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## More women embrace stress-free freelancing, finds new research

- *International Women's Day survey finds women are less stressed since going it alone in business*
- *A third of new businesses are now started by women*

[www.crunch.co.uk](http://www.crunch.co.uk)

More women are striking out on their own in business and finding greater work-life balance, finds new research released ahead of International Women's Day (8 March).

The study\*, commissioned by Crunch Accounting, asked male and female freelancers across the country what impact leaving 9 to 5 work life had on their stress levels and happiness.

More than half (51%) of female freelancers reported feeling significantly or moderately less stressed since leaving the traditional world of work – 10% more than their male counterparts.

Crunch's new client figures also show that the number of women starting their own business has grown 42% since 2010, and almost a third of all the new businesses they help start are now founded by women. With more [reasons than ever to leave full-time jobs](#), that figure will only increase.

Helena Mann, operations manager for Crunch Accounting said: "We weren't at all surprised to discover more women are turning to – and feeling happier in – a freelancing lifestyle. With the chance to determine when and where they want to work, freelancing is allowing women a level of flexibility and autonomy that's simply unheard of in the traditional 9 to 5 workplace.

"For anyone trying to balance family and a career, freelancing is a chance to finally level the playing field. We can only hope more big businesses start to adopt these forward thinking strategies, like workplace crèches and flexible start times, to make this a possibility for all employees," added Mann.

Both male and female freelancers named unpredictable workflow as the biggest cause of stress in their professional lives, closely followed by the challenge of chasing late payments. Women however are twice as likely to struggle with the isolation that comes with solo working.

Female freelancers are also turning to healthier techniques to help manage their stress levels. Women were more likely to try cooking, socialising, exercise and meditation in difficult times. In contrast, men are 10 per cent more likely to turn to alcohol to alleviate stress (40% of men versus 30% of women).

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*\* The research commissioned by Crunch Accounting surveyed 750 freelancers and small/micro-business owners across the UK from 22 December 2015 to 7 January 2016. Key results below:*

Questions:

**1. What impact did leaving regular work to start working for yourself have on your stress levels?**

- Women - less stressed: 51%
- Men - less stressed: 40%
- Women - more stressed: 21%
- Men - more stressed: 31%

**2. What is your biggest cause of stress?**

- An unpredictable ebb and flow of work – 23%
- Insufficient work – 21%
- Late repayments – 13%
- Too much work – 11%
- Tax and red tape – 9%
- Personal problems are harder to switch off from when freelancing – 5%
- Bookkeeping – 5%
- Other cause – 5%

**3. Which of the following do you ever do to de-stress?**

- Drink – Men: 39%, Women: 30%
- Smoke – Men: 17%, Women: 12.5%
- Take drugs (illegal) – Men: 4%, Women: .5%
- Self medicate (prescription) – Men: 3%, Women: 3%
- Sex – Men: 18%, Women: 12%
- Socialise – Men: 26%, Women: 32%
- Cook – Men: 22%, Women: 26%
- Exercise – Men: 41%, Women: 43%
- Meditation – Men: 6%, Women: 18%
- Extreme sports – Men: 3%, Women: 1%
- Read – Men: 37%, Women: 54%
- Watch TV – Men: 50%, Women: 64%

**4. Do you ever struggle with the isolation involved with working alone?**

- Men - 6%
- Women - 12%

### **About Crunch Accounting**

Crunch is the UK's first and fastest-growing online accountancy firm, combining a team of expert in-house accountants available on-demand with simple online accounting software.

Designed specifically for freelancers, contractors and small businesses, Crunch is more than just an accountancy firm – it's everything you need to manage your finances. Their complete accounting solutions start at £64.50+VAT per month.

Crunch was co-founded by online entrepreneur Darren Fell and Accountancy Director Steve Crouch, with investment from Bebo co-founder Paul Birch. Former Skype CEO Michael van Swaij is Crunch Chairman.

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