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LILY SAYS
WHAT AM I HERE FOR AGAIN?

AN Italian, a Scotsman, and a Chinese fellow were hired at a construction site. The foreman pointed out a huge pile of sand and told the Italian guy, “You’re in charge of shovelling.” And to the Scotsman he said, “You’re in charge of supplies.”

He then said, “Now, I have to leave for a little while. I expect you guys to make a dent in that pile.”

The foreman went away for a couple of hours, and, when he returned, the pile of sand was untouched. He asked the Italian, “Why didn’t you sweep any of it?”

The Italian replied, “I no have no broom. You said to the Chinese fella that he a was in a charge of supplies, but he hasa disappeared and I no coulda finda him nowhere.”

Then the foreman turned to the Scotsman and said, “And you, I thought I said to shovel this pile.”

The Scotsman replied, “Aye, ye did lad, boot ah couldnay get messy a shoveell! ’e left th’ Chinese gadge in charge of supplies, boot ah couldnay fin’ him either.”

The foreman was really angry by now and stormed off toward the pile of sand to look for the Chinese guy. Just then, the Chinese guy jumped out from behind the pile of sand and yelled... “SUPPILIES!”

I’ve heard quite a few versions of this joke, but it still gets me every time. This particular one was taken from chinese-jokes.net.

For me, this simple joke illustrates one important point that lies at the heart of this week’s theme of productivity. It’s very possible, like the Chinese employee, to go about our day feeling like we’re doing exactly what needs to be done, only to find out that we’ve been productive in accomplishing the wrong goals. This false sense of productivity is something organisations cannot afford.

Productivity needs a compass, or our efforts could be leading us nowhere at all. So before you dive into our articles this week on productivity, here’s a question to ask: What are you at your organisation for?

If you’re a leader of a team, do the people you lead know what they are there for? Is it “supplies” that need to be organised or a “surprise”? Here’s an interesting leadership thought to consider: What could the foreman have done at the beginning of the story to ensure that the Italian, Scotsman and the Chinese employees were clear about what they were there for?

Until our compass is pointed in the right direction, only then can we really talk about optimising productivity. I hope you enjoy our pages this week.

Best wishes and have a great weekend,

LILY CHEAH
Editor, myStarjob.com

CREATIVE AT WORK

ALL leaders envision productivity in their workplace. More the exception than the rule, creativity and innovation are increasingly demanded of employees. However, some may say that creativity cannot be learned. If this is so, how can new ideas be generated? Creativity is one key component in productivity, evident in some companies like Google. Google has a policy where developers are encouraged to devote 20% of their working hours on side projects.

The aim of this policy is to give employees time and space for innovation. As a result, some of their best products, such as Google News, have been crafted.

According to a 2013 article by Vivian Giang called 5 Tricks to Increase Productivity in an Open Office, here are a few ideas on how to shape a more creative and productive environment:

1 SMALL SPACES ARE SOMETIMES BETTER SPACES

There are times when employees need to have their own space to properly focus and think about ideas or problems. Colleagues conversing or laughing aloud, music blasting and other distractions can hinder the ability to concentrate. Therefore, implement designs for cubes that give employees their own space. Movable desks and walls help block out distractions in the office.

Positioning couches in more secluded places can also reduce distractions.

2 HAVE MOVABLE FURNITURE

Employers often have different preferences — some can work with noise and people around, while others need absolute privacy to concentrate. This is where movable furniture will be beneficial for everyone. Have furniture like desks and cabinets that can be modified so that your employees can work either individually or with others.

3 DON’T JUST SIT THERE

According to a study conducted by the University of Sydney, the chance of dying increases by 15% in four years just by sitting at a desk for eight to 11 hours daily.

Encourage your employees to stand every now and then while working. There are even treadmill desks and kneeling chairs which have been invented to increase energy and productivity.

TRY THIS!

