

Step-by-Step Template: How to Get Things Done



How to Get Things Done: Take Control of Your Time, Tasks, and Priorities, and Accomplish More Than You Ever Thought Possible

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How to Get Things Done: Take Control of Your Time, Tasks, and Priorities, and Accomplish More Than You Ever Thought Possible

If you're like most busy entrepreneurs, you've read so many time-saving tips and articles, you're beginning to wonder if the time you spent reading them was, well, a waste of time. Here you are, still in overwhelm; still feeling as if you've accomplished nothing by the end of the day. Your big idea – the one that was going to generate steady [passive income](#) while you kept making money directly by serving clients – is still sitting on the shelf.

You genuinely work hard, putting in long hours and missing things you'd really love to do, like go for that walk with your sweetie or to see that movie before it disappears from the theater. But you never seem to “catch up” or find the time.

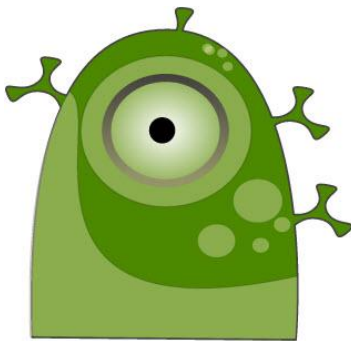
The guide you are reading right now can give you a simple, foolproof plan to help you take control of your time, tasks and priorities – and accomplish more than you ever thought possible.

And it will help you do it easily – step by step.

Not every step will be applicable to you – but don't skip reading right through this guide at least once in its entirety. This guide will go a little deeper than the usual “get an egg timer” solution and delve into the psychology behind time management. If you find yourself wanting to skip a section (or saying angrily: “This doesn't apply to me!”) it may actually be *the exact point you really need to tackle* – the one that's been keeping you from getting things done.

So let's not waste any more time – let's get straight to action.

Step One: Exterminate Procrastination



“I'm only human.”

You may have heard that particular phrase before – or even used it on yourself – but it doesn't make you feel any better when you've failed to accomplish something that is long overdue. Not deep down.

Why?

Because people mostly use this phrase **as an excuse**.

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You spend two hours on Facebook, getting sucked into your low-carb diet group's lives when you should have been cleaning the house. (And you even had "Clean house 10-noon." on your desk daytimer!) Or you put off working on your eBook because an hour on Farmville 2 seemed like a much more relaxing choice. Except that it turned into three hours; and you had to really scramble to get dinner ready before the kids' six o' clock skating lessons.

Your "excuse" doesn't have to be a "fun" one, either. Maybe you did your taxes because it felt easier than picking up the phone to call prospective clients. But the end result is the same: You didn't do something you really "needed" to do – and you feel bad about it.

"I'm only human," you console yourself. *"I can't do everything."*

It's true. Life happens. We can't work twenty-four hours a day. People matter. We do need breaks. And it's easy to lose track of time (especially if you're doing something fun).

But if you're chronically using excuses such as "I'm only human" to habitually procrastinate, this habit will have one catastrophic side-effect: **It won't make you feel better.**

No matter how excusable your action was, if it kept you away from your goals or resolutions (again), "I'm only human" will feel like a Band-Aid stretched across the yawning chasm of your rapidly-draining self-respect.



And procrastination *does* drain self-respect. It's a powerless, small-child response. It's the sort of response you got into the habit of adopting when your mother ordered you to do "do your homework". It is the response of someone who doesn't think they have the power to choose their own reality. Somewhere, Mom's voice is still sternly telling you to put out the garbage or do your homework or perform some other unpleasant (or overwhelming) task.

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Realizing you are human means realizing that that you have choices to make every day. You make the choice to get things done, or you make the choice to procrastinate, and you *accept the consequences*.

Addicts and Accountability

Addicts know this – the successful ones who have invested in therapy, changed their lives and beaten their addictions do, anyway.

