

Working from home productively

Dominate distractions



Working from home

Because of the Covid-19 crisis, thousands of Dutch families are forced to work from home. Gradually children are (partially) going to back to school but although this may provide some relief, it remains a challenge to work from home.

By creating structure in the day and making clear agreements, you can still be productive and find the space to relax a bit.

Setting yourself a challenge to your employer and private situation

What deserves attention now?

Clarity in the expectations of both the employer and own expectations. Communicate with your employer. Let them know what you are going to do in the coming week/days. By communicating clearly about expectations, you may be able to let go of certain expectations you have of yourself and thus experience less pressure.

Large projects can feel overwhelming. Break these projects up into pieces. Simpler steps that make the work doable. This way you create more overview and it becomes clearer what is important and what needs less attention.

How can it be made easier?

Make active use of a family diary. This will give you more insight into what is important to each and where possible bottlenecks lie. This way you can fine-tune appointments better.

Make clear 'do not disturb' agreements

Try to create a workspace separate from the space or place where you relax, focus more on your private life. And if possible, don't work in the same area as where the children are. Same counts for possible other 'distracting' housemates.



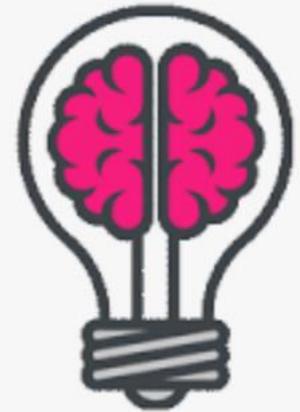
Use of agenda and time blocks

1. Make a daily schedule, this provides clarity and overview
2. Organize your to-do list as follows: urgent and important; important and not urgent; not important/urgent
3. Plan space between the blocks, a buffer.
4. In addition to time for your work tasks, plan blocks for reading, attention for your child(ren)/other housemates, relaxation.

Is it actually possible to be productive now?

Attention management

Attention management: what is the focus of attention now? There are both external distractions (washing has yet to be done, the many messages on the mobile phone, etc.) and internal distractions (own thoughts, emotions). Become aware of what distracts you, what attracts your attention now? The sooner you become aware of where your attention is going, the easier the steps become to focus your attention where it is needed.



Dealing with attention seekers

Children, family members, housemates

- Make it clear in a simple way when you really can't be disturbed by, for example, hanging up a sign/paper with 'do not disturb', agreeing on certain signals for 'do not disturb' such as closing the door, putting on headphones, the traffic light method (red, do not disturb; green, ok to disturb).
- Agree when you have a moment's rest with work. As a reminder you can write on a chalkboard or whiteboard when you need a break.
- If you have care duties and a partner, work in shifts. You can divide the care tasks as follows.

Home environment, household chores, thoughts

- I have to clean out the dishwasher, get groceries, hang up the laundry, etc. Plan these interruptions and use them as a 'reward'. Bundle these personal tasks after important work activities so that the days can be both productive and personal.
- Keep a gratitude journal. Actively write down 3 things every day for which you are grateful. Becoming aware of the positive things - even if they are small - contributes to changing your perspective and has a positive impact on negative thoughts and your overall well-being.

Mindset

You may want to do a lot, but you can't do everything. Don't set yourself impossible goals.

Be aware of your own limitations and boundaries and deal with them as you would with another person in the same situation.

Give yourself some space. Sometimes you have less energy or do not feel like performing a certain task. In that case, find another (useful) task to do.

Adjust your expectations, there will be moments when everything goes according to plan, but there will also be moments when it doesn't.



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