

## Time Management Hack #1

# Plan Your Day In Advance

Time Management is a crucial component to overall productivity. And in order for you to get the most out of time management, you have to know what your day will look like. Set aside time each day to plan for tomorrow. Many people do this first thing in the morning, whereas other people do it the night before. If you are a “morning person” the “day-of” tactic will probably work best. If you have a hard time getting started in the morning then the night before would probably be the smarter time to strategize your day.

When you are planning out your day, be sure to work based on priority. Start with a list of all the things you would like to accomplish. Then, put the items that will make the biggest difference first. Next be sure to put down the items that are time sensitive. And lastly put the items you will enjoy the most. If you put your favorite activities at the end of your day you will not only be more motivated to accomplish your goals but you will end the day on a high note.

## Time Management Hack #1 - EXERCISE

# Plan Your Day In Advance

List the items you want to accomplish today:

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Order the items in terms of highest impact:

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List time sensitive items and deadlines:

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List the activities that you will enjoy the most:

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## Time Management Hack #2

# Track Your Time

Many large companies will do time audits and assessments to understand how employees are spending their time and how productivity can be maximized. This kind of business systemization should be treated just as seriously by you as a business owner. Your time is your business life blood so you need to understand HOW you are spending it.

Setting up a system that allows you to track how you spend your time can have a huge impact on both short and long term business success. There are many different ways that you can do a time audit so the format doesn't really matter. What ultimately matters is doing the work.

Implement a system that forces you to enter how you spent your time for every hour of the working day. You might want to break it into 15 minute blocks, 30 minute blocks or 1 hour blocks (or any other break down that makes sense for you). In this system you literally write out how you spent your time for each block of your working day. Do this for an entire week and then assess your gaps in productivity. You will almost certainly find areas where you can improve your productivity. Knowing this information allows you to make better decisions about your time and ultimately, about your business.

## Time Management Hack #2 - EXERCISE

# Track Your Time

List the items you want to accomplish today:

Time Block	Activities
7:00am	
7:30am	
8:00am	
8:30am	
9:00am	
9:30am	
10:00am	
10:30am	
11:00am	
11:30am	
12:00pm	
12:30pm	
1:00pm	
1:30pm	
2:00pm	
2:30pm	
3:00pm	
3:30pm	
4:00pm	
4:30pm	
5:00pm	
5:30pm	
6:00pm	
6:30pm	

### Time Management Hack #3

## Working In Time Blocks

There are countless strategies about working in time blocks. Unfortunately you will simply have to try a few to find which works best for you. One highly effective strategy is to work for 45 minutes and then allow yourself a 10-15 minute break. This strategy works for a few reasons. One, 45 minutes sounds a lot less daunting than staring at an 8 hour day. Two, once you get into a rhythm of working 45 minutes with a break it will be very easy to maintain this schedule. You will find that if you actually hustle for 45 minutes and then take a break your time working will be much more efficient.

Every strategy has its drawbacks. The most important pitfall to avoid here is to allow yourself more than a 15 minute break. Get up, walk around and maybe have a snack. Don't start watching TV or surfing the web. You have only 10-15 minutes and then you have another 45 minutes of work.

Another huge pitfall for any strategy incorporating time blocks is that of expectation. You have to be realistic in order to be successful. Don't schedule 10 blocks of work time throughout the day if you have never done that before. If you schedule too many hours of work and mark down what you

expect to finish you will have a false sense of accomplishment. For example, let's say you have 20 projects to complete. And if you really hustled you could complete two projects within a 45 minute block. So you schedule a ten hour day. And even though you haven't worked that hard in ages, you feel a sense of accomplishment because at the end of your paper there isn't any more work to be done. The problem is, now you have 10 hours of work to do. The best case scenario is you trudge through and your work becomes sloppy by hour 5 or 6. The worse case scenario is you imagine you have all this extra time because you will be done in 10 hours so you schedule more things to do. Do yourself the favor of being realistic. If you only work 4 hours a day, then schedule yourself 4 or 5 hours. Next week add an hour somewhere until you build the discipline to work longer.

## Time Management Hack #3 - EXERCISE

# Working In Time Blocks

Plan your next 3 working time blocks and breaks

Time block 1 – List what you will work on

Break 1 – What will you do for this break

Time block 2 – List what you will work on

Break 2 – What will you do for this break

Time block 3 – List what you will work on

Break 3 – What will you do for this break

## Time Management Hack #4

# Avoiding Talkers And Visitors

When you work in a huge office building there will always be a person who wants to chat all day long. When you work from home, that person might be a precious loved one. One of the most difficult parts of working from home is to establish that you are actually working. The good news is there are a variety of ways to accomplish this.