The first step comes when you **commit yourself to taking full accountability for each and every action**. No more “she made me do it” or “everybody does it” thinking. (And especially no more “it won’t really matter if I...” excuses.) Take a page from the successful addict’s book – even if the idea offends you and you’re busy telling yourself angrily that your problem is just working too hard, twenty-four-seven. In fact, that in itself can be a form of addiction or procrastination!

When you take full accountability for your actions – the good as well as the bad – it can be the most liberating feeling in the universe (and we *will* get to things that people really *do* make you do, I promise!)

Try this simple exercise:

1. Think of a common scenario or activity which you avoid by choosing instead an easier or more pleasant alternative where you typically find yourself saying: “I should be *[insert task here]* but I’m only human”. (Or any other similar qualifier.)
2. Place your hand on your solar plexus.
3. Say, out loud, “I’m only human” – and add a Qualifying Statement – your reason for not doing the task – one qualifier at a time. Try out any that come into your head. (E.g. “I’m only human. I can’t help it... I’m only human. I’m too tired to wrap my mind around taxes today... I’m only human. I can’t do it, I’ll fail.”)

See which reason resonates the most powerfully for each Qualifying Statement and response, paying attention to which physical or emotional results you experience, such as muscle tightening, nervousness, fear or a “pang” of emotion – the famed “gut reaction” you get when your car skids on ice.

Here are some suggestions

- “I’m only human. And it’s only for half an hour...”
- “I’m only human. And the kids are driving me crazy – I just can’t work.”

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- “I’m only human. It’s his fault. He shouldn’t have...”
- “I’m only human and I never get any help. Why should I always be the one who *[insert task here]*”

4. Write down your most compelling Qualifying Statement here when you’ve completed the exercise and found your “resonator”.

My Most Common Qualifier is: “_____”

You may find that on different occasions, more than one qualifier could be added. If this is true for you – and especially if you have several scenarios where (or why) you procrastinate – the problem is most likely bigger than a single task or responsibility that’s giving you grief.

Decide where you fit on the following scale:

<input type="checkbox"/> My problem is with a particular task	<input type="checkbox"/> My problem is with too many things to do	<input type="checkbox"/> My problem is systemic: Procrastination is part of my personality and pervades all aspects of my life
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The Reason Why Nine out of Ten People Never Beat Procrastination

And here’s the real reason people can never seem to find the key to stopping procrastination. **They don’t know where they fit on the scale above.**

They are **applying the wrong fixes** to their unique problem.

Here’s how to tell what you need to do next:

- **If you answered “my problem is with a particular task”,** then all the fixes for “my problem is systemic” absolutely don’t apply to you!
- **If you answered “my problem is with too many things to do”,** then finding ways to shorten each task will turn out to be yet another Band-Aid solution.
- **If you have realized that your problem is systemic,** its roots are deeply based in emotion and experience. It’s a psychological issue. Coming up in a moment, you’ll find an easy method to bypass months of therapy and get on track – but if your problem stems from specific trauma or you are caught in a situation of ongoing abuse or stress, you may need to seek additional professional help.

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Step Two: Applying Your Custom Solution

Procrastination is the number one reason why ninety per cent never reach their daily goals. It's a sobering thought – but it doesn't have to be your reality.

Here are the fixes for your Procrastination Type:

(a) “My problem is with a particular task”

Identifying the problem puts you halfway to solving it – and this type of procrastination is the easiest to put behind you. You can:

- **Outsource the task** to a freelancer who specializes in it (and what's more, loves doing it). The time you save and the gains you will make by having it performed by an expert should offset the cost of farming it out – and actually help your ROI.
- **Delegate the task.** If we're talking about something like doing the laundry, ask your significant other or a teen to help. Sure you may have to bribe, trade off other tasks or put your foot down – but one way or other, it needs to be delegated. (Especially if something is literally preventing you from doing it safely: For example, a bad back makes sweeping the floor knock you out for the day.)
- **Dump the task.** Is it really necessary to perform this particular task? If the answer is “no”, get rid of it altogether. For example, if you always dust every single day, try dusting three times a week or twice a week instead.
- **Get creative.** Think of alternate ways to perform the task, get it done for you or substitute something you find easier to produce the same result. For example, offer to swap services with someone who specializes in what you hate or find difficult to do and offer in exchange a service you perform brilliantly and easily – but that they think is rocket science.

