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YOUR BUSINESS.**



HOW TO BALANCE A BUSY HOME LIFE WITH RUNNING A BUSINESS

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BALANCING CARE AND HOME WITH RUNNING A BUSINESS CAN OFTEN BE A JUGGLING ACT FOR MANY SMALL BUSINESSES...

IT'S DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE...

Maybe you're someone who started your business because you wanted to work from home to spend more time with your family, but recently the business has got busier, or the demands of family have increased, and you've started to feel torn between work and family. Maybe you're a single parent and wondering how to get started on setting up a business in order to make some money for your family as well as making time for your children. Maybe you're caring for an elderly relative and you want to make sure that you're able to run your business in the most effective way possible.

THIS MINI-GUIDE WILL HELP YOU TO:

- Look at ways of improving your work-life balance. Learn some time management tools and techniques to help you better manage your time.
- Pick up some tips on organising yourself more effectively.
- Find out about the help and support that's out there to improve your work-life balance.

FROM CHAOS TO CALM... TIME MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

We all have busy lives these days and at times it can be difficult to see where you could fit in running a business on top of all the other things you have to do. But don't worry, lots of people are successfully managing to do just that by using tools and techniques that help them find the mix that's right for them between work and life.

When you're starting a business you might write a business plan that clearly sets out what you want to achieve in a business and how you will get there. In the same way, the key to time management is in the name of this document — the word plan. Make some time for planning what you need to do each day and how are you going to do it (for business and home), and you'll soon find you're getting more done - and maybe even have some time to switch off and relax.

LEARNING TO LOVE LISTS

Speak to someone who is good at getting things done and they'll usually be a great list maker. Try and get into the habit of making lists to keep everything in one place - even if you have separate lists for work and home. Writing it down on a list will take it out of your mind and reduce the stress of trying to remember everything at once. Keep each item on your list a small enough task to be achievable fairly quickly – that way you'll build up motivation by getting through at least one thing every day.



LEARNING HOW TO MANAGE YOUR TIME BETTER

THINK ABOUT HOW YOU SPEND YOUR TIME NOW.

You may find it helpful to write down your ideas using the columns below. As you go about your day, write down your activities (business and home), how long you spend on them and how you're feeling. This will show you if any activities can be cut down or even cut out altogether to free up time, and which activities are linked with different feelings and energy levels.

| Real Time | What I'm Doing | Time Spent On It | Importance (High/Medium/Low) | Feelings and Energy Levels |
|-----------|--------------------------|------------------|--|---|
| 9:30am | Checking personal emails | 1 hour | Medium (some were about school trip coming up) | Guilty that it's 10:30am and I've not started working yet |



LEARNING TO PRIORITISE

One of the secrets in getting more things done and juggling lots of things at once is learning to prioritise - both for your home and business. Although it can sound like it, urgent and important are not always the same things. Something might be very important for you, your family or your business, but not need doing now. Start with the really urgent jobs on your list first. Don't get distracted by the bigger but less urgent tasks that you could work on later.

URGENT

Urgent tasks need doing now but might not always have value later on. Too many 'urgent' items on your lists may mean that you find it harder to find time to get through your important tasks.

IMPORTANT

Important things are those that make a lasting difference - to you, to others or to your business.



MANAGING YOUR TIME MORE EFFECTIVELY

Write down all the tasks you have to do at the moment. This might include tasks from different lists e.g. personal, work, family tasks and starting a business. Use the table on the opposite page as a guide and write your different tasks into one of the four boxes. Over time you will move tasks from box 2 to box 1 (moving from planning it to doing it once the deadline draws nearer).

SOME DIFFICULT QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF:

CAN I GIVE THIS URGENT TASK TO SOMEONE ELSE?

IS IT REALLY URGENT? WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF IT'S NOT DONE NOW?

