

“Busyness” or Productivity

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will explore the difference between being busy and being productive. You will understand that they are not synonymous. You will then learn more about steps you can take to improve your productivity and results driven skills.

Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Busy vs. Productive
2. Tips for Productivity
 - a. Use a Calendar
 - b. Break Up Your Goals
 - c. Take One Step at a Time
 - d. Remove Distractions

1. Busy vs. Productive

Do you know someone who is always running to the next task or activity? Do you catch yourself doing this some days? In some cases, this can be the result of someone with too much on their plate who is truly busy. However, in many cases, it is an indicator that better time management is needed to increase **productivity**.

When you are productive, you accomplish tasks that help you achieve your desired results. On the contrary, “busyness” happens when you fill your plate with tasks and activities that can wait or that are not critical. Taking the time to reflect and plan to achieve your goals is essential so you can avoid simply being busy and ensure your actions are taking you one step closer to achieving your desired results.



Productivity: Skill Reflect

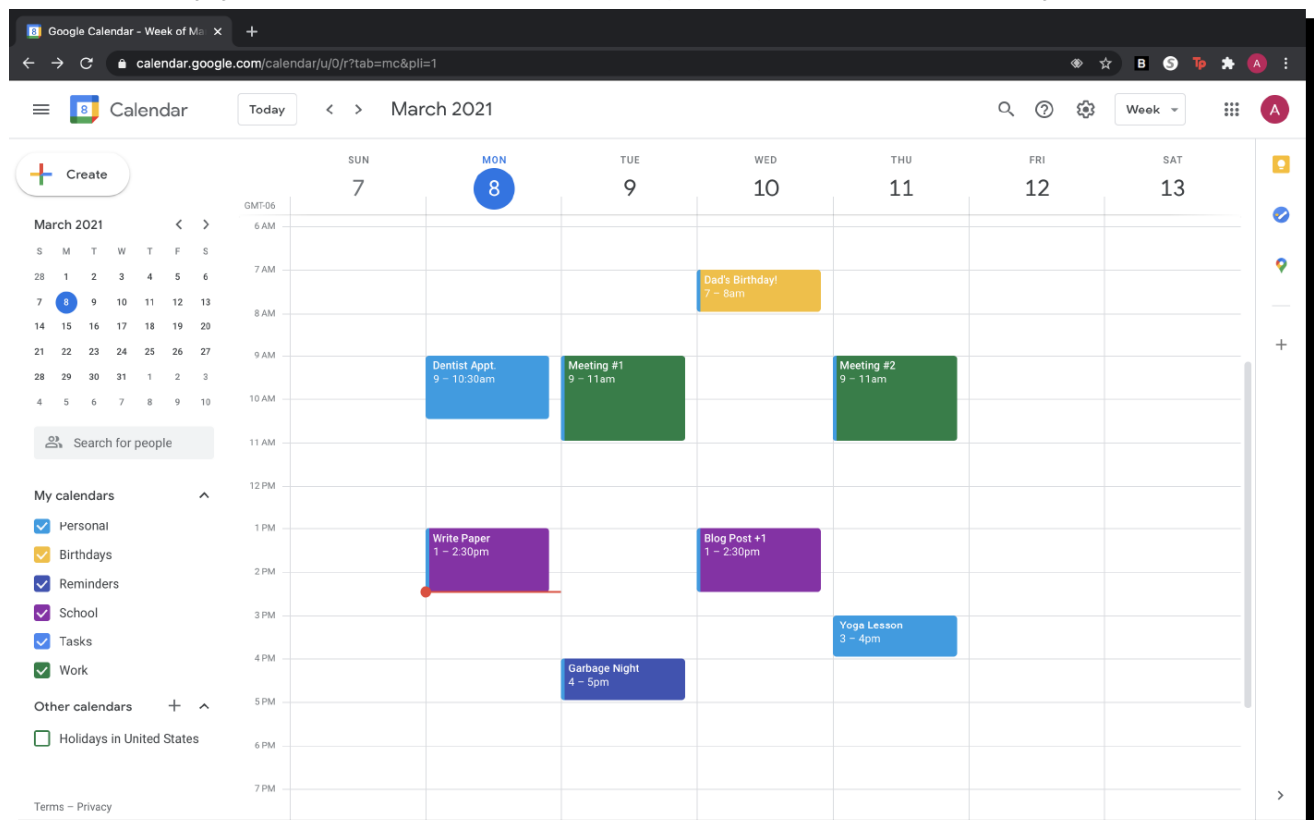
Consider the last “busy” day you had? What were your tasks that day? Was each one critical? Can you think of something you could have put off for another time or was there a different way to manage your time that day to make you more efficient?