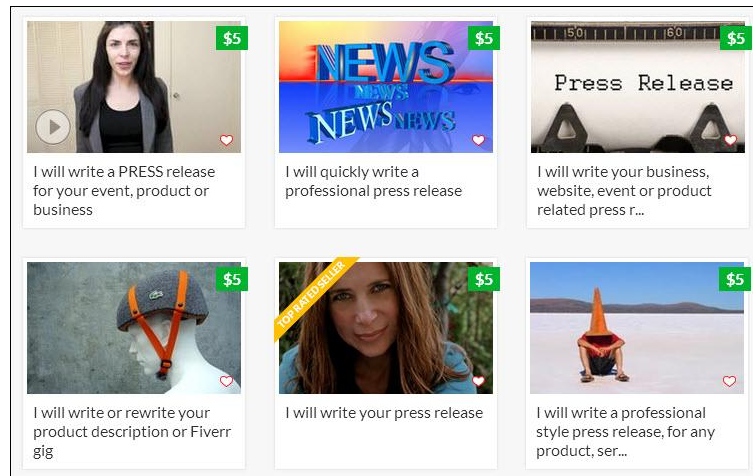
(b) “My problem is with too many things to do”

Again, this cause for procrastination is fairly easy to deal with. Here are suggestions that others have found effective:

- **Dump unnecessary tasks.** This is another scenario where you can get rid of unnecessary tasks with a clear conscience. Ask yourself if it is really necessary. Look to see if a specific component of the task is what is causing your reluctance to perform it. Also remember to evaluate how much ROI it brings you.

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- **Hire an assistant.** Make a list of all the tasks you need to do; then highlight all those you can delegate or outsource.
 - If they are all similar tasks – for example, they all relate to bookkeeping – you need to hire a bookkeeper or a VA who specializes in bookkeeping.
 - If they are differing tasks, outsource them to freelancers or check out [Fiverr](#) to see if you can get these done inexpensively and easily



Don't automatically assume you can't afford to hire an assistant or outsource: Using controlled, inexpensive job boards like Fiverr help make outsourcing easy to budget and manage. And many VAs have package deals for batches of specific tasks or a monthly number of hours (as low as four hours) – you don't have to make a full-time commitment.

- **Examine your boundaries.** To delve deeper than just the tasks themselves, you also need to seriously examine your boundaries. (And if you don't know what "boundaries" refer to, you probably don't have any!)

(c) "My problem is systemic"

If you have realized that past trauma, low self-worth or current abuse is responsible for procrastination, by all means consult a trauma-trained therapist – but you can move past it (especially if there is no current, ongoing abuse) by creating success.

Part of the reason low self-worth is so devastating lies in the emotional paralysis it creates – the self-fulfilling interior statements like "I'm so stupid, I can never do what they do" or "I'm not good enough", "they won't like it", "I've got nothing worth sharing" or the hundreds of other bad messages we tell ourselves.

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Success depends on putting the right systems in place and using them. If you don't know what the systems are, or you have difficulty in one business area, of course you are having problems. We're going to help clear away that particular obstacle and talk about systems in our next step. But first, just as people who succeed take specific actions, so do people who chronically "fail".

Check out this comparison chart and see if there is a particular action or mindset that applies to you. (Not all will).

