Process and Proceed

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Y ou've made it through thirteen weeks of time blocking. Hopefully, you felt both more productive and more in control of your work during this period. Before moving on to a fresh planner for the next thirteen weeks, however, it's important to take some time to process what you've learned from the weeks that just passed. I suggest browsing through the pages of your planner to review the following information:

- **Metric Completion.** Survey your metrics to develop a better picture of your activity during these weeks. If you track deep work hours, for example, this is a good time to confront how

many such hours you completed on average. If you're not happy with this number, perhaps it's time to consider more serious changes to your work setup. Similarly, if you find that you're struggling to complete a given metric, you might tweak the behavior you're tracking to something more tractable.

- **Schedule Repairs.** Review the days where your time-block schedule required multiple repairs. Study the source of these disruptions. It might turn out, for example, that you chronically underestimate the time required for a certain work activity. This is useful to know! If the disruption is external—say, your boss has the habit of stopping by your office to ask you to "quickly look into" their latest big idea—it might make sense to put a process in place that allows you to handle these requests without blowing up your schedule.

- **Time Allocation.** More generally, as you look over your recent time-block schedules, improve your understanding of how you actually spend your time. Are your days almost universally fractured with meetings? What's your ratio of email to non-email efforts? Most knowledge workers never directly confront the reality of their professional efforts, but such confrontation is crucial, even if it can sometimes be uncomfortable. To move from *busy* to *effective* you must understand exactly how you're actually spending your time, identify what you don't like about these allocations, and then take hard steps to fix it.

Once you've reviewed and processed this information, you're prepared to start fresh with a new planner, armed with knowledge that will make you an even more effective time blocker than before. When it comes to your work life, if you don't control your time, others will do so for you. I hope your experience with time blocking so far has helped you appreciate the superiority of the first option.