

## ‘Tis the Season to Be Productive

The holiday season takes place at the same time every year. However, most of us are still caught off-guard when December comes around. With so much to plan for and to execute, the whole experience can sometimes prove overwhelming. This becomes even more apparent when an everyday work life is added to the mix. Usually, by the first week of December our brains have begun conjuring up thoughts of presents, decorating and entertaining at home. Therefore, when at the office it can prove difficult to switch off and focus on the day to day tasks that we are faced with. However, a little thought and planning can aid in preparing for Christmas and the New Year without infringing on work assignments.

**Plan Ahead-** To remain productive at work whilst preparing for the season, your time must be scheduled properly. Design your strategy at home. By doing this in advance, you can then put your plan into action. Everything may not go the way that you intended, but at least by planning, you can then deal with the few mishaps that arise from time to time.

**Put Your Lunch Hour to Work-** During the month of December, it might be a good idea to work through your lunch hour, this way you can then leave work an hour early to run errands. If leaving work early is not an option, be proactive and use your lunch hour to write holiday cards, address gifts or to shop for small, easy to find items.

**Dedicate After Work time To Online Shopping-** Shopping from store to store for the season can be time consuming. Shop online during your out of office downtime. This in turn will result in you having extra time on hand that can be devoted to other tasks.

**Focus on Work, Not on Your Time Off-** Although the holiday spirit may have already taken a hold, try to stay on target. It is very easy to allow your mind to wander this time of year, but if that happens turn your thoughts to what could go wrong if you do not complete tasks. Those images should keep you on track.

**Ask for Favours-** We all get a little stressed out from time to time. If you feel this is happening to you, there is nothing wrong with asking for help from friends and family. If they are out on the road, ask them to pick up certain gift items. If they are having certain food items prepared, ask them whether their caterer will be able to prepare some dishes for you also. You will be surprised at how many people may be willing to go that extra mile during the season.

It is important to find a balance between work and preparing for the holidays. Supervisors will not look too favourably on an unfinished project that remains incomplete because you had to go gift shopping. On the other hand, you do not want to be spending extra time in the office on Christmas Eve completing tasks that you continuously kept putting off. Choose to be productive- you will be surprised at how much you are able to get done.