

101 WAYS TO GET MORE DONE WITH LESS STRESS

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Time Management Tips

1. **Identify the activities in your day that are time-stealers.** Keep track of how much time you spend reading emails, browsing the web and chatting on the telephone because these are some of the most well known time-stealers. After you track the time that you spend on these activities, it is likely that you will automatically start to decrease your time-stealing activities.
2. **Start by setting achievable goals.** Even the smallest goals can put you on the track to better time management skills. Set a small goal, like not reading personal emails during work hours for a week or filing your mail the day it comes in instead of letting it pile up. Once you've achieved this small goal, move on to something bigger. Before you know it your time management issues will be a thing of the past.
3. **Set up a plan for time management.** Why? Well, quite simply your efforts to better manage your time will not be noticeable until you start keeping track of the progress that you are making. Create a simple chart and put it on your desk or refrigerator – somewhere where you'll see it every day – then fill out what you plan to do and when you did it. This will help you see at a glance what needs to be done and as you complete items you'll feel a sense of accomplishment.
4. **Find a time management system that works for you.** Some sort of time management tool is crucial for making your time management goals a reality. Whether it's a computer program, a PDA, a wall calendar, a desk calendar, or something else, the key is to find something you like and use it. But be sure to keep only one. Having different systems for work and home only leads to confusion.
5. **Use the reminder option in your online calendar.** Whether you use an online calendar, the calendar with your email software or even your Palm Pilot – use the reminder feature because it will help you to remember what you have planned for a specific block of time.
6. **Spend a few moments each morning looking over your task list.** Decide first what you need to do during the coming day. Then, rank the items that absolutely must be done in terms of priority. It is important to do this every morning to get into the habit of prioritizing. Studies show that you must do something 21 times to make it a habit. So stick with it and within a few weeks you'll find you do this automatically each morning.
7. **Delegate whenever possible.** If you need to pick up dry cleaning, fill your gas tank and stop at the grocery store on the way from work consider asking your spouse to take some of the load for you. Asking for a little help sometimes can save your sanity and free up time in your schedule to help things run more smoothly.
8. **Start a routine and stick to a schedule.** Routine and schedule – two words that most people hate – are the two most important words when it comes to effective time management. You need to establish a routine and a schedule, and you need to work hard to stick to them as much as possible. Do yourself a favor and get your entire family

involved. If everyone is aware of what they're expected to do and when, things will run a lot smoother.

9. **Don't waste time waiting.** One of the largest time wasters that people complain about is waiting. Instead of just waiting before your next doctor's appointment or while the oil is being changed in your car, take along your task list for the following day or your checkbook if it needs balancing.
10. **Understand what good time management really is.** Time management means more than just keeping track of how you spend your time – it means finding ways to change your routine to get more out of the time you have during the day. Time management is not simply rearranging your schedule in order to fit in as much as possible. It means taking care not to over-schedule your day whenever possible. Balance is the key to getting the important things done, while still finding time to enjoy life!
11. **Never allow work to interfere with your downtime.** Whether your downtime is an entire weekend, an hour in the morning to workout or a few hours for TV watching in the evening, that time is necessary for you to recharge and energize yourself so that you can be more effective. Block this leisure time off in your calendar and honor it the same way you do your other commitments.
12. **Set a time each day for uninterrupted work.** Whatever it is you have to work on, make it a priority to have some time every day for uninterrupted work. If this is unrealistic for you, at least try to minimize interruptions as much as possible by turning off the ringer on your phone and putting up a do not disturb sign for a few hours each day. This time will allow you to focus on getting things done and the sense of accomplishment will help you be more productive for the rest of the day.
13. **Keep track of your daily activities.** For one week, carry a notebook and write down everything that you do during the course of a day. This is very helpful, because it will allow you to determine a benchmark for where your time management efforts will begin. From this information look for obvious time wasters like running to the grocery store several times a week for forgotten items, or spending 10 minutes every morning searching for your car keys. When you see how your time is really spent you'll be able to identify areas that can be improved.
14. **Talk to other people who are working on developing their time management skills.** Almost everyone struggles with effectively managing their time. Find a friend or co-worker who is also working on this and talk about your downfalls, achievements and discoveries. Just like anything else, having a support network is an excellent way to improve your chances of success.
15. **Determine what is most important.** If you are working on time management at work, which functions of your position are the most critical? If you are working on time management at home, which responsibilities are the most important to the running of your household? Put together a list of what your priorities are so that if something needs to be cut it's an easy decision to make.

