A Day in the Life of a Self Employed Professional

By Caroline Jordan, MBA

It's Monday morning and Connie the Consultant sits in her executive office chair overseeing her business empire. Her desk is strewn with half finished projects, several weeks worth of to do lists (none of them completed), scribbled post it notes, and a permission slip for her daughter's field trip to the Planetarium that should have been turned in last week. Somewhere, buried deep in the rubble is Connie's business plan. The last time she saw it was during the Clinton Administration.

The phone rings. She checks her caller ID and groans. It' Dee Dee Demanding calling again, wanting to make one more change in the project that should have been wrapped up a month ago. Connie scribbles Dee Dee's current list of demands on yet another post it note. She hopes this will be the end of the changes so she can finally get paid for the project. She sure won't be making a profit on THIS project.

Connie picks up the Joann Marden file to find the notes from their last meeting. She looks through the entire folder twice—no notes. She starts to dig through the stacks on her desk muttering, "I had it in my hand, where did I put it, I just saw it, where can it be?"

The phone rings again. This time it's a telemarketer wanting to sell Connie a vacation trip. Connie laughs and says, "No sense calling me, I'm self employed. I don't get vacations."

She thinks back for a minute to when she became self employed. She actually believed she'd be able to take time off whenever she wanted to. What a joke! Every time she thinks she can get time off, something comes up with one of her clients. Or the check she was expecting to receive didn't come in. Or, she didn't dare spend money because she didn't have any new projects lined up.

Her email dings and she stops to check the new message—a notice that her online credit card statement is ready. She clicks through and signs in. She sits back stunned, "I spent HOW MUCH?! Shaking her head she goes back to work looking for the notes from the meeting with Joann Marden. Instead she finds the estimated tax payment that she should have sent in a month ago. She groans and checks the clock. It's nearly lunch time and she's accomplished nothing so far.

Another email comes in. It's a newsletter from a small business expert telling her she needs to work "on" her business, not just "in" her business. "Yeah", she says, "I've got all kinds of time to learn about working "on" my business. Right after I find the Marden notes, make the umpteenth change on Dee Dee's project, and get these proposals done that have been sitting on my desk for three weeks."

She hits the delete key and goes to lunch…

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