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The opinions expressed in this career guide are those of the writers or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.
RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

MANAGING SETBACKS WITH DILIGENCE

BY PREMA JAYABALAN
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I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT THERE ARE NO LIMITS TO OUR ABILITIES, SO WE SHOULD PUSH OURSELVES TO THE FULLEST IN ORDER TO SUCCEED.

OR Mohd Shokri Daud, “failure” is a negative word. He prefers to address obstacles in life as “setbacks”. “I don’t like to use the word ‘failure’ because when you consider events as failures, you may view these events in a negative light,” he shares.

“I don’t recall having any failure in life, but I have faced many difficult situations, especially in my career and I learned great lessons from them.”

Mohd Shokri is senior vice-president of the asset management division for Malakoff Corp Bhd, managing all its power and water plants.

“We have about 5,000MW of power plants in Malaysia. We also have about 500MW of power plants and more than 3,000,000 cu m of water plant overseas. All these come under my responsibility,” says Mohd Shokri, who has been with Malakoff for 19 years.

EARLY DAYS
Growing up, the dynamic senior vice-president never imagined that his career would revolve around power plants. Nevertheless, he has always had a fascination with them.

“I recall visiting a power plant which was under construction when I was a student. I was very intrigued by the complexity and the technicalities. It was at that point that I decided that I wanted to be an engineer.”

After obtaining his degree in electrical engineering, Mohd Shokri was given the choice to work in a job in the heart of the city, or a power plant in a rural area. This ambitious man chose the power plant. He started as a control engineer in a ‘Tema National Bhd plant in 1992 and joined Malakoff in 1995 as a senior control engineer.

His passion for power plants grew and slowly, he took on the challenge of learning the different aspects of managing power plants. Mohd Shokri went from maintenance, operations, construction, commissioning, engineering and managing the plant to finally, vice-president in charge of managing a portfolio of power and water plants.

“During these years, I also worked on building new plants and acquired operating assets. I was based abroad for a while. When I came back in 2008, I took on the position of power plant manager. I hit that position before I turned 40 and for me, that was one of the biggest accomplishments in my career.”

LIFE AT MALAKOFF
For Mohd Shokri, life at Malakoff is always interesting as he is given the opportunity to gain both depth and width of knowledge and experience.

“When I first started as an engineer in the power plant, I came across many experienced technicians who were very skilled but lacked engineering knowledge. Here I was, with engineering knowledge but I lacked the skills they had.

“Working together with them, I acquired many skills which they were happy to share with me and I helped them with the knowledge I had. It worked well both ways.”

“I always accepted the challenges that came my way and put in my full effort when it came to taking on new roles and jobs. I believe that these traits have helped me learn new things quickly and made me even more versatile.”

According to Mohd Shokri, the biggest challenge he faced in his career was a few years ago. He was given the responsibility to take on an assignment which he had very little knowledge about, and one which was not within his expertise. He had to practically start from scratch.

He had to move from his core skill in maintenance and engineering, to operations which requires entirely different skills and managing different kinds of people.

“It was a stressful time for me but I was lucky as I had the support of my people. It was a huge challenge because it took me months of sleepless nights just to get a clear perspective of things,” he reminisces of the time he stepped in to take on his new role.

“A month of hard work, I learned how to speak the same language as my team and gained their respect.”

“I also managed to acquire the required knowledge and skills to perform my duties. It was a challenging time, moving from one role that I was familiar with to another totally new and different one, but I managed to get through that.”

DON’T FEAR FAILURE
As a child and while growing up, Mohd Shokri always looked up to his older brother. His brother was a top student in school who secured himself a scholarship to study abroad.

“I always wanted to follow in his footsteps. I guess that feeling was what led me to doing well in school and furthermore my studies in the United States,” he says.

“At work, my inspiration would be my former boss. What I like about him is his work ethos and eye for detail.”

He has a never-give-up attitude that drives him to find efficient ways to get things done. These attributes inspire him, even till today.

