

“Stepping in Faith: Going From J-O-B to FREE!” by Susan Whitehead



Homeschool Biz Expo

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By Susan Whitehead

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Hi. This is Susan Whitehead with the Home School Biz expo. In today's audio, I'm going to share about how our family went from having a career in the military to being totally free as home business entrepreneurs. I'll share some of the steps that you can take to make sure that you are ready to become a full time entrepreneur before you leave any job or full time paid position. I hope you enjoy this audio.

Well let me begin by sharing a little bit about who I am. I am a wife and mother of five and our children age ranges are 11 all the way down to 17 months and when I look back on my life, I think that I've always been an entrepreneur.

The very first business I ever recall having was selling those braided friendship bracelets with the embroidery floss. When I was in elementary school, a friend of mine and I had a little index card that had all the different colors of embroidery floss that we had and we charged based on the number of strands that our friends wanted and we really had a lot of fun and we actually did fairly well doing that.

And then later on in life I did some other things. I went and took a bunch of our used stuff that I had and my brother and my sister and we took it all to a local flea market and sold our stuff there under the hot Florida sun amongst all these professional flea market vendors and it was definitely a learning experience to say the least, but when I really started to get more serious about being an entrepreneur, it was not until after I was married.

My husband and I were stationed in Wichita, Kansas and we had had our first child in 1998. When she was about 3 months old, I noticed something that every parent soon realizes after they have a child and it was that babies grow very quickly and they outgrow their clothes even faster.

Here I was with a 3 month old child and I had all these really adorable clothes that she had gotten for baby gifts and I just didn't have any use for them anymore because she was growing like a weed. So I had heard about this little site online, perhaps you've heard of it. It's called eBay and I'd heard about this site that I could go on there and I could sell things at auction and do pretty well.

So I took a little webcam, if you can believe that there actually were webcams back in 1998. There actually were. Terrible resolution, but it did the trick and I took some pictures, using that webcam, of the little clothes that I had and I put them up online and in October of 1998 I made my first sale on eBay and I was hooked.

From that point on, I really kept looking for opportunities to make money online. I continue to sell on eBay to this day. In fact I have some boxes that I'm looking at right now that are ready to be taped up and labeled and get ready to ship out and then mailed tomorrow morning, but it wasn't until 2004 in the summer that I started to experiment with having my own web presence.

I bought my first domain called barefootmemories.net and I actually still own that site and I was using it for a direct sales scrapbooking company that I was part of and I thought this company doesn't really provide a website for its consultants or it didn't at that point. So I thought this would be kind of a neat way to have a hub for my business.

Since then I've left the direct sales company and now it's just a content site with information on scrapbooking, but I really got a chance to experiment with web design and find out that I really enjoyed it. It kind of took us on an interesting journey of really diving right into head first the whole realm of internet marketing.

Now in 2005, my husband at the time was a pilot and we were experiencing an unbelievable amount of stress because of the birth of our fourth daughter. She was born in October of 2005 and at that point we had four children and we kind of came to a crossroads. As we looked down the path of a full fledged 20 year military career, at that point my husband had 10 years in service, we came to the realization that by the time my husband got to that 20 year mark, our oldest daughter would be 18 years old and most likely leaving the home.

We started thinking about what those 10 years from 2005 onto 2015, what those, or actually it was 2006 down to 2016, what those next 10 years were going to look like. Based on the knowledge that we had at the time of how military deployments were going, we knew that my husband would likely spend between 1/3 and 1/2 of that time away from home, whether it was during training in the United States that we could not accompany him on or whether he was actually deployed to the Middle East or somewhere else.

So we really spent a lot of time praying and just talking it over and trying to decide what is the best for our family.

In the spring of 2006, we bit the bullet and made the decision that for the best interest of our family it was time to get out. My husband decided that he didn't want to come to the time that our oldest daughter was ready to leave the home and not really know who she was because he just wasn't physically home.

So that was a major event that happened in our lives. We didn't just get there from one day to the next. It was definitely not an overnight type of thing. We learned a lot in the years prior to that and especially; I would say, maybe the 6 months before we actually separated from the military, about what it meant to have a home business. What true financial education is and those are some things that I'm going to share with you later on about some of the things that really changed our mindset and helped us get to the point of being able to make that decision to leave military life which was, at that point for us, super secure.

