

How To Save Time and Get More Done at Work



Now more than ever it's easy to get distracted at work. Between emails, people coming and going, [LinkedIn](#) and Facebook alerts and of course the phone, it's little wonder that you struggle to accomplish everything you have set out for the day. Sure, you tell your spouse, friends and family that you have no choice but to go in early, stay late and work on weekends. But are you really making the best use of every minute of the day? How much time do you honestly spend in the mental twilight zone looking at your ex-colleagues LinkedIn profile or checking your fantasy football lineup? You might not want to admit it, but there are some small steps you can take to be more efficient with your time and get more done.

Mindfulness

It might be hard to see the correlation, but studies have proven that incorporating the practice of [mindfulness](#) into your daily routine helps you stay focused and be more productive. So, what exactly is mindfulness? It can be anything from breathing exercises to a meditation routine to keeping a gratitude journal. The good thing about practicing mindfulness is that it doesn't take a lot of time. Even just a few minutes practiced on a daily basis can do wonders.

Time Blocking

Maybe you're good about time blocking. You set aside time throughout the week to check and send email, engage new prospects and get necessary tasks done. But how often are you interrupted? Either by someone else or of your own volition? In

short, you know the importance of time blocking, but it often becomes difficult to stick to. Someone walks in your door, the phone rings or you see the email with the big red ! that says it just can't wait. Which leads us too... Plan your time blocks with a purpose. What do you want to get accomplished during that time block? Having a goal for the time block will help you stay on track.

Setting Professional Boundaries

If you're in any kind of position of leadership or you manage a team of people, you have to set professional boundaries. Of course, you have to have an open door, make sure everyone has the proper training and resources to do their job and meet the objectives set by your superiors. But what about you? Don't you need time to do your job instead of everyone else's? This is why it's important to make clear to everyone involved that you too need time to get things done. Whether that means locking your door for an hour after lunch or not being available on Wednesdays after 11:00 am, you need to make it clear to everyone that while you're there to support them, you too need time to do your job.

Define Happy Hour on Your Terms

Who doesn't love a break for some interoffice levity and time to shoot the breeze? It's healthy, no one will question that. But when that two-minute check-in about Sunday's game turns into a 45-minute conversation about more than running backs, you're wasting time. The last thing you want to do is kill collegiality and morale, but you still need to get work done. If you want to be at the top of your game, define what and when happy hour is. It's important but, should be dictated on your terms.

Smart Phones Make You Dumb

It's a bit worrisome to think about how much smartphones dictate your every move. Yes, they are a convenience that allows you to work remotely and always be on call. But have you ever stopped to think about how they affect your productivity? That new Instagram like or Facebook post. Mindless notifications populate your screen constantly and at the end of the day don't matter. They only serve as a time suck to make you jealous. After 30 minutes in fantasy land, you

look at the clock and it's 3:30 and you wonder where you left off.

If you want to be more productive and efficient with your time, set aside periods of time when your phone is off and tucked away in your drawer. That text will be there in an hour. In the meantime, do yourself and everyone else a favor and get some important work done.

Know When You're at Your Best

There are certain times of the day when you're more productive than others. For some it's before the sun comes up and for others it's late in the day. Knowing when you're the most productive is vital to your success. If you're someone that likes to sleep in until 7:30, read the paper and have a leisurely morning until 10:00 then more power to you. On the other hand, if you like waking up early and getting a pile of work done before most people wake up, all the better. The key is to find the time of day when you're most productive and structure everything else around that.

The workplace demands a lot from you. There's the pressure of managing those under you and meeting the expectations of those above. Balancing everything is a full-time job to say the least. There's a reason divorce rates are on the rise and mental and physical health are gaining traction in the national conversation. If you want to [increase your productivity](#), reduce [stress](#) and get the most out of each and every day, try implementing some of the strategies above. You might just find yourself excelling in your job and getting home in time for dinner with those that really matter.

Why You Need to Have Hobbies If You Want to Be Successful



While there's no denying that the demands of the modern workplace are higher than ever before, there's been a significant amount of research to suggest that achieving a proper work-life balance not only allows you to be more productive, but be healthier and live longer too. You can't be in work mode all of the time. You need a break both mentally and physically to something unrelated to work to recharge and keep a healthy perspective. If you've ever wondered what the hobbies of some of the most successful people are, read on.

Sailing

Just like running a successful business, sailing involves plotting a course and optimizing your strategy to get from point A to point B. Becoming an accomplished sailor takes time and is full of ups and downs depending on factors that are often out of your control. Many of the skills necessary to be successful in business are paralleled with sailing.

Yoga

Yoga can be a difficult activity to start but once you realize how beneficial it can be for your physical, mental and emotional health, you'll have a hard time stopping. Yoga is widely touted as an activity that brings about balance and the mindset you need to perform at your best both at and away from the office.

Running

You've probably heard people describe runner's high. What they are talking about is the euphoric feeling they get during a run when endorphins are released to the brain. Like sailing, running is also a pursuit that requires discipline, self-

motivation, determination and mental toughness. Just as is true in business, running requires skills that almost all successful people possess.

Golf (my favorite)

It's not a coincidence that some of the brightest names in business are avid golfers as well. Not only is golf one of the most mentally challenging games in the world, it's a great venue to network, cultivate relationships and close deals. While there's all sorts of sayings like "you should never beat your boss" and "golf is your grandfather's game," it's a pursuit that affords you opportunity to recreate and do business at the same the time.

Songwriting

You probably won't be selling out large venues anytime soon, but songwriting is a wonderful creative outlet. The patience, dedication and creativity it takes to match the right lyrics and melodies are all similar to the skills it takes to run a business. And the best part about songwriting, no one ever said you have to perform in front of someone else to enjoy it.

Chess

It should come as little surprise that the game of chess is a favorite past time for successful people. You could make the argument that you're playing a game of chess every day when you run your business. You're constantly having to think multiple steps ahead, make decisions based on partial information and adapt on the fly when unexpected challenges present themselves.

Reading

The most successful people know that if you're not always learning and trying to improve, you're getting lapped. Reading is one of the ways successful people wind down at the end of a long day but also keep their minds active and open to new ideas. The libraries of the best and the brightest aren't filled with the *Twilight Series* or *College Humor*. Instead, you'll probably find books from thinkers, philosophers and industry leaders.

Volunteering

Even if you don't have a lot of money to give to your favorite charity, there are countless ways you can help make your community a better place. Whether you volunteer at a local soup kitchen or coach your son's little league, the simple act of helping others is proven to make you feel better mentally and physically as well.

No one's going to question the importance of making money. You have bills to pay, groceries to buy and college funds and retirement plans to save for. If you want to be at your best at work and at home however, maintaining a healthy [work-life balance](#) is a must. If you make it a point to incorporate some hobbies that get you outside, involve physical activity and keep your mind active, you'll be setting yourself up to be more productive and live a longer, happier, healthier life.

My name is Jeff King and I am a [Life Sciences Recruiter in the Bay Area](#). Contact me today if you are interested in finding a job or hiring in the [pharmaceutical, biotech, or medical device industries](#).