



Time Is Money And So Much More.

You're wasting [21.8 hours every week](#). Over a year that's 1,133.6 hours, or 47 days. To really put this in perspective, you're wasting over one and a half months every year. You think that you're working 12 months a year, but no. You're working 10.5 months a year.

There's a reason you're doing this, and it doesn't have to be this way. Time wasting should be at the top of every person's priority list, but it's not. Why? They're too busy wasting their time.

If you want to reclaim your life and those 47 days a year then read on. Here are [4 Ways You're Wasting Your Time \(And What You Can Do About It\)](#).

#1

Mistaking Efficiency For Effectiveness.

“Efficiency is doing the thing right. Effectiveness is doing the right thing.”
— Peter Drucker

Most people researching productivity tips spend about 90% of their time reading about cool new to-do apps, email tools, or note-taking software. In reality, these tools improve your productivity by about only 10%. They make you just a little more efficient.

But, efficiency is not what it's about. Not until you've covered a fundamental building block of productivity — the one thing most people skip. I believe the obsession with efficiency is a massive distraction from the one thing that matters most in productivity: effectiveness.

Being effective is all about working on the right things. The tasks and projects that truly move the needle. This is what yields the most productive results. Logically, it's where you should spend the majority of your time, energy, and attention.

Efficiency, on the other hand, is about doing any task — no matter the importance — a little faster and a little better. Of course, that's good. Especially when applied to highly valuable tasks and projects. But it's not nearly as essential as most people make it.

If your goal is productivity then effectiveness, not efficiency, is where you should focus. Are you doing the RIGHT thing?

Productivity isn't about being a workhorse, keeping busy or burning the midnight oil... It's more about priorities, planning and fiercely protecting your time."

— Margarita Tartakovsky

#2

Failure To Prioritize.



Prioritization is critical when it comes to being effective. You need to become a master at separating the essential from the non-essential. Identifying the vital few among the trivial many. Picking the mission-critical tasks among the clutter.

One of the best ways to prioritize your tasks and projects is by asking yourself high-quality questions. Here are a few of my personal favorites:

Are the tasks and projects I'm currently working on the most productive use of my time? Or could I make a significantly bigger impact working on other tasks and projects?

If I could work only 3 days per week, what tasks or projects would I work on — and which ones would I eliminate, outsource, or delegate?

If I could work on only 3 tasks for the rest of this year, which tasks would I pick? 90% Of Productivity Is About Being Effective

Once again, I can't stress the importance enough: About 90% of the impact is made by being truly effective — by working on tasks and projects that actually matter. Only 10% of the impact comes from efficiency.

You can have all the productivity apps in the world and work incredibly fast and focused, but if you're working on low-impact projects, it doesn't really matter. In that case, efficiency is just a distraction from productivity.

On the other hand, if you know your priorities and protect your time and energy for them, it doesn't matter that much at what level of efficiency you operate. Your work makes an impact — and that's real productivity.

Once you've set to become effective, being efficient makes the next stage of productivity. Doing more than one task at a time, especially more than one complex task, takes a toll on productivity.

Although that shouldn't surprise anyone who has talked on the phone while checking E-mail or talked on a cell phone while driving, the extent of the problem might come as a shock.

