

OVERCOME EXCUSES



How To Stop Procrastinating And Get
More Done While Staying Happy

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Introduction

In any occupation, there are elements that are not as “fun” as other elements of that occupation. As a result, many people will often procrastinate and slow themselves down in an effort to “avoid” those boring or tedious elements that they don’t like doing as much as the fun aspects of their job or occupation.

In truth, those efforts to procrastinate, make excuses, and just avoid certain aspects of an occupation or task just lead to people taking longer to complete work they could do much quicker, leading to them getting less done than they could within a set amount of time. Additionally, it forces them to work harder, take more time away from other activities they’d rather be doing, and can lead them to doing poorer-quality work because they have to work faster to make up for the time they lost by procrastinating and making excuses. Due to the fact they are working faster, they’re more prone to making mistakes and not thinking clearly when doing important tasks.

Procrastination is just one excuse people make when they want to avoid a more unpleasant part of their occupation or a project or task they are not particularly fond of doing. However, procrastination isn’t the only challenge people face when people try to get high-quality work completed in a set period of time.

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Often, people will question if they can work fast and still deliver high-quality work. They will often doubt themselves over whether they are doing something properly or if it's what their target market, boss, or customer is looking for in the completed work. As a result, they slow down and take longer to complete the work when it's usually not necessary.

Time management is key for everyone, but especially for entrepreneurs who are their own bosses. Entrepreneurs must motivate themselves to stay on or ahead of schedule; there is no boss who will get on them to stay on or ahead of schedule. If an entrepreneur falls behind an intended schedule, only he/she can motivate himself/herself to pick up the pace and get back on track. He/She won't lose his/her job, but also won't get as much to any profit because he/she is failing to do the work expected of him/her in a set period of time.

Entrepreneurs in particular have to learn to not let distractions take away from their focus when doing work for clients and/or for their businesses. Time is the one commodity you cannot get back, and each distraction that takes work time away from the entrepreneur costs him/her money, reputation, and time doing other things, both within the business and away from the business.

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Some distractions are the type that can be controlled by the entrepreneur, such as being logged into his/her social media accounts. Other distractions are the type that can't be easily controlled by the entrepreneur, such as kids running around the house, etc. Both types need to be managed if an entrepreneur is going to overcome the excuse of not getting as much done as he/she can within a specific period of time.

Another important aspect of time management entrepreneurs must learn is being efficient in their work time so that they can take breaks, enjoy themselves, and not burn themselves out trying to complete projects and other tasks necessary to have a thriving business. Oftentimes, entrepreneurs will want to work every waking minute of every waking hour, sacrificing their health, well-being, and social life just to improve their businesses. Yet, taking this approach can actually hinder an entrepreneur from improving his/her business.

Therefore, dealing with procrastination, self-doubt, and distractions is key to overcoming excuses and getting the most high-quality work done in the least amount of time possible. In order for entrepreneurs and others to do this successfully, they need to learn techniques and ways to counter the procrastination, self-doubt, and distractions they will experience as they attempt to complete projects and tasks that will boost their businesses,

reputations, and profit. They also need to learn how to manage their time so that they are efficient, do the best-quality work in the least amount of time possible, and not ignore other areas of their life that would endanger their health, well-being, and their businesses.

In the coming chapters of this book, you will learn why procrastination is a major enemy to doing your best work and why it is in your best interest to overcome it. You will learn how self-doubt leads to slower work, which can negatively impact the quality of your work. You will learn how to handle both the distractions you can and cannot control so that they do not impact the quality of your work nor the time it takes you to complete them. You will learn why staying on or ahead of schedule is key to doing your best work. You will learn how to “make a game” out of getting things done promptly so you can work more efficiently. You will learn why focusing on the benefits and rewards you’ll get after completing a project is key to completing that project efficiently and doing your best work. You will learn why taking regular breaks during your project and taking care of your health and well-being are also key to doing your best work.

Step 1: First Understand Procrastination Makes You Work Slower



In virtually every occupation, there are certain aspects to a job or task that people don't like doing. In the business or financial world, it could be that you have to work with mathematics or mathematical computer programs in order to determine what actions to take to create the best products for your business or pick the best stocks for your investment firm. In teaching, it could be writing or typing out the lesson plans you have to create for each day and week you teach. For entrepreneurs, it could be creating the sales letters you need to sell your online products.

In essence, it's the tedious tasks that every occupation has that most people try to avoid, even though in truth, there is no real way to avoid these tasks. They just "come with the territory," as many people like to say. Yet, many people will try to avoid these tasks

by procrastinating, taking longer to complete other tasks they like doing better in order to “avoid” doing the tasks that they don’t.

For instance, in the business and financial worlds, much research has to be done in order to learn what is the next best move for one’s business or investment firm. Thus, people may like to access and read the various stories and reports online detailing what is going on in the world in order to know what is the next best move for one’s business or financial firm. They’ll spend more time doing the research than is necessary to do it well in order to avoid using the mathematical programs to analyze that research and determine what truly is the next best move for their business or financial firm.

Similarly, there are those in the education field who prefer interacting with their students and giving them hands-on learning. As a result, some may try to avoid outlining their lesson plans by providing more hands-on learning and even spending time after school to provide tutoring for those who need additional hands-on learning.

Some entrepreneurs may want to add more content to their products in an effort to make their products better and enable them to charge higher prices for them. As a result, these entrepreneurs will avoid creating their sales letters and focus more on making their products better.

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As you can see in the examples above, procrastination can sometimes be difficult to spot because one will think he/she is doing a good thing by focusing on a specific task that is needed for his/her business to do well. While all necessary tasks are important and need to have the appropriate amount of time spent on them in order for them to be done well, spending too much time on one area to cut back on time spent in another area because that first area is more enjoyable will likely lead to the business not performing as well as it should because not enough time and focus is placed on that second, less enjoyable area.

What you need to realize when it comes to procrastination is that doing this will cause you to work slower than is necessary in order to achieve your best work. When you focus on a more enjoyable area of your occupation and spend more time doing that work, you are still only completing a part of the project or overall task you need to complete for your business to be doing as well as you expect it to. This takes more time away from the area of the business or occupation you are not as fond of, which will either lead to you not putting as much time on that area, leading to poorer-quality work that negatively impacts the whole project, or it will cause you to put in the necessary time and delay the completion of the entire project.

