

# Productive to the Max

**P**roductivity

**P**erformance

**P**rofitability

## **Concentration on Being Productive**

Productivity is a constantly evolving process. Our lives, our work, our relationships and our motivation changes on a regular basis and in many cases it is difficult to maintain a consistently productive life.

I am assuming you have already laid the foundation by organizing your space so it is efficient and effective. You have proper information management process in place in order to complete your tasks in a timely manner and you have embraced the importance of a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

To remain productive follow these easy steps:

1. **Be aware at all times.** As time management consultant Brian Tracey states, "Develop judgment, foresight, self-reliance and self-discipline. Always have a clear and accurate picture of what is happening. Know who you are and what you want and value. What matters to you most is the motivation for being productive."
2. **Live for today and only today.** We so often are constantly thinking of the past or the future, even when we are performing a task in the present! It's a "shoulda, woulda, coulda" scenario. What's gone is gone; Give it up. What will happen, you have no control over. Act now or the moment will disappear quickly.
3. **Anticipate and be proactive.** Take responsibility now for your own existence and go out there and create the life you want instead of waiting around for things to happen to you. I see people on a regular basis who bemoan the fact that life has not gone their way. You will find more satisfaction if you decide what you want and create your own ways to obtain it. Along the journey, You will learn valuable tools and lessons that can be put in place for future use. As you go through a routine day, decide how you are going to deal with situations that will arise and how efficiently you are going to manage your life.
4. **Don't keep it in your head.** That noggin is very valuable real estate so save it for the important thinking and ruminating processes. When details pile up and you become overloaded, you end up wasting time trying to remember what to do. You feel anxious, depressed and distracted. Your memory is affected. And when you get to my age, that memory is the second thing that goes! Plan and prioritize by writing down everything that has to be done. This process is also useful for decision-making where you are required to compare and contrast ideas. Use notebooks, voice recorders, phone apps, sticky notes (if you really must!), checklists and planners.

Leave yourself messages on your voicemail.

5. **Use the salami technique.** Unless you are Jessie, our dog or Lefty, our grand-dog, you cannot eat a salami all at once. Bite-size pieces are essential. Define systems and subsystems for all your tasks and projects. Analyze their components one-by-one. Make constant improvements to your systems, aligning them with your corporate culture and team. Document and update all procedures.
6. **Create concrete reminders of what inspires you and keeps you on track.** Use a bulletin board or whiteboard to post pictures, lists and ideas. Print out your calendar every day.
7. **Build new habits one at a time.** Change does not happen instantly and it requires baby steps for success. It takes 28 days to alter a behaviour. Start with what is bothering you the most and take action to modify the behaviour-one day at a time. Maintain what you have accomplished through repetition and discipline.
8. **Stop blaming others.** Realize that you and only you are responsible for your behaviour. Blaming others for lack of completion will get you nowhere. Analyze your behaviour, your motivation, your responses and your communication style to obtain the result you want. Think outside the box or seek assistance from others and utilize creative ways to achieve your goals.
9. **Communicate, communicate, communicate.** Communication is the key to everything we do in life. I find now that it is easier than ever for people to hide behind email, texting and social networking rather than face-to-face communication. Talk to people face-to-face and learn good techniques to impart your ideas and wishes to others.
10. **Constantly reward yourself.** Talk to yourself (It means you have lots of money in the bank). Anticipate rewards that will be available after completion of behaviours, changes and tasks. Ask others for consistent positive feedback and offer up the same.

There will always be challenges that distract us from our focus. We must remain strong in the face of adversity and not rush off to the pantry for that donut or retreat to our safe place and be anti-social. Follow the ideas conveyed in this article and you will remain on track for most of your life.

This is a really busy time of year for many people, so stay focused!

**Sincerely, Ann Max** Productive to the Max