HOW TO BE PRODUCTIVE

mindapples
BITESIZE

Focus your mind on what matters, concentrate better and be more effective

A PRODUCTIVE MIND?

Productivity is often associated with working harder, doing longer hours, achieving more - but actually it is a measure of efficiency.

It is about the effectiveness of your efforts; about **working smarter**, not harder.

You can double your productivity by doing the same amount of work in half the time.

Productivity isn't an exact science, and the techniques vary for different tasks. There's no one-size-fits-all model of productivity.

Productivity is about **learning how your mind works**, so you can work in a way that suits you best. The more you get to know your mind, the more productive you can be.

Productivity is about **making work count**, not counting work.

$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{\text{Value output}}{\text{Labour input}}$$

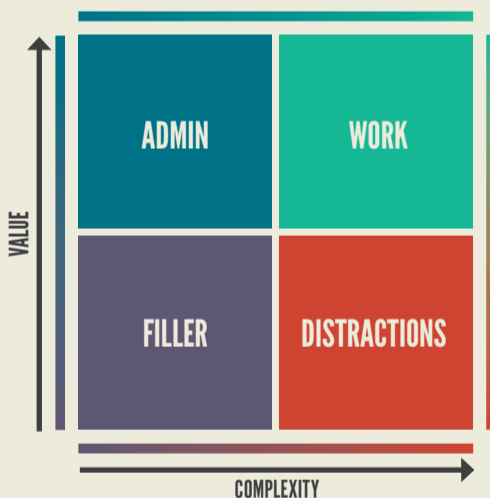## 5 TIPS FOR PRODUCTIVITY

1 GET ORGANISED

To apply your mind, you need to know what you have to do. Develop a trusted system for keeping track of tasks, commitments and deadlines, break down complex tasks into chunks, and write your lists so they feel achievable.

2 MANAGE ENERGY

Time management is overrated, because not all units of time are equally productive. Instead, manage your mental energy: avoid unnecessary distractions and worry, and do complex tasks first when you feel freshest. Notice when you feel tired and learn to take proper breaks to rest and recharge.

3 CONCENTRATE

Focus your mind on one thing to make more efficient use of your time. Clear away any distractions, avoid task switching and multitasking, and stay energised to help your mind concentrate. Mindfulness can also help.

VALUE

| ADMIN | WORK |
| FILLER | DISTRACTIONS |

COMPLEXITY

4 BUILD GOOD HABITS

You can't maintain focus forever, so make the most of the time when you're not concentrating by building productive habits. Think about the routine tasks you do regularly, and automate them to save time. Be careful what habits you build too, especially around technology.

5 LEARN TO SAY NO

Saying yes is a habit, but it leads to overpromising and burnout. Prioritise key tasks and drop whatever you can, especially complex, low-value tasks that absorb a lot of your mental energy. The grid opposite can help you focus on high value, complex work.

FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS

FINDING A BALANCE

Productivity is a marathon, not a sprint. You need to find a balance between work and everything else in your life Balancing "work" and "life" is a simplification though: work can be rewarding, and life can be hard sometimes. **Present-future balance** may be a better goal: work to make your life better in the future, but remember to enjoy the here-and-now too.

You aren't defined by your productivity. Make the most of your time, but appreciate the quiet moments too.

"We call ourselves **human beings,** but we behave more like **human doings.**"

AN EFFICIENT LIFE?

Productivity is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Ask why you want to be productive. Efficiency is great, but only if you can apply it to the right goals. Increasing your productively won't make your work more **meaningful** or **rewarding**. Productivity isn't about getting to the end of your to-do list; it's about learning to enjoy the journey.

This free tip sheet was created by Mindapples to support people during the COVID-19 pandemic. To find out more about our apps, e-learning, webinars, face-to-face training and charitable work, visit www.mindapples.org

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