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Pros and cons of working at home

With today's rising demand for service-oriented businesses along with recent technological advances, the opportunities for home-based businesses have never been better. However, before taking the plunge, you may want to consider some of the pros and cons of working from home.

The PROS of a home-based business include:

Financial Benefits. One of the biggest advantages of a home-based business is the financial benefits it provides. A home-based business allows you to eliminate the cost of an office, a major expense for most small businesses. Also, most home based business owners are eligible for a partial write-off of their house payment, utilities, and maintenance costs. (The laws are becoming stricter in this area. Be sure to check the current tax laws in your state.)

Flexibility and Freedom. Let's face it. Work takes up a lot of our lives. Because of this, more and more women want the flexibility and freedom associated with owning a small business. Even if they must put in more hours than their corporate counterparts (which is highly unlikely these days), home-based business owners gain the flexibility to structure their own time and control their own lives.

The CONS of a home-based business include:

Vague Boundaries. One of the greatest challenges of working from home is to set definite boundaries between work and family obligations. Friends and family members may have a difficult time adjusting to the fact that you have to work while you are home. Remember, this is a transition period for them, too. As long as you are straight-forward about your expectations, you should be able to eliminate most of the conflicts before they occur.

Increased Self-discipline and Isolation. In addition to the skills every woman needs for starting her own business, a woman who starts her own home-based business must also possess two additional skills - namely, the ability to be self-disciplined and the ability to deal with isolation. These are critical skills for anyone thinking about starting a home-based business. Although you will still have some interaction with the outside world, chances are it will be far less than

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you are used to. Be honest with yourself. If the thought of spending many hours alone makes you nauseous or you are easily distracted and find it difficult to complete a project on your own, a home-based business is probably not for you.