WORK FROM HOME PRODUCTIVITY

DISCOVER HOW TO STAY PRODUCTIVE WORKING FROM HOME AND DEVELOP YOUR MIND FOR SUCCESS

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Sean's words of wisdom:

"I believe that knowledge is power. Everyone should improve themselves and/or business, no matter what stage in life they're in. Whether it's to develop a better mindset or to increase profits. Moving forward is key."

If you would like to learn more from ***Sean McCormack***, please visit:

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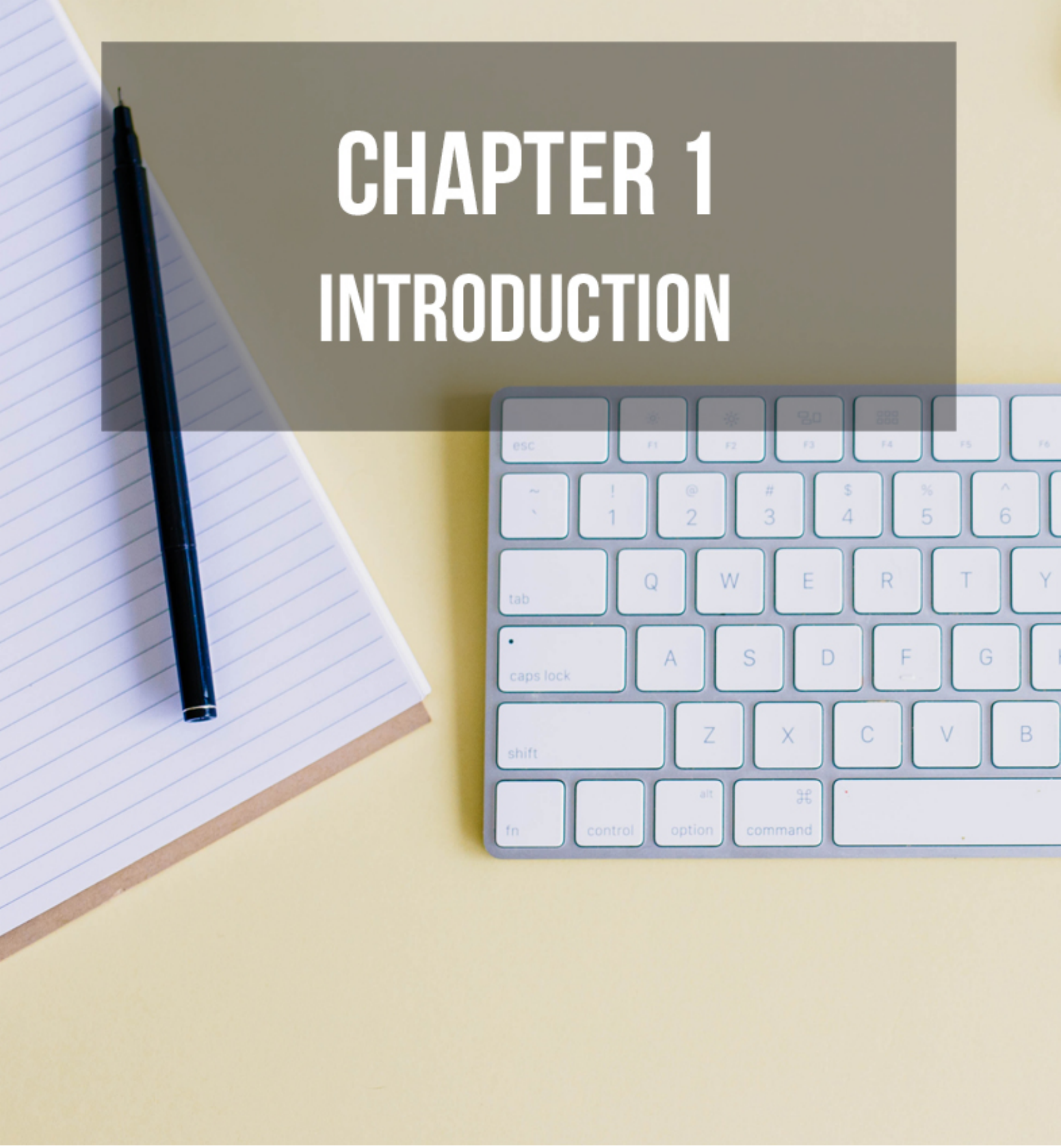
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

