

Need More Hours Every Day to Grow Your Business? Then Quit These 7 Time Wasters

Between checking Twitter and jetting off to client meetings, where do you find time to run the business?



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The entrepreneurial life is busy, which means you can't afford to waste time on tasks that don't lead to results. That doesn't mean you can't have fun -- even the best entrepreneurs need to take breaks -- but it does mean you should cut out the least useful parts of your day.

Successful founders know how to manage their time well. They make room for work and play, limiting their stress levels by staying focused on the things that matter. When they run into unexpected obstacles, they don't need to rearrange their lives to tackle the problem -- they're prepared for anything.

If you're a new entrepreneur or one struggling to find enough hours in the day, cut out these time wasters holding you back.

1. Social media

According to Business Today, social media usage reduces total workplace productivity by 13 percent. With so much at stake, entrepreneurs can't afford to let their working hours fall into the black hole of Facebook or Twitter.

Unless you need to be on social media for work, delete the apps from your phone, and only visit social media sites from your computer. That won't stop you from the occasional browsing session, but it will keep your eyes focused on incoming emails instead of a scrolling news feed.

2. Unplanned mornings

It only takes a few minutes to plan your day ahead of time, but if you skip this crucial task, you'll always be one step behind. Take part of the morning to write down all the things you need to accomplish that day, and organize the list by priority. Tackle the biggest challenges first (your brain works faster in the morning). By the time lunch rolls around, you will have accomplished more in one morning than a spur-of-the-moment person does all day.

3. Multitasking

By now, most people know that humans can't multitask. Despite this truth, many entrepreneurs still try to do everything at once.

Slow down so you can focus on one thing at a time. Emails are the biggest offender, so rather than let incoming messages disrupt your workflow, schedule two times during the day to focus on your inbox. This can easily be done in Google Calendar. That way, you can keep your messages from piling up without letting them interfere with the rest of your work.

4. Most meetings

Most meetings are a waste of time, especially for founders who have a million other things on their plates. Never attend a meeting solely to learn information -- you can get the same update from an email. Instead, attend only the meetings that require your input. Even then, send someone else in your place unless you're the only person who can provide the necessary guidance.

5. Worrying

Entrepreneurs tend to be obsessed with the future. They want to think about where their companies will be next year, what kinds of problems are on the horizon and how they can act now to prevent those issues.

Foresight is great, but unnecessary worrying can prevent you from accomplishing tasks that require your attention today. Schedule time to brainstorm future plans and needs (because you don't want to fly blindly); then, spend the rest of your time focusing on what's in front of you.

6. Business travel

The boss gets to fly around and schmooze all the time, right? Wrong. Most business travel, like most meetings, is better delegated than done by the leaders of the business.

Travel to important events, but leave everything else to your staff. If you really want to know what's going on outside your office walls, ask your delegate to bring back notes for your review. Be careful not to insult a big prospect with your absence, though. If your presence would make a difference, be present, but use your travel downtime to get some work done.

7. Redundant work

Founders love to compete over who works more, but the truth is that working more doesn't always mean getting more done. In fact, researchers from Stanford University found that too much work is not only inefficient, but actually harmful to the work that came before. Too many late nights could lead you to undo progress you made earlier in the day.

Learn when to switch off and focus on life outside work. Leave yourself a note on what to do first tomorrow, then go outside and play. It might sound counterintuitive, but an evening at the park could do much more for your company than your presence in the office.

Entrepreneurs have plenty to do and not much time to do it. Rather than spend your time fretting about time, cut out these unproductive habits and start getting more from your days. Your company -- along with your friends and family -- will thank you for it.