The easiest and most important way to establish you are working is to establish working hours. Hire a nanny, put up a sign, turn off your ringers and let the people around you know that you have set work hours. This will also help you to mentally prepare for work.

Another key component to working from home is to have a set work space. Somewhere in your home where you work and somewhere you only go when working. This can be a corner in your living room or a completely other office. The point is to make your workspace as defined as possible. Some people use a desktop computer as a way to create the cubicle feeling. Others simply use their laptop in the same location over and over.

When you have a set workspace and set work hours you will have a much easier time saying no to talkers or other distractions. If your friends or family ask you to do them a favor during your work hours simply decline and explain that you are working. If you respect your time and your business eventually so will the people around you.

## Time Management Hack #4 - EXERCISE

# Avoiding Talkers And Visitors

In the boxes below, list all of the policies you will implement immediately to ensure you are not interrupted and/or distracted.

Policy #1

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Policy #2

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Policy #3

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Policy #4

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## Time Management Hack #5

# Outsource As Much As Possible

Outsourcing can be a daunting task. Whenever you give up control of your business it can be scary. However, there is simply no other way to increase your income, reach or business if you do everything yourself. So then the question becomes, “which items should I be outsourcing?”

The answer is simple, anything you don't want to do. People tend to enjoy the things they are good at. They are successful and are able to complete these things quickly and well. The opposite is true of things they don't enjoy. If you don't want to do something, you will waste time avoiding it as well as eventually doing it. So when it comes to items you don't like doing, get someone else to do it.

This works very well for a few reasons. One, the job gets done quicker. Two, you stay in a much better mood. At the end of the day this is all about leverage. Leveraging your time is a skill. And if you plan to work from home, it is a skill you will want to hone early.

The only limit to this is the ability to outsource and the cost of outsourcing. If you simply don't have the cash to pay someone to do it then obviously outsourcing is not the solution. And if you spend just as much time supervising it as you would doing it yourself then it isn't worth outsourcing. However, the vast majority of business items can be outsourced eventually.

## Time Management Hack #5 - EXERCISE

# Outsource As Much As Possible

List all of the activities you enjoy doing and want to do more of

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List all of the activities you do not enjoy and would make good candidates for outsourcing

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For each item listed in the second box, identify websites, companies, people who might be able to take on the task for you

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## Technology Hack #1

# Email Management

Everybody these days has multiple email addresses, especially if you happen to make money online. You have work email, home email, business account, paypal email, etc. The list goes on and on and on. One tool that any home based business person needs is an email aggregation system. There are a variety of them available and basically they keep you from checking multiple email accounts.

Your time is money, so the last thing you want to do is spend a couple hours a day checking email. When you use an email aggregation system all your emails are accessible in one place. Most of these systems also have multiple filters. That way you can easily find the most important emails quicker. You can respond from multiple emails as well. This provides you the most flexibility and efficiency in your workspace. Eventually as your business grows you can have a secretary or virtual assistant go through your emails for you. Until that day your best bet is to use an email management program.

Programs like Outlook Express, Mail on the Mac and Gmail allow you to download email from multiple accounts.

## Technology Hack #1 - EXERCISE

# Email Management

List all of the email accounts that you use:

Research and select an email aggregation tool:

Determine which filters you can apply to extract the most important email first:

Select and commit to a date that you will get this task implemented by:

## Technology Hack #2

# Phone Aggregation

If you thought that checking multiple emails was a hassle, consider all the different phone numbers you need to run a successful business. Now add your personal numbers on top of that. That's a lot of work to keep things straight.

The good news is applications like Grasshopper or My1Voice allows your business line to be forwarded anywhere you want. That way you can answer the phone while you are dropping the kids off at their friends' house. Never feel tied down to your business line again. Most of these programs also allow you to store voicemails online. This can be great if you want to share messages with members of your team.

If you run a virtual business and you want to service multiple countries call aggregation is an easy solution. You can have a number for the US, Canada, Mexico and wherever else. And the setup is a lot easier than you might imagine. The simple availability of these country specific numbers will increase your market incredibly.

## Technology Hack #2 - EXERCISE

# Phone Aggregation

List all of the phone numbers that you use:

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Research and select a phone/voice mail forwarding service:

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Select and commit to a date that you will get this service implemented by:

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### Technology Hack #3

# Google/Twitter Alerts

Very few of us have the time or desire to sit around surfing the net all day long. And all of know that things can move pretty quickly in this virtual world. That's why items like Google and twitter alerts can keep you ahead of the pack.

One way to use either of these alerts is to simply stay abreast of what is going on in your industry. When you have a chance, just skim the alerts to see if anything needs your attention.