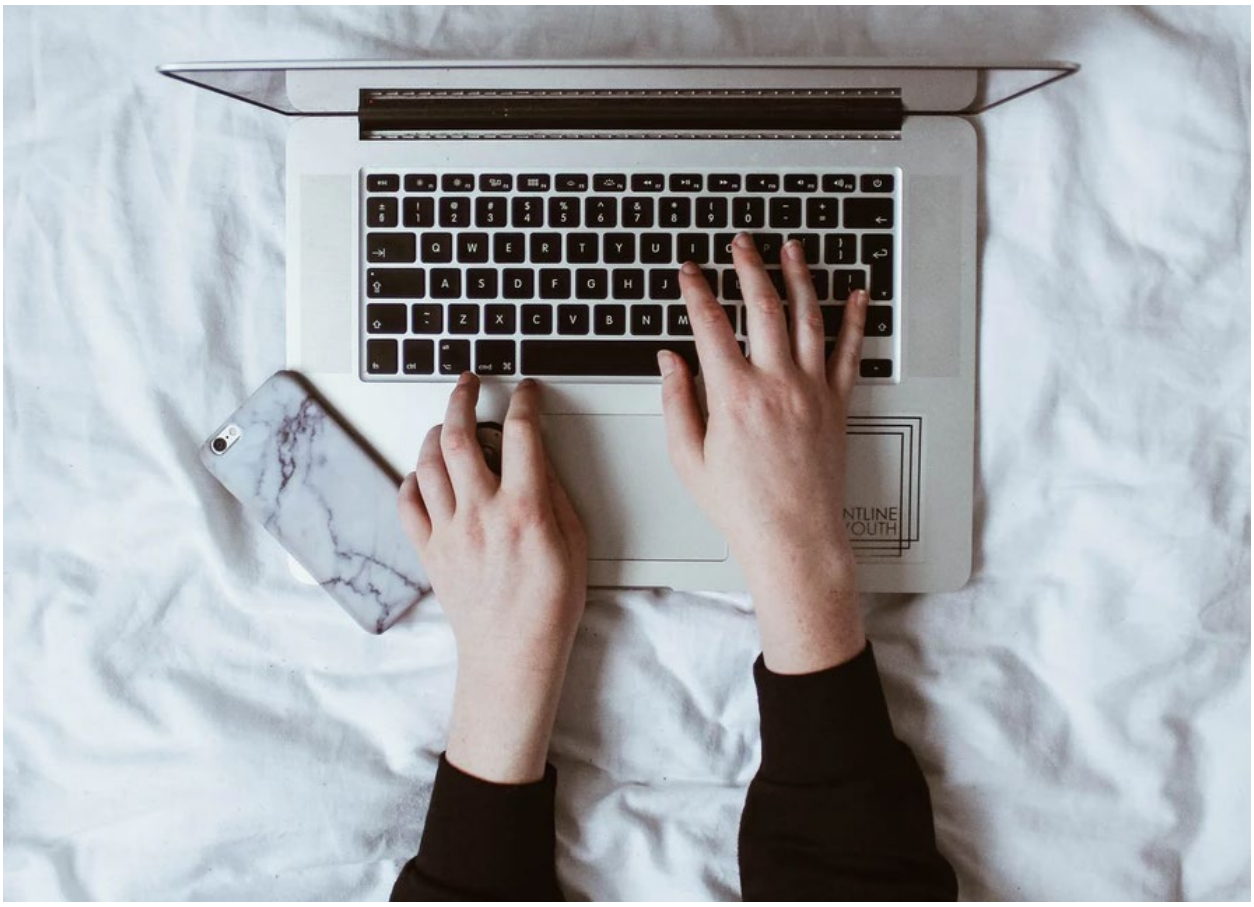


Chapter 1: Introduction – Working From Home is What You Make of It

So, you're stuck working from home? There are now two ways this can go.

One option is that you work like so many other people who are confined to home offices. That means you'll spend a huge chunk of your day procrastinating before you actually get anything done, which will result in work spilling over into your evening.

You'll go to bed with work still on your plate, feeling stressed and behind. Meaning you'll wake up the next day and start work in your pajamas.



Without someone looking over your shoulder or structuring your day, it's all too easy to fall into bad habits. You make yourself that morning cup of coffee, you check your emails, you read Facebook… you neglect to shave! It feels like liberation at first, and it's a great feeling not having to rush out of the door.

But as a result, you end up with no structure. You spend all of your day "half working" and you spend all your time cooped up in one room. Your work life bleeds into your downtime, and you end up falling behind in all kinds of aspects of your productivity AND your personal life.

So, what is the other option?

The other option is that you grasp this opportunity with both hands: that you apply a little strategy and discipline. Most importantly: you gain the correct mindset that will help you to tackle this unique challenge in the best way possible.

And what does all that mean?

It means that you can now finish your day's work in less time. Because let's face it: most of us wasted hours in the office on meetings and chatting around the water cooler!

It means that you have no commute either, meaning that you probably just gained 2-4 hours of extra time *every single day*.

You'll work in a tidy and organized office that is designed specifically to help you feel productive at work, and then you'll properly relax and unwind in the evenings with the people and things you love.

The best part is that you can start applying a little "lifestyle design." That means working in the way *you* want to work: working the hours that you

like, and even from different locations. Why not do extra work throughout the week so that you can have Fridays off?

(Which also means you can now go to the bank and hairdresser when it's much quieter.)

Why not forego working in your home office (if possible) and instead go and work in a café somewhere? Or even while looking at a looking at a beautiful local landmark?

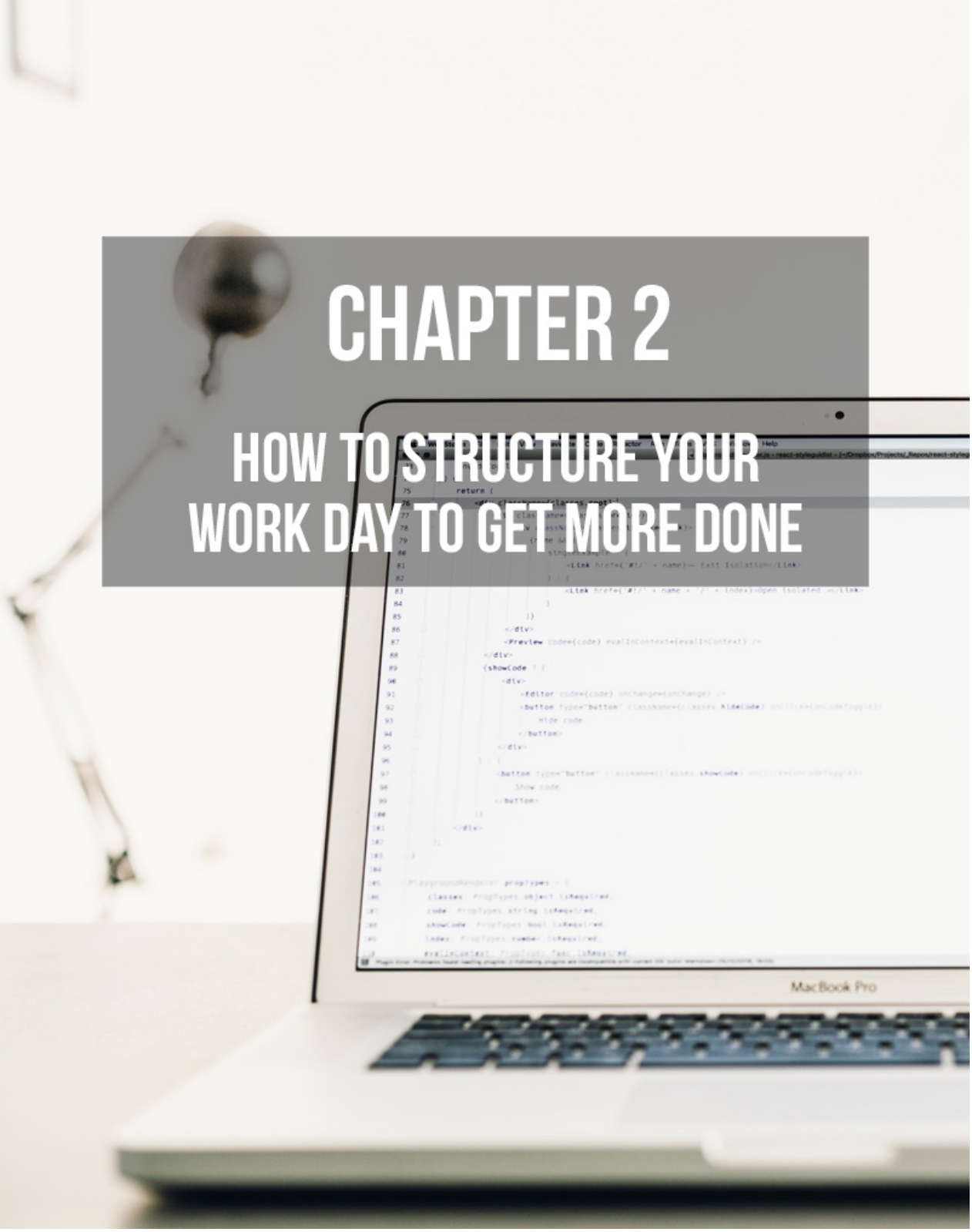
Why not work from your garden, if going outside is not an option?

All this is possible when you work from home, whether you are freelancing or employed by a large organization. All you need is to approach this in the right way, and with the right state of mind.

