Top Ten Time Management Mistakes

And How to Avoid Making Them

Yours Free!

This special report describes the top ten time management mistakes that most people make. These mistakes could easily steal up to two hours of productive time from you each day.

By correcting these common mistakes, you CAN significantly increase your productivity and work much more effectively.

The sections below contain a brief description of each mistake, the reason why it is a problem, and some simple steps you can take to correct them.

Mistake # 1 – Keeping Too Many Things in Your Head

A common mistake is trying to use your memory to keep track of all the things you need to do and places you need to be.

Why is it a problem?

Most people need to keep track of many little details as part of their normal work. This is particularly true for knowledge workers that have to deal with several simultaneous projects and an assortment of smaller tasks.

The fact is that you simply cannot rely on your memory alone to keep track of all these details without getting overloaded.

These are some other problems associated with keeping too many things in your head:

- It leads to feelings of anxiety and overwhelm as the details begin to pile up and you become overloaded.
- It is very easy to forget something important.
- It is much easier to plan and prioritize when things are written down because you can contrast and compare.
- You waste time trying to remember what you need to do.
- It causes distractions, which prevent you from fully focusing and concentrating on your work.

What is the solution?

The best way to stop using your memory to keep track of things is to write them down!

Most people discover that they can handle a lot of information and details without getting overloaded, and they can work productively on a large number of projects and tasks, but only if they use a well-designed productivity system to help them conquer the chaos.

Achieve Planner is a proven time management system that can help you write things down using an effective to-do list that really works.

Click here to see how Achieve Planner helps you organize all your projects and tasks in one central place.

Mistake # 2 – Doing Whatever Grabs Your Attention Next

When you are done with your current task, how do you choose what to do next?

Many people don't stop long enough to even think about it, they just jump right in and do whatever grabs their attention next.

Why is it a problem?

It is a problem because the things that grab your attention are not always very important, and they often don't represent the best way to spend your time.

Things that grab your attention tend to be urgent. It could be the latest crisis, an interruption, a telephone call, or an impending deadline.

Do you remember the old adage "the squeaky wheel gets the grease"? Urgent things are often very squeaky!

The point is that urgent things are not always important, and important things are not always urgent. When you focus only on the urgent things each day, you won't leave enough time to deal with the things that are really important but not very urgent. This is what experts call the "tyranny of the urgent."

Another reason why this is a problem is that, in general, it is much more effective to work on related tasks for a block of time than to continuously jump from one unrelated task to another. It takes a certain amount of time to "switch gears" when working on unrelated tasks.

What is the solution?

The solution is to make a plan and then work your plan. Instead of doing whatever grabs your attention next, use your plan to figure out the best way to use your time based on your top priorities for the week. That way, you'll spend more of your time on important things, whether or not they are urgent.

In order for this to work, you need to use a to-do list that works, prioritize it based on importance and urgency, and use your list to plan out your week.

Your plan gives you a solid framework to decide moment-by-moment whether that squeaky wheel trying to grab your attention really is important, or whether it is just a distraction that you can postpone to a more appropriate time.

If you want to improve your time management skills fast, I recommend you check out the Effective Time Management program.

Mistake # 3 – Not Spending Enough Time on Your Top Priorities

If you find you are busy most of the day, but don't accomplish the things that really matter to you, you may be spending too much time on low priority items.

Why is it a problem?

These are some of the symptoms of poor prioritization:

1. Too much to do and not enough time

2. Feeling overwhelmed and out of control

3. Feeling under constant time pressure

4. Not making significant progress on important goals

Effective time managers quickly realize that they simply cannot do everything. They have to be selective with their limited amount of time and *consciously* choose to spend it on what is most important.

Whenever you start a task, you are automatically rejecting everything else you could have done with that time.

This is why it is so important for you to be the one choosing, rather than just going with the flow and allowing circumstances or other people to choose for you.

Prioritizing means taking conscious control of your choices and deciding to spend more time on the projects and tasks that are important and valuable, and less time on the ones that are not as important or valuable.

This may sound obvious, but the fact is that the vast majority of people don't put much thought on how they spend their time. They just flow through life doing whatever grabs their attention next, or repeating the same things day after day out of habit and routine.

