



Tips for Improving Productivity

Working from home or working while under great stress or in a new environment can truly affect our productivity. Stress, tension, uncertainty, and fear can leave us reeling and with very little mental energy to tackle our day.

Before sitting down to work, take a few minutes to assess where you are. What unmet needs do you have? What emotional needs do you have? What emotions are you currently experiencing? How are you physically? How is your mental state? What about spiritually? Once you have run through all of these questions and clearly defined what your mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health is and identified any unmet needs you have, you can make a plan to address each need. Some needs simply need to be named, such as stress or tension, others need to be addressed, such as hunger or thirst. Only once you have named each need and defined if they need to be met or not, can you move on to your day.

Productivity must be measured. Without a way to measure what you accomplish in a day you will never know how productive you have been or what changes need to be made. The best way to measure productivity is by creating goals for each day.

Daily goals should have a deadline of 8 hours. Daily goals should be created in such a way they are met daily. Some goals will not be met. This is normal, as hard as we try, we cannot account for interruptions, emergencies, and challenges.

Tips to Increase Productivity

1. Start every day with a personal inventory. Meet the needs you can and create a plan to meet the needs you cannot immediately meet.
2. Take 30 minutes to review your day. What meetings do you have? What deadlines do you have? What needs to be accomplished today?
3. Take 30 minutes and look at the next day and the remainder of the week. Note all meetings, deadlines and needed work.
4. Create a list of what you need to accomplish for today. Create a second list of what you need to accomplish for the week.
5. Place each list in order of importance, based on deadlines and meetings.
6. Assign each task to a day. Make sure you only assign as many tasks as you feel you can accomplish in one day. Allow yourself an hour of unplanned time to account for interruptions, breaks and such.
7. Once you have your list completed, begin to work. Focus on one item at a time until you have completed it. Then, move on to the next task. As much as possible try not to multitask. Multi-tasking can leave us stretched thin and cause us to make silly mistakes.
8. At the end of the day, note what you accomplished, what interruptions you had and adjust your plan for the next day.
9. This method will allow you to learn how you work best and see the progress you are making daily.



Additional Tips for Productivity

1. Remove all distractions. I like to place my phone in shush mode while I work. Shush mode allows notifications to come through, but my phone is on silent. When I need a 5-minute break, I quickly look at my notifications, determine if I need to address any immediately or if they can wait.
2. Check emails three times a day. Do not allow your email to rule you. Checking it three times a day will allow you to address important issues, but not become bogged down or distracted by it.
3. Limit conversations to certain times. We all need social interaction, but continuous interactions will not allow you to complete your work. Take a 15-minute break in the morning and afternoon to catch up with co-workers.
4. Protect your work time. If you have a large project or a quickly approaching deadline, purposely schedule time in your day to work on the project. Protect this time and do not allow any interruptions.
5. Do not schedule 40 hours of work in a week. Understand that in any given week, with meetings, emails and last minute requests, we can only reasonably plan for 25 hours of work.
6. Keep snacks and caffeinated beverages in your office.
7. Drink 8 8oz glasses of water.
8. Take sun and fresh air breaks.
9. Separate work life and home life. As much as possible, do not allow them to bleed into each other.
10. Practice self-care. When you need a minute to breathe, give yourself a minute to breathe. When you are burned out, give yourself a minute to find your joy.
11. Practice gratitude.