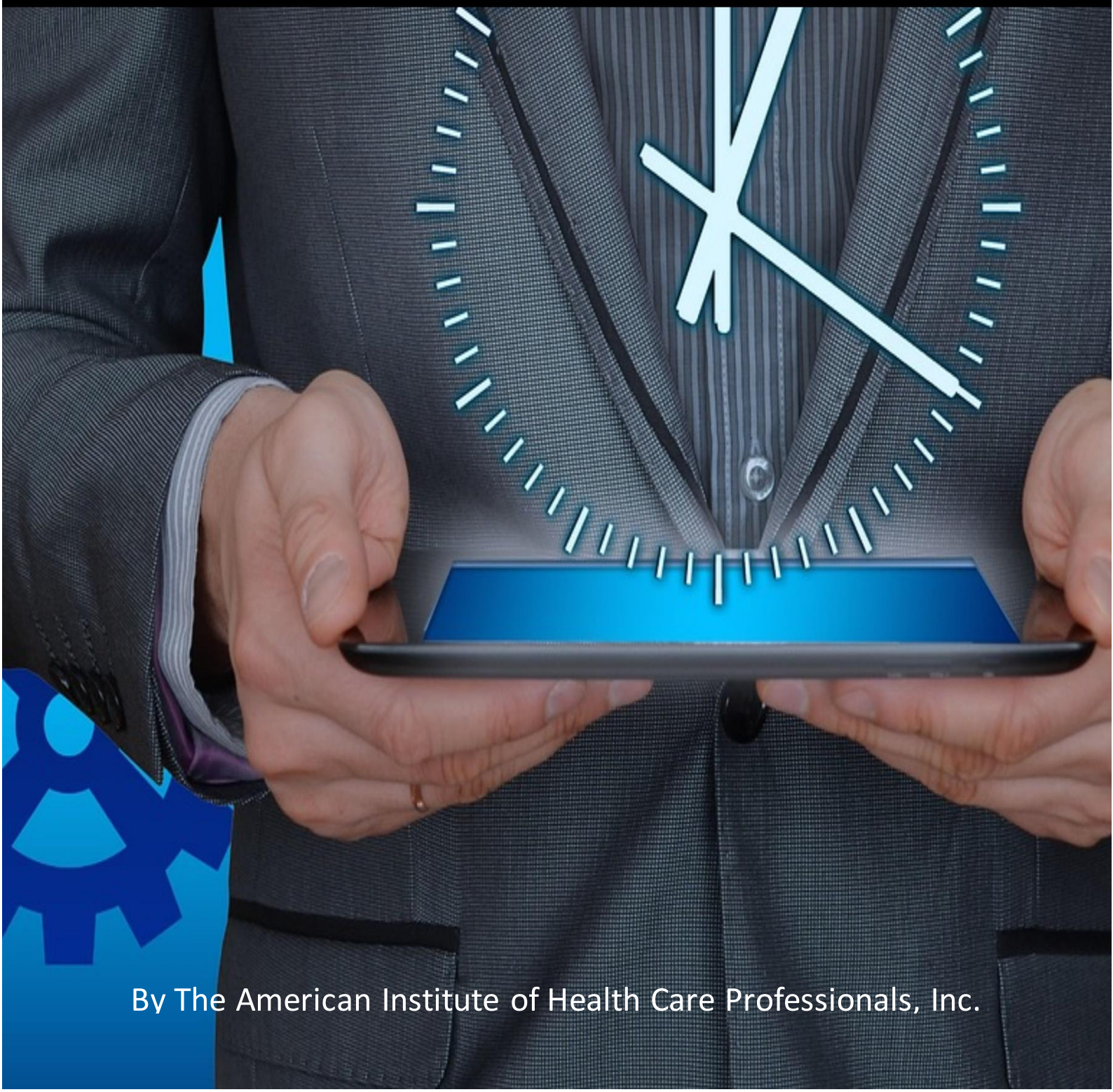# 101 Ways To
Greatly Boost Your
PRODUCTIVITY

By The American Institute of Health Care Professionals, Inc.

