




Time Management

**Beat Work Overload. Be More Effective.
Achieve More.**

Introduction

- This seminar will teach you time management skills. You will learn simple, practical techniques that have helped the leading people in business, sport and public service reach the high point of their careers.
- The **skills** taught in this seminar will help everyone **become highly effective**, by showing how to identify and focus on the activities that can give everyone the greatest returns. Doing this will save time for everybody and help **work smarter, not harder**. What's more, these same techniques can help beat work overload – a key source of stress



I divided the techniques in six categories that are listed below and that can help you find specific skills, and develop the ability to properly manage your time.

- **Prioritization**
- **Scheduling**
- **Time Management Challenges**
- **Concentration and Focus**
- **Goal Setting**
- **Self-Motivation**

Prioritization

Making Best Use of Your Time and Resources

- Prioritization is the **essential skill** you need to make the very best use of your **own efforts** and those of your team. It's also a skill that you need to **create calmness** and space in your life so that you can **focus your energy and attention** on the **things that really matter**.
- It is particularly important when time is limited and demands are seemingly unlimited. It helps you to allocate your time where it is most-needed and most wisely spent, freeing you and your team up from less important tasks that can be attended to later, or quietly dropped.
- With good prioritization (and careful management of reprioritized tasks) you can bring order to chaos, massively reduce stress, and move towards a successful conclusion. **Without it, you'll flounder around, drowning in competing demands.**

Simple Prioritization

At a simple level, you can prioritize based on time constraints, on the potential profitability or benefit of the task you're facing, or on the pressure you're under to complete a job:

- Prioritization based on project value or profitability is probably the most commonly-used and rational basis for prioritization. Whether this is based on a subjective guess at value or a sophisticated financial evaluation, it often gives the most efficient results.
- Time constraints are important where other people are depending on you to complete a task, and particularly where this task is on the critical path of an important project. Here, a small amount of your own effort can go a very long way.
- And it's a brave (and maybe foolish) person who resists his or her boss's pressure to complete a task, when that pressure is reasonable and legitimate.

Prioritization Tools

While these simple approaches to prioritization suit many situations, there are plenty of special cases where you'll need other tools if you're going to be truly effective. We look at some of these below:

- **Paired Comparison Analysis**

Paired Comparison Analysis is most useful where **decision criteria are vague, subjective or inconsistent**. It helps you prioritize options by asking you to compare each item on a list with all other items on the list individually. By deciding in each case which of the two is most important, you can consolidate results to get a prioritized list.

- **Grid Analysis**

Grid Analysis helps you prioritize a list of tasks where you need to take many different factors into consideration.

Prioritization Tools

The Action Priority Matrix

- This quick and simple diagramming technique asks you to plot the value of the task against the effort it will consume.
- By doing this you can quickly spot the "quick wins" which will give you the greatest rewards in the shortest possible time, and avoid the "hard slogs" which soak up time for little eventual reward. This is an ingenious approach for making highly efficient prioritization decisions.

The Urgent/Important Matrix

- Similar to the Action Priority Matrix, this technique asks you to think about whether tasks are urgent or important.
- Frequently, seemingly urgent tasks actually aren't that important. And often, really important activities (like working towards your life goals) just aren't that urgent. This approach helps you cut through this.

The Ansoff Matrix and the Boston Matrices

- These give you quick "rules of thumb" for prioritizing the opportunities open to you.
- The Ansoff Matrix helps you evaluate and prioritize opportunities by risk. The Boston Matrix does a similar job, helping you prioritize opportunities based on the attractiveness of a market and your ability to take advantage of it.

Prioritization Tools

Pareto Analysis

- Where you're facing a flurry of problems needing to be solved, Pareto Analysis helps you identify the most important changes to make.
- It firstly asks you to group together the different types of problem you face, and then asks you to count the number of cases of each type of problem. By prioritizing the most common type of problem, you can focus your efforts on resolving it. This clears time to focus on the next set of problems, and so on.

