

SelfInformed

Published by the National Association for the Self-Employed

December 2017

Stand Out
from the
Crowd



MAKING THE

holidays happy

FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED
BUSINESS OWNER



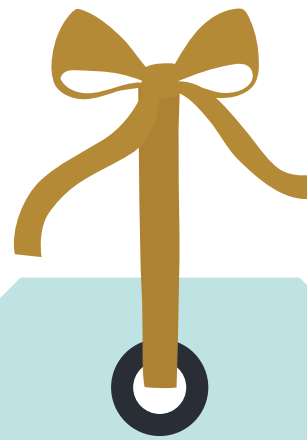
The season leading up to the winter holidays—Christmas, New Year’s, and whatever else you might celebrate—can be stressful, both personally and for your small business. If you work in any field that sells goods or services for the holidays, from haircuts to gift-able goods to parties, you probably depend on this time of year for a good chunk of your income. Plus, you may have your own family obligations, shopping, and parties to attend. Add it all together, and most of us would *really* like to take a *long* holiday break during the holidays.

When starting a business, your own health and sanity often take a back seat. You can exhaust yourself and start to burn out. For your health and the health of your company, you need to replenish your energy so you can continue building your business with clarity and purpose. A vacation, whether before, during, or after the holidays, is a fabulous way to regain your vision and concentration. It may seem counterintuitive, but there is nothing like a break from everyday struggles to give perspective and renewed energy.

When can I take a vacation?

For small business owners and entrepreneurs, it can seem impossible to take some time off while continuing to grow your business. How can the business go on without you? How could you close and leave your customers hanging? What if you miss an opportunity while you are away?

First, let’s consider when you can take a holiday for yourself. If you are in a service or retail goods profession, holiday shoppers and partiers are big business. If you are busy right up until Christmas, but dead between Christmas and New Year’s, then



Tips for enjoying the vacation you do take

- Warn your customers well in advance that you will be out of the office
- Have a virtual assistant, employee, or colleague cover you while you are away
- Set aside a little time each day to check in with your designated lieutenant
- Check in, then forget about it
- Get a change of scenery
- Leave your electronics off for at least a few hours each day
- Schedule activities that are fun and engaging
- Plan some down-time, where you can do anything you want or nothing!
- Relax, knowing that your productivity will soar when you get back from your break



you know you could get away or even close up shop during that week. If you are still busy through New Year's, think about planning a vacation for January or February.

Before you go

Warn your customers well in advance of your planned vacation so that you can take care of their needs. Prepare your staff to fill in for you, but customer relationships are often strongest with the micro business owner. Make sure that your clients know you care and that your company is there for them, even when you are taking a well-deserved break.

If you can't close the business for a week or more to get some time away from the office, figure out who can best fill in for you. If you have a senior employee who knows the business, they can take on most of the tasks and even some of the decisions that need to happen. For a family business, stagger your vacations so that one of the principles is always there, though this is not always possible.

If you are a solo practitioner and you have friends in the business you can trust, you could ask them

to cover emergencies for you on vacation, and you could return the favor later for them. Consider joining a membership organization like the National Association for the Self Employed, as you can network with like-minded professionals and perhaps find someone in your field who you can pair up with for vacation coverage. If not, but you want to make sure you don't miss anything, you can hire a virtual assistant to answer your business phone and emails, and check in with you on urgent matters.

Here's an article on how to work with a virtual assistant and what they can do for you:

Three Questions to Ask When Hiring a Virtual Assistant

Business on vacation

It would be ideal if you could forget about business entirely on vacation, but this is not realistic for most micro businesses. You don't want to lose any money while you are away, but you also want to limit the amount of time you spend on work so that you can get a real break to refresh yourself.

Set some guidelines for yourself to make sure you can relax. Put your electronics away for at least a

Warn your customers well in advance of your planned vacation so that you can take care of their needs.

Holly jolly





Planning a vacation is a great way to take care of the most important asset for your success: **you!**

Plan activities for your vacation: new experiences, a fun class to take, a favorite pastime to engage in. Actively engaging in pleasurable experiences during your time off is more beneficial to health and wellbeing than just lounging around, according to a study in the Journal of Travel Medicine. Planning ahead ensures that you have something fun to look forward to and that you will be too busy enjoying yourself to worry about your business the whole vacation.

few hours a day. Let the person covering for you know what hours you will be available to chat. Let them know where you are staying so they can have you paged in case of a business emergency. Then you can relax, knowing that you would hear about any problems. Everything must be fine because no one is calling you!

Planning the perfect escape

Plan your vacation so that you can get out of town. A change of scenery can really help you clear your head. Even if you can't afford a beach vacation on a far-away island, just being in new surroundings can shift your perspective and change your routine.