Another fantastic way to utilize these alerts is for your social media. Take the alerts and craft a message to your audience about breaking news. Write up a quick blog post and get ahead of the tidal wave of information.

And lastly, you can use these alerts for more traditional marketing. Set an alert for your type of client. Let Google/Twitter do the work for you and then you can make a proposal. Or, use the alerts to find potential employees or partners. These alerts keep you on top of whatever it is that matters most.

## Technology Hack #3 - EXERCISE

# Google/Twitter Alerts

Brainstorm a list of all the various keywords that are important to you in your business (product names, industry specific words, locations, problems, etc...)

Go to [www.google.com/alerts](http://www.google.com/alerts) and create alerts for all of the keywords you deemed important. List your Google alert keywords below:

Do a Google search for “Twitter alerts” and research all of the options available. Enter your choice below along with the Twitter keywords you have selected:

## Technology Hack #4

# Calendar Alert Reminders

Another fantastic application from Google is their Google Calendar. Now, you can use any sort of calendar software you want, but Google Calendar has emailed alerts. This is fantastic because if you are in the midst of things it is always nice to get a little reminder for upcoming appointments.

Calendar alerts can be sent daily or set up to email at a specified time before any event. It's like having your own personal secretary to remind you about that important lunch later. This type of tool will keep you on your game and efficient. It can be fully customized for whatever you need. And most calendar applications can be accessed by multiple team members. This can make group meetings a snap.

This increases your confidence and your productivity. That way you can do what you do best, keep on working!

## Technology Hack #4 - EXERCISE

# Calendar Alert Reminders

If you already have a calendar system, enter the name of the system below. If not, create a Google calendar and mark the task complete below:

Once you enable your calendar to issue alerts to you, list all any additional items you can insert into your calendar to keep you on track (i.e. due date for bills, blog post reminder, weekly reminder to call your parents, etc...):

## Technology Hack #5

# Dictation Software

Whether you write copy or you send out multiple emails, typing can be a tedious process. If you are doing it for hours on end, day after day it can be an unhealthy way to do business. One solution is to invest in dictation software. Items like Dragon Naturally Speaking can make your efficiency go through the roof!

This software takes a bit getting used to and the first week or so will be correctly setting it up. The program has to know how you talk. This part of dictation is a bit frustrating but it is helpful to do all the prep work as early as possible to avoid errors down the road.

There are also dictation services out there, but you only have to purchase the software once. Remember that you can use dictation software for actual written assignments, emails or just free flowing ideas.

## Technology Hack #5 - EXERCISE

# Dictation Software

List all of your writing activities that could be improved upon with dictation software:

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Do some research on the different types of dictation software available. Make sure you verify operating system compatibility (i.e. if you own a Mac, don't buy Windows based software):

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Write a date you intend to purchase and begin using dictation software:

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## Cash Management Hack #1

# Bootstrapping Basics

Working from home often means a very small budget. The great news there are many open source programs and applications out there to build your business. So before you spend your cash on items, check out some cheaper options.

The other great news is the abundance of advice out there for building a business on a shoestring budget. Take *Toilet Paper Entrepreneur* for example, a fantastic book that is all about building your business on a toilet paper budget.

Bootstrapping has a lot of advantages. If you have no outside funding then you don't have to share the end profit with anyone. And it has been said many times that those who make money quickly, lose it even quicker. So before you contemplate what you could do with a million dollars, figure out what you can do with what you have. In the end you will make more money. Instill bootstrapping into your mindset now and when you are rolling in it you will keep even more of your profit.

## Cash Management Hack #1 - EXERCISE

# Bootstrapping Basics

Analyze all of your current costs of doing business. Then list all costs that could be cut or removed with bootstrapping in mind:

Identify the top 5 activities you perform in your business that yield the highest payoff in terms of revenue:

Brainstorm all of the ways to increase your output/productivity in these 5 areas:

## Cash Management Hack #2

# Paypal

People were skeptical when Paypal first came out. Why would you fork over your financial information to a website? Well, those days are long over and Paypal has proven itself as a secure process over and over.

Paypal costs nothing to sign up. You pay a small fee per transaction. Think of this as your convenience fee. Don't write a check, send a Paypal payment. For those who work from home this means getting paid faster and that can mean everything!

Some people complain that Paypal charges too many fees. If you are a merchant online and you sell most products you can use Paypal as your merchant account. That in itself pays for its services.

Lastly, if you use Paypal exclusively it will help you with your books. You can track transactions and most recently it tracks your invoices. That means you won't have to pay someone to watch your books for you. Paypal does it for you, and only for a small fee per transaction.

