

Solutions for Success...

10 Point Productivity & Perspective Tune Up

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1. **Focus on value.** Invest chunks of time in important projects that aren't yet urgent. It's the best way to keep those projects from cropping up as crises further down the road. Not sure what adds value? Then your first step is to tackle some serious strategizing about work and life in general. Figure out where you are headed and why.
2. **Triage the work.** Make time at the beginning of each month, week and day to prioritize. Refer to your lists as you start working. Use them to refocus your attention after inevitable interruptions. Keep your priority lists visible. Share them with your colleagues so others can help you stay on track and coordinate their work with you priorities.
3. **Guard your prime time.** Protect it from time wasting people and piddling, low priority projects. Devote your best time to your highest level priorities. Disappear for an hour or two and work elsewhere if that's the only way you can create that interrupted reflection or action time to spend on key activities. One hour of prime time is worth two hours of low energy time. Make it count.
4. **Delegate strategically.** Share tasks - not just to get things done - but to build capacity and confidence in members of your team. Think earlier rather than later about what might be done by others. Don't dump at the last moment. Delegate with sound intent, clear instructions, and healthy lead time. You have no team? Start building one now.
5. **Invest in key relationships.** Not only are they personally rewarding, but connections that are well maintained are more viable and resilient in crunch times. This is true for family, friends, clients and colleagues. Relationships are either appreciating or depreciating in value and worth. Be sure yours are headed in the right direction. Make the investment and reap the rewards.
6. **Become a groupie.** Group errands and meetings. Group phone calls and your questions for others. Group tasks to create high value trips in the office (to files, fax machines and photocopiers) and outside the office (to suppliers, clients and service providers). Set aside regular times to check signals with key contacts. Encourage them to anticipate what they'll need to know and hold their questions for those confabs.
7. **Say no.** Decline requests and tasks that are: a) outside your priorities; b) easily done by someone else; or c) likely to drive you into overload. Don't be driven by guilt or resentment. When you are tempted to say yes or no (against your better judgment), step back and search for middle ground. Base your choices on purpose and intention - not knee jerk reactions and muddled emotions.
8. **Clear the decks.** Dejunk and unclutter your main workspace and living areas. Trash the duplicates. Toss the distractions. File according to next action required. Don't let indecision paralyze you or your environment. Move the mounds so you are in a better position to move mountains.
9. **Filter your e-mail.** This is the electronic equivalent of having an administrative assistant prioritize your messages and trash the junk before it hits your In Box. If you don't know how to do this, find out. Every e-mail software package will let you create rules or filters to dispose of useless messages and group valued messages for effective action.
10. **Take your breaks.** If you're skipping time out, you're just delaying disaster. Whether you realize it or not, your productivity is taking a nose dive and you're headed for a crash landing. Take a few seconds between tasks to stretch your back and rest your eyes. Allow yourself a few minutes between appointments to catch a breath of fresh air and clear your mind. Enjoy a half hour away from your desk to lunch without thinking or talking about work. Each investment pays off as you restore the rhythm of renewal to you life and your work.



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© 2006 - Patricia Katz of Optimus Consulting is a life balance and renewal strategist - a speaker, author and consultant who helps the stressed and distressed restore the rhythm of renewal to work and life. If you would like help getting things done and having a life, too, check out the information on her websites: www.patkatz.com and www.pauseworks.com. Bring Patricia's expertise to your organization by contacting her at info@patkatz.com or (306) 934-1807.