In either case, you are slowing yourself down to avoid doing the work that is needed in that less-desirable area of your business or occupation. This is doing a disservice to yourself and to the

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business at large because you could be doing more in the same amount of time it is taking you to complete the necessary work. As a result, you could be getting projects done quicker if you were not procrastinating and avoiding the area of the business or occupation you are not as fond of. Your business could be doing much better as a result of you working more efficiently. Additionally, you could have more free time to work on other areas of your business or even to take time away to enjoy leisurely activities.

Therefore, realize that procrastination does not help you or your business in any way. The work you keep “avoiding” will still have to be done in order for your business to function and succeed as you expect it to. All you’re doing by procrastinating is allowing yourself less time to complete that less desirable work you don’t like doing, likely leading to poorer quality that could harm your business. Or, you’ll give yourself more time to complete that less desirable work, which will lead to you missing deadlines and goals you’ve set to make up for your procrastination, which will also damage your business and keep it from thriving as you expect it to.

Referring to the aforementioned examples, a business or financial person still has to use the mathematical programs to analyze gathered research in order to make the best use of it to benefit one’s business or financial firm. A teacher still has to make out lesson plans in order to best educate his/her students so that they

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progress and become contributing members of society. An entrepreneur still has to create sales letters to sell his/her own products. These tasks can't be avoided to be a successful business/financial person, teacher, or entrepreneur.

Procrastination of certain tasks will only lead to you doing slower work and doing less work in a set amount of time. Chances are high that you will also do poorer-quality work as a result.

In the next chapter, you'll learn that procrastination also makes you work harder to complete the tasks you need to complete in order to be successful.

Step 2: Understand Procrastination Can Also Make You Work Harder



In the last chapter, you learned that procrastination makes you work slower, leading to you getting less done than you could in a set amount of time. You also learned that procrastination will likely lead to lower-quality work being done. However,

procrastination doesn't just make you work slower; it also makes you work harder as well.

Procrastination will make you work harder because procrastinating means taking longer than is necessary with a set task in order to avoid doing another required task to achieve the main goal you want to achieve. You procrastinate in order to avoid something that you perceive to be unpleasant and that you want to avoid.

As discussed in the last chapter, you'll spend more time on an enjoyable task because you want to avoid a less enjoyable task as much as possible. The problem with this approach is, the more time you spend on the enjoyable task, the less time you have to work on the less enjoyable task you're trying to avoid.

To compensate for the lost time, you will have to do one of two things:

- You'll have to work faster (and harder) on the less enjoyable task to stay on schedule.
- You'll have to give yourself more time to complete the less enjoyable task to put the required amount of effort and work in to do the task well, leading to a delay in the overall project.

If you choose option two, you'll delay the overall project, which can impact your profits, your reputation, and more. Thus, option two is an option you really cannot afford to make, leaving you with option one: Working faster and harder to make up for your procrastination.

We discussed in the last chapter why working slower can have detrimental effects on your work. It can cause you to have to speed up the rest of your work, which can lead to producing lower-quality work. This is especially true since you will be doing faster work on a task or part of a project you were trying to avoid in the first place through procrastination.

In addition, you will have to work harder in order to complete the project you are working on in the allotted time for the project. That is because you will have to extensively focus on completing the task you were avoiding because you have a very strict time limit to complete it in or suffer damage to your credibility, reputation, and profitability. There is no margin for error now- any mistake or slip-up by you now will lead to lost credibility, a damaged reputation, and a reduction in profits because you will not hold true to your word when you would have a project completed.

If you're an Internet marketer and announced that you would release your next product on a certain date, but don't, the damage to your credibility will last for a very long time. The consequences

would likely include other Internet marketers not wanting to work with you on joint ventures because they'll see you as unreliable. You'll also lose credibility with customers and potential customers because they will see you as untrustworthy because you said your new product would be on a specific date, then wasn't. They'll always have doubt in their minds when it comes to you telling them something, questioning whether they can believe you or not. That is certainly not good to building up a relationship with them and having them purchase your products and/or services.

Therefore, you have to do everything you can to stay on the planned or announced schedule you have and finish your project in time so you can stay on that schedule. This means that you have to make up for the time you lost procrastinating, which means you'll have to work harder to make up for that lost time.

Working harder means you won't be able to take regular breaks throughout the rest of the time you work on your task or project, which can hamper your focus and cause you to make more errors, something you really can't afford to do because you're not on a very strict time limit. Additionally, the work will be more draining to you because you really can't take any meaningful breaks because of the limited time that remains to complete the work.

This is why procrastination is something you have to avoid at virtually all costs; it will only cause you to work harder and

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produce lower-quality work. Therefore, procrastination doesn't allow you to escape or avoid the work you want to avoid; on the contrary, you'll have to focus even harder and do even more challenging work to complete it.

In the next chapter, you will learn why doubting your own abilities is a reason why many people procrastinate and cause them to work at a slower pace, which makes them less efficient and productive than they can be.

Step 3: Stop Doubting Your Abilities – Here's How To Work Faster



When many people face tasks or projects that are considered large or challenging, they will often question their abilities to complete the work, knowing they have to do their very best work to complete the project or task at the level it is expected to be completed. As a result, they tend to slow down the pace of their work, believing that if they do it slower, they will do the work better.

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While rushing through a project or task is never considered a good idea, especially when the work involved is complex or challenging, many people will go at a slower level than they need to complete the work at a high level because they doubt their abilities to work quickly and effectively.

Most people will naturally question their abilities to do quality work quickly because, as a society, we've often been trained that it takes considerable time to do quality work. We've learned this in school, when we've had our first job, and even in the corporate world. This is why large projects are given time frames of weeks or even months to complete- it implies that you need that much time to do high-quality work to complete that project.

