

The Three Points of the Productivity Triangle

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Giving attention to the three points below can help you quickly establish productivity again.

1. Clarity

Productivity is the art of knowing, clarifying, and setting boundaries. The following areas typically need to be Clarified.

What is to be done? Should you project A right now, or project B? Can some of it be done later with no penalty? What part HAS to be done now?

What are the next sub-tasks? Sub-task clarity can help you feel capable of quickly ramping up into the work. What are the next five sub-tasks that take less than two minutes each?

How will you recover? Without rest, productivity can lead to burnout. Plan for when to rest, where to go, with friends or alone, fully resting or semi-active, twenty minutes vs. a full day of recovery, etc.

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

Poor expression of boundaries: "Study for final"

Good expression of boundaries: "Must be done: 1 hour total, reading last 20 pages of ch 1. and taking notes. Sub-tasks: Put on coat and get books--1 min, walk to study room--2 min, set 20-minute timer--1 min. Take short breaks every 20 minutes to stretch, listen to favorite music during, and watch a favorite movie 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 reflect on your results.

2. Comfort

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

Comfortable Body: Do I need a light snack or some water? Do I need to use the restroom? Do I feel any pain or exhaustion that I can address somehow?

Comfortable Environment: Do I need to cool down or heat up the environment? Would some music be helpful? Am I in a comfortable place?

Comfortable Circumstances: Does the work I'm doing align with my vision? Am I in the right job? Am I being treated fairly, in doing this work?

If not, perhaps I can feel more productive and comfortable overall, by promising myself that I will look for a new job for 30 minutes on my break, *then* start on this work.

As you build patterns of healthy, reflective comfort, it will be easier to engage in high-productivity efforts, and you'll feel like productivity is more enjoyable than it was before.

3. Courage

Rally yourself by building up courage.

Get All Your Emotions, Fears and Concerns Out: Write, talk or otherwise vent about why you don't like the work you need to do, and what can go wrong. Be direct and get it all out. This will help engage your executive processes so you can solve problems and move forward. If there are conflicts, make sure you go into detail.

Start with Easiest-and-Funest-first: These are high-courage items. As an example to-do item: "Dance

party, 5 minutes, with new music I purchased last night". This will also naturally give you some courage-related brain chemicals.

Meditation or Prayer: For example, listening to a 10-minute courage meditation on Youtube

Other 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

If your courage levels are good, but your plan isn't moving forward, go back to Clarity, #1 above.