2. Tips for Productivity

Being productive takes work. It requires you to take some time to plan and ensure you remain focused on your goals. The good news is, there are digital tools that can help you along the way. By following the tips below, you can make certain you are effective, efficient, and more **results driven**.

2a. Use a Calendar

Many people will create a daily to-do list to keep track of what they need to accomplish on any given day. That is better than nothing, but a better approach is to use a calendar. A calendar allows you to see a larger period of time. This way, you can better understand how to map out a plan that works best for you.



In Context

On June 3rd, Alice received an invitation to a birthday party. The party was set for 1 p.m. on June 15th. She pulled up her calendar and looked ahead to June 15th. She had a note that she wanted to get an oil change that day. The party sounded like a lot more fun so she moved the oil change to June 14th because she had nothing scheduled that day.

If Alice did not have her future mapped out on her calendar, she could easily lose track of her oil change (an important item) and she would not have been able to add the party. Without it listed on her calendar, she could accidentally book something that same day and miss out on the fun.

You will spend more time reviewing digital calendar options in another lesson.

2b. Break up Your Goals

Have you ever been assigned a project in school or at work and felt overwhelmed by all that needed to be done? People often procrastinate or don't complete tasks because they don't know where to start or they feel like it is just too much work. Breaking things down into smaller pieces is one way to help you get started. As you begin to make progress, you will feel more confident about achieving your ultimate goal and you will be building your **results driven** skill.



Results Driven: Skill In Action

Leon was asked to plan a luncheon for work. He had never done anything like this before and he was nervous because his supervisor would be attending. He sat down at his computer and created a spreadsheet to track his work. He listed out everything he needed to do. Things like: secure a room, locate a caterer, calculate the cost, and several other steps. Once he had the list in front of him, he felt more relaxed. He worked through each task and checked them off when complete. By the time he was done with his list, the lunch was ready to go!

2c. Take One Step at a Time

Even after you break things down into smaller pieces, it can be tempting to try to do more than one thing at once. It is very easy to allow this to happen if you are on a tight timeline or you feel pressure to move faster than necessary. You want to work hard to avoid juggling more than one element of a plan at once. The quality of your work is more important than the quantity. If you choose to focus on more than one task at once, you risk cutting corners or letting things fall through the cracks. Focus on one thing at a time, do it well, and then move on to the next items on the list.

2d. Remove Distractions

How many times have you started to work on something only to be distracted by a text or something on TV? It is very easy to get off track when there are so many things that can steal your attention. To be productive and achieve your desired results, it is important to remove, or at least mitigate, any potential distractions.



DID YOU KNOW

Most phones have a do not disturb feature. You can change your settings to silence calls and/or texts for a set time period.

When you set aside time to work on a task, think about what is around you that could pull you away from your work. Taking the time to lessen the chances you are diverted away from working toward your goal will pay off in being more **productive**.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned there is a difference between **being busy and being productive**. You also reviewed some **tips for productivity** that will help ensure you are being productive rather than filling your time to be "busy." Being able to do things like **use a calendar** and **break up your goals** can help you **take one step at a time**. You also explored the importance of **removing distractions** to keep you on track. You reflected on how taking some of these actions can not just ensure you use your time

more wisely, but it can also improve your productivity. When you are more productive, you can more easily achieve your desired results.

Next stop... time management!