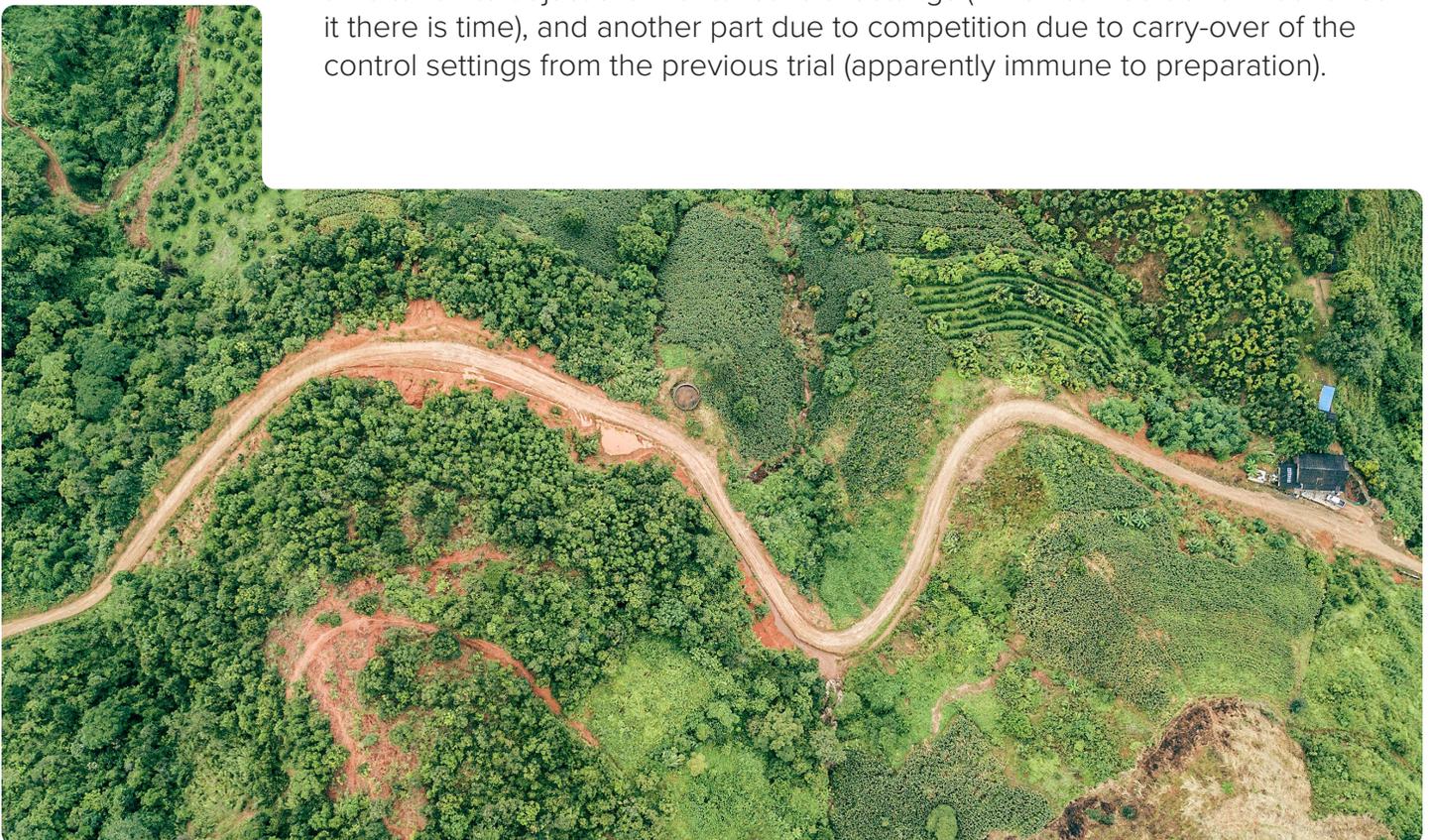
Psychologists who study what happens to cognition (mental processes) when people try to perform more than one task at a time have found that the mind and brain were not designed for heavy-duty multitasking. Psychologists tend to liken the job to choreography or air-traffic control, noting that in these operations, as in others, mental overload can result in catastrophe.

Multitasking can take place when someone tries to perform two tasks simultaneously, switch, from one task to another, or perform two or more cognitively taxing tasks in rapid succession. To determine the costs of this kind of mental "juggling," psychologists conduct task-switching experiments.

By comparing how long it takes for people to get everything done, the psychologists can measure the cost in time for switching tasks. They also assess how different aspects of the tasks, such as complexity or familiarity, affect any extra time cost of switching.

In the mid-1990s, Robert Rogers, PhD, and Stephen Monsell, D.Phil, found that even when people had to switch completely predictably between two tasks every two or four trials, they were still slower on task-switch than on task-repeat trials. Moreover, increasing the time available between trials for preparation reduced but did not eliminate the cost of switching.

