

It is Time for Time management

One of the crucial skills of the 21 century is an ability to manage yourself. By managing yourself I mean being responsible for your actions. Knowing exactly what your goals are, what you need to do in order to achieve them, how to do this and what are the deadlines. However, knowing this is just a part of success, doing this is what also matters.

Time is a limited resource. That is why if you want to achieve high results, you can't allow yourself to waste your time. On the one hand you should learn how to take the most from your time and but on the other hand you should be careful to yourself in order to avoid possible burnout.

Myths about Time management

Some things we do make us stressed out, distracted and as a result less productive, these patterns of our behaviour can be also called time-killers. While reading this paper, try to identify these habits and then replace them with new good habits. Let's take a closer look at myths and misconceptions of time management.

✓ Multitasking

We live in a very fast world, things are happening all the time, we have more and more tasks. This makes us think that doing everything at once is a good idea. We create a habit of finishing two tasks at the same time: eating while working, answering phone while writing a report, checking emails while being at a business meeting. We feel that if we do more things, we save time, however it is the opposite.

It has been proved that multitasking strongly affects productivity, lowering an ability to focus and increasing stress level. Do this exercise if you want to experience an effect of multitasking on yourself. It is simple but it shows how painful multitasking is to your brain and ability to focus:



Write down the Arabic numbers 1-10, the Roman numbers 1-10 and the letters A- L. Be as fast as you can. But here's how you should do this. Write the Arabic numeral, the Roman numeral and the letter, then continue with the next Arabic numeral, then next Roman and so on. Time yourself doing this.

Now, your second task is to write the same, but instead of doing this be rows do it by columns. Write down 10 Arabic numbers first, then 10 Roman and 10 first letters. Time yourself.

Has the result surprised you? Did you expects having that difference of time for doing the same things? That is how our brain reacts when we try to switch from one task to another, our brain simply needs time for switching.¹

¹ Jeff Sutherland "Scrum. The art of doing twice the work in half the time"

✓ Planning more than you can do

If you plan more than you can do, you lose your motivation even before starting to work. When you see that it is impossible to finish all the tasks you have in your to-do list, you do even less than you can. At the end of the day you feel unsatisfied with yourself and guilty for what you haven't done. If you don't follow your plan, making it doesn't make sense anymore.

✓ Having every single minute planned

It is good to follow your plan, but it is simply impossible to have every minute of your life scheduled. You would feel controlled by someone and overwhelmed, you won't be able to relax even if you want.

Life is unpredictable and having tight plans makes you less flexible. You become a machine that just makes things done instead of looking for a balance between productivity and happiness. Later you get tired of plans and give up, what creates negative emotions and associations in your brain.

Time management rules and tools

Now, when you hopefully appreciate the value of your time as much as we do, read about time management tools that will help you to stay productive. Remember, time management is a skill that can be acquired, however some efforts are needed. People are different, that is why we all need to find an approach that will work for us. Read the rules below and decide which techniques are to most suitable for you.

Rule 1 – Make plans and check things you've done every evening.

We usually hear people saying they are too busy to plan, they simply do not have time for these "games". This is just an excuse.

Create a routine, take a notebook if you prefer writing by hand, create an Excel document if you like typing or install one of the apps presented below if you want to have your plans with yourself in your smartphone.

The trick is to find simply apps that will help you to plan but will not take much of your time. We do not promote any of these apps, we just share our experience:



✓ Google Keep <https://www.google.com/keep/>

Using this app, you can type your notes or tasks, share them with others, make photos, draw and set reminders. It is very clear and user-friendly.

✓ Kanban Flow <https://kanbanflow.com>

This app is based on the well-known Japanese methodology called Kanban, which means signboard or billboard. Kanban is a system used for a just-in-time manufacturing. It helps controlling all the activities of the company (also your activities)

To use it properly you should put all the tasks for the next week (or month, depending on your goals) to the "to do" section, and then to



move them to the “doing (in progress)” section and finally to the “done” one. Thanks to this technique you will learn to structure things better and avoid multitasking.

Rule 2 – Do one thing at a time

As you have already noticed while doing an exercise with numbers described above, multitasking is an enemy of your productivity. The opposite of multitasking is less popular and for sure more efficient, it is **single-tasking** also called monotasking. This is a technique of doing only one thing at a time but doing it well. It means to stay concentrated on this task only, to spend as much time as needed to finish it and only then to start doing something else. At the beginning your brain may protest against single-tasking, you can hear your



inner voice telling you that you lose time, just stay on track and you will see the results.

The method that will help you to focus on your work and to get things done is the technique created by Italian university student called Pomodoro technique. In the picture above you can see the steps of implementing this technique.

Rule 3 – Eliminate distractions

It has been proved that distractions lower our level of concentration drastically. Phone is the main distraction but how to deal with it if the silent mode doesn't work anymore? The bad thing is that usually we do not even consider things we do distractions. We just check our mail couple of times per hour while working, make coffee and tea, talk to our colleagues about this and that and do other things unconsciously.

There are two apps recommended by us that will help you to **deal with distractions** caused by your phone:

- ✓ Tide – this is a free app available for both IOS and Android. All you need to do is to choose to mode: focus, sleep or breath. After this you set timer and choose the sound you like. These sounds of nature help to calm down and concentrate on your work.



- ✓ Forest <https://www.forestapp.cc/>

This app helps you to stay present and to see the results of your presence.



In order to decide which of these two apps is better for you, you should listen to yourself and learn if you work better listening to some sounds or you prefer to stay in a calm room.

As you see usually the lack of time is a problem of disorganised people. But it is never late to change your lifestyle, life is about continuous learning. Start planning your day the evening before, do not multitask, focus on your activity, use apps presented in this manual and check their effect on yourself.

Choose the techniques that seems the most suitable for you, try different approaches, make small but confident steps to your better life with us.

Contacts

For more content and manuals don't forget to follow us on our social media:

And if you want to implement those rules and start the journey to a sustainable competitive advantage, contact US:



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