

# Work Anywhere Trail Guide

WORK & LIVE ON PURPOSE - 6 STEPS



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# Who am I, and who is this for?

Hi, I'm Peter Fritz, and I've worked remotely for over 20 years - mostly from my home office in Melbourne, Australia. I haven't tried it from a Balinese villa or road tripped through Iceland yet, but I've worked where and how I like for about half my life.



I created this guide for busy professionals who'd love to work and live on their own terms rather than the terms defined by outdated corporate 'norms'. It's for those of us who value our time, our freedom, and the capacity to do great work when the environment is aligned with who we are and how we prefer to work. It's for you if you want to go:

... from *married to the job* to **reconnected with family**  
... from *beige walls & fluro lights* to **a space that inspires**  
... from *no time for anything else* to **a side hustle you love**  
... from *life on autopilot* to **working & living on purpose**

Although it's been a while, I remember exactly how I felt suiting up each morning, sitting in a slow-moving car park for two hours and then reporting to the same location with the same drab furniture and the same routines every damn day. I remember how drained I felt each time I arrived back home, and how depressed I felt on Sunday evenings.

I resented the fact that my colleagues and clients saw more of me than the people I loved. I hated the unspoken presumption that attendance mattered more than outcomes, that looking successful to people who didn't care was more important than living a successful life with those *I* cared about.

In the beginning, it was fine, I suppose. I wanted money and lots of material things, and going to an office, wearing a suit and speaking in acronyms was the price I paid to get them. I also wanted status, and having a title and a business card seemed important at the

## COVID-19 changed everything & nothing.

Almost overnight, COVID-19 made remote work a matter of life and death, and for many, the change will be permanent. Others will eventually be asked to return to the office, wishing all the way that they didn't have to.

This pandemic is a tragedy of epic proportions, but it's also an opportunity to reassess what matters. The benefits of remote work have been known for decades - a fact many have now experienced for themselves. I hope this guide shows you how to create an amazing life using remote work as the catalyst, and that it provides a path to a life lived on purpose.

time; as did selling the most widgets, getting a bonus and driving a fancy car.

But today I have a different set of values. Yes, money is still important **where money matters**, but freedom, autonomy, time with my family, and the head space to pursue other opportunities are worth more. And strangely, the benefits and the money aren't mutually exclusive - not anymore. Thanks to the Internet and abundant, cheap software, it's actually possible to make **more** money once you escape the office and start working on purpose.

I used to think I needed my own business to work from home, or that I needed to be financially independent to quit going to an office every day, but it turned out neither was true.

We hear a lot about side hustles, and as someone who's had them since he was a kid, I'm a huge proponent; I think everyone should have at least one. However, **it's tough to create a side hustle when you spend all your time at work or traveling to and from work.**

That's where working remotely helps. By eliminating the commute; by working at times when you're most productive, and by working in an environment that brings out your best, you can free up time and bandwidth to create something on the side.

**To be clear, I'm not talking about quitting your job, but doing your job from somewhere else - at home, on the road, in a cafe, in the hills - wherever you work best.**

Perhaps that's possible with your existing job (you might be surprised), but maybe it isn't. You might need to find a job where you *can* work remotely. Either way, this guide will help you get a feel for what's required to pull it off.

Location independence is increasingly available today thanks to the Internet, powerful collaboration tools, and a growing realization by employers that people who lead happy, balanced lives are more loyal and productive than those who are caged five days a week.

**In my view, working this way is the ultimate expression of work/life balance. It makes everything - work, family, health, happiness; all of it - better.**

The remainder of this guide is intentionally brief. It's a taster; an insight into the steps I've taken, the practices I employ and the tools I use to be a successful remote worker. Its job is to give you a framework and a sense of what you need to consider.

This guide gives you a simple trail map for the journey towards working (and living) on purpose. Saddle up.

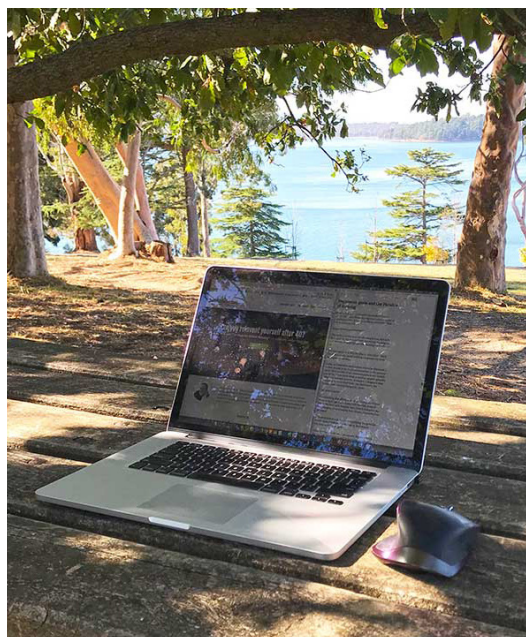


## Welcome to my office.

Before we move on, I thought it might be helpful to show you where I work. These spots mightn't appeal to you - perhaps you're more adventurous than I am - but they work for me.