“For all of you just starting your careers, you have nothing to lose. Make full use of all the opportunities given to you and gain as much knowledge and skills as you can,” he advises young recruits.

“I have always believed that there are no limits to our abilities, so we should push ourselves to the fullest in order to succeed.”

“In 2002, if I had not taken on the challenge that my then boss had put in front of me to do something totally out of my expertise, I definitely would not be here today. That was the turning point in my career.”

Mohd Shokri shares that once you successful pass the first obstacle, you should emerge stronger and more capable of facing any other challenges thrown at you.

Meanwhile, he is also quick to voice out that when you have nothing to lose, it is alright to try new things and fail. If there are many things on the line, then it is best to weigh your risks before jumping into something.

Mohd Shokri says that failure is inevitable so everyone should be prepared to face it. “Managing a power plant is no easy feat and a lot of things can go wrong,” he says.

“I have experienced this and when it happens, you reflect on that incident and learn how to plan better, get more organised and do things much better. So, facing failure at work has helped me learn things,” he says.

“But I also feel that being successful shows you with lessons as well. When you are successful, you tend to look back at the factors that made you succeed, and you learn how to leverage those factors to move forward and achieve greater heights.”

Managing Setbacks with Diligence

1. We will never know what we will face and the opportunities that are available if we do not explore beyond our comfort zone.

2. We may not know everything, and we must have an open mind and heart to learn from other people, no matter what level they may be at.

3. It is not about the failure, but how to get back on our feet and recover from it.

4. Failures and setbacks always give us options; suffer from it forever, or learn from it and move on to greater heights.

5. There’s no shortcut to success but to accelerate the process, we should learn from mistakes or failures of others.
In your opinion, why is there a need to transform followers into believers for sustainable growth?

A: Often times, the cliché goes like “Leaders cannot exist without followers, nor can followers exist without leaders”. These two seemingly linked groups have led to many intellectual discourses and leadership surveys around them globally. The outcomes from these have commonly reinforced their interdependence. Good leadership is key in sustaining business performance. The question that bears on us today is “Are our followers also believers in our leadership?”. The truth of the matter will determine if our followers will continue to believe in the vision when the leaders move on. Hence, the paradigm shift must happen from building followers to finding believers in leadership for sustainable growth.

Khalis will be speaking at the Asia HRD Congress from June 9 to June 20 at the Shangri-La Hotel Kuala Lumpur. For more information, visit www.hrdocongress.com or please call Kim at +603 22969199 or email kim@umthrigroup.com

THE ASIA HRD CONGRESS 2014

The Asia HRD Congress will be in Kuala Lumpur from June 9 to 10. The congress is set to feature international and regional thought leaders, including the following:

- **DR MARSHALL GOLDSMITH**
  One of the Top 10 most influential business thinkers in the world and top-ranked executive coach at the 2013 biennial Thinkers50 ceremony in London, founding partner, The Marshall Goldsmith Group, the United States

- **SHAHID MALIK**
  Former UK government minister and member of parliament, the UK

- **LORRAINE HAHN**
  Former CNN and CNBC presenter, Hong Kong

- **JUN MARIA TAN ABDULLAH**
  General manager, Human Resources and administration, LeaEd Services Sdn Bhd

- **SHANKAR NAGALINGAM**
  Human resources director, South Asia and ANZ, Dell, Malaysia

- **TUNKU ALIZAKRI RAJA MUHAMMAD ALIAS**
  Deputy chief executive officer of planning and strategy management division, the Employees Provident Fund

- **TAN SRI AMAR MOHAMAD MORSHIDI ABDUL GHANI**
  Sarawak state secretary

- **DR SANTRUPT B. MISRA**
  CEO, Carbon Black Business & director, group HR, Aditya Birla Management Corp, India

**TRANSFORMING FOLLOWERS INTO BELIEVERS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

By HYMA PILLAY

By JOEL NEOH

**4 SIMPLE STEPS TO BUILD A CULTURE OF PRODUCTIVITY**

**1. BUILD SMART TEAMS**

Passion spreads, and people learn from interacting with each other. When putting together teams for projects, mix them up and put together people with different skill sets and experiences. I have a strong belief in hiring people who are smarter than myself and not allowing that to intimidate me.

