

# Productivity Tips and Techniques

*Let's get right into it.*

## Planning

- *Daily*: Plan your day for a few minutes either the night before or early morning.
- *Weekly*: Plan your week at the end of Friday or first thing Monday.
- *Meetings*: Go into every meeting with a clear sense of its objective and what value you bring and/or receive. Review your meetings quarterly to remove yourself from ones (or cancel ones) where there is value gained.
- *Calendar*: Block time for priorities (professional and personal goals, projects, and self-care) – these blocks may move but should not be deleted. Also, “I publish my calendar publicly so people can [easily see my schedule].”

## Timing

- Tackle the most important projects and work during your “high-energy” times.
- Perform work requiring less mental energy during your low-energy times.
- Improve at delegating. Done constructively, this is both good for you to remove responsibilities and for someone else to learn.
- Consider a virtual assistant to outsource time-consuming tasks such as social media, trip planning, and scheduling.
- Batch email responses (versus responding to people throughout the day) and check messages and social media at certain times (not constantly).
- Do the worst thing first: “Eat a live frog first thing in the morning, and nothing worse will happen the rest of the day” – Mark Twain

## Environment

- *Breaks*. Move your body and refocus your mind regularly.
- *Focus*. Remove or silence smartphones and other distractions.
- *News fast*. The news is proven to make us less happy, so take a break during periods or even try for a couple days.
- *Honor transitions*. If you had a rough morning or a bad meeting, walk away or shake it off to bring your best self to the next activity.
- *More*. Some people work better under brighter light/sunlight, cooler temperature, calmer background noise, improved chair & desk position, clean workspace, etc.

# Ways to Think About Productivity cont.

## Learn & Adjust

- Record weekly and then learn from these areas: Accomplishments, Ideas, Progress, and Ways to Develop. Revisit your Accomplishments during a tough period.
- Track your time including meetings, projects, tasks, and planning. Based on your priorities, reallocate your time so your efforts align with your objectives.
- Experiment with productivity apps including hardware (e.g. timers) and software.
- Recognize that you are building mental muscle, so it will take time to see results.

## More Tips

- Major Habits:
  - *Sleeping* (i.e. a lack of sleep leads to slowness and foolishness)
  - *Exercising* (e.g. schedule short workouts every day and do activity when stressed)
  - *Eating Habits* (e.g. keep healthy snacks on hand and stay hydrated)
  - *Mindfulness* (e.g. Breathing, Meditating, Journaling, or Yoga)
- Keep a list with tasks you can accomplish in 5-10 minutes for unexpected downtimes
- Connect regularly with people who want the best for you.
- Don't change everything all at once. Pick one to start and once that is working for you, then consider adding another new technique.

## Final Thoughts

- Remember, speed is only useful if you're heading in the right direction, so always know where you're headed.
- Expect a new habit will take at least four weeks to absorb, often eight.
- If you try a change and it doesn't work out, forgive yourself, since the key is persistence not perfection.