And that's precisely what we're going to be exploring in this eBook.

Read this book, and you'll find that working from home can be the best thing that could happen to you. You'll be more productive, you'll earn more, and you'll have more spare time to work on your self-development, your hobbies, and the things that really matter to you.

It's all about getting into the right mindset, learning to be productive when there is nobody to pile the pressure on, and doing what you can to stay on task.


CHAPTER 2
HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR WORK DAY TO GET MORE DONE
MacBook Pro

Chapter 2: How to Structure Your Work Day to Get More Done

The way that you structure your day when working from home can make a huge difference to your ability to get lots of work done. The danger is that when you have no manager leaning over you, you might find that you allow yourself a little extra luxury and time than is ideal. That in turn could mean you end up procrastinating to the point where you fall behind before you've even started!

The solution is to introduce some rules. These might seem somewhat arbitrary, but we'll see that they can provide a structure and discipline that will help you to accomplish MUCH more.

Eat the Whole Frog

The first one that we're going to address is something called "Eating the Whole Frog." This comes from a quote by Mark Twain that says:

"If your job is to eat a frog, then you should do that first thing in the morning. If your job is to eat two frogs, then you should eat the biggest and ugliest one first."

You should also change your job.

Basically, what he's saying here, is that you should do the biggest and ugliest task first.

If you're starting your day and you have 5,000 words to write, then you should sit down and do that before you do *anything* else. Before you answer any emails, before you do any smaller tasks, or anything you want to do.

This is important, because it means you're providing the most value as quickly as possible. The biggest task is the one that will probably get you paid the most, that will win over clients the most… and it also means that is no longer hanging over you.

And if you run out of time at the end of the day, it's much easier to fit in something small that you're looking forward to doing, than it is to fit in something huge that you don't want to do.

So instead of putting it off, then just get it out of the way! This also works as great training: it builds great habits.

This is why it's so annoying when clients just want to talk, send emails, and change the goalposts every two minutes.

If you want a professional to do something - if you're *paying* them to do something – then just let them do it!

This simple rule will allow you to be as productive as possible.

There are exceptions to this rule though…

The 1 Minute Rule

For instance, if you should find yourself needing to complete a task that will only take one minute, then you should tick that off as soon as you possibly can.

It's very common for people who work from home to find themselves becoming overwhelmed and exhausted. While there are several reasons for this, one of the biggest is simply trying to manage their time when they have a huge amount to do. How do you possibly keep on top of all the tasks that are piling up, when there is no one to help structure your day?

Tim Ferriss calls the kinds of small tasks that play on your mind "open loops."

For instance, you might have an email that you need to answer that you are putting off (because the client is awkward perhaps), or you might have something that needs fixing on your website.

These jobs take one minute or less, but you put them off because:

a) You have that other big pressing task to take care of
b) They are emotionally stressful – so you would rather bury your head in the sand

But here's the thing: those issues aren't going to go away. And the longer they hang over you, the more they are going to cause you stress and anxiety.

In other words, you should *just do them* right away. If they take one minute, then they aren't really going to eat into your day. But once they're done, that's one thing less on your mind. And it becomes *that much easier* to just focus on the work that you need to get done!

This doesn't just apply to your work either: it likewise applies to chores and things you need to do around the house.

For instance, if you have dishes that you have just eaten off of, then *put them in the sink* and get back to work!

The **exception** to the one-minute rule, is when you are deep in work. If you are working in a very focused manner toward completing a specific task or goal, then you should not allow small things like emails to steal your attention away.

When you are distracted by another task, it can actually take you around 23 minutes and 15 seconds to refocus back on the original job (this is according to Gloria Mark, who researches the topic at the University of

California). Our brains are not physically capable of multitasking, and instead work by switching *between* tasks!

So, if you stop your big essay to write an article, you are going to break yourself out of flow, and find yourself struggling with procrastination again as soon as you try to get back to it.

(That said, this IS something you can train with time).

My advice is that you turn off all notifications, shut your doors, and put on noise cancelling headphones. You aren't breaking the one-minute rule, because you're not going to be aware of the new task until after you have finished the current *big* job.

To-dos

Okay, but what about those jobs that are going to take 2-3 minutes? What about the 20-minute jobs?

Well, jobs that are large enough to be considered actual tasks will simply be queued up behind your one big task in descending order. You'll complete your biggest and ugliest "frog" first, and the second biggest and ugliest frog second.

For those niggling to-dos, the best option is to put them on a to-do list. Once you do this, you clear them out of your headspace, allowing you to focus more on the big task at hand. The best part is that you can now designate sometime within your day in order to attack those issues.

For instance, you can spend 20 minutes at the end of each working day making sure to work through small to-dos. This means they'll never pile up and become overwhelming, and you'll never forget something that ends up causing you a lot of stress!

Of course, these rules are not set in stone. Different people work differently, and the best strategy for you may depend on the type of work you prefer.

But the key take home is that by employing strict rules, you can make sure that you don't end up overwhelmed by tasks as they come in. This in turn allows you to work during more defined hours and avoid letting your work spill over into your downtime. All that can be game changing.

And this *specific* set of rules have been tried and proven to be highly effective by countless professionals!

CHAPTER 3

PRODUCTIVITY HACKS: HOW TO MOTIVATE YOURSELF TO WORK

Chapter 3: Productivity Hacks: How to Motivate Yourself to Work

Of course, sitting down and doing the hardest and biggest thing first, isn't always easy. It's one thing to set yourself rules for working, but it's quite another to stick to them! With so much to do, how can you make sure that you stay on-course and actually do it?

Especially when it would be so easy to grab a good book and a hot drink, and then retire into the armchair that's *right there* in the corner of the room!

This is where you need some productivity hacks!

Setting Up Rewards For Yourself

Coming to our rescue is a tip from the book "How to Save an Hour A Day" by Michael Heppell. He says that you should set yourself smaller goals within a project, and then reward yourself for completing those.

So, for instance, if you normally start your day by going to make yourself a coffee, then browsing through emails, and having a cheeky look at Facebook… that needs to change.

It is about half nine and you've so far achieved nothing! That's a deflating way to start your day.

So instead: sit down, eat the frog, and set out to write that massive project, or to complete the big data entry task… but then set yourself a target for the first *chunk* of work (perhaps N number of data rows).

At this point, you can go and have your coffee.

And then when you complete another chunk of work that you set as a goal, you can go and answer those emails.

NOW by 9.30, you have already completed a huge chunk of your work and you'll feel far better about yourself as a result. What's more, is that you'll often push yourself even further: you finish those 20 rows of data and then you think… why not do ten more before the coffee?

And this also means you'll drink less coffee. If you're anything like me… then that's no bad thing!

Leaving Work Unfinished

Another way you can encourage yourself to dive straight into your biggest task is to leave a project incomplete the day before.

Now, this might sound quite counterintuitive! Most of us assume we should try to polish everything off when we finish for the day.

