

Working From Home

©Tara Crooks

It was less than twenty years ago that women slowly made their way into the workforce, some out of necessity and some out of wanting a career outside of the home. It is getting increasingly harder to make ends meet with just one income. Many women have since bridged the gap in income while simultaneously stressing the importance of staying home with their children by starting their own home-based business.

What progress! Owning a home based business does more than just allow you to earn a living, it gives you the freedom to test your limits and see what you can accomplish. There are many benefits to working from home; low overhead, no need for childcare, tax deductions, flexibility, safety, security, and it's simple to relocate.

However rewarding, working from home is harder than it seems. No matter what your choice for working from home might be, you need to realize a few things before you take the plunge.

Working at home requires discipline. All too often individuals want the money but they do not want the work. Success takes work. Images of watching day-time TV or meeting the girls for lunch everyday must be set aside. Self-employed people must keep focused on setting up the business and sticking to deadlines. Remember, you have not said goodbye to the boss. The boss you have now is you, your customers, and your success.

If you work from home you must expect the unexpected. You must be prepared to adjust your schedule at any given moment for any number of reasons - a sick child, a backed up drain, or an upset client.

You might have to give something up to work at home. Whether you have a full time job with a steady income or are just starting out and wanting to make some spending money you will have to invest either your time or your money. Remember millions don't fall off of trees so expect to put something toward your business.

You must always be on top of your game. To run a business as well as manage a household takes determination and scheduling. You may not feel like you have a schedule, but take a look at your day/week and see how you are spending your time.

The reality is that tomorrow you will not wake up and "sign up" to work from home. Your paycheck will not be instant. Legitimate employers with home based jobs hire the same way traditional employers do. There will be an application process and possibly an interview or test. Therefore, it is a good idea to have a resume written that outlines your skills and experiences.

If you choose direct sales, your sign-up might be instant, but the money will not. You will have to work hard to plan parties and online sales. You will also have a lot of

networking to do if you plan on making it a long term success. Plan your work and work your plan.

Lastly, if you choose to develop your own business concept, your work will encompass hours of research and development, marketing and promotion, and business planning.

I'm most certainly not trying to scare you about working from home. It is the most rewarding thing I have ever done. Military life takes us through many twists and turns and I can always take my business with me.

Tara Crooks, or "Household 6" in the Crooks' family, is best known for her ability to motivate and empower others. Tara's journey with the military began in 1998 when she and her husband PCS'd to their first duty station, Ft Hood. She and her husband, Kevin (US ARMY), have two beautiful little girls, Wrena and Chloe. Their family, including two dogs and a cat, is all snuggled in their cozy home in Fort Sill, Okla. Tara is the host of Army Wife Talk Radio and cofounder of the popular website www.ArmyWifeNetwork.com.

Army Wife Network is interactive empowerment for Army wives. Featuring Army Wife Talk Radio the original internet talk radio program for military wives, "Field Problems" a self-syndicated question and answer column for military families, "Field Exercises" live interactive events for military spouses, message boards, Loving