

// THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

TASK AUDIT

A fantastic way to find out where you can make better use of your time. Create a table, either in a notebook or on the computer with 3 columns. One each for Tasks, Time it took to complete & D.O.C.S. (Delegate, Outsource, Continue, Stop). For at least 3 days write down what tasks you are performing and approximately how long it took.

At the end of the week consider whether you can Delegate, Outsource, Continue or Stop the task. Write an action to each task. Now you have an action plan to get focused cut down the busy.

// BATCHING & BLOCKED SCHEDULING

// The best way to work! Focused action on a specific task and combine it with the Pomodoro Technique – BOOM! (see the Pomodoro Technique)

// Regular Social Media Posts – Using the Weekly Content Manager & Content Idea Creation forms work on creating a month or at least a week's worth of content at a time

// Social Media & Instant Messaging – Block out 10mins x 1-3 times a day that you check your social media and reply to comments/messages. Don't look at it any other time.

// Emails – See next column.

// Quoting – Gather all your enquiries together and work on quoting at the same time. Don't give unrealistic expectations of quote turn around. Unless it's very straight forward, allow at least a week to get back to the couple.

// Accounting – Xero is a huge time and stress saver. It should only take 15 mins once a month to confirm and allocate all the months transactions. It is also very user friendly for emailing out invoices and statements as well as printing reports, such as the Profit & Loss or Debtors Ledger.

// // THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE

This allows you to work in short bursts followed by a short break and after four periods, you have a longer break. This technique is great when you have a larger amount of time to work through tasks. There are plenty of free Pomodoro timer apps you can download. Highly recommended.

// DON'T MULTI-TASK

Do one thing at a time – **BATCH & BLOCK SCHEDULE!** Eliminate all distractions and get your environment ready to help you focus and get it done!

// CHECK YOUR EMAIL AT SET TIMES DURING THE DAY

Use your calendar to remind you to check your email at set times throughout the day. Also turn off email notifications so you're not continually distracted every time an email comes in.

Batched Inbox – www.batchedinbox.com

For Gmail. Your emails will all be delivered in one batch so you can focus on other tasks until it's time to do your emails.

Boomerang – www.boomerangapp.com

Allows you to take control of when you send & receive emails. It also help you keep control over your inbox and can also remind you to follow up an email after a specific time frame.

// GET IN THE CLOUD

Dropbox or Google Drive are the most popular. Have all of your most important documents synced across all of your devices.

SOCIAL MEDIA

// LATER & PLANOLY

Free apps to help you schedule your Instagram posts. A notification pops up when it's time to post and all you have to do is go into the app and post.

// SCHEDUGRAM

For \$20 a month Schedugram will automatically post to Instagram without you having to do a thing. Great for scheduling a month's worth of regular content once a month and then forgetting it.

// BUFFER, HOOTSUITE & MEET EDGAR

Schedule, publish & analyse your posts for a combination of Facebook, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, YouTube & Instagram. Check them all out and see what one is best for you.

ADMIN

// TEMPLATES

If you have to create a document or response more than once, create a template and save time.

Regular documents – Quotes, Letter format.

Email – create standard responses to regular questions or initial general enquiries that you can still customise slightly.

Canned Responses – if you have Gmail, you can create templates in the Labs section of Settings.

// NOTETAKING & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Great aps to help you get organised and you will be able to use across your devices. Asana, Trello, Evernote, Airtable. Have a quick look at them and see what suits you.

// PLAN TOMORROW AT THE END OF TODAY

This is the best time to plan the next day, the most important tasks are still fresh in your mind. If you leave it until tomorrow, it might take you 30 minutes to decide what has to be done... once you've had that first amazing coffee.

// GET ORGANISED

It's hard to be more productive if your admin and life is a mess! Write a list of all the annoying little things that fill your brain and need to be done. Block some time out to start ticking them off the list.

// DELEGATE!

Virtual Assistant – If you don't have quite enough work to employ someone on a regular basis, a VA may be a great option for you.

Fiver – Great for smaller tasks, especially technical ones if you aren't that way inclined.

Staff – do you have a staff member that could take on some extra tasks or is ready to go to the next level in the business? Train them how to do those tasks and trust them to complete them correctly.

// UNROLL ME

This is essentially Batching your subscribed to emails into one email that is received daily. It also scans for any new subscriptions and gives you the option to unsubscribe, roll it up or keep separate.

// RANDOM HACKS

// HIRE A COACH

Together you will assess where you are, where you want to be and how to get there. They will keep you accountable on a weekly or fortnightly basis to make sure you're doing those smaller goals and tasks to achieve your big business goals.

// TAKE SOME TIME OUT

DownDog – customise a yoga routine from 15-90mins right on your phone!

Headspace, Calm or Ovana – free apps for customisable meditations to help you deal with the wedding season stress. Our minds get so busy that the creativeness sometimes takes a back seat to the chaos. 5-10mins a day, even only a few times a week is better than nothing.

Pamper Yourself – Massage/Manicure/Pedicure/ etc. Whatever is your jam – Our jobs are very physical, your body needs this. Book a time that suits on your normal day off. Secure the booking 6 months in advance for the same time every week, fortnight or month. So you never have an excuse to take care of yourself.

// NOISLI

Improve Focus and Boost Productivity with Background Noise. This is a great app that uses sound to help you either be more productive or to relax. Check it out for free at www.noisli.com or download the app onto your phone. Have all of your most important documents synced across all of your devices.