



The unexpected key to boosting your productivity

让人意想不到的提高生产力诀窍

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I've always secretly wanted to be a machine. I felt like if I was a machine, I'd never let things fall through the cracks, I wouldn't forget things, and I'd do everything I needed to do on time every time. I knew there were people out there that were like this, and I wanted to know what makes them tick.

我一直默默想变成一台机器。我想，如果我是一台机器，我就不会不小心忽视一些事，我就不会忘事，每次我都会按时完成我需要做的一切。我知道有些人就是这样的，我想知道他们是怎么做到的。

[The Way We Work]

[我们的工作方式]

So a few years ago, I started a newsletter called Super Organizers, where I profiled 50 of the top performers in a variety of fields. I've talked to managers who track everything they do in a day in 15-minute increments. I've talked to investors who keep spreadsheets of every single person they've ever met, and CEOs who keep their calendars basically empty and rarely ever do meetings, ever.

几年前，我做了一个新闻稿系列，名叫《超级组织者》，其中刊载了各个行业中的50位优秀员工的故事。我和经理们谈过，他们以15分钟为单位记录自己一天中的所作所为。我和一位投资者聊过，他/她会在表格中记录下碰到的每一个人，还有首席执行官们，他们的日历基本上是空的，很少开会，永远不会。

I've also experimented with a lot of hacks myself to try to get me closer to my ideal. I've taped my mouth shut while I'm sleeping and stared at a sunlamp to increase my energy levels. I visualized my compassionate self and tried all sorts of supplements to hack my body chemistry. Sometimes the things I try work, and sometimes they don't. Sometimes they're just kind of ridiculous. But I want to share with you the best trick I've learned in all of my exploring.

我也在自己身上试过很多诀窍，让我更接近理想状态。我试过在睡觉的时候用胶带把嘴贴上，盯着太阳灯看，增强我的精力。我画下了心目中的自己，尝试了各种各样挑战人体化学的营养品。有些我试过的东西确实有效，有些没什么用处。有些真的有点离谱。但我想与你分享在我探索的过程中学到的最有用的诀窍。

The ideal of being a machine is actually a trap. It gets in the way of our productivity because it makes us blind to the roots of our actual problems. We are not machines, we're emotional beings. And learning to skillfully recognize and work with our emotions is the only way to actually be productive day-to-day. Guilt, shame, fear, so often they're at the base of what's going on for us in ways that we barely understand. What's underneath our productivity problems isn't just a need for a new tool or system, but something going on in our emotional lives. And being aware of and observing how our emotions can affect us can open up a lot of flexibility and freedom to make progress when we'd otherwise be stuck. I found that the most productive people in the world, the ones who are most machine-like, actually recognize this and they often do three things to work with it. They're aware when they have a problem, they observe what's going on without judgment so they can understand it, and they keep experimenting with systems or teams, mindsets and tools until it changes. This might sound simple, and it is, but it's actually very hard to do because at each stage we get blocked and twisted up by the shame, guilt, fear and doubt -- the things that get in the way of seeing things clearly. To do this well requires a level of emotional mastery that is very difficult to practice. So let me walk you through it and show you how it can work.

成为一台机器的愿望其实就是个陷阱。它会影响我们的工作效率，因为这会让我们无法看清真正问题的根源。我们不是机器，我们是有感情的生物。学会巧妙地识别情绪、与情绪和谐相处，才是我们每天真正保持工作效率的唯一方式。愧疚、羞耻、恐惧，它们总是会以我们无法理解的方式潜伏于我们经历的深处。我们工作效率问题的背后不单单是需要一个新工具或者系统，而是我们情感生活上的问题。意识到并观察情绪对我们产生的影响会为我们带来许多灵活性和自由，让我们在面临阻碍时向前迈进。我发现世界上工作效率最高的人，是那些最像机器的人，其实大家对这点了然于胸，为此，他们会做到这三点。他们知道，遇到问题时，要不偏不倚地观察发生了什么情况，这样他们就可以理解这个问题，他们不断采取不同的系统、团队、思维或者工具进行试验，直到情况发生了改变。听起来很简单，确实很简单，但操作起来其实很难，因为在我们卡住的每一个阶段，都会被羞耻、愧疚、害怕、怀疑笼罩，它们都在阻碍我们看清情况。要做好这一点需要有高超的情绪掌控技巧，但很难操练。我来讲一讲这点，给你看看它有什么用处。

Awareness is the first step. That means being aware of problems in your productivity. But that's harder than it seems. No matter what the issue is, it's much easier to ignore it and hope that it goes away than to admit that something's wrong. We feel like we should be able to just do better. We feel like, well, that's the job, I should just suck it up. Whatever the problems that you're encountering in your productivity, you might not think about them that often because it's pretty painful.

