

The Three Points of the Productivity Triangle

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1. Clarity

Productivity is the art of setting boundaries. The following areas typically need to be Clarified:

- The boundaries between **rest and work** (when I'll work vs. when I'll rest)
- The boundaries between **items to be done** (project A vs. project B; high priority vs. low; short time vs. long time; specific vs. vague; easy vs. hard; can be done at home vs. can be done at work, etc.)
- The boundaries between types of **productivity recovery** (here or away, with friends or alone, fully resting or semi-active, twenty minutes vs. a full day of recovery, etc.)

As you explore these boundaries, you will find that your to-do list becomes more effective:

Poor expression of boundaries: "Study for final"

Good expression of boundaries: "High priority, 1 hour total, reading 20 pages and taking notes, easy to do, studying for final at library, alone, take short breaks every 20 minutes to stretch, and watch a favorite TV show afterward"

It is important to **modify the boundaries if you are not getting results**. Maybe you need 50 minutes of play to accomplish 10 minutes of work—really, it could be. Experiment and observe your results.

2. Comfort

Productivity happens more easily under comfortable circumstances. Become reasonably comfortable before you start:

- **Body** (Do I need to use the restroom? Have I shaved today? Do I feel any pain or exhaustion that I can address somehow?)
- **Environment** (Do I need to cool down or heat up the environment? Would some music be helpful? Am I in a comfortable place?)
- **Circumstances** (Does the work I'm doing align with my vision? Am I in the right job? If not, perhaps I can be more productive by promising myself that I will look for a new job for e.g. 30 minutes, *then* start on this work)

3. Courage

Rally yourself by building up courage. This can be done in several ways:

- **Starting Easiest-and-funniest-first** (As an example to-do item: "Dance karate party, 5 minutes, with music I purchased last night". This will naturally impart some courage-related brain chemicals.)
- **Meditation** (For example, downloading a 10-minute courage meditation from iTunes)
- **Prayer** (For example, telling God how you have prepared, and asking for his help with your work)
- **Reading, Listening, Viewing, or Writing** (For example, watching a favorite action movie, or reading some favorite quotes, or listening to some music that makes you feel courageous, or writing about how you'll attack your work)