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Introduction

If we are being honest, it's likely that every single one of us has wishes to be more productive. In one corner, you have the procrastinators, who find a way to put everything off until the last possible minute. Another corner has the most productive people ever.

In the two remaining corners, the rest of the world resides. Those who know how to get things done but get caught up in distractions. The people who want to be more productive than they already are, so that they can leave work at the door and enjoy their home life. It's the majority of us.

There has been a really big focus in workplaces on doing more with less. Or, the other catchphrase: work smarter, not harder. The problem is, we all have *more* to do than we used to

You have more deadlines to meet and in half the time. You're the one fielding phone calls, replying to emails, and planning the afternoon meetings. So, it's easy to understand why so many of us are struggling to remain productive in the face of *everything*.

101 Ways To Boost Your Productivity

Here are 101 ways to help you find the right way for *you* to boost your productivity. We've compiled quite the list for you, but only you can determine which of these tips will work for you. Don't try them all in one day either.

1. **The Night Before**

   Not the night before Christmas, no. Quite simply, the night before. Start planning tomorrow tonight! You don't need to take hours out of your evening to do this. It's as simple as deciding what you're going to wear, what your priorities look like, and even deal with your lunch, etc. It will save you time in the morning and help you manage your stress a bit more effectively, too.

2. **The Hardest Part**

   Tackle the most difficult job of the day first. Once that's out of the way, you will feel a weight off your shoulders. It should pave the way for a smooth day. Otherwise, that task will weigh on your mind as you go about the rest of your day.

3. **The Next Hardest Part**

   Once you tackle your urgent and important tasks, you can move on to those important, but non-urgent tasks on your list. These fall into the second quadrant and are also often referred to as big rocks. You know when you take a glass jar and throw in big rocks and it looks full because you can't fit anything else in it? Well, you obviously *can* fit other stuff in there, just smaller stuff. The point is, you can get to the small stuff once the big stuff is out of the way. It's all about effectively streamlining your day.

4. **Appropriate Multi-Tasking**

   The biggest favor you will ever do for yourself and your productivity is understanding when multi-tasking is appropriate. Let me be clear, multi-tasking is inviting serious stress into your life, so, don't do it at work. However, there are times when you *can* multi-task without much risk. For example, you should feel free to listen to a podcast or catch up on your favorite television show while you iron, vacuum or tackle other chores around the house.

5. Your Focus

If something requires your focus, don't multi-task. Your brain is powerful, yes, but the task you are working on requires your full attention. For example, if you are budgeting, you shouldn't also be trying to reply to emails. Your total focus should be on that budget. If you struggle with your attention span, you may want to try to Pomodoro technique for the heavier tasks. So, give it your full attention for 25 minutes and then take a five-minute break before you go again.

6. Unimportant? Cross It Offer

If your to-do list has items on it that you don't *need* to do... why is it even on your list? Sure, it might be nice to do it. However, it's cluttering up your list, adding more pressure to your day. You have probably been writing it on your to-do list every single day for months. It's time to cross it off and forget about it.

7. To-Do Lists

Speaking of to-do lists... you should have one of those. There's nothing worse than getting caught firefighting. Instead of spending your day putting those fires out, you should be scheduling your day and creating a plan that sees you easily deal with every task on your list. So, plan out your day in a way that gives each task plenty of time (and add some extra, so you have wiggle room) and work through it in order. This will help you remain focused on your current task. If other jobs pop up, you can fit them into your list as required. Your to-do list shouldn't be increasing your stress levels, it should be helping you manage your stress. Just make sure you cross each task off as you complete it. This will prevent you from forgetting any tasks.

8. To-Do Later

Not everything is important to make *the* to-do list, but it still might need to be done. For those smaller tasks that aren't super important or urgent, you can create a to-do-later list. You can tackle this once you have completed the main to-do list. So, maybe some of those items from point six can fall here.