But in fact, when you know that you've got 3,000 words to write tomorrow, you should try to write 400 words of it before you finish your day. So, you're not leaving work incomplete that you were meant to complete today – you're not completing *less* work. All you're doing, is making a start on tomorrow's project.

Firstly, that means you don't have to start a project fresh first thing in the morning. Looking at a blank screen is the most jarring and most difficult part of completing any task for many people!

At the same time, this now means that you will have an emotional urge to complete that task. Our brains *hate* leaving work unfinished – it makes us itchy! And so, the fact that there is an open, unfinished task, just sitting there on your desktop, means that you're far more likely to just get stuck in.

Overcoming Writers' Block

But what if you don't have this luxury? What if you didn't get a chance to start the work the day before?

Staring at a blank screen is hard work for anyone. Writers' block is NOT something that only affects writers!

So, the other big piece of advice I can give you is this: just start coding. Just start writing. Just start designing.

Even if the quality of the work appears to be poor. Even if you are feeling slow and sluggish and you aren't sure if what you are producing is high quality…

Just get working!

What this will do is to help you to get *into* the flow. Now you can always go back and check that what you wrote was okay. But in order to get into that "flow state." In order to get productive, you just need to push past that initial resistance.

And again, this is good training. It forms good habits. And it will help you to just get stuck in in future.

Prepping Your Work

Something else you can do, is to focus on how you are going to spend your time between work by prepping. When you're making cups of tea, when you're stuck in traffic, and when you're in queues, you can still actually be "working" in your head.

Now it's really important that you do allow yourself proper downtime. Properly resting and enjoying yourself will make you MUCH more productive lately. So, the aim is not to do this throughout your weekend or evenings.

BUT if you have a lot to finish and you have the opportunity… why not think about the project?

You can *program* in your head. You can *write* in your head.

That means coming up with solutions to coding problems, or it means thinking about article structures…

And NOW when you sit down at the computer to do some work, you will find that it flows MUCH easier and you get much more work done.

Likewise, you spend your time listening to videos about things you need to know for your project. If you're a blogger for instance, why not listen to videos on that subject and get ideas for how you're going to write your post?

This works really well if you happen to love what you do. If you *enjoy* the work you're doing, then it really won't feel all that much like work anyway!

This is also similar to another concept describes by Tim Ferriss: prep and pick up.

Prep and pick up describes how you can set the conditions for productivity prior to the point where you actually need to do the work, and then simply execute on your plan when the time comes.

The example that Ferriss gives on his blog, is when creating a Kickstarter campaign. Rather than launching your campaign and then spending the next several days writing emails, making calls, and chasing leads… instead you would write all the emails you need and all the marketing materials in the days leading *up* to the launch.

Then you can put those emails and marketing messages on some kind of auto-scheduler, and then simply let the campaign market itself once it is live!

The reason this works so well, is it means that you can't possibly fail to complete the work you need to finish. Nothing can "crop up" and get in the way, because all the leg work is already done.

And any work you *do* need to do, is that much easier for all the research you put in.

This is what you are doing when you work from home: you're going to spend the time between work and in the days leading up to big projects getting together all the resources you need and thinking about precisely what you need to do.

Then you can be optimally productive when the time comes.

One more concept to discuss from the book “Deep Work” that is relevant to this, is the notion of “Productive Meditation.” This is a form of meditation where you “meditate” on a particular project or problem. This is perfect while going for walks, when doing zombie tasks, or while otherwise conducting menial tasks. And it has the added bonus of being very good for your brain!

Creating Accountability

Finally, the most important thing you need to recreate if you want to be productive while working from home, is accountability.

At home, you might find yourself browsing Facebook for too long, or wondering off to raid the fridge. Why does this happen at home and not in the office?

Simple: at the office, there are people watching you to make sure you don’t do those things! Likewise, your manager might swing by to see how much work you’ve done!

You’re *accountable*.

At home, you don’t need to show your work until it’s due. Therefore, you can easily put off doing it until right before you’re supposed to hand it in. Of course, that means a mad dash at the end of the day, which ultimately results in your work coming completely unravelled!

One way to reintroduce that accountability, is to use apps, websites, or even pacts with your friends and loved ones. Many people will ask their partners to check in on how much work they’ve done, and to then “punish” them in some way if they fail to complete the work!

I personally don’t believe this is particularly feasible in the long term, nor particularly healthy!

So instead, why not create natural incentive and accountability, by setting yourself stricter deadlines! Speak with your boss/client and tell them that you will hand your work in to them *every day*. If you have a 10-day project, that means you'll provide them with an incomplete version of the work, so they can see how it is coming along.

This might seem like digging your own grave or making your own life miserable. But at the end of the day, it will force you to stay on track, and it will structure your day.

Now you know that you need to write 4,000 words a day or write 20 lines of code (or add X feature). You know you need to complete 5 data rows.

What that means *in turn* is that you now have no option to put the work off until the last day. That means no "half working" while you twiddle your thumbs.

More importantly, it means that if you complete your work early – by putting in more time to work more quickly – then you will find yourself with free time! This is now *actual* free time, because you don't have an abstract goal looming at the end of the week.

Now you have options: do more work and get more money, do more work today and take tomorrow off, or just clock off early and relax!

This not only gives you a precise target, but helps you stick to that target. That in turn is when the amazing benefits of working from home start to reveal themselves.

CHAPTER 4
FINDING THE INSPIRATION

Chapter 4: Finding the Inspiration (The Key to Incredible Productivity)

But THE most important key ingredient for doing lots of great work, is to be passionate and inspired by your work.

Inspiration is different from motivation. Motivation is being able to push yourself to work even when you don't want to. But inspiration means having ideas for how you want your project to turn out. It means visualizing it when it's complete, and it means wanting to get back to work to put those ideas and plans into action.

When you are inspired by work, it becomes *intrinsically* motivating. That means that you want to do it for its *own* sake.

One way to accomplish this, is to think about the type of work you're doing. If you find that you are consistently being given tasks that you find dull or boring, or that you really can't be excited about, then perhaps it is time to assess whether you're in the right line of work.

Should you consider changing jobs?

Because when you find work you really love, you'll find you become *instantly* more productive and better at working.

Now of course, changing jobs won't be an option for everyone. You might not have this luxury. Moreover, even if you *love* your job, there will be still be tasks and jobs that you *don't* love. No one loves every single part of their job!

So, another thing to do, is to try and look at whatever it is you're doing, and then make it more interesting.

So, if there is a particular task you need to do, find a way to gamify it, or to make it something you are more passionate about. Look at more inspirational examples of the work that you're doing, try to understand the craft and the artistry that can go into the best examples of that work, and then find a way to turn it into something that you can feel pride in and get excited to do.

Going back to the example of the writer, many writers find they struggle with writers' block when they reach specific scenes. They get "stuck" on a scene and find they procrastinate around writing it. Often, they will eventually push through.

