How To Be Really F***ing Productive

and get more done in 4 hours than most people get done in a week ...

this is another project from

The Project Program

Where you get more done in a month than most people do in a year ...

Introduction

Welcome to **How To Be Really Flaming[1] Productive**, put together to SERVE you and not to BURDEN you. It's short and sweet and easy to consume, like a Twinkie. Unlike a Twinkie, however, it will improve the quality of your life.

This guide will make you more productive. Keep it on your desk.

It has been put together to complement The Project Program, and although it's useful on it's own, it will be quadruply effective when combined with four weeks of guidance, accountability and a support network of your peers.

[You can grab your spot here](#).

[1] Yep, really ;-)

The Fundamentals of Productivity

To be productive is to *create*. It is to make stuff.

"*Productive*" comes from "*produce*". A totally made-up etymology of the word would suggest that it comes from the Latin. "Pro-" means "for", (antonym: "against") and "-duce" means "to lead".

Therefore: to produce means to be in favor of leadership.

Which is almost certainly wrong on a literal level, but is conceptually absolutely correct.

To be a producer means to be a leader.

Look around you. Look at the world leaders. Not just politicians, but industrialists, corporations, media groups, manufacturers.

Those people who rule the world: are they producers or are they consumers?

They are producers, of course. They are producers on large and impressive scales. If we define productivity as output, and measure it in units like ounces and bytes, the true leaders of the world are the greatest producers.

And the consumers are the masses: everybody else.

For sure, we all consume and produce some things in certain quantities, but (and this is said much better in the excellent *The Millionaire Fastlane* by MJ DeMarco) we can *choose* whether to be net consumers or net producers.

And we determine whether we have succeeded in answering the following question: does our output *outweigh* our consumption? Are we accumulating through production or giving away through consumption?

When we can produce more (and more of what matters - more on that later) than we consume, then we are truly productive.

And the productive rule the world.

Quite literally.

Working Out What To Work On

So we must become productive in order to rule the world. But perhaps more appropriately (because who wants to rule the world? That's a lot of responsibility) we must become productive in order to achieve the things that are important to us.

We know what is important to us already. Sure, we might have a slightly misconstrued sense of priority when it comes to the day-to-day stuff (we choose soda over water, or Desperate Housewives over Top Gear, or kale chips over home fries) but we know largely what's important:

Security, shelter, family, health.

We can control all of those to some extent. Admittedly, we can't choose our family (the ascendant line, at least) but we can take steps to ensuring our family are as healthy as is within our power.

But in order to exercise that power effectively, we need to take effective action: we need to do the right things at the right time to achieve the right result.

And that's where things start to get messy.

Immediate concerns normally get immediate attention, although those immediate concerns are not always the most important: they're not always what we should be working on.

This is especially true in business. We tweak our website because it's mildly broken when we should be making sales. We focus on fighting fires today when we should be focusing on creating a great product for next month. Or we spend so much time working IN our business that we neglect to focus ON it.

In short: we are busy being busy, rather than busy being productive.

It is only by taking time out of our “business as usual” working day that we can commit to the important projects that will have the longest, deepest impact on our wealth, health and happiness.

And to take time off from “business as usual”, we often need to CREATE more time.

Create more time in your day to work on the things that matter.

Let this guide be your teacher. We’ll show you how to create more time in the pages that follow.

When it comes to working out specifically what you need to be working on, you’ll want to join The Project Program.

How To Create More Time

Get up an hour earlier

Or two hours, or three. There isn't a highly productive person out there who doesn't work the hours that the rest of the world are sleeping. (Sometimes later in the day, sometimes over lunch, and sometimes first thing in the morning.)

We firmly believe that the sense of satisfaction that comes from achieving two full hours of work while the rest of the household is fast asleep is the best way to set you up for the day.

Use Sunday evening for planning the week

You should know exactly what it is that you have to do when you get to your desk on Monday morning. The minute you start to deal with the "immediate" is the minute you start to neglect the longer-term and more important planning.

We work best to a script. Forewarned is forearmed. A good Boy Scout is always prepared. You should be, too.

Say no.

You owe it to yourself to be selfish in your business. Just because you're the only shareholder in your organization, doesn't mean that you get to treat yourself badly.

By creating constraints: time constraints, activity constraints, word count targets and hard deadlines, you're better able to focus. Ignore all that isn't on your list of objectives. That means gently turning down requests for your time and attention.

If you were employed to do a job in any other firm, you wouldn't get to muck around on personal stuff or stuff unrelated to your job description. Keep the same standards for yourself.

Get a cleaner.

Get household help. Time you spend ironing and scrubbing and laundering and polishing is time you're not spending creating your legacy. Your time is more valuable.

Use your phone as a phone.

That means don't use it as a personal assistant, don't use it to surf the internet, Facebook chat and tweet. Turn off notifications. Even better, turn it off entirely, at least during core working hours.

Just because the phone rings, doesn't mean that you are obliged to answer it. If God had intended us to answer our telephones, he wouldn't have given us voicemail.

