

Workcations: The Teacher Seller Hack You've Been Missing

Hello there and welcome to School of Sellers. I have something really fun and exciting to share with you guys today and it's going to be one of our quicker episodes but it's something that I love talking about and I hope that you will find some excitement in it as well. so, I know a lot of this show is focused on our lack of time because we are so busy whether we are teaching, whether we are parents, whether we are teachers and parents or we are TPTing full time. It doesn't matter. Time is just something we don't have a whole lot of and I bet that most of us end each day wishing that there was more time in the day. Well, that will never happen. However, I'm going to give you a solution that I have discovered that has made my feelings about time a lot better.

So, let's backtrack a couple months ago. Gosh, it might even have been almost a year ago. I was in a meeting with my mastermind group. We meet via Google chat or Google Hangout every two weeks and one of my mastermind members, Tammy from Tarheelstate Teacher mentioned that she was going on a workcation and I was like wait a minute, what? A workcation? What is a workcation? Let me tell you about Tammy's workcation. She was getting an Airbnb for a couple nights just around the corner from her house, not too far away and she was going to use her time to work on TPT and I just thought that was the most exciting idea. Like the thought of going somewhere by myself where I could focus on working without any distractions sounded like a vacation. Okay? Except Tammy was calling it a workcation and I loved that. In fact, it sounded right up my alley. So, after our meeting ended, I walked downstairs and I cautiously approached the topic with my husband and to my surprise, he was like yeah, you should totally do that and that is how my very first workcation happened and how I've been continuing to do them ever since.

So, today I'm going to give you just a little overview of what a workcation looks like, why it's awesome, how you could convince your partner or family members to send you on your own workcation and how to use your workcation to the best of your abilities. Okay? Now I probably don't need to explain too long why it's so great because you are probably already thinking oh, tell me more, this sounds really fun and exciting. But I love the fact that a workcation is something that I can count on every so often. So, I've actually started doing one workcation a month and it's because I've been working on a couple extra projects and ever since I started School of Sellers in addition to my TPT business, I'm finding that I need a little bit more time in my schedule and my husband is an angel. So, he's pretty much fine with me going on as many workcations as I want but I typically go on one every month and it's usually one or two nights. But I love it because it's something I can count on even if the rest of my month is crazy especially with kids and with teaching and all the germs that happen throughout the winter months. You never really know what kind of time you're going to have during the week to work because people are getting sick, there's other stuff going on and it's just very unpredictable. Life is unpredictable no matter what season we're in but my workcation is something that I know I can count on every month no matter what happens the other 28 days.

I also love workcations because there is something about being out of my house in a totally different environment where I get so much more done and that's obviously because there aren't those distractions that are present when I'm working at my house. Now I will be the first to tell you that I love my home office. It is my favorite place in the house and I get a lot done. It really feeds my creative energy. So, I feel like I am pretty productive at home when I work. However, there are always distractions that I can't eliminate. There's the housework that needs to be done. If I leave my office for a minute, I see about 12 different things that I know I need to do. Like do the dishes, fold the laundry, pay a bill, things like that. So, those distractions are never going away. I also have two little kids. So, those are built-in distractions right there and my husband is the primary caretaker during the day of the kids so I know I already have it easier than most when it comes to kids being distractions. But they do come in and out of my office all day which is fine. I love seeing them and hanging out with them throughout the day but it takes away from my work and my focus and it's really easy for me to get off track when I am working and am really in the zone with something and then one of my kids comes in and wants to tell me a story. It's fine but then it's really hard for me to get back into the swing of things.

And then too even if I am working on something and I tell my husband like oh, I just need like 20 minutes, I'm going to lock the doors, I can't have them come in here, for example, when I'm recording a podcast. But then you know what? I'm the kind of person where like if I know my husband has it under control, if I hear some commotion or they're giving him a hard time, I want to go downstairs and help him because I just feel bad, right? So, no matter how you spin it, there are so many distractions at your house that you might not even realize. So, when you take a workcation and you're in a hotel room or an Airbnb and it's not your own area and there's not anything to distract you like laundry or dishes or vacuuming or kids, you will find yourself in a much more focused mindset to get work done.

