

AT WORK WITH **CASEY MOORE**

owner of *Living Simply Consulting* in Chesapeake, on running a home-based small business



CHRIS TYBEE/THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Publication: The Virginian-Pilot, Section: Business, Page: 41, Date: Thursday, April 14, 2005

The first challenge of running my own show is wearing 10 hats when I have only one head. I am a productivity consultant, and there is all the work that goes with that. And then I have to be the marketing director, the administrative assistant and the Web master, the computer technician, the chief executive officer with some vision guiding my company. Even the janitor.

The way I prioritize is the way I suggest my clients do it – I look to the bottom line. How close is this to helping me achieve growth in my company? Is it going to lead to clients down the line or build relationships with the current client? Is it something that meets with my goals?

The most difficult of the hats is marketing. I hate self-promotion, I hate asking for help. I am now learning to be more comfortable doing that. I am more of the worker bee – I'd rather be doing what I love to do and not have to drum up business.

I go into people's offices, and I help them do whatever it takes to work more efficiently – whether it is

rearranging the furniture, changing the file system. Mainly it is handling the workload. I show them how to make it so you don't have 5,000 e-mails in your inbox – so you can see only the ones you really need to work on. How you can handle all of the to-dos that you have going on so it doesn't make you insane. So you can see all that you need to do and feel good about the decisions you make with your time.

People come to me because they want to increase their business, they want to take it to the next level. Or they want to achieve as much as they are currently achieving but spend more time with the family.

I have worked with everyone from Mary Kay and Creative Memories consultants working out of their homes all the way up to high-powered financial advisers and lawyers and CEOs of insurance companies.

I started in 2000, and the first several years it was part time. Now it is full time. I not only got a degree in psychology from the University of Texas in Austin, but I worked

as a counselor for a few years, and so I have a deep empathy for people and a deep respect for people. My message to everyone is that you didn't get those piles out of nowhere. There is a really good reason for it. And it's not that there is something wrong with you – there are practical reasons. Like you probably are really overworked or you just don't have the time or you're lacking some skills.

One of the biggest challenges of running a home-based business is turning it off when my office is so near my bedroom. When I check personal e-mail at night, it is tempting to pick up work, so I have a limit on how many hours a day I spend on work. I have to live what I tell my clients, after all. I try to put in 50 hours per week. It is a little more than I would like, but a lot less than it could be. Sometimes, because I also manage my household, and I am the errands runner and the shopper in the family, my workday might be a few hours here and then a few hours later in the evening.

There are fitness personal trainers, and I am a productivity personal train-

er. My greatest satisfaction is to see the relief on people's faces, and to hear they are able to spend more time with their families or achieve their goals better. I think the relief is the major thing. They are managing their time better, and not just their office organization, but their workload – how they deal with all their to-dos. They are less overwhelmed.

The biggest disappointment is when someone hires me and doesn't want to take any advice. I have hit a brick wall before. I am not rigid. I just suggest trying things and if it doesn't work, we can go to plan B or C or whatever. But when people don't want to try, I feel disappointed.

I would say I am about three years away from where I want my business to be. I want to have a book written – that is my goal for this year, so I can do more talks and spread the word. Someday, I want to hire a marketing firm to do my marketing for me so I can concentrate on what I love to do.

■ As told to *Pilot* business editor, Bill Choyke.