## Cash Management Hack #2 - EXERCISE

# Paypal

If you don't already have a Paypal account, create one now and type in the name of your account below:

Take some time to learn the Paypal system. Browse through the various options, settings and reports. List all of the features that would benefit you/your business:

## Cash Management Hack #3

# Bartering

It seems like everybody is working from home these days. Back in the 80s only computer programmers were able to make it on message boards. Now everybody is invited to the party. The great news is with a larger pool of people you have a larger list of strengths.

So if you are building a website and you know graphic design but you aren't comfortable with SEO you can barter for services. Offer to do graphics for someone you know in exchange for SEO help. This can be super cost effective way to build your business early on.

And just because you meet people online doesn't mean you can't use people in your own neighborhood. Are you an online business person who also does a little painting? Offer to paint a house over the summer for exchange of babysitting your children during work hours.

## Cash Management Hack #3 - EXERCISE

# Bartering

Make a list of all of your “tradable” skills that could be used for barter:

Make a list of all of the services you require that you could trade with someone in a barter exchange (list both business services and personal items like lawn care, etc...):

Choose 3 people you will approach in the next week to arrange a barter agreement:

## Cash Management Hack #4

# Understand The Payoff Of A Task

There are three major ways to get a lot more out of a task than by simply accomplishing it. Those are self knowledge, customer service and long lasting effect. Let's say you have never considered learning html. You aren't a coder and you would rather just outsource anything at all that has to do with html coding. If you were to take an afternoon to trudge through just one page of html coding on your own you will save yourself thousands in outsource fees during your business. Not to mention the experience will be a bit of a confidence booster.

Customer service is also a major way to reap more than you would expect. Business is business, but people are people. When you provide good customer service you endear people to you and your business. Look for opportunities to really go out of your way for your clients. Not only will they come back, but they will bring their friends as well.

Long lasting effect can be tricky at times, but you can never know until it happens. One fantastic example is a well written blog post. You might write a blog or submit an article that brings you new customers for years to come. Networking is

another type of long lasting effect tool. If you take the time to meet people face to face, you can refer back to that for years. Then when it is time to choose between you or a competitor you will have the advantage.

So the next time when you have a task in front of you that seems bothersome, consider the true payoff. Will I learn something? Will it breed customer loyalty? Is there some other long lasting effect?

## Cash Management Hack #4 - EXERCISE

# Understand The Payoff Of A Task

List all of the tasks you perform on a weekly basis where you feel like it is more of a hassle than anything else:

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For each of these tasks, group them into 2 buckets – tasks that you **must** do and tasks that you could drop:

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Of the tasks you **must** do, use the space below to acknowledge the true payoff of doing this task and doing a good job with it:

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## Cash Management Hack #5

# Sometimes You Need To Do It Yourself

There is a cycle to business development. At the beginning you do everything yourself. You wear every hat, you do all the jobs. Eventually as your business grows it is time to outsource to other people. This can be relieving and a bit scary.

One thing is always true.... sometimes you need to do it yourself. It might be a customer service issue that needs your particular attention. Or, it could be you are simply the most equipped member of the team.

FedEx used the tagline, “When it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight.” And oftentimes in business when things “absolutely, positively” have to be done you should do them yourself. If the chances are it won’t be done or won’t be done as well as it “absolutely, positively” needs to be – do it yourself.

## Cash Management Hack #5 - EXERCISE

# Sometimes You Need To Do It Yourself

Knowing the current size of your business and your ideal visions for growth, write down the tasks that absolutely must be completed by you (at least for now):

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Remind yourself why it is important for you to personally do these tasks:

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Acknowledge the cash savings you are making by doing this task yourself instead of paying someone else to do it:

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## Customer Management Hack #1

# Support Desk Software

Zendesk and other support desk software programs allow for you to keep track of your customers in a highly efficient manner. These programs track “tickets” from beginning to end. They send them to the right team members and allow you to manage a virtual office more effectively.

Your customers are your best asset, the last thing you want to do is have them fall through the cracks. They say that it takes 1/10 of the effort to market to current customers as it does to market to new customers. So, if you have customers you want to keep them! An easy way to keep customers happy is to address their issues quickly.

Support desk software has come a long way in the last 2 years so be sure to check out your options. Most of them track the rate of completion per agent. This gives you insight on which team member is most effective. Another fantastic feature is regular reminders. You might have every intention to address an issue and then get distracted. With support desk software, you will have automatic reminders for outstanding tickets.

## Customer Management Hack #1 - EXERCISE

# Support Desk Software

Make a list of support desk software that is available on the market. Take free and paid options into consideration:

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Based on reviews, testimonials and your own research, select a support tool that meets your needs:

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Select a date that you will acquire and implement a support solution by:

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## Customer Management Hack #2

# Designated Customer Service Hours

This might seem like a no brainer but you would be surprised with the amount of companies that do not designate customer service hours. And when you work from home people can't rely on 9-5, especially if you cater to other time zones or countries.