So why did they get stuck in the first place, and what can they – and you – learn from that?

In many cases, it comes down to the fact that that scene in the book is less interesting or exciting. Often it will be an exposition scene, or two characters talking.

Pushing through is not the solution. Think about it: if it is that boring to write, think how dull it will be to read!

So, the answer instead, is to change the scene so that it becomes more interesting and so that you *can* bring yourself to read it! Maybe set the exposition scene in a more interesting location, have them playing chess, or place a ticking time bomb under the table to add tension.

Suddenly, that scene is easier to write!

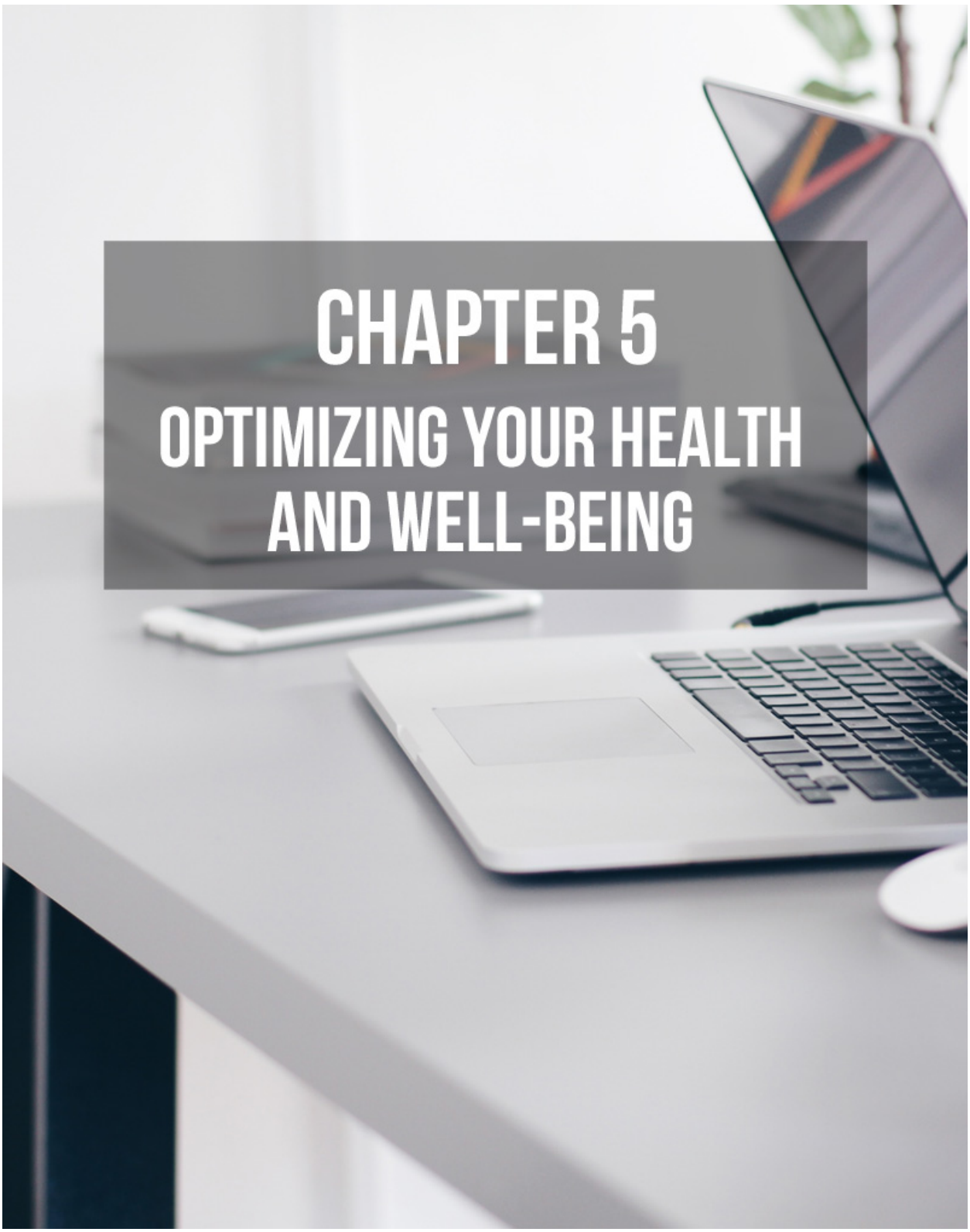
This same concept can be applied to many different dull tasks.

Assigned with a website to build that you *really* don't feel all that interested in building?

Then think about ways you can go above and beyond with the design, so that it becomes something truly special. You'll get more work done because you'll be keen to get to work on it, and the client will be more satisfied with the result!

Entering data? This is much harder, but if you view it as a challenge, and if you think about how focussed you can be, then this can help to make the task more inherently interesting.

If you love what you do, then you'll be more than happy to put in extra time.


CHAPTER 5
OPTIMIZING YOUR HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING

Chapter 5: Optimizing Your Health and Well-being

Working from home creates other challenges too. Chief among these, is trying to look after yourself and your wellbeing.

When you don’t leave the house to go to work, there is no incentive to dress well. When no one sees you for days, there is no requirement to wash.

And when you can get up at any time you want, and work at any time you like, there is nothing stopping you from losing all semblance of routine and health.

What's more, is that because you don't need to go to work, there is no guarantee that you'll get *any* fresh air or exercise! These are all serious issues, because they can be detrimental to your health and wellbeing.

When work gets on top of you, you might even find yourself eating poorly as you grab whatever is quick and stuff it in a microwave.

All this leads to your being tired, de-motivated, and less able to focus. Focussing and staying motivated requires energy, and resisting temptations and distractions likewise requires that you be in good health.

In short, if you don't look after yourself outside of work, you'll struggle to stay focussed when you sit down at the computer.

Optimizing your health will allow you to focus better, seeing as focus requires energy. Using a disciplined routine will ensure you get proper time to rest and recover. And taking the time to groom yourself and look your best will help you to feel (and thus become) more productive and professional.

Getting Proper Downtime and Rest

One of the most important things you can do to optimize yourself for productivity and output, is to make sure that you get proper downtime and rest. Think of this as the "yin to the yang" of productivity.

What many people don't realize, is that their effort and their focus are based on energy. And that their energy is a finite resource.

When you work from home, you might feel tempted to work longer hours in order to get more done. Because your office is in the same house, you can *very easily* put in an extra hour in order to better satisfy the client/earn more money/make tomorrow less stressful.

But guess what? If you do that, then you'll start tomorrow *more tired* and you'll be less likely to get work finished.

We have a tendency to think that working late will help us to get more done, but studies show us that the work done at this time is lower quality AND that it tends to be far less pressing than we imagine.

This is why it's SO important that you make a clear distinction between "work time" and "down time." Only by resting properly – which also means *forgetting* about the stressful aspects of your job – can you then come back to work the next day feeling restored and productive.