16. **Never ask yourself if you feel like doing something.** We all face things in life that we do not feel like doing, and if we spent less time not wanting to do them and more time actually getting them done, think about how much more productive we could be! So next time you find yourself having a conversation in your head about not wanting to do something, just get it done and make it a habit.
17. **Find your peak performance time.** Everyone has a different time during the day when they are the most efficient. Pay attention to when you are able to get the most done and then be sure you're using that time for your most important tasks. If you are more effective in the morning, make every attempt to get into the office early. Or, if you find that evening is your best time of day, it might be a good idea to work a later shift if possible.
18. **Touch a piece of paper only once.** A great time management trick is to touch a piece of paper only one time. Make a decision the first time you read it to either file it or throw it away. If you do this, you will notice immediately that the time you spend reviewing piles of paper is significantly decreased.
19. **Be flexible with yourself.** If you find that your schedule is overloaded, be realistic and willingly accept that you sometimes cannot get everything finished in one day. You'll accomplish nothing by beating yourself up over it. Instead take some time to figure out why you are so busy and look for ways to eliminate some items from your to-do list. Are you always the one driving the kids to soccer practice? Ask another parent to help. Do you spend hours cleaning after everyone else is in bed? Assign chores and get the whole family to pitch in. And don't forget that sometimes it's alright to give yourself a break and leave some things to be done another day.
20. **Don't forget about time for yourself.** Make sure that you schedule personal time for yourself at some point every day. Even if you are only able to fit in a few minutes, don't skip this important appointment with yourself. Use it to take a walk, have a bubble bath or watch your favorite television program. Don't look at this as time wasted. Instead remember that by taking a little while to recharge your batteries you will be more efficient at the other tasks you have to complete.
21. **Don't let technology become a hindrance instead of a help.** If you use a PDA, learn how to USE the PDA. Sometimes, people change over to a PDA and find themselves spending more time trying to figure out how to use the calendar than they do getting their task list finished. The same holds true for fancy computerized calendars. Sometimes a plain old paper and pen is best!
22. **Keep your email inbox in order.** When you read an email make a decision about what to do with it immediately. If it is spam, delete it. If you've replied to it and it does not need to be saved then delete it. And if it's important file it right away. Don't leave it sitting in your inbox until you have hundreds of them to go through. This waste time unnecessarily and can be a source of anxiety knowing that such a large task is looming.
23. **Learn how to use your email program's spam filters.** People today spend more time than ever filtering through their email to determine what is spam and what is actually

legitimate email. Spam filters can save you a few minutes every day that you can spend on other things.

