

# 5 Truths About Working From Home



# About This Ebook

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Many people dream about the joys of working from a home office. Maybe you are one of them. Working from home can be a happy change from working in an office, but it provides its own challenges. In this ebook, I will share five truths about working from home, offer suggestions for making your home office work for you, and tell the stories of successful home-based workers.

My heartfelt thanks to these contributors: Kim Cramer, Philip Sedgwick, Jane Smith, Evo Terra, and Jay Thompson.

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# Why You Need This

Many people dream about the freedom of working from their home from the confines of a corporate cubicle. Maybe you are one of them. You may think that the world would suddenly turn upright if only you had that sort of flexibility and control over your working life.

## The Myth vs. The Reality

I have worked from my home office for 15 years. I've worked from home through several moves and different space configurations. I love working from home. While I can't imagine going back to a cubicle, I also know deeply the challenges that face the home-based worker.

Along the way, I've figured out a few things that can help anyone who dreams of working from home, or who struggles to work effectively from home.

Here are my five truths about working from home, along with success stories from people who successfully work from home today.



# The 5 Truths About Working From Home



## Truth 1:

# Your Workspace Matters

You may be sitting right now in your cubicle with visions of sitting on your patio with your laptop sipping iced tea and listening to the birds.

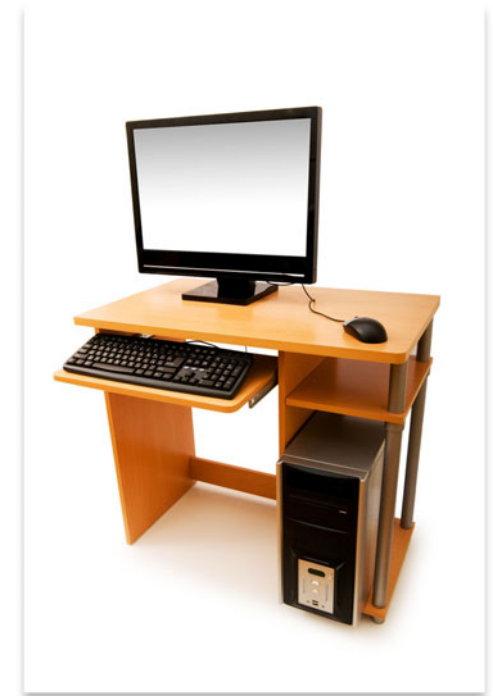
Or you may be dreaming of lounging on your couch with your feet up typing away on your laptop with a frosty mug of something else beside you.

If you start working from home, you can spend part of your time doing both or either of those things. However, you will find that those pesky birds make it impossible to conduct business calls while outside, and it is difficult to type while lounging on the couch.

*Having a dedicated workspace helps you to train your brain to think about work when you are in that space.*

### **Have A Place To Work**

Your home office must have a dedicated space in your home. That doesn't mean that it must be a full-time office. Many successful businesses start on the kitchen table while kids are in school. You need a specific place where you work and where you store the materials that support your work.



## Truth 1: Your Workspace Matters (cont.)

# Setting Up Your Office

In general, a home office must include the following components:

- A table, desk, or other flat surface.
- Lighting.
- Equipment (computer, telephone, printer, etc.).
- Resources (documents, office supplies, etc.).
- Organizing tools (bookcase, file drawer, etc.).

The type of work you perform determines the specific components for your workspace. Place a phone within reach. A file drawer helps you organize your work and put things away when you are not working. Keep a stash of office supplies tucked into a nearby drawer.

*Don't be afraid to try different home office configurations until you find one that suits your work style and needs.*

### Remove Distractions

Set up your office in a quiet space where you can work without distractions like television or game consoles. It's hard enough to concentrate without the temptation of other activities calling to you every moment.



## Truth 1: Your Workspace Matters (cont.)



# Build A Success Team

To work successfully from your home office, you must have the support of your family and friends.

- Your family must understand the ground rules for your working hours, or they may expect you to complete housework or childcare duties while working.
- Your friends must also be on board with your work life. Otherwise, you will be invited to do things that interrupt your work schedule.

