

Module 11. Productivity.

Introduction Video Transcript	<p>Hi! Welcome to Module 11 – Productivity.</p> <p>Please note that for the purpose of this training module, productivity refers to maintaining efficiency in an age of distractions. Therefore, the main focus of this module is the ability to produce something of a certain quality with a given timeframe.</p> <p>Being productive is important to everyone, whether at school, university, when looking for a job, while at a job, when starting a business, and when seeking investment or financing.</p> <p>So, productivity skills are essential skills that could be used in any career, and you can apply them on a daily basis in your personal life too.</p>
Lecture Video Transcript	<p><u>What Is Productivity?</u></p> <p>Productivity is the ability to complete tasks efficiently and effectively using these skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) setting and meeting goals,(b) prioritizing needs,(c) managing time,(d) working ethically,(e) collaborating, and(f) cooperating with colleagues and clients. <p>From a different perspective, productivity means taking a role in the creation of a product or completion of a task and taking responsibility for the performance of the product or the task. Therefore, accountability and productivity are interconnected. When you feel responsibility over a task or a product, it increases your motivation to complete the task or create the product in a timely and efficient manner, thereby increasing your productivity.</p> <p><u>Examples of Productivity</u></p> <p>Here are some sample behaviors you might use to define and understand productivity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You are able to concentrate on a task for prolonged periods of time.• You are fully aware of your goals and understand what is required to complete a task or create a product.• You are able to perform tasks efficiently and can contribute to the goals of your team.

- You are able to utilize work related resources effectively, whether it is tools or time.
- You are able to define and address your problems that limit your productivity.
- You are able to manage distractions that hinder your ability to focus and concentrate on your work.

Importance of Productivity

Have you ever planned a schedule but never managed to commit to it?

Have you ever wondered why a full 24-hour day doesn't seem to be enough?

Are you having problems managing your time and optimizing your resources to be productive?

If you answer 'Yes' to all the questions above, you might have a productivity problem. As we discussed earlier, productivity is not just about creating a product, it has wider implications. Therefore, it is a necessary skill for all walks of life.

Why Is Productivity Necessary?

In simple terms, productivity is necessary because you can get more done with such an attitude. If you're a productive person, you can do more with less time. That means you can take on harder, more important tasks and complete them with equal efficiency. Productivity also means that you will have more time to do the things you enjoy like hobbies or spending time with friends.

Another crucial advantage of productivity is the feeling of accomplishment. Taking something off your to-do list releases dopamine in your system, which is a natural mood enhancer. You get a boost in your mood every time you check something off your list and the sense of achievement and accomplishment will further boost satisfaction in all areas of your life. But it is also important to remember that failure to complete tasks on time will lead to frustration, stress, and disappointment, which would further impact your productivity.

People love the feeling of completing tasks and creating products, especially when it is difficult or important to them. If you want to be more productive but you're not sure where to begin, below is a discussion of reasons why people struggle to be productive and ways to improve your productivity.

Developing Productivity Skills

Productivity skills allow you to become less stressed, more effective, and thus, a more successful individual.

Being more productive needs clear focus on time management and

stress management.

Today technology offers us unlimited resources to save time and make us more productive than ever. We should harness the opportunity and keep up to enhance our productivity through better time management and distraction avoidance.

Discover Your Strengths

One way to be more productive is to discover your strengths. If you find that there are tasks you can accomplish easily and brilliantly while working on others with less enthusiasm and passion, relying on what you already do very well can help you reach optimal productivity quickly.

Think about your daily life at home and at work. What kind of work inspires you and makes you feel alive? What topics would you like to discuss with your friends, family, and colleagues? What projects do you spend most of your time working on? As you immerse yourself in new experiences and step out of your comfort zone, answer these questions to help you realize that your way of doing things is different.

What do you think you like best about yourself? What are you proud of? You don't have to look at your biggest achievements for that. Find resilience, determination, a positive attitude, discipline, a willingness to learn, and other positive qualities in the small moments of life.

Makes it a goal to read every day about self-improvement, even if it's just one article. Find out what's going on in the world, how people motivate themselves, and the habits they adopt to improve themselves. As you read, look inside yourself and see what strengths match what you are reading.

When you can't clearly identify your strengths and weaknesses, you're less productive. Everyone has something that makes them unique. Take a break now, find your assets and start investing on them. You will be impressed with your success.

Stress Management Techniques

You usually feel stressed when the goals you have to achieve outgrow the resources present at your disposals, such as a project's time-frame and your current level of motivation. However, the state of being stressed consumes from your mind's capacity, hence leaving you with little room for productivity.

While there are a lot of ways to cope with stress, here are several effective productivity tips to help you cope with stress:

- Stop Multitasking:

A theory in psychology called the 'Zeigarnik Effect' states that your

brain tends to remember incomplete tasks more than complete ones. Accordingly, when you multitask, your mind will keep hammering you with the other incomplete task you are performing at the same time. So, focus on just one task, and when done, start the other.

- Exercise:

Doubtlessly, this tip perfectly works for anything especially for stress management. You would be surprised if you knew how exercise works in each and every way to help your body systems work harmoniously and supply you with a dose of endorphins to make you more immune to stress afterward. No matter how stuffed your work schedule is, find a way to squeeze exercise in.

- Drop Perfectionism:

Sometimes, it's easy to fall into the trap of perfectionism. While 'perfect' doesn't exist, you will constantly feel stressed upon working relentlessly but rarely feeling satisfied about the outcomes. You'd argue that perfectionism brings out the best in you, but try being 'a high achiever' instead. It's a healthier version of success.

You can't avoid stress when running a business or handling a job, so it is time to consider dealing with it. With these techniques in mind, you will soon find yourself functioning productively even under stressful situations. Soon, you will impress yourself and become everybody's preferred work partner.

