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HOME OFFICE TIPS

A day working from your home office can be filled with interruptions from spouses, kids, or unexpected visitors. To maximize your time, consider these tips:

- Establish regular office hours and make sure everyone knows and respects them. If necessary, find quiet time by getting up early or staying up late.
- For parents working at home with small children, utilize nap time for peak work hours. Set aside a bucket of special toys to be taken out only when you're on the phone and need extra special quiet. Establish regular childcare as needed, and don't forget to create a back-up plan for school vacations or sick days.
- Resist the urge to continually check email or voice mail. Ignore the doorbell. Use caller ID to direct your energies toward work-related calls, rather than chatty friends and pesky telemarketers.
- Make a to-do list at the beginning of each day or the evening before. Schedule your time so the most important tasks get done first. That way, if you do get interrupted, at least your most urgent tasks have been completed.

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