For example, dealing with a customer complaint will be urgent – it needs to be responded to now as well as being something that’s very important for your business to get right, so it goes in box 1. Networking to get your business known is important but doesn’t have the urgency of a family or business crisis and so would go in box 2. Box 2 is where you want most things to be. This is central to success as this is where your planning and preparing tasks

will be - your effective ‘space’. You will have to be organised and block out times in your day or week to focus on box 2 tasks so that you can manage the important tasks and reduce the amount of time spent in crisis management (box 1). You might need to ‘borrow’ some time for box 1 and 2 by trying to cut down on the things you do that fall into box 4.

| | URGENT | NOT URGENT |
|---------------|--|--|
| IMPORTANT | BOX 1: DO THESE NOW | BOX 2: PLAN TIME FOR THESE |
| NOT IMPORTANT | BOX 3: GET RID OF THESE IF POSSIBLE | BOX 4: TRY AND RESIST OR STOP DOING THESE |

TOP TIPS FOR BALANCING CARE AND HOME WITH A BUSINESS

TOP TIP ONE

SET YOURSELF CLEAR GOALS ABOUT THE BALANCE YOU WANT

You need to be clear about what your goals are for the balance you want between care, home and work or running a business. Sharing your goals with others can be a great motivator and help you work out what support you need to achieve the balance. You can also find out more about setting goals in our other mini-guides and workshops.

TOP TIP TWO

KEEP TRACK AND REWARD YOURSELF

Get into the habit of making lists and more importantly using them every day to keep your work-life balance on track. Tick off tasks as you go and make sure you build in rewards once you finish things. Maybe the rewards can help with work-life balance in themselves.

TOP TIP THREE

REVIEW YOUR PROGRESS

Seeing the progress you've made can help to keep you motivated and keep good habits going so that the balance doesn't tip. When you work for someone else, you might have a review to see how work's going. Now that you are your own boss, you need to look for this in other ways. Do you have a friend of yours who's running a business who you could get together with and do this for each other? It's a useful chance to take stock of your achievements and celebrate progress that you've made in getting a better work-life balance!

TOP TIP FOUR

MAP YOUR SUPPORT NETWORKS

If you're finding it difficult juggling home and business, write down all the places and people you can think about asking for help or support. It might be helpful for you to map out your support as below. Sometimes just seeing the support on paper can make you start to feel part of a team.

TOP TIP FIVE

TRY AND REDUCE DISTRACTIONS

To be effective in getting things done so that you make the most of your time when you're working on your business, you need to try and keep distractions to a minimum. You might not be able to get rid of distractions completely, but there will usually be things you can do to try and reduce disruptions and distractions.

TOP TIP SIX

GET USED TO PLANNING HOW LONG THINGS TAKE

If you find it difficult to work out how long a task will take you, try this exercise of working backwards from a deadline.

STEP 1:

Draw an arrow on a piece of paper and put the deadline at the end of the arrow. If you haven't got a deadline, put the date at the end of the arrow that you think you will be able to get the task finished by.

STEP 2:

Break the arrow down into weeks or months if it's a longer deadline.

STEP 3:

Start at the date at the end of the arrow. Underneath the line, write down everything you need to have ready each week or month to meet the deadline (working backwards all the time).

STEP 4:

Once you've broken down the task beneath the line, above the line write down any personal things you are doing that week.

STEP 5:

You should eventually get to the point where you've broken the task down into every small step you can think of. What date have you got to at the beginning of your arrow? If you've arrived at a date that's earlier than today's date – don't panic. Either cut out some tasks in order to meet the deadline or get back to the person with more realistic timescale that you've just worked out on the arrow chart.



REFLECTIONS

Writing down the new things you have experienced - keeping a 'learning log' - will help you think about your day to day activities during this time of change. This can help you to understand what you are finding out as you go along, as well as showing you just how far you've come, when you look back. Keeping a learning log can help you to see areas where you are

doing well and areas where you need help and support from others e.g. a business network. Most people prefer to use a small notebook as their learning log - keeping everything together in one place. Some people also like to use pictures or drawings to help to describe what happened and what they learned from it.