And here's what my workcation typically looks like. Like I said, I take one about once a month and the past couple weeks I've actually been going once a week because I'm working on a very exciting project in the School of Sellers space that you guys will probably hear more about soon but it's required a lot more time than usual. So, I've been going once a week. But typically I go once a month and it's one to two night at a time and it's at a hotel that is literally five minutes away from me. So, I don't go far. It's a very affordable hotel five minutes away. That way if something does happen like one of my kids get sick or God forbid there's an emergency, I'm still very close and able to come home right away. And I make sure that when I schedule my workcation, I plan to arrive at the very minute that I can check in and I stay until the very minute that I can check out because I want to know how many hours I'm working with and I want to be able to plan my workcation accordingly. And something new I'm trying this year is also planning one mega workcation. So, in addition to my monthly one or two nights away, I am planning a hotel stay about 20 minutes away—again, not very far—for three or four nights where I can really dive into a big project that I'm working on. So, that's something else to consider.

Now you might be wondering well what do you do when you're there? Like what types of things do you work on? You have really two options when you do a workcation. If you were someone who doesn't have a whole lot of time in your schedule to begin with, you might want to use your workcation for the routine everyday stuff that you don't have time for any other time.

So, things like making your Facebook posts, writing blog posts, working on products, whatever you want basically, right? Just anything you want to work on, work on it. I like to use workcations for my batching days. I like to know ahead of time that I'm going to be batching maybe one of my growing product lines. Maybe I'm going to be batching my social media posts or maybe I'm going to be batching my blog posts. I find that workcations are so incredibly helpful for batching because you are already super focused and being able to knock out the same kind of tasks in one large session is amazing. Workcations are also helpful if you have a special project that you are working on that is different from your typical stuff. Maybe you have a launch coming up or a membership site or something huge and big and you want to save it for a time when you know you have at least 24 hours of uninterrupted time to focus and really plan things out and make it happen.

The way you prepare for a workcation is important because like I said, even though you do have all that uninterrupted time, it does go quickly so you want to be able to make the most of it. I've found that it's super helpful to have a plan for the work that you are doing and the plan should be specific. You want it to be specific because you want to be able to get right to work once you're there and you also want to make sure that you pack any materials you might need for that work. For example, if you are recording a podcast, you want to make sure you grab your wires and your mic and things like that. If you are working on a product line, you want to make sure you have your notes for your product line and anything that you might use along the way. I love making a packing list before I go and I also like to make it a little fun because it is still the workcation. It's work but also the vacation aspect of it.

So, make sure you are packing things that will make you comfortable and be able to enjoy your time. I always make sure to pick up some special snacks along the way. I love packing a set of slipper socks that I can wear in the hotel mostly because hotels kind of gross me out but also because it just makes it nice and cozy and I can get really comfortable and feel really good while I'm working. You want to make sure that you pack any chargers you might need. I've even started packing my computer monitor, my larger monitor that I use in addition to my laptop and that has been so helpful in terms of productivity. So, don't feel like you're being a little excessive if you want to pack things like that. Pack what you need to get the work done but also to enjoy yourself. I also like to maximize the vacation aspect of it by having a show that I'm able to watch while I work if you're doing that type of work. Sometimes you just need to keep it off and make sure that you're focusing. Treating yourself to at least one nice meal while you're gone and scheduling at least one nap in there. I think that's a luxury that a lot of us probably don't have typically so that's always a nice little added bonus of the workcation and it's a great way to recharge your brain so that you are ready to continue working and getting things done.

I have created a workcation guide of sorts and it's kind of like a combination of a packing list and ways to prepare for your workcation and also ideas to get you started on thinking about how you can use workcations in your business because it is one of my favorite discoveries of the past year and again, I have Tammy of the Tarheelstate Teacher to thank for this.

I can't thank her enough for how much this has changed the way I work and just my overall lifestyle. It's a great little gift to give yourself every once in a while. Even if it's just once every few months or even once a year, it's a really cool way to do work that's a little different than usual. So, thanks, Tammy. If you want to grab my workcation guide and planning sheets, you can go to ErinMWaters.com/workcation. If you plan your own workcation, I'd love to hear about it. You can share about it over in School of Sellers which is our Facebook group. It is free to join and it is an awesome community of sellers just like you who are working every day to make their business feel more doable and reach that success that we all want. Thanks again for tuning in and I will see you next week.

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