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Launching Yourself to Work From Home
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Why should I start a business? Why should I work from home?

Why should I telecommute?

You have a great entrepreneurial spirit.

You have a great new product idea.

You experience a change in your situation (parenthood or a move to a new city).

You are disillusioned with current career.

You want a more flexible schedule than a “typical” job can provide.

You want to decrease costs like professional wardrobe, commuting and day care.

Maybe you just want to supplement your current income.

Whatever your reason, here are some ideas on how to get started!

Know yourself:

Make sure you are self motivated. Working for yourself or from home may sound like a great solution for a busy lifestyle, but unless you are internally motivated, it may not be a fit for you. If I did not create and stick with my own deadlines, nothing would ever get done! And working from home can be isolating, so be ready to find ways to stay connected.

Do your homework:

Congratulations, you have a great idea. Spend some time researching your chosen area, and you may find others have had the same idea. This is not a bad thing! Perhaps a professional organization exists for your new profession and you can take advantage of networking or marketing suggestions and opportunities.

Decide on what you do and do not want to do. For example, for Professional Organizing, check out NAPO.org. There are up to 70 different services a PO can provide, but not everyone can do everything. I do not want to manage relocations so that is not where I'll focus my energies, but I love organizing kids, and that sets me apart from many organizers.

Make sure you address the legalities of your business, business ownership and registration in your town, plus insurance and liability issues before you start.

FabJob.com, “How To” books and on-line info for a number of professions.

“It’s a Jungle Out There and a Zoo in Here: Run your Home Business Without Letting It Overrun You”, by Cheryl Demas

“...Momcorps.com, ‘mom-friendly’ part time and telecommuting jobs, with offices in Atlanta, Chicago, Charlotte, NC, Washington, DC, and New York City, but the companies and clients are nationwide (from Parenting, 2003).”

Dedicate some Resources:

Space Essentials: Home Office. Are you working when others are home or not? A door is a plus! Work space, file storage, computer and telephone, files and resources close at hand, plus good lighting and a comfortable chair. Your office does not need to be large or expensive, but does have to be useful. Also consider aesthetics, form in addition to function – daylight and a window, great colors, lack of home clutter.

Time: Make sure you have time to start a new endeavor, from 2 to 40 or more hours a week. Limit interruptions: Dedicated office hours to take care of business. Hang a sign, ignore the phone and the doorbell. I have seized the idea of controlled email flow, meaning I check my email and then close the program, so I am not distracted while I work by what other people think is important in the moment. Stick to a schedule, so you know when you can take care of business and clients know when they can reach you. And consciously close the office when it is time for your personal life.

Money: How much do you hope to earn? This is where doing your homework is vitally important, as how much you earn will depend on your chosen field. And when you are determining income, remember that the business of business takes time. Paying bills, promoting your business, professional development, filing, you name it, it takes time. So not every hour worked will be an income generating hour.

Create a budget for start up costs. When I started my business, I promised myself and my husband that I would not spend any of our money. I am lucky in that much of what I needed, a computer with internet access and printer, a cell

phone, a tool box, we already had. My start up costs, which I paid back immediately to our personal accounts, included PO Box rental, business cards (almost free on VistaPrint.com), and my initial mailing to everyone I knew announcing my business. Since that day, every expense for the business has been paid by the business.

Decide on the essentials for getting started, and determine where that money will come from and when it will be returned. And keep track of it all, to make tax time run more smoothly.

Marketing (Excerpts from Wikipedia) is:

“...the process of creating or reorganizing an organization to be successful in selling a product or service that people not only desire, but are willing to buy.”

“...a societal process that is needed to discern consumers' wants; focusing on a product / service to those wants, and to mold the consumers toward the products/services. Marketing is fundamental to any businesses growth...”

What are you really selling? Every product has tangible and intangible aspects. We all sell products or services, but there are also feelings or emotions or opportunities or lifestyles that go along with the tangible items.

Who are you selling it to? Imagine, in detail, your ideal client or customer. What do they look like? Where do they shop, live, play, work, etc? Now go there, and find them and advertise to them.

Get the Word out:

You are not alone! When you launch your business, tell everyone you know (unless you need a patent) what you are doing and how they can help you.

Network: Get more people thinking of you and how to maximize your business by finding a local or on-line networking group, like mine – SucceedNetworking.org, to help get your news out to the world.

Donate your time or product to charitable causes, purely for the experience and exposure, and get your name listed in the program for free.