Most people get the idea that if they do the work quicker than the time they're allotted, their superiors, customers, or target markets will look upon their work as if it was done haphazardly and carelessly. In other words, they will see the work as lower quality, which will lead to a negative impression of you as an employee, as a business owner, as an entrepreneur.

This is why many people slow their work down; they think that if they utilize all the time that they have, people will look upon their work as being the best it could possibly be. If they utilize all the time that they have, no one can accuse them of rushing through the work and doing it haphazardly or carelessly; people will look upon their work as being the very possible best it can be because

all of the time allotted for the project was used to complete the project.

The main problem with this viewpoint is that people use this as a crutch or as an excuse to take all of the allotted time given to complete a project when it's not necessary to do so. Sure, some projects may be so challenging that if you are efficient and productive in your work habits, you will still take all of the time allotted to finish the project.

That is perfectly fine, but what you must realize is that most project deadlines are given with some leeway thrown in in the event you mess up a task or don't understand part of the assignment and need to have more clarification before you continue work, etc. Therefore, when most project deadlines are given, it is not always expected you take the full amount of time to complete the project. In fact, if you provide high-quality work to the superior, customer, target market before it is expected, your reputation and credibility will get a major boost, and people in your industry will want to work with you.

Therefore, you have to adopt the mindset that project time frames are not intended to be fully completed for every project. Some projects will require you to work very diligently throughout the whole project in order for the project to be completed at a high level and be done within that time frame, but many project time

frames give you some flexibility in case a problem or issue occurs.

If no problem or issue occurs, then it is quite possible and even desirable to finish the project before the deadline. Finishing ahead of time will benefit you and your business, as you will be seen as productive, efficient, and even as a “miracle worker.” Finishing ahead of time can be done if you are focused throughout and don’t procrastinate on any section of the project, even parts of the project involving tasks that you aren’t particularly fond of doing.

This also means that you need to be confident in your ability to work at a high level at a faster pace of speed. Think about the world we live in today. Information is everywhere thanks to the Internet and mobile devices being virtually everywhere we go. Think of all the content that is available and that continues to come to our smartphones and other mobile devices. If people weren’t working at a higher rate of speed (either via their own efforts and/or through technology), there wouldn’t be the same amount of content coming to our mobile devices.

Additionally, think about how fast the world is changing in terms of business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) models. Just ten years ago, people weren’t buying that much on websites, and mobile devices really didn’t exist back then. Nowadays, people buy as often or more on the Internet (and

especially on mobile devices) than they do in stores, a key reason why many retailers are closing their doors, while others are trying to reformulate their business models to include and even highlight ecommerce and mcommerce.

The main point is that, now, speed matters as much as high-level work. You essentially have to be able to do both in order to really survive and thrive in this content-driven, fast-paced world we live in. Doing high-level work and taking forever to do it will no longer suffice, but doing poor-quality work quickly won't suffice either.

Therefore, you have to adopt the mindset that you have the capability to do high-level work quickly. You have to be confident in your skills and rely on the experience you have gained so far in order to know how to best approach projects, avoid most setbacks, overcome setbacks that do happen, and put out a quality product or project in as little time as possible.

The other main reason you must learn to be confident in your own abilities to do high-quality work quickly is because, other people are learning to do the same thing! The ones who learn to trust themselves to do high-level work quickly are the ones that will survive and thrive in this content-driven, fast-paced economy. Those that can't convince themselves that they can do high-level work quickly will not last long in business. The only choice they will have is to go back to a typical 9-5 cubicle working for

someone else, thereby ending their dreams of owning their own business and working the hours they choose to work.

Therefore, you now know why you must learn to trust your own abilities to do high-level work quickly and why you must adapt the mindset that not all project time frames are intended to be used entirely on all projects. You must learn to not procrastinate and avoid tasks you are not fond of doing, as this will only slow you down, cause you to work harder, and keep you from being as productive and as profitable as you can be.

You will learn in the next two chapters why it is vital that you take care of yourself during a long project and why it is critical to doing your best work. You'll also learn why procrastination can hinder your ability to take care of yourself during such long projects and another key reason why you must avoid procrastination and making excuses of why you don't get more things done in a set amount of time.

Step 4: Take Regular Breaks – Why Taking Regular Breaks Is Key To Doing Your Best Work



You learned in the last two chapters why procrastination leads to you working slower and working harder than is necessary to complete high-quality work. Working harder than is necessary is going to drain you in many ways, not only physically, but mentally, emotionally, and socially as well.

During any long-term project that spans the course of days, weeks, or even months, you are going to have periods where you will not be as focused as you normally would be. You're going to have periods where your mind wanders, thinking about other

things and not the task you are currently working on, whether that's other aspects of the project you're working on or topics that are not related to the project in any way, such as family, friends, leisurely activities, personal interests, etc.

It's virtually impossible to go through an entire long-term project without letting your mind wander at some point. It's also impossible to put in great work effort and intensity continuously for hours on end to complete a project in the highest quality possible. This is why taking regular breaks is key to ensuring your mind remains focused and your work quality remains high.

Many experts suggest that most humans can only stay focused on a task for around 45 minutes out of a one-hour period. This means that for 15 minutes of every hour, their attention spans aren't at their optimum levels, which means that focus and concentration wane, which can lead to slower, lower-quality work.

Therefore, it is recommended that you take at least a 15-minute break every hour that you put in work in order to keep your attention span at its optimum level. Taking a 15-minute break every hour will allow you to stretch, give your mind a rest, and allow you to refocus on the task at hand when you return. This is especially true if your job or task requires you to do the same actions over and over again over that 45-minute period. Human brains can get bored easily when they are required to do the same tasks repeatedly; they lose interest. To stimulate the brain

and get it to focus all of its energies on the same tasks, it needs a regular break, which is suggested to be 15 minutes for every 45 minutes of work put in.

Therefore, you should be taking regular breaks throughout any projects you are doing; you should NOT be trying to do them all in one sitting, hour-after-hour, day-after-day, week-after-week, only taking breaks to eat, shower, and sleep. Doing that will lead to your brain losing focus, you getting bored, your work quality suffering, and you taking longer to complete the work than is necessary for it to be completed, either because your mind will wander and/or you will make a critical error and have to redo the work again.