Nominal Group Technique

- Nominal Group Technique is a useful technique for prioritizing issues and projects within a group, giving everyone fair input into the prioritization process. This is particularly useful where consensus is important, and where a robust group decision needs to be made.
- Using this tool, each group participant "nominates" his or her priority issues, and then ranks them on a scale, of say 1 to 10. The score for each issue is then added up, with issues then prioritized based on scores. The obvious fairness of this approach makes it particularly useful where prioritization is based on subjective criteria, and where people's "buy in" to the prioritization decision is needed.

Effective Scheduling

Planning to Make the Best Use of Your Time

So far in this seminar, we have looked at your priorities and your goals – these define what you aspire to do with your time. Scheduling is where these aspirations meet the reality of the time you have available.

Scheduling is the process by which you look at the time available to you, and plan how you will use it to achieve the goals you have identified. By using a schedule properly, you can:

- Understand what you can realistically achieve with your time.
- Plan to make the best use of the time available.
- Leave enough time for things you absolutely must do.
- Preserve contingency time to handle 'the unexpected'.
- Minimize stress by avoiding over-commitment to yourself and others.

Key Points:

Scheduling is the process by which you plan your use of time. By scheduling effectively, you can both reduce stress and maximize your effectiveness.

Before you can schedule efficiently, you need an effective scheduling system. This can be a diary, calendar, paper-based organizer, PDA or a software package like MS Outlook or GoalPro 6. The best solution depends entirely on your circumstances.

Scheduling is then a five-step process:

- Identify the time you have available.
- Block in the essential tasks you must carry out to succeed in your job.
- Schedule in high priority urgent tasks and vital "house-keeping" activities.
- Block in appropriate contingency time to handle unpredictable interruptions.
- In the time that remains, schedule the activities that address your priorities and personal goals.

If you have little or no discretionary time left by the time you reach step five, then revisit the assumptions you have made in steps one to four.

How to Use the Tool:

The scheduling tool that is best for you depends on your situation, the current structure of your job, your taste and your budget. The key things are to be able to enter data easily, and to be able to view an appropriate span of time in the correct level of detail.

Scheduling is best done on a regular basis, for example at the start of every week or month.

Go through the following steps in preparing your schedule:

- Start by identifying the time you want to make available for your work. This will depend on the design of your job and on your personal goals in life.
- Next, block in the actions you absolutely must take to do a good job. These will often be the things you are assessed against.
- For example, if you manage people, then you must make time available for dealing with issues that arise, coaching, and supervision. Similarly, you must allow time to communicate with your boss and key people around you. While people may let you get away with 'neglecting them' in the short-term, your best time management efforts will surely be derailed if you do not set aside time for those who are important in your life.

How to Use the Tool:

- Review your **To Do List**, and schedule in the high-priority urgent activities, as well as the essential maintenance tasks that cannot be delegated and cannot be avoided.
- Next, block in appropriate contingency time. You will learn how much of this you need by experience. Normally, the more unpredictable your job, the more contingency time you need. The reality of many people's work is of constant interruption: Studies show some managers getting an average of as little as six minutes uninterrupted work done at a time.
- Obviously, you cannot tell when interruptions will occur. However, by leaving space in your schedule, you give yourself the flexibility to rearrange your schedule to react effectively to issues as they arise.
- What you now have left is your "discretionary time": the time available to deliver your priorities and achieve your goals. Review your **Prioritized To Do List** and personal goals, evaluate the time needed to achieve these actions, and schedule these in.

- By the time you reach step 5, you may find that you have little or no discretionary time available. If this is the case, then revisit the assumptions you used in the first four steps. Question whether things are absolutely necessary, whether they can be delegated, or whether they can be done in an abbreviated way. Remember that one of the most important ways people learn to achieve success is by maximizing the 'leverage' they can achieve with their time. They increase the amount of work they can manage by delegating work to other people, spend money outsourcing key tasks, or use technology to automate as much of their work as possible. This frees them up to achieve their goals.
- Also, use this as an opportunity to review your To Do List and Personal Goals. Have you set goals that just aren't achievable with the time you have available? Are you taking on too many additional duties? Or are you treating things as being more important than they really are?
- If your discretionary time is still limited, then you may need to renegotiate your workload. With a well-thought through schedule as evidence, you may find this surprisingly easy.