This means you should stop work at 5pm (or whatever you have designated as the end of your day) EVEN if there is still work left to do.

AND it means that you should stop looking at your work emails. Many apps like Slack will allow you to turn off notifications outside of office hours. But

you can also do this by owning two phones – one for work and one for getting things done.

It's also important that you enjoy yourself during your down time with things you like doing. That means reading books, playing games, chatting with friends, or watching movies.

One of the reasons we feel distracted at work, is that our brain *wants* stimulation and entertainment. If you don't have any set time where you get to enjoy those things planned, then you will find it hard to turn off and focus on work during work hours. You need to "get it out of your system" so to speak!

Grooming and Self-Maintenance

Part of this separation between work and place is wearing the right clothes when you sit down to get work done. This makes a huge difference, because it means that you will *feel* as though you are going to work once you set about being productive. Ever heard the statement "dress for the job you want?"

By feeling more productive, you will therefore be more likely to actually focus on your task and less likely to want to sit down and play video games. Your brain associates that suit with a particular mindset and way of working.

Likewise, it's crucial that you continue to shave, to wash, and to be up and dressed by a certain time. This will all help you to feel as productive as possible when your day starts.

Dealing with Loneliness

There are many more issues associated with working online that we have yet to address. One of the very biggest ones, one that a lot of us don't anticipate before going into this business, is loneliness. When you start

working from the comfort of your home and kiss goodbye to the commute and the office politics it can feel like a breath of fresh air. But then later when you hear about your friends' Christmas parties and their office romances, you can start to miss the camaraderie that working with other people provides.

And in fact, as you sit there typing away most days, you can even start to find yourself getting rather bored or going out of your mind for the lack of people to talk to. The solutions? Spend time working in cafes (if this isn't an option, then you can sit in your front garden and tip your hat to people as they go by), meet with friends during your lunch break (or call them), or just do more in the evenings!

General Health

Other factors of your general health are also crucial if you want to optimize productivity while working from home.

For example, it is very important to get adequate time outdoors. When working from home, it is very easy to go days without walking, and without getting sunlight!

Spending no time walking is extremely unhealthy: studies show that this can actually shorten our lifespans. This is due to the lack of exercise for the heart, which then atrophies and becomes weaker, putting us at a great risk of heart disease and many other issues. At the same time, numerous changes in the body occur when we sit for too long, which cause issues like kyphosis (roundness of the shoulders and back pain), as well as an anterior pelvic tilt.

Likewise, sunlight is crucial for everything from our mood, to our productivity, to our weight. Sunlight coerces the body into producing vitamin D, which actually works more like a “master hormone” than a vitamin, and regulates the production of testosterone, growth hormone, and more.

Not only is a lack of vitamin D terrible for your mental health and your bone density, but it also prevents you sleeping properly – thus you wake the next day feeling less tired and less able to focus.

It is therefore *crucial* that you balance your time spent working indoors with plenty of time *outdoors*. Even if that just means going skipping in the garden or going for long walks around the block – you simply cannot spend your whole life in your four walls, or you will see your body AND mind begin to deteriorate.

(TIP: Having more than one space to work around the home can also help you to avoid some of the issues associated with spending too long in one position. For example, try working on the couch, or working on the floor.)

Finally, make sure you are getting adequate, restorative sleep. How well you sleep will make a huge impact on your ability to focus and work the

next day. Getting more sunlight and fresh air during the day is one critical thing you can do to help this, as is being able to sufficiently switch off from the work you are doing once you finish for the day.

Fitness and Strength Training

In terms of exercise, walking and jogging are two options that will help to strengthen cardiovascular fitness and undo a lot of the damage done by working at a desk for long hours.

Strength training is also a very good idea though too. This will help you to reduce injury risk, will speed up your metabolism, and will actually make you feel sharper and more awake while you're at work.

The best type of strength training is "functional fitness." This is strength training that is designed to help us reintroduce and regain some of the lost movement patterns that we were born with. Examples include things like the ability to squat down to the ground or lift your arms over your head.

Watch a young baby and you'll see they can do these things with ease. As such, they move with more energy, and vigour, and they're completely pain free! If you have spent the last 10 years working at a desk though, you are probably tight, restricted, and in pain.

Yoga, animal movements, and other types of "movement training" are also particularly good for this. Kettlebell training in many ways combines the benefits of strength training with those of mobility and movement training.

Different people will take to different types of training, so experiment and see what you enjoy most.

Exercising first thing in the morning is a brilliant option that will also help you to wake up feeling more productive and ready to tackle the day ahead.

Exercise itself actually stimulates the production of the feel-good hormone serotonin, while also increasing the metabolism. Both these things can help you to be happier and more effective while working.

CHAPTER 6

CREATING THE PERFECT HOME OFFICE

Chapter 6: Creating the Perfect Home Office

Your ally in the battle to maintain productivity and health while working from home, is your home office. While you might be limited for space, if there is any way possible, then you should design a home office that will be separate from the rest of your home.

This is important, because it will allow you to step in and out of your “work mode.” The worst thing you can do, is to work in the room you sleep in. This will make it much harder to separate your working life from your downtime, which will have deleterious impacts on your sleep.

There are other things you can do to make an ideal home office for productivity too.

Inspiration

One powerful tip is to surround your office with things that inspire you and that put you in the mood to be productive. These might be examples of the best work in your niche or industry, or pictures of your heroes and people who inspire you.

This is something that Cal Newport talks about in his book Deep Work (which I’ve referenced before). Here, he talks about the idea of the “Eudaimonia Machine” – a space built by architects with the singular purpose of generating the most productivity possible.

Part of this design involves museums filled with inspirational works. This is something that I feel very strongly about and believe can make a huge difference to overall productivity.

This is linked to the psychological concept of “priming.” Priming essentially means putting someone in the frame of mind most conducive to whatever

task comes next and it has been linked with memory. So, for instance, if you want to “prime” someone to give positive responses to a question, you might spend twenty minutes complimenting them and giving them chocolate to put them in a good mood. If you want to influence someone’s answers to an inkblot test, you might put them in a room with lots of fruit.

This room is supposed to have the same effect, but instead it will put you in the mood to get productive work done.

Organization

One of the most important things to do if you want to make your office as productive as possible, is to keep it organized and tidy. Your office space is an outward reflection of your mental state, and if it becomes disorganized and untidy, it will make it harder for you to focus on work.

Adopting a minimal décor is one excellent way to this. The fewer items you have, the less dusting and organization there is to do. At the same time, this will automatically increase the average quality and value of the items you *do* keep on display!

Another tip is to create systems for keeping things organized. A paper tray system can be very effective for instance when it comes to keeping papers organized and going paperless is also a very good idea!

Faces and Plants

There are several studies that suggest that humans are supposed to live in small groups or tribes, and that this is the way our brains have evolved. We therefore struggle when we don't get that stimulation, and our neurochemistry is less conducive to happiness and productivity.

