PRODUCIVITY

A FINE ART

11 PRODUCTIVITY HACKS TO IMPROVE YOUR LIFE

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11 Tips to Make Your Day More Productive Than You Can Imagine

Productivity isn’t something we’re born with, so don’t make the mistake of thinking that truly productive people just have more energy than you.

Becoming productive is a matter of creating simple habits that you do on a daily basis. I’ve had the opportunity to sit down and talk with some of Australia’s most successful entrepreneurs and I’ve noticed they all have their daily rituals and habits. Those constant actions are a big part of why they can be so successful for so long.

So, here’s my list of 11 things you can do every day to boost your productivity:

**Keep your environment clean and clutter free**

Every day starts with the same routine. You wake up, pull the sheets off and get out of bed. If you sleep eight hours a night, you spend 34% of your life in bed. If you sleep 12 hours a night, that number goes up to 51%.

Why do I bring this up? Because the first thing you should do every morning is make your bed. I can’t be any more direct here, wake up - put your feet on the ground and then turn around and set your day off on the right motion by making your bed.

What you don’t know is that whether or not you make your bed is a true reflection of the rest of your life. It’s either haphazard, slapped together, unmanaged and lazy, or, your life will be full of precision passion pride and enthusiasm. Which one sounds better?

So de-clutter, organise and minimise your bedroom. But don’t stop there. Do the same thing with your car, office, desk and your life in general. Because what you’re presenting here is a true reflection of your mind. And if your bedroom or your office or your car looks like a bomb has gone off in it, it tells me that your mind probably looks like a bomb has gone off in it!

By doing this it also allows you to be more creative and productive with your day. Since everything is where it needs to be, you know where everything is. You don’t waste precious time trying to find something that should be at your fingertips. You are providing your mind a structured environment.

**Exercise every morning**

The reason for doing exercise first thing in the morning every morning is so that you stimulate blood flow. We’ve already uncovered that the most powerful organ in the body is the human mind.

In the morning, though, everything has been at rest for the last 8, 10 or 12 hours - and it needs to fire up again. Exercise does this. Your heart rate goes up, you stimulate your blood flow and get blood flowing in the right direction — to the most powerful organ in your body, the one that can rule your day.

You can be one of two people. You could be the person that sits on the edge of the bed and grumbles about having to get up, lays back down, hits the snooze button and then eventually realises that they’re late for work because they slept in. And by the time they get to work, have logged in and checked in on Facebook and stared at the screen for 20 minutes waiting for the artificial stimulation of coffee to kick in, it’s already 11:30 a.m.
Or you could be the person that jumps out of bed, puts structure on the day by making their bed, puts their runners on and heads out the door feeling greatly empowered and loving their life. They’ll have more energy that sustains and lasts throughout the day ... more than any other person their network. You hit the ground running!

**Goalsetting and visualization**

Make sure that you spend the time to set your goals and visualise what success looks like. This is the time to bring forward all those goals and dreams that you’ve written down as you’ve worked through this book.

If you bring your goals into your mind first thing in the morning, at a subconscious level you’re bringing them to the front. And every decision that you make from there on in will be moved in the direction of that goal and will help you live a full and successful life.

Picture this... First thing in the morning you get in the car, you start the car and then just start driving with no thought, no preparation or no clue as to what direction you should be heading! What are the chances that you will end up where you need to be at the correct time?

Not a chance. You have no idea where you’re going, you will be slowed down by hesitation and indecision, and you will most likely make a few wrong turns ... and that’s if you end up at the destination at all. You may get there - by luck! But if you do get there, there is a good chance you’ll be late, stressed and burnt out.

Get clear on the direction of your day, have laser-like focus and attention to detail on your goal. Execute with a minimal amount of stress and maximum amount of efficiency.

**Choose your associations wisely**

The most important thing in any goal is the people around you, those who are supporting you, helping you and enabling you to achieve and reach the outcome. These people must respect your goals.

A common self-sabotage strategy a lot of people run is to surround themselves with negative people. People that say it can’t be done, say negative things or talk rumours or gossip. These people are not helping you move forward; they are holding you back. As we’ve already uncovered, you’re letting these people hold you back and using it as an excuse.

The really disappointing thing for me is – and I see this a lot – is that people are not strong enough to act on their intuition. We all have those people of “negative influence” in our lives, yet you choose to allow them not only to enter but enable your self-sabotage strategy.

You know in your heart that they are not a good fit for the future that you are designing. Yet you continue to let them infiltrate. I’m not saying don’t be friends with them, I’m not saying don’t be hospitable - but recognise who they are; protect your mind and create boundaries.

**Time management**

Right now, if I was to pull apart your day, no doubt there are areas where you are leaking time. You’re getting distracted by Facebook, responding to low priority emails and talking to friends on the phone who aren’t adding to your business or moving forward.
If you can tidy these tasks up and start allocating certain times of the day to do certain particular tasks you will claw back 1 to 2 hours in your day because you’ve rid yourself of things that should not be there.

Imagine you check your emails at 9 a.m., you quickly scan through them to see important action items or urgent items. You flag them. And then you close your email program down. At 12 p.m. you go back in, answer the flagged items. Then at 3 p.m. you may review all the other items that were not as important, or they were of low value or just sheer noise.