*When I started working from my home office, more than one friend asked me to wait at their home for a repair or installation person. I had to educate my friends so they understood that I was working the same hours they were working.*

It's very easy for your partner to mistakenly assume that you can complete household and childcare duties while you are at home. You must schedule these duties for other hours if you are going to complete your work during your office hours. Many home-based workers use day care to ensure that they are not interrupted by childcare needs.

Recruit your friends and family to make up your work at home success team. With their support and understanding, you have one more key element in place for running a successful home office.



## Truth 1: Your Workspace Matters (cont.)

# Learn Ergonomics

At the office, you most likely have a desk with an appropriate chair in front of a computer. There are good reasons for that. You need to consider the ergonomics of your work location. After all, you don't want to end up unable to type because of some repetitive stress injury that you could have prevented.

You need a setup designed for the range of motion of a human body. You need a desk and a chair that comply with the ergonomic standards.



*The Aeron chair, designed in 1994, has won several design awards. Often seen in offices on television and movies, it became synonymous with the technical company start-up environment in Silicon Valley.*

### Chairs

Don't skimp on your chair. You don't have to go all out and purchase your own [Aeron chair](#), but you do need a good office chair. Look for a chair with:

- Adjustable parts.
- Enough padding to be comfortable for extended sitting.
- Lumbar support (the curve of the back).

### Your Keyboard

If you use a computer for work, switch to an ergonomic keyboard. The unusual design encourages the proper placement of your hands and fingers. These keyboards are great for touch typists, but present a challenge for people who only finger peck.



## Truth 1: Your Workspace Matters (cont.)

# Notebook Computers

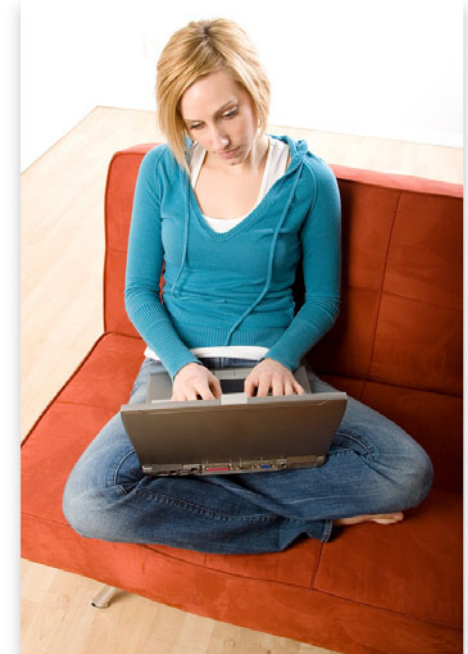
Many people today use a laptop or notebook computer because of their portability. However, notebook computers are not designed for ergonomics. They do not allow you to work in a healthy posture.

To use a notebook computer safely:

- Attach a separate, full-sized keyboard and pointing device (mouse, trackball, etc.).
- Always place the notebook on a table or flat surface with venting to avoid burns and overheating.
- Raise the notebook so the screen is at your line of sight while seated.

While most people do not follow these basic ergonomic suggestions, they do so at their own peril. Repetitive strain injuries develop over a short period of time, and can result in permanent disability if not treated.

*Pay attention to the ergonomics of your space. You can avoid painful and expensive medical bills by taking care of yourself. And you can avoid long-term damage that could prevent you from working.*



## Truth 2:

# It's Lonely In Paradise

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You know that pesky office mate who talks too loud on the phone. Or the one who slurps her coffee all day long? You are going to miss them. Well, maybe not exactly those people, but when you work from home, you are going to miss the interaction of the office. And if you are a highly social person, it will drive you crazy.

Human beings are social animals, and when you work in the seclusion of your home, you eliminate the opportunities to have a short conversation at the coffee machine, or randomly running into someone on your way back from the bathroom. No one pops his head over your cubicle wall and invites you to lunch.

It's just you. Alone. Inside your four walls. Even the most hermetic can go stir crazy.



