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PRODUCTIVITY HACKS



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A common ailment we all face from time to time is more to do than time to do it. At least it seems like that sometimes. Truth be told, time management is a myth. We can't manage time.

In fact, we are all given the same 24 hours every single day. No one can magically create any more hours in a day, nor can you waive a wand and make hours disappear. It all comes down to how well we manage ourselves during the 24 hours that comprise today.

Yeah, it would be great to end each day with everything on your "To Do" list checked off. It would be fantastic to end the day early, with all your projects completed in a timely manner, and maybe a jump start on what you've got to do tomorrow.

Sadly, that doesn't always happen.

All too often we find ourselves with more to do than time to do it.

So unless you have a superpower no one knows about, getting more things done in the 24 hours we've all been allotted means that you've got to be more productive.

For many of us, that's easier said than done. Truth be told, it requires that you be willing to be more deliberate about the choices you make so you can use your time more efficiently and effectively.

High-productivity people aren't that much different than the rest of us. They simply take the time to be more deliberate, more intentional, in how they manage themselves.



Here are seven high-productivity tips you can implement to get more done each day. Implement these into your daily routine and you'll discover you can get more done with less effort, and less stress. Or you can continue to do things the way you've always done and hope things magically change for the better.

But isn't that what Albert Einstein defined as the very definition of insanity?

CHECKLIST



1. Structure Your Day for Success

All too often, we try to pack too many “To Do” items into a single day. High-productivity people understand that there’s only so much productive time in any given day. Many of them employ a proven strategy to assure that only the most important things get their attention.

When you start your day, make a list of everything you need (or want) to accomplish each day. Having done that, look over that list and circle the top three things you must get done and move those three items to a separate sheet of paper. Throw the original sheet away and focus only on those three mission critical items.

2. Stay Organized

Before you start any task, take a few moments to gather together the items you’ll need to get the job done. A few moments of preparation in advance can save hours of time in completing a task in a more efficient manner.

High-productivity people understand the value of organization. They structure any project into smaller, bite-sized tasks not only create quick wins, but allows everyone on the team to know exactly how their contribution helps to complete the task quickly and efficiently. Not only that, having what you need at your fingertips, or within easy reach, minimizes stress and boosts productivity.



3. Use the 80/20 Rule

Highly-productive people use the 80/20 Rule. They spend 80% of their time focused on the 20% of things they do best (or are most important), delegating the rest to others. If you’re working alone, you should devote 80% of your time to the Top 20% of what MUST get done that day.

If you’re working with a team, delegate. If someone else on the team can do something 80% as well as you can (or better), let them do it so you can spend more time working in the area of your strength. You’ll both be more productive, and together you’ll get more done in less time.

4. Work in Short-Term Bursts

Highly productive people understand they can only be focused for so long before their brain needs a break. So they will work in 1-2 hour bursts of highly focused effort, then take a 15-20 minute break to rest their mind and exercise their body. They will get up from their desk or step away from their workstation, engage in some deep breathing exercises, stretch their limbs, and change their scenery.



At lunch, they will head out of the office to take a walk. Getting some fresh air will not only clear your mind, but physical exercise also rejuvenates your ability to refocus and work in more high productivity bursts of activity.

Instead of eating lunch at your desk, scrunched over more paperwork, go for a walk outside. A change in scenery can also provide a change in perspective and reinvigorate your creative thought process.

Studies show that even a short, brisk walk can improve boost your efficiency by as much as 60% or more. Even if you can't get outdoors, walking a stairway or even the hallways can give you a mental break while gaining the positive health benefits of exercise.

5. Stop Multitasking

It's a common misconception that people can be more effective by multitasking. Studies in neuroscience have shown that we actually perform better when we give our undistracted attention to a single task. When we attempt to multitask, our attention is divided among competing goals, making it easier to overlook important matters and doing less than our best.

Productivity studies also show that distractions caused by multitasking negatively impact the quality of their work, and actually puts unnecessary stress on the brain by attempting to force it to focus on multiple tasks at the same time.

Highly productive people are intentional in how they manage themselves, focusing on a single task until it is completed. This allows them to maximize their available brain power to maintain those high-intensity bursts of focused productivity that gets more done, gets it done right the first time, and gets more time in a timely manner.



6. Set a Deadline and Stick to It

Highly productive people understand setting and meeting deadlines is how things get done in an effective and efficient manner. While many people view deadlines solely as a means to invoke



added stress into what may already be a stressful situation, high-productive people see view deadlines as a challenge or a goal. As they tend to break projects down into bite-sized chunks, deadlines allow them to establish those periods of highly focused productivity and be rewarded with a break when they meet (or beat) a deadline.

Setting a deadline also allows you to be accountable to yourself, or if you're working with a team, to be mutually accountable to each other. Knowing everyone is working toward a common goal of getting things done in a timely manner actually creates the framework for a celebration when the deadline is realized.

7. Decorate for Success

Studies have shown that decorating our workspace has a psychological boost to our productivity. Adding a touch of home, such as photos, plants, candles, or decorations transform a dull and boring workspace to one that is pleasing to the eye. When we do this, it actually lowers our stress levels and boosts our productivity as much as 15% or more.

Highly productive people have taken this a step farther, placing in their office photos, statues, quotes, or trappings of highly successful people. By surrounding themselves with the trappings of success, or constant reminders of successful people they want to emulate, they subconsciously trigger a mental picture of success. The conscious mind then goes into overdrive to make the choices that bring that reality to life. Remember, as you think, you become.

Summary

Boosting productivity means working *smarter*, not harder. It does not mean doing more, but it does mean being more intentional in what you choose to do. High-productivity people actually get more done in less time than unproductive people as they minimize (and in many cases eliminate) the distractions that can hijack their day.

Highly productive people are also perpetual students of personal growth, as they understand they can't outperform the quality of thinking they bring to the workplace every single day. So they daily spend time becoming a better version of themselves by investing in their own personal growth and development. They read daily, and they work with a coach or a mentor.