This is another reason why you cannot afford to procrastinate; if you procrastinate, you will be less able to take the regular breaks you need to stay mentally sharp and engaged in the work you are doing, which will cause your work quality to suffer over the long term. Procrastinating will force you to have to work longer periods in an effort to make up for the time you lost by procrastinating, or lead to you being late for completing your project, which can damage your credibility, reputation, and profitability.

Taking regular breaks every hour, including getting up, stretching, using the restroom, getting a snack, talking to a friend or colleague, checking social media, playing a mobile game, etc. can

help your mind to rest and recharge for the future work you need to complete at a high-quality level.

Note, though, that you should be spending no more than 15 minutes per hour on your break; if you start to go beyond that, you'll start to lose some momentum and find excuses to stay away from work. Therefore, if you think or know that spending time on social media or playing a mobile game will take longer than the time left in your break, don't do it. Only do activities you know you can keep to within the 15-minute time span so that you don't go over the time allotted for your break, don't ruin your momentum, and not cause you to look for ways to keep from returning to your work.

In this chapter, you've learned that taking regular breaks (15 minutes out of every 60 minutes) will enable you to do your best work. You've also learned that being able to do this is virtually impossible if you procrastinate, all the more reason not to do so. In the next chapter, you'll also learn why you must take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and socially so you can do your best work.

Step 5: It Starts With You – Taking Care Of Yourself Is Key To Doing Your Best Work



In the last chapter, you learned why taking regular breaks is key to doing your best work. The human brain becomes disinterested and even bored in doing repetitive tasks over and over again for long periods of time; that is why many experts suggest taking 15-minute breaks every hour (i.e. 60 minutes) in order to keep your brain engaged and enable you to do your best work possible.

However, it's not only mentally that you need to take care of yourself in order to do your best work, but physically, emotionally, and socially as well. If you allow other elements of your life to be negatively impacted by your work, you won't be as mentally sharp and focused to do your best work, and you won't even be eager to return to the work you need to complete.

For instance, if you are an entrepreneur who works on your computer and mobile devices to create products to sell people online, if you are constantly working at your computer and/or mobile devices and never take breaks away from them to do other things, there are several aspects of your life that are going to suffer.

For one thing, your weight is probably going to increase, causing a detrimental effect on your health. That is because you are constantly sitting, looking at a screen, typing away with your fingers, but that is about the only physical activity you'll be getting. If you do this hour-for-hour, day-by-day, week-by-week, over time, the food you are eating is likely going to go onto your frame as fat because you aren't doing enough physical activity to burn it off.

As a result, your weight is going to increase, and you will likely have a negative view of yourself, especially when you look in the mirror or are around family and/or friends who may look at you differently because of your changed appearance. This is not going to help your mindset and your mood when it comes to your work, which will negatively impact the quality of it and might even lead you to avoid the work altogether, which will negatively impact your reputation, credibility, and business profitability.

Therefore, you need to take time out for yourself to work off the food you eat and stay in good, physical shape. Not only will this keep you in good physical health, but it will put you in a good

mental state of mind too to where you can stay mentally focused and engaged on your work and do higher-quality work.

It's not just your weight that will be negatively impacted if you constantly are at your computer or mobile devices creating products and content. Your social life will be negatively impacted as well. If you have a family – spouse or even spouse and kids – they will not like the fact that they don't see you that often because you are constantly working. Chances are, you will drift farther apart from your spouse because you spend no quality time together. This will also happen with your kids as well, which could cause them to resent you because you spend no quality time with them. This can occur with young kids (from 1-12 years old) or even with teenagers (13-19 years old). They may not grasp that you are working that hard to aid them, leading to them resenting you not being there for them and with them in their lives.

If your family starts to resent you not being there constantly, chances are high that the environment will be strained and you will constantly have that resentment and strain in the back of your mind, which will lead to you losing focus on your work, negatively impacting the quality of it. This is why it is critical that you set enough time in your schedule so that you can spend time with your family and loved ones so that they know you still make time for them even when you are busy with work. In addition, the break away from work will do you good as well, as your mind will get that much-needed time away from work so that you can be

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more mentally focused and engaged on the tasks you need to do to complete your project.

Even if you are unmarried and don't have a family, it still will negatively impact you if you don't take breaks away from your work and head outside from time to time. If you cut yourself off from your friends, family members, and/or boyfriend/girlfriend, your mind will start to lose focus, and you will forget what it means to do anything other than work, which will negatively impact your social life and skills. Having a dull social life is not going to enrich your life any, especially since constantly working can cause your mind to become disinterested in your work and even cause you to resent your work, which will negatively impact your credibility, reputation, and profitability because your work will be of lower quality.

If you're thinking that you can reduce the amount of food you eat to avoid exercising and put more time into your work, that's not a good strategy either. Again, your physical health is going to be impacted because you are not eating regularly and not getting the required nutrients, vitamins, and minerals your body needs to perform at its very best. This includes your mind as well; you'll constantly be hearing reminders from your stomach about how little food you've eaten, which will take your focus away from your work and more towards what food you can eat.

Therefore, you need to eat regular meals throughout all projects you are working on; skipping meals to give yourself more time to work on projects is not going to benefit your health, your work quality, or your business in the long run. This is all the more reason why you cannot afford to procrastinate and make excuses in why you are not getting tasks completed as quickly as you should; it's more than just actually completing the project, but managing the aspects of your life away from the projects you're working on – including family, friends/social life, diet, exercise, and more – to ensure you are in the best condition possible to do the best work possible for your clients and your business. All of the aspects of your life go into this to make it possible to do your best work; cutting back on any aspect in order to give yourself more time to do your work will have negative impacts on your life and your work quality at some point in time.

Therefore, in this chapter, you have learned that you not only need to take regular breaks away from your projects in order to do your best work, but you also have to take care of other aspects in your life – including diet, exercise, and social life/family life – to ensure you remain mentally engaged and focused on your work. Failure to tend to all other aspects of your life can lead to you becoming bored or even resentful of your work, which can have negative impacts on your credibility, reputation, and profitability. In the next chapter, you'll learn how making a “game” out of getting things done promptly can help you to work more efficiently and produce high-quality work.