There thus appear to be two parts to the switch cost -- one attributable to the time taken to adjust the mental control settings (which can be done in advance if there is time), and another part due to competition due to carry-over of the control settings from the previous trial (apparently immune to preparation).



#3

Lack Of Systemization.

Looking at all the main systems you use in your business should be at least an annual event. Each system needs to be reviewed and objectively assessed whether it meets the needs of the business. Systems can take many shapes and forms, but there are 3 main ways to create systems in your business and at least these three areas need to be addressed on an annual basis.

Planning

Yes, planning is a system. Its easy to get overwhelmed with the idea of planning because there are so many gurus and "thought leaders" constantly talking about it. Planning is essential for time management. Under the umbrella of planning are several different elements that significantly affect your management of time.

1) Manage Your Tasks

The first way to plan is to clearly define and organize your tasks. Task management is at the root of most time-management issues. The temptation to keep everything your head is killing your productivity and your peace.

2) Set Time Boundaries

Planning involved setting time limits for your work keeps you on-task and prevents work from spilling over into the rest of your life. When you know that you only have a specific window inside which you're allowed to work on a task, it motivates you to focus and get the work done in a reasonable time frame. Always remember, work expands to fill the time you have to do it. Plan the amount of time you will give to specific work and stick to that time.

3) Plan Your Planning

It's not necessary to be constantly planning. This is why so many people fail at planning. They think planning means that every single morning they have to spend 30 minutes planning, or they have to take 4 hours at the start of a month and plan out every moment of their month.

This is not only a waste of time, it is unproductive because plans are always subject to change. It's much better to build a filing system where you put all the things you need to plan, then give yourself a limit of things in that depository. For example, once you have 4 things that you need to plan written down in your depository, then you take an hour and plan for those 4 things. This way you're only planning when you need to and you have a purpose for it every time.

Documentation

Documentation is the most overlooked system in business. In this digital world it's incredibly easy to think that we know where our docs and information are located. When we go to look for them though, we often get completely lost. Files that should ordinarily take just seconds to access, could take hours to hunt down.

Creating a documentation system is essential to managing customer information, sales and marketing, finances, employee data, and everything else you need to have at your fingertips.

The best way to do this is to establish a cloud storage system that can be accessed by anyone who needs it, from anywhere. This is most likely going to be something like Microsoft Sharepoint, Dropbox, Google Drive, etc...

Software

In the modern business landscape we can sometimes feel like we're drowning in software tools. If you feel that way, it's likely that you're using too many tools and also not using the right ones. There are a couple incredibly powerful and essential tools you should be using to create systems in your business.

1) Project Management

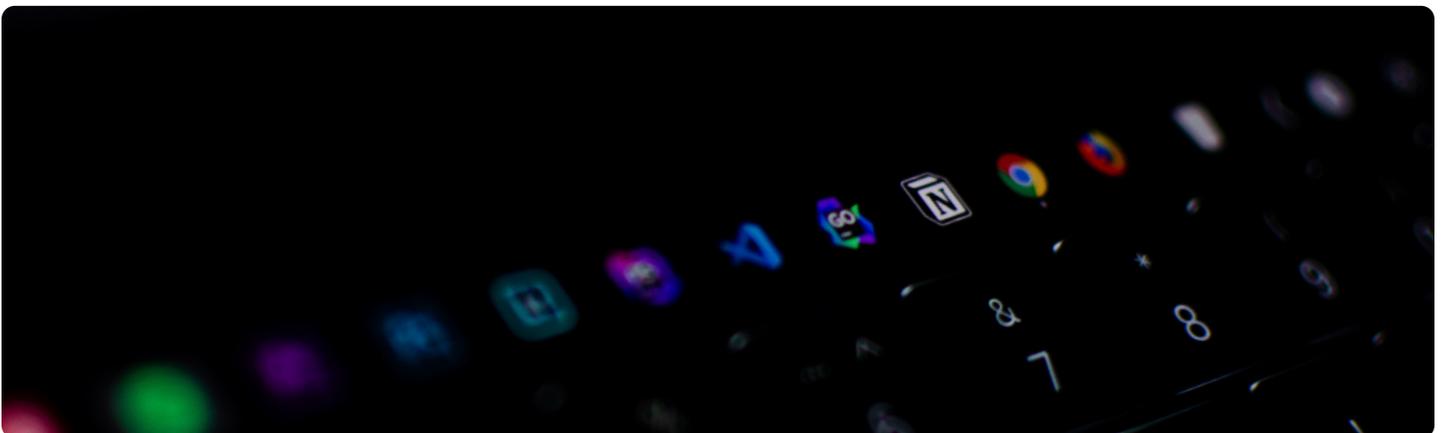
Depending on your business, project management is likely to be a part of your systemization. Managing customer projects without project management tools is inefficient and likely to lead to unhappy customers. [Asana](#) is a powerful project management tool that is free to use until your team gets to a certain size.

