



Time: It's Not How Much You Have, It's How You Chunk It!

No matter how many new technological innovations are created to improve our efficiency and productivity, there are still just 24 hours in every day.

This limitation leads to missed business, deadlines and opportunities. It also results in feelings of guilt and inadequacy, and a huge amount of stress. And while you can't add more hours to the day, you CAN make better use of the hours you have.

It's called time chunking, and it's a whole new way of looking at your day. Begin by assessing which of your tasks need "solid" chunks of time and which need "spilt" chunks.

Solid Time Chunks

If time chunking is going to work for you, it's imperative that you book these solid time blocks in your schedule and protect them from distractions or things that seem urgent but aren't.

Here are the two types of tasks to reserve for your solid time chunks:

1. *Big Thinking*. Tasks that need a running start and that require creative or strategic thinking, such as planning and writing. Each time you stop and start these tasks, you lose time as well as thinking power.
2. *Production Line*. Any task that follows the same sequence of steps each time. For example, processing emails, paying bills, invoicing and shipping tasks can be handled much more efficiently if you get them all done at once. All the tools you need are in front of you and you're "in the groove" of that particular task. Use a checklist to guide your work.

Split Time Chunks

This is "found" time, such as waiting on hold or in line, traveling by public transportation, or if you arrive early for a meeting. Keep a list of tasks you can do wherever you are. Important note: Be sure to have a system in place for transferring information back to your desk, computer or project folder if you're working remotely.

Here's what you can check off your list during your split time chunks:

1. *Project Details*. For example, booking or confirming a meeting time or picking something up from the printer. Phone calls and brief email responses (that you identified when you “processed” your email during a solid time chunk) also fit into this category.
2. *Miscellaneous*. Tasks that may not be associated with a specific project but still need to get done, such as ordering office supplies or replying to general inquiries and customer service requests.

When you do the right task in the right chunk of time, you’ll be amazed at how much more productive you are! Your “to do” list will get shorter, you’ll enjoy more peace of mind and you’ll stop wasting time trying to recapture your creative flow.

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