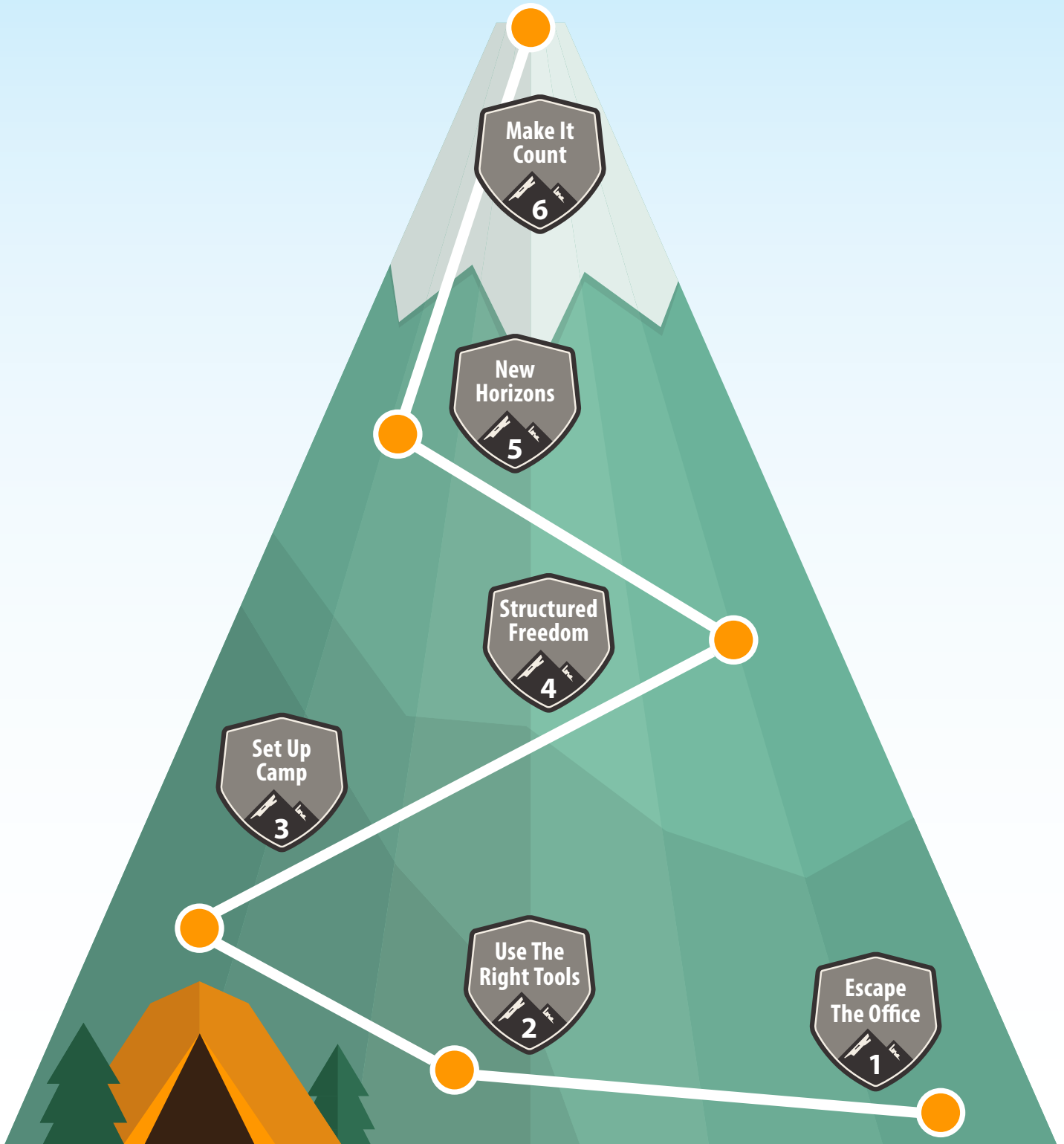
Most days, you'll find me in my home office. However, I also like to work on our backyard deck on summer mornings, or in my garage; and when the weather's just right, at a nearby lake.