2) Finance

Managing business finances without a software tool will lead to mistakes, missed payments, and tax issues. There are many finance software tools that are free to use and will accomplish a large portion of what you need. [Wave](#) is a great place to get started here.

3) Workspace

Because of the cloud, the days of in-person collaboration are behind us. Workspace software allows you to build a digital depository that can be accessed by anyone who needs it. [Notion](#) is a powerful software tool that combines elements of project management and document housing to create an easy-to-use cloud collaboration workspace.



#4

Mistreating Your Personal Time.

“Time is what we want most, but what we spend worst.”

— William Penn

1) Protect Your Time Fiercely

Good time management skill is an asset when it comes to staying organized. When you organize your time on any scale, you automatically create order.

There are lots of ways to slice your working hours every day. 8 hours is a lot of time you may be spending on too many things that have little or no value to your long-term goal —low-value meetings, reacting to urgent but unimportant emails, social browsing, responding to notifications etc.

Time management works on a weekly basis when you’re making important plans and establishing recurring events. It works on a monthly basis when you’re deciding where you need to be and when. It also works on an annual basis when you’re planning which events to attend, or when to start a new habit.

A little bit of organization can go an incredibly long way toward increasing effectiveness, boosting productivity, and creating new habits that foster the efficiency you crave.

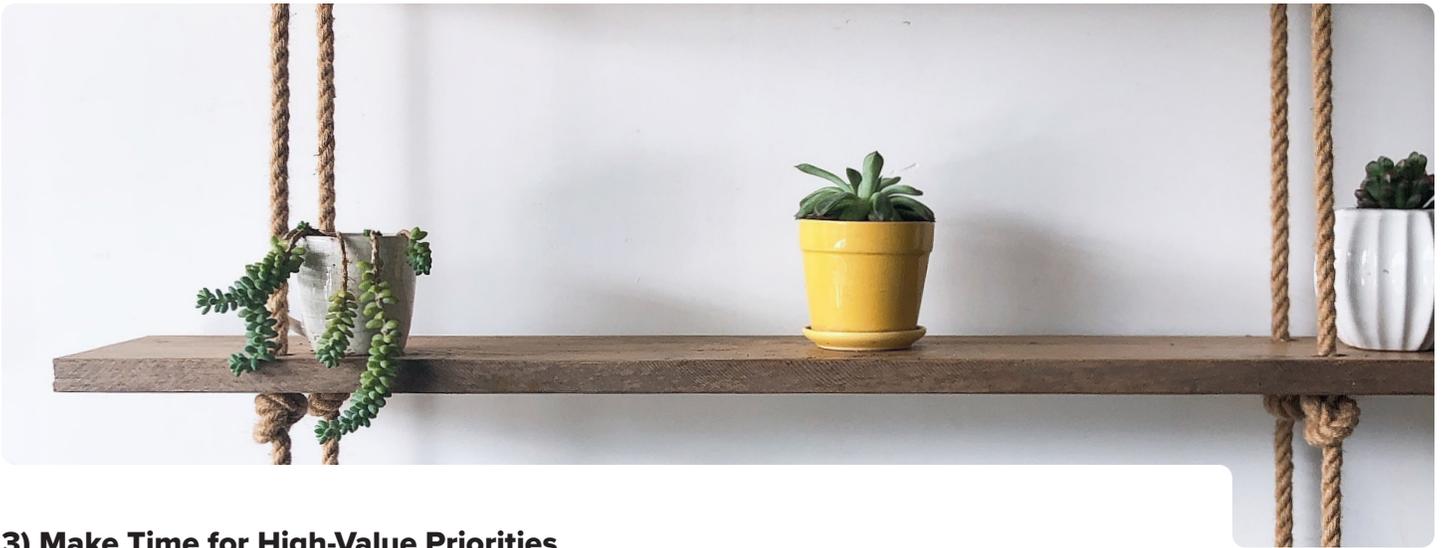
2) Have a Place For Everything — and Put it There