Managing Interruptions

Maintain focus. Keep control of your time

- Everyday interruptions at work can be a key barrier to managing your time effectively and, ultimately, can be a barrier to your success.
- Think back to your last workday, and consider for a minute the many interruptions that occurred. There may have been phone calls, emails, hallway conversations, colleagues stopping by your office, or anything else that unexpectedly demanded your attention and, in doing so, distracted you from the task at-hand.
- Because your day only has so many hours in it, a handful of small interruptions can rob you of the time you need to achieve your goals and be successful in your work and life.
- More than this, they can break your focus, meaning that you have to spend time re-engaging with the thought processes needed to successfully complete complex work.
- The key to controlling interruptions is to know what they are and whether they are necessary, and to plan for them in your daily schedule. The tips that follow will help you do that, and so prevent interruptions from frustrating you and jeopardizing your success.

Using the Tool

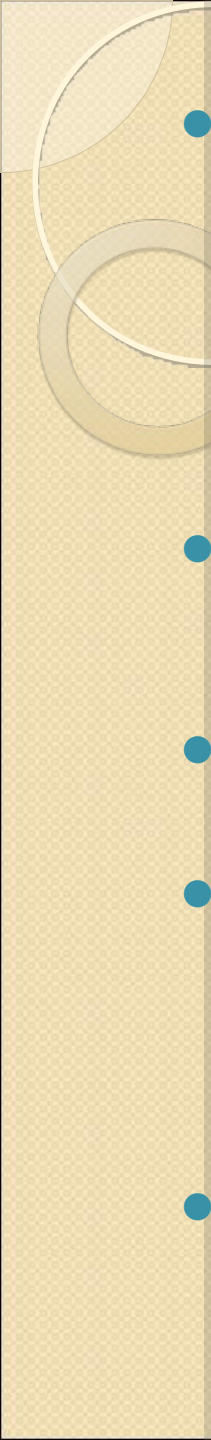
Use the following tips to understand and manage interruptions:

1. Keep An Interrupters Log

- If interruptions consistently rob you of time and energy, or if they frequently push you off schedule and cause delays, it's time to keep an Interrupters Log. This is a simple record of the interruptions you experience in the course of a day.

Person	Date and Time	Description of Interruption	Valid?	Urgent?

Figure 1: The Interrupters Log

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- Keep your Interrupters Log with you every day for at least a week, recording every interruption you experience, and marking down the person interrupting you; the date and time it occurs; what the interruption is; whether it was valid; and whether it was urgent (or whether someone could have waited until a better time.)
 - Once you have recorded the interruptions for a week, sit down with your log and analyze the information.
 - Which interruptions are valid and which are not?
 - You need to deal with the valid interruptions. We'll show you below how you can schedule them into your day so that they get the attention they need, while you still have the time you need to adequately address your daily work.
 - As for the interruptions that are not valid, you must find a way to block these out in the future.

Using the Tool

2. Analyze and Conquer Interruptions

- To analyze and conquer the interruptions you find in your Interrupters Log, firstly look at whether the interruption is valid or not.
- Could someone have avoided interrupting you by waiting for a routine meeting? Or was it something they should have asked you about at all?
- If not, deal with this politely but assertively.
- Next, look at how urgent the interruptions were, and whether they could have been pre-empted. You can pre-empt many interruptions by holding routine meetings with people: If they're confident that they'll have access to you at a defined point in the near future, they'll learn to save up non-urgent issues until this meeting.
- However, some interruptions are both urgent and valid. You need to be interrupted, and you need to deal with the situation.
- From your Interrupters Log, you'll see how much time is taken up by these urgent, valid interruptions. Block this time into your schedule as "contingency time", and only take on as much other work as you can fit into the remaining time. You'll have to juggle this other work around the interruptions, but at least you won't be overloaded and stressed by the things that you haven't done because they've been displaced by emergencies.