## Truth 2: It's Lonely In Paradise (cont.)

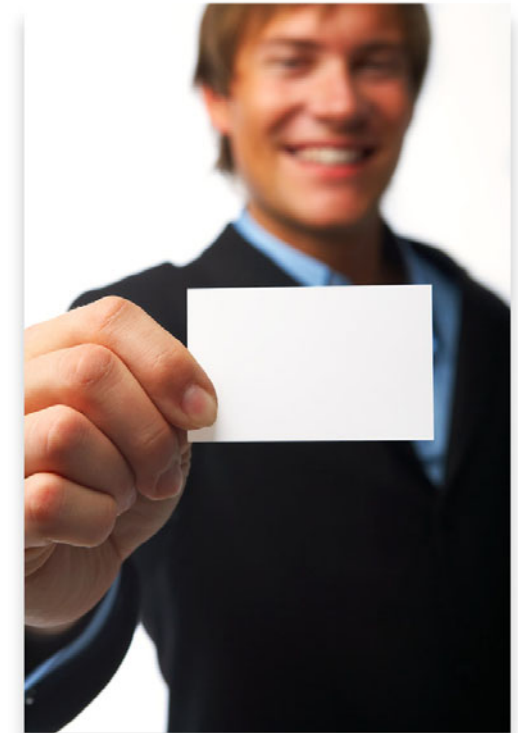
# Build Relationships

Every person needs a different amount of social interaction, and your amount will change over time. Get to understand your social needs so you can find a balance between the isolation of your home office and interaction you need to stay productive.

### Professional Networking

Some people cringe at the word “networking,” but it is an important part of your home office life. While you are working from your home, you can’t disappear from your industry or profession.

- Join professional organizations and attend the monthly meetings.
- Find business mixers in your community.
- Look for business-related workshops in your community and for your industry.
- Research co-working spaces, and spend some time meeting other independent workers in your community.
- Spend a little time each week working in a coffee shop or co-working space. Not only will the change of scenery invigorate you, you can chat with other home-based workers.



*Check your local business newspaper or the events section of your newspaper for appropriate business events.*

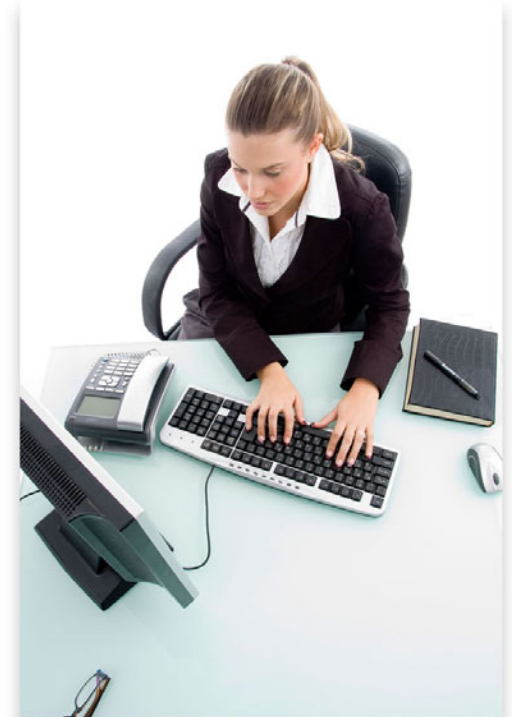
## Truth 2: It's Lonely In Paradise (cont.)

# Use Social Media

Social media tools let you connect with people online. They can help you get more social interaction, and can keep you in touch with your professional network.

- Use [LinkedIn](#) to connect with your peers, former co-workers, and others in your industry or related fields. Request recommendations and use its features to stay connected professionally.
- Use [Twitter](#) to connect with your peers and your community. Twitter can replace the casual conversations you are missing from the workplace. Just be careful that you manage your conversation time.
- Create a professional [Facebook](#) presence if that is appropriate for your business. But avoid spending time on your personal Facebook account during working hours. It may be fun, but it's a huge time drain that doesn't support any business goals.

In many communities, social networking sites also offer public meetups. Check with other users in your community to learn about these opportunities to meet others.



## Truth 3:

# It's All On You



You know that nice computer they provide at the office? The one connected to the network that automatically backs up your work every night? You're going to miss that. At your home office, you are not only the worker bee, but you are the IT support person, and a whole range of other types of supporting staff.

