

PROSPERITYMATTERS

YOUR GUIDE TO A BETTER BUSINESS AND A FULLER LIFE

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WELCOME!

The more you work, the easier it is to get caught up in the stress of business and forget what goals you had that pushed you to start in the first place. Prosperity Matters is designed to help you reconnect and focus on your personal wellbeing.

In this issue, we will cover maintaining a work-life balance when working from home, mid-life career changes, taking a break from coffee and managing work-based anxiety.

Success isn't about how much money you make. It's about **the difference** you make in **people's lives**.

- Michelle Obama



KEYPOINT Business Consultants.

Getting the work-life balance right from the home office

Working in your pyjamas, schedule flexibility, and no morning commute makes working from home seem relaxing, but what happens when life and work become the same thing?

A 2017 study conducted by Eurofound saw that 41% of highly mobile workers (employees who predominantly work from home) were stressed all or most of the time, compared to only 25% of employees who worked on-site. This can be the case due to isolation, finding it difficult to self-manage time, and blurred boundaries between life and work.

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is key to keeping mentally healthy and not losing sight of the important things in your life. When working from home it helps to be more actively conscious of sustaining this balance to ensure that you either don't get carried away with work or procrastinate work until it adds up to be too much.

Set priorities:

Take time to consider what is most important for your work and for your personal life, and prioritise tasks based on these. What should you do more or

less of? What should you stop doing? Is there anything you should do differently?

Establish boundaries:

It can be difficult to separate your working mode to your home self when everything is done in the same environment, but try to avoid bringing work to family dinners or staying up too late working. Setting schedules and giving yourself set hours dedicated to work, relaxation, and establishing a work zone can help distinguish between work and home life.

Track your time:

Remember to take note of when you start work and record how many hours you work each day. Even if you feel like you haven't done enough, knowing how many hours you have worked can help you justify taking a break.

Set goals:

Be realistic with the goals you set. If you end up with too many idealistic goals, you'll end up feeling stressed and disappointed if you don't achieve them all. If you set too little, you might give yourself too much time to relax and be stuck with more work the next day.

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Taking a break from coffee

For many people, a cup of coffee is a part of their morning routine, helping them to wake up and feel ready for the day.

Caffeine is a stimulant that affects your nervous system, meaning it speeds up the messages travelling between the brain and the body, making you move and think faster for a period of time. Whilst this can be helpful when getting up in the morning, a heavy reliance on caffeine can have negative effects such as faster breathing and heart rate, headaches and irritability.

Taking a break from coffee helps you physically and fiscally in a few ways:

- Reduces blood pressure, risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiac arrest.
- More restful sleep.
- Better mood - less anxiety.
- Saves money.
- Reduces waste.

If you are experiencing the more negative effects of drinking coffee, it is in your best interest to consume it in moderation.

Gradually cutting back on the amount you drink a day or taking a break all together can significantly improve your day to day life.

Undertaking a midlife career change

Switching careers later in life can seem daunting and risky, but with the right planning and preparation, it doesn't have to be.

If you're tired of the same job you've been doing for 20 years, or you're finally ready to pursue the thing you're passionate about, a career change can be exciting and give you the opportunity to learn new things and love your work. However, it can be a scary move, especially if you have to think about financial stability, location change, or supporting your family. Here are some things you should consider before taking the leap.

Self assessment:

Are you capable of pursuing the career you want to switch into? Will it be a good fit for your personality type, values, and interests? To get a better sense of this, be realistic about what you're capable through experience-based evidence, and evaluate what you do or don't find interesting or enjoy. This will reduce the risk of you starting a new job only to discover that it's not as suitable for you as you imagined. You can hire a career counselor, or other career development professionals to help you do this with accuracy.

Training and education:

Does the job you are considering require extra qualifications and skills? Do you have these qualifications or will you have to undertake further training and studies to be eligible for the job? Having a midlife career change means that you have accumulated years of experience from working, and you may have transferable skills from your past jobs that can be used for other careers. Research what the job requires of you and if further qualifications are needed, think about whether the added training or courses would be suitable for you to complete.

Career field demographic:

What is the typical age of those working in the field you want to pursue? This can help you determine the likelihood of employers choosing to hire you or not based on your age. Unfortunately, it is common that some companies prefer younger workers due to perceived technology savviness and career growth potential. In saying this, many employers actually prefer older workers as they can offer experience, maturity, and wisdom. Research the demographics of the job and evaluate your prospects of getting hired.

Managing work-based anxiety

While anxiety and stress are quite often inevitable, it can take a severe toll on the state of your mental health and quality of life if not handled properly.

In Australia, 1 in 4 people are affected by anxiety, making it more common than some may think. You are not legally required to disclose to your employer a mental health condition unless it has the potential to endanger your safety or that of your colleagues, such as your ability to operate machinery or make decisions.

Though not necessary, informing your employer can help them to support you and better understand what you may need to successfully manage work and health. In the event where an employer takes adverse action against their employee on the basis of their mental health, the Fair Work Act 2009 protects employees with mental health problems from unlawful workplace discrimination.

Those who find they have significant triggers at work should consider making a step by step plan to help identify and combat situations that cause anxiety. Those who experience more general anxiety could consider the following:

- Sleep well: poor quality or not enough sleep can significantly impact your ability to perform tasks at work. For those who struggle to sleep, don't consume caffeine after 12 pm, avoid screens 30 minutes prior to going to bed and have a regular bedtime.
- Know everyone's name: although seemingly small, those with anxiety can find names particularly hard. Identifying colleagues by name can improve reduce stress when interacting.
- Ask for help: when you find tasks confusing or difficult, asking for help may seem daunting but the discomfort of asking for

clarification is worth it in the long run as it can decrease overall anxiety about responsibilities. Asking for help also communicates to your superiors that you genuinely care about doing a good job.

- Eat properly: take the time to eat a proper meal at breakfast and lunch as eating not only fuels you for the day, a good diet can also help you to better manage symptoms of mental health.
- Schedule: learn when during the day you are most productive and tailor your workload to align with personal peaks. When scheduling, though it is important to set honest timeframes for yourself, it is not the end of the world if you fall behind.

Managing anxiety in the workplace is all about understanding what your strengths and limitations are. Anxiety may always be present to some degree in daily life, but it doesn't have to interfere with working hard and enjoying your profession.