- Maximize Utility from Available Resources:

This is what all businessmen do for maximum revenue. Whether you're a morning person or a night owl, complete the work that requires most focus when you are most energetic. However, when you start to feel sluggish during the day, switch to easier tasks or more engaging ones such as making calls or meeting with clients.

- Take Regular Short Breaks:

If your work requires long seated hours, take a break every now and then because your body and brain can become numb and demanding of a new stimulation to reboot their energy. Stand up and stretch, have a small walk, sit in the sun or breathe fresh air. Otherwise, you'll soon burn out and motivating yourself then would become more difficult and consume much more time and energy.

- Use Organization Tools:

There are many, and you just need to search online for the one that meets your needs. For example, Evernote is an application that allows you to take notes, organize information and write down any idea that crosses your mind, with everything synced on different devices. Bullet Journal is a to-do list and a journal at the same time. Google docs helps you take notes, share files and edit them on different devices. Google Calendar contributes to your experience of a

scheduled day with non-overlapping duties, and the list goes on.

To keep the productive mode ON, maintaining a healthy physical and emotional life is top priority. Adopt a balanced diet, exercise, get enough sleep, laugh, listen to others, and surround yourself with happy people. Have some time for yourself, reflect, let go and commit to other positive rituals. Last but not least, build a certain routine into your life to save time asking yourself “What is the next step?”

It is only normal that you wake up every day with different levels of motivation, but only the mind of a winner plans to sustain a productive lifestyle on the long term.

Interactive Task 1: Pomodoro Method

The Pomodoro Technique is a time management method based on 25-minute stretches of focused work broken by five-minute breaks. Longer breaks, typically 15 to 30 minutes, are taken after four consecutive work intervals. Each work interval is called a pomodoro, the Italian word for tomato (plural: pomodori).

The Pomodoro Technique essentially trains people to focus on tasks better by limiting the length of time they attempt to maintain that focus and ensuring restorative breaks from the effort. The method also helps them overcome their tendencies to procrastinate or multitask, both of which are known to impair productivity.

The Pomodoro Technique can also help individuals develop more efficient work habits. Through effective time management, they can get more done in less time, while achieving a sense of accomplishment and reducing the potential for burnout.

Now, for this activity, follow the steps below:

- Choose a task for a pomodoro session.
- Set the timer to 25 minutes.
- Work on the task until the timer sounds, then record completion of the pomodoro.
- Take a short break; start with five minutes but know that it can be as little as two minutes.
- After four pomodori (4 sessions of 25 minutes work with breaks in between them), take a longer break; this is generally 15 to 30 minutes.
- When the session is done, reflect on your experience. Were you able to achieve more than you would at any other time using your usual method of work?

Interactive Task 2: Mini Tasks

For this activity, work on developing your productivity skills through the following tasks.

Gamification-
Based Interactive
Tasks

Prioritizing:

Start your day with a to-do-list and classify your tasks under these labels: important and urgent, important but not urgent, not important but urgent, not important and not urgent. This method helps you feel more productive earlier during the day to keep you the least stressed and demotivated later on. This is a productivity skill you need to work on and develop.

Adopting Organizational Skills:

This involves a couple of little tasks that make a big difference, like sorting your files into folders, labeling them properly, cleaning your desktop and workplace, planning the steps of your task before your start. Such easy methods help you stay focused on one assignment without being unnecessarily interrupted.

Managing Distractions:

This doesn't only cover sitting in a quiet place or switching your phone to silent, because you've got to control inner distractions too. For example, if you're working while constantly worried about the load of work you still have, write the remaining tasks on a sheet of paper instead of keeping them in your mind.

Saying Yes Mindfully:

When confronted with a new task, overcome the excitement of having something new to do before saying "yes." Reflect about the to-do-list sheet you have already written. Cancel unimportant meetings and reject requests that aren't aligned with your priorities, because saying yes costs you more stress and time pressure.

Taking Social Breaks:

You might constantly feel the need to produce, but life is not all about work. Avoid becoming a perfectionist and know when to say enough because some people get easily addicted to work as an escape, not knowing that this could kill their creativity and lead to chronic stress. So, keep some space for friends and hobbies. To be productive, you need to be happy first.

Reading

- Four Reasons You're Not Being Productive (And How to Improve!)

<https://www.cornerstone.edu/blog-post/four-reasons-youre-not-being-productive-and-how-to-improve/>

Self-evaluation test

ARE YOU A PRODUCTIVE INDIVIDUAL? TEST YOURSELF TO SEE!

Read the statements below that reflect on perceptions of productivity. For each statement, please choose a number between 1 to 5, where 1, which is the minimum number, denotes that you highly disagree with the statement and where 5, which is the maximum number, denotes

that you highly agree with the statement.

1. I am able to concentrate at work.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

2. I feel that I accomplish a lot of work at my job.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

3. I provide a high level of work quality.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

4. I take initiative at work.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

5. I understand my work goals.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

6. I efficiently perform my work tasks.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

7. I think that I am productive at work.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

8. I am able to contribute to my organization's goals.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

9. I utilize my resources effectively.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

10. I am effective in achieving its goals.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

11. I can define and address my problems that limit my productivity.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

12. In life, it often takes me more effort than it should to complete a task.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

13. Uncertainty makes it difficult for me to complete tasks assigned to me.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

14. My productivity is often hindered by lack of directions.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

15. My productivity is often hindered by lack of outside support.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

16. I often feel frustrated while trying to meet my goals.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

17. I am often unproductive due to random noise.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

18. I am often unproductive due to interruptions.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

19. I am often unproductive due to lack of privacy.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

20. My productivity is often hindered by lack of flexibility.

Highly Disagree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Highly Agree

QUIZ