Three common reasons for not spending enough time on your top priorities are:

1. Not prioritizing your to-do list. How can you spend your time on your top priorities if you don't even know what they are?

Achieve Planner is a proven time management system that uses the ABCD priority system to prioritize your to-do list.

2. Trying to FIND time for the important stuff. Another common reason is trying to FIND time for the important projects in an already busy and overcrowded schedule.

The fact is that you already have all the time you are ever going to get. Charles Bixton said, "You will never find time for anything. If you want time, you must make it."

If you feel like you don't have enough time to do something important you want to do, you have to learn how to MAKE time for it, even if that means delaying or eliminating other less important items from your schedule. You can't find more time, but you can always change the way you use the time you already have.

Time management trainers use the "big rocks" in the pickle jar demonstration to show why you need to MAKE time for the truly important stuff by getting it into your schedule FIRST, before all the filler work.

3. Drifting into trivia. Drifting into trivia is a phrase coined by Peter Drucker and describes the practice of drifting from important and valuable tasks into less important tasks.

There are many opportunities during each day for us to drift into trivia: remembering a phone call we need to make, coming across a piece of paper reminding us of some other project, getting an email asking us a question, a call from a colleague, a drop-in visitor, etc. Before you know it, the important task that you were working on has been hijacked by a much less important errand.

If you find yourself routinely working on unimportant things, you may be drifting into trivia more often than you think. Drifting into trivia is an easy way to escape doing an important but unpleasant task by jumping at the first chance to do something else, even when that something else is not at all important.

Drifting into trivia is not always easy to spot. Sometimes the work that you drift into seems important, but if you take a step back and reflect on what you are really trying to accomplish, you realize that the work doesn't really serve your objectives and is merely distracting you from what you need to do.

Spending more time playing with the fonts and graphs of a marketing report than working on the actual content, or working on a report that no one needs, are examples of drifting into trivia in the guise of doing productive work.

What is the solution?

Prioritization and planning are essential to make sure you spend enough of your time on your top priorities.

You'll find that you can make time for your truly important tasks, but only if you give them top priority in your schedule, and consciously choose them over the less important "filler" work.

Weekly Planning along with project blocks, which are sixty minutes of uninterrupted time that you allocate to your top-priority projects ahead of time, is a very powerful combination. If something trivial comes up during one of your project blocks, you can postpone it to a more appropriate time.

Achieve Planner has a Weekly Planning Wizard that helps you plan out your week using project blocks.

Mistake # 4 – Doing Very Efficiently That Which Need Not Be Done At All

According to management consultant Ben Tregoe, this is one of the worst ways you can waste your time, particularly when you don't even realize you are doing it.

Why is it a problem?

It should be obvious why spending your time doing unnecessary work is not a good time management practice, since you could be spending all that time doing other more important things.

Nobody really sets out to do unnecessary things. This is an all too common problem that you just fall into without realizing it.

Usually, one of these factors is to blame:

1. Perfectionism – Perfectionism tricks you into spending too much time perfecting tasks that should already be done.

2. Gold-Plating – Gold-plating is another form of perfectionism where you spend time doing unnecessary things that are easy, interesting, or fun, but that don't add any real value to your project.

3. Human nature – It is normal to want to escape something difficult, complex, or uncomfortable, and instead do something easy or fun. We all like the feeling of making progress, checking things off the to-do list, and doing competent work.

The problem occurs when we choose to make progress on "filler" low-priority tasks like organizing the desk, or returning some calls, instead of tackling an important project head-on. It is all too easy to fool ourselves into believing that these are important and necessary tasks, when in reality they are just escapes from our true priorities.

4. Lack of Clarity – It is easy to lose track of what you are ultimately trying to accomplish with a project, particularly when you are down in the trenches working on the low-level details. That is why it is important to regularly take a step back and take a good look at where you really want to go. Weekly planning is a useful tool to help you

review your ongoing projects from a longer-term perspective and reconnect with what you are ultimately trying to accomplish.

What is the solution?