If you want to shop at your local brick and mortar shop you would expect them to be open at 2pm in the middle of the week. So you get in the car and drive over there. Imagine the frustration you would feel if the store was closed and there weren't any posted hours of business. This is the same frustration your potential clients feel when they find your site and try to contact you. You might work 9-5 but you are in California instead of Florida. Or you might live in California but you work noon to 4am.

You are in total control of your home based business, so you can work whenever you want. However, if you post your hours and expected response time your clients will be more comfortable for contacting you. If you post 9-5 EST

and they shoot you an email at 7pm EST they will be less likely to sit by their computer waiting for a response. Due to your posted hours they will expect an email the following morning.

So unless you have a dedicated customer service agent available 24/7, be sure to post your hours.

**Customer Management Hack #2 - EXERCISE**

# Designated Customer Service Hours

Review your average weekly agenda as well as your customer behavior. Determine your days and hours of availability

Prepare a formal “hours” statement that you can deliver to your clients. Write it below:

Send your new hours to your customers, partners, etc... (post it on your website, social media profiles – if applicable):

### Customer Management Hack #3

# Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently asked questions are one of the top visited pages on any website. This saves you and your customer time and effort to run down answers. If you get more than 5 emails with the same question, post it to your FAQ page as soon as possible.

It's human nature to feel in control. When you have an extensive FAQ page for your clients to look through they will feel more in control. That in turn puts them at ease and increases the chances of purchase. It's a win-win all the way around.

## Customer Management Hack #3 - EXERCISE

# Frequently Asked Questions

Brainstorm all of the common questions that customers ask:

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Setup a calendar alert for the end of your work day to review all of the customer requests you had that day. Document the recurring questions:

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Use a document or a spreadsheet to capture all of the common questions along with your answers. Make sure the document is editable and somewhere easy to access for future updates:

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## Customer Management Hack #4

# Video Tutorials For Questions and Problems

Video tutorials are a fantastic way to create an FAQ section that shines. People love video and this will not only make your company look more professional, it will lessen the chances of further emails.

Putting together video tutorials also communicates a sense of customer care. You only have to produce it once and it can be viewed over and over again by many potential clients. People recognize that video tutorials take effort and they appreciate your company taking the time to make their experience better. Impress your clients in your sleep by creating these videos.

The best part is video tutorials are easy to make. You can use programs that use screensharing or you can spend a little more to get a professional looking video shoot. Video tutorials can also be submitted to various video sites like YouTube to extend your reach to potential clients.

## Customer Management Hack #4 - EXERCISE

# Video Tutorials For Questions and Problems

Make a list of anything that you do in your business where video tutorials could save you time and/or money (i.e. customer support, explanations, etc...):

Do your research and list the various video capture applications that pique your interest (take free and paid options into consideration):

Select an application and a date you will acquire the application for creating video tutorials:

## Customer Management Hack #5

# Community / Forum

Depending on the nature of your business, one way to improve your customer management and even cut down on hours spent in this department is to implement a “community”. This could come in the form of a message board, forum or blog (with comments sections).

The real win here is that if you are servicing many different clients with different needs, a community like this allows your customers to talk to each other and help each other out.

You might have a customer who has opened a support ticket with you. If they can also take that issue to a forum to get other opinions, other members might answer this question on your behalf even before you get the chance to.

Imagine a support ticket being closed by a customer before you even open the ticket? That can definitely happen when you implement a forum or community.

## Customer Management Hack #5 - EXERCISE

# Community / Forum

List all of the potential problems that could be handled by client-to-client networking:

Research free and paid forum/message board software that might suit your needs:

Choose a forum solution and set a date as to when you want to implement the system by:

## Business Development Hack #1

# Learn More In Less Time

We've all heard the expression, work smarter not harder. This is absolutely essential when your time equals money. So when you are considering how to learn more about business development be sure to include the entire time commitment into the equation.

For example, you might learn a ton during a weeklong seminar in another city. Eight hours a day for five days will certainly give you lots to work with. Remember that means getting to the seminar, possibly flying. And chances are that you won't be able to absorb that much information and immediately put it to use anyway.

So a much better solution is to use other resources that don't suck up extra time. Things like business development books or podcasts. There is a fantastic resource, [Mixergy.com](http://Mixergy.com) that is a collection of interviews about startups. Any one of those interviews will be worth your time and more. And all you have to do is click a site and listen.

## Business Development Hack #1 - EXERCISE

# Learn More In Less Time

List all of the business development goals you have for the current year. Include books, courses, seminars that you intend to take:

Of the items listed above, list all of the different ways you can acquire the knowledge (live training, web based training, audio podcasts, etc...)