24. **Have more than one task list.** Instead of one large to-do list, opt for separate lists for work and home, and separate your lists into individual lists for projects and tasks. This way, your task list seems a lot more manageable and less cluttered. Studies show that if you look at your list and see 25 things to be done, you'll feel overwhelmed and be less likely to do any of them.
25. **Distinguish between small projects and large projects.** Realize that large projects may require many tasks to complete, and that small projects like getting a haircut may take just one step. Keep track of the tasks associated with every project that you need to accomplish. By breaking out your large projects into manageable tasks you can see progress being made.
26. **Use the ABC prioritization method.** "A" projects are those that are important because they will contribute to your long-term success. "B" projects are important but not urgent. And "C" projects are the ones it would be nice to get to if you have time. Always start with any "A" tasks and break them down into smaller, easier to handle tasks so you can accomplish them quicker. Then move on to "B" tasks and finally – if there is time – the "C" tasks.
27. **Weigh tasks according to both urgency and importance.** Not sure how to start prioritizing everything you have to get done? Look at each task and determine how urgent it is, and how important it is. Although something is important, it may not be urgent. And, just because something is not important does not mean that it is not urgent (or time sensitive). The most logical place to start is with tasks that are both urgent and important.
28. **Don't let negative emotions stop you from completing a task.** If you find that negative emotions are keeping you from completing a task, spend some time trying to determine the cause and figure out what you can do to alleviate the feelings so that you can move forward with what needs to be done.
29. **Listen to self-improvement audio books.** There are lots of different books now available in mp3 format so you can listen to them during your commute, while you workout or even while you're running errands. Look for ones that can help give you new tips and techniques for better time management. Although you may not be consciously listening 100% of the time, you will pick up tips that can help to make your time management skills better.
30. **Get organized!** Studies have shown that people who are organized spend less time looking for important items and more time completing the tasks on their to-do list. So buy some filing cabinets, mail sorters, drawer organizers or whatever other organization aids you need for your home and office. It may be a big task to find a new home for everything but once it's done you'll be amazed at the time you can save!
31. **Learn to identify things that are a waste of your time.** Some things to look out for include: a failure to plan properly, stress, fatigue, meetings without a clear agenda, clerical tasks at work that could be effectively delegated and unplanned interruptions.

Once you identify these time wasters you can work to avoid them or better manage them in the future.

32. **Set meeting agendas.** This way everyone in attendance will know ahead of time what is to be discussed and what the intended outcome of the meeting is to be. Even if the meeting is just a simple brainstorming session, it is best to announce this ahead of time so that everyone is on the same page.
33. **Set up timelines for group projects.** When you have more than just yourself to manage, it is critical that everyone know their role and responsibilities when it comes to project completion. This way, you will spend more time working and less time explaining what everyone should be doing and when.
34. **Define your goals and priorities each week.** Goals and priorities change. What is important today may no longer be a top priority next week, so you need to be willing to shift your focus occasionally. By evaluating what is important to you on a regular basis you will ensure that you're always focusing your time on the most important tasks.
35. **Clean off your desk.** At work or at home, one of the number one time wasters is a desk with more than 20% of the surface covered. Clear your desk and you will see an immediate improvement in your productivity.
36. **Don't procrastinate.** If you see something that needs done, do it now instead of spending a lot of time thinking about why it needs done and why you haven't already done it. In the time you would take thinking about it and rescheduling it you could have it completed and out of the way.
37. **Learn how to say "no".** If someone asks you to fit just one more thing into your schedule, or to do something that you can't or don't want to do – say no. You may find this difficult in the beginning but it will get easier as you start to see the benefits.
38. **Limit the number of meetings you attend.** Meetings at work are often a huge time waster. Therefore, make every attempt to reduce the amount of meetings that you attend. Possibly delegate attendance to someone else, or just ask for a copy of the minutes when your input is not as important as the follow-up activities.
39. **Have a long-term goal.** One large overall goal will help you to develop short-term smaller goals that can be more easily achieved. Having an end point in mind is important when planning your time. Simply break your larger goals into smaller, more manageable tasks.
40. **Build time management related goals into your schedule.** For example, include on your to-do list that you will 15 minutes at the end of every day to get organized for the next day. By making time management a priority you will find that it soon becomes less of a chore and more of a habit.
41. **End each day ready to start the next.** At the end of every work day, make sure that your desk is cleaned off and that you have at least started a task list for the following day. This will make your next morning smoother, and allow you to get started as soon as you get in.