Step 6: How Making A Game Out Of Getting Things Done Promptly Can Help You Work More Efficiently

In the last two chapters, you've learned why you must take regular breaks from your work and focus on other aspects of your life while working on projects to ensure you stay mentally



engaged and focused on your work to produce the best-quality work possible. In order to stay mentally engaged and focused to ensure you have time for breaks and focusing on other aspects of your life, it helps to make a “game” out of getting things done promptly.

You may be wondering, “How do I make a ‘game’ out of getting things done promptly?”

Well, one way you can do this is to keep track of how quickly you get things done. In other words, you should track how long it takes you to accomplish various tasks associated with a project and even how much time it takes you to complete overall projects, then compare them with other

tasks and projects to see if you are improving your efficiency or not.

If you are an entrepreneur or any employee who uses a computer and/or mobile devices regularly, you should be able to easily monitor your time by utilizing the computer or mobile device's clock that is usually present on the screen. You can just open a Notepad (.txt) file, record the start time of when you begin a project or task, then note the time that you stop. It can also be a good idea to make a separate notation of how long each break is that you take and compare it to the recommended 15 minutes of every 60 minutes you should be taking breaks. You should also give a brief description of each task, as well as what the overall project entails, to give you an idea of the work you need to do and to evaluate how effectively and efficiently you are doing that work.

Over time, you could transfer that information from the .txt file and put it into an Excel (.xls or .xlsx) spreadsheet file (or equivalent spreadsheet program file) and see how well you are managing your time and how efficiently you are working over the course of days, weeks, and months to see if you are improving or declining in terms of your productivity.

Granted, not every project will be the same, and there will be varying tasks from project to project, but you can at least get a general idea of how efficiently and effectively you are working, as well as seeing what tasks and parts of a project you are really

efficient and effective in and what tasks and parts of a project slow you down and where you need to improve your efficiency and focus.

As mentioned above, you can do this by hand (i.e. typing it out in .txt and .xls or .xlsm files) and track everything yourself, including how much time is spent on each task and part of a project.

Alternatively, you could use an online timer; there are many to choose from if you input “free timers” into your favorite search engine or your app store (including the App Store, Google Play, or Amazon AppStore).

Whichever one you choose, learn how it works, then activate it when you start a task. If you take a break, pause that timer (most timers have a pause button), then resume it when you come back and begin work again. You can use your computer or mobile device’s clock to record how much time you were on break if the timer doesn’t record how long it was paused. Again, input that information into a .txt file and/or a .xls or .xlsm file as described above to keep track of how effective and efficiently you are working.

As mentioned above, see how efficiently and effectively you are working via the data you collect. Before each project or task, estimate how long you think it will take you to complete that project or task; consider even writing it down somewhere so that you don’t change your initial estimation later.

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Then, when you have the task or project completed, check to see how long it actually took you versus the initial estimation. If you beat that estimation, consider rewarding yourself – you could choose to do some leisurely activity you’ve been wanting to do, spend more time with family/friends, purchase something you’ve been wanting to buy, etc. In essence, treat yourself to doing better than you expected when it comes to being efficient and effective in your work.

Note that you should NOT inflate your initial estimation just to ensure you finish ahead of it; be honest with yourself when you make that initial estimation so that you get the most benefit from this “game.” If you wind up missing your initial estimation, you don’t have to punish yourself for missing it, but don’t reward yourself for it either. Instead, look back through your log of the times you recorded for each step of the project and see where you fell behind so that you can learn what is hindering your efficiency and effectiveness and learn where you need to improve so you can beat your estimation the next time.

Note that you want to try to avoid inflating your next estimation after you miss an estimation just because you think you need more time to complete a project. This is why it’s imperative you provide an honest estimation of the time you think it will take to complete each step of a project and the overall project itself. If you don’t provide an honest estimation at each step, this “game”

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will not help you to improve your efficiency and effectiveness at working, which is the main point of this “game.”

Therefore, you have learned how you can turn your work efficiency and effectiveness into a “game” where you can improve that efficiency and effectiveness and even reward yourself when you “beat” your estimation of when you finish a task or project. In the next two chapters, you will learn how to overcome distractions that can hinder your work efficiency and effectiveness.

Step 7: How To Overcome Distractions That You CAN Control



In a perfect world, we would be able to work on our projects and not have to deal with any distractions whatsoever. However, we don't live in a perfect world, and distractions are all around us. Some of them we can control, while others we cannot control. In this chapter, we'll focus on the ones we can control, while the next chapter will deal with the ones that we cannot control.

Controllable distractions are those that we can directly control and prevent from impacting our focus and affecting our work quality. There are many distractions that we can directly control to keep them from distracting us and taking our attention and focus away from our work.

For example, a common distraction that is easily controllable is our social media accounts. Many people, including entrepreneurs, like to have multiple browser windows open, one of which at least is a social media account (often one's personal Facebook account). As you likely know, Facebook provides a notification error and sound any time you get a new message, a new friend request, or other activity on the social media site. In fact, Facebook has enabled auto-play for videos on one's newsfeed; thus, video and audio will play from those videos, creating yet another distraction for us to contend with.

Fortunately, the solution is simple: Don't log onto your social media accounts while you are working. That may not sound pleasant to your ears or to your eyes, but it is vital if you really want to be productive and efficient in your work. Let your social media friends, including your own family and personal friends, that you are working in one of your breaks or in your off-time to let them know that you will not be responding to every video or photo they post. You'll get in touch with them again either during those 15-minute breaks we discussed earlier or when you are not working and have leisure time.

Keeping your social media accounts open while you are working is not required to get your work done. In fact, it will hinder your work and lower your work quality because you will be distracted by the notifications of someone posting to your newsfeed or profile page or by a new friend request. Then, you will likely want to check out what this new content or who this new person is, etc.

All of that takes time away from your project and lowers your work quality. In other words, it's procrastination, exactly what you need to avoid for the many reasons we've already discussed in this book. This is why you **MUST** not log into your social media accounts while you are working.

