

## Blurring The Lines Between Work and Home

Insights from Tom Hershberger, CEO, Cross Financial, 2020

Am I the only one that struggles with time management? The list of things-to-do is always present. It is part of work life. The workday is always present. It is also part of work life. Now the challenge...how to get more projects on my things-to-do list done within the confines of an acceptable workday schedule?

### Extra Bedroom Home Office

I say acceptable workday schedule, because working from home offers opportunities to work beyond what was an acceptable schedule before the pandemic. You have probably had a few of those days in the last few months. You have a project deadline and despite your efforts to get everything done on time, there are still a few more details to address. You shut down your work computer and shut off the light in your extra bedroom, now your temporary office. You spend some time with family, eat dinner and as everyone settles into evening activities, you return to that extra bedroom to spend a few minutes getting caught up. But, should you?

With home offices and remote work becoming more common, it is important for professionals to set boundaries for their work schedules and activities. If you went to an office prior to the pandemic, you know what it is like to have a clear separation of work life and home life. It was a physical reminder that the two activities were separate parts of your day.

### Physical Separation of Home and Work

Today the lines have blurred. We don't have a physical separation of home and work. We don't have the change in surroundings, during our commute, that reminds us that work is work and home is home. Now we are faced with a blended environment. You would think that having work so close to home would improve everything. That isn't necessarily true.

Earlier this year, when you weren't at the office, what were you doing? Probably, spending time with your kids, or working out at the gym, or heading to a sports event or community activity. Those things matter. They are an important investment in your life. A healthy addition, for sure.

### Back To Time Management

How does this connect to my struggles with time management? For years people have told me to work smarter, not harder. Great advice, right? Only if you can actually find solutions to the 'work smarter' portion of that advice. The reality is, our go-to solution is often, just work harder.

Working from home makes it easy to spend a few extra minutes of our valuable home time on the one additional thing we think will make our work load easier the next morning. That is a horrible trade-off. Don't give up your investment in your family, your friends, your health and your community.

Being effective at work is healthy. It feels great when we get things done. Being effective at home is also

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*Work and Home, continued*

healthy. It feels great when you see personal, household, or community achievements accomplished.

Everyone has their own techniques to help with time management. Large sections at libraries and bookstores are dedicated to teaching people how to manage this precious commodity. We all need to examine those solutions and adopt what works. For me, the solution is to prioritize effectively and provide a measure of forgiveness on the days when my productivity falls short of desired outcomes.

**What time management tips help you optimize your work and home life schedules and productivity?**

While we are learning to prioritize our things-to-do list and enhance our work practices, don't allow a blurry line to develop between your home office and your family room. Replacing home life with work life isn't the answer. Your mental and physical health is in the balance.

**Use the following space to prepare a list of ways you plan to improve your time management and separate work from home.**