

Some Drawbacks of Working at Home

Ready to abandon the office to work at home? Before you do, remember the hum drum, or no hum drum, can become mind boggling.

Consider this:

Isolation: One of the biggest challenges of working from home is being alone, all day, every day. Try to break up your day with junkets outside the house. Your local coffee shop could make for a nice, occasional offsite working spot.

Punch a clock: The tendency to forget to set, and stick by, working hours is not something you want to make a habit. Commit to a firm start and end time for your work day. Break that commitment only in emergencies. When you punch out, don't punch back in until the next day.

Distractions: Housework, errands, kids, pets -- these can't be allowed to become a distraction. To be productive, you must make a commitment to being at work while at home.

For small business people, sharing office space is a possibility. This can put business owners in a work setting with other busy bees.

Planning an Inverse Vacation

When people plan a vacation, they probably have a particular destination, like Disney World, in mind from the beginning. From that point, they will try to find the best deal available for that location, but they will always be limited to deals surrounding that choice. Enter Inverse Vacation Planning.

Trent Hamm at The Simple Dollar explains that for people who want to vacation on a budget they should be looking at things backward. Find the deal, then consider going there.

This approach is sort of like browsing the clearance racks at a department store. People are not usually looking for something specific there, but often, a great deal will suddenly appear. Clearance shopping is a very gratifying experience for many because they receive a great deal and the unexpected thrill of surprise.

Get started by keeping your eyes open for deals. Trent explains that deals will often fall into people's lap if they are simply on the lookout for opportunities. Visiting family across the country, taking advantage of a friend's unused cabin or stumbling upon a program that offers free tickets and discounts to students of a certain age are all ways in which he was able to turn something that looked uninspiring on the surface into a meaningful family vacation that everyone could enjoy.

Travel is often the largest expense for far-away destinations and searching for flights well in advance can reveal incredible discounts if a person does not already have an endpoint in mind. If a family was not even considering an international trip for their holiday, discovering insanely cheap tickets to the UK might spark a new feeling of possibility and interest.

Don't forget to check last minute cruises. Cruise ships want to be full. If you are flexible, you can get the last rooms at a great price. Watch for sales and try the adventure of not really knowing where you'll end up.



Mom's Greeting Card is Unreadable to Young People

A plaintive email posted on Yahoo Answers: A questioner says her mother gave her a beautiful Valentine's Day card with a lovely written message.

She couldn't read a word. It was written in cursive, a foreign language to young people, who were never taught the script used for a thousand years in their language, the script of their parents and grandparents. Was she missing something not learning cursive?

The answers from kids pointed out they were faced with cursive writing in letters and in school and they couldn't read it either.

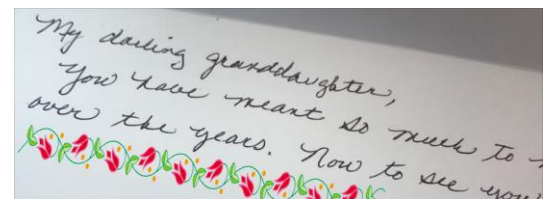
Cursive writing was taken out of school curriculum in 2010, a dying, unnecessary art to be replaced by keyboarding.

Problem is people still use cursive. They send handwritten letters and cards to their children and grandchildren. Do they know their sentiments are in language foreign to the recipient?

Despite studies that show handwriting improves fine motor skills and enhanced the composition of ideas, schools have all but made cursive obsolete. In June 2016, however, Louisiana had passed a law requiring public and charter schools to teach cursive writing to children from the 3rd to the 12th grade. It joined 10 other states including Virginia, California and Texas where the teaching of cursive script is a state education requirement.

According to Abigail Walhausen, in her article, "Learning Cursive is a Basic Right", "running hand" is tied to being able to sign one's name and "the signature, the ability to sign one's own name," she says, "has long been an essential marker of society." Walhausen says students understand the pedigree that it represents, "has become a status marker."