42. **Don't waste time on the telephone.** Telephone calls are a big time waster for many people. Try to minimize this problem by planning the calls that you need to make ahead of time and then making several calls in a row instead of spreading them throughout the day. Try to set a time limit for each call, and stick to it as closely as you can. Often letting the person you're calling know upfront that it will be a quick call is all it takes. Simply start by saying "I only have a few minutes to talk..." or "This is just a quick call to let you know about...".
43. **Determine the times during the day when you are least effective.** Everyone has downtimes it's only natural. By recognizing when yours are you can plan your lunch or and other break times during those less efficient periods. Often a break is all it takes to help you clear your mind so you can return to the task at hand more focused.
44. **Minimize stress by getting small tasks out of the way.** Stress usually arises because of the list of things you still need to do, and not because of the things that you have already done. Help minimize stress by quickly completing the easiest tasks on your list. Once you have a momentum going you'll be about to tackle larger, more involved tasks.
45. **Stop wasting time looking for things.** Many people spend a lot of unnecessary time each day looking for things. By better organizing your home or workspace you'll know exactly where things are instead of having to hunt for them. This will free up more time to work on the tasks that you need to get done. Certainly, getting organized can take a while initially – but once you get in the habit life will be easier.
46. **Keep an organized filing cabinet.** At least once a month, review your filing cabinets to make sure your files are organized in the most effective manner for your habits and that they contain useful and complete information. Remove old paperwork and items that simply do not belong. This will make it quicker and easier for you to find what you need when you need it instead of sorting through irrelevant files and useless papers.
47. **Organize your paperwork.** If you find your file folders are bursting with papers, it is time to implement a new filing strategy. Try color coding your files so they're easy to find. Or start sub file folders. Simply use a large divider file to hold individual sub-files in order to keep everything together. Keeping your paperwork organized will reduce the amount of time that you spend looking for specific items.
48. **Ask yourself "is this an effective use of my time?"** Doing say may remind you that there are other priorities that you should be addressing instead of what you are currently doing.
49. **Set realistic timelines to complete projects.** When working with a timeline, try to identify early on where you think problems might occur. Building in some padding is a good idea where you see potential problems arising. If everything goes smoothly, you will finish ahead of time. If there is a problem, you will be better equipped to resolve it and still finish when expected.
50. **Be proactive with your planning.** Do you tend to leave things until the last minute? You're not alone! But remember that the more you plan to get things done ahead of time,

the better off you will be. If you are proactive about making tasks a priority a couple of days before they need to be completed, you will be more effective and a lot less stressed.

51. **Eliminate distractions so you can focus.** If you are the type of person who is easily distracted by your surroundings, consider finding a quiet place to work so that you can more effectively use your time. You might also want to try wearing headphones, which can minimize distractions like background noise, television or the telephone.
52. **Keep a list of events in chronological order so you know what is coming up.** Whenever possible, keep a list of your weekly appointments, meetings and social obligations in chronological order. A good calendar software program or even a spreadsheet program can help you to sort and re-order your list as required. Doing so will help you always know what is coming up next so you can plan your schedule accordingly. If there is a birthday part on Saturday you will know at a glance and can remember to pick up a gift next time you are out running errands – instead of waiting until the last minute.
53. **Break large tasks into smaller, more manageable ones.** Large tasks are daunting; therefore it is a great idea to break large tasks into more manageable pieces, which can be done over time instead of all at once. This is a great tip, particularly for those who tend to procrastinate.
54. **Reward yourself for your achievements.** There's nothing more encouraging than receiving a reward for meeting a goal, even when you provide the reward! For example, after you have finished cleaning out your closet, take a break to watch your favorite television show. Or if you stick to your time management goals for an entire week, treat yourself to that new pair of shoes you've been wanting. If you have something to work toward it can be the extra incentive you need to get things done.
55. **Use the 90-second rule.** Using the 90 second rule you will get into the habit of spending no more than 90 seconds deciding whether or not to keep a piece of paperwork, fix a small problem, prevent a potential problem or make a short-term decision. This gets the small tasks that pop up unexpectedly out of the way instead of letting them build into a huge task.
56. **Come up with a plan to manage housework.** Do you let the housework pile up until it becomes a huge task? A full day of cleaning is daunting and many people tend to let things go for a few weeks because they can't decide where to start. Instead, make it a habit to do 2 or 3 small tasks every day. The 15 or so minutes that you spend will save you countless hours in the long run.
57. **Try this method of organizing your time.** The next time you are planning out your day, make a large square on the paper, and divide into four smaller squares. The top left is for things that are both important and time sensitive. The top right is for things that are not important, but are time sensitive. The bottom left is for things that are important but not time sensitive. The bottom right is for things that are not important and not time sensitive.
58. **Buy back a little of your time.** If you're always short on time, it may be a good idea to hire someone to help you with things like housekeeping, lawn care, grocery shopping or

even to lend a hand around the office. This will free up your time for the more important tasks on your to-do list. Or give you a much deserved break!