9. **Have A System**

   There isn't a single system of productivity. My productivity might be driven by something different than yours. What's important, though, is that you have a system that truly works for you. So, find the right fit and stick to it. If your friends keep recommending their systems, don't get down on yourself when it doesn't work for you. You'll find the right system if you keep at it.

10. **Effectiveness Over Efficiency**

    Before efficiency can even be a thought in your mind, first you must be effective. This essentially means your focus should be on the tasks that really matter. Being efficient simply means that you deliver a higher output in less time. What's the point in efficiency if you aren't being effective in the tasks that you complete?

11. **Stop Procrastinating**

    You don't need me to tell you how much time procrastination wastes. No one ever accomplished anything by procrastinating their day away. If you feel a bout of procrastination coming up, force yourself to do one single task. Once that is out the way, you will soon see yourself getting into the rest of your to-do list. In these cases, you can go for a quadrant two task if necessary.

12. **Use Your Toolkit**

    There are available tools, which can help you be more productive. So, if you are traveling and can work while you do, a keyboard for your tablet is a great way to increase your productivity. This is an ideal solution for anyone who faces a long commute on public transport for work. Or, someone who often flies. There are apps like Evernote, which can help make your life a bit simpler.

13. **Meditation**

There is no better way to clear your mind than by taking five, ten minutes out of your day to sit in quiet meditation. You can follow a guided meditation if you want. Or, you can just find somewhere quiet to focus on your breathing and clear your mind.

14. Early Rise

The early bird really *does* catch the worm, so make sure you are up before the rest of the house. Getting up just ten minutes earlier than normal will put you at an advantage for the rest of the day. It's an excellent way to motivate yourself for the entire day ahead.

15. The 80/20 Principle

You don't need to be a perfectionist to succeed. In fact, it's probably going to impact your productivity. So, instead, you should aim your focus on the 20% of tasks that will produce the greatest results. Generally speaking, 20% yields 80% of your results.

16. Organize

Declutter your desk, file your paperwork, create a system of organization that will make your life easier. It doesn't matter what type of filing system you work with, as long as it works for you and you use it consistently.

17. Delegate

You will always be more productive when you learn how to delegate. Sometimes you have tasks on your list that aren't really your job, could be handled by someone else or just aren't the wisest use of your time. These are the types of tasks that you should delegate. It allows you to use your time effectively.

18. Outsource

This is a similar idea to delegation; however, this means you hire someone else to do certain things. That might mean hiring a housekeeper, a nanny, sending your laundry out or enlisting the help of freelancers to take care of certain professional tasks.

19. Shun Distractions

Do you get a notification every time you receive a message? Do you leave the sound on your phone? Is your inbox open, as well as a multitude of tabs, while you are trying to work? These are all distractions that affect your productivity levels. Shun them all, no matter what it takes. Even if that means turning off the internet connection on whatever device you are using at the time.

20. Become a Master

The better you are at something, the quicker you will be at it. So, if you haven't already mastered your skill it's time for you to level up. That might mean you need to spend more time doing something so you're better at it. Or, it might mean pulling out instructions to learn the ins and outs of a task. Whatever it takes, it will be worth it in the long run.

21. Harness Productivity Periods

We all have our own hot-spots of time where we are more productive. Some people are incredibly productive early on, while others are better after lunch. While we recommended doing the hardest, most important tasks first… you can move your toughest tasks to the times you are most productive.

22. Enjoyment

You will do more if you make the process as enjoyable as possible. For example, you may hate dealing with payroll. However, if you can listen to music while you do it and have your favorite beverage on hand while you do, it won't seem as terrible. This is especially true of exercise. When you work out, choose an activity that you truly enjoy doing. You don't always have to go to the gym, sometimes you can play indoor soccer with friends.