As a home-based worker, you have to address a wide range of issues, including:

- Fixing your computer when it acts up.
- Figuring out how to back up your files and making sure that happens every day.
- Cleaning the office.
- Sorting the mail.
- Keeping the printer stocked with paper.
- Having enough pens.
- Figuring out what internet connection is the best and most economical strategy.
- Calling your ISP when your internet connection acts up.
- Answering the stream of phone calls that come in all day.
- Signing for the UPS packages.
- Providing food for your meals and afternoon snacks.
- Figuring out how to do all of these distracting things while still accomplishing your work.



## Truth 3: It's All On You (cont.)



# You Are Not Alone

The good news is that there are many free and inexpensive tools available online to help you run your home office. These tools include contact managers, project management, and bookkeeping.

### Find Helpful People

The trend for home-based workers supports a new industry. Virtual assistants, sometimes called concierge services, offer a wide range of practical assistance to you.

Take advantage of them. Many are willing to work on your small projects and occasionally run errands for you. They can make a huge difference in how your day and week runs. Their help can make you much more productive. And happier, too.

### Business Coaching

Many people find that a business coach makes a huge difference in how they process their business challenges. A good business coach helps you where you get stuck, and offers suggestions you might not have considered alone. Always interview a potential coach and ask for references. Many coaches are certified and belong to a professional organization that sets the standards in their industry.

*Check with your professional contacts to see which tools they use and recommend.*



## Truth 3: It's All On You (cont.)



# Get Creative

One way to get things done in your home office is to trade services with other home-based workers and small businesses. You can trade services to find people who can do anything that is beyond your skill set, including:

- Set up your bookkeeping.
- Write a press release.
- Update your website.
- Install new software.
- Set up your wireless internet.

Get creative about what you have to offer and start trading with others. Just be careful that you don't fill up your schedule with time spent on trade work. You still need cash income each month.

### **Advantages of Trading**

The beauty of trading services is that people perform the services within their strengths and get assistance for tasks outside of their strengths.

Trading services can improve your schedule as well. Often, the things we don't perform well take longer. By trading these tasks, it leaves you with more time to do the things you do well.



## Truth 4:

# You Run The Show

*To be successful in your home office, you can't do everything at the last minute. Sure, you might have the flexibility to work through the night before your deadlines, but that is a stressful way to live.*

Do you have one of those bosses (or co-workers) who loves to point out that you were ten minutes late today, or that you took a long lunch? You may dream of being the master of your own schedule by working from your home office.

With some limitations, you do get to decide when you start your day and when you take lunch. You can decide if you start work at 6 am or noon, or if you take part of the afternoon off to catch a ballgame. All of those are the upside of working at home.

### Setting Your Schedule

The challenge to working from home is that you have to provide your own schedule and structure. Yes, having options is nice. But when you have nearly unlimited options, how do you decide how to spend your time as the minutes click past you each day?

This is especially hard for people who like having structure and schedules, and nearly impossible for people who thrive on the pressure to meet goals. It's a whole different situation when you are the one creating the structure and goals that you must meet. It's hard being on both sides of the schedule.





## Truth 4: You Run The Show (cont.)



# Create A Schedule

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An effective home worker usually ends up setting up a schedule almost identical to the one they loathed while in the office. A set starting time. A set lunch time. A set ending time. It turns out, without a schedule, it's nearly impossible for most people to get things done.

Until new home workers figure out this truth and create their own schedule, they flounder. Add to that the influence of Truth 2 (It's Lonely At The Home Office) and the built in distractions from Truth 1 (Your Workspace Matters), and you can have a recipe for non-work, if not disaster.

It takes a great deal of self discipline to work from a home office. If this type of discipline is not one of your strengths, you may find that you struggle to put together a successful home office working plan. You must decide if the flexibility and other benefits of a home office are worth learning self discipline. It's a question that only you can answer.



## Truth 5:

# You Live At Work

After working from home for a while, after I mastered Truth 1 through Truth 4, I faced my greatest challenge.

Being a driven personality and being engaged by my work, I soon found that I was working all the time. One of the nice things about working outside of the house is that you know what is expected of you in each space. At the office, they expect you to crank out work. At home, you live your life. But when you work from home, the boundaries can disappear.