Highly organized people strongly adhere to the “a place for everything and everything in its place” philosophy, which makes it much easier to stay organized. They are habitual declutterers. Decide where your keys will go and put them in the same place every time you walk through the door.

Store away summer clothes in winter to declutter your closets. Declutter your drawers and get rid of everything you don’t need to make room for things you’ll actually need and use.

“Keep only those things that speak to your heart. Then take the plunge and discard all the rest. By doing this, you can reset your life and embark on a new lifestyle,” recommends Marie Kondō, author of *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*.

“I recommend you dispose of anything that does not fall into one of three categories: currently in use, needed for a limited period of time, or must be kept indefinitely,” she writes in her book. By getting rid of, or storing away, things you only use occasionally (or things you never use but can’t seem to part with), you create instant organization. That’s because you know where the things you really, truly use are and that automatically makes them easier to find when you need them.



3) Make Time for High-Value Priorities

What are the priorities in your life? Organized people block their priorities — relationships, personal development, career growth, financial goals, healthy habits etc. Everyone’s priority list is different but the same concept can be used to make time for the most important things in your life.

With a printed calendar (versus the one on your phone) you can create a colour-coded, time blocked schedule that keeps everyone and everything in your world organized.

Time blocks also help you schedule downtime, dinner plans, and important client tasks. Need to beat a deadline? Schedule in five uninterrupted work hours. Have a repeating weekly event? Build a time block into your calendar. Need to just create daily routines?

Time blocks can help you do it. Learn to break your day, week, or month into valuable time blocks to improve your personal efficiency, increase your productivity and recover from your workload.

4) Purge Your Schedule to Build Efficient Routines

It can be tough to get things done when you feel as though your schedule is taking over your life. Occasionally purging your schedule saves you time and helps you achieve your goals as planned (monthly or quarterly).

The aim of a productivity purge is to reduce unnecessary repetition and improve your autopilot routines. It’s an opportunity to analyse every task or action, and identify items you can move around, delegate, slice, spread out, or even stop working on right away if it’s not helping you get closer to your goals.

“The productivity purge is a necessary piece of project gardening. By doing these regularly, you keep yourself focused on what’s important. You get at least one month after every purge in which serious work gets done on a small number of projects,” says Cal Newport, author of *Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World*.

It might seem irrelevant and unimportant to set aside time to pause and purge unnecessary tasks from your routine when you have a lot to do. But that time to analyse your routine, measure your results and make that important change may be the fresh start you need to get more done.

5) Have a Routine — Even On Nights and Weekends

How you spend your days is how you spend your life, which is why it's so important to carve out daily routines. A life without a positive daily routine or structure is so much more draining mentally, physically, and emotionally than you can ever imagine!

To make the most of your day, develop a routine for when you awake, for when you first start working, for when you finish your workday, and for the end of your evening.

Whether you wake up 30 minutes before everyone else in your family, read important news every morning or workout at the same time after work, routines provide stability and organization to each day.

