

PRINT MATTERS

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Working from home has its perks

At first glance, working from home can seem like a pretty sweet deal. You can make your own hours, kiss rush hour traffic goodbye and make pajamas or sweats your new standard for office attire.

There definitely are perks to this arrangement, home commuters will tell you, but working for home is not for everyone. In many cases, the hours are longer. Home-based professionals tend to work well into the night and often on weekends. They get flexibility, but it comes at a price.

"It takes a certain type of person to be able to work from home," says Shani Goss, owner of Goss Graphic Design. "You have to be motivated and disciplined, or you will never succeed."

So are the benefits of working from home worth the demands? If you're a hard worker anyway, it can be ideal.

Butterz (seated at right) is undoubtedly delighted that his owner, Shani Goss of Goss Graphic Design, works from home. ▼



"You get twice as much from me at home," says Roland Hopkins, editor of *The Carousel News & Trader*. "There's no 5 o'clock bell. There's no water cooler chatter. I also like to work in the middle of the night. I work better that way."

"I lose shutting off on Fridays, but I can play tennis at 11 in the morning on Tuesday."

Charlotte Brailey Kneeland, the editor and publisher of *Riding Instructor* magazine, says she doesn't see any disadvantages to working from home. "Sure I put in more hours, but they're hours of my choosing," she says. "There have been many 16-hour work days, but also many days when I can do something else or nothing at all."

Right at home

Kneeland says she knew she wanted to work from home for years before realizing her goal in 1974. "I've always loved being at home," she said. "I had to get up early and go off



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to work. I would hate leaving my home. I wanted the freedom of setting my own hours — working early in the morning in my pajamas is my best time. I always wanted to work and earn money; I just wanted it to be in my home.”

In her case, the flexibility of her work has allowed her to maintain a home office from New Jersey, New Hampshire and now, Florida.

It can be especially nice when you share your home office with a spouse. Kneeland says she and her husband work together — but they do make it a priority to maintain their own space, too.

“That’s a necessity,” Kneeland says. “My husband and I each have separate rooms for our offices, plus two more rooms in the house set up with tables for doing special projects and storing business supplies and files.”

For them, the arrangement is ideal. “We’ve been married since 1965, so we are tuned in to each other and are a great team in every way. It works very well.”

Goss and her husband have been experiencing similar office bliss. “People can’t believe that a husband and wife can be together 24/7 without

killing each other, but we make it work,” says Goss, who also works with her son, Alec.

“We have a large office set up in our home, so it’s comfortable and a great creative environment for us.”

“ I FINISHED THE
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TREES. ”

— Roland Hopkins

Pet projects

Of course, for many people, working from home means working alone. Hopkins, who has worked from home for several employers, says he does miss the companionship of office colleagues.

“I was a social butterfly in the office,” he says. “I certainly miss that going out together on a Thursday night or that, ‘Woo-hoo, it’s the weekend!’”

That’s not to say Hopkins is completely without companionship in his home office. He shares his workspace with two dogs, seven cats, three birds and a couple of rabbits.

“I have a couple of Cockatiels that, I’m told, are quite a bit louder on your side of the phone than mine,” he says.

Goss’ two cats like to make their presence known, too. That trait is not always a plus with those who come by the office. “I have a client that hates cats,” Goss explains. “She was sitting at

my desk and our 25-pound cat ran into the room and jumped on the desk right at her face. She screamed and ran into the kitchen in two seconds flat.”

Kneeland considers playtime with her felines as one of her favorite ways to take a break. She also enjoys relaxing on her La-Z-Boy and reading her Kindle.

When Hopkins makes time for a break, he usually spends it playing tennis or working in the yard. “I finished the magazine the other morning at dawn and went out and trimmed trees,” he says. “You can do stuff like that. You can say, ‘I’ve had it. I’m going to Home Depot at 1 p.m.’”

“The trade is, I’ll be working on Sunday.”

Balancing act

Working from home is simply a matter of maintaining equilibrium. It lets you make time for family, pets and for life. But it demands discipline when duty calls.

“It can be very easy for people to procrastinate and do other things instead of work when they are at home and don’t have a boss breathing down their neck,” Goss says. “Working from home is more effective for me, personally, because my best work is usually done later at night, and I can set my own hours.”

“I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to start and maintain a successful home-based business and never take it for granted,” she adds. “I think if you do quality work, and have a passion for what you do, that you can succeed as long as you are 100 percent dedicated.”



One on one

JPA profile: Jerry Zeller, finishing supervisor
Number of years with JPA: 4
(more than 40 years in the industry)

Why he loves JPA: “I like the people,” Zeller says. “They’re very easy to get along with; they’re easy to talk to. They’re also multi-talented. Most of the people can do multiple jobs. I just really enjoy working here. It’s unique, and it’s constantly changing.”

Family life: Zeller has two grown children. His son, Michael, lives in Bolingbrook, Ill., and his daughter Michele lives in Bradenton, Fla. Zeller’s 9-year-old grandson, Noah, was born on Halloween weighing only 1 pound, 9 ounces. “He was supposed to be born on Valentine’s Day, but he came early.” Zeller also has a granddaughter, Riley, who was born on the same day he was born. “It’s pretty easy to remember their birthdays.”



Hobbies: Zeller repairs computers part time for his brother’s business. “I love doing that. It’s like being an MD. My brother puts it like this: ‘You’ve got the computer in front of you, but it doesn’t talk to you.’”

Zeller also enjoys water skiing and once skied 18 miles downriver on one ski before resting and making



the return trip 18 miles upriver. He considers it a special treat to visit a friend in Florida. They’ve been followed by dolphins during sailing excursions. “That’s an absolute blast,” he says. Zeller and his friend also enjoy fishing; Zeller has caught puffer fish, stingrays, grouper and kingfish. “I haven’t caught a shark yet, but we’ll give it some more time,” he said.

Zeller also tries to travel as much as possible and loves reading. He’s careful to never break his books’ spines, saying it’s a tradition among those in the industry.

One cool fact: With his previous employer, Zeller joined the international franchise team on an extended stay in Europe. He spent about one and a half years in York, England and seven weeks in Krakow, Poland; some sites in the Polish city date back to the seventh century. “Krakow is one of the most beautiful cities I’ve ever seen in my entire life.” 



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RECIPE

Bacon sauce for macaroni shells

- 1 pound bacon
- 1 medium onion
- 1 can of tomato sauce
- 2 Tbsp. brown sugar

Slice bacon into ¾-inch pieces. Fry with chopped onion. Drain grease. Add tomato sauce and brown sugar. Heat thoroughly and pour over macaroni.

— courtesy of Jerry’s late mother Verna

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