The best way to avoid this common mistake is to catch yourself when you are falling into it and stop. Having a prioritized to-do list and a weekly plan really helps because you automatically assign more time to important things and less time to trivial ones.

As long as you [work on high priority tasks](#) before tackling lower priority things, your plan helps you avoid perfectionism and gold-plating because you simply run out of time and need to move on to something else.

The [Effective Time Management](#) program shows you how to implement all these ideas using a proven productivity system that works.

Mistake # 5 – Poor Planning

You've probably heard the saying "if you fail to plan, you plan to fail." Poor planning is one of the main reasons projects fail, fall behind schedule or miss their deadlines. It is also a contributing factor in many of the time management mistakes described here.

Without adequate planning, it is difficult to really understand what it will take to complete a project successfully. Lack of planning leads to inadequate preparation, unexpected problems, and poor execution.

Why it is a problem?

Planning is one of the most important activities in time management—it has been estimated that every minute spent planning can save three in execution—and yet it is one of the least practiced.

In fact, for most people, this mistake is not poor planning, but no planning at all!

There are many reasons people give for not planning: not enough time, don't really need it, won't work for me, it's too constraining, my work is too unpredictable, I'm a creative type, etc.

All these reasons are merely excuses and rationalizations. The real reason people don't plan is usually one of the following:

1. They don't understand the value. They don't know what their lack of planning is costing them. People who don't understand the value of planning often claim that they don't need to plan because they are doing well without any planning. The reality is that they are doing well despite their lack of planning, not because they are not planning. Effective planning would make them even more productive and capable of achieving even better results.

2. Immediate Gratification. Planning is a practice that doesn't provide immediate results; it takes time for your planning efforts to pay off. People that want to get their payoff now will find it difficult to escape their practice of poor planning. No planning is the path of least resistance.

3. They don't know how to plan effectively. This is probably the most common reason why people don't plan: they just don't know how to do it well.

Planning is a skill that is learned; there are good ways to do it, and there are bad ways to do it. Just because you can make a list doesn't mean you know how to plan.

People that think they know how to plan but really don't may honestly believe that they don't have enough time to plan, or that they don't need to plan, or that planning doesn't work for them. All of these statements may be true of poor planning, which can often be worse than no planning. However, these statements don't hold true for effective planning.

Overscheduling. Overscheduling is the practice of trying to plan your days, weeks, or projects with too much detail.

Overscheduling is usually an overcompensation to doing little or no planning by going to the other extreme. The problem is that the extra details being added to your plans don't add any real value—they don't make the plan any better—and in fact make it confusing and overly complicated.

Complicated plans and schedules tend to be inaccurate and difficult to follow leading to frustration.

Here is an example of an overscheduled day:

- Wake up at 7:30am
- 7:30am Shower (10 minutes)
- 7:40am Breakfast (10 minutes)
- 7:50am Commute to work (20 minutes)
- 8:10am Read email (20 minutes)
- 8:30am Voicemail (20 minutes)
- 8:50am Faxes (10 minutes)
- 9:00am – Call Steve regarding memo (5 minutes)
- 9:05am Prepare memo for John (15 minutes)
- 9:20am Coffee break (5 minutes)
- 9:25am Research for presentation (20 minutes)
- 9:45am Call Mike about presentation (5 minutes)
- 9:50am Prepare presentation (1 hour)
- 10:50am Bathroom break (5 minutes)
- 10:55am Prepare for team meeting

…

You get the idea. People not familiar with daily planning can easily fall into the trap of attempting to plan their time this way. This is not what effective planning looks like.

What is the solution?

The best way to escape the practice of poor planning is to learn how to plan effectively, and to do it consistently.

Planning your time at the project level using one-hour project blocks helps you plan your days without overscheduling them.

Mistake # 6 – Working in a Disorganized and Distracting Work Environment

While you may not have too much control over your work environment, there are things that you can do to remove distractions and organize your desk.

Piles of Paper. One of the symptoms of disorganization is the piles of paper that begin forming over your desk, over your filing cabinet, or even on the floor. A common practice for handling paperwork and notes is to just put them at the top of the closest pile!

Why it is a problem?