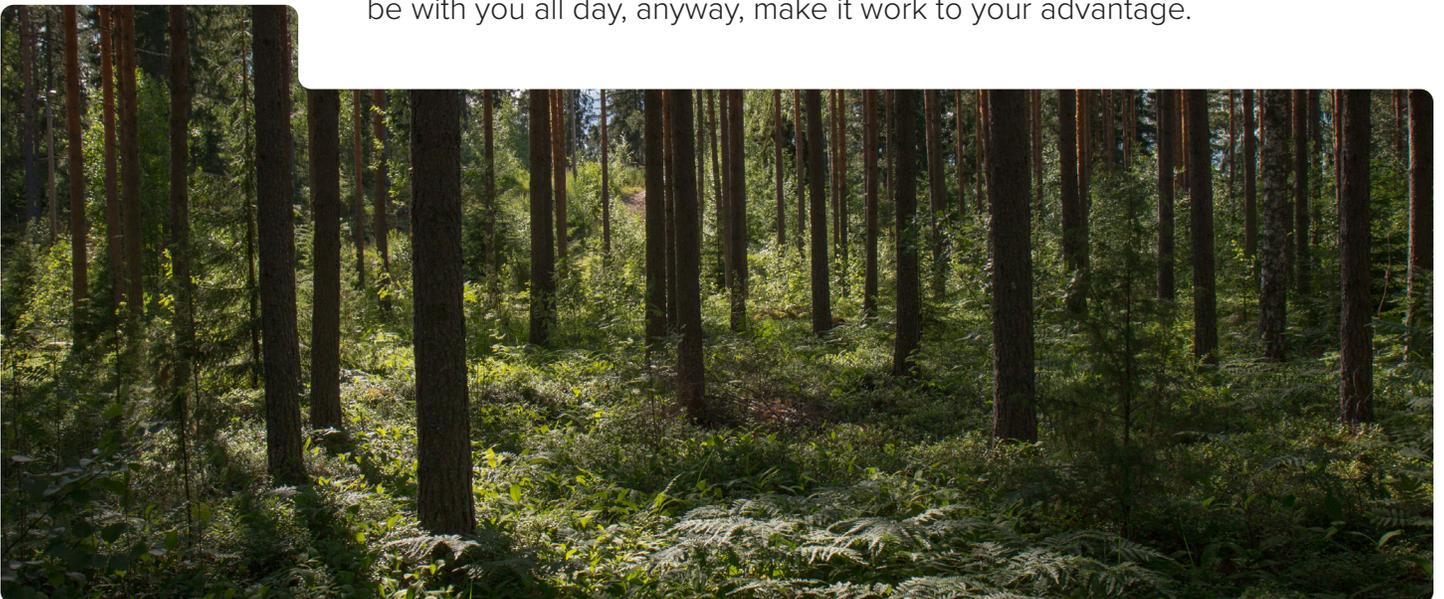
Routines predetermine your schedule, allowing you to use your time efficiently. They provide a sense of structure and familiarity. You wake up with a sense of ownership, order, and organization of your life.