23. Get On With It

Instead of making up excuses to *not* to something, just do it! Once you get started your momentum will carry you through.

24. Rest Up

How do you expect to get anything done when you're exhausted? Make sure you get at least seven hours of *good* sleep every night. Turn off your devices, move the television out of the room, and just sleep!

25. Find A Mentor

Find someone who does what you do *really* well and learn from them!

26. Best Practice

Compare best practices from similar arenas and measure your own against them. How can you apply other best practices to your world?

27. Improve

You should always set a target for yourself and then you need to track your performance. However, if you don't meet your own expectations, don't beat yourself up. Instead, improvise and determine how you can do better next time. If you *do* meet your target, find a way to beat your own performance.

28. Read

There are plenty of great materials regarding productivity. So, find the best ones and use some of your spare time to educate yourself.

29. A Manual

Everything comes with a manual, so, why can't you? Why not create a manual or a guide that covers your short-term goals, as well as your mid and long-term ones, and include plans, strategies, and values. It can help you stay focused on your priorities.

30. Batch Tasks

Try to batch all your similar tasks together. So, instead of spreading activities throughout the day, you can batch all the related tasks into one session.

31. Upgrade Your Tools

That means keeping your software updated and using only the best. You don't need your daily tools to slow you down. There's nothing more frustrating than working on a computer that freezes or a program that always shuts down.

32. Rewards

Life is always better when there's an incentive. So, when you are faced with what appears to be an insurmountable task, offer yourself a reward at the end.

33. Just Say No

Just as it's important to know when to delegate, you need to know when to say no. If a task is unrelated to what you do, is unimportant or it's something you just don't *want* to do... don't. You'll never get anything done if you say yes to everyone all the time.

34. Know When To Quit

Don't buy into the hype about quitting being a negative. It isn't always. If a certain path is leading nowhere... it's okay to quit.

35. The Environment

The environment in which you work plays a major role in the attitude you hold regarding work. So, create a personal space that will motivate you.

36. Posture

Shoulders back, chest our... yes, your posture can affect performance and productivity. So, keep yours in check.

37. Ignore Limiting Thoughts

Why are you spending your time worrying about a scenario that might never happen? Those negative feelings and thoughts are only holding you back.

38. The Commute

If you spend a lot of time commuting and you can't take public transport to maximize your productivity while you do... consider a ride share or carpooling. You can at least get some

work done. You may want to look for another job or look into your options on working from home.

39. Time Slots

Give each task a time slot and focus solely on *that* task in its assigned time slot. When time runs out, move on to the next task. It's all about learning how to do your tasks in a fair amount of time, forcing you to shut everything else out.

40. Set Targets

When you have a goal or a target, you have something you are working toward.

41. Set Deadlines

When you set a target or a goal, you should attach a deadline to it. It's all about making decisions that will push you into action.

42. Email Crazy

If your emails aren't making you an effective, then you need to find a new way to manage them. That might mean choosing two times a day to check your email and reply to them then.

43. Plan

You shouldn't just plan your day and week. You should plan your tasks, too. So, take a minute to organize your thoughts and work your ideas into a plan that makes tackling that task easier.

44. Punctuality

There is no point in having a schedule if you don't stick to it, so aim to be on time (if not slightly early) for everything that's on your schedule.

45. Visualize

Before you tackle a task, take a moment to visualize yourself finishing it. That feeling can be incredible enough to push you through.

46. Practice

You can't be an expert in something unless you log the hours. So, if it takes 10,000 hours for you to become an expert at what you do, put the work in!

47. Use Force

Instead of applying your energy in short bursts to finish tasks, give it all your energy to blast it. For example, instead of dedicating half an hour of your day for two weeks to a big report, just sit down and focus your energy on it to deal with it all at once.

48. Coach

A coach is different than a mentor. A coach will help make you aware of your blind spots and find a way to keep you moving forward.