As mentioned above, you **CAN** log into your social media accounts during your 15-minute breaks so long as you keep the break to 15 minutes and no longer. Failure to stay to that 15-minute time frame will lead to you wanting to stay on the social media site, converse with family/friends/fans, and not return to your work, leading to you falling behind on your schedule and having to play "catch-up," a process we've already discussed in this book that will make you work harder and can lead to lower-quality work and even resentment of your work.

If you are afraid you won't stick to that 15-minute break time frame, then don't log onto your social media accounts during those breaks. Instead, only log on when you are done working for the day and have leisure time. Alert people on these social

networks that that is the only time you will converse with them, not while you are working on projects or other aspects of your business. If these people truly care about your success and well-being, they will likely be impressed by your self-discipline and may even consider adopting a similar policy for themselves.

Note that social media accounts are not the only distraction you need to be aware of and that you can control. This also includes email inboxes, such as Gmail or Hotmail. The notifications from receiving email into these inboxes have sound effects that can distract you from your work, negatively impacting your work quality. In addition, you can “chat” with other users of these services and can get notifications when they wish to chat with you. Again, you want to stay away from doing this while you are working, and you need to decide if you want to do this within the 15-minute breaks we’ve discussed before or if you want to only use these chat services when you are totally done working for the day.

You can either not log onto these sites during the times you work on projects or other aspects of your business, or you can log onto these email sites and set the notifications for incoming email and chat requests to “mute” and/or “away,” respectively. This way, you can still be on the sites and check out email and chat requests during your 15-minute breaks if you wish, but not be interrupted each time you receive an email or chat request while you are working. Of course, it’s advised that you keep the email

service in a browser window either behind the project you are working on or have it in the background on your taskbar (provided you are working on a computer) so that you are not distracted by the messages that come into your inbox or the graphics that alert you to an incoming email or chat request.

Even browser windows open to your favourite sites, such as sports or entertainment sites, can be distractions if you allow them to be. You should either keep such windows behind the project you are working on, minimize them to be on the taskbar, or close those browser windows while you are working.

Another common distraction in this day and age that can affect your focus and your work quality is your smartphone (or other mobile device, such as a tablet). Just as with your computer, be sure the notifications on your smartphone are muted or show you are “away”; this way, you won’t be distracted by the notifications of when you receive a new phone call or text message. If you are the type who just can’t go for a long period of time without picking up your smartphone and doing something with it, don’t keep it next to you. Put it elsewhere (such as in another room) where you can’t see it; this way, there is no way you can be distracted by it. If you do choose to keep your smartphone nearby, be sure to only turn it on and use it during breaks or when you are done for the day.

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These distractions that have been described in this chapter are the ones you can control, including social media accounts, email accounts, browser windows with favourite sites and content, and smartphones/tablets. In the next chapter, you will learn how to overcome distractions you can't control.

Step 8: How To Overcome Distractions You CAN'T Control



In the last chapter, you learned about overcoming distractions that you can control, including social media accounts, email accounts, favourite sites, and smartphones/tablets. In this chapter, you will learn how to overcome distractions you can't control.

What are some distractions you can't control? Well, for instance, if you have a family, you may have children running your house

doing whatever they please, which can include making a lot of noise or playing loud music, etc. This is especially true in the summer when they are out of school or on the weekends when they are not in school, etc. Obviously, you can't control exactly what they do or how they behave, although you can try to set up rules in how they behave and act, but only to a point. Yet, their actions and noise can disrupt your rhythm and ruin your focus and work quality if you allow them to.

A similar instance can occur if your spouse is cleaning the house and running a vacuum cleaner or other loud machine in an effort to clean the house. Again, you can't directly control what he/she is doing; thus, you will have to deal with the noise in some fashion. The actions and noise from such activity can also disrupt your rhythm and ruin your focus and work quality if you allow them to.

How do you handle and overcome such distractions? One way is to discuss your work schedule and your need for a quiet environment with your spouse and/or children. If they are understanding, they will likely try to accommodate you if possible. Now, this doesn't necessarily mean they're going to be absolutely quiet – after all, the house still needs to be cleaned, and children will still be children – but they may make some effort to accommodate you if they can. With that said, though, you still will have to make a determined effort to ignore or block out any noise or actions that are not eliminated.

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How can you do this? Consider earplugs of some sort and wear them when noise is prevalent in your work area. Even cotton balls could be helpful in blocking out some of the noise, which can help to improve your focus and your work quality.

Note that it's not just your spouse and children that can cause distractions in your work area. If you have pets, they can also cause distractions, whether it's your dog barking or your cats and/or dogs wanting attention from you, etc. If it's your dog barking, you can use the earplugs/cotton balls tip to help you remain focused on your work; if your cats and/or dogs want attention from you, try to prevent them from entering your work area if possible. Shut the door at all times while you are in your work area, and even when you leave to use the restroom or head elsewhere in your home- this way, they can't get in when you leave.

If your pet(s) try scratching at the door while you are in there, either ignore them or shout "no" to them. This may help to deter them from continuing to do so. You may want to consider talking to them and giving them a little bit of attention during those 15-minute breaks we've discussed before, as this can help to alleviate their distress during the times you are not with them, plus it can be therapeutic for you as well.

Other distractions that can occur in your home include a neighbour mowing his/her lawn or doing other noisy yard work.

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Again, the ear bud/cotton ball technique can help to block out the noise and keep you focused on your work. Another distraction can be your landline phone ringing; you can either choose to ignore the phone ringing (possibly with help from ear buds/cotton balls) or even choose to turn the ringer off. If you have an answering machine, you can either choose to block out the noise with ear buds/cotton balls or turn the volume down to zero so you can't hear what is being said by anyone who leaves a message.

All of these distractions – loud noises from spouses/kids, loud noises and distractions from pets, noisy yard work by neighbours, landline phone calls and answering machine messages – are ones you cannot directly control, but can learn to block them out via talking with spouses and/or children, ignoring your pets and/or training them to not make noise, muting the volume on phones and answering machines, and using ear buds or cotton balls to block out noises you can't control so that you can stay more focused on your work and ensure you provide high work quality. In the next chapter, you will learn why staying on time or ahead of your project is essentially to producing your best work.

