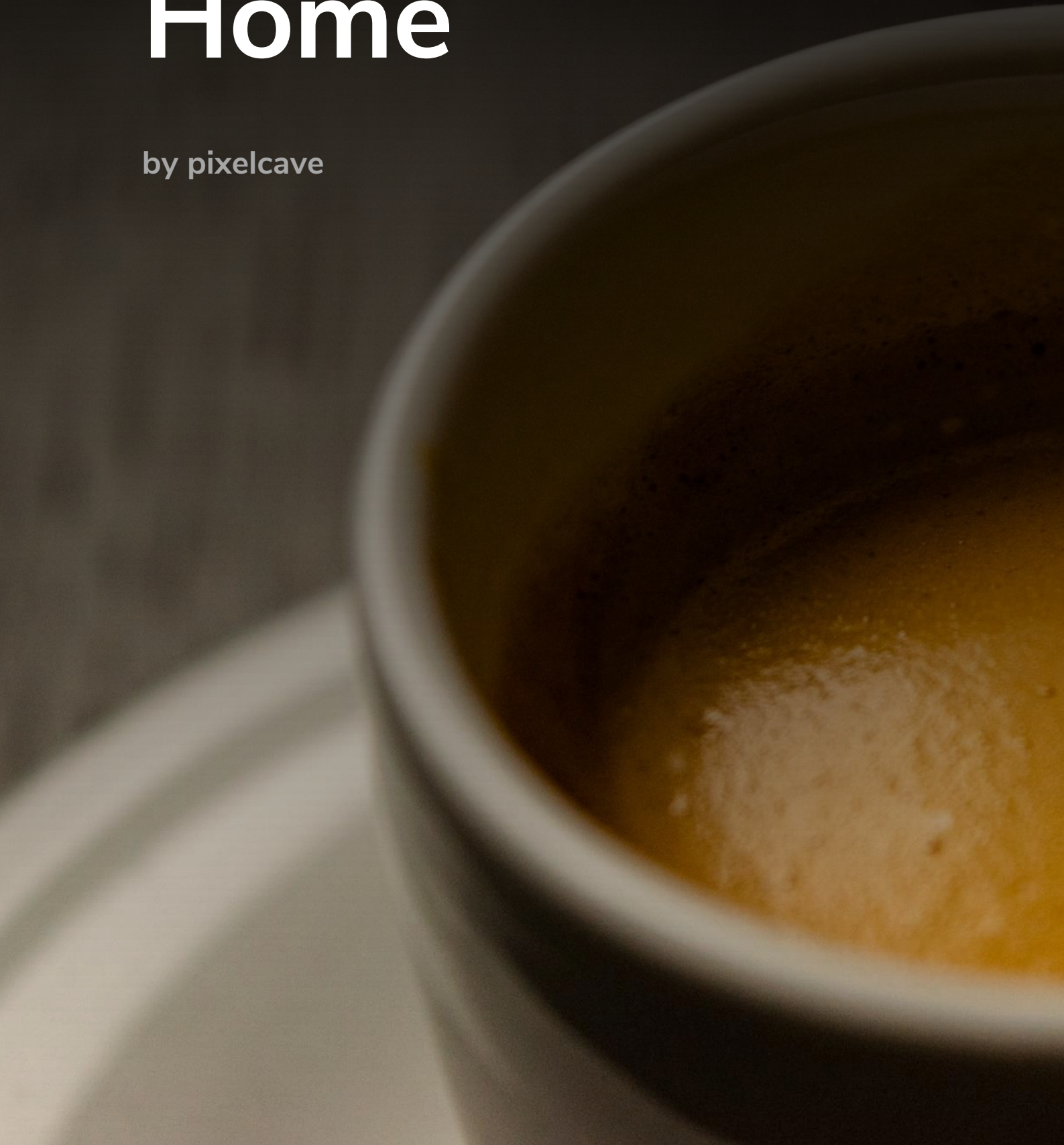


Working From Home

by pixelcave





An eBook by pixelcave.

