



7 Things Highly Productive People Do !

You have more important things to focus on than, um, focusing. Get back on track with these tips.

You probably don't want to admit it but you love distractions. In fact, just like monkeys, you get a shot of dopamine every time something pulls you in another direction. Why do you think you check your email so much? Want to be more productive and get your focus back? There are no secret tricks here... do one thing at a time. Stop multitasking—it's just another form of distraction. Easier said than done, I know.

Recently I sat down with Tony Wong, a **project management blackbelt** whose client list includes Toyota, Honda, and Disney, to name a few. He's an expert in keeping people on task, so I thought he'd be a good person to ask.

Here are his tips for staying productive:

- 1. Work backwards from goals to milestones to tasks.** Writing "launch company website" at the top of your to-do list is a sure way to make sure you never get it done. Break down the work into smaller and smaller chunks until you have specific tasks that can be accomplished in a few hours or less: Sketch a wireframe, outline an introduction for the homepage video, etc. That's how you set goals and actually succeed in crossing them off your list.
- 2. Stop multi-tasking.** No, seriously—stop. Switching from task to task quickly does not work. In fact, changing tasks more than 10 times in a day **makes you dumber than being stoned**. When you're stoned, your IQ drops by five points. When you multitask, it drops by an average of 10 points, 15 for men, five for women (yes, men are three times as bad at multitasking than women).
- 3. Be militant about eliminating distractions.** Lock your door, put a sign up, turn off your phone, texts, email, and instant messaging. In fact, if you know you may sneak a peek at your email, set it to offline mode, or even turn off your Internet connection. Go to a quiet area and focus on completing one task.



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4. Work on your own agenda. Don't let something else set your day. Most people go right to their emails and start freaking out. You will end up at inbox-zero, but accomplish nothing.

After you wake up, drink water so you rehydrate, eat a good breakfast to replenish your glucose, then set prioritized goals for the rest of your day.

5. Work in 60 to 90 minute intervals. Your brain uses up more glucose than any other bodily activity. Typically you will have spent most of it after 60-90 minutes. (That's why you feel so burned out after super long meetings.)

So take a break: Get up, go for a walk, have a snack, do something completely different to recharge. And yes, that means you need an extra hour for breaks, not including lunch, so if you're required to get eight hours of work done each day, plan to be there for **9.5-10 hours**.

~ The End ~

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