

Title:

7 Strategies Guaranteed to Increase Your Productivity

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Summary:

Have you ever felt exhausted at the end of the day, knowing you worked your butt off and yet wondering what the heck you actually accomplished or, worse yet, wondering why nothing has been crossed off your "to do" list? It's frustrating to say the least. Here are seven strategies guaranteed to increase your productivity...and I don't use the word "guaranteed" lightly!

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Article Body:

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Have you ever felt exhausted at the end of the day, knowing you worked your butt off and yet wondering what the heck you actually accomplished or, worse yet, wondering why nothing has been crossed off your "to do" list? It's frustrating to say the least.

Here are seven strategies guaranteed to increase your productivity...and I don't use the word "guaranteed" lightly!

1. Most "To-Do" lists are useless.

There, I've said it and those time management companies who insist we make lists and put pretty-colored "A", "B", and "C" identifiers after tasks will have to deal with it.

The reason why, quite simply, is that tasks have start times, but no end times. If you make just one change, do this: Put a start and an end time for everything you do and watch how much you get done!

2. The right "tools"

You need to have a schedule - one where YOU purposefully script out those things

that are your priorities for the day and you insure that nothing "bumps" them. I have a schedule for each day, week and for the year so if a client asks me to attend a call or visit his office, I know what I'm doing.

Your schedule should include those things that you need to do every day until you have built a routine around them. I write every day. Not some days, not most days, but every day and it was only by having it on my schedule that it got done. It's now a routine that I rarely miss.

Another critical tool is what I affectionately call my "Chat Pad". I have a steno notebook for each client/key person that I deal with and keep a list of what I need to discuss with them (and the resulting actions of that discussion) so I can group phone calls or send one summary email rather than several throughout the day.

3. Ask this question.

What is the most effective use of your time RIGHT NOW?

For those rare times when you haven't scheduled your time, ask yourself the above question and then follow through with working on the answer. You will dramatically increase the quality of the work you do.

4. Know your worth.

How much money do you want to make this year? If we assume that you work 8-hour workdays and you will earn \$50,000 this year, then each hour is worth \$25.61 and every minute is worth \$0.427.

You intend on making \$100,000 this year? Then double the above figures: every hour is worth \$51.23 and every minute is worth \$0.852.

So for every workday hour that you waste, you have lost \$6,250 on a \$50,000 income and \$12,500 on a \$100,000 income.

5. Delegate, don't abdicate.

As an entrepreneur (or aspiring entrepreneur) who now knows the value of his time, you recognize that it is worthwhile to delegate those activities that you either aren't good at or dislike.

While delegating is critical to the most optimal use of your time and energies, be sure not to abdicate responsibility for those items. Keep a running list of

the tasks you've delegated and check in with that person (remind yourself using your "Chat Pad").

6. Post your goals.

Having your goals posted provides consistent motivation on why you are doing the things you are doing.

Want an extra kick in the pants? Post a picture of that new car, new home, or dream vacation. Seeing the reason you are working to meet your goals will provide your subconscious with extra motivation to get the job done.

7. Keep a success journal

Success "journals" can be done several ways. You can simply keep a written record of all your successes or, you can follow Arnold Palmer's method: he had a table wherein he inlaid his golf medals and, when he placed one medal in the table, he had a new hole grouted for the next, as-yet-to-be-won medal. Always looking ahead, always anticipating the next success.

Remember this: time can not be replaced. You can replace money, you can replace clients or projects. You can not replace time. Use it wisely.