Sometimes, I'll head off to a restaurant on the Black Spur in the Victorian High Country. If I'm working on a tough project, I'll use the time in my car to record ideas on my phone's voice memo app. When I arrive, I'll play them back and create a plan on my laptop or a notepad.



# The Trail Map to Freedom

There are six stages towards working and living on purpose.  
Think of them as badges you receive on your journey to the mountaintop.





## Stage 1 | Escape the Office

**Before you can ascend your mountain, there lies a critical first step - *escaping the office*. Until you do this, your options to work and live on your terms will be very limited.**

The goal is to structure your work around the rest of your life instead of your life around your work, you'll struggle to improve the things that matter to you.

Escaping the office is a simple enough process for some - especially in industries where remote work is common, or your employer understands the benefits. For others, though, a well-planned approach is essential. Here's a checklist of the things you'll need to consider.

### **It's not available to everyone.**

You can't work from anywhere you like if you're a city bus driver or a kindergarten teacher. There will always be jobs that dictate where you need to be each day. However, many careers offer alternate paths and niches that lend themselves perfectly to remote work.

If you're certain there's no way to perform your current job from home (or another remote location), look into adjacent roles within the same company or industry. If all else fails, you may need to consider another type of job.

### **The rate of acceptance *is* accelerating.**

The percentage of U.S. and Australian populations working remotely is growing by double digits each year, while 40% more U.S. employers now offer remote work than they did five years ago. Post-pandemic, these numbers have skyrocketed.

More than 80% of us want to do it, and according to surveys, more than a third of us would accept a 10% pay cut to work from home.

### **We're a little bit scared.**

Despite the myriad benefits of working remotely, it's natural to have reservations. Will your boss assume you're not dedicated? Will you be passed over for promotions? Will your colleagues, superiors and clients take you seriously? Will it place an arbitrary limit on your earning potential? Will you be as productive? Will you get lonely? These and other questions might need to be addressed before you can move ahead with confidence and prepare your pitch to your employer.

## **An 'Office Escape' Pitch has Five Steps**

Once you've made a commitment to start working somewhere other than your office, you'll need to tick off five crucial steps.

1. Get clear on your objectives.
2. Gather hard evidence to support your case.
3. Prepare the necessary assurances around accountability and productivity.
4. Show how and where you'll work - including the tools and practices you'll use.
5. Prepare a well-researched letter requesting a trial.

### **Build your case with data.**

In any negotiation, it's essential to understand the playing field, the parties involved (especially their concerns and motivations), and the facts surrounding the issue. In preparing your approach, it's important to gather provable, relevant and compelling evidence, and then weave that evidence into your pitch so it's personal. Without it, your efforts will likely fall flat.

### **Prepare your escape plan.**

In gathering evidence, you'll need to document what's relevant to you, your role, your employer and your industry. That way, you'll be able to move forward with a calm assurance that you know why you're doing this, who will benefit (and how), and what your letter needs to contain.

### **Craft your Escape Letter.**

This is where it all comes together. Your letter will distill your findings into a simple 2-to-3-page document that articulates concisely what you're proposing and why. It will deliver all the requisite assurances, backed by evidence; and a clear path forward.

### **What if they say no? Overcome objections.**

As you build your case, you'll also explore potential objections and offer solutions before they're raised. However, there's always a chance the answer will still be 'no'. If that happens, you'll need to know what to do next. Perhaps you'll need a couple of goes at this. Maybe you'll even offer a slight pay cut for a chance to try it out.



## Stage 2 | Use The Right Tools

Today, there's no reason to wing it with Frankenstein solutions. Software is cheap and the choices are plentiful. Pick the right ones, and you'll be able to work from just about anywhere, and get more done than someone who's stuck in an office.

I still sometimes resist learning new software tools, even if they'll save me time and money. Being 'too busy' is my favorite excuse, but it's a bad one, and typical of my lizard brain avoiding new things.

Invest a bit of time selecting and mastering a few tools and I promise you'll make up the 'lost time' in spades afterwards. Plus, you'll have a better handle on things, which is great for reducing stress.