*In a recent survey of home-based workers around the world, 68% said that creating a boundary between work life and home life is their greatest challenge.*

### **Boundaries Between Life And Work**

I found myself thinking about work from the time I got up until I went to sleep each night. Because of that, I found myself back in the office all throughout the day, not just during my working hours. Weekends became additional working days. Innocent tasks, like stopping at the computer to check my email turned into work sessions. Check Twitter? I get pulled into work from something sitting on my desk.

I had to create a physical barrier between me and my office. I put up curtains to separate my den from the rest of the house. Curtains closed? I can't go in there, not even to check email or chat on Twitter. I had to find another way to get myself online from other rooms of the house (hello mobile devices). This is still the biggest challenge I face with my work situation. I have to go on vacation to actually walk away from work.



# Conclusion

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The bottom line about working from home is this: The grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence.

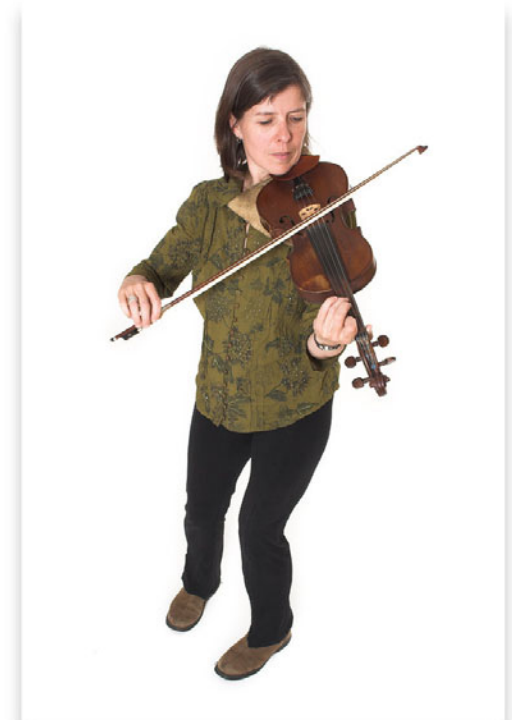
Before you jump that fence, realize that you are trading one set of problems for another, and make sure you are prepared for the challenges of working from home.

Working from home is a great option for some people, and a challenging option for others.

- If you are working from home and are not happy, there are things you can do to make the situation easier. I've included many suggestions in this ebook to help you work through your challenges.
- If you are working from home and love it, use these tips and suggestions help you to get even more satisfaction from your work life.

In the end, it's all about finding the balance that works for you, and fine tuning your environment to suit your specific needs.

Happy working!



# Home Office Success Stories



## Home Office Success Stories From:

- Philip Sedgwick
- Jane Smith
- Evo Terra
- Jay Thompson

## Author, Screenwriter & Astrologer

# Philip Sedgwick

### How and when did you become a home-based worker?

In 1981, when challenged by a discordant work environment for an electronics firm, a friend prompted me to seek self employment with one concise comment: "Quit or shut up!" Since then, with the exception of a two year run where I worked in an office environment with two other astrologers, I've been self employed and working from home.

### What great advantage did you expect when you started working from home?

Actually because of the sudden nature of my change to working at home, I anticipated nothing. There are the obvious advantages, the most notable being that you don't have to drive to work. Saves time, petrol and improves your personal carbon footprint for good planetary karma.

### What has been your greatest challenge in being a home-based worker?

I knew I'd have to battle the demon that nags inside the head flagellating the psyche into squeezing out a bit more work.

### How did you meet this challenge?

Improvement in quelling the inner slave driver happened as time trudged forward.

Now I quell this by realizing when I am effective and when I am not, a function of sleep, fun, blood sugar, time of day. I no longer work when I am not effective. Why bother? You only end up repeating work anyway.

Also, I have a reward index that I apply now. When I've done enough,

it's my time. I can kick back and enjoy doing nothing if I please. Of course, there are other times when the energy is there that an all-nighter passes in but the blink of an eye.

**Also, I have a reward index that I apply now. When I've done enough, it's my time.**



Philip Sedgwick is a writer and astrologer who works from his home office in Tucson, Arizona. His latest screenplay, *Thorns for a Rose*, is currently in pre-production.

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## Author, Screenwriter & Astrologer

# Philip Sedgwick

### What is the one bit of advice you would give to someone who is just starting to work from home?

Learn discipline. Have no distractions on your work computer such as games or whatever might thin your focus.