People who succeed...	People who fail...
Allow themselves a pat on the back for small and large accomplishments	Minimize or criticize their own successes – or allow others to do so
Make prudent use of and appreciate people in their lives	Chase after people out of their circles that are impossible to reach or impress
Look for and listen to positives	Beat themselves up with negatives
Take chances	Feel "doomed"
Learn from failure and mistakes and move on	Beat themselves up for failure and mistakes... and either repeat the same mistakes or stop trying
Find life an exciting adventure	Are terrified of or depressed about the future
Have no problem imagining and envisioning success	Imagine unrealistic successes (e.g. you're twenty years old and a rock star, when you're forty-four and have never even picked up a musical instrument)
Make success happen, one goal at a time	Look for external sources of instant success (e.g. lottery tickets)
Think of themselves as rich people who are temporarily financially challenged	Think of others as the "haves" and themselves as the "have-nots". (They tend not to see all the hard work and sacrifice that the "haves" had to commit to – and do.
Focus on their successes	Focus on their failures

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If you have several of the negative habits, don't beat yourself up about it: As we said, it's hard to model success if you've been constantly criticized for everything your whole life, while successes were ignored or – worse – minimized or ridiculed. And it's hard to believe nice things will happen to you if you've been steam-rolled by a succession of awful disasters.

Contrary to the way you may feel, other people are not naturally smarter or luckier than you: They've just had better experiences, better support – and as a result have developed better habits.

Habits can be changed. It's very difficult to do so, precisely because they *are* habits – but it can be done. Every successful repetition of a new action brings you closer to literally altering your well-worn neural pathways and creating new, better ones.

Even of just noticing the good along your particular path can make the route seem shorter – and get you looking around you and noticing shortcuts you can take.



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Of these common life outlooks between the two groups, the two most devastating are **looking to externals for success** (lottery tickets, other people) **and looking for business salvation to people you are not naturally attuned to or in touch with**. Of all the habits, these two are consistently the most common denominator in depressed, unsuccessful people.

Be Your Own Psychologist

Feeling “doomed” is not some supernatural curse – it’s the sadly natural outcome of having hyper-critical parents, teachers or partners that you could never please, and/or having a history of sad, cruel life events. If you have experienced this type of background, the hardest steps are the first ones – but take heart: You **can** literally re-program your reactions by re-framing your self-talk. Instead of “I blew it again, I’m a total failure”, literally correct yourself and say out loud something more (a) realistic (b) positive. Example: “Today I procrastinated for four hours – but tomorrow is another day and I have the chance to make it anything I want.” Say it out loud, while looking in the mirror. Frame your face into a smile while you say it. Smile AT yourself.

This will feel totally unnatural at first, and you may even find yourself running a sarcastic interior commentary on each positive statement you make – but *stick with the exercise*. Re-framing negatives into positives is one of the major exercises any accredited psychologist will take you through, over and over – so save yourself some of that much needed money and be your own psychologist.

Strengthen those weak knees and lift up your tired head and make sure the next step you take is in the right direction – not down that dark, gloomy, worn-out and slippery old neural pathway. It really is true what they say: The only real failure is to never try.

Step Three: Streamline your Systems

Now that we’ve taken care of hidden psychological factors in not getting things done (and even ONE of the above habits can derail the most positive of people), let’s take a look at your actual business systems...

1. Know your preferences

You can follow suggested systems till the cows wander home, but if they run counter to your personality preferences, you’ll find they just don’t work for you. Take a look at your habits and preferences and decide whether or not you are an intuitive or linear thinker. If you’re having trouble determining, here is a quick way to check:

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If you...	Then you are...
Prefer to-do lists, schedules and daytimers... Prefer to outline and plan projects...	A linear-logical thinker
Find yourself always flying by the seat of your pants... Create your plan as you go...	An intuitive-creative thinker

Believe it or not, one type isn't "better" than the other type. In fact, we could all benefit by being a mix of both types (and most of us actually are: We just tend to favor one over the other). And sometimes, flying by the seat of your pants, creating a plan as you go just means you've been taught poor organizational skills.

Intuitive-Creative Thinkers

If you are an intuitive-creative, heavy to-do lists and scheduling software probably makes you feel heavy, trapped, claustrophobic, doomed and inadequate. So don't use them.

Instead, **write down your top three priorities for the day** on an index card. Be specific (not "work on eBook" but "write 1,000 words"). Then put it where you can see it – propped against your computer, pinned to the cork board behind your monitor, et cetera.

For now, focus **only on accomplishing these top three priorities**.

