



**Increase
Your
Focus
for
Better
Productivity**

By Danna Cruzan

Are You Busier Now Than You Have Ever Been Before?

In our lives today, we are busier than ever before. We think technology has streamlined many tasks, but instead we are given more tools that give us more and more to do with less time to do it. We are stressed and overwhelmed. The phrase “time management” has become taboo, since it implies there are different ways to cram even more into our already overflowing lives.

We have been led to believe that if we don't multitask every minute of our day we will not be productive. This can't be farther from the truth. Successful people have long realized that focus is the key to being productive.

Increasing your focus means you should get up each day, looking forward to what you can achieve. Being focused means you are making progress towards what is most important to you. You will feel a greater sense of productivity and fulfillment.

Learn why focus is important in both your personal and professional life in the following pages. You'll learn tips & strategies on gaining and keeping your focus, so you can be more productive.

Multitasking is one of the most overrated skills people claim to have. In this report you'll find out why you shouldn't be multitasking, and what to do instead. **Let's get started.**

**"Most of what we say and do is not essential. If you can eliminate it, you'll have more time, and more tranquility. Ask yourself at every moment, is this necessary?"
- Marcus Aurelius**



Why Focus is Important

Why is being focused so important in today's world? What results happen when you are focused? Does being focused make you less stress? Happier? If it's so important, why don't people focus more?

Being focused on one thing for a certain period of time allows you to do a better quality of work, more work gets done quickly, and your creative ideas flow easier. Being focused on one task at a time is less stressful on your mind. And being less stressed allows you to be happier.

It's difficult for people to remain focused on one task for a variety of reasons. For one, we live in a world where we are constantly bombarded with TV, radio, cell phones, social media, as well as a much larger population that lives closer together than ever before. It's difficult to completely get away from all these distractions. One way is to go to a room where you can shut your door and turn off your phone and email notifications.



When you focus on a single task, avoiding distractions, your brain becomes focused on that task alone. This lets you complete that task much more quickly than if you are trying to complete two or more tasks at once. For instance, let's say you need to write a blog post, do your bookkeeping for the week and research information for an upcoming speech. The best thing to do is to set aside all but one task. So, for this example, you want to give all your attention writing your blog post. That means turning off the TV, cell phones, social media pings, closing your door and putting all your attention on writing.

By giving all your attention to the task without distraction, you can get it done much more quickly and with fewer mistakes. Your work will be higher quality as well. Another benefit to being focused is that your creativity will kick in too. You'll come up with new ideas associated with the task at hand.

This is great if you are someone who creates in some way. This includes traditional creative types like artists, writers, photographers, designers and musicians, as well as people who create products or services, teachers, researchers, stay-at-home parents, executives, bloggers, and anyone who needs ideas. This means just about everyone can benefit.

Focusing on one thing for a certain period of time helps you think better. Having your mind scattered over several tasks at once keeps you from thinking about what you are actually doing. You only have time to complete a task quickly before you must move on to the next one. All the while you are trying to remember everything that must be done. When you focus, you can think about only one thing for that period of time.

Focusing allows your subconscious to do the work. Think about when you learned to ride a bike or drive a car. It was difficult in the beginning, but when you began focusing on what you were doing, your subconscious took over and helped you learn. The same is true in your everyday tasks. Once you begin focusing solely on one task, your subconscious helps you do them quicker and easier.

It's important to focus on one task at a time to become more productive, do better quality work and be less stressed. Focusing can help you be more creative and have more happiness.



Multitasking is Overrated

If you're like many people you spend most days multitasking. You're probably so used to multitasking that you don't even realize when you're doing it. After all, it's a skill many employers look for in their employees. Many people believe multitasking saves them time. There are many reasons why multitasking is bad. It's better to focus instead though. Focusing lets you concentrate on one task or thought at a time, helping you create a better result for each task.

Many people like to multitask because they become bored working on one task at a time.

Why is Multitasking Bad?