Avoid social networks at all costs. These take time to manage and then you need to focus upon who's included you, who doesn't like you, who objects to your latest post and whatnot. I see no possible gain. I have found through social websites, blogs and forums that people love to hear the sound of their fingers on the keyboard. So, you spend a lot of time disarming ill-thought, mean-spirited commentaries. I know a lot of people that swear by them, but personally, I see them as something that's causing social de-evolution. Value your time. Getting "exposure" may require a ton of online time that produces no revenue.

Manage your books daily.

### Philip's favorite resources for home-based workers:

A good course in creativity development would be a worthwhile investment as well as getting a grip on mundane matters, accounting, etc. The Small Business Association actually provides some pretty good content for free.

I find professional organizations very worthwhile. The National Writers Union ([www.nwu.org](http://www.nwu.org)) has been a phenomenal resource for me over the years, pretty much every work at home self-employed person is a writer.



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## Instructional Designer

# Jane Smith

### How and when did you become a home-based worker?

I've been working at home since February 2008, when my house in Sedona was finished, and I was able to move up there. I had a contract job for a company whose IT processing was in Phoenix but headquarters in the Chicago area. I'd worked for them before I moved to AZ.

My former boss gave me an opportunity to work for them again with him in Chicago and me in Phoenix. I started in November 2007 and then moved quietly up to Sedona in 2008. My boss knew but for 2 months no one else on the team knew.

### What great advantage did you expect when you started working from home?

The great advantage was that I would still have steady work but be able to live in

Sedona. I realized this for about 16 months, long enough to get me established in Sedona. For a little over a year of that time, I came to Phoenix for Tuesday through Thursday to work onsite but also because I realized I

HAD to have social contact, and I knew very few people up here.

The "blended solution" was perfect for me. I could not have been happy being totally remote at that time. Since then I've had most of my projects totally remote/virtual.

### What has been your greatest challenge in being a home-based worker?

I'm pretty motivated, especially when I have deadlines, so my biggest challenge was not in self-discipline but in the lack of social contact.

The other challenge is not only finding work at home opportunities in one's city but finding work at home opportunities when

**Be sure to keep a balanced life and don't let work take over both work and home.**



Jane Smith is an instructional designer and a Certified Performance Specialist who runs JEM Communications, LLC from her home in Sedona, Arizona.

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## Instructional Designer

# Jane Smith



you live remote to almost everyone. I've had word of mouth referrals and have sometimes worked for other consulting firms in Phoenix or elsewhere, but getting someone to hire me unreferrred or sight unseen or with no experience is a lot tougher.

### **How did you meet this challenge?**

The phone is my lifeline now. I do have friends up here now, so that helps. But when you're working there's limited time for them, so I need my work-friends. I mostly make/keep those over the phone. I really didn't anticipate this problem, but I was/am able to compensate. When I don't have enough work, it rears its ugly head again, but at least now I have friends to call on here.

The second one I'm still working on. I really rely on referrals, but I need to do more about going back to former clients to see what their needs are now.

One additional problem I have that impacts getting work is rates. I've reached a point in my career where I am considering different pricing options, so that I work a fixed bid that gives me my rate based on being very fast

but doesn't compromise the client or the consulting firm by asking them to pay more than their usual. I'm almost twice as fast as newer IDs, so I often make less money on a project if I take their rate. I need to find more creative ways to get the compensation I deserve based on my experience and efficiency.

### **What is the one bit of advice you would give to someone who is just starting to work from home?**

Be sure you can handle the physical isolation and are self-disciplined and structured enough to not put off all your work until the last minute, or you'll be up until all hours. That is also an advantage - it's easier to work late hours to get a project done when you're working from home than it is if you only work onsite.

I've also heard of people making all types of arrangements to "fake" the real work situation. One person gets up, eats, dresses, and gets into their car to drive around the block to come back home to work. Others shut their door at night to keep themselves



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## Instructional Designer

# Jane Smith

from working when it's not reasonable or for life-balance. Be sure to keep a balanced life and don't let work take over both work and home.

