Top 10 Habits of Super Productive People

Brought to you by:

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Introduction

There are productive people, and then there are super productive people. You know the types. They seem to be able to get ten times more accomplished than you ever can, they always have free time, and they always have a smile on their face.

Secretly you wonder if they ever get any sleep. Or if maybe they’re exaggerating...? but then you see evidence of their output and you know. They really DO achieve a lot. So how can you do it too? And still see your family and friends?

You can see that this incredible productivity usually leads to quicker goal achievement and higher levels of success. Whether you’re running a business from home (like most writers) or you’re working in the corporate world in a 9-5 job and writing in your spare time, you see that productive people move up the career ladder rapidly.

The good news is that there are simple steps that any average person can take to guarantee a marked improvement in productivity. Note: although the steps themselves are simple and easy to replicate, that doesn’t mean you don’t have to do any work. Rather, your aim is to use the time you do have to achieve more. Then you can take some time off to party. (All right, maybe not to party. Maybe just put your feet up and read a good book for a few hours, or go to that CrossFit centre you’d always wondered about.)

You are virtually adding hours to your day when you incorporate the following top ten habits of super productive people into your daily schedule – whether you apply them to getting your work in progress finished or use them at home and at work.
1) Super Productive People Wake up Early

If it is true that the cock crows with the morning sun, uber-productive individuals could act as alarm clocks for that very rooster. Productive people understand the value of getting up earlier than their peers and competition.

An old saying goes, "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."

That early up time often means an early quitting time for the truly productive person, and by waking before the rest of the world, you have fewer distractions and impediments to keeping you from achieving your daily goals.

Tip: keep your alarm clock or radio across the room from where you sleep, so that you have to physically leave your bed in the morning to shut it off. It’s probably better if you forget about morning radio altogether; it’s much too easy to lie there and listen. Just use an alarm. Once you are up, tell yourself you are up for good.
2) Highly Efficient People Almost Never Multitask

This may sound counter-intuitive to you, and that is to be expected. It used to be that calling someone a multitasker meant that you were paying them a huge compliment. But did you know that multitasking can actually lower your IQ?

I don't think anyone would argue that smoking marijuana makes you as dumb as a rock. That is why they call it getting stoned. And research shows that your IQ drops by at least five points if you smoke dope. But did you know that a recent clinical trial performed by Dr. Glenn Wilson, a psychiatrist at King's College London University, shows changing tasks over 10 times a day actually reduces your IQ by an average of 15 points if you are a man, and roughly 5 points if you are a woman?

Work one task through to its completion, then take on another for the most productive outcome. No comment here on why men appear to be three times as bad at multitasking as women.

If you’re already shaking your head and saying: “But I wear a lot of different writer’s hats. I write fiction and articles for magazines and I create Private Label Rights material and sell it. I can’t focus on one task...” then think again. Look at everything you do in a week. Maybe you have to do some writing tasks to earn an income, but do you need to work on all of them every day? Try spreading your tasks out over a week, rather than slotting them into different segments of each writing day – or do no more than two different types of writing in a day. (Example: fiction in the morning, bread-and-butter tasks in the afternoon.)

3) Highly Productive People Work Backwards

Just like the tip we gave you above, this may be completely opposite to everything you have heard about productivity. The traditional idea behind goal
accomplishment is to start from where you are, and plan a path that hopefully leads you to your desired destination.

But if this age-old method actually worked, everyone would be successful. The people who seem to squeeze more hours out of the day start with an accomplished goal in the mind, and work backwards from it. They go from goals to individual milestones to tasks that help them reach those milestones.

They then take action on those tasks which can be accomplished in a few hours or less, and you may be surprised at how many more items you cross off of your to-do list when you write a game plan in reverse order from your goals to your current situation.

4) Super Productive People Outsource

You do not have to outsource tasks to a foreign country as some high-powered home workers do, but when you get other people involved in handling your tasks and chores for you, you instantly create more hours in the day, week and month for you to focus on your most important activities.

Make a list of those dreaded low-return jobs and actions which you normally handle, and sub them out. Just think of the amount of time you can free up if you never again have to wash the dishes, clean the house, cut the grass or a wash the car!

Apply the same process to your writing. If you’re a writer, then write! Don’t fiddle about for days trying to create your own book covers or design a Facebook header for your author page. Get someone else to set up your blog. If you want to write and sell PLR from your own store, get someone else to set up the website and payment options. You can sub out this sort of thing to outsourcers on websites like Fiverr.com and Odesk.com where virtual assistants will work for as little as three dollars or four dollars an hour.
You may be amazed that people will work for so little money, but this can actually provide a good daily income to employment seekers in other places around the world.

5) Massively Efficient and Productive Individuals Plan Their Day... The Night Before

If you get into the excellent habit of planning each day the night before, especially just before you go to bed, you hit the ground running rather than stumbling in the morning. (It’s quite likely that you’ve heard this advice before. It’s a staple of time management. So why am I repeating it here? Because it works... and because you’re probably not doing it now, even if you know that it’s good advice!

Sara Caputo is a professional productivity coach, consultant and trainer at RadiantOrganizing.com, and she says this additionally removes the time wasting process of figuring out where to start when your mind is not totally awake yet.