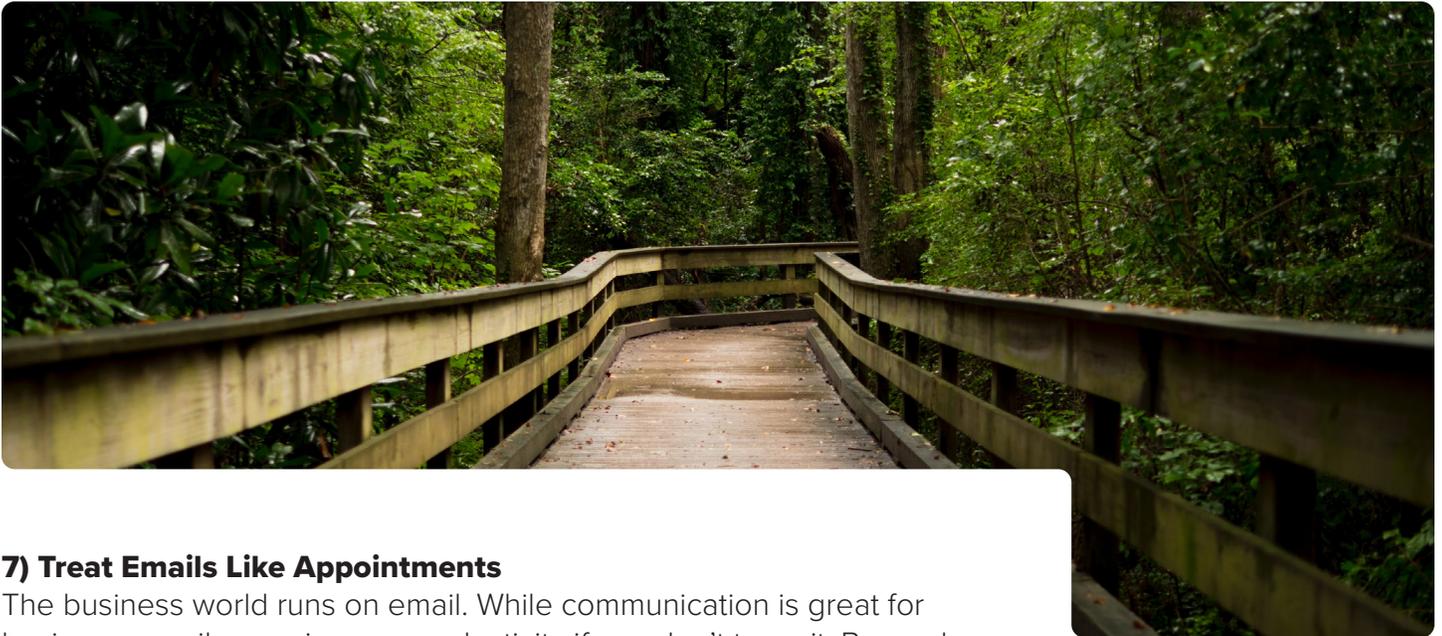
6) Configure Your Phone to Work For You, Not Against You

Our phones connect us with people we love, help us work on the go, and make online purchases easier. But if not managed, your phone can work against you — notifications, badges, banners, games, inboxes and social media can create an environment of interruption and distraction. But you can change that.

That amazing little device gives us access to an incredible suite of organizational and productivity tools — use them to organise your life and work. Use your notes app to make shopping lists. Use your photo app to organize picture albums.

Use productivity apps to organize work. Use the calendar app to purge unnecessary tasks, block off time and organize your day. Almost every activity of your day-to-day life can be found in an app. Since your phone is going to be with you all day, anyway, make it work to your advantage.





7) Treat Emails Like Appointments

The business world runs on email. While communication is great for business, email can ruin your productivity if you don't tame it. Beyond necessary communication (sending and responding to important emails that advance work), email can be just as much of a distraction as it is a great communication tool.

Learning when it's productive to pay attention to email and when you should ignore it is a necessary skill. It's counterproductive to check your inbox every five minutes. To defend your time from unnecessary emails, schedule time to check or respond to incoming emails. This keeps the incoming work in order while getting other tasks completed.

To tame the chaos, you need an ongoing process for managing incoming emails; prioritising and weighing the value of different messages appropriately and responding to them at the right time without interfering with your workflow.

In Gmail, you can create tabs that tell your emails where to go when you receive them. That little touch of organisation could mean you never have to see a spam email, again, except when you empty your spam folder. Many email providers have that same functionality and organization tools.

Another way to organize your email inbox is to have multiple email addresses. Multiple email addresses will allow you to have one email for work, one for entering contests and signing up for freebies, and one for whatever else you want. Since people communicate by email on an ever-increasing basis, you can save an incredible amount of time with this simple organization hack.

Finally, build email responses into those beneficial time blocks by opening emails only at certain times of the day and not allowing yourself to get sucked into the email rabbit hole over and over on a daily basis. You'd be surprised how much organization you can lose just by losing control of your time in small batches.