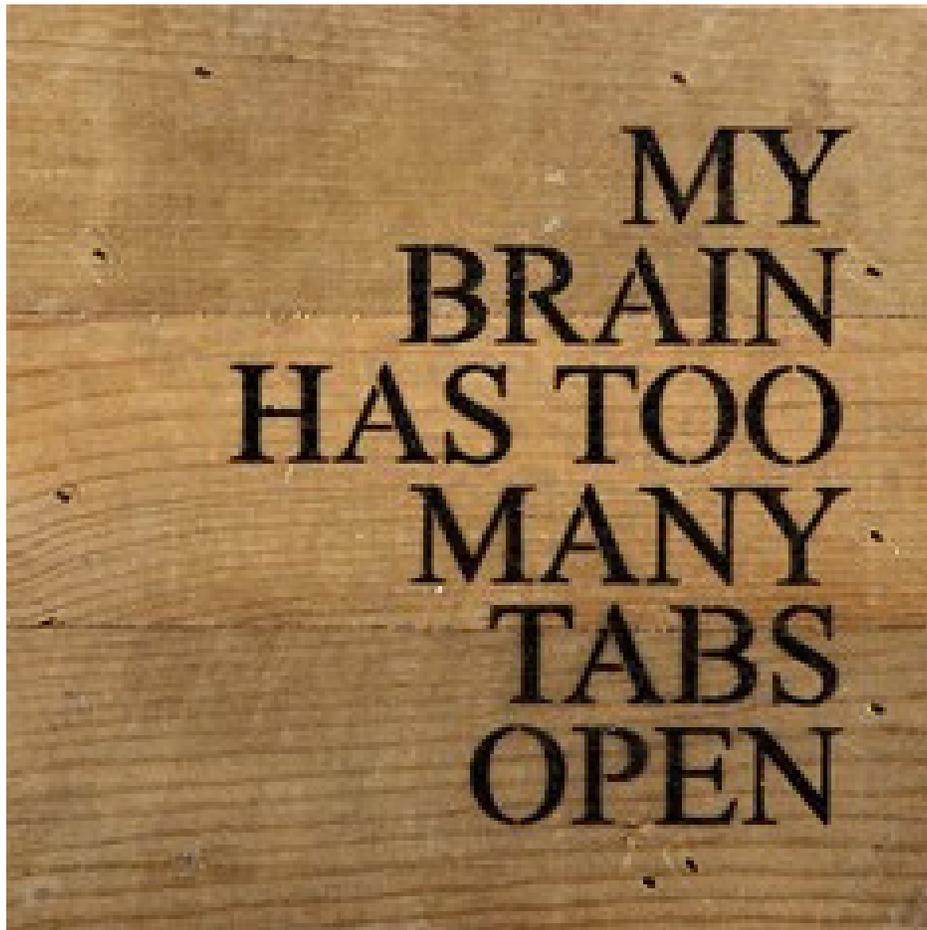
You must switch from task to task. This takes time for your mind to change into the right mindset for the new task. You must take the time to remember where you left off.



1. Multitasking leads to attention and memory loss. According to a study by Harvard Professor Clifford Nass, in findings published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, people who use online social media and other forms of electronic communications have trouble focusing their attention and have lower scores on memory tests.

2. Cognitive performance is diminished. A recent study by Zheng Wang, a professor at Ohio State University, showed that multitasking caused students to feel more productive, but showed they were reducing their cognitive skills abilities such as studying.

3. It turns people off when you are interacting with them. People who multitask often find themselves meeting others. If you only half pay attention to them, answering texts and phone calls while talking to them, you will lose their respect.
4. Multitaskers lose productivity. Switching between tasks is counter-productive. You lose time and concentration every time you switch to a different task.
5. Multitaskers are less likely to finish one quality project. They may finish all their tasks for the day, but they will most likely be sub-par than if they had focused solely on one to completion.



Multitasking makes it difficult to focus entirely on each task you are doing. You are thinking about emails you have to respond to when writing a report and the phone calls you need to return even while you are thinking about the next task on your to-do list. This type of working environment doesn't do anything but cause you stress. Instead of multitasking among several tasks, you should prioritize your tasks and break them up into workable time chunks

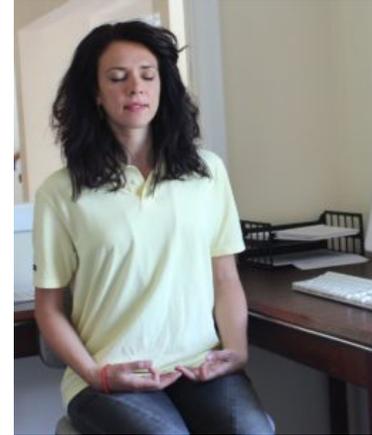
Tips to Improve Focus

Maybe you want to focus on a single task but find yourself easily distracted. You find it difficult to focus on what you are doing because you find your mind wandering, you're worrying about everything or maybe you just have way too many things you need to do to make a choice of just one task to start with.

Here are some valuable tips on how to improve focus.

Meditate

Try to allocate at least 30 minutes each day to meditate. If you can't dedicate that much time you can still do a short breathing exercise. Focus on your breathing, really focusing on the air, how it touches your nostrils and enters your lips. How does it feel as it escapes? Your mind may wander, filling with endless amount of thoughts. When this happens bring your thoughts back to focusing on your breathing. Continue this process for several minutes. Regulating your breathing relaxes your circulatory system and brings you a sense of peace.



Listen

Listen to music to help improve your focus. Really concentrate on the music. Try to focus on a single instrument.

Cut Goals into Small Targets

Having an end goal in mind while working on the tasks to achieve it can frustrate you because you target goal might be too big or difficult. Your results won't be quick, and it may seem like you aren't getting any closer to the end. Instead of working toward the ultimate end goal, break it down into smaller, more achievable goals you can reach within a few days. Then cross each smaller goal off your list as you achieve it.