### What can the right tools do for you?

1. Be accountable to bosses, colleagues and clients
2. Communicate in ways that suit you and those you serve
3. Enhance and manage your productivity

#### 1. Accountability

Working remotely makes me happy and productive because the environments I choose to work in have minimal distractions, giving me long stretches of deep work. However, because of that, I can also forget to tell my colleagues where I'm up to with a project. The problem with that is, if they can't see what I'm up to, they might assume I'm doing nothing.

So, the number-one thing we must all be when working remotely is **accountable**. Your colleagues, clients and bosses need to know what you're doing and how things are tracking. Over time – if you're consistently good at delivering projects on time – they'll loosen the reins a bit and expect fewer updates. But the rule of thumb is, more transparency is better than less.

#### 2. Communication

There's no better calling card than the quality of your work. A close second is the quality of your communication. Also, few things position you in the minds of others than the way you communicate, and that includes the channels, frequency and style of your words.



The point is, it's important to know your audience and to communicate through the channel/s they're most comfortable with, at a frequency that gives them peace of mind, and in a style that's relatable to them.

Sometimes one of the best ways to communicate an idea is with a short video. I've used half a dozen over the last few years, but the two that really stand out for me are Loom and ScreenFlow. Other brilliant asynchronous tools include YAC and Bonjoro.

Ideally, you really want to tie all project-related communications to the project itself. That way, you're not fishing through old emails, calls and text messages to try to determine who said what to whom about such and such. I know it's not always going to be possible, but if you can use a tool like Basecamp, Asana or Trello, you'll be more organised. That equals less stressed.

### 3. Productivity

With the exception of e-mail (which can easily become a productivity killer), many of today project management and communication tools will help you work more productively – providing you take the time to learn them. Thanks to online tutorials and the blessing that is YouTube, it's all pretty easy these days.

However, here's a 3-part process that beats just about everything when it comes to upping your daily productivity.

1. Disable all non-essential device alerts.
2. Schedule everything with one app.
3. Prioritize tasks from the most important to the least, and stay with one till it's done.

#### The Email Black Hole

Email is the most widely used productivity tool on the planet. It's also the biggest drain on productivity on the planet (although social media is getting right up there).

Here's how I've mastered my Inbox. When I check my mail, I sort them first by Subject. That way, the crap is easy to spot and delete. See-ya! Then, I sort them by Sender. Important people (clients, readers and suppliers – in that order) get my attention first. With each email I either:

- Respond and file
- Delegate, schedule a follow-up, and file
- Forward, schedule a follow-up, and file
- Delete

With those I delegate or forward, I schedule a follow-up so the interested parties aren't left hanging. As for filing, I've created a set of folders and sub-folders where everything I've dealt with lives. Nothing stays in my inbox. I deal with it, then I file it.

Finally, I sort the remaining items by Date Sent so I can address them in the order they left the sender's keyboard. I deal with these the same way as the others – respond, delegate, forward or delete. Once they're done, my inbox is empty.

Okay, now the big one. My email app doesn't check for new mail (nor alert me) until I tell it to. I have alerts on my phone that remind me to check mail at 9:30, 1:30 and 4:30, and that's it!

This is how I get more done than most of my colleagues. I control the distractions, I decide where my attention goes and I never abdicate it to others. After all, I'll never get my last 10 minutes back.

### **Should you have a morning ritual?**

Short answer: Yes.

Long answer: Yes, but you needn't meditate or journal or face the sunrise, chanting affirmations – but *do* create something that works for you, because how you start your day has an enormous impact on how the rest of the day goes.

I'm a fan of starting early (between 5:30 and 6:00 am) because there are no distractions, I feel like I'm getting a jump on the day, and I can work on something that matters to me (like this guide) before tackling less enjoyable tasks. That way, even before I begin the 'normal' part of my day, I feel like I'm winning.

Some people exercise first thing in the morning; others like to visualize stuff (I do that better when it's not forced – like when I'm driving). The point is, having some kind of routine that you repeat each morning does a few important things. First, it shows that you're in control of your life. Instead of hitting the snooze button five times, you're waking at a time *you* decide so you can do something you want to do. There's a big difference.

Second, it eliminates the panic state most people experience when they wake. Instead, you begin your day at a deliberate pace. And third, it creates incremental progress on something that matters to you – whether that's exercising, writing, creating art or developing a piece of software. Great progress doesn't happen in surges – it happens 1% at a time, compounded over a long stretch. Do a little of something you care about each morning and you'll be amazed at where you'll be 12 months later.

## More Productive and Less Stressed

These days, I'm less stressed but more productive because of a few key practices.