There was no chance of us losing his job. We had full medical benefits and for those of you who actually have to pay for medical benefits, you know exactly what I'm talking about how valuable

that can be. I mean we were making about \$6,500 at the time in 2006 and much of it was tax free and so it wasn't one of those decisions that was one that we made easily, but it definitely, looking back, was the best decision that we ever made and I don't want to discount at all any of you who are military families.

I applaud you and I'm so thankful for the sacrifices that you make because I know how hard it is to be married to the military. So I just want to set the record straight that we didn't leave the military with any hard feelings. We just knew that, at that point in our lives, it was not the ideal situation for our family.

So in this audio, what I want to do is I want to really walk you through some of the ways that you can begin to get ready and prepare for being a full time entrepreneur.

Now I am a pretty direct person. It kind of gets me in trouble sometimes, but if you are looking for candy coating or those soft focus images of entrepreneurship, I'm sorry, but you're going to have to go somewhere else. That's just not who I am. So I'm going to be very direct with some of the things that I'm sharing and I hope you will appreciate my honesty and appreciate the fact that I'm going to tell you the truth. I'm going to tell you where it was hard mostly so that you know the pitfalls, the challenges and the struggles that we went through so you can avoid them when you are at that point of making the decision to be a full time entrepreneur.

Let's get started.

I broke this down into three segments of how to prepare for being a full time entrepreneur.

The first one is to plan. The second one is to prepare and the third one I'm calling purpose and what I mean by that you'll find out when I get to that step.

So number one to plan. I think the most important thing when you are considering being a full time entrepreneur is you really need to know yourself. Now what I mean by that is that you really need to know what your strengths are. What your weaknesses are. Are you a people person or are you more of an introvert? Are you better at coming up with ideas or are you better at just getting things done? Are you self disciplined enough to work on your business instead of spending time being busy and getting nothing done?

And what I mean by that is if you have a project that you're working on, are you able to sit down and get it done whether it's on the computer or not or will you get on the computer and just kind of fiddle around. Maybe you'll go to Facebook and kind of interact with some people that you knew from high school or maybe you'll go on Twitter and send out a few tweets about the snow that's falling outside your house. Little things like that keep you busy, but you're not getting anything done for your business. So you need to know that.

Now I'll be the first to admit that I do get in the trap of getting onto Facebook and the next thing I know 30 minutes have passed and I'm looking at somebody's pictures that they posted of their kids and that's not getting business done.

So if you know that that is a weakness of yours, you can prepare to have something in place so that you don't get stuck going down those rabbit trails that happen when you start diving into email and Facebook and those types of things.

Now another thing to plan for is think about are you going to need some specific skills to run your business?

Now I'm not saying that everybody needs to be a superb accountant or excellent bookkeeper because I certainly am not good at bookkeeping at all, but you need to know if there are certain things you want done for your business whether you have the skills to do them or not and if you don't, will you acquire those skills yourself or will you hire out somebody else to do it for you.

Now let's say you have a physical disability. It's definitely going to have to be something that you take into consideration. If you do have a physical disability and it's hard for you to get out of the house, perhaps selling big large items on eBay is not the best way to go. So take that into consideration when you are toying with different ideas for businesses.

And lastly and definitely not least, you need to really consider what you're going to do with your children while you're working on your business. If you have them at home, you're a home schooler, they're home with you most of the time, what are you going to do when you have a big project that comes up?

Now my husband and I will take turns tending to the children. We won't just sit them in front of the TV and tell them to fend for themselves, but sometimes we'll have our oldest daughter and our second oldest, the 11 and 9 year old, tend to their little brother because he is at the stage where he demands constant attention and they're able to do that for short bursts of time.

Now if you have older children, they're probably a little more independent in their schoolwork and think about are you going to involve them pretty heavily in what you're doing. If you have a business that provides a product, will they be helping you maybe box stuff and ship stuff? Will they help you with marketing? Will they help you maybe tweak a website or do some graphics for you, whatever? Really think about how you're going to involve your children because after all most people get into a home business so they can spend more time with their family.