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The Idea

Many people find the idea very intriguing and why shouldn't they? You can have the freedom to act completely under your own terms and work whenever/however you like from the comfort of your own home. It sounds, and it can be great but there is also a catch: you have to be ready to take full responsibility for everything in your life. Let's slow down and start from scratch.

Working from home

There are many professions that could give someone the freedom to work from the comfort of their home. There are also many companies nowadays that can hire you to work remotely from your own office.

Despite these cases, we will mainly focus on those that require you starting your own business and using a computer connected to the Internet. Some ideas, tips and suggestions could apply for all cases though, so you should be able to find helpful advice throughout this e-book.

Starting your own business means that you could:

1. Take on custom projects from third party companies or individuals from all over the world. This makes you a freelancer who offer his/her services to clients. In the same manner, you could also become a consultant, offering your valuable experience to where is needed.

2. Build your own start-up company which solves a problem or provides value to people. In simpler words, you could build a web application or create products for sale. You could do it on your own or partner with (or hire) other people to help you out.

Can I do it?

You can do it if you want it too much. As with everything in life, wanting something very much means that you are willing to do whatever it takes to achieve it. It means that you make yourself available to any change required to get there. Working from home is not a farfetched goal anymore and can be easier than you think.

Having a professional background in one or more of the following areas can give you a great head start:

1. Web Development
2. Web Design
3. Graphic Design
4. Programming
5. Marketing
6. Writing/Editing
7. Teaching
8. Consulting

If you only have the entrepreneurial spirit in you but lack any expertise, don't worry. With the right time exploitation, motivation and attitude you can acquire the knowledge you need to move a step forward.

It's not only about you, working from home

Before moving further, we would like to stretch out that working from home shouldn't only be about you. You consider it because you believe that it can change your life for the better but one of your goals should also to make the life of others better in any way you can from your own office.

It's about providing value first and foremost. It's about solving problems and making the life of other people easier and helping them achieve their own success. The side effects will be rewarding and can impact your life in so many positive ways.

Things To Consider

There are many things that you will probably have to deal with when working from home. You haven't thought about them, but that's ok. Our expectations are usually high at the beginning and all the positive stuff we keep reading online might have something to do with it.

A photo of someone coding on his laptop while drinking a mojito at a tropical beach can be a bit misleading at first. Unfortunately, we aren't there yet, so for now, let's start by focusing on three main areas where most of the problems occur.

Surviving at the beginning

Every beginning has its struggles, and this is no different. At first, you will start thinking that it is too good to be true. You might feel excited and focus on how awesome your life is going to be from now on, at least for the first few days.

After that, reality kicks in and you will start thinking that you are fooling yourself and not really working since you don't have something to show to the world. It is too soon to have something ready, but you might also feel that way if you love what you do. It will feel more like a hobby than real work, which could stress you out.

Heavy pressure comes into play and before you know it, you start working crazy hours to make your plan work and not fail, something that is always at the back of your head and terrifies you. You can keep telling your family and friends that all is under control, but you won't be

convinced. Well, most probably they won't be convinced either, you will sense it and stress out even more.

Suggestions

1. Get ready from the start and calculate the risk. How much risk are you willing to take?
2. Create a plan before even starting. It can be your guide and help you along the way.
3. Have a backup plan. Definitely have a backup plan. Call it *Plan: Don't Fail*.
4. If you already have a 9 to 5 job, take advantage of it and build your business alongside. More time and effort are required in that case (you will have to work crazy hours) but if you want to play it safe, this is your best bet.
5. Have a budget and ensure that you will be able to live for at least a few months without any extra income. That will give you the time you need to get started.
6. It's worth mentioning that the pressure can also be very beneficial for your work since your mind may come up with great ideas to face it, so don't always try to fight it.

Work and personal life in the mix

This can't be emphasized enough but separating your personal life from your work life will most probably be one of the biggest issues you will have to face at least for the first few months. It will be hard to separate it for yourself, imagine how difficult it could be for your friends and family.

Home is the place where you live but is now also the place where you work. Imagine how easily and in how many different ways you can mix it all up. It is a piece of cake. Even if you eventually handle it for yourself, you will also have to handle it for others as well.

