

15 TIPS

FOR BEING EFFECTIVE WHILE WORKING FROM HOME



Working from home can be awesome, the freedom, the flexibility, the convenience. However, there are negative aspects as well, like the lack of socialisation and not having the peer pressure to perform.

Also when working in an office environment, the biggest distraction you probably face is co-workers. When you work from home, you are now your biggest distraction.

The following tips have been created to make working at home effective, allowing you to combine the freedom and convenience of being at home with the productivity of working in an office environment.

1 GETTING GOING IN THE MORNING

When working in an office, the morning commute gives you time to wake up and get ready. When you work at home, you miss out on this opportunity. Add some sort of small exercise routine to your morning, for example a short walk or some callisthenics (push ups, sit ups, star jumps etc). Give your body a chance to warm up before you start work.

2 HAVE AN OFFICE

Ensure you have an office at home. This could be a room set up entirely for work, or maybe a space that you use only for work. Make sure you don't work in an area you use for leisurely activities, like the couch you watch TV from, or the kitchen table you eat dinner at. The area must be exclusively used for work.

3 GO TO WORK

Dress in clothes you would go to the office in. Pyjamas are not work clothes. It's easy to relax your dress code when working from home, but it's important not to. And if you usually grab a coffee on your way to work, you can either make a coffee and then take it to your "office space" or you may even drive to your regular coffee shop and buy one, then return to your home office.





4 STICK TO A WORK ROUTINE

Have usual start and finish times. These times can be flexible but try to keep to a routine. If you usually get to work and check your emails, then continue to do the same working from home. And most importantly have designated breaks (coffee breaks, lunch break). When working at home it's easy to just stop and duck to the kitchen to grab a bite anytime you want. This will lead to longer breaks and sometimes more breaks than you need. Stick to a routine you would use at the office. And ensure you stop work at the end of the day.

5 COMMUNICATE YOUR EXPECTATIONS WITH WHOEVER IS AT HOME WITH YOU

If there is going to be other people in the house while you are working, let them know that you can't be disturbed. Obviously if there is an urgent matter that can't wait then an exception can be made, but in general, if you are at work, you need to be left alone. Remember, working from home doesn't mean you are at home.

6 PREPARE LUNCH AND SNACKS

Get in the habit of preparing any food you will be eating during your work hours prior to going to work. This will reduce the opportunity to waste time cooking up a big lunch or popping into the kitchen for an unscheduled break.

7 HAVE SOME BACKGROUND NOISE

When you work in an office environment, there is always some noise around, for example co-workers talking, photocopiers being used, phones ringing etc. When you work from home, quite often it is silent. Make sure you have the television or a radio on in the background, just ensure that if the television is on, it won't be a distraction.

8 SCHEDULE YOUR DAY

The best way to be productive is to schedule the tasks you want to complete. And breaking down these tasks into necessary steps will allow you to schedule your day out. There are many programs that will let you schedule a task and put a deadline on it, giving you reminder alerts to keep you on target. To do lists are very effective.



9 USE TECHNOLOGY TO STAY CONNECTED

Working from home can get lonely. It's possible to stay connected with co-workers and bosses through technology. You can utilise video conferencing and facetime to check-in with workmates. Another useful tool is instant messaging.

10 DON'T GET DISTRACTED

When working from home, there is the temptation to multitask and do some household chores in between completing work tasks, thus distracting you from what you are meant to be doing. Try to avoid such chores as washing up, vacuuming, laundry and other cleaning tasks

11 TAKE SICK DAYS

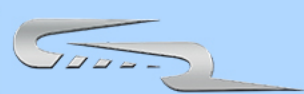
Quite often, when someone starts to work from home, if they feel sick, they will continue to work anyway. Unfortunately, their effort will not be effective, their concentration will be diminished, and their productivity will be below par. Sometimes you need to stop and recover, allowing yourself to return at full speed when you feel better.

12 INTERACT WITH OTHERS

During your breaks, just like at an office environment, interact with other people. If someone is in the house, maybe you could have a lunch date with them. Alternatively, you could ring people on your breaks.

13 SOCIALISE AFTER WORK

When working in an office environment, many people will socialise after work, going out for a few drinks or dinner. These opportunities aren't as common when you work from home. Ensure that you still socialise, even if it's just through face timing or phoning people.





14 ERRANDS AND APPOINTMENTS

Just as if you were working in an office environment, try to use your lunch break to run errands or organise appointments. If you need to see a doctor, dentist etc, make the appointment during your lunch break or after work. It is very easy to become relaxed when working from home, popping down to the shops at any time, again distracting you from what you are meant to be doing.

15 PRETEND YOU ARE NOT HOME

During work hours, it is so important that you pretend you are not home. If the home phone rings, don't answer it. Likewise, if there is a knock on your front door, don't go and see who it is. Obviously if you are expecting a delivery, exceptions can be made, but don't give in to distractions. If you were at the office the home phone or front door wouldn't be answered, would it?

Working from home can be **amazing**. It can change your life by giving you flexibility in work hours and giving you the convenience of not having to commute to work. If you can discipline yourself and keep on task, you will be effective and productive.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Craig Needs is a hypnotherapist, a Master NLP practitioner, a body language expert, a keynote speaker and a leading authority on changing thoughts. Through hypnosis, coaching and educating people he helps them modify their behaviour to improve their lives.