So definitely keep in mind what are you going to do with your children while you're working on the business?

One thing, I want to go back to because I really feel like this is such a stumbling block for so many people when they're getting started trying to come up with a business is really knowing yourself and being aware of what your makeup is and what is the best type of business for you.

There are so many opportunities that come through my inbox and I have what a lot of entrepreneurs have and it's the shiny object syndrome and what I mean by that is that I am drawn to something new. I am drawn to whatever the newest trend is, the newest fad is and that can be a real distraction for me. So what you have to realize, if that is your personality, is you can do a few things to kind of ward off getting drawn in by those shiny objects that bombard you.

One thing you can do is to just unsubscribe from a ton of newsletters. About every quarter, I will go through and go through an email newsletter purging stage. Now there's a few that I will not unsubscribe from and there are some folks that are experts on this series in the Home School Biz expo, but there are others that I sign up on their list through some other joint venture kind of deal and I just get bombarded with all these messages and I just have to unsubscribe.

So that would be my first tip. If you get caught in this cycle of always wanting to chase the newest whatever it is for marketing or newest business model, just unsubscribe from a bunch of newsletters and I'm telling you it will really, really help and when you do keep some newsletter, when you open them up, really think about what it is that that product or that course or that seminar or whatever, think about how that will affect your business.

Does it fit into the idea that you have already for your business or not? And if it doesn't, then you don't mess with it. Don't buy stuff thinking that oh well you might be able to use it later. If you do end up needing to use it later, chances are if it's a decent product it'll still be available for sale. Don't worry about getting in on an opening deal when you save \$20 if you just can't see where you would use it right now. Save it until it's time for you to use it in your business and then the extra \$20 or whatever it won't really matter because at that point you're ready to actually use it.

Alright. So that is my first step which is to plan.

So now let's move to step number two and that is to prepare.

This is an area that I think many entrepreneurs don't spend enough time on. I know we sure didn't so I hope that you will listen to these and really take notes and consider what it is I'm about to share.

The first one to prepare is I'm recommending to set aside a good 6 to 12 months of income in case your business does not turn an adequate profit for a while.

Now the ideal situation would be for you to start working at your business and become profitable before you don't have a full time income from your current employer or whatever. Make sure

that you have some money stashed aside that can carry your family through the lean times of starting up a business.

Starting an internet based business definitely has a shorter time line to profitability generally speaking than a brick and mortar type business; if you're serious about running it as a business, but you still need to think about what if the economy takes a turn for the worst. How will I carry my family through that time? Maybe the economy doesn't get bad, but say your market dries up. Look at what is happening to local phone service verses cell phones. I mean nobody ever thought 15, 20 years ago that landlines and normal telephone service was going to kind of fall by the wayside.

So think about how you're going to be able to provide for your family including insurance and that kind of stuff before you are left without any kind of regular steady paycheck.

Another way to prepare is to pare down your lifestyle before you quit that job and what I mean by that is see if you can pay off some debt. See if you can get by on one vehicle. We did that in our family and at first I was really, really apprehensive about my husband selling his truck and I wasn't sure how it was going to work out. I mean if he was ever out with the van and I needed it with the five children what was I going to do, but we tried it and it has been a tremendous savings financially for our family.

We don't have to pay insurance for his truck. We don't have to pay for the license plate and the taxes and stuff that they charge here in North Carolina for vehicles and not to mention gas for that extra vehicle and one kind of hidden thing that a lot of people don't think about when consolidating to just one vehicle is when we had two vehicles, I was much more likely to get all the children loaded up in the van and go out somewhere and every time I went out somewhere, I spent money.

Now it may not have been much. It may have been only \$20, \$25, but if you're doing that multiple times a week, it really adds up.

So now that we only have one vehicle, I'm very much more focused. When I go out I have specific places that I'm going to go and specific things that I'm going to do and I try to get as much done as I can in just one trip and that just was not happening when we had two vehicles.