49. Take A Time Out

If you have paid vacation time available... take it! Make sure you use all the time off that's available to you. Your brain and body will thank you, so will your productivity levels. Stress negatively affects productivity.

50. Avoid Junk Food

Food is fuel. So, think of what type of fuel you feed your body? If you choose junk food, then you choose the short-term fuel that will inhibit productivity and increase stress. That 80/20 principle that we mentioned above can also serve you well in your diet!

51. Eat Light

If you choose foods that are heavy in calories you will start to feel sleepy. That burger and fries might taste delicious, but it's going to bog you down and make your work day feel even longer. Choose leafy greens, lean proteins, and whole grains.

52. Go Small and Frequent

Always eat breakfast. Secondly, if possible, you should always eat a small amount regularly. This will help you maintain your energy a bit better than sitting down to three big meals. Though, it may depend on your metabolism.

53. Eat Bran

Bran can help you sustain your energy, thus increasing your productivity. It's also great for lowering cholesterol, thus protecting your heart. It also happens to contain phenylalanine. If you don't get enough of this, it can cause a lack of energy as well as confusion.

54. Go Bananas

Nature did you a favor by wrapping a banana in its own peel. You can toss them in your bag for a handy snack. They are healthy, satisfying, and packed with vitamins.

55. Go Nuts

More specifically, *almonds*. Yes, nuts are high in fat. However, it's the healthy fat that your body *needs* to function properly. They are also packed with riboflavin, which can help boost your brain. Just be sure to get your serving size right.

56. Broccoli

Broccoli is an energy booster because it's chock full of iron. There's also plenty of other nutrients and vitamins in these little green trees. They help keep your immune system steady thus keeping you healthy and productive. Sick days *definitely* impact your productivity levels.

57. Spinach

Spinach is another excellent example of a leafy green that will help you sustain energy. It contains more than 13 different minerals and vitamins that are essential to your body. Just half a cup will give you more than half of your daily Vitamin C requirement. You can easily toss that spinach into your morning smoothie to make life easier.

58. Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes are an excellent way to get fuel without going carb crazy. They can provide you with a much-needed boost of energy. So, consider a baked sweet potato for lunch to power your productivity to finish the day.

59. Blueberries

Blueberries are great at helping you prevent the appearance of wrinkles, but that's not why we want you to eat them. They are a great way to get a serious boost of energy. They're an excellent source of vitamins C and E, as well as manganese and fiber. They're like gummy bears, but good for you.

60. Eggs

Eggs are one of the greatest foods we have. So, enjoying eggs at breakfast is ideal. You get the full family of B vitamins and choline, vitamin D, and more. Once you boil an egg, you can keep it in the fridge (in its shell) for around five days. So, keep hard boiled eggs handy for a quick breakfast or snack.

61. Salmon

It's packed full of Omega 3 Fatty Acids, which your brain needs for overall function *and* improved memory. We call fish brain food, and salmon is the ultimate in brain foods. This can help you improve your productivity by staving off brain fog.

62. Greek Yogurt

Greek yogurt helps you feel fuller for longer, but more importantly, it's super healthy. It's packed with zinc, calcium, protein, B vitamins, and potassium, too. All of that will help fuel you to success.

63. Quinoa

This whole grain is a super food and it's super easy to make. It will take on just about any flavor you infuse it with, so it's a great option to replace pasta and rice. The benefit here, of course, is it's great for boosting brain energy.

64. Minimalist

Look at your workspace and ask yourself what you really *need* on hand. If you don't need it constantly, find a place to store it.

65. Small Steps

One of the reasons many people procrastinate is that feel overwhelmed by a set of tasks. So, the impulse is to run in the opposite direction and procrastinate. So, when you create to-do lists, you should break your projects down into smaller steps that feel more actionable and less overwhelming. It's one task at a time.

66. Baby Steps

You can take even smaller steps if you find yourself getting lost. Sometimes you need to trick yourself into getting started. So, tell yourself you will work on something for just a couple of minutes. Once you get started you will ease into it and keep going.