Their expectations are completely different now that you are working from home. They think that you can be more available now that you have your own schedule, but the truth is completely the opposite since you might end up working much more than a usual 9 to 5 job.

Suggestions

1. Create a schedule and stick to it. This will help your mind separate the hours you work and the ones you don't. Try to experiment to see which hours work the best for you.
2. Let your family and close friends know when you are working and when it is better to reach you if they want. Explain the situation and struggles you might face to them and they will respect it. It is always better to clear things up before even starting since it will make it easier for both them and you overall.
3. It really helps if you can have a room dedicated to work. An office where once you enter, your mind clears and starts working towards your goals.
4. You will have to set boundaries to yourself early on, because if you don't, you might stop making progress really fast.
5. Sometimes things might not work the way you want but that's fine. Many days won't go as you would like to but it's important to keep trying for consistency with the way you work.

The greatest battles will be in your mind

Working on your own can become a continuous battle inside your mind. From accounting and marketing to product creation and support, you are constantly responsible for all aspects of your business which can make you worry and think way too much.

Worrying and thinking too much can easily damage your productivity and hurt your business. Your limits might be tested, especially if things take an unexpected turn, so be prepared, and always keep moving.

Working on your own also means that you have to take full responsibility for everything. You won't be able to blame someone else for your shortcomings BUT that's a good thing. Taking responsibility will eventually make you more resourceful and help you overcome the problems you might face.

Suggestions

1. Stop stressing out about the things you are not in control. Worry about those that you are and do something about them.
2. Don't blame other people, the situation or 'the system' about anything that goes wrong. Try to find ways to improve yourself and do what you can to make things better.
3. One of the best advice we could give you is to start winning small battles. Set goals on an environment where you have control over and achieve them. For example, let's say you've always wanted to start exercising for 30 minutes a day but you never manage to do it. If you can't achieve such goal, then how could you work from

home and achieve far-fetched goals in an environment you can't directly control?

4. Do a few additional small tasks towards your goals each day. They might seem insignificant at the beginning but after a year they can become something really huge.
5. Review your goals each day and keep yourself motivated.
6. Please, don't think too much.

Don't let yourself down, it's only the beginning

There are so many things worth fighting for, but you must really want them to have a chance at them. It's always better taking a sneak peek and getting an idea of what to expect first. This way, you will be much better prepared once you are ready to pursuit your endeavor.

The Good Stuff

Once you establish your business and overcome the initial struggles of putting everything together, you will start enjoying the fruits of your labor. Your life can change for the better and you will be able to live more freely based on your own terms.

Work wherever you like

One of the most important aspects is that working from home automatically means that you could work from wherever in the world you want and that's priceless if flexibility is what you are aiming for.

While on the road, you could use your smartphone to handle lighter tasks (eg email communication) most of the time or set it up accordingly in such way that enables you to manage even more work-related tasks.

Of course, having a capable and powerful laptop, serving as your mobile office, is crucial for your creative and more demanding tasks. It is not the same as working from your workstation at home but if the need arises you will get used to it.

Travelling either for work or pleasure is so much easier and manageable since you can take your work with you wherever you go. Becoming a digital nomad is also an option if this is what you are looking for.

Work whenever you like

You can set your own schedule and work all kinds of hours. You could follow the 9–5 pattern and match the hours you would work as an employee at a company or go crazy and work even at night.

Your time is in your hands to handle and that's one of the best things that can happen. Choosing when to work and when not is crucial and might be the most important benefit you can have because it affects so many other aspects of your life as well.

Create your own workplace

Creating your own office is an awesome experience. You get to choose from the computer hardware and room decoration to the desk and chair you will use. This will enable you to create a far less stressful environment tailored to your own needs.

You can set it up in such a way that makes the most sense to you and lets you be more productive. Of course, you can always improve or completely change things which do not seem to work as time passes.

Take a day off or months at a time

You have a choice if you are not feeling well or something happens that requires your absence from work. You just don't work for a couple of days till you feel better or solve the pending issues that came up.

You could also take a few months off if you like to clear your mind and then get back with more energy focusing on your next big project or step in your business.