Another benefit is that your brain will begin subconsciously working on your problems and goals while you sleep, since your game plan is fresh on your mind. Plan your day at night, and you can productively start your day quickly in the morning. This applies to both fiction and non-fiction tasks. (Every author knows what it’s like to wake up with a sudden insight into a seemingly insoluble plot problem from the night before, when they decided to ‘sleep on it’.)
6) Highly Productive People Exercise

The most successful people get more done in a shorter period of time than the average person. And when you exercise, your energy levels rise rapidly, giving you the fuel to accomplish more.

If you are working from home, it’s much easier to go for a walk around the block or do a few exercises, but there are measures you can take anywhere. Even if you are stuck at an office desk for your entire work day, stand up every chance you get, go for a brisk walk or jog on your lunch break, and find other ways to incorporate exercise into your daily routine.

It is no great mystery that keeping fit and healthy can extend your longevity, and research has shown that healthier people accomplish more in their work and personal lives than unhealthy individuals. Add at least one hour of moderate to intense exercise into your daily schedule (yes, one hour... you don’t have to do it all at once!) and watch your productivity skyrocket.

7) Super Productive People Do Not Strive for Perfection

As the entrepreneurial founder of Los Angeles web design and marketing firm Ciplex, Ilya Pozin has no choice but to be productive. And while you probably have heard all your life that practice makes perfect, the successful young business owner says that his experience has proven
just the opposite is true.

He operates under the principle of, "Ready, Fire, Aim!" **Form a quick and intelligent game plan, then take action.** There is always time to aim, or tweak your business, product or service, after you have it up and running. (Writers, take note: yes, you do have to edit your work and polish it so that it reflects well on you as a writer and attracts a loyal group of fans who want to buy your next book. However, be careful that you don’t fall into the trap of being perennially dissatisfied with your work, always wanting ‘just one more run through’. Set a time limit for your final edit, and use a critique group or reliable friend for feedback to help you get it right.

8) Highly Efficient and Productive Individuals
Understand and Practice the Pareto Principal

Also known as the 80/20 rule or the Law of the Vital Few, the Pareto Principle states that roughly 80% of effects come from 20% of their causes. (Or: 80% of your returns come from 20% of your efforts.)

Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto observed in 1906 that 20% of the pea pods in his garden actually produced 80% of his peas! He studied further, and learned that 80% of all Italian land was owned by only 20% of the population.

Decades later businessmen and consultant Joseph M. Juran suggested the principle and named it after Pareto, and it has become a common rule of thumb in business. 80% of your sales will come from 20% of your clients, and 80% of your results will come from 20% of your actions.

Focus on those activities which deliver the biggest bang for your buck, and handle those first to massively crank up your productivity levels.
9) Super Productive People Get on "Qi Time"

Qi Lu (pronounced chee loo) grew up as a poor villager near Shanghai. But he learned to be incredibly productive, and now sits as the President of Online Services at Microsoft. He said during college, he started to resent the amount of time he "wasted" sleeping. He felt he could learn more and do more with less rest.

We would never recommend trying to get through life successfully by not sleeping. But the fact is that many of us do oversleep. Lu sleeps only the amount required for healthy functioning, and his coworkers and contemporaries salute his almost superhuman productivity levels by getting on "Qi Time" with their work projects.

Lu said he latches approximately two extra months of productivity to each calendar year by this method alone.

If you seem to have tried everything else to boost your productivity and nothing is working, try your own version of 'Qi time'. Experiment with working later at night, getting up earlier in the morning, and with the effect of taking a 'power nap' during the day.

Be careful not to nap for too long during the day. 20-30 minutes seems to work well; energizing you for continued work without leaving you feeling sluggish. You may find that a daytime nap gives you the energy you need to work later at night, while still getting up earlier in the morning.
10) Massively Successful People Prioritize Correctly

This really should have been number one on our list, because if you are working on the wrong things, it really does not matter how productive you are. You will be wasting your time, and will have to redouble your efforts.

Basically, the most productive individuals know what is important, and what is not. They focus their attention first on critical activities, and getting the right things done. A few minutes prioritizing can save countless hours, weeks and possibly even months of wasted labor.

Extremely efficient people are not superhuman. They have just developed a way to look at their life, their actions and their surroundings, and inform the smartest plan of attack that maximizes every minute of their efforts.

For example: now that it’s so much easier for authors to publish their own books, they worry too much about what they ‘should’ be doing to promote their work. They spend hours on social media, trying to find the magic formula that will drive people to their author blog or sales pages.

The main job of a writer is to WRITE. Earlier, I mentioned outsourcing as a great way to offload the jobs that suck up your time without producing any tangible results. Think about hiring someone to do regular posts to your blog, Facebook and Twitter. Just give them an outline of the sort of posts you want, get some samples to make sure they’re on track, and just check in occasionally with a post of your own. The rest of the time... WRITE.

The ten tips for super productive people mentioned here can be implemented by anyone immediately, and can lead to more free time, better production, and even a better way of life.

Practice the 80/20 rule, don't oversleep, get up early and stop multitasking, and the successful achievement of your goals may happen quicker than you ever thought possible.