After typewriters, handwriting became a choice, but now it is a choice older people can't afford to make when communicating with the young.



Do You Know...

... Someone that could use our services? Perhaps a colleague, friend, family member, or networking buddy?

... If you would think of 3 or 4 people that could use our services, then don't hesitate to call them and give them our name and phone number. Be sure to have them mention your name when they call so we can send you a referral bonus!

... We are always looking for reliable employees. If you know of anyone looking for a job have them call Jessica at extension 224.

Thanks in advance for your help and we look forward to sending cash your way!



New Car Prices on the Rise

Interest rates, production costs, and regulations have made new cars cost more.

According to Experian, the average consumer pays \$495 for a new car loan. That is more than the \$447 they paid in 2008. The average interest rate in the third quarter of 2016 was 4.69 percent, compared to the higher rate of 6.14 percent in 2008.

Consumers were financing more car in 2016 than in 2008 -- up to an average of \$30,022 compared to \$24,600 for 2008.

The cost of cars is also higher. In fact, according to Autotrader, about 3 million new cars should have been sold last year, just looking at population growth.

Part of the problem, says Heritage.org, is that new regulations push car prices up, just as new technology actually pushes prices down.

The price of a new vehicle is more than \$7,000 higher than 2008, Heritage says. It points to new, costly fuel economy standards that are driving prices up.

Prices are also under pressure at the dealer level. According to Automotive News, franchised new-car dealers in the U.S. spent a combined \$3.2 billion in 2012 to meet 61 new federal regulations. Those costs are passed along to consumers.



"I tried those once. They leaked."

'Pay What You Can' Cafes Spring Up

Pay what you can' (PWYC) cafes and restaurants have sprung up around the world as a way of revolutionizing charitable food giving.

In the U.S., there are about 50 restaurants across the country exploring the model and these include the JBJ Soul Kitchen in New Jersey, set up by the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation, and the One World Cafe in Salt Lake City.

Non-profit PWYC establishments don't rely solely on the sale of their food and service but adopt a mix of revenue generators including grants, donations (both of food and money), and "paying it forward" where patrons who can afford to, discreetly subsidize the meals of those who can either pay very little or not pay at all.

Working to throw off the stigma of food assistance, PWYC cafes and restaurants attempt to create a community, of both the needy and the non-needy, and serve menus that put them way beyond what could be considered a soup kitchen.

Location is also important, according to Mariana Chilton, a researcher at AR Drexel University who started EAT (Everyone At The Table) in Philadelphia. Chilton told NPR that the restaurant would need to draw on a variety of customers. EAT cafe's location in Mantua, a couple miles from Philadelphia's center, makes it an option for local hospital employees and college students to middle-class and low-income residents, says Chilton.

EAT's mission, like other PWYC eateries, is to ensure that as many people as possible have access to nutritious food. Chilton, though, also had a personal desire to make dining-out accessible to those on a low income. At EAT, diners are offered a three-course meal, with a choice of soup and salad, main course including a nightly special and two options for dessert. There is also a kids' menu and specialty drinks at a fixed price. Patrons get a check, just as they would in any other establishment, but the total is only a suggested price. Only the server and diner will know, in the end, how much was paid.

Trivia Teaser – Salt and Pepper

1. Which actress starred as a CIA agent suspected of being a mole in the 2010 movie "Salt"? a-Jennifer Lawrence, b-Angelina Jolie, c-Scarlet Johansson, d-Winona Ryder.

2. Who starred as Pepper Anderson, the title character on the 1970s TV drama "Police Woman"? a-Florence Henderson, b-Kate Jackson, c-Angie Dickinson, d-Teresa Graves.

3. According to the Book of Genesis, whose wife was turned into a pillar of salt she turned back to look at the destruction of the city of Sodom? a-Jacob, b-Lot, c-Laban, d-Abraham.

4. Which song was the first cut on the Beatles album "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band"? a-"Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," b-"For the Benefit of Mr. Kite," c-"Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds," d-"When I'm 64."

