

How to Manage Time and Energy to Boost Personal Productivity

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Are you stuck on the procrastination highway where productivity slows to a crawl and stress uncontrollably speeds up? Why, because you'd rather be doing something else, fear of failure or lack of organization? Or are you procrastinating just because you do not know how to manage your internal productivity clock, organize your energy and focus your attention?

Current research shows an alarming increase in procrastination which has quadrupled over the past 30 years to a whopping 95% of the populations saying they procrastinate at least occasionally. And, 52% procrastinate regularly especially if they are students and 20% of those are chronic procrastinators. The research also goes on to say that most people procrastinate because of one of four reasons: fear - of failure or success, perfectionism, low-self esteem and as an excuse or the blame game.

Unfortunately, procrastination develops into a lifelong habit that follows people right into the workplace and if not corrected inhibits productivity, performance and self satisfaction. It negatively impacts one's performance in the workplace jeopardizing one's job, relationships and finances while limiting one's ability to stay focused and impairing productivity. In the workplace procrastination translates into lost opportunities and time, disorganization and indecision; and at home, lost respect, poor family interpersonal relationships and dependability.

Personal Productivity Matrix

Whether you are among the millions of people that sabotage their future daily or not is less important than learning how to manage your internal productivity clock and your surroundings to improve your personal energy. The following steps are based on the Feng Shui principles of creating balance and a supportive personal environment which will enable you to be more focused and productive.

Manage Your Personal Time Clock

One of the simplest ways to improve your productivity and eliminate procrastination is to manage your internal productivity clock by determining whether you are a morning person or a night owl. A Spanish researcher found that early risers were more likely to be logical and analytical, and likely to use concrete information as sources of knowledge, whereas those that stayed up late were more imaginative, creative and intuitive. It has also been determined that morning people were most productive during the first half of their work day while night people's productivity did not kick in until much later in the day.

Armed with this knowledge, to be most productive morning people should do their most important tasks in the first several hours of the day such as strategic thinking, writing proposals, contacting important clients, business development, making important decisions and scheduling

meetings only for breakfast and lunch. They should not schedule after work or dinner meetings when their peak energy has been depleted for the day. The last part of their day should be filled with less important tasks like updating their social media sites, responding to email and phone calls, research, following up with details for clients and any items that do not require high energy and intense focus.

Night owls should do just the opposite. They should perform the lighter less important tasks in the morning and really dig into the substance of their tasks after lunch when their ability to focus and be productive will be greatly improved. Night owls should schedule their important meetings either late in the day or over dinner when they will be at their best.

To avoid unproductive meetings in the workplace and to maximize the focus of all employees, joint meetings should be scheduled from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm when the morning people are still very productive and the night owls are gaining their productivity and creativity strength.

Manage the Energy in Your Surroundings

Focus and efficiency are keys to productivity. If your workplace environment, whether at home or in a building miles away, is unorganized with no clear workspace available procrastination will become enemy number one instantly and your productivity will drop to zero. The clutter and lack of organization will create great discomfort and eventually overwhelm you until you cannot perform at all – the ultimate procrastination.

Unclutter and organize so 80% of your workspace, desk and desktop are always visible and available for you to begin work immediately. Handle your paperwork, post-it notes and inbox only once – read it, take the appropriate action then keep it and file it or toss it if it is no longer needed. Not only will your focus and productivity rise but your anxiety and frustration will dramatically decrease.

Focus Your Attention

Focus, focus, focus! The more you can focus the more productive and efficient you are and the less stressed and anxious you will be. To maximize your productivity do the most important thing on your list for the day first – not the easiest or quickest to perform but the most important one. If you find it difficult to focus for longer periods of time, take short breaks and get outside into the fresh air for five minutes, take a short walk or drink a glass of water. If the job is too big, break it up into sections you can easily complete in shorter time spans and take a quick break. You will be re-energized and ready to get back to work.

Be sure to turn off all electronic and communication devices while trying to stay focused. They can quickly break your concentration and it can take time to reconnect. Others may find that playing Feng Shui or New Age type music will help them stay in a focused frame of mind and concentrate more easily.

Occasionally while focusing on the work at hand, ask yourself, “Is what I am doing getting me closer to my work objectives or what’s best for meeting my personal business goals?” The answer to this question will guide you as to whether you are focused enough and on the right thing.

Set a schedule for your focused time so you accomplish exactly what you set out to do. Do not let yourself get diverted to any other project during that time period. You will be rewarded by your accomplishment and the visible results of your improved productivity.

Procrastination is a huge problem if you let it control you. It is also a huge problem in the workplace where productivity and profitability rule. Shift your thinking about how to perform your daily duties based on what time of the day you perform best and watch your productivity and personal satisfaction speed up on your personal highway to success.

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Pat Heydlauff, president of Energy Design, helps business leaders streamline and transform their companies, resulting in employee satisfaction, client retention and bottom line profitability. She energizes and enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of workplace environments using color, design and organization principles. Her new book, "Feng Shui: So Easy a Child Can Do It," provides change that leads to success and prosperity. Contact Pat for consulting and speaking: www.Energy-by-Design.com or call: 561-799-3443 – Feng Shui Music for meditation, relaxation and energizing <http://www.energy-by-design.com/HealingMusic.html> .