Step 9: How To Stay On Time or Ahead of Your Project



In the last two chapters, you learned about the distractions you can and cannot control and how to overcome them. It is critical that you overcome any distractions you face, as your work efficiency and quality will be negatively impacted if you don't. Procrastination can occur when you give into distractions and self-doubt, which can negatively impact your work efficiency and

quality, as well as negatively impact your own health and well-being, as we discussed in the first two chapters of this book.

As you recall from the first two chapters of this book, procrastination leads to you working slower and working harder. You also have an idea of why staying on time or ahead of your project is key to you producing your best work. By staying on or ahead of schedule in completing your project, you will be able to utilize the information in this book to enable you to produce your best work quality.

One instance is where you will be able to take the 15-minute breaks that many experts suggest you take every hour. Thus, you should be working for 45 minutes and resting for 15 minutes. However, if you allow distractions to affect your focus, procrastination will set in, which will cause you to do less work in a set amount of time. This will result in you falling behind on your project, which will force you to work faster and harder in order to catch up, likely leading to a decline in work quality, which can negatively impact your credibility, reputation, and profitability. The alternative is taking longer to complete the project than you either planned or announced, which will again negatively impact your credibility, reputation, and profitability.

Therefore, it is vital that you stay on time or even ahead of schedule in your projects to keep you from having to work harder and faster in order to catch up from procrastination and making

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excuses due to distractions. Note that if you do fall behind and want to stay on the schedule you intended, you are going to have work longer on the same project, which means that you will either not be able to take 15-minute breaks every hour as recommended by most experts or you will have to take away leisure time and work extra hours in order to catch up from procrastination and being slowed by distractions.

Remember, it's your credibility, reputation, and profitability that is at stake when you miss deadlines for superiors, customers, peers in your field, and target markets. If you miss deadlines, people will question your commitment and your ability to perform quality work in a reasonable period of time, even if you do provide high-quality work. Similarly, if you make deadlines but produce low-quality work, people will question whether you have the skill set and the ability to produce the quality of work they are looking for.

This is why you must do everything possible to stay on time and even ahead of schedule when working on projects; your credibility, reputation, and profitability depend on it. This is why it's vital you avoid procrastination and you avoid making excuses due to distractions so that you can perform your best-quality work in the shortest amount of time possible. This is why you must take steps to overcome the distractions you can and cannot control to ensure distractions don't cause you to make excuses and procrastinate, as this will only cause you to work less

efficiently and produce lower-quality work than is expected from you.

Giving people reasons to doubt your ability to produce high-quality work in a set time frame will lead to other people or competitors overtaking you, either leading to them getting promotions over you or having their businesses take your potential customers away from you. This is why the information in this book is so vital to you overcoming procrastination and excuses; you need to be efficient and effective in your work in order to have the most success possible.

You'll learn about how focusing on the rewards and benefits you will receive after you complete a project can help to motivate you to stay on time and even ahead of schedule in the next chapter.

Step 10: Reward Yourself When a Project is Completed



You've learned about the importance of why you must not procrastinate and make excuses due to distractions in order to achieve the best success for yourself and/or your business. Failure to product high-quality work in a set amount of time will cause people to doubt your abilities and have them turn elsewhere for what they need.

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You've also learned how you have to take regular breaks in order to keep your mind focused in order to be able to do your best work. Many experts recommend taking 15-minute breaks every hour in order to give your brain the rest time it needs to stay focused, especially when it comes to doing repetitive tasks over and over again, as the human brain can become disinterested and even bored when facing the same or similar tasks over and over again.

In the case of entrepreneurs, you have to motivate yourself to do the work that is required; there is no boss that will put pressure on you to speed up your work and get back on track if you fall behind. Yet, you know what will happen if you do fall behind because of procrastination and making excuses from distractions- you'll have to work faster and harder to catch up or risk missing the deadlines you set to meet the goals and achieve the success you want to achieve.

You may be wondering how you can continuously meet so many deadlines for many different tasks and projects you have to complete in order to have success in your business. A good way for entrepreneurs (and anyone, actually) to maintain the focus and drive that is needed to meet deadlines consistently is to focus on the rewards and benefits you will receive once the project is complete.

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Think about what you will achieve once your current project is complete. It's likely you will make money, whether it's from a product launch, doing work for another entrepreneur, doing work for a boss, etc. The actions you take to complete a project by the deadline will result in profit for you, which will benefit you (and your family), thereby making your financial future more secure.

However, it's not just financial benefit you will receive by continuously meeting deadlines. You'll also get a good reputation and have high credibility of being a worker who is efficient and can meet deadlines, essential in just about any industry. This will make you more desirable for employers, peers (such as other entrepreneurs/Internet marketers), and customers/target markets. People will seek you out and want to work with you to achieve more success for both you and them.

Having a good reputation of getting things done on time can lead to greater success and profitability. If you're working in the corporate world, chances are high you will get promoted to higher positions, leading to a greater salary, a greater reputation, and greater respect by your peers. If you are an entrepreneur, other entrepreneurs will take note and want to include you in joint ventures because you have demonstrated an ability to meet deadlines, produce quality products repeatedly, and be a positive force in the business world. In addition, your customers and prospects will see you as something they can depend on to

provide quality products they are looking for and that they can always depend on to deliver quality consistently.

Therefore, you should also focus on the increased reputation and credibility you will receive when meeting deadlines to create the quality products your business needs to deliver consistently.

Other people and companies will take notice, and greater avenues of profitability and reputation will open to you once you show a track record and reputation of delivering consistently.

This is why meeting deadlines, staying on track or ahead of schedule with projects, and not allowing procrastination and excuses from distractions stand in your way of being efficient and effective in your work.

Also consider how you will feel when you have completed your project and have some leisure time to relax. This is especially true if you are an entrepreneur and have a successful product launch. This means you will have made considerable profit from that launch, enabling you to take some time off and enjoy some of the leisurely activities you enjoy with family/friends/loved ones. You could decide to go on a vacation or purchase an item you've always wanted with some of the profits you've made.