Time Clock

Work within your body's most comfortable time. Maybe you work best early in the morning before sunrise. Or late at night. Work when you are most productive. For example, many authors get up early to do their writing, while artists often do their best work late at night.

Light Meals

Have you ever eaten a big meal for lunch when working only to feel lethargic and weighed down all afternoon? Eating a heavy meal slows you down and makes you sleepy. If you need or want to, you can go on a small juice fast on a regular basis. It will keep you alert and help keep your body in good physical condition.

Exercise

Exercise your mind and body every day. Do crossword puzzles. Engage in lively discussions. Build something that's creative. A simple 30 minute walk every day is all you need to keep your body healthy.

Force Yourself

You may need to push yourself some when you're feeling lazy. If you are hitting a mental roadblock, though, take some time away from the task. Do something else until you can regain your focus on the original task.

Learning to improve your focus will take time but it is worth it. Begin by implementing one or two of these tips into your day to begin changing how well you can become focused.

**Follow
One
Course
Until
Successful**



Strategies to Improve Focus



You'd be surprised by how many people lose track of where their time goes. They might think they are focused on a single task, but are they really? One way to find out is to keep track of how you spend your time for a week. You might find out you've been wasting time on little things like checking Facebook once an hour.

Here are my strategies for improving your focus and increasing your productivity:

- 1. Track your time.** Analyze the results after a week. Tweak and get rid of time wasters.
- 2. Plan your week.** At the end of your week, find a quiet spot to plan out your week's tasks. Write down key projects and the tasks associated with them. Don't forget to add in family activities that you participate in as well.
- 3. Prioritize your list.** Break down your tasks from most important to least important. Use a calendar to mark out blocks of uninterrupted time (anywhere from 15 to 60 minutes) to work on each one.
- 4. Eliminate what isn't essential.** Outsource what you can for things you need to do but which aren't your strengths. This could be anything from mowing your lawn to hiring a virtual assistant to take care of your social media for the week.
- 5. Set your goals.** Break down big or long-term goals into smaller weekly or daily goals to make them easier to focus on.
- 6. Reserve a specific amount of time each day** for checking/answering email and social media. It could be the first 30 minute task of the day, the last 30 minutes of your work day, or maybe the 15 minutes before your lunch break. Do it once a day, don't stop in the middle of a task to check your email or your social media.
- 7. Do away with multitasking.** It takes a while to learn how to focus on one project at a time, but stick with it and it will become a habit. Finish one project/task before moving on to the next one. Become laser-focused on one task at a time. This can really increase your productivity.
- 8. Make a distraction to-do list.** The Internet has made it easy for us to become quickly distracted. As soon as we want to look something up, we hop on the Internet to do a search. "I wonder what's happening on Facebook." "What was the name of the actor in that movie?" "How long will it take me to drive to the zoo tomorrow?" Anytime we get distracted like this it takes about 25 minutes to get back to the original task. Next time you want to look up something or an idea pops in your head, jot it down on a piece of paper or a note taking app.

9. Learn to say NO. If you already have full day's task list, don't feel like you have to take on another project for someone else.

10. Create an environment that works for you. Do you need a quiet space, free from people, phones and television noise? Set up your office so it works for you. Decorate it in soothing colors, inspiring artwork and a comfortable chair. If you work best in a neat and clean area, make sure you put away or file papers and magazines. Get rid of clutter. If you focus better while listening to music or some kind of ambient noise, be sure to have a way to make that happen.

11. Take a break when needed. Short breaks help break up boredom and burnout when you're working on a big project. Get up and walk around the room. Do some yoga stretches.

12. Break up or Chunk it. Break your tasks down into smaller more manageable chunks of time with short breaks in between. For example, work on a task in 15-minute chunks. For example, let's say you're writing an eBook. Don't try to do the whole thing at once. Break it down. Take 15 minutes to write out your outline. Take a short break. Then 15 minutes to research the first chapter. And so on.

13. Use an app on your phone to boost your productivity and concentration. Apps like Evernote can keep you organized and keep track of distractions. Apps like Brain Wave can be downloaded to your cell phone. There are other apps that help you stay focused and productive as well.

The strategies for becoming more focused are endless. Make lists. Remove distractions. Set up your ideal environment. You need to find what works best for your style of working.

What's Next?

- Learning how to focus on one task at a time takes time and commitment. In our busy lives we are pulled in many directions at one time. Gradually implement the tips and strategies found within this report to improve your productivity and focus.
- Focus is such an important part of how productive you are. If you can focus on one task for a set amount of time you will be more productive in a shorter amount of time. Stopping yourself from multitasking will improve your productivity as well, since you will be able to finish one task before you move on to the next.
- Removing distractions can help you focus as well. Create an environment that you feel comfortable in, and that fits with how you work. If you're a morning person, then focus on your work tasks, and vice versa for night owls.
- Eat healthy and nutritious foods to keep your brain strong and able to concentrate. Exercise daily, meditate daily and take time to enjoy nature and your family.