But you can "hack" this process as simply as putting a picture with your loved ones on your desk. That's all it takes to put you in a more productive and positive mindset when starting your day.

Likewise, adding a plant to your desk can be a very effective way to boost your mood. This works because it brings a bit of the outdoors in, which once again has an impact on our mental state due to our psychological evolution. We still associate plants and greenery with areas of natural abundance. Thus, they stimulate the production of serotonin and other feel good hormones, which have actually been shown to combat stress and even make us more productive!

CHAPTER 7

THE BEST PRODUCTIVITY APPS AND GADGETS FOR WORKING FROM HOME

Chapter 7: The Best Productivity Apps and Gadgets for Working from Home

Perhaps what will help to make your office most productive of all though, is to use productivity apps and tools. There are now countless services, apps, and products designed specifically to help you get more work done, and these can make a huge difference to your ability to stay on task, and to collaborate with people around the world.

Many of these apps in particular will become nigh essential as you start to work from home, while others will give you a big advantage and help you to avoid confusion, errors, and distractions.

Remote Collaboration

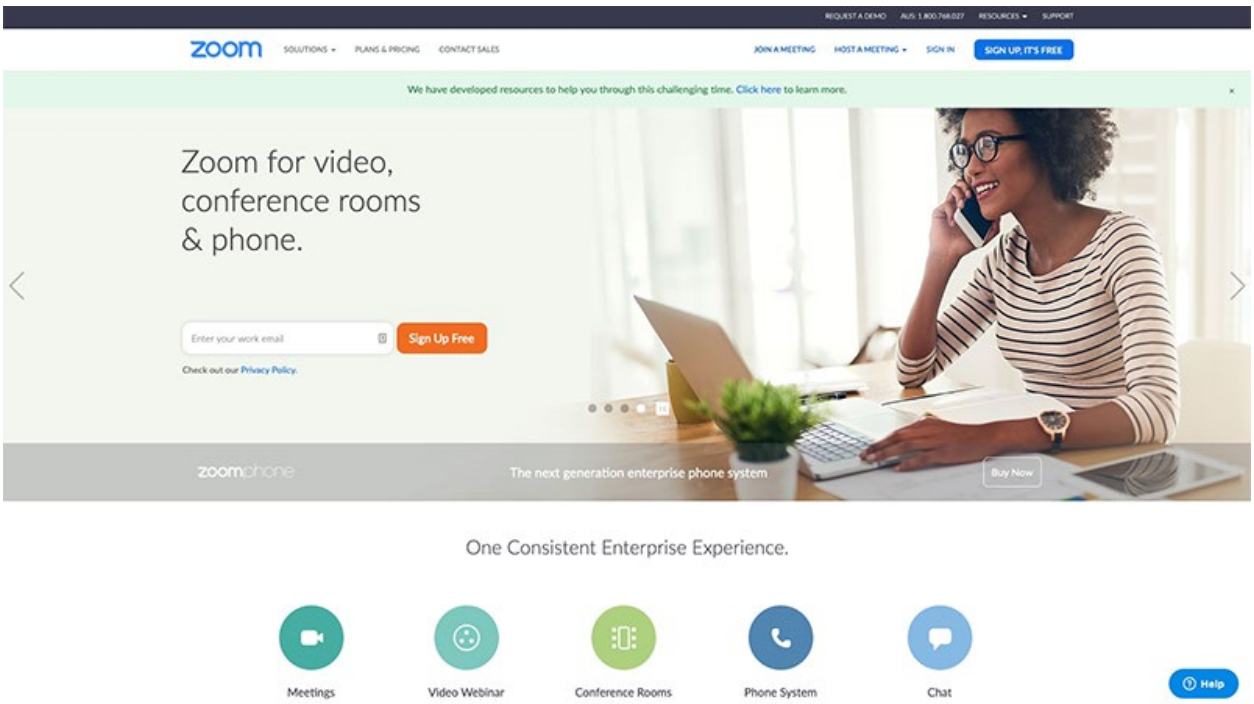
For remote collaboration, the best tools are:

Zoom (www.zoom.us)

Slack (www.slack.com)

Microsoft Teams (https://products.office.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software)

Other powerful tools include Google Drive (https://drive.google.com) and Workplace (https://work.facebook.com).



Zoom is a teleconferencing app that is useful for conducting remote meetings. Sometimes you need to see someone face-to-face in order to have a proper discussion about the type of work that you need to do, or in order to secure a contract. In these cases, Zoom is extremely easy to install (important in case the person you are talking to doesn't already have it), it has lot of features (like the ability to record calls), and it is the industry standard for remote calls.

Slack is designed to replace the kinds of casual interactions you might have previously had in an office. It is a little like WhatsApp for business, which means it's perfect if you have a quick question or want to say high.

Microsoft Teams is a unified communication and collaboration platform that combines persistent workplace chat, video meetings, file storage, and application integration.

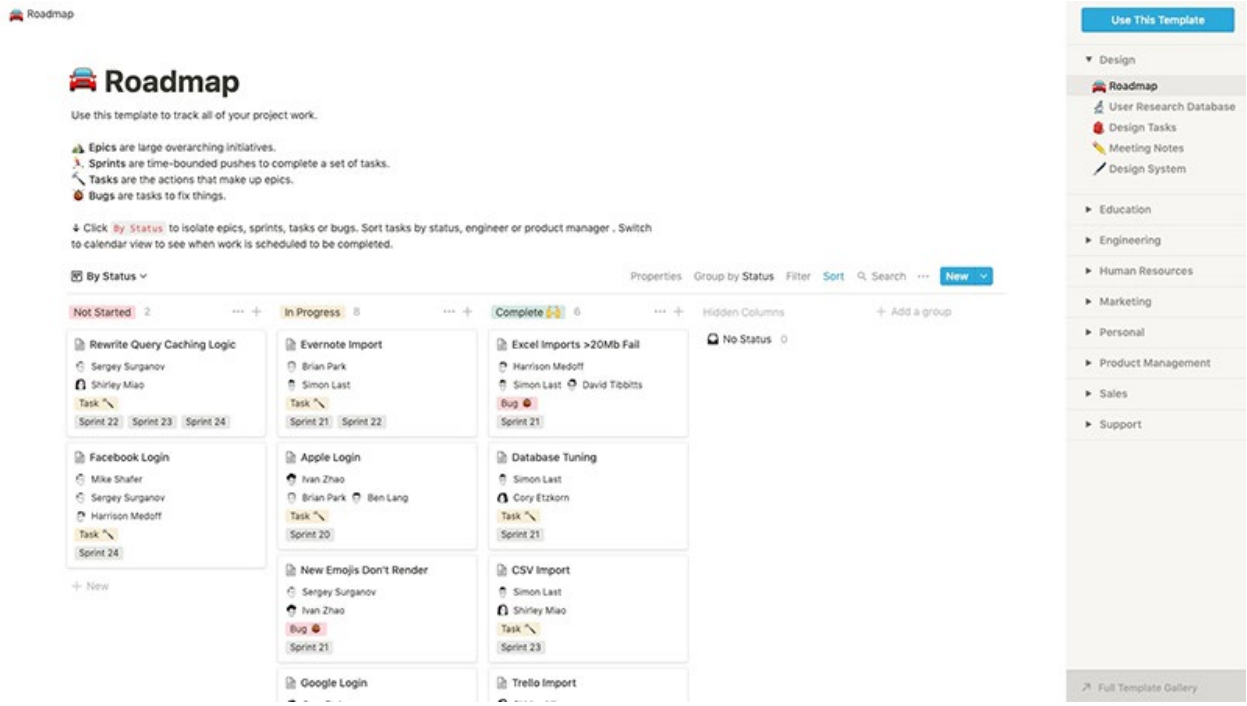
Workplace is Facebook for businesses, while Google Drive is ideal for collaborating on documents and spreadsheets.