意识是第一步。意思是了解你工作效率中存在的问题。但是看起来容易，做起来难。无论问题是什么，忽视它、希望它就这么消失了比承认出了问题要简单得多。我们觉得，能做得再好一点就好了。我们觉得，好吧，这就是我的工作，忍忍就得了。无论你的工作效率出现了什么问题，你都会选择根本不去想它，通常是因为思考这个问题太痛苦了。

But there's magic in becoming aware of the problems that we're ordinarily not aware of. The most productive people have regular practices that they use to maintain that awareness. Sometimes it's journaling, sometimes it's mindfulness, sometimes it's just a walk, sometimes it's therapy. But everyone has something.

但是意识到这些一般注意不到的问题 有一个神奇之处。工作效率最高的人都会有一些习惯，他们会用这些习惯性行为保持对问题的意识。可能是写日记，可能是正念练习，可能只是散散步，可能是某种治疗。但每个人都会有这么个习惯。

Here's an example from my own life. I have a ton of trouble staying on top of my inbox. I'm the CEO of a start-up, and so this was really hard for me to admit at first. It seemed like an indictment of me and my ability to be successful if my inbox was a mess. But last year, after a lot of reflection, I realized that I had to face the fact that the backlog was causing problems throughout my company.

举一个我自己生活中的例子。我在处理邮件这一问题上有很大的困难。我是一家初创企业的CEO，一开始要让我承认 这个问题真的很难。就像是在控诉我本人，控诉我没有成功的能力，因为我的收件箱乱七八糟。但在去年，反思了很多以后，我发现，我必须面对一个事实：积压的工作给公司 上下都造成了问题。

Once I was aware of the problem, I could start the next step: observation. When I moved into the observation stage, I wanted to see with as little judgment as possible what usually leads to my inbox being crowded. Observing without judgment was really difficult for me. My sense of doubt and fear came up. I thought: Should I really need to do this? I really felt like I should just be able to get through my inbox without any problems. But once I got beneath that, I began to notice something really surprising. There were actually many periods where I was on top of my inbox. It's just that every couple of weeks there would be a shift where it would just turn into a giant mess. And it had a very specific trigger, either a single email I really didn't want to deal with or a really busy period in my life where I couldn't look at my inbox for a day or two. And when this happened, emails would start to pile up, and I'd start to feel shame. I'd avoid my inbox and the pile would just get way worse. It was a vicious cycle. Once I saw this, I realized that there was a logical place to intervene. What I really needed to do was to catch myself right at the point every couple of weeks where my clean inbox was turning into a mess. And if I could do that, I knew I could keep it clean the rest of the time.

一旦我意识到这个问题，就开始了第二步：观察。当我进入了观察阶段，我想尽可能不加评判地观察到底是什么让我的收件箱堆积成山。不加评判地观察对我来说真的很难。疑虑、恐惧的感觉涌上心头。我想：我真的需要这样做吗？我真的觉得自己可以畅通无阻地看完收件箱里所有的邮件。但当我真的开始观察时，我发现了一些意料之外的东西。其实有很多时候我都可以处理完所有邮件。只是每隔几周情况就会突然恶化一下，然后一团乱麻。恶化会由某个特定的契机引发，要么是一封我不太想处理的邮件，要么是生活太忙了，有一两天没空看一眼收件箱。出现这种情况的时候，邮件就会堆积起来，让我感觉很羞耻。我会逃避去看收件箱，于是邮件只会越堆越多。这是一个恶性循环。我看到这种情况时，发现有一个逻辑缺口可以介入。我真正需要做的是拦住那个每隔几周收件箱由整洁到混乱的瞬间。如果我能做到这一点，我知道其余时间我都能让收件箱保持整洁。

This brings us to the next step: experimentation. Once productive people have recognized a problem and observed its contours without judgment, they try new solutions to find out what works. Again, this can be really easy to get twisted up about. We're all filled with preconceptions about what's in and out of bounds to experiment with, and we're really boxed in by those preconceptions. We don't want to look silly or weak. But if we allow ourselves to find what works for us, we often find things that no one else would.

