you think The YEBDC could help you with, please call or write to: The Yellowhead East Business Development Corporation, Box 249, Sangudo, AB T0E 2A0
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