So that's just one example of a way you can pare down your lifestyle before you quit your job. You can also slow down on eating out if you eat out a lot. You can cancel your cable or your satellite service. You can tailor back on your cell phone usage or cut out your home phone. There's so many different ways if you really look in your financial statement where you're spending money, where the little leaks are that you can really pare back and start living a more conservative lifestyle to prepare for being a home entrepreneur.

Now when you are getting ready to start a business, it's always good to have a plan. So if you can come up with a solid business plan or idea that is realistic to shoot for then of course that is a wise way to prepare and I also would advise you to get some input from others.

Now it's great if you can find a mentor or a coach or a friend who is going to encourage you during those times and I definitely would say to find people who will tell it to you like it is. Don't specifically look for people who will just tell you yes that's a great idea. Go ahead and do it just because they love you and they don't want to say no to you. Find somebody who will be real with you.

One of the things you can do is you can look in your local area for an office for the Small Business Administration or an organization called SCORE, something to do with retired entrepreneurs. I don't know what all the letters stand for, but that's a way that you can go and field some input from people who have experienced running a small business that can help you and kind of point out hey there's some flaws in this idea that you have. You're not estimating the amount of capital that's required to get it started or you're really shooting short on how much time you think this will take to become profitable, but also keep in mind when you go to a lot of the local small business organizations, they're mostly focused on brick and mortar type stuff, at least that's been our experience.

So if you're starting an internet business you need to look for someone that has some experience doing stuff online because it really is quite different.

Now once you have come up with business plan, I advise you to pick a specific deadline for implementing that plan so you can really get focused and know when you've already decided you're ready to take that leap of faith and become a full time entrepreneur.

Now when you do make that leap, I want you to know that other people are going to think that you're nuts. They're going to think that you're crazy. They're going to question why in the world you're doing this. Why you're putting your family at risk and all kinds of crazy things. This is why I encourage you to have a mentor, a coach or some friends who will encourage you because people will say things and they will hurt.

I love my mother dearly, but whenever I have a business idea, I will not tell her about it because she is a pessimist and she will find faults in anything, but I know that so I know not to go to her when I have an idea, but just be prepared that people will think you're nuts.

I think at the time that we were really praying about whether to stay in the military or not, I would say if we had taken a poll, about 99.999% of the people that we knew would have told us that we were crazy and some of them in fact might still think that we're crazy, but we had to really make that decision for ourselves and not be influenced by any naysayers and there always is a naysayer that will find their way into your space to tell you that what you're doing is crazy.

So be aware of that and know what you're going to say when those things start to come and one of the ways that we were able to come to that decision to take that leap is by learning from people who had done this sort of thing before us and we read this book and you may have read it. If you haven't I highly recommend that you go out and get it as soon as possible. It is a book called *Rich Dad Poor Dad* by Robert Kiyosaki.

Now it's been a while since I've read it, but the main premise of the book is him educating and teaching people how to change their mindset about what we have always been taught in school in regards to making a living. One of the things that he says that his poor dad used to say a lot is you work hard so you can go to school and get good grades so you can get a job and work hard again and then retire in 20 some odd years and unless you have not been tuning into the news for the past 5 years or so, you know that it's just not like that anymore.

The age of people spending their entire working lives devoted to one company and the company rewarding them at the end of that time; that just doesn't exist anymore and for us to continue in that cycle to keep thinking that way is absurd frankly.

So reading that book *Rich Dad Poor Dad* really opened our eyes to the fact that we are in a new era of employment. We are in an age that it's not like that anymore. People who have 10 years in a company will get dumped for somebody who is 20 years younger and pay them half as much because they know what's happening in the world now.

So get some resources like that. Find a book like *Rich Dad Poor Dad* to begin to train your mind to think in a different way about finances and about business.

Now lastly my third step is purpose and what I mean by purpose is that you need to live on purpose. You need to do things on purpose. Don't just kind of go about this whole idea of becoming a home entrepreneur without having focus, without doing things purposefully with a specific and a specific end result in mind. Part of doing your business on purpose is to continually educate yourself on how to increase your business. How to market it more effectively. How to find your target customers or clients and how to stay in touch with them and really connect with them on a level that is better than all of your competitors.