于是我们就来到了下一步：实验。工作效率高的人一旦发现了问题，客观地观察它的情况，他们就会尝试新的解决方法，看看哪个方法会奏效。这也是个很容易让人纠结的阶段。我们都先入为主地认为哪些东西该去尝试，哪些不该尝试，于是我们真的会由于这些预设束手束脚。我们不想被人觉得愚蠢或软弱。但如果我们让自己去寻找适合自己的方式，我们通常都会找到一些别人不会发现的东西。

I tried a lot of different experiments to deal with my inbox problems. I tried going to a new coffee shop every time I needed to power through some emails. I tried talking about it with my business partner and other people at my company to try to lower my sense of shame about it. I tried a one-touch email strategy, I tried only checking my email twice a day. But none of these really solved the problem completely. So I kept going and I had a big insight. I figured out I might be able to use my own desire not to let people down to help me get through my inbox. I'm lucky enough to split a virtual assistant with my business partner, so I wondered, what if I put an hour on my calendar a few times a week where they would babysit me. At the beginning of the hour, they'd message me and ask me how many emails I had in my inbox. And at the end of the hour, they'd message me again to ask how many I'd gotten done. I used my virtual assistant, but you could use anyone in your life. A family member or friend who struggles with something similar

为了解决我的收件箱问题，我试过很多方法。每当我需要集中精力浏览一些邮件时，我会去一家没去过的咖啡店。我试过和我的商业伙伴聊一聊这个问题，和公司里的同事聊一聊，试图降低我对此的羞耻感。我试过一口气看完邮件策略，一天只查两次邮件。但这些措施都没有真正彻底解决我的问题。所以我继续寻找，产生了一个深刻的认识。我发现，也许我可以利用我不想让人失望的欲望处理完收件箱里的邮件。我有幸和我的商业伙伴平摊买了一个虚拟助手，所以我在想，所以我在想，我是不是可以每周让助手照顾我几次。在这一个小时刚开始的时候，助手可以给我发消息，问我收件箱里有多少封邮件。在这一个小时结束的时候，助手会再给我发一次消息，问我处理了多少封邮件。我用了我的虚拟助手，但是你可以拜托生活中的任何人。你的家人、朋友，他们也许有类似的困扰，

and propose a trade. It literally takes a couple of seconds to message back and forth.

并提出一项交易。实际上，来回发送消息需要几秒钟的时间。

When I started to consider this, my immediate reaction was shame. I felt like I should not need a babysitter to do my work. And I dreaded the conversation where I had to ask for this kind of thing. I also dreaded admitting it to anyone else. It all seemed very silly, but I decided to try it anyway. And it turns out just that little interaction a few times a week makes a gigantic difference for me. Getting a message from my assistant keeps me on task on my email and prevents the piles from being created, which makes it really easy for me to keep my inbox clean at every other time. And now I'm sitting here almost a year later with a clean inbox on a consistent basis. This may not work for you, but it does work for me. You might find that other approaches are better, like transferring your emails to your to-do list or making sure you're following a one-touch inbox strategy or maybe even examining why you need to get through your inbox in the first place. But the only way to find that out is to try it.

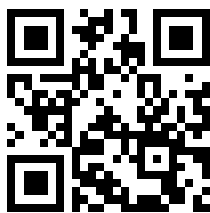
我刚开始这么想的时候，第一反应就是感到羞耻。我觉得我不需要一个保姆才能好好工作。我害怕开口提出这种要求。我也害怕向其他任何人承认这一点。这一切看起来都很愚蠢，但我还是决定试一试。结果每周的几次小互动给我带来了巨大改变。收到助手给我的消息，我就会开始认真处理邮件，避免堆积一堆邮件，在其余时间要保持邮箱的整洁对我来说就很容易了。此时此刻的我已经让邮箱一直保持整洁快一年了。有可能这个方法对你来说没有用，但对我来说确实有用。你可能会发现其他方法更好，比如把你的邮件放入待办事项，或者严格执行一次性看完的策略，甚至可以是先搞明白到底为什么必须处理完收件箱里的邮件。但找到答案的唯一方法就是试一试。

What I've realized in all of my exploring is that I actually didn't really ever want to be a machine. I just felt guilty and ashamed for not being one. And once I started to work with that, everything changed for me.

我在探索的过程中发现我其实从未想变成一台机器。我只是因为自己不是一台机器而感到内疚、羞耻。一调整心态就豁然开朗了。

We think productivity is about software, notebooks and to-do lists frameworks, calendars, schedules and inboxes. And it is all of those things, but it's also about our brains and our bodies. It's about our emotions and how they guide us and sometimes get in our way. If you turn over the rock of productivity, you can find a lot hiding underneath. Identifying what's there is the best productivity hack I know.

我们总是把工作效率和软件、笔记本、待办事项、框架、日历、日程表和收件箱联系在一起。工作效率确实包含了这些东西，但它也和我们的脑、身体有关。它和我们的情绪有关，和情绪如何指引我们，有时阻碍我们有关。如果你翻到工作效率的另一面，你会发现底下藏着很多东西。搞清楚那里有什么就是我所知的提高生产力的最佳诀窍。



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