The practice of creating piles of paper becomes a problem when the level of disorganization in your desk and office start to cause you to forget important deadlines or assignments, misplace information that you need, or cause you to waste time searching through your piles for an important piece of paper you need to complete a task.

To overcome this problem you will need to bite the bullet and get your desk, office and email organized. However, before you launch into a full-out organization effort, you may need to resolve the underlying problems that caused you to fall into this practice in the first place; otherwise, you may have a hard time getting rid of the piles or notice that they start returning after just a few days.

Most people pile papers for one of three reasons.

Reason # 1: Lack of Inflow Management

First, they don't have a systematic way of handling new paperwork. They don't have a plan for dealing with the inevitable arrival of that new piece of paper, so they fall back on the path of least resistance: put it on top of the closest pile to look at it later when they have more time.

Problem is that time never comes and the piles just grow and grow. Julie Morgenstern, author of Organizing from the Inside-Out, says the number one cause for disorganization is that things don't have a "home," a place where each item naturally belongs.

Reason # 2: Need of a Reminder

The second reason people spread papers on their desk is as a way to remind them of something important they need to do.

Whenever something that needs their attention shows up, they put it on their desk as a reminder so they won't forget about it. This is a natural crutch for people that have reached the limit of what they can keep track of using their memory. Without the constant reminder, they would simply forget to do the important task.

The problem with this approach is precisely that you have a constant reminder of that task, even when you are trying to work on something else. This nagging distraction can prevent you from concentrating on your present work and being as productive as you can be. Now just multiply this effect by the ten or twenty different "reminders" on your desk and you get an idea of why it's difficult to concentrate and focus with a cluttered desk.

A better way to store these reminders is to capture work items in a productivity system. With such a system in place, you can keep these distractions off your desk without the fear of forgetting something important.

Reason # 3: Mental Context of Your Work

The third reason people place notes and papers on their desk is that it can give them a concrete idea of all the projects they are working on.

Some people have discovered that by spreading bits and pieces of their projects all over their desk and office, they can clear some of the information from their head and put it out in the open; it is their way of storing a "mental context" for each active project.

For example, the context could be the next person you need to call as part of your research, or the memo that contains key information you need to include in your marketing report.

This "mental context" serves as a crutch that relieves some of the stress, anxiety and overwhelm associated with keeping track of everything using memory alone and may even help them think more clearly.

The payoff they are getting from putting things out in the open more than compensates for the extra disorganization and wasted time searching for information.

Psychologist Alison Kidd argues that for many, piles of paper represent a way to cope with too much information and complexity. Since people cannot deal with this complexity using their memory, they have to put things out in the open.

They can't file the papers away because they would risk losing track of them and forgetting the important action or thoughts associated with them.

It should be clear that this is not the best way to get a "mental context" for your active projects; there are much better ways that don't involve keeping a cluttered desk with bits and pieces of your projects out in the open serving as regular distractions.

Once you setup a practical system for keeping track of all your active projects—a system you can use at any time to restore your mental context—the need for keeping a cluttered desk with papers out in the open begins to disappear.

If you do want/need to put things out in the open when working on a project, you just pull out all your relevant documents from your project file and spread them on your desk.

Some writers have said that they need to see their editorial scribbles on real paper because it helps them sort out their ideas. That's just fine.

The point is that when you are done with this project, you can collect all your paperwork and store it away knowing that you've captured the necessary context in your productivity system.

For example, you could capture where you left off and what you need to do next. The next time you work on this project, you'll know exactly where to start.

What is the solution?

Use a [productivity system](#) that helps you capture the context of all your active projects, so that you don't need to keep reminders out in the open.

Once you've resolved the three fundamental causes, you can get around to organizing your desk and your office without worrying about losing a valuable reminder or the context for an active project.

Mistake # 7 – Attempting To Do Too Much

In time management, the word 'overload' describes the condition of having too much work; more work than what we can normally handle. Overload can be the result of external circumstances such as a big deadline, a coworker's resignation, or a major crisis, but it is often self-inflicted.