The upshot

Balancing work life and personal life needs to be a priority for micro business owners. Planning a vacation is a great way to take care of the most important asset for your success: you! Here is a great NASE blog post to get you thinking about work/life balance: **3 Tips for Balancing Your Professional and Personal Life.**

The holiday period can be full of stress, but if you have planned to take some time off, soon or in a few weeks, you can make it through. Just imagining yourself relaxing will give you the strength to carry on, knowing that the reward of time for you is coming soon! ■



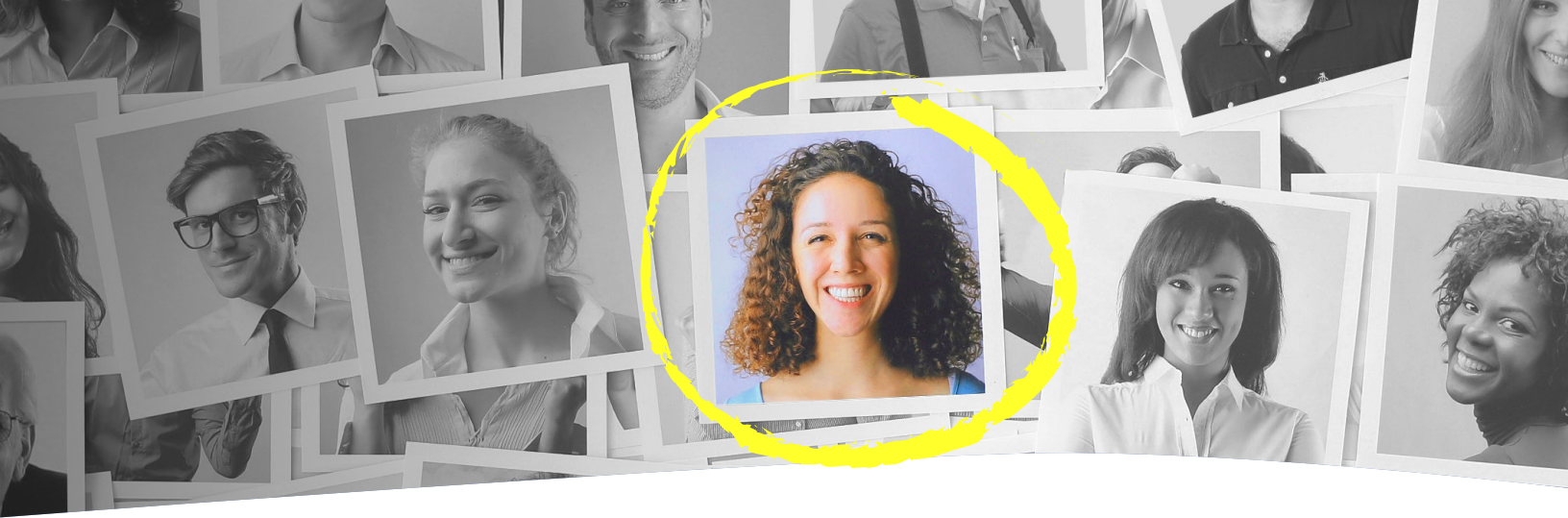
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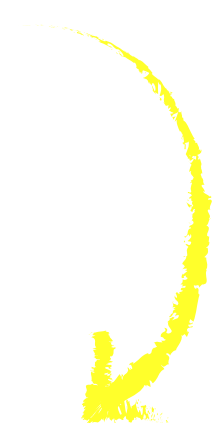
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Stand Out from the Crowd

As 2017 comes to a close and we gear up for a great 2018, we are looking for NASE Members to feature in our monthly spotlights. If you want free publicity for your business and you are an NASE Member, we can help you promote your business! Simply fill out our "Get Publicity!" form here, and you and your business could be featured in an NASE publication, like our monthly member e-newsletter, SelfInformed.

Fill out the information in our Publicity form so an NASE representative can reach out to discuss featuring you and your business next!



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Being the boss often means you are also head of marketing, sales, accounting, HR and more. And sometimes you could use some help.

Get answers, advice, and tips from our team of professional experts. Ask a question online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Self-employed business owners are passionate about what they do. They thrive on unbridled enthusiasm for their work. Maybe you are a fantastic graphic designer, or an innovative IT consultant, or a master plumber. Yet, knowing one's business is not the same as knowing how to run a business. That's why our experts can be of such great value; they are here to help you succeed in the areas you are not as familiar with. ■

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NASE Continues to Voice Strong Desire for Simplified Tax Code



As SelfInformed goes to print, the Senate is busy debating the tax reform legislation with the House previously approving their sweeping tax reform legislation. The NASE continues to advocate for a simplified tax code that promotes parity amongst all businesses, regardless of size.

If all goes as expected, the Senate and House will have a conference committee sort out the differences between the two bills, before both chambers once again approve the measure before sending it to the President for his signature. As you can see from the graphic, there are significant differences that need to be resolved between the House and Senate versions.

NASE looks forward to productive conversations with the Senate and House conferees as to how to best move forward comprehensive tax reform that is simplified and equitable for the nearly 27 million self-employed. ■

Katie Vlietstra is NASE's Vice President for Government Relations and Public Affairs; You can contact her at kvlietstra@nase.org.

Provision	House	Senate
Changes 401(k) plan rules	✗	✗
Curbs mortgage interest deduction	✓	✗
Cuts corporate tax rates	✓	✓
Drops state and local deductions	✓	✓
Fewer individual brackets	✓	✗
Increases child tax credit	✓	✓
Keeps charitable donation deductions	✓	✓
Lowers the "pass through" rate	✓	✗
Maintains medical expenses deduction	✗	✓
Raises standard deduction	✓	✓
Repeals estate tax	✓	✗
Repeals the Alternative Minimum Tax	✓	✓