At Groupon, I brought aboard Malaysia’s country manager Rafiq Kazi to run day-to-day operations. He has a brilliant mind and working with him means I get to learn from him. That kind of relationship promotes us to challenge ourselves and grow, both as individuals and as a team.

**2. FLEXIBLE WORK SPACES**

Our environment plays a big role in our productivity. The days of rigid office cubicles are fading, as employers understand the value in a workspace as dynamic as the team working in it. Different projects require different spatial needs and levels of interaction. Setting up an office with moveable furniture and different sized tables allows people to find the space that suits their needs best. Teams can spread out across community tables. Those looking to work independently, can find a space where they won’t be disturbed.

It’s important to have spaces for unwinding too. Often, creative problem solving comes when we decide to turn our brains away from work for a while. Providing a space for people to relax and brainstorm outside of the box promotes genuine creativity when it is least expected.

**3. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT**

Along the same lines as creating a flexible workspace, allowing for movement will serve any leader well in driving the success of the team.

Productivity is fueled by interaction – with each other and the world around us. Try taking a meeting outside for a walk to get everyone’s blood pumping and thoughts rolling. Changing the scenery can inspire new insight and open everybody up to new concepts.

The best way to increase productivity is to make work natural. Along with getting people moving, it is important to allow them to move around the office and interact with each other as they see fit. At my place of work, I don’t have an assigned seat – I can sit and get to work wherever it makes sense. I get to be a part of the team that makes the company run, and everyone knows they can access me easily.

On top of maximising productivity, working with the team fosters trust and open communication.

**4. HAPPINESS IS THE NEW PRODUCTIVITY**

There is no way to cultivate a culture of high productivity without taking time for fun. Nobody works their hardest when they feel stifled.

Create a lounge where people can relax on their breaks. Allow for personalisation of the office so that everyone feels like they’re making their mark.

Don’t underestimate the value of socialising as a group. Getting together to have a party and celebrating can have a positive effect on productivity. My office throws awesome parties every quarter, giving people a chance to connect. People want to work for companies that are fun.

Ultimately, it’s in every leader’s best interest to create a culture that promotes productivity in a natural way. When a passionate team of people come together and share vision and ownership, accomplishment and creativity can come naturally.

Evaluate the space you’re working in and the way your team interacts. Decide how to get started and keep the momentum going.

Joel Neo, listed as one of the top 10 young entrepreneurs in Asia, is head of Groupon Asia Pacific leading operations across 12 countries in the region.

**CREATING A CULTURE OF PRODUCTIVITY**

By JOEL NEOH

**Mystarjob.com, Saturday 17 May 2014**

By HYMA PILLAY

Hyma.pillay@leaderonomics.com

With more than 20 years experience in human capital management in several multinational companies, it is no surprise that chief human capital officer of Telekom Malaysia Datuk Mohd Khalis Abdul Rahim has been selected as one of the speakers for the upcoming Asia HRD Congress in June.

Khalis has received a number of outstanding awards, among them being:

- Chief human resource officer of the year at the 21st Global HR Excellence Awards in February 2013
- HR leadership award at the 21st Global HR Excellence Awards in February 2013
- Recognition for contribution to the HR community at the Asia HRD Congress Awards 2008

At the Asia HRD Congress, he will be speaking on “Transforming Followers into Believers for Sustainable Growth”. We asked him to elaborate on the topic:

Q: In your opinion, why is there a need to transform followers into believers for sustainable growth?