Put no more than three things on your to-do list.

Your to-do list will end up demolishing your productivity if it's not handled carefully. Every small thing that needs to be dealt with gets listed on your small list. Your small list becomes a big list and you realize you'll never make a meaningful dent in it.

Use your Sunday review sessions to ensure that you have no more than three important things on your to-do list every day. It doesn't mean that business as usual comes to an end: you've still got to pay your bills, answer your emails and buy your groceries, but you don't need to put them on a list of things to make you feel sick every time you look at it.

Big first.

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. How do you get overwhelmed at the thought of eating an elephant? Eat an antelope beforehand.

Plan your day so that you put your biggest, most important task first. Make a sizable dent in it. Then move on to the easier, lighter stuff. Sorbet follows steak, right?

Avoid meetings at all cost.

Enough said. If you absolutely MUST have a meeting, get crystal clear on the agenda and (ideally) the outcome, before you even get in.

Know what's next.

Not doing the right stuff at the right time is often a result of not knowing what the right stuff to do next actually IS. Every time you have a conversation, every time you finish up one part of a project, know what has to happen next to make progress, and know WHO is responsible for it and WHEN it has to be done.

Time yourself

Set a timer to go off at 30 minute intervals to focus on one activity and take a short 1 minute break to refocus.

Take a proper break after 2 hours for 10-20 minutes and do something completely different. Water the dog, walk the plants, dance in front of the mirror. Remember when you were at school and your day was broken down into 40 minute periods? Remember how that helped you focus on what you needed to be doing? Do the same in your working day.

Ask yourself "is what I'm doing right now getting me closer to what I want to achieve?"

Know what you're looking to achieve – what does finished look like?

If you're not sure what it is you want to achieve, or if you know what it is and need some help getting there, join the Project Program.

Contain your distractions.

Ideas are what keep your butterfly mind from focus. As an entrepreneur, every time you get a new idea, you get excited. That excitement leads to distraction.

Have a dumping ground for your ideas: a book, a text document, a folder. Review your ideas once a week over a stiff drink. A lot of them will seem ridiculous even a few days later. Keep the ones that you like the most for another project.

Know what you have done.

Keep a journal - just a few jottings each day of what you've achieved. Not knowing that you have actually made progress can make carrying on seem like an unattractive slog. Imagine you're running a marathon: the mile markers are there to show you your progress and keep you motivated.

Do the same for your projects.

Disconnect

Now that you're not answering the phone, you can throw out the TV – literally bury it in your back garden. The amount of people who "don't have the time" to get things done, but know EXACTLY what happened in every episode of Desperate Housewives is alarming.

Don't be that person.

And while you're at it, turn off the internet. Either unplug, or head to a coffee shop that isn't connected. If you're working on the Great American Novel, that's where you'll get it finished. You won't get it finished when you're online. There are too many dancing cats.

Do the right stuff.

And lastly: work on the right stuff. If it's going to take you three weeks to set up a website, but you have a younger cousin or guy you found on Craigslist who can do it for you in two days for $100, that's the option you should choose, even if you think you can't afford it.

Time is your most precious commodity. Put a dollar value on it right now and start spending it accordingly.

Get help.

Join us in the Project Program: we'll hold that stick over your back and dangle that carrot just in front of you. You can't always do it alone.

You don't have to.

[Click here to join THE PROJECT PROGRAM]

Our favorite tools to make you more productive

We're huge believers in shaving a few minutes off all you do here and there. The most productive people we know either eliminate repetitive tasks entirely (by getting somebody else to do them) or else they automate and streamline using technology.

Yep! Technology can be your friend.

Here are some of our favorites:

Email management

Gmail Canned Responses

Save ready-written emails and hit a button to fill out your email.

Contactually

Follow up with the RIGHT people at the right time.

emailga.me

Blast through your emails in record time against the clock.

Writethat.name

Don't waste time looking for an email address or phone number: this updates your contacts automatically.

Sanebox

Filter out the least important emails. Just focus on the important ones. Review once a day.

Repetitive Tasks:

Text Expander for Mac

Like Gmail's canned responses for using anywhere you type.

IFTTT

Put the internet to work for you. If this, then that. Smart automation.

Zapier

No more manual processing: get your apps talking to each other.

Freshbooks

Recurring invoices and smart client management.

Staying organized

Evernote

Your always everywhere personal database.

Cobook for Mac and iPhone

Sweet, centralized contact management.

Teux-Deux

The world's simplest to-do list software.

Keep reading for your morning routine …

Your Morning Routine: 4 Effective Hours

This is a suggested morning routine to get four effective hours out of the day.

You might be surprised, but four hours is probably A LOT more than most people are putting into REAL projects every day at the moment.

Sure, we'll be dealing with emails and bills and servicing existing clients and stuff, but we're not working on those projects of ours that are going to change the world.

Use these first four hours each day and be different.

First off, and VERY IMPORTANT. Before you go to bed EVERY NIGHT, write down on a piece of paper the TWO important things that you have to get done tomorrow.