If you like to journal, keep a "Priorities" journal and at the same time every day, write down what stopped you from achieving any of these that particular day; what helped you and what you are going to do to change things tomorrow.

Then make a habit of reading that journal, at least once a week – you will probably be surprised at your progress – and you'll start to notice changing patterns – or negative patterns you didn't know you had.

Some other tips:

- Use [software](#) or organizers that allow you to look at an overview rather than detail after detail. Even if the organizer includes details, it should allow you to see where you are (and – most important – what you still have to do at a

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glance.

- **Don't call your daytimer a daytimer:** Call it a "Book of Dreams" or a "Tangent Detangler" or some other emotionally meaningful title; and make sure it is artistically laid out in a way that appeals to you. It should be a journal or daytimer that makes you *want* to write in it!

As a creative-intuitive, you will perhaps be hypersensitive to negative associations, so remove them by remove old labels of failure, like the phrase "to-do list" or "organizer" (which can sound like the Kiss of Doom to a creative-intuitive).

- **Highlight in bright colors.** As you accomplish each task, highlight it in your favorite color, so that your achievement stands out – even if it's only "stick stamps on envelopes". Increasing those lines of bright colored achievements can feel like a fun game and be happily addictive.
- **Realize that you are prone to obsessive thinking and tangent-chasing:** It is fatally easy for intuitive-creatives to get "stuck" on one task (usually a negative one) – or "escape" from it by spending the day playing Farmville instead of at least doing six other important tasks that would move one forward. And rather than playing Farmville, you can be working away with the best will in the world, busy as a bee – but realize at the end of that day that you spent it putting neat new labels on all your dead files. (This is where that "overview" type organizer comes in.)

Linear-Logical Thinkers

If you are a linear-logical thinker, you probably don't have any trouble using to-do lists, day-timers, scheduling software or organizers, but what probably derails you is the depression of finding you never got to the end of that list; or accomplished half of the tasks you wanted to complete.

Welcome to the human race.

You, of all people, are the one that finds it most frustrating when you are hit with an unscheduled interruption – the dog that has to be rushed to the vet, the husband who can't make it home to drive your daughter to hockey or the washing machine that overflowed, resulting in a massive clean-up.

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It might surprise you to find out that your fix is exactly the same as the creative-intuitive's: Prioritize only your top three tasks every day and use [scheduling software](#) that allows you to keep track of your overview.

Why? Well, success really has nothing to do with whether or not you are intuitive-creative or logical-linear: It has everything to do with following good systems and creating organizational habits. And what we've just looked at are the bad habits of both types (trying to be superwoman for the linear-logical thinker and being paralyzed by procrastination for the creative-intuitive).

Successful people don't just follow a particular system: They are realistic about themselves and their personality traits and habits. They work around these dispassionately, *without judgment* – but with open eyes.

Judging yourself is the greatest paralyzer: Analyzing yourself and applying solutions in a non-judgmental way will move you forward. No matter what your ideal system turns out to be.