59. **Only check your voicemail once a day.** How many times each day do you check your voicemail? Determine at what point in the day checking messages would be most effective and try only checking your voicemail once each day for a week. And when you do check it, take action on the calls you received rather than letting them pile up. This simple change can potentially save you 10 or 15 minutes a day.
60. **Don't allow interruptions to throw you off course.** If you receive a telephone call at a busy time, ask the caller if it would be ok for you return their call in an hour, when you are finished with the task at hand. Make a note, and remember to call back when you said that you would.
61. **Make record keeping quick and easy.** Something you can do to make record keeping easier for yourself is to pick a time each week when you will empty your wallet of the week's receipts. At that time, file them appropriately. Not only will you save yourself the time required to empty your wallet after it is bursting with papers, but when it's time to do your taxes you will have everything you need, all together in the right place.
62. **Be careful that you don't overlook important tasks because you're short for time.** If you decide to remove some tasks from your routine, be sure that you do not eliminate important tasks such as balancing your checkbook or comparing your receipts with your credit card bill. These tasks are often overlooked when people are trying to save time, and they can definitely cost you money in the long run.
63. **Prepare at night, for what you will do in the morning.** If you find yourself wasting a lot of time looking for your car keys, wallet and other essentials it is a good idea to develop a habit of always putting your things in one place - the SAME place - every night before you go to bed. In the morning when you're rushed it can mean the difference between starting off on a good note and starting off with a headache!
64. **Set your alarm clock 15 minutes earlier in order to give yourself more time in the morning.** This will give you time to fit in breakfast, if you normally skip it. It will also give you more than the time you need to sit down and prioritize what is on your to-do list for the day.
65. **Identify the top three items on your priority list for each day.** Put those at the top of the list. Do everything you can to scratch off those three tasks every day, and you will find that you are actually getting more done, because you will feel as though you are accomplishing a great deal, just by knocking out the three most important things.
66. **Choose your hobbies carefully.** Hobbies are important; however in most cases they also require a significant time commitment. If you are considering taking up a new hobby, determine one or two other hobbies that no longer keep your interest. Consider a trade off, and you will have more time to devote to your new hobby.
67. **Consolidate your technology devices.** Do you have a cell phone? A PDA? A Laptop? Are you TOO connected? Consider consolidating your data onto one device that you can

carry with you, and spend less time trying to synch your data from one device to all of the others.

68. **Create checklists for complicated tasks that you do frequently.** For example, if you frequently travel for work or pleasure, keep a checklist handy of the things you need to do before you leave. If you have a set of identification cards that you need to have with you – keep them together and in a specific location. Include on the list reminders to have your mail held, paper delivery stopped or even to phone the neighbors to let them know that you will be gone and for how long.
69. **Get an answering machine.** Are calls constantly taking your focus away from what you're doing? An answering machine might be an investment worth making so that your meals go uninterrupted, and so that you can avoid the constant interruptions of your time.
70. **Create an action list.** If you frequently attend meetings, conferences or other activities where you gather notes and information, plan to immediately review those documents and make yourself an action list of things that you will do in response to the recent activity. Go through documents, brochures and other paperwork that you received and keep only what is important.
71. **Try to consolidate errands as much as possible.** For example, unless it's an emergency don't go to the hardware store for only one thing. The same can apply to the post office, the library, the grocery store and the dry cleaners. We all experience times when a single purpose errand cannot be avoided, but you can save a tremendous amount of time if you put together several errands per trip. Simply keep a list of everything that is waiting to be done so nothing is forgotten.
72. **Check your email at set times during the day.** Set a few specific times, like first thing in the morning, after lunch and right before you leave for the day to check your work email. Try to avoid checking personal email more than once a day and send responses immediately to all emails whenever possible. Not only will you have less email to get through later but you also won't forget to answer an important email.
73. **When sending an email, always use an appropriate subject.** Most people simply hit the reply button when responding but doing so can make it difficult to find that email later. Especially if several emails go back and forth! Instead include an appropriate subject so you know what the email contains.
74. **Don't allow yourself to procrastinate.** Everyone occasionally procrastinates to avoid doing tasks that are not enjoyable, but when you have something that simply cannot wait, just get it done. For one thing, it's off of your task list and for another thing, you won't be spending a lot of unnecessary time thinking about what you need to be doing.
75. **Record "pending" tasks in your calendar.** These are items that will not happen until some time in the future, or cannot happen until someone else has done a particular action. Mark down these items in your calendar so that you have a reminder to check the progress, or to include the task on an upcoming to-do list.

