

4 Ways to Structure Your Day for Success

Productivity is always a big push at the beginning of the year. Everyone wants to do more with less, less money, less time, and fewer resources. This article will show you four ways to structure your day for greater success in achieving your goals. The one that best works for you is a personal decision but trying several of these can give you some good insights into how you (and your employees) work best.



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Time Segmenting

The first way to think about your day is the organization framework. Most productivity experts will agree that segmenting out time is a way to stay on track. Elon Musk, for instance, budgets his day in five-minute increments, five-minute calls, meetings, touchbases, etc.

If that is too frantic a schedule for you, you may want to try something like the Pomodoro Method, which structures the day around 20-minute sprints of focused activity. Set a timer for 20 minutes and during that time nothing is allowed to derail you from your work. When the 20-minute buzzer goes off, you have 10 minutes to do other, less focused things such as check on emails or return a phone call. At the end of that 10 minutes, you set another sprint timer.

Themes

You can also take a cue from Jack Dorsey, founder of Twitter. He assigns themes to his workday concentrating on one aspect of the business per day much like you might do as part of a workout routine.

If that is too limiting and you feel your schedule needs to be a little more fluid, you could assign theme hours or chunks of the day. For instance, Monday Marketing or New Business at Noon.

Permanent Dates

Another way to be more productive is to work on things that you're passionate about. But in times of crisis and when there are many things going on, it's easy to go into reactionary mode and eliminate these "less important" activities.

Avoid that temptation. Scheduling time—even if it's just half an hour to concentrate on something that refuels you—is a good investment in yourself professionally and in your business.

But in order to adhere to these "refreshers" you need to put them on a calendar like you would a meeting with your most loyal customer. Do not allow yourself or anyone else to cancel these important times in your day or week.

Free Days

Everyone needs a meeting-free day. It allows you to focus on things that don't require consensus and gives you more controllable time in your day.

You can get quite a lot done if you work to keep your meeting-free day the same day (or half day) every week. This day can be used to catch up on things, reach out to new business, explore a creative outlet or new market, or whatever the business needs at the moment.

If you like a tight schedule, building in "free time" that will never be stolen by meetings or other potential time wasters will give you peace of mind that you have a scheduled cushion or productivity boost coming up.

If this year is the one you plan on becoming more productive, know that there's not one way that works for everyone. Implementing one of these tried-and-true structures can help you get better insights into your day and where your time is going. Remember, every decision you make on how you will use your time brings you closer—or tracks you further—from your goals.

Since others don't usually know what your goals are, don't leave it up to them as to how you spend your time. If you do, you can be assured you won't end up where you're planning to be.

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