Using the Tool

3. Put Your Phone to Work for You (Not Against You)

- A little bit of planning can go a long way in working to control telephone interruptions, which many people experience all day long. If you are on a deadline or your focus needs to be intense (and not interrupted), use your voice mail to screen calls, or have an assistant deal with messages for you. This way, you can deal with calls by priority, and at times that suit you. In fact, this telephone time can be planned into your schedule, and so become a normal part of your working day.

4. Catch Your Breath

- When interrupted, it's easy to get caught up in the "rush" of the person who is interrupting, for they undoubtedly feel their request is urgent. In reality, however, most interruptions are not genuinely crisis-driven, and it can serve everyone best to take a little time before taking action.
- Take a few minutes to consider the situation. Catch your breath and clear your head. A small delay, even one of just a few minutes, goes a long way in assessing the situation accurately and reacting appropriately.

Using the Tool

5. Learn to Say "No"

- It's often acceptable to say "no" to requests or tasks if you are busy when someone else can handle it, if it is not an important task, or if it can be done later.
- When this is the case, saying "no" in a courteous and sincere way, followed by a short explanation is the best course of action to take: "I am working against a very tight deadline on an important project right now so, I am sorry, but I can not jump in and help".

6. "Available" and "Unavailable" Time

- Simple yet effective: Let people know when you are available. and when you are not. Make sure that people know that during your "unavailable time", they should only interrupt you if they have to.
- You and your co-workers can also agree on a signal that everyone in the office can use when unavailable, like turning the nameplate on the door around, or simply closing the door. This alleviates interruptions and can avoid hurt feelings.

Using the Tool

7. "Invitation Only" Time

- Schedule regular check-in times for the individuals you talk to most often. Ask these people to keep a running list of things that they need to discuss, so you can cover all the points at one time. And, force yourself to do the same.
- An open-door policy is good, but you should limit the number of people you invite to your work area. For instance, if you're scheduling a meeting, offer to meet your co-worker in his or her office or a conference room. This way, you can excuse yourself after you accomplish your purpose. Additionally, it's much easier to get up and leave than it is to get people to leave your office once they're seated and comfortable.

8. Uncontrollable Interruptions

- There are interruptions that, no matter how hard you try, you simply cannot control.
- Most people are happy to schedule a more convenient time, but when this does not work, quickly set the parameters by saying something like, "I only have five minutes to talk about this right now," and stick to it.
- Do not ask the interrupter to sit down and do not engage in small talk. Encourage the interrupter to get right to the point and if a solution cannot be reached before the allotted time runs out, set a time for getting back to them and, again, stick to it.

Dealing With Lateness

Solving Punctuality Problems

- Do you have a colleague who regularly arrives late for meetings? It's an annoying habit, and it's even worse if everyone else must wait for him because he's a key person in the decision-making process.
- Or perhaps you have a colleague who frequently turns up late at the office, complaining about "nightmare traffic" on her drive to work.
- Worse still, are you the person who is always late?
- Lateness is bad for team productivity or team morale, and it may point to a wider lack of responsibility. So, what can you do to stop it?
- This seminar helps you understand how to stop persistent lateness – whether you're the guilty party, or it's a member of your team.

Organizing Disorganized People

Motivating Your Team to Change

• **Understanding Lateness**

Whoever the habitual latecomer is, identifying why the lateness occurs is the first step toward eliminating it. Sometimes the causes will be obvious. Other times, the reason for habitual lateness can be rooted in the person's subconscious.

• **Finding the Cause**

Before you begin looking for solutions, take time to discover why they are disorganized.

Improve Your Concentration

Achieving Focus Amid Distractions

- How many times have you sat at your desk and tried to focus on a task, only to find that your mind is wandering? Despite your best intentions, you just can't concentrate. We've all been in this familiar, frustrating situation, and it's something that can really undermine your performance.
- In this seminar, we'll review strategies to improve your concentration and reduce your daily distractions.

Environment

- Your personal work environment plays a large role in your ability to concentrate. The more comfortable and welcoming your environment is, the easier it will likely be for you to stay there and focus.