Of course, this way of working requires the automation of your current business and might not work for more traditional businesses where your full attention is required day after day.

More time with your family

The most 9–5 jobs require much time of your life, especially if you include commuting time and extra working hours. It is one of the main reasons people often trying to find alternatives that will allow them to spend more time with their family.

Working from home can give you that flexibility and enable you to be there with/for your family. This is time you can't get back, so is of utmost importance.

Being your own boss

It doesn't have anything to do with other people but only with yourself. It can become a great thing as you work it through and gain more experience. Being you own boss means that you can make decisions for your business, the way you will work and the approach you will follow with various problems.

More time to enjoy life

What can be more rewarding than finding the time to enjoy your life by doing things that you love? Reading books, working out, doing sports, or exploring the world is so much easier when work is part of your life and not the other way around.

Limitless possibilities

You can literally structure your life any way you can imagine. You have the option to live where you want and work the way you like. You can work crazy hours and scale your business to become something really big or keep it simple and enjoy more of what life has to offer.

On the other hand, after your home business is established, it can be a great base for achieving your future goals. All decisions rest in your hands and you are responsible for the outcomes of your efforts.

How To Get Started

Every beginning has its struggles but starting a business from your own home is a fulfilling process. If you don't know where to start, don't worry, since this is completely normal. We will guide you through the generic steps you will have to follow to set up your business and start working towards your goals.

1. Getting yourself ready

Before getting started, make sure that you've calculated the risks you are willing to take to create a successful home business. Are you starting from nothing? Do you already have something promising? Do you have a backup plan if things don't go well? Do other people (e.g. family members) might negatively affected by your decisions? Are you willing to give all in to achieve your goals?

There are so many questions that might come in your mind and you should have a good answer for most of them. Starting something requires a lot of effort and you must be sure that you are prepared accordingly.

Of course, you don't have to worry about everything, but it is your responsibility to carefully evaluate your intentions and how those might positively or negatively affect you or others in the future. Starting a home business at your 20s is a completely different risk story than starting it at your 40s with kids and tons of responsibilities.

2. Setting up your home office

One satisfying experience you will have at the beginning is the setting up of your home office. You will get a great feeling creating your own working space based on your preferences. Putting everything into place your way will help you be more productive.

Starting off with the room, a separate one dedicated to work would be ideal as your office but if there is lack of space, any room in the house will do if it helps you stay isolated while you work.

Choosing a good anatomic chair is the very important first thing you must do for your health since you will spend a lot of time each day sitting on it. A nice steady desk with the appropriate height is also important.

The hardware you will use it's completely up to you. The most common setup would be the use of a desktop PC or an iMac and a laptop as an alternative computer when you are away from your home. Nowadays, laptops have become far more powerful and completely capable, so a single laptop with a couple of external monitors on your desk should also do the work.

Lighting in your office is very important for your psychology and productivity, too. Make sure that the place is well illuminated with natural light and that you have artificial light with warmer shades available for when working at late hours. Do not underestimate the power and the effect the light can have on your work.

Decorating the space accordingly plays a helpful role to your psychology, so it's up to you to make the most of it and create an environment where you feel the most energetic and inspired.

Of course, your home office won't be perfect from day one but since it will be your own, you can improve it as time passes to better fulfill your needs. Don't forget to always question what might work against you and try to improve it when you have the chance.

Also, not affording to create the perfect office from the beginning does not put you in a disadvantageous position. Start with what you already have, take advantage of what you can, and everything will eventually start improving along with the work you do.

3. Setting up a business

This is the boring step you must execute and unfortunately one you can't just overlook. Establishing a legal entity for your business is necessary but it is usually easier than you think.

The one thing and only you will have to do (if you don't want to do it on your own) is to visit an accountant in your country and pay him a fee to help you establish your business. The most common legal entity used for an online home-based business is the Limited Liability Company.

In most countries, the process is usually very straightforward, and it will take a couple of days at most to complete. In some occasions, starting a business can be an online form application away but, in any case, it is better to ask for professional advice first to make sure that everything will proceed as smoothly as possible.

