University of Richmond Employee Well-being

How to Be More Productive

Everyone assumes that being more productive is simply about getting more done in less time. If you are a productive person, you definitely accomplish more in months than many people do in years. But productivity is more of a way of being. You could be doing less and at the same time, be more productive. What do you think of when you think about ‘being more productive in your life’?

It is not only about applying the best practices but also applying yourself more and in different ways. So how to be more productive?

1. Get out of your own way. You might tend to look at all the extrinsic factors of why you can’t be more productive and you might blame, complain and point fingers at everyone and everything, except yourself. When the blame cannot be directed externally, you might then resort to using excuses, desperately searching for a justification that will give you comfort because ‘you have no control over what happens.’ How many excuses do you have and live by each day? ‘I can’t do this because…’ or ‘I don’t have time to do this because…’ I am not saying that your excuses might not be valid, but I strongly believe that more than 80% of the time, they are not real; it is an avoidance technique that we subconsciously use. Put results before comfort, get out of your own way, and stop making excuses. Like Nike says, “just do it!”

2. Talk to yourself differently. Productive individuals think very differently than others. You need to challenge your thoughts and develop a productive mindset. What is the main difference? A productive person doesn’t think along the lines of ‘Oh no, I have got so much to do. What am I going to do?’ ‘I am so stressed. I can’t think straight’ or ‘I am so overwhelmed. I wish this…or that…’ The words and phrases you use immediately empower you or they don’t; they either make you feel better or more stressed.

3. Identify your time thieves. We all have time thieves but most of us don’t even know what they are. If you can identify your biggest time thieves, the activities or situations that throw you off course, distract or interrupt you, or the bad habits that keep you from performing better, you will improve your results much more quickly. If you try to study and apply different techniques and you ignore your current thieves, the effort will remain fruitless. If you just aim to change one of your worst time management habits, you will change your results immediately. It will most likely also give you the impetus to change what else isn’t working, once you feel the reward of your efforts and you see the clear connection between what you do and what your reality is. Don’t forget to put results before comfort, if that is what you really want. Most people give up without ever knowing that they really can achieve their goals, meet their objectives and transform their lives!

4. Adjust the suit to fit the body. Most people often overlook the fact that time management is not a cookie cutter though, and what might suit you won’t necessarily work for your colleague or best friend. You need to take the advice given from a meta view and then adjust it to your situation specifically. If some tips and techniques don’t work for you, instead of throwing in the towel, find a way to adjust them to suit your situation. Otherwise, it is like wanting to get healthier but resisting a change in lifestyle.

Source: LifeHack
Healthy Cooking: Peach, Tomato, and Corn Pasta Salad

Ingredients:
- 8 oz. fusilli or bowtie pasta
- 2-3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt, plus more to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 4 oz. crumbled feta or goat cheese
- 2 large ripe peaches, sliced
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup raw corn off the cob (can sub canned or thawed frozen corn)
- 1/2 red onion, sliced thinly
- 5 oz. baby arugula or spinach
- Optional: quartered salami and avocado

Directions:
1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add some salt. Once water comes to a boil, add the pasta and cook until al dente, for about 7-9 minutes. Reserve a few tablespoons of pasta water before draining and putting pasta in a large bowl.
2. In a small bowl, whisk the olive oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes until combined. Pour the dressing over the warm pasta and add a little pasta water. Add feta and give the pasta a toss.
3. Add in peaches, cherry tomatoes, corn, onion, and arugula. Toss to combine. Taste and add more lemon juice, salt, pepper, or olive oil if necessary.
4. Enjoy warm or cold!
Educational Corner: 3 Myths about Coronavirus

Despite the growing number of COVID-19 cases and deaths reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) Trusted Source, some people choose to dismiss the seriousness of the pandemic. “A pandemic on the scale of what a novel virus like SARS-CoV-2 could end up being has not occurred since the influenza pandemic of 1918 that took the lives of some 50 million or more people worldwide,” Dr. Joseph M. Pierre, health sciences clinical professor of psychiatry at University of California, Los Angeles, told Healthline. Here’s the truth from experts about 5 of the most common myths about the pandemic.