But what most of us tend to do is troubleshoot and spot fires out of our email program throughout the day dragging us away from the most important things that we should be doing which is the big three rocks: mindset/beliefs, habits and skills.

It takes concentration, it takes discipline and in today’s world it requires you to be brave and disconnect from little while. But what it will stop you doing is majoring in minors - it will let you focus on the important things and let go of things that don’t matter.

You’re not going to take your productivity to the next level until you start planning the night before, writing out blocks for specific tasks & then sticking to it, practising and making it a habit.

Success guru Paul J. Meyer said, “Productivity is never an accident, it is always the result of commitment to excellence, intelligent planning and focused effort.”

Rest

This may seem like a paradox, but it’s a fact proven through countless studies – if you want to increase your productivity you must include breaks during your day.

Have you ever set about the task, then, after a certain period of time, lost focus? That’s because we’re designed to be that way. We are not designed to sit in front of computer day in day out, staring at this same screen, doing repetitive, mundane tasks.

Here’s the theory: take 5 or 10 minutes off every 60 minutes of work. To allow yourself to refocus, rebalance and recharge! The end result of doing this will allow you to actually work for a longer period of time.

If this is a task that you need to continue to do throughout the day you need to be very careful during these breaks. The purpose is to refocus not become distracted. Some of the things you can do are:

- Walk outside get some fresh air
- Play an uplifting song
- Stop and meditate for five minutes
- Focus on your breathing
- Do some start-ups

This ultimately allows your brain to rest and recover, which will empower you to push on and do more for a longer period time.
Change your mood

If the big, arduous task ahead of you is going to change your mood and put you into a bad mindset, make sure you attack the high-priority items on your to-do list first. The first half of your day is when your motivation and willpower is strong.

Starting with the high-priority tasks will create a positive mind, a sense of achievement and momentum. It is at this point you then tackle the big arduous task whilst in a good state of mind.

Visualization is the key to so many of these productivity tips. Imagine if you visualized the huge task ahead of you without breaking it down into high- and low-priority tasks. How productive would you be? Not very!

Visualization is also the key to achieving the goals you’ve set for yourself on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. On a daily basis, visualizing helps you create the mood you’ll carry from the time you start working to the time you’re done.

Remind yourself of all the amazing things around you, everything that you have which you can be grateful for, and be happy about all things that are coming to you. This is bound to create a positive mindset that we can carry through the day.

Naturally, when you’re feeling good, your energy is high! The higher your energy, the greater your output.

Collaboration

Have you ever worked on a project and been in a really good state of mind? You started out very productive, but then you run into a few roadblocks. And these roadblocks caused your creativity to stop. So, you take some time out and you give your brain a rest, only to return to your work and find out the blocks are still there.

The strategy around this is to take two or three minutes to call a friend and brainstorm. Don’t get distracted. Have a clear, concise and powerful phone call focused only on the roadblocks. Then, power through the roadblock.

The alternative is you sitting in this roadblock and spinning your wheels for a very, very long time not getting anywhere. It really stifles all motivation, momentum productivity.

So, recognize the roadblock early, nip it in the bud and move forward.

Checklist

Once you’ve chunked your big task down into manageable pieces, you’ve got lots of little micro tasks. The next best thing is to create a checklist, and then prioritise this checklist.

Because you created all these new micro tasks and there is a lot more of them, it might be hard to keep track of things. And there would be nothing worse than completing the project and realising that you’ve missed a few key crucial steps.

The great thing about a checklist is that it gives you the ability to cross things off which will help you build momentum, confidence and the feeling of success.
Get up early

I’ve referenced this one many times. You’ve heard me say that all successful entrepreneurs and business owners get up early. The super successful ones to getting up at 4 a.m., while the majority are waking up between 5 and 6 a.m.

Now, we’ve already run through why they get up early: so they can get ahead of the game. They get in about 3 to 5 hours of work before the majority of people are waking up. Imagine you’ve slept in till 10 a.m. … you’ve lost an entire working day to these motivated individuals.

But there is science behind this. The sun rises at somewhere between 5 and 6 a.m. Our natural body clock wants to wake up at that time and get going because the sun tells us that it’s time to move. And conversely, in the evening, once the sun sets, our body is going to start its wind-down mode. Our body produces melatonin to slow us down so we can go to sleep and rest and prepare for the following day.

If you wake up at 10 a.m., you fought the natural light coming in for more than four hours. Then, in the evening, you wrestled against your body-clock rhythms as they tried to put you to sleep when the sun when down.

The sun and the moon are pretty powerful entities. They have a gravitational pull on this earth that causes the tide to rise and fall. The sun and the moon have an effect on every single creature on this planet.

When you compile all the facts, biologically speaking, you’re meant to be rising and falling as tides do with the sunrise and sunset.

If you want to create a new habit of waking up at 5 or 6 a.m., set your alarm for 15 minutes earlier each morning until you reach your target wake-up time.

**Focus on being productive instead of being busy**

Ask yourself this question every time you begin a task: Are you being productive and moving yourself towards your big goal for the day or are you being busy?

Choose productive over busy every time! Not only will you feel fulfilled and satisfied, but your productivity and income generation will soar, allowing you to reap the rewards and live a purposeful life that unlocks your potential.