1. I take short breaks throughout the day. Check out the Pomodoro technique.
2. I stand for part of the day, thanks to my brilliant Uplift electric desk. Sitting is considered the new smoking, so alternating between sitting and standing throughout the day keeps me fresh and a lot less stiff than I used to be.
3. I time block my work. If I say I'm going to spend two hours on a task, I don't let anything interrupt that.
4. I change locations. I'll work on our backyard deck, in my garage or in my upstairs podcast studio. And when the weather is nice, I sometimes jump in my convertible and head for the mountains or a nearby lake. You'll be amazed what you can accomplish in your car with the voice memo app on your phone. It's actually one of my ultimate productivity hacks.

I believe with all my heart that, for the right person, working remotely is one of the best things you can do for your health, your happiness and your work. Being able to work (and therefore, live) on your terms can change your life in many positive ways.





## Stage 3 | Set Up Camp

**Work shouldn't be the opposite of 'fun'. If you can't make *any of it* enjoyable, you should find something else to do. Life is too short to waste half of it doing things that make you unhappy!**

You'll never do your best work if you hate 'being at work', and that includes working from home or any other location. The idea is to make the place you work a haven of happiness and productivity. The money you earn shouldn't be 'compensation for hardship and servitude', but rather, 'reward for great work that helps others'.

**Bottom line: your work environment has a huge impact on how you show up each day.**

A quick Google search reveals most of us are stressed about work. Depending on whose research you read, around half of us love our jobs about as much as getting a root canal. We're leaving our families each day to visit a place we don't like, to do things that make us unhappy.

This probably comes as no surprise, and I suspect it hasn't changed much over the last half-century. What's changed, though, is how we deal with it. Since Tim Ferriss published his seminal book, it seems everyone wants to quit their job, drink Margaritas and work four hours a week. I reckon we're being too hasty, though – that part of our dissatisfaction stems not from what we do but how we do it.

**Forget *what*. Consider where.**

I believe our environment has a greater impact on the way we feel about our work than the function we perform *while working*. In other words, many of us don't need to quit our job, we just need to change how and where we do it.

Granted, there are myriad exceptions to this; a lot of jobs can't be done somewhere else, as we've discussed. But plenty can. I also know from experience that an exciting job can turn sour if one of your colleagues turns out to be a vexatious abomination – especially if she's the boss. Likewise, a mundane job can be enjoyable if the environment is pleasing.

For years, I dreamed of having a space that's just mine – somewhere to do my best work - and for the last seven years, I've enjoyed exactly that. My home office has floor-to-ceiling windows on two sides that catch the arc of the sun throughout the day. Greenery surrounds me, and everywhere I look I see things that make me smile: a drawing from my daughter, photos of my family, a huge canvas print of the Flinders Ranges, taken on a drive across the desert to Perth. A glass-doored cabinet houses my most treasured books from the likes of Godin, Pressfield,

Singer, Zander, Frankl, Altucher, Guillebeau, Clear, Robbins, Crowley, Manson and Ruiz. Lifetimes of wisdom in one place.

My fabulous electric height-adjustable desk houses the things I need to do my best work and nothing more; it's not a filing cabinet nor a halfway house for detritus. On it sits my MacBook Pro, a high-res monitor, a DAS keyboard and a pair of Audioengine A5+ speakers. A small box of items and two stacks of papers (one for my current project and one for 'soon' projects) round out the setup.

I'm sitting here right now on my Ergohuman V2 chair, looking out at the London Plane I planted seven years ago. Rows of Liriope Evergreens trace an outline of my office while up to my right sits a million square kilometres of blue sky.

I sometimes wonder how I sat in traffic for two hours a day; how I remained sane in my cubicle or produced anything valuable in that setting. That's why I escaped to places like Lake Mokoan; it's why I began working from home all those years ago. The bottom line is I valued my time, my output and my sanity.

Today, my home office is a place where great things happen – distraction-free and fueled by creativity, good coffee and great music. Wild horses wouldn't drag me away, not even for triple the money I earn today.

## **Change your environment. Change your life.**

I started out by saying that half of us hate our jobs. As a father of teenage girls, I've had this conversation many times. I tell Amy and Sarah there are three critical elements to happiness at work:

1. What you do
2. Where you do it
3. How you do it

It's not enough to work in a field you like. If you've dreamed of being an architect but the environment sucks or the commute, the people or the rules suck, your life will suck, too.