5. Which actress plays Pepper Potts in the "Iron Man" movie series? a-Megan Fox, b-Lindsay Lohan, c-Cameron Diaz, d-Gwyneth Paltrow.

6. Who challenged the British-imposed salt tax by leading the 250-mile Dandi Salt March in 1930? a-Henry Stanley, b-Benito Mussolini, c-Mahatma Gandhi, d-Thomas Hardy.

7. What is the active ingredient in pepper spray? a-Daraprim, b-Capsaicin, c-Psilocybin, d-Diphenhydramine.

8. Which song was the biggest hit on the Billboard Hot 100 chart for the hip hop trio Salt-N-Pepa? a-"Push It," b-"Whatta Man," c-"Let's Talk About Sex," d-"Do You Want Me."

9. Defensive end Julius Peppers accumulated 81 sacks between 2002 and 2008 as a member of which NFL team? a-Pittsburgh Steelers, b-Chicago Bears, c-Green Bay Packers, d-Carolina Panthers.

10. Built completely with salt blocks, the Palacio de Sal hotel is located at the edge of Salar de Uyuni, the world's largest salt flat, in which South American country? a-Bolivia, b-Venezuela, c-Chile, d-Colombia.

11. Alto saxophonist and clarinetist Art Pepper was a longtime member of which band leader's big band? a-Count Basie, b-Stan Kenton, c-Woody Herman, d-Glenn Miller.

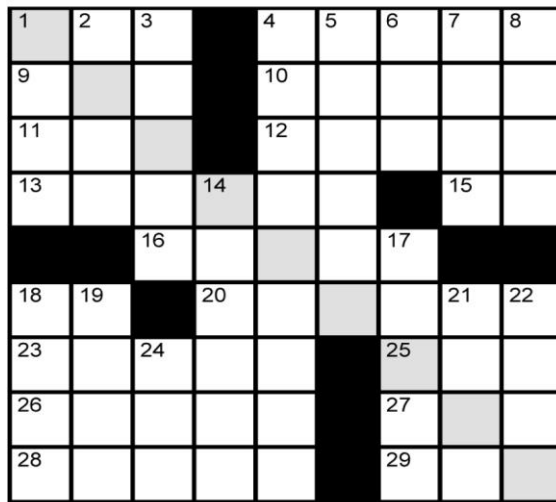
1-b, Angelina Jolie
2-c, Angie Dickinson
3-b, Lot
4-a, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely
Hearts Club Band
5-d, Gwyneth Paltrow
6-c, Mahatma Gandhi
7-b, Capsaicin
8-b, "Whatta Man"
9-d, Carolina Panthers
10-a, Bolivia
11-b, Stan Kenton

Answers to 'Salt and Pepper'

Ice Cream Drink

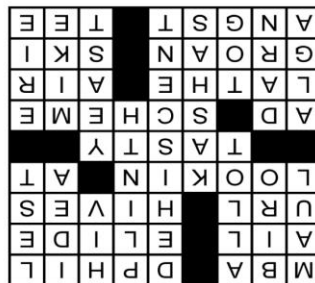
Across

1. Wharton degree
 4. Oxford doctorate, briefly
 9. Be sick
 10. Slur over
 11. Web browser entry
 12. Busy places
 13. Visit briefly
 15. @
 16. "Yum!"
 18. Commercial
 20. Plot
 23. Carpenter's machine
 25. Put on TV
 26. Response to a weak joke
 27. Hit the slopes
 28. Anxiety
 29. In Phil's bag
- Down
1. Handle roughly
 2. Ballpoint pen inventor
 3. Apportion
 4. Bursting, in botany
 5. Pedestal part
 6. Target of vaccine
 7. Notion
 8. For fear that
 14. Buckwheat grains
 17. Bakery supply
 18. Pond organism
 19. Mend socks
 21. Boxer Tyson
 22. Buffalo's lake
 24. Dress (up)



research

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The headline is a clue to the answer in the diagonal.