Keeping yourself educated in this day and age is absolutely critical. Businesses change so quickly due to just how fast things can get out on the internet. A lot of you will remember the issue that, I believe it was Domino's Pizza had with some employees doing some things in one of their franchises and posting a video on YouTube and everybody found out about it and it was like everybody was wondering where is Domino's. Where is the official response to what these delinquents, I'll call them delinquents, what these delinquents were doing and it took them days and that's not what the public wanted. They wanted an immediate response.

There's also, if you look up I believe it's United, United Airlines. Go to Google or go to YouTube and type in the phrase United breaks guitars. There was a musician who was on a United Airlines flight. I believe it was United and they broke his guitar and I can't remember all of the details of the story, but basically he was told too bad, so sad. I'm sorry your guitar broke, but we're not going to do anything about it. Well this gentleman, being a musician, decided he was going to write a song about how United Airlines broke his guitar and it went crazy and again United was kind of slow in responding to what this gentleman had put up on YouTube.

I mean the video was circulating everywhere and it really is actually quite a good song. So if you find it, at least it's entertaining, but with the age that we are in things change so quickly that you've got to constantly be on the ball, constantly following what the newest ways are of connecting with your customer and that has to come from staying educated.

Now also by living and working on purpose, I encourage you to have some milestones that you will set with a reward after you have achieved them and this can be a reward for you personally or for you as an entire family. During the process of setting up this Home School Biz expo, it has taken quite a toll time-wise on my family. It has been stressful and there's been a lot of work that's had to get done and once this is all done, I promised our daughters that I will take them to a local pottery place so we can just have some quiet time just with mommy and just paint some pottery and have fun and it helps kids to have that goal at the end to see hey. This is what we're working towards. Yes mommy and daddy are busy right now, but at the end we'll be rewarded and there's nothing wrong with that.

Also I encourage you to find ways to streamline your business by outsourcing and putting systems in place to, not to mechanize, that's not the word I'm looking for, but to just make some of the tasks that you have to do, the repetitive tasks simpler.

Now what I mean by outsourcing is if you have a lawn, if you have a yard that you go out and mow and you don't enjoy mowing. Now if you enjoy mowing that's fine and weed eating and that sort of thing, but if you don't enjoy it, why would you spend an entire afternoon, an entire morning or entire day depending on how big your yard is, doing your yard work when you can hire somebody out to do that and pay them much less than you should be paying yourself.

Also if you do not enjoy housework. I do not enjoy housework by any stretch of the imagination. I am not a domestic diva, but if I can hire somebody to come into the house and have her dust and vacuum and clean the bathrooms, mop the floors that frees me up to do things that help my business grow. It allows me to concentrate on my strengths and let whoever that is do what their strength is.

I kind of see it as not so much a selfish thing which a lot of people kind of have that stigma. If you hire out people to mow your lawn and if you hire out people to come clean your house, that's kind of a selfish thing, but it really allows you to bless someone else by letting them have

a job, letting them have their own business instead of being forced to say work at the local Target or the local fast food place and make minimum wage.

I mean what a blessing it is to have somebody come in and clean my house for a couple of hours, pay them \$75 to \$100 to do the job. They're done in 3 to 4 hours and there's no way they could make that amount of money working at a minimum wage job. It would take them a couple of days to make that kind of money.

So think of it that way. That you're allowing someone to come in and do what their strength is, at the same time freeing you up to do what is best for your business.

Now I've talked a lot about our family and I just wanted to share with you some of the ways that we are currently making an income. Right now our family actively sells on eBay that will probably continue for a while. We do kind of go in cycles. Before Christmas time in 2009, we were selling a lot of children's toys on eBay and that was a lot of fun. We actually were able to involve my oldest daughter. She invested in some toys with us that we were then able to turn around and sell at a profit and that was a lot of fun.

We also have several digital products and courses out online that work for us basically on autopilot and this kind of goes back to what I was saying about finding ways to include systems in your business.