A: Often times, the cliché goes like “Leaders cannot exist without followers, nor can followers exist without leaders”. These two seemingly linked groups have led to many intellectual discourses and leadership surveys around them globally. The outcomes from these have commonly reinforced their interdependence. Good leadership is key in sustaining business performance. The question that bears on us today is – “Are our followers also believers in our leadership?”. The truth of the matter will determine if our followers will continue to believe in the vision when the leaders move on. Hence, the paradigm shift must happen from building followers to finding believers in leadership for sustainable growth.

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By LILY CHEAH
lily.cheah@leaderonomics.com

As the most reputable employers in the world and Shell will inevitably come to mind. The energy and petrochemical group operates in 80 countries and topped Fortune’s Global 500 list in 2012 and 2013. Close to 90,000 employees power its operations, all of whom are the best and the brightest, in the group’s own words, “a world-class company needs world-class talent.”

POWERING WORLDWIDE OPERATIONS THROUGH BUSINESS SERVICE CENTRES

At the heart of Shell is a world-class network of business service centres. Shell Business Service Centre (SBSC) in Cyberjaya is one of six centres in this global network employing over 2,000 people.

SBSC is a multiple award-winning employer. It was the recipient of “The Grand Award for Employer of Choice” by the Malaysian Institute of Human Resource Management (MIHRM) 2013 and the Best Sustainable workplace award 2013 by the Malaysian Dutch Business Council 2013.

Do you have what it takes? To find out more about career opportunities at SBSC, visit com.my/sbsc

HUMAN RESOURCES

Nisha Murugan - HR adviser
I believe Shell is ahead of the game in expertise and delivery of world class people strategies. I play a critical role in my team in ensuring that effective policies are implemented throughout Shell to build a culture of performance in the organization.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Lim Teck Ming - project manager
My expertise is in providing strategic IT solutions to Shell. The opportunities for IT professionals in Shell is vast, allowing me to select a career to potentially learn many aspects of the Oil and Gas business from Exploration, Production to Manufacturing and Retail.

CONTRACTING AND PROCUREMENT

Mohammad Aiman - senior buyer
In CP, we take a strategic approach to manage Shell’s expenditure and suppliers. We provide critical support to Shell’s operations and major capital projects by ensuring that goods and services are delivered on time and to the right specification all the time.

FINANCE

Ashley Lee - finance analyst
My role is critical to delivering world-class performance and adding value to Shell’s business. I support critical business decision-making, help ensure compliance with today’s complex regulations in Finance, functional areas and externally look for opportunities to achieve greater efficiencies whilst overseeing simpler standard processes.

CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

Niki Sarah - customer service advisor
I am to create an exceptional experience for Shell customers; from the basics up - driving Customer Excellence and putting the customer at the heart of everything we do. I design and implement continuous improvement processes while working closely with account managers and country managers in Shell to drive operational excellence.

SUPPLY CHAIN AND DISTRIBUTION

Gerald Andrews – regional support
In the team allow me to gain exposure to all aspects of Shell’s international distribution and logistical activities, I play an active role in managing the balance between Supply and Demand, optimising value creation through analysing the optimal provision and availability of assets and resources.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION AND MEMBERSHIPS

We encourage our employees to take up professional qualifications like ACCA, CIMA and PMP. We cover professional membership fees with any Shell recognised professional institutions which are relevant to the role.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (L&D)

We place importance in L&D and our employees are encouraged to actively seek out opportunities to acquire or renew skills and knowledge required to perform (and excel) in their role. With the support of their line managers, employees take responsibility for their own development plan which will be reviewed every year.

NETWORKING AND LEARNING FROM OTHERS

SBSC place great emphasis on networking, learning from others and teamwork, which means we help others in our team, but are also prepared to challenge each other. Various local and global networks are set up to encourage networking across natural work teams.

A VIBRANT, ENGAGING, ENERGETIC AND PRODUCTIVE WORKPLACE

The first Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED) certified building in Cyberjaya, Wisma Shell was designed with the primary objective to provide a vibrant, engaging, energetic and productive workplace. Besides giving their best at work, we expect our employees to maintain a healthy lifestyle and participate in sports, games, hobbies or just work out at our well-equipped commercial grade gym.

