

2018

“MASTER PRODUCTIVITY” CHECKLIST

Intro

All of us have the same 60 minutes in each hour and 168 hours per week. We do not control them and we cannot expand them. It's time to stop worrying about the number of hours you have, and wishing there were more hours in the day. Instead, *focus on mastering how effectively and efficiently you use your time.*

Increase Your Ongoing Productivity

- ✓ **Tip #1 – Make Lists:** (You'll need more than one). Having lists will help you stay focused and you'll know exactly what you need to get done. One list is for everything that needs to be done. A good time to create this is after you've done a 'brain dump' of everything you need to do.

The other is your Priority List (see Tip #2). You won't start your day wasting time trying to figure out what you should be doing or getting pulled in every direction as things pop up. You'll hit the ground running with a clear focus of what your priority tasks are. These are the tasks that will get you closer to your goals.

- ✓ **Tip #2 – Focus on the 3 Most Important Tasks:** What are the three tasks that will make the biggest difference? What things have to get done no matter what? What will make the most progress? Do those first every day and anything else on your list can be done after.

- ✓ **Tip #3 – Cut Mental Clutter with Calendars and Reminders:** Grab your smart phone or log into Google Calendar and use it to keep track of all life events that are important to you, appointments, and your meetings. You can even set the calendar to remind you about important dates and times. You can create multiple calendars in Google Calendar – business, personal, etc. No need to keep a mental note.
- ✓ **Tip #4 – Be Aware of Time and Parkinson's Law:** Have you heard of Parkinson's Law? It basically states that work expands to fill the time available for completion. In other words, each task you're working on will take as long as you give it. It's important to increase your awareness of whether you're really being productive, or you're just staying busy.
- ✓ **Tip #5 – Learn to Say No:** For a lot of us it's hard to say, No. Stop and think about how many times you've found yourself doing a lot of extra work or wasting time, simply because you did not say, NO? Learning when and how to say know shows respect for yourself and your time, and prevents you from feeling resentful of others.
- ✓ **Tip #6 – Use the Pomodoro Technique:** The Pomodoro technique is a time management strategy wherein you give focused attention on a specific task, with no distractions, for 25 minutes (traditionally); take a short break of say, 5 minutes, and then another 25 minutes.

Test it out for yourself. Many people swear by it. They say their productivity increases significantly. Others do not like to stop what they're working on after 25 minutes. I find it very effective when I'm writing lengthy pieces, like creating an ebook, and I set my timer for 40 minutes.

Increase Your Productivity in the Workplace

- ✓ **Tip #7– Become Good at Delegating:** You're probably doing a lot of things you could delegate to someone else and increase your efficiency in the areas only you can do. You gain a lot of focus and time to get the things done that are important and therefore increase productivity.

If home is your workplace, take a look at the tasks you do on a daily basis. What can you outsource? For some, letting go is a challenge. I can relate, but when you let go and allow someone else to do certain tasks in your business that free up your time to do the 'important' things, your results will be amazing.

- ✓ **Tip #8 – Automation is Essential:** Question everything you do that is somewhat mindless or repetitive. Is there a way to automate it and free up your time and you brain to work on something else? Automation is invaluable to keep your business going, if you're self-employed and have to take some time away from working in/on your business.
- ✓ **Tip #9 – Surround Yourself with the Right People:** Take a good look at the people you work with. These could be co-workers and independent contractors. What's working and what is not?

Extend this to your personal life. Jim Rohn said, "You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with." Who are you spending time with the most? Do they uplift you or bring you down? Your associates can support and empower you, or detract and demotivate you.

- ✓ **Tip #10 – Make Sure You Have a Plan:** You can't be productive unless you know exactly what you're working on and what your end goal is. If you don't know either, you're doing busy work, not productive work.

- ✓ **Tip #11 – Reduce Distractions:** Whether you're in an office with other people, or you work from home, you'll be interrupted quite a few times each day. In the office it could be by people walking up to your desk, the boss calling you in for an impromptu meeting, the phone ringing or the email and social media alerts on your phone going off.