If you have a business online, it's so easy to find different systems to put in place so that you're not working the business like you would if you have a traditional store like in a strip mall or something like that. There are programs that I use to help manage my auction listings. There are specific websites that I use to process credit card payments. There are all kinds of different ways that you can include systems in your business especially if you're doing a business online.

Now most of them do come with some sort of fee so you really have to weigh, again just like hiring someone to come clean your house, is it worth it for me to pay a certain amount of money every month to have a system in place to get things done or should I just do it myself and honestly I did a lot of stuff myself in the very beginning, but now I've been able to get to the point to where my business is just going in so many different directions that I need to have systems to keep everything organized.

Now another way that our family is currently making an income is doing marketing consulting and this is the one my husband is most involved in although he does help with eBay, but he will go out and meet with local business owners and talk with them and find out what their needs are and then we come up with a marketing plan for them generally involving the internet, creating a unique selling proposition, doing online video and that sort of thing and we help them not only reach their customers, but do it online in several different ways.

So that's another way that our family is making an income.

Now some of the things that we've done to make our home business easier is I tend to work after the children go to bed for the night. I am a night owl and I will stay up late and that's really when my brain tends to turn on and get stuff done. I'll do video courses at night. I'll work on websites and stuff at night. I'll create slideshows and stuff at night. So I tend to focus most of my work stuff after the children go to bed. That's really when I am the most productive and the least likely to get trapped in that web of getting on Facebook and getting sucked into everybody's pictures, but if you're a morning person, definitely you can get up a little bit earlier than the children and get stuff done then. That's just not my time of day. That's not when my brain is at its peak.

Also take turns with your spouse taking care of the children so you can get things done. I already talked about how we have our two oldest daughters, they really step it up when they're done with their school work or even in between the times that they're working on their school work they'll take a break for 30 minutes at a time and play with the younger ones and that really helps not only break up their day, but it allows me to get things done including helping some of their younger siblings with their schoolwork or even with the older ones, helping them with their more challenging math and grammar and those sorts of things.

Having a schedule really really helps in this way. Like one of our experts was talking about Terri Johnson. She shares how it just helps with communication. Everybody knows what is expected, what's coming next and it just eliminates all those little questions that young children especially seem to have as to what is going to be going on that day. So a schedule can really help you stay on track and get things done without getting sucked into different things that might kind of throw the whole day out of whack.

Another thing that we do in our family, especially with those of us that have larger than average size families is really critical to find ways to spend some one on one time with each of our children.

Now we live kind of out in the country so it's not really for us to go different places one on one with the children and again we just have the one vehicle so we're limited in that respect. One of the things that we do is we'll just take one of the children with us whenever we go on an errand.

For example my husband had to run into town today. He had to go to the bank and had to run to the grocery store and he took our youngest daughter with him and that just meant the world to her to have one on one time with her daddy. She didn't have to worry about taking turns to talk with him with any of her other siblings. They got to do some fun things. In her mind they're fun. To us it's just running errands, but it really is special time for the children.

Whenever I end up going to Target, I've usually got at least two children fighting over who is going to come with me and then we have to think about okay. Who went last time and so on, but that just even the ride in the car allows me the opportunity to talk to them, find out what's going

on and because we're home schoolers, we're pretty involved and know pretty much everything that's going on in their lives, but unless we ask them, we don't know what's going on in their heads that maybe they're not sharing.

So I really treasure those times that I can just take one of them out and take them out shopping with me and sometimes I'll have to take the little guy along and that usually presents an interesting challenge just because of the age that he's at, but still it's an opportunity for me to bond with my older children in a way that we just can't get done when it's all of us and I've realized that they really are different people when they're by themselves. It's very interesting to see how they are different. There's a different dynamic when it's all seven of us or even six or five or four of us than it is when it's just two of us.

Now I talked about before outsourcing some of the tasks that are just not your strength. I have somebody that transcribed all the audios for this Home School Biz expo. That is not my strength. I could do it. I know I could sit down and listen to these audios and type away, but it's so much more efficient and so much better use of my time to let somebody else who's an expert at doing that take care of it than me sit down and try to do that kind of thing.

We have a young lady that we've been working with in the Philippines who was setting up some accounts on social sites for some of our clients and again that's something that I can do. I am able to do, but for me doing that sort of thing is just mind numbingly boring and it's just not my strength.