Personal Workflow

We've discussed the power of to-do lists a lot in this eBook, so it should come as no surprise that one of the most powerful work-from-home tools is just such an app. Todoist (www.todoist.com) is a powerful to-do app that features natural language interpretation. This means you can type or even dictate something like "send an email to X client every Monday" and that will automatically create a recurring task every Monday with a due date for that day.

You can also work with teams by assigning tasks to other people. Tasks can be neatly categorized, and there are lots of integrations with other key apps like Google Calendar.

Note taking apps are similarly important for personal workflow. The most powerful of these is arguably an app called Notion (www.notion.so). Notion is an app that will let you create pages of notes like any other and organize these in hierarchies like normal.



What's more impressive about Notion though, is that you can also create links to other pages within your notes, you can create tables, and you can embed videos and images. This is almost more like a compete content management system, and we're only just scratching the surface of what it can do!

Notion has the power to become a second brain and to adapt to your style of work. Once you get used to using it, you will find it is extremely effective.

Finally, I highly recommend an app called Freedom (www.freedom.to). Freedom allows you to block specific websites and apps on your phone or computer, which helps you avoid the distractions that these can cause. How much more work could you get done if you didn't have to struggle not to look at Facebook?

Admin

Getting familiar with admin apps and tools including PayPal for sending and receiving money (www.paypal.com) and DocuSign (www.docusign.com) for signing documents is also advisable.

CHAPTER 8
BEST ONLINE JOBS

Chapter 8: Best Online Jobs

You may be reading this book because you have been forced by circumstances to start working from home. But there's also a chance that you're reading it in a prospective fashion: that you want to start working from home. Hopefully, you've seen that with the right mindset, this can be a hugely positive influence on your lifestyle!

Or maybe you've been recently forced to work from home and you're now thinking about the other types of work you could do. Why not transition to a workplace that is better suited to this new working style?

The great news is that this is now more possible than ever: as more organizations start hiring online, and countless apps and services seek streamline the process.

In short: it's now easier than ever to maintain a productive online workflow, and the number of online jobs is rapidly increasing.

Top Online Jobs

Before we begin listing the top online jobs, it's worth noting that the top online jobs broadly fall into one of three categories:

- Employment
- Gig economy
- Passive income

In other words, you can either find a company to work for but send your work in remotely, or you can sell your skills to online clients on a freelance basis.

Many job roles can fit into any of these categories. For example, you can work as a programmer who makes apps to sell directly to users (passive income), you can provide code for clients that are working on apps (gig economy), or you can work remotely for a software company as a full-time employee (employment).

Other jobs will only fit one of these categories or will lend themselves more to a specific modality.

Without further ado, here are the top online jobs you can get right now.

Copywriter

Copywriting means writing content for website homepages, for advertising campaigns, and for packaging. This is content that has a specific purpose, and it is required by online businesses in large quantities.

Copywriting works particularly well as freelance work, offering a large amount of flexibility to find work and complete projects in your own time. You'll need to be able to write quickly, and professionally.

A lot of this writing will be ghost written, meaning that your name won't go on it. It's not particularly high-paid, but if you work fast, it can provide a stable income.

Blogger

Blogging means writing content that will go on a blog or a website with the aim of entertaining or informing the reader. Blogging can be monetized through display ads or might form part of a content marketing strategy for a company looking to increase its authority and engagement.

That means you can blog for yourself or for other brands. If you choose to run your own blog, expect it to take some time before you gain enough visitors to generate a significant income.

Journalist

Journalism is slightly different to blogging. Whereas blogging typically means writing in a fairly casual manner, journalism is more serious reporting. As a journalist, you'll work for one or more publications (online or otherwise) alongside a team of editors. You may be required to cover breaking news, to attend live events and unveilings, or to write opinion pieces discussing topical matters.

Vlogger

A vlogger is someone who makes money from YouTube videos. Generally, this means working for yourself to generate money from ads.

Becoming a YouTuber is one of the top online jobs in many regards. You'll get to enjoy a sense of minor celebrity as you get comments from fans all around the world. And it's rewarding work creating videos that get thousands of views too!

Digital marketer

As a digital marketer, your job will be to help companies promote themselves online. There are many aspects to digital marketing, ranging from pay-per click advertising (PPC), to search engine optimization (SEO), to social media marketing.

Digital marketing can mean working as part of a large in-house team, or it might mean selling your services on a freelance basis. You might devise the entire online marketing strategy for a brand, or you might handle one small aspect of it. Either way, this work is in growing demand. The average salary for a freelance digital marketer in the US is around $66,206 per year!

Programmer/software developer

Software development can mean a lot of different things depending on the types of project you work on, and the languages you learn. Likewise, software developers can again work independently, or as part of a large team – either of which will introduce many unique challenges.

The average programmer earns an average of $92,046 up to $134,000 per year, according to Glassdoor.com (https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/Salaries/us-software-engineer-salary-SRCH_IL.0,2_IN1_KO3,20.htm).

Video editor

Video marketing can make a huge impact and help a business to communicate its vision and brand in a direct and engaging manner. In order for this to happen though, the videos in question need to be punchy and well edited.

This is a skill that you can learn relatively easily through sites like Skillshare.com, and then begin selling for profit.

Data analyst

A data analyst is someone that looks at large data sets in order to identify patterns and useful metrics. At the same time, they may be responsible for data cleaning (removing faulty data) or helping data to work with different systems.

Data analysts are in high demand right now, though the number of online jobs is slimmer than you might think owing to the sensitive nature of a lot of data.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Working from home can be a blessing and a curse. Ultimately though, the issues that can arise from working from home are mainly due to a lack of experience and familiarity with the process. This is a *skill* and like any other skill, it takes time and practice.

If you currently find yourself struggling to focus or get work done, then don't worry. This can and will improve, as long as you apply consistent effort and smart changes. This book will hopefully have shown you precisely how to do this and how to adapt a work-from-home-mindset in order to optimize your productivity.

Once you understand how to do that, you can then begin to benefit from the HUGE amount of flexibility, comfort, and productivity that this will afford you.