2. Create a model that works

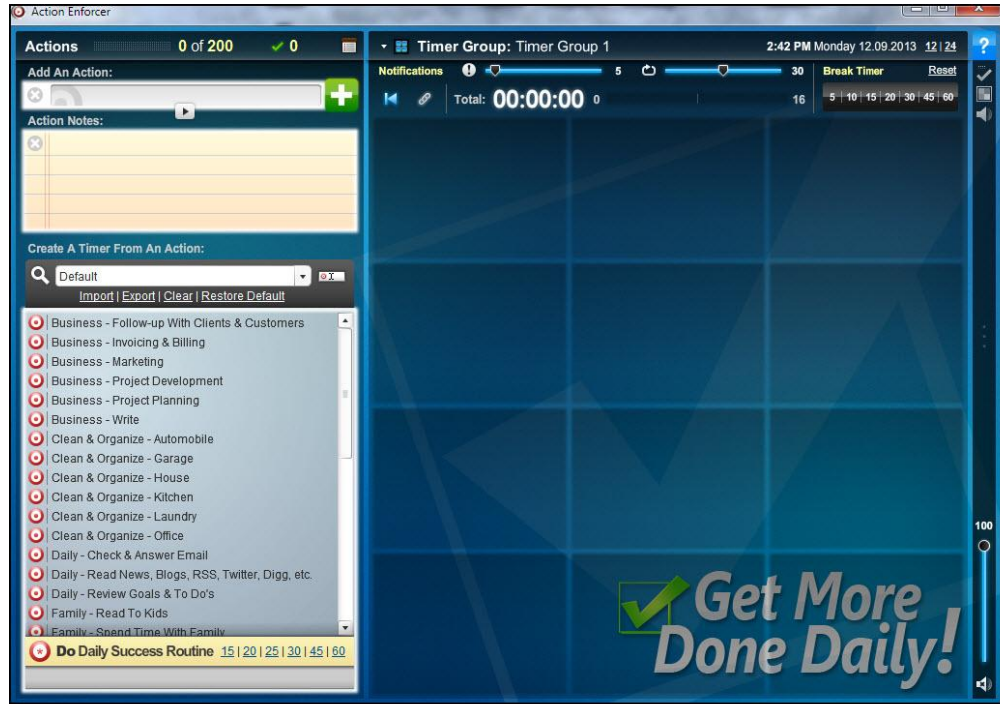
You need to know what you want your business model to accomplish. But no matter what that business is, do your best to actively have in place systems that work for you. For example, if one of your goals is to grow your business by 50% in the next year, you might have projects like this on your to-do list:

- a) **Acquire new prospects.** This will require sign up boxes, offers, blog posts, Facebook Apps, coupons, QR codes. Work on at least one of these a day – either set one up, write a blog post or analyze your results from one of these areas.
- b) **Sell products and services.** Make sure you have offers and goods to deliver. Spend some time each day filling the store shelves, so to speak, so you can not only attract new customers, but also...
- c) **Keep your customer long term.** Okay, you've made the sale: What are you doing to *keep* your customer?

This is something you have to turn into a goal and take action on every day. Write more blog posts. Offer a 7-day email course. Check to make sure your new customer is enjoying your product (and using it properly). Write articles designed to help your customer get even more out of your product – and make sure you share them. Check out what your customers are doing and saying at the right time of day in the right social networks

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And, above all, schedule your retention practices. Use scheduling software such as Coachglue.com's [Unstoppable Productivity](#) Action Enforcer, which lets you schedule all these multi-steps simultaneously while still keeping an overview (and roping in private life tasks too – such as “put pork roast on at 11:15 a.m.”)



The Unstoppable Productivity Action Enforcer employs a technique known as **time-boxing** in a simple, three-step approach to getting things done – then proceeds to solve all the problems usually associated with methods that incorporate timers and allotting specific units of time for tasks.

At the end of the week (or however often you like) you can find out what you really did during the week by generating custom reports for yourself.

It is a highly effective tool that impartially helps linear-logical and intuitive-creative thinkers alike.

- d) **Generate more income.** You also need to actively generate income every day. This means using your money-making skills, so first be sure you know what they are (you may have more than you realize).

For example, you may know that you are a great direct response ad writer – but when you stop and really analyze it, you discover you also have a gift for cold-calling prospective clients by telephone.

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This means you sit for one day a week (or half an hour a day) with your work schedule in front of you and make XX many cold-calls in that time period. (If you haven't been doing that, you can increase your business dramatically by adding that new "habit" to your daily routine.)

- e) **Generate more referrals.** Make sure you are providing incentives for people to refer you to other potential customers or clients.

Actively plan to:

- Ask for recommendations – and set up automatic ways for people to give them to you
- Set up an affiliate program – so others can do the work FOR you, leaving you hassle-free, with more actual time at your disposal (AND more income)
- Provide incentives for your affiliates – if there's a nifty contest for an iPad, you will generate more affiliate activity than if your program is passive and static: Ditto if you provide new, attractive resources such as a great squeeze page template or new graphics – and let your affiliates know. (Rewarding affiliates with your attention as well as with great resources, cash bonuses and prizes is also crucial – and is something successful marketers know how to do.)