STARTING YOUR LEARNING LOG

Keeping learning logs and writing your thoughts and ideas down can sometimes seem difficult at first, but as with any new challenge, it gets easier with practice. You could try writing about meetings or activities you get involved with while setting up your business and think about what you learned from them. Some starter questions to ask yourself are:

- **DID IT WORK OUT AS I THOUGHT IT WOULD?**
- **WHAT WAS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PART OF THE MEETING /ACTIVITY?**
- **WHAT AM I LEARNING ABOUT STARTING UP A BUSINESS?**
- **WHAT AM I PROUD OF AT THE MOMENT?**
- **WOULD I DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME? WHY?**
- **WHAT AM I LEARNING ABOUT MYSELF?**



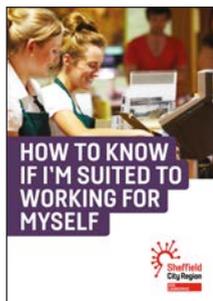
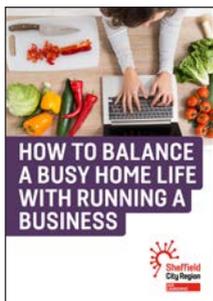
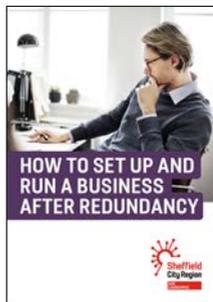
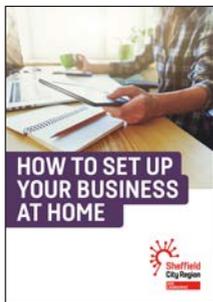
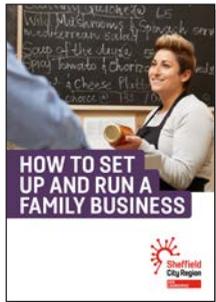
THINKING OF RUNNING YOUR BUSINESS FROM HOME?

Sometimes, running your business from home can make the juggling act between work and home a little easier. But you need to accept that the business is work, and so you'll need the space, time and concentration so that you can get your work done well. If you're thinking of starting up a business

from home, you could book on one of our workshops or pick up some information on this topic. Contact the Growth Hub team to find out what is currently available.

OTHER TITLES IN THIS SERIES...

- How to... understand if I'm suited to working for myself
- How to... balance a busy home life with running a business
- How to... manage the move from employment to self employment
- How to... set up and run a retail business
- How to... increase self-confidence and self-belief for starting up in business
- How to... set up and run a business after redundancy
- How to... set up and run a family business
- How to... set up and run a business if you are new to doing business in the UK
- How to... set up and run a business when you have been out of the job market



USEFUL RESOURCES

To find out more about legal, financial or general information about starting a business from home contact us:

SCR Growth Hub **03330 00 00 39** or growthhub@sheffieldcityregion.org.uk
Visit our website for useful information on starting up or running a business and to watch video case studies of how other businesses have overcome different barriers to make their business a success.

www.carersuk.org/Home

Carers provide unpaid care by looking after an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or partner. This website provides a good place to find out about support for carers.

www.worklifebalancecentre.org

A virtual resource that aims to raise awareness and promote discussion and research of work-life balance issues.

www.familyandchildcaretrust.org

National childcare charity that promotes high quality affordable childcare for all.

www.pacey.org.uk

Provides quality registered childminding for children, families and communities.

www.gingerbread.org.uk

Gingerbread is the leading support organisation for lone parent families in England and Wales.

DISCLAIMER

This information is intended to give an overview and introduction to the subject. Any legal information is provided for guidance only and should not be regarded as an authoritative statement of the law. Sheffield City Region Growth Hub cannot be held responsible for any actions taken as a result of this guide.