Environment

Here are some ideas for improving your physical environment:

- **Make sure that you're comfortable** – Start by ensuring that your chair and desk are at the right height for you to work comfortably. If your chair is too high or your desk is too low, you'll be uncomfortable, and you'll be tempted to use this as an excuse to get up and walk away.
- **Put up pictures** – Viewing a natural scene or watching wildlife can help improve concentration. If you're able to put up pictures in your office or work area, then choose landscapes or natural images that you enjoy. This can help your focus, especially if you can see the pictures from your desk.
- **Shut out distractions as much as possible** – Listening to music can help, especially if it's instrumental music. Some people even use noise machines in their offices – these produce a steady "white noise," like ocean waves or falling rain. This steady background noise can drown out other noise, helping you focus better and ignore distractions.

Nutrition

Follow some simple nutritional tips:

- **Drink water** – Many of us don't think about drinking water while we're at work, yet dehydration can make us feel tired, irritable, slow, or even sick. When our brains don't have enough fluid, they can't operate at peak performance. Staying hydrated is an easy way to help improve your concentration during the day.
- **Eat breakfast** – Start your day with a healthy breakfast. It's much harder to concentrate when you're hungry, so eat a well-rounded meal before you go to work. You can also help your concentration throughout the day by keeping healthy snacks at your desk. Almonds, whole-grain crackers, fresh fruit, and vegetables are good choices.
- **Get up and move around** – Do you walk around during the day? If you're like many people, you probably don't move around enough. Research has shown that regular walking can help increase your focus during the day.

Mindset

Constant distractions, and the low productivity that's associated with these distractions, have become so commonplace in today's offices that doctors have even given it a name: Attention Deficit Trait, or ADT. And, they say that entire organizations can suffer from it.

Follow some of these guidelines to help focus your mind:

- **Set aside time to deal with worries** – Many of us have trouble concentrating during the day because we're constantly worrying about other things. It could be an approaching deadline for a project you haven't started, a new colleague who's causing problems, or just the amount of work on your desk. If you find yourself distracted by worries, then note these down so that you don't need to hold them in your mind. Then schedule time to deal with these issues.
- **Focus on one task at a time** – It can be much harder to focus if you take mini breaks (15–30 seconds) to answer emails, send text messages, or take quick phone calls. Some researchers believe that it can take up to 15 minutes for us to regain complete focus after a distraction.
- **Close your email box and chat program** – Let your voice mail do its job. If your office allows it, close your office door or put up a "Do Not Disturb" sign to let colleagues know you need to focus. (If you're a manager and you want to operate an open door policy, then consider working from home or from elsewhere.)
- **Switch between high- and low-attention tasks** – This can give your brain a rest after heavy concentration. For instance, if you spend two hours working on your department's budget, you'll probably feel tired afterward. You can recharge your energy by working on a low-attention task, like filing, for 15 minutes before going back to your budget.
- **Prioritize** – Having too much to do can be distracting, and this sometimes causes procrastination. Or, you may quickly jump from task to task, creating the illusion of work – but in reality, you're not accomplishing very much.

Personal Goal Setting

Planning to Live Your Life Your Way

- Many people feel as if they're adrift in the world. They work hard, but they don't seem to get anywhere worthwhile.
- A key reason that they feel this way is that they haven't spent enough time thinking about what they want from life, and haven't set themselves formal goals. After all, would you set out on a major journey with no real idea of your destination? Probably not!
- Goal setting is a powerful process for thinking about your ideal future, and for motivating yourself to turn your vision of this future into reality.
- The process of setting goals helps you choose where you want to go in life. By knowing precisely what you want to achieve, you know where you have to concentrate your efforts. You'll also quickly spot the distractions that can, so easily, lead you astray.

Starting to Set Personal Goals

You set your goals on a number of levels:

- First you create your "big picture" of what you want to do with your life (or over, say, the next 10 years), and identify the large-scale goals that you want to achieve.
- Then, you break these down into the smaller and smaller targets that you must hit to reach your lifetime goals.
- Finally, once you have your plan, you start working on it to achieve these goals.
- This is why we start the process of goal setting by looking at your lifetime goals. Then, we work down to the things that you can do in, say, the next five years, then next year, next month, next week, and today, to start moving towards them.

