

SURVIVAL TIPS FOR WORKING FROM HOME

When the time comes for you to start out on your own, you feel excited and frightened at the same time. You're inspired by other self-employed people they've taken the plunge and quite frankly it didn't look that hard.

But what you see on the surface is quite different to what is actually going on in that person's mind.

When you work in an office environment you can bounce things off other people. If you are feeling a little down, someone will always be there to pick you up, crack a joke and you don't feel so bad.

But when you're self-employed and work from a home-based office, there's just you, so you have to be the best you can.

My next-door neighbours knew I worked from my home office and tried it them selves. She opened a secretarial service and he took a real estate course. Sadly, both of their solo attempts lasted less than six months. They were well qualified for their chosen endeavours, but they lacked self-motivation, discipline and the vision to succeed.

Here are a few tips that might help you to survive.

Don't be caught out

Every morning dress for the office, smart casual is a good theme. Do your hair properly and apply make-up if you are a female and shave if you are a male; just the same as you would if you were going to an office away from your home. It's so easy to let these things slip.

You can work in your pyjamas, but what if a client arrives unexpectedly, even though you don't widely publicise your address? It could happen.

Your confidence and professionalism are reduced to nothing. The client is having second thoughts about working with you, and even you have second thoughts about working with you.

A friend said to me some time ago "You only have one chance to make a great first impression." And, I have never forgotten it.

Always look as good as you can, in a way that fits your circumstances. It will make all the difference to how you feel.

Next, the office

I'm fortunate, my office is big, has a beautiful outlook and I want for nothing, but I've been doing this for a long time. When I started out I worked from the smallest bedroom in the house, so I had to be neat and tidy. But that's the secret. Always keep your office and especially your desk neat and tidy and only have one job at a time on your desk.

Every evening when you finish work, tidy your desk and put away the things you don't need. Then write a to-do list for the next day, or enter the tasks in your electronic calendar. This is the best tip, it will ensure you always get your work done, and have time for your own interests.

Try and keep your to-do list to three to five things you would like to achieve that day. Rate them in order of priority and then work through the list. If you cannot finish the task, for example, a person you wish to speak with is not in the office until the next day, make a note on that day's calendar before you go on to the next task.

There's nothing like walking into your office and the desk is clear and ready for the day.

These simple things may work for you.

About the Author:

Barb is a successful business writer/editor/communicator. She writes in plain language and believes material for print and the web should be clear, concise and user-friendly. Please visit her website at www.barbclews.com to find out more.