You may not want to work on every element in this five-step system every single day – but make sure that taking care of these elements is a consistent and ongoing habit.

For example, instead of doing a little of everything every day, you could work on all your direct-income generation tasks (e.g. web design for clients) on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and reserve all your acquisition activities (e.g. creating a sign up box and a new Facebook App to drive people to it) on Mondays. But the important point to remember here is:

Don't neglect **any one** of these five essential system components.

You need to be aware of them all and making sure all are covered, for success to arrive on your doorstep.

3. Use the right tools

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Find what works for you, and use it. If you can't afford it:

- Save up for it
- Ask for it for Christmas or birthdays
- Barter services for it

But whatever "it" is, make sure you **get it** and **use it!**

Tools might include:

- Timers
- Physical calendars, organizers or planners
- Software

And don't neglect "tools" like a door for your office (if you haven't got one and the kids like to play Wii really, really loud) or the right office chair, if you have a bad back and realize that you can't spend more than three hours a day at your computer because you are in screaming agony.

4. Plan for outsourcing

Here's an inescapable fact: Really successful online entrepreneurs all outsource and all have a "team" – even if that team consists of individual freelancers that they use on a regular basis.

Sit down and think about:

- What you need to outsource
- What you would like to outsource
- What would actually allow you to make more money, if you outsourced it

Then decide what you most need to outsource first. Building that into your business plan can actually become an incentive. "I need to be able to pay VA Sandi \$150 a month for her Cleanup Package, so that means I need to generate at least XX dollars per month." Then do it.

Outsource one area or task at a time, and add more as your income grows. *Plan* to add more as your income grows, because outsourcing is one of the best ways to make sure not only that everything gets done, but that it gets done on time.

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Step Four: Create Balance

You've heard this one before, I'm sure: "Create balance in your life". Well, here's the Big Surprise...

As long as you interact with other people and live on planet Earth, there's no such thing as true balance, because you can't control:

- Other people's actions
- External factors such as weather or seasons
- The government
- Space
- God

However, there are many parts of your life you **can** control:

- **Banish reactivity** – which is feeling compelled to abandon your plans and jump up to take an unscheduled action because someone else:
 - Asks you to
 - Thinks you should
 - Yells at you
 - Distracts your attention
- **Take care of the core basics**
 - Enough food, water, air, sleep and play
 - Your ethics and beliefs
 - The people you love and care about
 - Your inner child
 - God or spirituality
- **Reframe your thinking**
 - Putting a stop to judgmental or critical self-talk
 - Allowing yourself realistic, analytical, solution-based self-talk
 - Remembering to praise yourself; especially for small achievements
 - Remembering to praise and thank others

Becoming successful is built on getting things done. Achieving the latter really is best done step-by-step, with a solid balance of **flexibility** and **organization**. If putting everything in this guide into practice, all at once, seems overwhelming, start out by identifying **one thing you need to change**. Ask yourself: "What is the one suggestion I could follow that would help free up time and make a difference to my productivity?" Then put it into practice. Starting today.

That first step outside your comfort zone is the real key to making sure you get things done!

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The Included Templates Are:

- Step-by-Step Tutorial to Train Yourself and Become an Instant Expert (18-pages, 4941 words)
- 19 PowerPoint Slides Created from the Step-by-Step Tutorial to use for Your Presentations, Videos, and Webinars
- Worksheet Handout for Your Clients & Guests (7-pages, 247 words)
- 2 Week Done-for-You Business & Marketing Planning Calendar (6-pages, 1527 words)
- Checklist for Your Clients & Guests (5-pages, 679 words)
- Resource Directory with Links to Tools & Resources You Can Monetize with Your Affiliate Links (9-pages, 1040 words)
- 21 Ideas Blueprint to Get Things Done (11-pages, 2742 words)
- 22 PowerPoint Slides Created from the 21 Ideas Blueprint to use for Your Presentations, Videos, and Webinars



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