Think about how you will feel when you have the weight of the project off your shoulders and seeing that it was a major success. It will feel as if you just won the lottery or that your favourite sports team just won the championship. You will feel a sense of elation

and joy from having completed the project and it turning out well, not just financially, but also in terms of the boost you will get in terms of reputation and credibility in your industry, leading to even greater profit opportunities in the future.

These are the thoughts you need to have whenever you feel self-doubt or distractions causing you to slow your work speed. Keep your focus on how you will feel after the project has been completed by the deadline and it turns out to be a major success for you and your business. Think of all of the benefits you will gain when you have completed the project successfully. Think of how you are capable of achieving this success and that you can achieve it without having to do that much if you stay on-time and on-course with your schedule. Think of how you don't have to do anything extraordinary; all you have to do is to do the work you are fully capable of doing within the given timeline. You do that, and you can have great success and all of the benefits that go along with it.

Therefore, you have learned how focusing on the end result is key to keeping self-doubt and distractions from negatively impacting your work speed and quality. You have learned that focusing on the benefits you will gain from successfully completing a project on time or earlier can aid you in staying on-time or ahead of schedule when you face challenging or less-desirable parts of your project. You have learned that focusing on the feelings you will experience when you have completed a successful project

can aid you in keeping focused on the task at hand and ensuring that you complete your project on time or ahead of schedule so you can experience those benefits and feelings as expected.

You have learned much information in this book about working efficiently and effectively and ensuring that procrastination and distractions don't affect your work quality and speed. In the conclusion of this book, we will summarize much of what you have learned to ensure you keep it in mind and utilize it so that you will improve your work speed and quality so that you can experience the benefits and feelings of completing successful projects on time or earlier.

Conclusion

In this guide, you have learned that procrastination makes you work both slower and harder than you need to, to create high-quality work. Whereas many people think that procrastination can help them to avoid parts of their job or their occupation they aren't really fond of, it actually forces them to have to work harder and faster in order to make up for the time they lost by procrastinating. Working harder with fewer to no breaks and working faster to complete a project because you're on a very strict time limit will likely lead to more mistakes and lower-quality work, which can damage your reputation, credibility, and profitability.

You've also learned that doubting your own abilities can lead to slower work. Many people want to take their time when working on projects that have a time frame of days, weeks, or even months to complete. While one should never rush to finish a project when it's necessary to take your time to do high-quality work on it, many people use the longer time frame as an excuse to work at a slower pace than they actually need to in order to complete the work at a high level. They don't want to appear as if they are doing sloppy work or don't really care about the work they are doing by finishing before the allotted deadline. However, in today's content-driven, fast-paced world, people are looking for quality work to be done as quickly as possible; it is no longer

enough to take forever on a project to do quality work- one must be able to do high-quality work as quickly as possible to succeed.

You've learned that taking regular breaks and taking care of yourself physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially are key to doing your best work. It is recommended by many experts to take 15-minute breaks every hour, meaning you should work 45 minutes per hour and rest 15 minutes per hour. Some people believe that you need to work nonstop on a project to do their best work, even if that means they neglect other areas of their life, such as their diet, their sleep, their exercise, their family/social life, and more. Neglecting other areas of your life to help you complete a project faster is not healthy for you, as it can cause your health to suffer. In addition, your mind will begin to wander during a project because of a lack of sleep, a lack of eating, and/or a lack of breaks away from the project. You could even start to resent the work you are doing because you are always working and doing nothing else, including being with loved ones and doing leisurely activities you enjoy doing.

You've learned that you can make a "game" out of getting things done promptly to help improve your work efficiency. You can track your start times, the time periods you take breaks, the times you resume a project, and the times you finish both tasks of a project and the project itself. You can track these times yourself via the clocks on your computer and/or mobile devices and recording them in a .txt or .xls/.xlsm file, or you can use an online

timer to help you record the exact times you work and break from a project.

You've learned to estimate how quickly you think you will complete a task and an overall project before you begin, then see how close you come when you finish. If you beat your estimation, you can reward yourself by spending more time with loved ones, doing a leisurely activity, purchasing an item you've wanted, etc. If you missed your estimation, determine at what point or points in the project you were delayed and learn what caused the delay(s) so that you can take steps to improve your work efficiency in the future.

You've learned how to overcome distractions, both those you can and cannot control. Distractions such as social media accounts, email accounts, and mobile devices can be controlled via not logging onto such accounts or by muting the notifications you get each time you get a friend request, chat request, or email notification. You can mute the ringer on your mobile phone, as well as the notification of new text messages that come through.

Other distractions, such as those made by your spouse, your children, your pets, and/or your neighbours cannot be as easily controlled. You can talk with your spouse and children in an effort to help them realize why you need a quiet environment to do your best work; additionally, you can use ear buds or even cotton balls to block out some to most of the noise that they make if needed.

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As for your pets, you can attempt to keep them out of your work space, then choose to spend some time with them during your breaks. You can help to drown out noise from neighbors doing yard work or when your landline phone rings by using earbuds or cotton balls.

You've learned why staying on time or ahead of your project is essential to doing your best work. This will enable you to take those 15-minute breaks you've learned are essential to keeping your mind focused on your work and reducing the chances of making critical errors in your work. This will also enable you to not neglect other areas of your life as you work on tasks and projects so you can stay healthy physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially.

You've also learned why focusing on the rewards and benefits you'll receive after completing a project is key to helping you stay on or ahead of schedule and doing your best work. By focusing on the rewards, both monetary and non-monetary, you will receive after you complete a successful project and the feelings of joy and relief you will gain after you have completed a successful project will drive you to stay focused on your work and finishing your work as efficiently as possible. Doing this will improve your reputation and credibility with your boss, your peers, your customers, and/or your target market, no matter what industry you work in.

After reading this book, you should have a very clear idea of how to prevent procrastination from slowing down and negatively impacting your work. You should also know how to overcome various distractions that can lead to excuses of why you don't complete more work in a set period of time. By following the information in this book, you should become more productive than you've ever been before and really get noticed as a person who produces high-quality work efficiently and effectively.