There are times when we get overloaded due to extenuating circumstances beyond our control, and we have to put in extra time and effort to get through it; but these should be exceptions and not the rule. If you are consistently getting overloaded at work or in your other activities, the most likely cause is you.

Why is it a problem?

As I already mentioned, effective time managers quickly realize that they simply cannot do everything that is available to them. Whenever you choose to do something, you are automatically rejecting everything else that you could have done during that time.

When you attempt to do too much, you invariably end up shortchanging and neglecting important areas of your life that get left behind.

Most people would never choose to put serving on a committee ahead of their family, but they often do so without realizing it because of over-commitment.

People attempt too much for three main reasons.

The first is the same one that leads to overly optimistic schedules: underestimating how much time tasks will really take and overestimating how much we can do. This has been called the superman (or supermom) syndrome and comes from a sense of 'I can do it all myself, now get out of my way!'

Recent research suggests that many people believe they will have more free time in the future to accomplish their work because they don't expect to be as busy as they are now. They cannot foresee all the tasks they will be working on and tend to ignore the fact that new

and pressing demands on their time may also "pop-up" unexpectedly in the future.

As a result, they over-commit their time and end up attempting to do too much.

Other major psychological factors that play a role in attempting too much are an unhealthy need for overachievement, wanting to be productive all the time (with no downtime), insecurity outside of work, a desire to please others, perfectionism, and gold-plating.

The second main reason people attempt too much is the related worst practice of always saying 'yes' to requests for your time. As more and more commitments start to pile up, your inability to say 'no' to new requests eventually leads you to attempt to do too much.

The third main reason people attempt to do too much is guilt. Guilt is a powerful emotion that can have a great deal of influence over our thoughts and actions. Guilt is not always a bad emotion: it can warn you that you are doing something that is weighing on your conscience and deserves further consideration.

The problem with tasks that are only done out of guilt is that they often don't really resolve the underlying problem, and can lead you to sacrifice your own long-term well-being for the temporary relief from the guilt you are feeling. Since all these extra tasks you are doing can keep you very busy, they can be a way to avoid facing the real issue.

What is the solution?

The first step in overcoming the worst practice of attempting too much is to realize that you can do almost anything you want, but you cannot do everything.

At some point, you have to choose what you are going to give up in order to accomplish what is truly important and meaningful in your life. Unless you accept the fact that you cannot do everything as a fundamental truth, you will continue falling into the worst practice of attempting too much and all the negative consequences that come with it.

The best practices of prioritizing, planning, and managing your workload are valuable tools that can help you decide which tasks are truly important and which tasks need to go.

If you are constantly overloaded and you don't think that you are attempting too much, you could still be partially at fault. Even when it seems that all the causes of your overload are external circumstances such as impeding deadlines, too many demands from your boss or co-workers, or a big crisis, if overload keeps happening to you over and over again you have some responsibility in the matter.

Overload is an unfortunate side-effect of many of the other time management mistakes described here. You may need to address some of these other problem areas before your workload will stabilize to normal levels.

The [Effective Time Management](#) program shows you how to put all these ideas into practice using a proven productivity system that works.

Mistake # 8 – Always Saying 'Yes'

Saying 'yes' to requests for your time is not always a bad practice. In fact, the better you are at managing your time and your projects, the more likely it is that you will be chosen to handle important tasks that need to be completed quickly with quality and care.

Taking on and completing important projects can be very rewarding and can lead to promotions and bonuses.

Why is it a problem?

The problem occurs when you say 'yes' to almost any request no matter what it is, who is asking, or how much work you already have on your plate.

Always saying 'yes' is a major source of overload and stress, and it can lead you away from your top priorities into less important tasks. If you want to avoid the work and stress associated with attempting too much, you need to decide carefully whether to accept new tasks or not.

People that say 'yes' when they should be saying 'no' usually do it for one of two reasons.

1. Saying 'Yes' automatically without thinking about the request.

This could be a reaction you save for certain people like your boss, or a family member, or the president of your volunteer group, or it could just be your normal way of dealing with requests.