It's imperative to have a separate room for a home office that has its own door that can be closed to shut out the outside world if need be. I have a stereo, a good amount of surface/work space, and a separate phone line for business and home.

I generally do not answer the home line if I'm working, and it doesn't ring in the office (although I can hear it ring elsewhere), so that my clients I'm on the phone with don't hear it. I also have the phone company's voicemail for both business and home so that I never miss a call and can choose which calls to take based on what I'm doing.

There's discipline in that, too - being able to shut out home when you need to but also use it for breaks when appropriate. Doing laundry is a good break if you don't get sidetracked and lose a lot of work time on "things along the way."

### **Jane's favorite resources for home-based workers:**

The STC CIC SIG discussion list is invaluable source of information on working independently and at home.

I do have a handout on how to determine rates based on a salary and how to manage your money so that you save for vacations, holidays, etc., and don't suffer any ill-consequences. It is on my website on the templates page:

[www.jemcommunications.com/templates.htm](http://www.jemcommunications.com/templates.htm).



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# Evo Terra

### **How and when did you become a home-based worker?**

I quit my job as head of eBusiness for a large Scottsdale-based company in March of 2003. I had worked for the company in various capacities for almost 14 years and had hit a ceiling. Oh, that and driving 103.3 miles round-trip each day sucked hard. I was living in Cottonwood at the time.

When I quit, I wasn't exactly sure what I was going to do. But I'm a resourceful guy and wasn't all that concerned. Later that day I received an offer from a vendor I had hired for the company. They knew I didn't have a plan and offered me a paycheck (good) to do some part-time consulting work for them (also good). I'd still have to work directly with my previous employer (could have been bad but was very, very good), but would only have to be down in Scottsdale once week (really, really good).

The rest of the time, I'd work from my home office. Which meant the spare bedroom.

### **What great advantage did you expect when you started working from home?**

Freedom to do what I want, when I wanted it. And yes, I got most of that. But the reality

**When you do it all yourself, you have to do it all yourself.**

is that when you work with other people, you have to be able to work when they want to. Yes, you could get the report done at 9:00 in the evening. But your co-workers were expecting it at 4:00 their time. EST. And you're on Pacific.

### **What has been your greatest challenge in being a home-based worker?**

Getting structure to my day. These days, I'm wearing a lot of different hats as I do so many things for so many clients -- and sometimes I'm my own client. I really needed help just organizing and planning, since I'm not good at that by nature.



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Now that I'm home, my "inputs" have increased dramatically. I subscribe to hundreds of RSS feeds to keep up with what's happening and see a few hundred emails each day. Then there are phone calls, physical mail... When you do it all yourself, you have to do it all yourself.

### **How did you meet this challenge?**

No one would make the mistake of calling me organized. The one thing that did work for me was adopting an "Inbox Zero" philosophy. I won't win any medals with my strict adherence, but it's working quite well from me. I'm a long way from perfecting the entire Getting Things Done approach to time management, but it's coming along. All the other productivity tools -- and I tried half a dozen at least -- didn't work out.

### **What is the one bit of advice you would give to someone who is just starting to work from home?**

Don't be afraid to re-boot your process several times in the first year. Some things SOUND like a good idea, but then they don't work out.

Don't stick with them if you think there may be a better way. Few of us get it right out of the gate.



Evo Terra is an author, podcaster and speaker who works from his home office in Chandler, Arizona. He is the co-author of *Podcasting for Dummies*, the #1 best-selling podcasting book.

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## Real Estate Broker, Blogger & Speaker



# Jay Thompson

### **How and when did you become a home-based worker?**

My wife and I started a "Virtual Office real estate brokerage" on February 27, 2008 - in the middle of one of the worst real estate markets in history. We wanted to run our real estate brokerage our way, and felt encumbered by our "traditional broker". The only way to \*truly\* run a real estate business how you want to is to get a broker's license and open your own brokerage. So we did.

The reason we went with a home-based office was primarily for the reduction in overhead expenses. Renting commercial space is the most significant expense a traditional real estate office incurs.

In our experience in a traditional office, agents rarely, if ever, met clients in the office. Rows of agent's desks sat empty the vast majority of the time. It seemed like a waste of money and effort to maintain a physical real estate office.