There will always be "business as usual" - tax returns, replying to emails, servicing clients and the like, but focus on the two things you can do that will take you a few steps closer to your bigger goal, whatever that may be.

Then, the next morning ...

1. Get up earlier!

By setting your alarm even 30 minutes earlier than normal, and diving straight into the important stuff, you're going to have a head-start. If you can't get out of bed earlier for a good reason (you already get up at five, you work nights) then it doesn't matter. The key thing is to START your working day earlier.

2. Do not check your phone or emails for 2 hrs

This is a GOLDEN RULE. If you start your day being reactive, then you have set yourself up for a day of chasing your tail. This means no reading the news, no checking Facebook messages, or Twitter, or email. If you get up 2 hours earlier, say, five o'clock instead of seven, then nobody's going to be expecting to hear from you at that time of day anyway.

3. Focus on the first task you set the night before

See why it's so important to set your to-do list before you go to bed? Get started with the first thing on your task list at the expense of everything else. You may pour yourself a coffee. You may not pour yourself a coffee, water the plants, think about what you're having for dinner and call your mother to check in how she's been doing.

4. Set a timer to go off every 30 mins

You're going to work solidly for two hours. To understand your progress, you're going to set a time to ding at 30 minute intervals. You can either use a kitchen timer, your iPhone, a software program or an old-fashioned egg timer. The sole purpose of this timer is to let you know that you're making progress and that time is running out. Yep, just like the rest of us, you're a mortal …

5. At the end of 2 hours take 5 mins to breathe

Stretch, ~~smoke a cigarette~~, get up and walk around your office, exercise your vocal cords, pet the dog, do some push-ups. But stay in the zone. You're about to do another two-hour blast. If you're complaining that four hours in one stretch seems an awfully long time, then you're missing the big picture. We're here to get stuff done, after all, right?

6. Set a timer for 20 mins to check your email

We love to use the emailga.me for blasting through our emails. They either need a reply, or they don't. That's a good place to start. You can be selfish with your emails as well. Before you hit the send button, ask yourself if you NEED to do that. Otherwise, as with your daily plan, deal with the important ones first: the ones that will have a direct impact on your revenue … come back to the others later when it's "business as usual" time.

7. Start on the second most important task

This is like the first most important task, only it's the second one. It's not rocket science ;-) This means that at the end of the day you will have made measurable progress on more stuff than most people. Studies have shown that your regular, run-of-the-mill office worker who has to clock in for eight hours a day, often does less than two hours meaningful work the entire time they're at work.

8. Repeat steps 4-5

Set a timer to go off every 30 minutes, then at the end of the fourth ping, reward yourself with a pat on the back, another cup of tea or five minutes in the downward sleeping dog position.

9. Set a timer for 30 mins to check on social media and keep in touch.

Keeping in touch with important people is one of the best things you can do to nurture your health and business, particularly if you're working from home. If you want to know how to make WICKED effective use of this time, then grab a copy of Matthew's 5 Things You Can Do Every Morning To Get More Clients In 60 Days.

10. Disconnect completely for 30 mins and exercise

Richard Branson said that his secret to getting so much done in such little time was “exercise”. When you’re healthy in body, you’re closer to being healthy in mind. Repeated studies have shown that moderate exercise, which releases endorphins and serotonin, can actually lift your mood. Energy breeds energy, so you you’re setting yourself up to be far more productive if you have the energy to get through two two-hour shifts.

Boom! There you go.

Four highly effective hours.

Be sure to look at the last page of this guide for your printable checklist.

Important Stuff

This book was brought to you by The Project Program: an intensive month-long community master-class for getting things done and completing important projects in good time.

You can find out more about the Project Program here:

The Project Program

About the authors

Natalie Sisson is the Suitcase Entrepreneur. She runs a full-time business on a part-time schedule, living out of hotels, suitcases and coffee-shops. Natalie is one of the most prolific online business people you've ever met, running countless programs and initiatives whilst living on the road. She excels in streamlining your daily efforts using online tools and social media to maximize your time and money.

Connect with Natalie on Twitter and Facebook

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Matthew Kimberley is the Head of the Book Yourself Solid School of Coach Training, the Big Deal at Daily Success Deals and corporate sales trainer and small business marketing consultant. He's also the author of How To Get A Grip – a guide to getting more done in less time with less stress, that keeps climbing the best-seller charts in the UK long since its release.

Connect with Matthew on Twitter and Facebook

Productivity Checklist for (date): _____

My two most important things:

1. _____

2. _____

- ☐ Got up early!
- ☐ Didn't check phone or emails for 2 hrs
- ☐ Focused on the first task you set the night before
- ☐ Set a timer to go off every 30 mins
- ☐ At the end of 2 hours took 5 mins to breathe
- ☐ Set a timer for 20 mins to check email
- ☐ Started on the second most important task
- ☐ Repeated steps 4-5
- ☐ Set a timer for 30 mins to check on social media and kept in touch.
- ☐ Disconnected completely for 30 mins and exercised

BOOM! Another GREAT day from
www.theprojectprogram.com