



Double Your Productivity, Double Your Results! In Half the Time

"Everything is hard before it is easy." – Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

One key to greater business success and personal success is the ability to effectively manage your time, overcome procrastination, and double your productivity. Here are six simple strategies that will guarantee your success if you practice them on a daily basis.

ONE Study and master your core competencies. What is one important subject or skill you could learn, or continue to develop, that would bring you closer to achieving your major goal? Decide what it is and work on that area every day no matter what, except for the one day or so each week you take off and relax. Ask yourself, "What specific areas do I need to improve upon in my line of work that would bring me closer to achieving my dreams?" The more experience you get, the more confident you feel. The more confident you feel, the better you perform. Write them down. Write them on your daily to-do list each day, commit to them 100 percent, and make time for them with no excuses and no distractions. Make a daily habit out of continuing to learn and practice new skills, strategies, ideas, and methods that are most critical to your success. By continuously honing these skills, you'll start achieving better results in half the time.



TWO Perfectionism leads to procrastination. Many people have trouble getting started on a task because in their minds they think they have to do it perfectly. As the saying goes, too much analysis leads to paralysis. I remember once procrastinating writing an article on overcoming procrastination! Why? Because somehow in my mind I thought I had to write the article "perfectly," and get it right the first time without even having a rough draft. Most of the time that never happens. Usually I sit down and brainstorm without giving it any thought, and just begin jotting down ideas. This way all sorts of creative ideas come to mind. That's how most of my articles are written. And many of them are written in the afternoon, and especially late at night when I'm performing at my peak in terms of creativity. Which brings up another important point about improving your productivity:



THREE Work with your natural biorhythms on your most important tasks. What time of day or night are you most productive? When do you have the most energy, concentration, and focus? If you are a morning person, make certain that is when you work on those areas of critical importance to your career. If you're more of an afternoon or evening person, are you able to do the bulk of your work during those hours? I remember a senior manager in one of my management skills seminars commenting on how many employees complain that they are "not a morning person," but yet they accepted a position where they had to report to work at 7:00 a.m.! Make sure that your job is in line with your core values, priorities, likes and dislikes. Otherwise you'll ultimately fail, no matter how much you're being paid.



FOUR Incorporate the “Divide and Conquer” rule. Break tasks down into doable chunks and with specific time frames written down. Research points to the fact that often we don’t tackle a task because it seems too overwhelming. For example, if you have to write a 10-page special report, start by jotting down ideas. Make a commitment to just get started writing one or two paragraphs. Often the hardest part is just getting started. Ever notice how often once you begin something, you’re on a roll and don’t want to stop?

somewhere for a week, with incredible views and nothing but my computer for writing. In fact, in my speaking engagements worldwide, participants often report to me that sometimes they arrive for work very early, or stay very late because it’s so peaceful and no one else is in the office. There aren’t any people distractions and they get double the work done in half the time.

Every morning, take time to write down your most important goals in the present tense. Write them down on a large sheet of

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I remember vacationing in Aruba in 1996. Normally I don’t work on vacation, but there was a keynote speech I just had to do for an upcoming conference in Seattle. When I told myself I would work on it “six solid hours a day,” I ended up doing nothing. After all, who would be motivated to work for six hours on a beach in the Caribbean?! As soon as I made a commitment to work on it for only 45 minutes a day, and with a specific time frame written down, it made it more palatable. I was on a roll and finished working on that speech after just three days. Get rid of the “all or nothing” mentality.

FIVE The compounding effect of new information and refining your skills. If you were to improve one percent per day, five days a week, at the end of that week you’d be five percent more effective. At the end of a year (52 weeks) you would be 26 percent more productive. With that amount of continuous and steady improvement, you would increase your overall productivity, performance and output by 1,004 percent over a 10-year period. Project 10 years into the future and think about what that could do for your income.

SIX Eliminate distractions, low-value activities, and create your ideal working environment. Block out a chunk of time to begin working on that all-important task. Write it down. But before you start, mentally prepare yourself. Clear off your desk except for the essentials you will need to work on that important project. Eliminate clutter. Tell everyone at work that you will be off-limits and unavailable until that time you’re scheduled to be finished. If you work from home, turn off the TV, turn off your home phone and your cell phone. Don’t have the washing machine or the dishwasher on. These will only serve as distractions.

What would be your ideal environment where you wouldn’t have any distractions whatsoever? See if you can create that. For example, to eliminate all interruptions and work at my best, my ideal working environment would be to stay holed up in a beautiful mountain lodge

paper several times. By writing them down, you print them indelibly in the subconscious of your mind. This will put you in the right frame of mind to start thinking of action steps for how to accomplish your major goals. And remember, the key is to just get started. Do something. Do anything on a daily basis that will bring you closer to achieving your dreams. Practice makes perfect. **N**

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