Step 1: Setting Lifetime Goals

The first step in setting personal goals is to consider what you want to achieve in your lifetime (or at least, by a significant and distant age in the future). Setting lifetime goals gives you the overall perspective that shapes all other aspects of your decision making.

To give a broad, balanced coverage of all important areas in your life, try to set goals in some of the following categories (or in other categories of your own, where these are important to you):

- **Career** - What level do you want to reach in your career, or what do you want to achieve?
- **Financial** - How much do you want to earn, by what stage? How is this related to your career goals?
- **Education** - Is there any knowledge you want to acquire in particular? What information and skills will you need to have in order to achieve other goals?
- **Family** - Do you want to be a parent? If so, how are you going to be a good parent? How do you want to be seen by a partner or by members of your extended family?
- **Artistic** - Do you want to achieve any artistic goals?
- **Attitude** - Is any part of your mindset holding you back? Is there any part of the way that you behave that upsets you? (If so, set a goal to improve your behavior or find a solution to the problem.)
- **Physical** - Are there any athletic goals that you want to achieve, or do you want good health deep into old age? What steps are you going to take to achieve this?
- **Pleasure** - How do you want to enjoy yourself? (You should ensure that some of your life is for you!)

Step 2: Setting Smaller Goals

- Once you have set your lifetime goals, set a five-year plan of smaller goals that you need to complete if you are to reach your lifetime plan.
- Then create a one-year plan, six-month plan, and a one-month plan of progressively smaller goals that you should reach to achieve your lifetime goals. Each of these should be based on the previous plan.
- Then create a daily To-Do List of things that you should do today to work towards your lifetime goals.
- At an early stage, your smaller goals might be to read books and gather information on the achievement of your higher level goals. This will help you to improve the quality and realism of your goal setting.
- Finally review your plans, and make sure that they fit the way in which you want to live your life.

SMART Goals

A useful way of making goals more powerful is to use the SMART mnemonic. While there are plenty of variants (some of which we've included in parenthesis), SMART usually stands for:

- **S** - Specific (or Significant).
- **M** - Measurable (or Meaningful).
- **A** - Attainable (or Action-Oriented).
- **R** - Relevant (or Rewarding).
- **T** - Time-bound (or Trackable).

For example, instead of having "To sail around the world" as a goal, it's more powerful to say "To have completed my trip around the world by December 31, 2015." Obviously, this will only be attainable if a lot of preparation has been completed beforehand!

Motivating Yourself

Practical Tools and Strategies

- Are you able to get excited about every task you need to do? Or do you sometimes need a bit more help to make a start, never mind getting the task done?
- Maybe you're continuing to ignore those overflowing filing cabinets, instead of taking some time out to reorganize them. Or, you're avoiding that difficult conversation with a person who is always late, choosing instead to tolerate the tardiness. Perhaps you keep rearranging your priorities, so that the tasks you hate always end up at the bottom of the list.
- The longer you delay doing something, the more stress and pressure you're likely to feel. After a while, you may even start to lose confidence in your ability to complete the task at all.
- Many of us sometimes need help getting motivated. And it can be very frustrating when we know we have to do something, but we just can't get around to making a start.

Motivation Basics

There are essentially two types of motivation:

- **Intrinsic motivation** – This is when you are motivated by "internal" factors to meet your own personal needs. Most hobbies and leisure activities are based on intrinsic motivation. We do them because we enjoy them, not because we have to.
- **Extrinsic motivation** – This is when you are motivated by "external" factors that are given or controlled by others, for example, by salary or by praise. Our jobs are usually based on extrinsic motivation, although there will be some intrinsic motivation involved if you enjoy aspects of what you do.
- Most situations at work involve both types of motivation. If we do a job we enjoy, some of the work we do will be intrinsically motivating. Realistically though, we probably wouldn't go to work if we weren't being paid! Enjoying your job is intrinsically motivating, while being paid a salary to do it is extrinsically motivating.
- Even if we do a job we enjoy, problems can crop up when we need to do something that we don't inherently like – such as filing, speaking with staff about performance issues, completing reports, and so on. We have to do undesirable tasks as part of our job, so we have to find a way to motivate ourselves to complete them. That's where self-motivation is necessary.