As soon as you have your business ready, be sure that you also have a lawyer in mind just in case you need him. For example, it's nice to have someone available if you would like legal advice regarding your work or need assistance preparing legal documents for freelancing or a SaaS web application.

4. Start working

The next and final step before the start of your new adventure is the most straightforward one and the one you are prepared for. Get into it and start working with your newly established business, towards your goals.

How To Survive

Surviving and succeeding in the business world requires your full attention and continued effort. After you set everything up and you are ready for work, there are no magic formulas to get you where you want to be. You will have to discover what works for you and use it to accomplish your goals.

1. Visualize your future life

Wake up every morning and spend a few minutes asking yourself some important questions. What do you want from your business? Where do you want to be in a year or two? What are your life goals? What have you done the previous day to get closer to those goals? The more you want to achieve, the more effort you have to put into your business. You should expect great things and believe in yourself from the beginning because no one else will.

2. Give your business all your positive energy, don't wait from others

Don't expect any permission on chasing your goals. If you ask a hundred people about your ideas, you will receive a hundred different opinions about them. Feel free to talk with your loved ones about your goals if you need to but don't expect them to provide the motivation you need. It is better to start listening, reading, and doing actual work.

3. Don't panic of making mistakes but learn from them

Every new beginning is hard and involves right decisions but also risks and mistakes. When you start your own business, don't expect everything to be perfect and take the right decisions all the time. Don't be afraid of being wrong but be sure that every failure makes you wiser.

Remember that unacceptable mistake is the one you make twice. You should be familiar with the idea that starting your own business has so many risks and possible failures that you can't even imagine at the beginning but answer yourself that: What is easy in life?

4. Passion for your work is one of the keys to succeed

When we were younger, everyone used to ask us what we want to be when we grow up. We don't always answer this question successfully but as soon as we discover our passion, we get one step closer to our own success.

When you love your work, you are happier and more productive. You are blessed. Make sure to use this passion as your asset for your business. Take advantage of it and let it guide you into creating solutions that are helpful to other people and your business will eventually thrive.

5. Be prepared, success and failure are sisters

Success and failure are walking side by side in the business world. You have to be careful in every step. Don't take quick decisions but think first

and act later. A decision may lead you to a big opportunity, but it may be a trap as well.

Always remember that luck is temporary. Work is what matters and keeps you and your business safe and growing. The harder and smarter you work, the more you can accomplish. Be patient and committed, success won't happen over a night.

6. Your reaction to a problem is what matters

Get ready to encounter various smaller or bigger problems which will require a solution from you. Remember that what really matters isn't the problem itself but how you react to it. Problems and bad decisions are a constant reality in business. The way you are going to handle the problems separates an owner from a leader.

Be patient, don't overreact and try to come up with a viable solution which can have a positive impact. Think first and then find the best way to handle the situation with style. Teach yourself to be responsible and learn from your mistakes, it's the only way to move on.

7. It might take a while before achieving your goals

When you start visualizing your business in its ideal state, it is normal to be impatient, anxious, and excited. It's not a bad thing and it can motivate you to work hard to achieve your goals at the beginning. After a while though, you might get tired not seeing your business reaching the desirable state, but this is normal.

You will have to be realistic and calm down because you can't achieve everything at once. Give yourself and your business some room to grow and settle. Achieving small tasks at a time and moving on with baby steps can motivate you to keep working more effectively. Try to win small battles each day and you will be able to win the war one day. Till then, try to enjoy those wins and remember it's the journey which really matters. Once you reach your final destination, it will be over.

8. The truth

Working from home, building your own business is not an easy task, it's the exact opposite, a difficult one. You are responsible for everything and that is a lot to handle but this is how it all starts.

You might want to travel the world, spend more time with family, be independent, build the next great company or solve a serious problem you are experiencing. Whatever your goals are, if working from home can get you where you want, then follow your dreams and passions, work hard but smart, provide value to people and be creative with incoming problems.

More importantly, make a commitment to yourself that you will not give up. This is the magic ingredient which can lead you to your own success.



Reminder by pixelcave

You are awesome, go out there and build something amazing!