So it's a blessing to her to have a job where she can do something that she can do and excel at and it's a blessing to me because I can get it done and not spend hours of my time doing these things that I'm not good at doing.]

So really find some ways to outsource some of your tasks. Some places to find people to outsource to include a website called oDesk.com. Another one is Elance.com and I believe another one is called Guru.com and also if you are experienced in certain areas like maybe you're a good writer, maybe you're a good editor. Maybe you're good with graphic design or have a child that's good at those sorts of things, go on those sites and look for different ways that you can make money. People post projects on these sites all the time and you'd be amazed at some of the things you can find and get paid well to do from home.

So definitely check out those sites. If you're not quite ready to start your own business full force, but still want to make a little bit of money on the side. If you have some skills everything from accounting to writing to techy stuff. Check out those sites and you're sure to find some kind of project that fits your skill set.

And lastly just find shortcuts. One of our experts Debbye Cannon talked about how she's not lazy. She just tries to find shortcuts to do things and I am all for shortcuts. Life is too short and

too busy to try to do things the long way. Like I said earlier, I use some tools to help me manage my eBay listings instead of having to spend time at our local post office which is not the most enjoyable experience for me especially when I have all the children. I use something called Click and Ship and what that does is that allows me to print labels at home on my printer.

I do have a scale at home so I can see how much my packages weight and those generally run, well let's see. I have a 5 pound scale. I think it was about \$30 at Staples or OfficeMax or that kind of place, but if you can print out the labels, weigh your packages at home, you can go to the US Postal website or if you're selling through eBay, when you click through to PayPal to print out your label, there's an option on the last page after you print out the label to schedule a pickup and if you have packages, you have at least one that is priority mail or international, you can have your postal carrier pickup packages at your house without even having to open the door.

I can just leave packages on my doorstep and as long as I do it the night before, as long as I schedule the pickup the night before. Don't try to do it that same day unless you're up really super early, super, super early in the morning, but as long as I can schedule it the night before, I can leave my packages outside and our postal worker will come and he'll get out of his truck and he'll pickup our boxes and leave a little note in the mailbox letting me know that he picked them up and I don't have to get out and go to the post office.

So there are all kinds of little shortcuts that you can find. Some of these things I found out on my own. Some of them I didn't find out until someone told me about them. So that's another reason that it's great to have a mentor or a coach or a friend with some experience who's a little bit further down the road, that's where they can come in and they can help you find those shortcuts so that you're not spending all this time learning these little things that can save you really just tons of time and tons of headaches as you're doing your home business.

Now if our family had to do this whole entrepreneurial stepping out in faith thing, if we had to do it over again you'd better believe that there are tons of things that we would have done differently. We would have planned better. We definitely would have prepared more and we would have started living on purpose much sooner.

So I hope this audio has been an encouragement to you. I hope that you took a lot of notes. If not go back and listen to it again and really think about all the things that I talked about. Planning, knowing yourself, knowing who you are. Preparing, get some deadlines in place, have specific things in mind, have some money set aside, those sorts of things. You can be ready when it's time to take that leap and then to live on purpose. Once you've started doing this entrepreneurial thing that we're doing definitely stay educated. Stay on that forefront so you don't get left behind and you don't lose your customers to somebody else who's doing your job better than you are.

"Stepping in Faith: Going From J-O-B to FREE!" by Susan Whitehead

Now if you want to find out more information about me, you can find me online at www.mrshomeschool.com and I also have a blog attached to that so be sure you sign up for my newsletter there and you can get more information and find out when I put new stuff on the blog. I do videos and tips for homeschooling and business and all sorts of stuff like that and that's www.mrshomeschool.com Also you can find me on Twitter at www.twitter.com/susanwhitehead and then you can find me on Facebook. I'm at www.facebook.com/SusanTWhitehead

So I hope you have enjoyed this talk. I hope that you can take some of the challenges that our family had to go through in becoming entrepreneurs and learn from those so that you are as prepared as possible when your family is ready to take that leap into becoming a full time entrepreneur.