Self-Determination Theory

Enhancing Self-Motivation by Meeting Basic Needs

- For a moment, think about how motivated you've felt at various times over the last few years.
- At some points, your motivation may have been high – if so, you will have felt engaged, energized, and filled with purpose. At other points, you probably felt listless, disengaged, or apathetic, and it may have been a real struggle to keep things moving forward.
- Many of us recognize instinctively that motivation comes and goes. But what causes these highs and lows?
- Why are some people consistently engaged and motivated, while others feel demoralized and powerless? And why can't we be motivated and engaged all of the time, so that we can consistently produce our best work?
- These are just some of the questions that Self-Determination Theory addresses. In this seminar, we'll look at how you can use it to increase your motivation and improve your job satisfaction.

How Self-Motivated Are You?

Taking Charge of Your Goals and Achievements

- Are you motivated to achieve what you really want in life? And how hard do you push yourself to get things done?
- Wanting to do something and motivating yourself to actually do it are two different things. So, what's the difference between those who never reach their goals, year after year, and those who achieve one goal after another? Often, it's their self-motivation.
- Self-motivation is the force that keeps pushing us to go on – it's our internal drive to achieve, produce, develop, and keep moving forward. When you think you're ready to quit something, or you just don't know how to start, your self-motivation is what pushes you to go on.
- **With self-motivation, you'll learn and grow** – regardless of the specific situation. That's why it's such a fundamental tool for reaching your goals, achieving your dreams, and succeeding, in this journey we call life.

Factors in Self-Motivation

Self-motivation is complex. It's linked to your level of initiative in setting challenging goals for yourself; your belief that you have the skills and abilities needed to achieve those goals; and your expectation that if you put in enough hard work, you will succeed (or at least be in the running, if it's a competitive situation).

Four factors are necessary to build the strongest levels of self-motivation:

- Self-confidence and self-efficacy.
- Positive thinking, and positive thinking about the future.
- Focus and strong goals.
- A motivating environment.
- By working on all of these together, you should quickly improve your self-motivation. Let's look at each of these factors individually.

1. Self-Confidence and Self-Efficacy

- Part of being self-motivated is having good levels of self-assurance, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.
- Being highly **self-assured** means you will set challenging goals for yourself, and it's also a resiliency factor for when you encounter setbacks. If you don't believe in yourself you'll be much more likely to think, "I knew I couldn't do this" instead of, "This one failure isn't going to stop me!"
- Albert Bandura, a psychologist from Stanford University, defined **self-efficacy** as a belief in our own ability to succeed, and our ability to achieve the goals we set for ourselves. This belief has a huge impact on your approach to goal setting and your behavioral choices as you work toward those goals.
- According to Bandura's research, high self-efficacy results in an ability to view difficult goals as a challenge, whereas people with low self-efficacy would likely view the same goals as being beyond their abilities, and might not even attempt to achieve them.
- It also contributes to how much effort a person puts into a goal in the first place, and how much he or she perseveres despite setbacks.

1. Self-Confidence and Self-Efficacy

By developing a general level of **self-confidence** in yourself, you will not only believe you can succeed, but you'll also recognize and enjoy the successes you've already had. That, in turn, will inspire you to build on those successes. The momentum created by self-confidence is hard to beat.

Take these steps:

- Think about the achievements in your life.
- Examine your strengths to understand what you can build on.
- Determine what other people see as your strengths and key capabilities.
- Set achievable goals for yourself, work to achieve them, and enjoy that achievement.
- Seek out mentors and other people who model the competencies, skills, and attributes you desire.

As you begin to recognize how much you've already achieved – and understand how much potential you have – you will have the confidence to set goals and achieve the things you desire. The more you look for reasons to believe in yourself, the easier it will be to find ways to motivate yourself.