**Myth #1: COVID-19 is just another flu.** The flu takes lives each year, but the fact that we have a vaccine and more awareness about the virus makes it a more understandable illness. However, while the flu and COVID-19 both cause respiratory illness, they are different. Dr. Bruce E. Hirsch, attending physician and assistant professor in the Infectious Disease Division of Northwell Health in New York, said there is some overlap between COVID-19 and other diseases caused by viral infections. “Differences between coronavirus and influenza and more common viruses still in circulation are that we know that the coronavirus binds to receptors in the lower part of the airways, and that accounts for the fact that so frequently, but not always, dry cough along with fever and fatigue are three of the symptoms that are most commonly associated with COVID-19,” Hirsch told Healthline. While dry cough, fever, and fatigue can occur with other viral infections, he said muscle aches and pains are distinct signs of the flu, while the common cold may bring on with a runny nose, sore throat, or sneezing. What makes COVID-19 stand out is its mortality rate, reports WHO.

**Myth #2: COVID-19 just affects the old.** While most people with COVID-19 develop mild or uncomplicated illness, WHO reports that about 14 percent of people infected will develop severe disease and need to be hospitalized, with 5 percent ending up in an intensive care unit. Although older people and those who are immunosuppressed are at greatest risk for complications, younger Americans aren’t entirely safe. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) showed that in the United States, of almost 2,500 people with COVID-19 whose ages were known, 29 percent were 20 to 44 years old. “A person who is young is less likely to have severe disease. But we are very disturbed to see a fair number of younger individuals below the age of 60 — in their 30s and 40s — and some of whom are deeply affected, critically ill, on respirators, and requiring extraordinary amounts of medical care and resources, who are getting this infection,” said Hirsch.

Additionally, he said “optimism bias,” a general tendency to underestimate personal risks, is another factor. “Of course, such an attitude ignores the potential for SARS-CoV-2 carriers with mild illness and those who are asymptomatic to transmit it to people who are more vulnerable, which is a kind of narcissistic or self-centered perspective that’s not unusual when we’re young. So there are many factors that allow us to discount risk during the early stages of a new infectious disease,” Pierre said.

**Myth #3: The virus was created by people.** While the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is new, other coronaviruses have caused health problems in humans in recent years, including those responsible for SARS and MERS. “To think of this as a biological weapon that escaped control or as something that is manmade... I understand that as a psychological defense mechanism to be able to understand, contain, and ‘otherize’ this phenomenon. It makes the world easier to understand and gives false comfort and gives a worldview of us versus them,” Hirsch said. He explained the truth of the situation is that we are biological beings living in a world with other biological beings we can’t always control.

“There are bats that live near humans and viruses that live inside bats. A person who gets infected 7,500 miles away from New York where I live — that person’s health and my health are directly affected with each other. This is the world we have to confront, and we have to accept the fact that we have a certain vulnerability living on such a small, crowded planet,” he said.

Source: Healthline
Long hot days and shorter nights means that summer is in full effect. Summer time is a great time to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables. You can plant tomatoes, green beans, squash, or peppers in a garden, go to a local farms to pick strawberries, blueberries, peaches, and cherries, or go to a farmer’s market. Below are some summer fruits and vegetables that you want to make sure you incorporate into your diet.

FRUIT

Peaches: A sweet and juicy summer staple, peaches are rich in vitamin A, which supports eye, immune and skin health.

Watermelon: A very popular barbecue fruit that is water-rich and will help keep you hydrated all summer long.

Berries: Cherries, strawberries, blueberries- summer berries come in a variety of colors and offer many health benefits. Cherries are rich in potassium, strawberries and blueberries are full of vitamin C and are rich in antioxidants.

VEGETABLES

Green Beans: A good source of vitamin A and antioxidants, which neutralize harmful free radicals.

Zucchini: One of the many summer squashes, zucchini can be prepared many different ways- raw, baked in the oven, sautéed, and even fried. Zucchini is a good source of vitamin A, vitamin C, and potassium.

Tomatoes: With all the different varieties, you are bound to find one that suites your needs. Tomatoes are a good source of lycopene, which is an antioxidant and help to reduce the risk of cancer.

Enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables all summer long. Eat vegetables with hummus or a light dip. For fruit, add them to yogurt, make a smoothie, or eat them by themselves.