WORK LIFE BALANCE SUPPORT

Our policies recognise that balancing work and life’s pressures at different stages of one’s career is important to our employee’s motivation, wellbeing and performance. We provide flexible working arrangements (subject to role and business requirements) for our employees and additional support to their families.

FUN AND GIVING BACK TO SOCIETY

We are proud of our Social Responsibility achievements which are led by our employees, utilising their creative and entrepreneurial talents to organise fundraising activities and taking time out to reach out to the needy, role modelling the Shell values.

SHELL’S UNIQUE EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION

WORKING IN A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

We provide our employees with a platform to excel in their area of expertise and we offer opportunities to transfer to other divisions within the Group in Malaysia and overseas. This means that you are better placed to achieve your career goals and aspiration, and experience the true meaning of job satisfaction.

CORE VALUES AND BUSINESS PRINCIPALS

We make a commitment to live by the Shell Core Values of Honesty, Integrity and Respect and the Shell General Business Principles (SGBP) which spells out the principles of ethical business behaviour. We can help build healthy relationships by behaving honestly, integrity and respect with people.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS (D&I)

We employ a young and diverse workforce with 17 different nationalities. We work together in close collaboration with selected consultants who are the best in their industry which enable us to build a competitive performance culture.

REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

Our remuneration and benefits policies support our business strategy and encourage behaviours which lead to the achievement of business and individual objectives. Our employees have clear tasks and targets set up for the year and they know what is expected of them.

WORLD-CLASS CAREER DEVELOPMENT AT SHELL BUSINESS SERVICE CENTRE

SUCCESS AT SHELL

The SBSC overall performance is measured through analysing the optimal provision and availability of assets and resources.

So what sets this multiple award-winning company apart from the rest? “To put it simply, Shell’s core values and a compelling employee value proposition (EVP) brings out the best in our employees,” says SBSC general manager Mabali Tan.
NOISY COLLEAGUES

In the 2013 “Office Workplace Productivity” study by Ask.com, 62% of respondents (over 600 working adults based in the United States) said that distractions mainly came in the form of noisy colleagues. However, he said that even when colleagues are nearby, they use instant messaging, email or phone to communicate with them instead of speaking to them face-to-face. According to Ask.com, 60% of respondents felt that max.

This is the dilemma of modern working spaces. As we move forward towards a culture of informality and as outside walls come down, we are also decreasing the availability of private and quiet working spaces. While such environments do encourage collaboration and relationship building, they can negatively impact our ability to focus.

While that time and group collaboration are critical to success, it’s interesting to see the significant value placed on focusing concentration and looking outside stats, “You see Ross, vice-president of human sessions at Ask.com in a press release. “It’s important for today’s employer to adapt to environments to effectively while that solution.”

TIP: When you need to focus, intentionally create or find your own quiet spot.

The setup of our office space may be far from ideal, but we can do the best of what’s surrounding us; in the ways in which we need it to focus.

Physically relocate yourself temporarily to a quiet area so you can work without distractions from colleagues; if there are no quiet spaces in your office you may have to your employer would allow this, a quiet café.

If relocating yourself is an impossibility, try to create the quiet environment you need. This doesn’t have to be done all the time. Discuss and agree with the colleagues in your section of the office on a “no-interruption” period. This way, work will be able to focus on their work for that period of time.

DIFFICULT TOOLS OR USE OF TOOLS

Take a quick inventory of all the tools you have in your current setup, then clean it. Cleanly it while it looks as well organized as possible to start. What tools are you using that make you spend more time to find things? Are you using a coffee and catch up with colleagues by the time it truly opens up your ideas?

—You urgently need to send documents to a client but then the internet connection is down. 

—You try to find files on your laptop but you don’t have an idea where they are.

What are these examples? These are less than 10% of the time and can be categorized as you not using the tools that you have, rather resulting in slower productivity.

