

Getting Productive Effectively

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Disclaimer: Everyone is different. My experiences and knowledge may not address your issues, nor might the methods suit you. Disregard whatever part of this that you disagree with. We understand our own tools best; if yours work for you, that's awesome. All I care about is helping you.

Six months into 2019 has most likely only given us more failed attempts at trying to be productive with our lives. However, third time's the charm (or whatever try you're on, at this point). I can't guarantee you full efficiency, but I can at least be sure that these ten steps for effective productivity will help you to some degree if you use it – unless you're already productive (in which case, why are you even here?).

PERSPECTIVES: This is the lynchpin everyone ignores. It ranges from "refusing to get into a healthy diet in order to lose weight", all the way to "my friends keep telling me I suck at singing and dancing, so I'll never practice ever again", and everything in between. Get rid of destructive mindsets, align your perspectives and your goals properly, and you're there!

Just kidding, this is only step one. Onwards!

MAKE A LINE, PLEASE: Instead of

becoming the king of "I MUST become productive in one single day or I'll drop all my goals again because I need instant gratification", focus on **ONE THING ONLY**. If it gets too boring/easy to schedule into your daily life, add more stuff. Limiting yourself makes things less daunting, making the task feel molehill-sized rather than mountain-sized and in theory, make you less likely to skip out on a goal due to it feeling unachievable.

CONSISTENCY: There will always be days you absolutely don't feel like working on your goals, which is fine. But in avoiding it, even for a few days, you lose a lot of momentum. In that scenario, rather than abandoning it, do it for any amount of time less than what you originally intended, even if it's just five minutes instead of one hour. This way, you always get **SOME** work done, even on the worst days.

Don't get complacent during sessions though, please. You still need to push yourself.

RESEARCH: More information = better decisions for progression.

PROCEDURE: PLAN IT OUT.

Structuring your learnings and failures will give a clearer idea of what stage of the process you are in. You'll be more likely to progress faster and see exactly where you are

and how much you have left to do. Indeed, syllabi are a blessing.

CIRCUMSTANCES: What is easy for someone may be extremely difficult for another person for whatever reason. Focus less on comparisons and more on your own circumstances, especially if you can't make them go away.

EXECUTION: There's little point to any of this if you don't begin, so write down all your research and information, grab some caffeine, have your lab coats ready, and get to business.

REFINEMENT: If your first plan fails (and it will), focus more on refining your plan in relation to **WHY** you failed in the first place, instead of moping around. It will work wonders.

PATIENCE: What you intend to accomplish will take time (unless it doesn't). Get over it and keep going. You could think of it like this: stopping guarantees total failure, but if you keep going even one single painstaking step at a time, you are much likelier to reach there, and if you do care about your goals, then you'll owe yourself at least that much.

You'll still probably fail multiple times though. Just saying.

TESTING, TESTING, ONE, TWO, THREE: QUIZ YOURSELF.

In order to connect

the pieces better, it's best to be able to remember and understand all the pieces. Despite their bad rep, quizzes are gentle, misunderstood tools. Don't hate the quiz, hate the grades. Grades suck.

GENERAL ADVICE:

A) If procrastination is an issue, **TRICK** your brain by telling it you'll do just five minutes of the task. That will put it under less pressure than if you told it you would be doing the task for an hour.

B) Use the "five-minute rule". If a task takes five minutes, just get it done with, rather than piling it up.

C) After the novelty wears off, you'll hit a dip where you feel like you aren't progressing. That's normal. Just don't give up, because after the dip, you start improving again.

With that being said, the last step is always on you. I know it's cheesy, but it is true: there really is no tomorrow. That's something we humans made up. There's no point waiting for anything or putting things off, if there's nothing genuinely holding you back now.

Rasheed Khan is a hug monster making good music but terrible puns and jokes where he's probably the only one shamelessly laughing. Ask him how to pronounce his name at aarcvard@gmail.com