Chasing money or a job title, or even an altruistic notion of what a job *should* be isn't enough, either. You spend most of your waking hours at work, so being happy doing it should be a huge priority. Changing where and how you work can have a massive impact on your relationship to it. Even a tedious job can become a joy, because once you have agency over your environment and your daily routine, life becomes so much easier. The additional free time presents some tantalizing options, too.

At the end of the day, the happiest people are those in charge of their lives. Controlling how and where you do your work is one of the most profound expressions of that ideal.

## What should you consider when setting up camp?

As I mentioned earlier, I often change locations to suit my mood. The question for you is, where do you feel most energized, happy and productive? Do you like the idea of a quiet home office, a bustling cafe, an RV with changing scenery, a co-share space, or something else? Think about where you want to work and why. As always, the 'why' is what matters most.

What do you want to see when you're working (besides a computer screen)? Visual cues impact how we feel - they can put us in the mood to work or they can drain us. When you set up camp the way you want it, your surroundings can reflect who you are - with pictures of goals, sources of inspiration or reasons why you're working (your kids, travel locations, favorite hobbies, the stuff you plan to get or do one day, etc.).

Every single item in my office is placed there for a reason. Some are practical, some invoke a certain feeling and some are pure folly, but they're all mine and mine alone, and that matters.

Like a lot of things, it might take a while before you figure out exactly how you prefer things. My son, my dad and I recently enjoyed a camping trip in the Victorian High Country. Over the last few months, I've been buying bits and pieces for our trip and carefully arranging them in and on our 4WD. However, it wasn't until after the trip that I learned what worked, what didn't and what needs to change.

It'll be the same for your remote work environment. I've honed my space over many years, and I still have ideas on how it could be improved. Experiment, try things on for a while and adjust as you go. You'll know when you've hit the mark; your happiness, your stress levels and your productivity will tell you.





## Stage 4 | Structured Freedom

**Some people have told me they couldn't work from home because they'd be too tempted to slack off. They'd sleep in every day, watch Netflix, and spend the rest of their time stalking the fridge. As many discover, though, the opposite is true.**

Working remotely - especially from home - can be a subtle trap. Because your office is right there, the temptation is always to do *one more thing...* and so, you work *too much*.

Even today, I have to remind myself to stop and switch off. Your biggest enemy isn't the tub of Ben & Jerry's in the freezer or re-runs of House of Cards. It's the lure of, "I'll just finish this..."

Part of being a successful remote worker is knowing how to balance freedom with structure. After all, without structure, there is no freedom. Without night, there's no day. Without Freddie Mercury, there can be no Queen.

Make sure you actually benefit from this newfound freedom of yours. Don't turn into a workaholic who never sees their family. Or sunlight.

My dad worked like a dog for more than 50 years. It was physically and mentally challenging and it tested his limits many times - twice to breaking point. Yet despite the hardship, once he retired, he was lost. It took him years to stop dreaming about work, to stop anticipating calls from clients, and to accept that his time was now his own.

Us remote workers can feel a bit lost, too - especially if we bought into the structure of corporate life. Being told what to do, where to do it and when to do it can be demoralizing, but at least it excuses us from having to think.

Working from home disrupts much of that structure, which can lead to procrastination. When you're looking at dirty windows, a dishwasher that needs emptying and a floor covered in kids' toys, you might want to tackle those instead of your work.

When I began working from home, I treated it like my boss had a bunch of hidden cameras in the house - so if I slacked off, he'd know about it. If I spent an hour on the toilet thumbing through my phone, he'd haul me into the office for a 'please explain'. These days, I behave like I'm the boss (which we all are in a way), and the fact is, I don't want to let *myself* down. I can act like I'm busy or productive all I want, but if I'm not, I'll know. Tom Bilyeu - founder of Quest Nutrition and Impact Theory - says our sense of happiness and success comes down to what we say about ourselves *when we're by ourselves*.

If you suffer from procrastination or you fear a lack of structure, you need to take ownership of your role and create that structure for yourself. You need to plan your days in advance, set a schedule and then work like the boss is watching you from the corner of the room.

Better yet, recognize that no matter who you work for, you are 'You-Incorporated'. You are ultimately answerable to that person staring back at you in the mirror, and she'll know if you did a good job today or not.