Same is true when you work from home. There are constant online and offline distractions. While you cannot eliminate them entirely, set boundaries that will allow you to reduce distractions.

Word of advice about distractions and your schedule. When creating your schedule, avoid being rigid. Allow time for some measure of distractions. This way you're not always playing "catch-up" because something unforeseen came up in the middle of your day.

Increase Your Productivity At Home

- ✓ **Tip #12 – Create Routines to Make Things Simple:** Create a routine or a schedule that you can stick to. No more worrying about what to do. You just get it done and after a while it will be on autopilot.
- ✓ **Tip #13 – Simplify and Declutter:** Did you know that it takes the average person 40% longer to tidy up and clean their house when there's a lot of stuff in it? Think about that 40% is a big chunk and a lot of time and effort.
- ✓ **Tip #14 – Plan Your Meals:** You can save quite a bit of time (and money) with meal planning. Plus you have the added benefit of having healthy home cooked meals to feed your loved ones.

When you work away from home, you'll find it easier to prepare your lunch and/or breakfast overnight. Or, at least position the things you will need for

ready access. This will prevent you from running out of time in the mornings and end up having unhealthy fast-foods for lunch.

- ✓ **Tip #15 – Share the Workload:** While it may seem like things only will get done right and in a timely fashion when you take of them yourself, there's a lot to be said about sharing the workload and assigning chores to the rest of your family.

Family members often complain that they do not help with tasks like the laundry or loading the dishwasher because, usually the mother, is not happy with the way they do these things. Moms, take the help! "Better done than perfect."

- ✓ **Tip #16 – Take Time to Relax:** We live in a busy and hectic world with too little rest, too little quiet time, and too little sleep. And you know what happens when we don't get enough rest. We can't concentrate and even simple tasks take us longer. It's important to schedule some "Me" to. It allows you to feel rejuvenated, improves your feeling of well-being, and increases your productivity.

Productivity Tips for Life

- ✓ **Tip #17- Take Responsibility for Your Results:** People who are productive are happy to take responsibility for both their successes and their failures. Rather than looking to point the finger at someone else, they make sure to stay accountable for their work.
- ✓ **Tip #18 – Learn From Mistakes:** This is one guarantee you can be sure of. Mistakes will happen. How will you react? When you're working to be more productive, it helps to understand that mistakes are learning tools. Productive people are aware that they will make mistakes but they look to learn from them instead of allowing mistakes to throw them off course or cause them to quit.

- ✓ **Tip #19 - Focus Your Efforts:** Instead of worrying about trying to do everything at once, learn to focus instead of multi-tasking. Contrary to previous opinion, multi-tasking is a waste of time. Nothing gets your full attention. Set a designated time or times each day to read email, respond to voicemail, and work on social media. The rest of your day should be spent on more important tasks.

- ✓ **Tip #20 - Avoid Procrastination:** Sometimes it's tempting to put off tasks that are less desirable. This will not serve you well as it causes you to fall behind your schedule and put off the inevitable. It also creates more stress when you know you have something to do and keep putting it off. When you need to do something, just use self-discipline to complete the task and move on. You'll save time and energy.

I hope you've enjoyed reading these tips and will find them helpful. I recommend you print them out and keep them in a folder on your desk for easy reference.

I am Yvonne A Jones, Personal Business Coach and Founder of 50 and Wiser Coaching | Relationship Marketing Strategist | Best-Selling Author

I help highly-motivated entrepreneurs, 50 and Wiser, get clear on their mindset and message, and grow their business fast by building strong relationships and connections.

What are you struggling with in your life or business right now? What is your biggest challenge, and what do you need help with?

Send me an email to Yvonne [at] YvonneAJones.com (with "Productivity" in the subject line), or go to my booking page and reserve a time slot for a 35 min no-cost phone conversation. <https://yvonneajonescoaching.youcanbook.me/>

I'm committed to supporting as many entrepreneurs and coaches as possible.



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