Determine the most efficient route to acquiring the knowledge. If your plan was to fly to a seminar but you can get the same info on a audiobook, state your preferred selection below:

## Business Development Hack #2

# Prepare Your Education Ahead Of Time

Think of your education as an investment and research it as such. That means, don't go out and spend the time/money to get a degree to have a piece of paper on your wall. What is the ROI for the education you are thinking about? Will it be more clients? Can you quantify that?

The truth is a lot of people become successful with unrelated degrees. The other side of that coin is a lot of people have mounds of student loans to pay off for degrees that did very little for them. When you run a business, you hold the purse strings. Investment in your education is smart, but not always wise. If you can learn the same amount of education with free podcasts, books and lectures then go for it.

## Business Development Hack #2 - EXERCISE

# Prepare Your Education Ahead Of Time

List all of the educational courses you have been considering enrolling in.

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Based on your previous choices, try to determine the return on investment. For example, if you are getting a certification that allows you to charge double what you are charging today, how long will it take to pay off the cost of the course:

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### Business Development Hack #3

# Book Summary Websites/Products

Business development is a huge area of interest. Don't waste your time with worthless products. They might be worthless because they are repackaged content you've seen before or they might be worthless because they don't apply to your specific industry.

That's why you should check out summary sites. Before you buy on Amazon, read the summary. Or if the author is showcasing a new book on a podcast, spend the hour listening to him or her talking about the book before you spend a week reading it.

Reviews and referrals are often helpful with this concept. You will find that many authors write multiple books that have the same sort of content in them. It's bad enough to waste your money on the same thing twice, it's even worse to waste your money and your time.

## Business Development Hack #3 - EXERCISE

# Book Summary Websites/Products

List the top 5 business books on your reading list right now (if you don't have 5 go find them because this is a major key to success):

Using Google, Amazon and other websites, read the summaries and reviews for these books. Based on the reviews, select only 1 book to read for now. Choose the one that seems like it will make the biggest impact to your business:

## Business Development Hack #4

# Course Summary Products

Course summary products allow you to do two things. First, they allow you to see what problems each course answers. Second, they share the “bare bones” of what the course teaches. Everybody learns differently and for a lot of people these course summary products will be all they need to grasp new concepts.

This allows you to take in more knowledge in less time. And, it allows you to implement concepts more quickly into your business. Most course summary products will also contain resources for further study. This gives you a head start when you want to revisit or go more in depth for any particular subject.

## Business Development Hack #4 - EXERCISE

# Course Summary Products

List all of the courses and training classes that you would like to attend over the next few years:

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List the payoff of attending these courses:

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Research all of the various ways you can acquire the same knowledge in summary format (an ebook, a blog post, an interview with the teacher, etc...)

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## Business Development Hack #5

# Mastermind Groups

Talk to any successful entrepreneur and almost every single one of them belongs to one or more mastermind groups. A mastermind group is basically a group of business people who get together on a regular basis to exchange ideas, inspire each other and share advice.

When it comes to developing your business and building it to the next level, a mastermind group can have a huge impact on you and can also save you a lot of time and money in terms of avoiding mistakes. When you work with a mastermind group, you become both an advice giver and receiver. You can take a new idea to your mastermind group and ask for feedback. Perhaps you have an opportunity to invest in a new product or software application to improve your productivity. Other members of your group may have already experienced using a tool like this and can give you feedback on how it worked for them. The advice you give and receive in mastermind groups can be life changing.

To find a mastermind group, start online. Use social media and forums to put the word out and state you are looking for a group to join. Talk to other business owners in your area. If you can't find anything that suits your style, perhaps it's time to create your own group! Remember that most successful entrepreneurs belong to mastermind groups. So you should too!

## Business Development Hack #5 - EXERCISE

# Mastermind Groups

Contact people on your list and do internet searches for anyone who is running a mastermind group. Make a list of the available groups:

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If you found a group, contact them and determine how you can join.

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If you did not find a group, begin to prepare your own group. Start by listing the most important benefits you and your members would receive as a group:

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Put together an invitation letter and begin contacting potential members for your own group:

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## Personal Health Hack #1

# Simple Stress Management

The good news about working from home is that you usually can create an atmosphere of your choice. In other words, if you find motivational posters or a desktop fountain relaxing you can put them in your office. The bad news is that most people who work from home live with other people and are often unable to disconnect when it comes time to work.

That's why for a lot of people who work from home, the best thing to do is to simply get out of the house. After you have worked a few hours, go for a walk around your neighborhood. Or take a warm bath in the middle of the day. Whatever it is that works for you. Just be sure to compensate that lost time back into your workday somewhere.