## **Tips to create structure (so you can enjoy your freedom).**

1. Set specific work hours for yourself and only waver when you have a good reason. They needn't be the same each day, but don't fall into the trap of working till you collapse. That's not a plan; that's a heart attack or a divorce waiting to happen. Set start/finish times or maximum number of hours per day and stick to it.
2. Have at least one zero-work day a week. That means no computer, no emails; nothing. Go outside, get some vitamin D; play with your kids, get amongst nature - whatever gets you away from work.
3. Plan your day before the day arrives. Don't ever begin a day by winging it. That's a recipe for stress, anxiety and crappy performance. I always know at least one day before (and often weeks before) what I'm doing tomorrow, and what my first, second and third priorities are.
4. I touched on this in Stage 2: don't switch between tasks. Tackle your tasks in order of priority and stick with one until it's done.
5. Get on top of your email. Create a simple set of rules and stick to them. Check 'The Email Black Hole' in Stage 2.
6. Set days and times when you're available for meetings - or days/times when you're not - whatever works better for you.
7. Take regular mini breaks throughout the day. Move, hydrate, get some fresh air.
8. If you can schedule meetings for work, you can schedule time with your family. Do it.
9. Create a morning routine so you start each day like a boss, 'cause that's what you are, now.

If you love chocolate, try eating nothing but Lindt, Hersheys or Cadbury for a whole day. Freedom is the same. Unless you mix it with other things (structure), you'll soon hate it.





## Stage 5 | New Horizons

**I describe working from home as ‘the gateway to freedom and happiness’. Apart from the obvious benefits of working where you like, it also opens the door to other opportunities; many with financial benefits. By ditching the daily rush hour and the stress and exhaustion it causes, you recover time and energy to try other things.**

Maybe you’re brilliant at what you do and you’d like to offer the same expertise to other people. Or perhaps you want to explore other aspects of your industry and create products or services around those. Or maybe you have a passion or curiosity for something unrelated.

Once you have control of how, where and when you work, you can begin exploring other tantalizing options. This is where the whole idea of working remotely gets exciting!

Today, there are lots of opportunities to build a side hustle. **But it’s tough to create anything after ten hours away from home each day.** You’re exhausted. Your kids need you. Your partner needs you. You have to tidy up, empty the dishwasher, put away clothes, eat and sleep. When do you find the time?

Doing your ‘normal’ job at home (or somewhere else you enjoy) gives you many of the benefits without having to start a whole business.

When I reclaimed my wasted hours in transit, in meetings and aimless distractions, great things happened. I started to get my life back; I recovered more of life’s most precious resource – time. By reclaiming just two hours, five days a week, I gained 520 hours a year, or thirteen working weeks. Thirteen weeks! You can explore a lot of ideas with that time!

If I had to return to the daily commute and sit in an office every day, I’d have to start drinking at noon. Or maybe I’d hang myself. I just couldn’t do it – I’ve seen the other side and there’s no way I’m going back. The cost - in health, happiness, freedom and opportunities - is too great.

### What are the options?

The short answer is ‘they’re pretty much endless’. However, the starting point comes down to a few simple questions.

First, do you enjoy the work you’re doing? If the answer is yes, you might explore freelancing a little for others who aren’t competitors to your employer. If the answer is no, the next question might be, do you like the industry you’re in?

If the answer to that is yes, you might look at learning other aspects of the industry with a view to getting a new job, or freelancing to others with your new skills.

Do you have other skills or interests you could sell, share or educate others on (via a blog, social media, YouTube, Teachable, Udemy, etc.)?

Consider the things you're really good at, and don't limit yourself to traditional definitions, occupations or roles. For example, maybe you've figured out a few clever ways to get your kids to do their homework or tidy their rooms. Perhaps you're great at introducing people in business or social situations. Or maybe you have a flair for creating art with collage (or just a unique perspective on the subject).

Whatever it is, chances are, there are people in the world who'd pay you to do it for them, or teach them how to do it for themselves.

Are there any intersections between the things you're really good at? For example, I used to sell luxury cars, advertising, and enterprise software. I've also been a pro photographer and writer since I was 18. Back in '96, I started building websites. Today, I combine all of those skills to offer marketing strategy and web design services to interesting clients (all of whom come through referral).

The bottom line is, the time you save by working remotely adds up. And since time is our most valuable resource, this is a huge opportunity for you to pursue something (or a few things) on the side and see where it all leads. Alternatively, it might be just what you need to start upskilling or cross-skilling for a career change.





## Stage 6 | Make it Count

**My father's greatest regret is that he worked too much. "It just isn't worth it," he says. I get it - a lot of us live with blinkers on; delaying happiness in the pursuit of a distant goal like a new home, a flashy car or a job title. Why? For what? For whom?**

Working where and how you choose doesn't feel so much like work when your office is three doors from the bedroom. Or it's a lakeside park on a spring afternoon, or a ribbon of asphalt through the Victorian High Country. How can it? And yet you're still working.