2. Positive Thinking, and Positive Thinking About the Future

- Positive thinking is closely related to self-confidence as a factor in self-motivation. It's important to look at things positively, especially when things aren't going as planned and you're ready to give up.
- If you think that things are going to go wrong or that you won't succeed, this may influence things in such a way that your predictions will come true. This is particularly the case if you need to work hard to achieve success, or if you need to persuade others to support you in order to succeed. Your thoughts can have a major influence on whether you succeed or fail, so make sure those thoughts are "on your side."
- Positive thinking also helps you think about an attractive future that you want to realize. When you expect positive results, your choices will be more positive, and you'll be less likely to leave outcomes to fate or chance. Having a vivid picture of success, combined with positive thinking, helps you bridge the gap between wanting something and going out to get it.

2. Positive Thinking, and Positive Thinking About the Future

To apply "the power of positive thinking", do the following:

- Become aware of your thoughts. Write down these down throughout the day.
- Challenge your negative thoughts, and replace them with positive ones.
- Create a strong and vivid picture of what it will be like to achieve your goals.
- Develop affirmations or statements that you can repeat to yourself throughout the day. These statements should remind you of what you want to achieve, and why you will achieve it.
- Practice positive thinking until you automatically think about yourself and the world in a positive way, every day.

3. Focus and Strong Goals

As I've said above, a key part of building self-motivation is to start setting strong goals. These give you focus, a clear sense of direction, and the self-confidence that comes from recognizing your own achievement.

First, determine your direction through effective goal setting.

When you set a goal, you make a promise to yourself. Part of the strength of this is that it gives you a clear direction. Part is that you've made this promise to yourself, and you'll want to keep this promise. And part is that it's a challenge, and it's fun to try to meet that challenge!

But don't set just any goal. According to Locke's goal-setting theory, your goal should have the following characteristics:

- **Clarity** - Effective goals are clear, measurable, specific, and based on behavior, not outcomes.
- **Challenge** - Goals should be difficult enough to be interesting, but not so difficult that you can't reach them.
- **Commitment** - Goals should be attainable, and should be relevant – that is, they should contribute in a significant way to the major objectives you're trying to achieve.
- **Regularity of Feedback** - Monitor your progress towards your goals regularly to maintain your sense of momentum and enthusiasm, and enjoy your progress towards those goals.
- **Sufficient Respect For Complexity** - If the goal involves complex work, make sure that you don't over-commit yourself. Complex work can take an unpredictably long time to complete (particularly if you have to learn how to do the task "on the job").

3. Focus and Strong Goals

- When you have a variety of goals, be sure to schedule your time and resources effectively. You can achieve the "focus" part of self-motivation by prioritizing and establishing a schedule that will help you succeed. It doesn't make sense to work until you're exhausted or give up one goal to achieve another.
- Using tools like the Urgent/Important Matrix and the Action Priority Matrix, you can quickly and easily see how each goal activity fits into the bigger picture of your overall objectives. If you fully understand your priorities, you probably won't feel as pressured to do everything at once. This can reduce stress and help you to concentrate on the most important strategies.

4. Motivating Environment

The final thing to focus on is surrounding yourself with people and resources that will remind you of your goals, and help you with your internal motivation. These are external factors – they'll help you get motivated from the outside, which is different from the internal motivation we've discussed so far. However, the more factors you have working for you, the better.

You can't just rely on these "environmental" or outside elements alone to motivate you, but you can use them for extra support.

Try the following:

- Look for team work opportunities. Working in a team makes you accountable to others.
- Ask your boss for specific targets and objectives to help you measure your success.
- Ask for interesting assignments.
- Set up some goals that you can easily achieve. Quick wins are great for getting you motivated.
- Buddy up with people who you trust to be supportive, and ask them to help keep you accountable.
- Try not to work by yourself too much. Balance the amount of time you work from home with time spent working with others.
- When you start your self-motivation program, you may tend to rely heavily on these external factors. As you get more comfortable and confident with your self-motivation, you'll probably use them only as needed, and for a little extra help.



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION !

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