

## **Business Tip of the Month**

*...from the desk of the Client Services Coordinator*

### **Stay Motivated When Working From Home**

It is no secret that women in numbers previously unheard of are making the decision to own their own business and work from home.

The advantages of setting up a home-based business are great, but there are also unique challenges that women face when working from home. The most common are staying motivated and productive when each day is filled with distractions that tempt and lure us from the tasks at hand.

There will always be other tasks unrelated to work that beckon you – the laundry, grocery shopping, gardening, the gym, walking the dog, paying household bills, soccer practice or conferences with your child's teacher. You can't ignore these daily duties and responsibilities but, if you put them on a separate to-do list they will be organized and more easily put out of your thoughts until you are ready to tackle them at the end of your work day or at a specified time.

Take a few minutes at the end of each workday to make a "work to-do" list and prioritize each task or objective. Be sure to set work hours and schedule lunch meetings and time to attend networking groups - surround yourself with strong mentors who will help you remain accountable.

No matter what kind of business you operate, it is important to create a clearly defined "work space" free from distractions. Remember to keep things that will tempt and distract you (like a television, personal email and facebook) out of your line of vision.

There are a lot of great little tips and tricks that can boost productivity – like standing when you are on the phone. You'll spend less time in idle chit chat and get to the point sooner than if you were lounging in your chair sipping coffee.

If you can complete a task or respond to a message in less than 2 minutes, do it! Clearing these things from your list of things to do will keep you on track and free up time to focus on bigger projects.

Turn on the tunes! Researchers found that listening to your favourite music can improve your productivity by 10 percent.

And to stimulate the left side of your brain, which processes work, try squeezing a soft ball in your right hand. Keep one on your desk so you can try this throughout the day when you are reading or on the phone.

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Instead of aiming to accomplish an enormous, abstract goal, break it down into smaller, more attainable ones and remember to reward yourself when you do reach a goal. Take a break and have some fun – you'll enjoy the time away from your work and chances are you'll return with renewed inspiration

There are plenty of websites that list great suggestions that will help you stay motivated and productive while working from home – do an online search, check them out and try to incorporate some of the recommended techniques into your day. You'll find that a few simple changes can make a big difference to the health of both you and your business.

Women's Enterprise Centre can assist women who are working from home and face challenges. When you need advice just ask - our Business Advisors just a phone call away at 1.800.643.7014.

You can also check out the following articles in our resource library:

Advantages and Disadvantages of a Home-Based Business

<http://www.womensenterprise.ca/resources/downloads/advantages-homebusiness.pdf>

Two Dozen Do's and Don'ts for Home Business Success:

<http://www.womensenterprise.ca/resources/downloads/dosdents-homebased.pdf>

You might even want to take a look at the Small Office Home Office (SOHO) website: <http://www.soho.ca/> – as well as providing resources and tools for small business/home-based businesses, they specialize in leading marketing, lead generation, special events organization and feature interesting and relevant articles via a regular newsletter.

*Women's Enterprise Centre is the go-to place for BC women business owners for business loans, skills training, business advisory services, resources, publications and referrals.*

*Last year Women's Enterprise Centre's Information Services responded to over 6,100 inquiries. This segment about motivation and productivity for the home-based business owner was prepared in direct response to a large number of those inquiries.*