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How to Make Money in Bed

**By Dr. Kathleen Begley
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Note to Readers: *This free e-newsletter, sent only upon request, comes from Dr. Kathleen Begley, owner of Write Company Plus communications training. She writes weekly on topics connected to business and personal success. Dr. Begley recently launched a new blog called "Meandering to a Different Drummer." Click onto the website address at the end of this article to read her one-paragraph musings on life, death, and how to communicate as well as your dog.*

Making money in bed. I believe we all should be thinking seriously right now about ways to make a living while sneezing and sniffing under a nice, thick, quilted down comforter. Why am I thinking about these lines? I just got over a colossal cold, during which I spent most of the time nestled under a thick blanket. My nose was stuffed. My voice was cracking. My body was aching. My most bizarre symptom was that my neck was so sore I couldn't move my head. Side to side. Other side to other side. Back and forth. Forth and back. My head wouldn't budge on my shoulders without a shot of pain that made me feel that I was, indeed, shot by some unseen sniper.

I discovered the strange immobility when I tried to drive myself to the One-Minute Clinic at my local CVS store. As I was backing out of my driveway, I found myself unable to look behind me. I was so nonplussed that I bagged the trip and went back to, where else, bed. By the time my husband Joe came home, I was in a deep Alka Seltzer Plus induced quasi-coma. At that point, I lacked the energy to get into the car to be taken to a hospital.

The next day, I typed in sick on last week's newsletter. Did you miss me? In almost 10 years, I had never before failed to write my weekly words of questionable wisdom because of illness. Even a year-long bout with irritable bowel syndrome – that included two weeks of hospitalization - - and another year-long battle with Lyme disease failed to keep me from your email inbox, like it or not. At any rate, I suffered on, feeling a tad better each day, until I finally was able once again to get my fingers walking across the keyboard on my computer.

So did I have swine flu. Maybe. Maybe not. As you may recall, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently predicted that half of the U.S. population will contract the new virus before the end of the year. By the way, most medical organizations now refer to the disease as H1N1. As a vegetarian, I'd like to think the switch came to stop insulting pigs. Crazy, huh? Anyway, I'm hoping my illness was the real thing, and not a forecast of a worst virus to come. I'm unsure my budget can afford the purchase of another six boxes of lotion-imbued tissues.

It surely can't withstand another week off. So I've been researching ways to make money while flat on my back without resorting to the world's oldest profession. Here are some ideas you may want to try along with me:

Limit use of your laptop. Sure, you could make yourself sicker by putting in a full day on the computer just the way you do at the office. But perhaps your illness is an opportunity to do low-tech tasks you normally put off. If I were you, I'd plug into wifi only to check email messages – and to delete as many as possible so you won't feel swamped once you're upright.

Make listening calls. Use your bedridden-ness as an opportunity to check in with long-lost clients or far-away buddies. Open the call with the croaky fact that you're unable to talk because



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your throat is raw, but that you'd love to hear what's going on in the other person's world. I predict your contacts will love the rare chance to talk one way without nervously anticipating any unwanted advice from you.

Get appointments. I hate setting up meetings, as much in my personal as in my professional life. The big reason is that I usually have to try during three-minute snatches of time stolen from my communication workshops. When someone puts me on hold, I normally have to hang up – and then try tedious again and tedious again and tedious again. So guess what? While I was ill, I finally got an appointment to get a business photo taken and to have my feet – not my head – examined.

Enter data. If you can see straight despite your illness, now may be the time to enter all the names, addresses, and phone numbers you have never put into your Blackberry or I-Phone. Still low-tech? Neaten your handwritten phone directory.

Do mindless tasks. During my slug-a-bug-ness, I managed to write a few cards to clients from the past – whom I'd like to drag into the present. I still don't understand why they took my angry outburst so seriously. OK, maybe I do. But business experts always say to continue efforts to resurrect former customers.

Scan dense journals. Almost every profession has a deadly dull magazine filled with significant research articles. The title of these publications usually includes the word "journal." I suggest you get someone to put the last three years of issues in your bed, after which you can flip through and rip out articles of interest. Delay reading until you're back on four cylinders and can understand not-so-plain academic English.

Give yourself a break. And breaks. After all, you're ill and should not expect yourself to perform at peak capacity. I recommend nodding off at least once an hour. Actually, that's not a bad idea even when you're feeling OK. In summary, I'd like to say ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ.

Dr. Kathleen Begley has written seven books and gives corporate seminars on topics such as writing persuasively, presenting confidently, and managing positively. You can call her at 610-429-1562 or e-mail her at KBegley@writecompanyplus.com. She responds to everybody. If you feel you've become too busy to ever read this free, opt-in blogletter, please tell us to remove you from our mailing list. Although our feelings will be deeply hurt, we'll cheerfully delete you.