Treated this way, work no longer feels like a life sentence, but a joy. As they say, if you do what you love for a living, you'll never work a day in your life. It's a similar feeling when you control how and where you work. The work itself mightn't light your fire, but because you control the elements of where, how and when, it's almost as good.

I wonder how much guilt it takes before a parent realises their quest for career advancement or another pay rise might be affecting their kids. We all have ambitions, and we all want to feel like we've 'made it' (or at least on the path towards it). But what does that mean if our kids only see us at dinnertime, or as they're tucked into bed at night? What's the ROI on that?

My kids have always had their dad around. I've taken them to school, attended their daytime performances and award ceremonies, and I've been there at 4:00pm to make them a snack while they do their homework.

I've worked for the same company for two decades, and yet, I doubt my kids even know what my job title is. For them, it's irrelevant. Their dad is happy, he's always available for them, and that's all that matters.

So my message as you explore this new way of working is, don't lose sight of why you're doing it. For me, it's to be around for my kids, to have agency over my schedule, and to do my best work in an environment that fosters creativity. Your reasons might be very different. Whatever they are, don't forget them. Own them.

I'll leave you with some thoughts from the late British philosopher, Alan Watts. In one of his fabulous talks, Watts explains that life is best described by analogy with music. Because music, as an art form, is essentially playful. We say, 'you **play** the piano.' You don't **work** the piano. Why? Music differs from say, travel. When you travel you are trying to get somewhere. In music, though, one doesn't make the end of the composition the *point* of the composition.

If that were so, the best conductors would be those who played fastest. And there would be composers who only wrote finales. People would go to a concert just to hear one crackling chord... because that's the end! It's the same way with dancing. You don't aim at a particular spot in the room because that's where you wish to arrive. The whole point of the dancing is the dance.

So, we're not on a pilgrimage, where the end – the destination – is what we seek. Because the end, by definition, is incredibly brief. It's the end. How long do you think you can enjoy the end of something?

**The whole point of life is to live it while the music is playing. Because when it stops, it stops forever.**

So don't spend your life in a cubicle or behind a desk somewhere, where if you left, you'd be forgotten in a month. Think of what you'd miss doing if you were given only a year to live. Who'd be at the hospital when you're breathing your last? Do more of those things and spend more time with those people.

I created Office Anywhere and this guide because I want you to have what I have. I want you to understand that **right now** is the best time to reinvent yourself, and to have less worry in your life, more purpose, and more control over how you spend your days. I want to help you marshal all of the experience and wisdom you've collected over the years and put them towards living life on your terms. And it begins with controlling how, where and when you work. It's a fundamental pillar in living an intentional life.

Consider marking this day as a new chapter. Not a cataclysmic change, mind, but a series of small incremental changes. Most of us overestimate what we can do in a month, but **underestimate** what we can achieve in a year or two. Change usually begins slowly, but the effect of compounding amplifies things further down the line.

Become super cognizant of what you're working for. Why are you doing this? Why are you doing the kind of work you do? Who are you doing it for, exactly? Get to the root cause of what drives you and be brutally honest with yourself. We've been conditioned for so many years to chase goals given to us by others, to compare ourselves to others, and to seek the approval of others. But the truth is, the opinions of others don't matter.

Make a deliberate decision to blaze your own trail, to set your own rules and to chase your own dreams. They needn't impress anyone but you.

The reality is, you don't need to be rich to live a rich life. You need only live on the terms you define. Given the choice, few of us would choose an idle existence. Sure it would be nice to zone out for a month or two and do nothing, but happiness wouldn't be the outcome. Nor

fulfilment. We still need to engage in something that matters, something that exercises our unique talents and creative proclivities. Deciding how, where and when we work gives us all of this; plus it opens the doors to so much more.

You family and friends (and especially your kids) don't care about your business 'success' or your position in the corporate pecking order if you're never there for them. Decide who and what matters most to you, then ask how much time you schedule for them. If it doesn't match up, you're living a lie.

Remember, the destination isn't as real or exciting as the dance. Studying, wishing and hoping won't change your life; only **action** will. The flawed practitioner stands a far greater chance of success (and happiness) than the knowledgeable theorist. Now that you know what you need to do, there are only two things left:

1. Decide to do it.
2. Start today.

And make sure you dance while the music is playing.

*Peter Fritz*



The **Work Anywhere** Trail Guide