### **What great advantage did you expect when you started working from home?**

Freedom to work how and when we wanted and needed to, and the previously mentioned \*very\* significant reduction in overhead expense were the advantages we expected. And yes, both were quickly realized.

### **What has been your greatest challenge in being a home-based worker?**

We expected some potential clients might not consider us a "serious brokerage" if we didn't have all the fancy trappings of a brick and mortar office. In reality, this does not seem to be an issue. To my knowledge, we have not lost a prospective client due to not having a brick and mortar presence.

On the contrary, several clients have told us that they think it makes perfect sense. We are able to pass on some of our savings on overhead to both clients and to agents we employ -- which both groups appreciate.

Surprisingly, the lack of a "real office" has bothered a couple of agents that were considering coming into our brokerage. They felt they needed a place to bring clients. This,



Jay Thompson runs Thompson's Realty with his wife, Francy, from their home in Gilbert, Arizona. He's a real estate blogger and speaks on social media topics.

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## Real Estate Broker, Blogger & Speaker



# Jay Thompson

despite the fact that two of them never had brought a client into their current office. But they wanted to keep that possibility open, "just in case".

My clients respect what I do for them, having a fancy desk and Corinthian leather furniture doesn't impress the kind of clients I enjoy working with.

### **How did you meet this challenge?**

As far as the challenge of not being able to hire the agent that feels they need an office, I've done nothing. I simply move on and hire someone that likes the idea of a virtual office. They aren't hard to find.

When it comes to the traditional brokerages that feel it can't work, I honestly don't let that bother me either. Many traditional brick and mortar real estate offices are shuttering their doors, closing branch offices and struggling to make ends meet. We're not. We've had our most productive year in real estate ever.

### **What is the one bit of advice you would give to someone who is just starting to work from home?**

It takes discipline to work from home. It is easy to plop on the couch and turn on the TV. It's very easy to say, "I'll get to that later". You **HAVE** to treat your home office as a work space. I "go to work" every day. Granted, I don't always take a shower (which is clearly Too Much Information), but it's really, really important to look at your home office as your work place. Ideally, a separate area, not a laptop on a TV tray, needs to be your "office".

### **Jay' also offers this advice to couples working together:**

If you and your spouse are going to work together from home, you'd best have your relationship ducks in a row. Spending 24 hours a day with your spouse, no matter how much you love them, can be challenging. Make some "alone time". That doesn't mean you love them any less. Everyone needs some space now and then.



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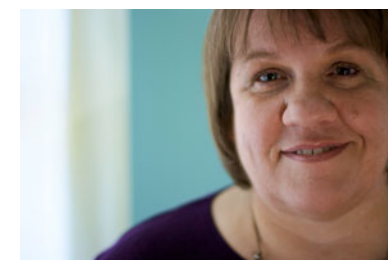
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# About The Author

## About Charlene Kingston

Charlene Kingston is an information strategist and writer with more than 25 years experience solving business challenges with practical information solutions. She started Crow Information Design in 1995 in the Phoenix metropolitan area.



*I wrote this ebook to help anyone who dreams about a home office or struggles with the challenges of working from home.*

*I'd love to hear how you use this ebook to improve your work life.*

Regards,



When she is not meeting with clients or traveling, Charlene spends most of her time in her home office.

Find Charlene online:

- Follow Charlene on Twitter: [CrowInfoDesign](#) (business) and [Kinchie](#) (personal).
- Visit her website: [Crow Information Design](#) and read her blog: [From The Crow's Nest](#)
- Become a fan on Facebook: [Charlene Kingston—Information Strategist and Writer](#)

## About Crow Information Design

Crow Information Design helps companies and freelance professionals present themselves in writing online and in print. My team can help you with:

- |                |                  |                     |                          |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| ■ Social Media | ■ Screencasts    | ■ User Manuals      | ■ Online Help            |
| ■ Ebooks       | ■ Websites       | ■ Software Demos    | ■ Training Programs      |
| ■ Blogs        | ■ Press releases | ■ Job/Task Analysis | ■ Knowledgebase Articles |
| ■ Editing      | ■ Indexing       | ■ Business Analysis | ■ RFP/RFQ Responses      |

**Finding the shortest distance between your message and your audience.**