



While there will always be things beyond your control to stand in the way of your productivity, there are many things that are within your control. Below there are some suggestions of things to Do and Don't do to be a good friend to your productivity.

Don't Whine, Complain, or Gripe

Complaining may provide a temporary feeling of relief from negative experiences, but it can also stand in the way of taking productive action.

Instead, DO

- Look to see how you contributed to the negative experience and take accountability.
- Make reasonable requests of others involved and those who do can do something about it. You may be able to fix the source of your complaint.
- Make it a challenge! Challenge yourself to go without complaining for a week or more. Reset the counter if you catch yourself complaining.

Don't work overtime all the time

While it may be necessary and helpful to work longer hours on an occasional basis, chronically overworking may make you less productive per hour and lead to negative health consequences.

Instead, DO

- Sign-off for the day your at originally planned time.
- Take [breaks](#) to refresh yourself throughout the day.
- Leave time for leisure activities and sleep.
- Make sure you have days entirely away from work.
- Find ways to automate tasks that are repetitive and time consuming.

Don't do everything yourself

In your workplace there are talented people and people willing to help and learn.

Instead, DO

- Ask for help, especially from those who know how to do a task well.
- Delegate when appropriate.
- Take the time to teach others how to do the work. The time you take now will pay off later.

Don't be a perfectionist

This is not to say you should strive for anything less than the best, but productivity can be diminished by focusing too much on the small stuff.

Instead, DO

- Adjust your standards. Not every piece of work requires the same level of refinement. Learn to recognize the point of diminishing returns.
- Take a look at the big picture and concentrate on what is important. Once you've satisfied that, examine what additional impact will be gained by continuing to work on the same thing.
- Create a checklist of what you want to accomplish on a given assignment. Once you've checked off all of the items, that is your sign that you are done.

Don't Multitask

On the surface it may seem like you're accomplishing more, but research has show that working on more than one thing at a time hinders performance.

Instead, DO

- Create lists of things you need to accomplish and schedule time for each task. Then devote yourself fully to each task as you complete it.
- Limit distractions. Mute or block text and email notifications during your focus time.
- Schedule time for interruptions. If they are already budgeted into your time, you won't feel like you have to make up time by multitasking after an interruption.
- If you have to switch tasks, first write down what is important about the current one. This can help your brain let go of the current task so you can focus on the new one.

References:

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