Earlier it was mentioned that you should have a specific location for work hours. Sometimes just taking in a short tv show or something in another part of the house can recharge your batteries.

## Personal Health Hack #1 - EXERCISE

# Simple Stress Management

Analyze your current working routine and determine when you feel the most stress (is it project based, client based, working hours based, etc...):

Make a list of 10 things you can do to disconnect and relax for a while:

## Personal Health Hack #2

# Stretching

One obvious bonus of working from home is your choice of attire. If you are a yoga queen, you can easily wear your yoga pants all day long. In the midst of your afternoon, pull out your matt and do a little stretching. This will help keep your back muscles from tightening up.

Stretching can be a great stress reliever or just a part of your daily routine. Mentally focus as you stretch each morning. Contemplate what you will succeed in the day ahead. Consider how a focused mind will reap rewards for you down the road.

Sitting at your desk can be hard on your back, neck and posture. Stretching can go a long way in keeping you healthy for years to come.

## Personal Health Hack #2 - EXERCISE

# Stretching

Go to Google and research all the different kinds of stretching exercises that can help you:

Make a calendar alert for once or twice a day to remind you to take a break for some stretching.  
Write your stretching schedule below:

### Personal Health Hack #3

## Home Office Workouts

A lot of people that work from home also work out there. This can be incredibly convenient. Take some time to research hallway exercises. These are things like lunges and squats that will get your blood pumping. Quick little workouts to peak your energy are fantastic to do while working from home.

A pair of dumbbells can go a long way when you are working out. Some people prefer videos, others just like to have a set routine. Burning just a few extra hundred calories can not only increase your happiness but your productivity. And who couldn't stand to lose a little weight. And remember, when you work out you sleep better too. So any sort of exercise you can do from your office can make your whole day run smoother.

One item that has taken the work from home industry by storm is using an exercise ball as a chair for part of your day. This will help you with your posture and increase some calorie burning pretty easy.

## Personal Health Hack #3 - EXERCISE

# Home Office Workouts

Do a Google search and identify 7-10 home office based exercises that you can do that require no equipment:

Create a weekly exercise agenda and create calendar alerts to remind you to workout. Write your agenda below:

## Personal Health Hack #4

# Eating Habits

One of the biggest drawbacks to working from home is your accessibility to the kitchen. Many, many people eat much more often because they are so close to the fridge. This can be good or bad. If you lack the discipline to only eat when and what you should, be sure to put in the effort to curb your bad eating habits.

Little tricks include breaking up snack items into snack bags and marking them per day. Another tool is to simply put a schedule together and place it on the fridge itself.

It's great to be able to access your home kitchen whenever you want. You can take the time to cook meals and save money. However, if you are just constantly grazing you will start to pack on the pounds in no time. Be sure to know your limits and put a plan in place to keep yourself from going overboard.

## Personal Health Hack #4 - EXERCISE

# Eating Habits

Analyze your current eating habits and identify the areas that you want to make changes in:

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Put together a weekly meal plan including types of foods, meal frequency, time of eating, etc...

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If this suits you, create calendar alerts for your designated meal time. Enter your agenda below:

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## Personal Health Hack #5

# Getting Outside

For so many people that work from home, they treat their house like one big cubicle. Make a point to take a walk around the block. Take your dogs to the park, or find activities to do outside the house during non work hours. This will help you from developing a hermit like lifestyle. And as long as you can keep yourself focused, consider working from a coffee shop a couple mornings a week.

It might be tempting to work the hours away but, getting outside and interacting with others will make you feel better. Getting the sun in your face and moving around will help you physically. And interacting with your neighbors and friends will keep you emotional happy as well.

Setting boundaries not only keeps you from being distracted, but it can also keep you from working \*too\* much. So make sure to put some “outside time” on your schedule.

## Personal Health Hack #5 - EXERCISE

# Getting Outside

For each day of the week, select a 30 minute block of time where you will be able to disconnect and get outside:

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Create calendar alerts to remind you to go outside during your designated times.

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## Personal Mindset Hack #1

# Understanding Your Moods

Self awareness is a difficult skill to master. There's a reason so many people go to therapy to help them with this diagnostic skill. However, for the mindful person it is just a matter of practice.

Take note of your moods during different times of day. Write down your mood at different intervals. Pay attention to what you were just doing and what you are about to do. Note things like the weather outside and the type of food you are eating. This process will take a few weeks but the more specific your notes, the more precision in the outcome.

You might find that you really aren't the morning person you imagine yourself to be. Or that a particular food makes you tired. It could be as simple as that afternoon program you love sucks all your energy.

Knowing your moods is key to conquering them. This will keep you from emotional eating or taking out frustrations on a loved one. Don't let your emotions control you, control them instead.