76. **Don't give yourself too much time to complete tasks.** There is an old saying that "any task or project can swell to take up the amount of time that you have dedicated to its completion". This is definitely true. A good plan is to reduce the amount of time that you allot to a specific task, until you find the right amount of time. Sometimes, this may not work out as expected but in most cases you will find some extra time in your schedule as a result.
77. **Try to get the most dreaded item on your task list out of the way as early in the day as possible.** This way, you won't spend the day trying to avoid doing it and thinking about it. And, you will be able to cross off one of the items from your task list, something everyone enjoys.
78. **Plan your telephone calls so you reach people in their office.** Studies have shown that the majority of people are in their offices between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Therefore, try to plan time for phone calls during the morning hours when you are most likely to reach the recipient. Otherwise you'll have to leave a message and when they call back there is a good chance they'll pull your focus away from another important task. Or you end up playing phone tag for days on end!
79. **Check your messages daily when away from the office.** When you are out of the office, or on vacation, check your voicemail and/or email at least once per day. This will save you a large amount of time when you return to the office or home from your vacation.
80. **Keep telephone numbers handy.** Keep a small telephone book of your important numbers with you at all times. Or include them in your cell phone if you prefer. This way, when you need to make an important call you do not need to waste time trying to find the number, or calling people to get the numbers.
81. **Always carry a small notebook in your purse, car or pocket.** This way, when you think of something that needs to be done or something that you want or need to remember, you will be able to write it down and have it at your fingertips.
82. **Eliminate extra seating in your office or workspace.** This will help to minimize interruptions, and if you are interrupted you should stand to speak with whoever has come in. This will keep them standing, and minimize the time of the interruption.
83. **Don't leave messages for people.** If you make a phone call and the recipient is not there when you call, try asking when it might be better to try again instead of leaving a message for a return call. This is better than having someone return a call at a bad time for you, and it's certainly easy enough to put a small reminder in your planner to call back at a better time.
84. **If possible, try to go into work earlier than others in the office or stay later.** This will give you more quiet time during which you can get your work accomplished. And you are unlikely to be interrupted by co-workers or phone calls during extended hours.
85. **Use a system to keep track of what needs to be done.** Try keeping an index card for each day, placing the date in the top right corner before writing anything else on the card. On this card, record the top three things that you need to do during the day, and if there is

room record what else you did during the course of the day. Then, file the card in an index card box at the end of the day. This is an excellent way to remember what you need to do, and what you have done on any given day.