Dealing with a Demanding Boss

Anyone working in corporate America is bound to have a run-in with a demanding boss.

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), managing a demanding boss is a challenging but feasible task. The key point is to understand the reasons behind the demanding behavior in the first place. Is he or she simply an over-achiever with high personal standards, or do they have a chronically hostile, abusive style that doesn't seem to correlate to work results?

Standing up for yourself: According to Forbes, it is crucial not to be used as a punching bag. To say nothing is enabling the boss to keep displaying bad behavior. A lack of confrontation is the same thing as approving it. Gently confronting the boss with a calm, rational style will help to disarm them and help get your perspective across.

Set boundaries: Frequently, difficult bosses will try to reach outside of regular working hours to get results from their employees. If it is boundless access to your time that the boss wants, according to the Wall Street Journal, then it is time to negotiate some boundaries. Compromising with weekend projects, late-night updates, or whatever else could all work to appease the boss and ensure a more positive work-life balance.

Handling business: As mentioned before, it is common for bosses to be demanding because they are someone who is on-the-rise or otherwise wants to achieve great things. Lifehack.org suggests that managing your boss by submitting your weekly plans and accomplishments, making the boss look good, and making sure that he or she knows what you want for your development are key points to co-existing.

At wit's end? It could be time to move on, but use these strategies proactively to ensure that the next boss doesn't get the upper hand.



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The Ins and Outs of Boring Business Meetings

Meetings have become so systemic in the workplace that a host of names have arose to describe the frequent gatherings. Here are some steps to increase your meeting's effectiveness. Whether you call them a stand-up or huddle, a meeting's success depends on how they are styled.

Keep meeting lengths to no more than an hour. Think of it in terms of how much per/hour the employees are being paid. Sitting through meetings that last more than an hour is a costly venture for the company.

Limit the number of attendees. Michael Mankins of Bain & Co. told The Wall Street Journal that "for every additional meeting participant over seven, the likelihood of making a sound decision goes down by 10 percent."

Often, too many people chiming in at meetings can overwhelm the topic at hand. Also, you run the risk of too many people drowning out each other with their points. Small groups can foster more interaction, and more results.

Ensure the meeting includes a group of employees whose projects and departments are being affected by the subject, says Mankins.

Have a prepared agenda. This may be a no-brainer, but Mankins says many meeting holders try to wing it. Prepared agendas help you keep your meetings short and effective. Follow-up with the meeting's minutes, and assign tasks to complete any project goals.

About Our Company

Celebrity Cleaning Inc. is a full service commercial cleaning company that serves the greater Lehigh Valley.

Services include general cleaning, carpet cleaning all types of hard floor care.

Owners, Wally Myers and Kevin Brown, have a combined 50 years of experience in the cleaning industry, and they feel it's important to provide cleaning services that place the utmost importance on the health and safety of their clients and employees. For that reason, they are active participants in industry associations ISSA (International Sanitary Supply Association) and BSCAI (Building Service Contractors Association International).

Fraudulent Credit Charges

A thief often only needs the numbers on a credit card to rip you off. According to CreditCards.com, about 31.8 million Americans had their cards breached in 2014 alone.

Personal Finance publication Kiplinger suggests that the most efficient way to correct an error is often to contact the merchant first. If they are unable to help, contacting the credit card company within 60 days of the charge will trigger a few protections under the Fair Credit Billing Act (FCBA). Under that protection, customers will not be responsible for paying the charge or any interest until the issue is resolved.



March Birthdays and Company

Anniversaries

Birthdays

- 1st – James Finnen
- 14th – Wally Myers
- 20th – Rafael Toledo
- 20th – Brian VanWhy
- 31st – Zenny Senese-Kim

Anniversaries

- 22 years – Nestor Cabrera
- 16 years – Cindy Long
- 6 years – Rodney Rothrock
- 3 years – James Finnen



What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson