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Achieve better results with these 7 forgotten fundamentals of time management

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Want to be less stressed at work or running your business? Often it comes down to simply getting more of your most important work done more quickly. Rather than focus on efficiency where you get more done, you must first focus on effectiveness where you ensure that you are actually doing the right things. When you are sure that you are focusing on the right tasks you can then strive for greater efficiency. There are many fundamentals of time management which you can apply to ensure that you are completing your most important work in the quickest timeframe. These fundamentals of time management go without saying but from my experience, they often go without getting done either. These fundamentals are many in number but in this article I have just focused on the time management fundamentals which I find are most often forgotten.

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7 Fundamentals of time management you should be applying

If you can be more effective and efficient with your workflow, then often you'll find that your job is far more manageable and much less stressful. Implementing the following *fundamentals of time management* will greatly improve your performance.

1. Take action first

When you are just starting your day, it is very tempting to try to ease yourself into the day. You check your email, your social media accounts or maybe you just grab a cup of tea/coffee and read something that is of little importance.

What you are actually doing here is attempting to convince yourself that you have started work when you really haven't. To add to the problem, you are likely to get distracted by something that pops up in your email or social media and that will take you away from what you were intending to do.

2. Make browsing more difficult

Do you want to really focus on writing or another task which needs your full attention but doesn't require internet access? Turn off your internet router. By making browsing more difficult, you reduce your chance of doing it.

Before you can browse the internet, you now have to take another action i.e. turn your router back on. The slight delay can be enough to make you think about what you are doing.

3. Find your most productive hours

If your work hours are not strictly dictated, then you can try moving your hours around to see when you perform best. You can use a sheet to record your energy levels at regular intervals throughout the day. Over time, you will see when you have the most energy and when you lack your energy. You can then design your day to make the most of your energy.

4. Focus on importance

If you're prone to procrastination, try starting your to-do list with the most important task you can complete. Rather than focusing solely on the quantity of work, you can focus on the quality of the work you get done. When you *focus on importance*, you realise that completing one very important task is more beneficial than completing 100 low value tasks.

This change in mindset can work wonders for *dealing with procrastination* because with each small piece of the important task that you complete, you know that you are making a big difference. You will no longer feel overwhelmed by the quantity of work because you know that quality is far more important.

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5. Practice singletasking

Multitasking has been shown in countless studies not to work. Every time that you switch between tasks, you have to regain your focus on the task you have switched to. This takes time and impacts upon your ability to concentrate. In the end, you end up doing a number of tasks poorly rather than doing one task to a high standard.

Work sequentially by moving from one task to the other. Start with your most important task. Complete that task to the best of your ability and then move on to the next most important task. At first, it may appear that you are moving slower but in reality, you are completing your most important work to the highest standard and this has a far greater impact on your performance than doing a half-baked job on a greater number of tasks.

6. Know your why

Before you spend any time working on a task, you must know why you are doing it. It is not enough to say that 'I have to do it'. You must understand the benefit that is to be derived from the successful completion of the task. This helps you to determine the importance of the task which is essential for prioritising. It is also essential for identifying tasks which should not be getting your time and attention.

From a motivation standpoint, always focus on the 'why' of what you're doing. If you remember why it matters and you think about your long-term goals, then you'll be far more likely to stay focused and push through any difficulties that you may face.

7. Try a power hour

Every Friday, I review my task lists to check that I have completed the required tasks. I will always find some tasks which have not yet been completed or had to be put back. Rather than finish my week at this stage, I have a power hour where I set a timer for 60 minutes and I complete as many of those tasks as possible. The timer motivates me to stay focused and give it everything I have to get as much work done as possible in that hour. I am also motivated to finish the week on a high and move in to the following week with less tasks on my list. There may be a similar way in which you can use a power hour to help you get more done.

Note: In the power hour, it is just as important to perform the tasks accurately and to the highest standard. If I had to make corrections the following week, it would defeat the purpose.

For more fundamentals of time management and more great time management and productivity tips, check out [The Organised Mind](#).

There are certain fundamentals of time management which go without saying. Unfortunately, because they go without saying, they often don't get done. The fundamentals of time management are far too many for me to cover in one article so I have just focused on the fundamentals which I find are most often forgotten. It is important to remind ourselves of these time management fundamentals from time to time so that we can ensure that we are implementing them in our everyday lives. Although I regard them as fundamentals of time management, not all strategies work for every individual. Therefore, I invite you to try them for yourself, test them out and implement any changes which you feel will work better for you.

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