Perhaps you feel good about serving and feel that by accepting the extra responsibility you are making a difference. Maybe you feel that taking on the extra work is the best way to get that promotion you've been waiting for. Both of these are perfectly valid reasons for accepting a new project; but when you accept every task thrown at you, you will quickly reach the point of attempting too much for your own good. When you do, your overload will produce stress, lower your physical and mental wellbeing, and reduce your productivity and effectiveness.

People that say 'yes' automatically usually don't realize how much each new commitment is costing them. Remember that you can do almost anything, but you cannot do everything. Whenever you accept a new task or responsibility, you are always giving up something else.

You could be giving up your free time, or an extra twenty minutes of sleep, or time that you would have spent with your family, or exercising. Without realizing it, you could be choosing to spend your valuable time doing trivial things instead of what is most important to you. Every time you choose to do something, you always give up something else you could have done with that time.

If you put a frog in a pot of boiling water, it will immediately jump out. However, if you put it in a pot of warm water, and slowly raise the temperature, you end up with a boiled frog.

If someone came to you and gave you twenty projects to work on over the next couple of weeks all at the same time, you would certainly take notice and have to at least consider what you would have to give up to complete the extra work.

However, when the new tasks come in slowly, trickling in one at a time, it is more difficult to realize what you are giving up until you've already overcommitted. Don't end up like the boiled frog.

2. Internal motivations such as guilt, desire to please, and fear of rejection.

If you have taken the first important step and are now considering each request before accepting, but you still find yourself overloaded because of saying 'yes' too much, you may be facing a psychological barrier that is holding you back.

The most common ones are a desire to please, fear of rejection, and guilt. You may be saying 'yes' because of a payoff you are receiving (feeling useful), or because it is the path of least resistance (don't want to confront the asker.)

Mahatma Gandhi said, "A 'No' uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoid trouble."

What is the solution?

If you want to escape from the worst practice of always saying 'yes,' your first step has to be to promise yourself to consider each request carefully before accepting it, instead of doing it automatically.

Make it your new habit to always stop and think before accepting a request no matter what it is or who is asking. Then at least you will be making an informed conscious decision fully aware of what you are giving up in order to accept the extra responsibility.

It also helps if you KNOW how many projects you are already working on and what your top priorities are right now. That's why having a productivity system, like Achieve Planner, helps you make the right decision for each request.

Mistake # 9 – Not Managing Your Inflows

Workflow management is one of the aspects of knowledge work that traditional forms of time management have been unable to address adequately.

'Workflow' refers to the way in which work flows through an organization from one person to the next. In an assembly line or factory environment, workflow is tightly controlled as part of the manufacturing process. Work arrives in well-defined units and is passed from one individual to the next in a very predictable manner.

Workflow in knowledge work is very different. New work can arrive in many different ways. You can receive an email, a phone call, a memo, a drop-in visitor, or an action item in a meeting; you can also create work for yourself as you discover and define the tasks needed to complete a project, or you get an idea on how to reduce costs or improve a product.

Why is it a problem?

With all these different sources of work and interdependencies between people and groups, workflow management becomes increasingly important for knowledge workers.

Without it, it is very easy to get overwhelmed with all the numerous demands of your time and things can easily start to fall through the cracks.

Combined with using your memory to keep track of things, inadequate workflow management leads to forgotten requests, incomplete work, misplaced information, and general feelings of anxiety and overwhelm.

Inadequate workflow management is a combination of the following factors.

Lack of Inflow 'Filtering'

Your 'inflow' represents the various ways in which people can communicate new information or requests to you. Typical inputs are email, phone calls, meetings, faxes, regular mail, and drop-in visitors.

Communications you receive through each of these inputs can contain new work, but they can just as easily contain passive information (announcements, discussions) or be completely irrelevant (junk mail).

The most effective way to handle these different communications depends on their content: some need to be handled right away, others should be postponed or delegated, others should be filed away, and the rest should be trashed.

No System for Capturing New Work

Since new work can arrive through so many different means, it is very easy for certain items to get lost in the shuffle unless you have a systematic way of capturing new work items and adding them to your to-do list.

When you have hundreds of emails in your inbox, two dozen sticky notes all over your monitor, a big pile of paper on the side of your desk, and you are using your memory to keep track of it all, how can you really expect to remember what you need to work on next? Let alone figure out the best way to use your time.