67. Take It Slow

If you want to avoid taking one step forward and two steps back, then slow it down. Sometimes if you try to tackle something too quickly it becomes a mental burden that you run away from. That just lessens your productivity.

68. Eliminate Tasks

As you get into your day, you should regularly check in with yourself about what tasks can be shaved. Are they on your list because it feels like *you should* do them or because you have always done them? Do they really need to be done? You can save so much time and energy by learning when to let go.

69. The Silence

You should shut out the noise as much as possible. If you have an office door – close it. Turn off notifications, put your cell phone on silent, hide it away. Disconnect as much as possible to prevent yourself from being distracted. If you can't close an office door, think about putting headphones in and listening to music that won't distract you. It's surprising how much more you can achieve when you can shut everyone else out.

70. Balance

Strike a balance between complete rest and total focus. The Pomodoro technique is one of the ways you can do this. However, you can instead work for 45 minutes and then take a short break (15 minutes is fine). It's an effective way to maintain your energy and mental sharpness for the entire day (and the work week). During your break, you can take a walk, enjoy a snack, grab a drink or just rest your eyes.

71. Celebrate Your Wins

It really doesn't matter how big or small your wins are, make sure you celebrate every achievement. It's a great way to keep yourself motivated.

72. Be Kind To Yourself

We are often our own worst critic. It's time to be kinder to yourself. Instead of going for the jugular, treat yourself the same as you would a friend dealing with the same problem. So, ask yourself what the lesson is and move on. It's a way to save energy and move forward.

73. Do What You Want

No, seriously. You will be more productive when you are doing something that you really want to do. So, shouldn't you be doing that as often as possible?

74. Restock Your Enthusiasm

Start thinking of your enthusiasm as a vending machine. It can't dispense anything if you don't constantly refill it. Treat your enthusiasm like it's a vending machine that dispenses water in the Mojave Desert. How you refill it is up to you – it could be a book, music, watching your favorite show or listening to a podcast. Just choose something that leaves you feeling pumped.

75. Priorities

We all have them but take a moment to note down your top three (or five) priorities for your life. That's right, not just the day – your life. Let them be your guiding light.

76. Limited Information

If you don't read it… unsubscribe! That goes for newsletters, forms, blogs, and podcasts that just don't add value to your life. Limit the amount of useless information that's pouring into your world.

77. Disconnect

We are completely reliant on technology and you don't need to feel bad about that. However, you will appreciate the opportunity to disconnect. So, think about taking a day (or even the entire weekend) to disconnect from technology and just be present with the people you love and enjoy the activities that give you life. It's an effective way to recharge your batteries and allows you time to rest. Which will help you be more productive in a work space.

78. Focus

Forget the what-ifs, start focusing on the how. Don't overthink and over analyze absolutely everything. Focus on the actions that will help you move forward.

79. Breathe

Sometimes taking a time out and focusing on your breathing can help you deal with feeling overwhelmed. Don't get caught up in the details and the big picture, instead just focus on today and the now.

80. Flexible Expectations

One of productivity's biggest challenges is our expectation that its static. We have fallen into this trap, thinking that there is only one way to define productivity. You should be able to move from point to point and that's it. That isn't it, though. Sometimes you'll need to take the scenic route and that's okay, you just need to learn to be more flexible about it.

81. Measure

Everything should be measurable in some way. How do you know you're making headway on something if there is no way to measure it? Just don't get caught up in the *how* of measuring. It might not be monetary or a time, it could be in progress. Just as long as you *can* measure, tweak, and improve as you go.

82. Feedback

You may be of the belief that sharing with others can interrupt your productivity. However, sometimes letting others in on your work provides you with the clarity you need to power through. So, don't be so quick to dismiss sharing and asking for feedback.

83. Routine

A routine can train you and your brain to get into the right mindset and flow at the right time. Set a routine that is designed around your power hour, values, and goals to maintain productivity.

