
STRENGTHENING YOUR PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity has many definitions. How you choose to define it will be based on your point of view. It can be thought of as a measure of efficiency (doing things right) and effectiveness (doing the right things). For you to understand just how productivity can impact on your life, you first have to understand a little about what personal productivity is and how its improvement can enhance your development.

The European Productivity Agency defines productivity as *'A state of mind... an attitude that seeks continuous improvement of what exists. It is a conviction that one can do better today than yesterday and that tomorrow will be better than today'*.

Strengthening your personal productivity enables you to fully utilise some of your positive characteristics and/or improve the negative traits you may have. By doing this you can accomplish many tasks more efficiently. A high level of personal productivity is the result of a combination of planning, organisation and hard work. There are many benefits to being proactive about completing a task. Such things can be achieved by ensuring that stress levels are reduced as a result of reduced procrastination, the improvement of personal and work habits such as time management, increased motivation, focus and dedication and setting personal timelines for task completion. You can actually try implementing the following as tips to improving your personal productivity.

Determine how much time you have available-

One of the most valuable resources that you have is time. Once you determine how much of it you have, you are then able to figure out how many tasks you can realistically complete in that set period.

In doing this, you will become better able to manage your time efficiently and this is considered a very important skill, whether it is in your studies, in your career or just within your personal life.

List what tasks you would like to accomplish during this time and prioritise them!-

Having established goals and making a list of them, enables you to see what you will be dedicating your time towards. You should then be able to prioritise the tasks on the list – decide which goals are most important, which deadlines that need to be met and which will take the least time to complete. Having better time management skills therefore improves how well you will be able to effectively manage your time for the tasks which you have organised. Setting a specific time to complete each task also allows you to know how much you can get done in any given day.

Focus and then split the tasks listed into smaller, more manageable tasks-

Setting priorities enhances focus and enables you to see the big picture clearly. Once you have set your target, you can then determine how you should go about accomplishing your goals. This can easily be done by breaking up your major tasks into smaller bits that would be easier to manage and would therefore allow you to concentrate on one thing at a time.

Creating a to-do list also gives you an advantage because it helps you to physically track your accomplishments. This can also provide you with the additional determination needed to stick to your path and reduce procrastination.

Start working quickly-

After creating your personal to-do list of your smaller, more manageable tasks, you should immediately start working on your first assignment. Completing the first one and then starting on the next, always marking off each task completed on your to-do list, and finally monitoring your time allows you to sustain the momentum needed to achieve your goal. It tells you how far off your schedule you are and also gives you time to rethink your strategy if you have fallen behind. It can also help you to identify the time of day that you get the most of your work done, i.e. your peak times.

Stay motivated and dedicated, keep a positive attitude!-

Being able to manage your time well and strategizing causes you to stay on your course and helps to fuel your motivation. We all experience a good feeling from knowing that we have extra time to spare or that we have successfully completed all of our tasks within the time which we have set aside to do them. This thereby inspires you to aim higher and to do better which in itself bodes well for productivity.

Being productive should be the aim of every individual, regardless of age or station. By maximising our resources, we can be significant contributors to our schools, businesses and society as a whole.