The main reason for inadequate workflow management is the lack of a systematic way of handling, capturing, and processing all your different inputs and projects.

What is the solution?

The key is to [use a system that helps you to capture & process each new item effectively](), determine any relevant work, and write it down in the right place so you won't forget about it.

Mistake # 10 – Confusing Activity with Productivity

This final mistake is usually the result of a mismatch between the lower tactical levels of time management and the more strategic levels where goals, vision and purpose come into play.

The key realization is that just because you are active and busy that doesn't mean that you are being productive or making significant progress.

You can stay very busy doing meaningless work that doesn't bring you closer to your ultimate goals, or spending countless hours fixing problems and putting out fires that could have been avoided by understanding what you are truly trying to accomplish.

Once you master the fundamentals of time management, you need to begin looking at the higher levels of purpose, mission, vision and goals to continue improving your productivity and effectiveness.

Goals to Action shows you how to integrate time management and goal setting to maximize your productivity and get the right things done.

Take a look at the special report, *How To Get The Right Things Done*, that came with the Productivity Start-Up Kit for more details.

Bonus Mistake: Not Taking Enough Time for Recovery and Renewal

Here is a bonus mistake that can quickly erode your productivity and effectiveness.

Not taking enough time to rest, recover and renew your energy can quickly lead to decreased productivity because we are not machines. When we are constantly overloaded with too much work, our productivity can quickly begin to suffer.

This is particularly true in knowledge work, where creativity, concentration, ingenuity, and problem solving are essential parts of the job.

Some studies have suggested that performance can decrease by as much as 25% when knowledge workers work an excess of 60 hours per week for prolonged periods of time. This performance degradation can often negate almost all the benefits of the extra time spent at the office.

The cause of the decreased productivity is often physical and mental fatigue, which leads to slower work, more mistakes, and wasted time. Another common problem is "presenteeism," where people are physically present at work but distracted and unfocused.

Since presenteeism prevents workers from concentrating and becoming fully engaged in their work, they may be putting in the long hours but not really accomplishing much during that extra time.

While it is sometimes necessary to put in extra hours at work to complete a critical project or meet an important deadline, you need to ensure that it is an exception and not your normal way of working.

Additional Resources

Effective Time Management Program

In this foundational program, you'll learn the best and most effective time management techniques and strategies, and discover a proven system to help you implement them.

This program integrates new, cutting-edge techniques with tried and true productivity practices. By combining "how to" knowledge and skills that you need to manage your time well, with some advanced conditioning and visualization tools that help you think like effective time managers, this program gives you everything you need to get organized, significantly increase your productivity and get more done in less time.

Click Here Now To Take Control Of Your Time And Get Things Done!

How to Download Your Free 30-Day Software Trial

With the help of the right tool, you CAN get a lot more done, you CAN feel more focused and productive while you work, and you CAN regain a sense of control over your tasks, your schedule and your life.

Achieve Planner is a powerful Windows productivity software system that helps you get organized, increase your productivity and make better use of your time.

- Easily work with multiple projects without feeling overwhelmed

- Use color-coded priorities to focus on what is most important

- Plan your weeks and days for maximum productivity

- Never miss another deadline again

- Save time and significantly increase your productivity

- Get a lot more done!

Imagine if you could find a comprehensive productivity system that really helps you keep track of all your projects and tasks, focus on what is most important, feel like you are finally in control of your time, and dramatically increases your productivity.

Well, you don't have to wait any longer because that's what Achieve Planner can do for you!

Click Here to Learn More and Download Your Free 30-Day Trial

Take the Tour and See How AP Helps You Work More Effectively

About the Author

Rodger Constandse is the President of Effexis, a company providing strategies, tools, and training programs to help clients increase their productivity and achieve their goals.

Rodger is the primary developer of the popular productivity software program Achieve Planner that has benefited thousands of users worldwide.

Rodger is also the developer of the Goals to Action system, integrating goal setting and time management principles in one powerful package that helps you connect your daily actions to your purpose, mission, vision and goals.