86. **Take time to occasionally review your goals, and to reassess their priority.** This will allow you to remember what it is that you are working toward, and see whether you are actually progressing toward your goals. You might also discover that your priorities have changed over time, and that you need to set some new goals. By doing this you can keep your focus on tasks that are most important.
87. **Spend fifteen minutes on planning before bed.** All it takes is fifteen minutes of planning in the evening before you go to bed to significantly reduce the amount of planning that you will need to do the next morning. Give yourself the time necessary to prioritize, and to determine what you will need to have on hand for the following day. You'll probably find that before bed you're calmer and more able to focus on planning than you are in the morning when you're worried about starting your day.
88. **Don't create an elaborate, difficult to follow system.** The more hoops you have to jump through to make your time management system work, the more it becomes too time consuming. Instead focus on a simple system that works for you. If that's a daily to-do list written with pen and paper then that's what you should use. The key is to find what is most effective at keeping you on track and sticking with it until using the system becomes a habit.
89. **Make a list of your most important goals.** Sit down and decide what exactly are the most important things to you. Raising healthy kids? Working toward a promotion? Helping others? Then evaluate every task against that list of goals. If a task doesn't bring you closer to achieving one of your goals then eliminate it or put it away for a rainy day when you have extra time. Sure the bathroom may need to be painted, but it really isn't a priority if you're so strapped for time that you're eating fast food every night.
90. **Don't waste time talking to telemarketers.** Do you get daily phone calls from telemarketers? Put a stop to it! In the US you can ask to be put on the "Do Not Call List". This is a national list that reputable telemarketing companies subscribe to. If you're on the list, they won't contact you. And if they do, you can file a complaint against them. Register your home and cell phone numbers for free at <http://www.donotcall.gov>. This may not eliminate all unwanted phone calls, but it will significantly reduce the number.
91. **Combine activities.** Whenever possible, complete two activities at once. If you commute to work, spend that time listening to recorded training sessions. While you're waiting for your kids to finish swimming lessons complete your to-do list. Or pay your bills while you watch your favorite television program. By combining these tasks you can get more done in less time!
92. **Do it now.** You've no doubt heard the old saying "why do today what you can put off until tomorrow". If this sounds like you then make it a goal to do things NOW instead of putting them off. If you're talking to someone and they say "Give me a call later in the week and we'll set that up" respond by telling them "Let's do it now instead and save

ourselves making another call.” Doing this will save you from wasting unnecessary time later playing phone tag. Otherwise a task that should take a minute or two ends up taking ten or fifteen minutes.

93. **Be on the lookout for tasks you’re doing over and over again.** For example, are you always stopping to look up a certain number in the phonebook? Write it on the inside of the front cover instead. Are you constantly searching for your keys? Hang a hook by the front door. By eliminating these major time wasters you’re creating more time in your schedule to get important tasks done.
94. **Slow it down.** Don’t feel that you always have to be rushing around to be getting things done. Being productive doesn’t mean going fast. What’s key is that you’re using your time wisely to complete the most important tasks. If you have to run around like a lunatic to get things done then you need to prioritize and focus on only a few items each day. By doing the most important things first you’ll feel less of a time crunch.
95. **Complete your least favorite task first.** On almost every to-do list there is something that you don’t want to do. Instead of pushing it to the end of the list and wasting time and energy worrying about it – just do it! You’ll feel great once you’ve gotten it out of the way and everything else will seem easy by comparison.
96. **Don’t be too accessible.** Cells phones, PDAs, email accounts... it seems that there is no end to the technology that is supposed to make our lives easier. In reality, it tends to make most people’s lives more hectic then they need to be. Does this sound familiar... you’ve got your errands planned out and half way through you get a call on your cell phone from someone asking you to stop and pick up something else. Your entire schedule now has to be rearranged. It’s convenient for the person who got out of doing that task for him or her self – but not so great for you! When you have important tasks to complete leave the cell phone and PDAs behind.
97. **Leave time in your schedule for unexpected events.** It’s never a good idea to fill your day completely. You never know what emergency or opportunity will come up that requires your focus. Leave a little room for these occurrences and they won’t become a major source of stress.
98. **Look for ways to spend more time on your most important tasks.** Most people only spend one quarter of their time on the tasks they consider to be the most important to them. Take the time to monitor how much of your time goes to your most important tasks. Then look for ways to improve that to one third or even half of your time. You’ll be significantly more productive.
99. **Get some things done before you open your email.** For most people, email is a big time waster. And it often adds several items to your to-do list. So instead of checking your email first thing in the morning, start your day by getting a couple of important tasks completed.
100. **Use the most efficient method of communication.** Unless you type several hundred words per minute, email is not an efficient method of communication. If you need to discuss something with someone give them a call or talk to them face to face. You can

usually accomplish in a few minutes what it may take days of back and forth emails to get done.

101. **Focus on one task at a time.** Sure you may be a great multi-tasker, but the reality is that you will never be as productive as you can be if you're trying to do more than one thing at once. So focus on the task at hand and complete it before starting something else.