84. Arrive Earlier, Stay Later

Don't worry, we don't mean start working for free. If you spend a lot of time commuting, you may find you can *save* time by changing your travel routine. Leaving a little bit earlier in the morning may help you avoid traffic while staying just a bit later might just get you home quicker. There's nothing more frustrating than sitting in traffic and it can seriously mess with your positivity and productivity for the day.

85. Out To Lunch

Do you eat lunch at your desk? That's terrible. In fact, we don't want you to just leave your desk for lunch. We want you to leave the office altogether! Getting out of the work environment can make a difference in your stress levels and help you get a bit of focus.

86. Keep Your Goals In Sight

Literally. Have a note of your goals in your phone, on your fridge, on your desk or computer. Stick your goals to your notebook. Wherever you can keep them in your vision, do it!

87. A Handy Notebook

You should always have a pen and paper to hand. It can help you purge your mind of distractions and ensures you don't forget anything.

88. Record Your Shows

Wait, how can television make you more productive? It's more about recording your favorite shows so that you can watch them without commercials eating up your valuable time. An extra twenty minutes is a lot.

89. Automatic Bill Payments

No productive person takes time out of their busy schedule to deal with paying their bills every month. No, they go online and set up an automatic payment to deal with bills. Not only will it save you time, it will save you a bit of stress, too.

90. Audio Books

Do you love to learn? Who doesn't? It's an excellent way to make yourself a better person. You might not have time to read, though. Why not use audio books (and podcasts) to learn while you do other tasks like driving, exercising, cooking, and cleaning? Learn while you carry out the more menial tasks.

91. Meal Planning

You probably hate seeing those posts from your Facebook friends, but planning your meals a week in advance can make you so much more efficient and productive. You'll know exactly what to buy from the supermarket, which means you'll be in and out quicker.

92. Share Your Goals

When you let others in on your goals you tend to work harder toward them. There's something to be said for accountability.

93. Online Shopping

You don't need to drive to or from the store or spend forever trying to find what you're looking for. You can just hop onto the online store, fill your basket, and go. It can save you a lot of time.

94. Screen Your Calls

Some of us don't answer any phone calls, but, to save time, start screening your calls. Don't answer the phone if it's not an urgent or important call. If your phone rings and it's someone who talks for an hour... let it ring.

95. Work On Your Typing Speed

The quicker you can type, the more productive you can be (if your job requires typing, of course). There are plenty of online typing tests that will help you improve your speed. The biggest favor you can do for yourself is knowing where your hands should sit and use both hands to type. Not everyone had the luxury of learning these skills in school. It isn't too late.

96. Purge Time Wasters

Are there apps on your devices that only serve to distract you? They are the ones that you don't really use unless you're trying to waste time or procrastinate... delete them.

97. Short Showers

Time your next shower, you'll be surprised at how much time you waste. Get in the shower, do what you need to do, and bounce. It will give you more time to get ready and relax before you need to leave. It's all about setting the tone for your day.

98. Low Information Diet

We already told you to reduce the information coming in. You want to keep up-to-date with current events, but don't check throughout your day. Instead, have one (or two) time slots set aside each day to read the news.

99. Turn Your Television Off

Don't feel bad about it, but, be honest... you get home from work and you park yourself in front of the television for the night. Instead, why not try exercising for a boost of energy. Once you've done that you can kick back with dinner and relax, guilt-free, to enjoy some evening reading and a spot of TV.

100.   Exciting Goals

You already know you need to set goals for yourself. Don't forget to set some exciting goals! You need to have stuff to get excited about.

101.   Now Picture This

Picture yourself as being productive, in fact, as the most productive person ever. Doesn't it make you feel amazing? Forget competing with everyone else, it's time to compete with yourself. Start being the best version of yourself that you can possibly be. You can beat yesterday's version of you and keep that momentum going. You can look back and see the change.