## Personal Mindset Hack #1 - EXERCISE

# Understanding Your Moods

Select a week where you can focus on self analysis... specifically your moods:

For that week, create calendar alerts 3 times daily that remind you to document your state of mind/mood:

Based on your observations, look at the causes of good moods, bad moods, etc...

## Personal Mindset Hack #2

# Optimizing Your Focus

If doing a particular task takes you four times as long as somebody else, it might be a simple lack of focus. Find what works for you and make it happen. For example, if you are motivated by a sales goal then put pictures of what you will purchase with the money around your office.

If you are motivated by accomplishing tasks than use a pie chart to illustrate the work that needs to be done. Then, at set intervals erase pieces of the pie until it is completely empty.

It might just be a matter of distractions. Don't play music while you work. Turn the ringer off the phones. Don't sit in front a window if you are distracted by the cars going by.

Working smarter not harder is about peak performance and peak focus. When you are working at your peak you get more done in less time. Leaving you time to do more of what you love.

## Personal Mindset Hack #2 - EXERCISE

# Optimizing Your Focus

List all of the things that cause you to become distracted and lose focus. Then write a commitment to eliminate them:

Make a list of things that cause you to become more focused and motivated (images of your goal, background music, ear plugs, etc...):

### Personal Mindset Hack #3

# Optimizing Your Energy

It's already been mentioned that regular exercise will help you sleep. So will maintaining a regular schedule. It can be tempting to live without an alarm clock but your body will soon fatigue of a relaxed lifestyle. Sure vacations can be energizing but too much of anything can be unhealthy.

Optimize your energy by having a set schedule. Set aside time for sleep, time for exercise, time for work and time for eating. This will keep your body in peak performance level. As you become more and more disciplined in your routine you will be more sensitive to what your body is telling you. When you are more sensitive to your body you will know the difference between hunger and thirst for example.

And when your body is getting what it needs, you will have more than enough energy to accomplish anything that comes your way.

### Personal Mindset Hack #3 - EXERCISE

## Optimizing Your Energy

Make a list of events, circumstances, foods, times of day, etc... where your energy lowers:

Create a schedule that lets you combat these energy zappers and allows you to optimize your energy (for example, eating an afternoon snack makes you tired, replace your snack with ice water). List your schedule below:

## Personal Mindset Hack #4

# Scheduling Down Time

Even workaholics need down time. It's important to schedule and be realistic about the downtime you need. Many people that work from home are constantly tethered to their computer. This is both unhealthy and unproductive. Find a way you can walk away and enjoy yourself from time to time.

If you are the kind of person that can keep your head down for hours at a time then go for it. Be sure to get out of the house in the evening or on weekends and enjoy your time off. If on the other hand you would rather work longer days and have breaks throughout, then work that way. The key is to work how you want. Just be sure to schedule downtime so your batteries get recharged.

The most important aspect of down time is to truly be away from the office. This can be difficult when your office is across the hall. Lock the door, post a sign, whatever you need to do. This allows you to truly relax without worrying about what you are missing.

What works for a lot of home based people is to really enjoy the first hour of the day. Eat breakfast with your family, walk your dogs, read the paper and don't check your email. One of the benefits of working from home is you don't have to commute. Take advantage of that extra thirty minutes by relaxing. Skip the shower and take a bath, whatever you want to do.

## Personal Mindset Hack #4 - EXERCISE

# Scheduling Down Time

Make a list of strategies you can implement that force you to take down time and disconnect (i.e. a lock on your office door, an appointment with a workout partner, etc.):

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Create daily down time and make calendar alerts to remind you to actually do this. Rest and down time are key to optimal performance:

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## Personal Mindset Hack #5

# Scheduling Alternate Projects

Another pitfall of working from home is to constantly do the same thing over and over. What ends up happening is you tend to surf the web or do something else just as unproductive.

When you are balancing multiple projects, nothing gets stale in your mind. So be sure to schedule multiple projects and have them overlap seamlessly. Spend a few hours each day on different things. This will keep your mind fresh. For a lot of things there is only so much you can do in any one day. Once you hit that point, move onto something else.

This will grow your productivity exponentially. Think of it as getting your second wind. It's only natural that new things bring in fresh energy. By working on multiple projects at different stages you are constantly challenging the status quo. And that keeps you and your productivity on its toes.

## Personal Mindset Hack #5 - EXERCISE

# Scheduling Alternate Projects

Make a list of all the various opportunities you have to create variety in your work (multiple clients, projects, etc...):

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Create a monthly planning session to look at all of your options and ensure that you always have at least 3 different projects on the go to keep you fresh and motivated. Write your current projects below:

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