TIP: Consider the tools you are using at work.

Check if there is anything you can do to improve your efficiency and manage them so you won’t have to search about them.

Are you struggling to use your computer with unnecessary files? You’ll be surprised how much quicker things can move if you delete items you don’t really need and empty out your trash.

The “file information cleaner” tip will allow you to free up space on your computer, which will enable you to use your tools more efficiently.

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PRODUCTIVITY TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS

BY SHAHRAN MASOOD

Are creatures of habit. There is comfort in getting things done in a way that we're familiar and comfortable with. By the same token, what if these habits lead us to repeated headaches and stress in the office? On top of that, it's easy for us to get swamped and overwhelmed with work – just add multiple deadlines, difficult people and impromptu meetings – suddenly you're working into your lunch break, and you're burning the midnight oil.

Instead of being reactive to your environment, I encourage you to “respond” by firstly evaluating your patterns of getting things done, and acknowledging that there is always room for improvement. And secondly, by committing to creating more space on your desk, peace of mind and time in your day.

This article is a focus on the latter, and is a quick intervention to interrupting unproductive habits, and to offer advice from the experts – for immediate and effective ways to free up more time and space at work.

Three big things you must do today by Robin Sharma, leadership and personal success guru

The biggest items on your to-do list are usually the hardest, most uncomfortable and usually require the most effort. Sharma suggests tackling these three big things first in your day, when your energy reserves are at their highest.

Procrastination occurs when we avoid these “big things”, and instead cherry pick the to-do items that are perhaps more fun and easier to complete. By attending to these big things every single day, you are forming an excellent habit to repeatedly create an abundance of space and time.

80/20 rule by Wilfred Pareto, 20th century economist and philosopher

Pareto made a keen observation that 80% of Italy’s wealth belonged to only 20% of the population. The common misconception of this principle is that 80 plus 20 equals 100 – this is not true.

In terms of productivity, Pareto leads us to identify the 20% of activities or tasks that produce 80% or more of results. Project managers know that 20% of work (especially the first 10% and last 10%) require 80% of your time and resources. The 80/20 rule is applicable to almost anything from productivity, learning and to management.

Work from home by Dr Rachelle Bosua, information systems expert and author

According to a study conducted by The University of Melbourne, “employees who work from home one to three days per week are more productive than workers who do not.”

Dr Bosua says work patterns and places of work are changing dramatically as a result of increased adoption of digital technologies.

Job flexibility allows employees to invest in work life balance. The effect of having healthier and happier employees translates to better work output in the short term and sustained quality of work in the long run.

The biggest picture effect of happier employees results in lower absenteeism, decreased staff turnover and a culture of productive and fulfilled employees.

Simplicity by Edward de Bono, physician, consultant and inventor

“...you need to put a very high value on simplicity!” De Bono highlights habit in our increasingly complicated lives, we need to focus on the essential parts of a task or problem, to make the complex more manageable.

In this way of thinking, “less is truly more” because we aim to get more value from less activity.

Instead of adding more components and more activities to a task, De Bono suggests that we reassess the value of our outputs and reduce our inputs. In the context of medicine, we can seek the minimum dose that provides the maximum effect.

Deconstruction by Tim Ferriss, author, entrepreneur and deconstructor

Ferriss’s take on deconstruction firstly looks at deconstruction in the traditional sense – breaking down a task into smaller manageable pieces and rearranging based on priority. But he takes it a step further by identifying which parts typically lead to failure, and attempts to answer the question “why do people quit”.

This becomes his focus area of task orientation, effort and learning practice. By spending more time on these difficult areas, this leads one step closer to mastery or world class ability.

Projects by Jerry Madden, NASA project manager

Madden, a long serving project management specialist in NASA, has intimate experience with high precision and high stakes projects. During his career, he achieved the first lunar landing, launched NASA’s first satellite and deployed the Hubble telescope.

He attributes his success to team alignment, and above all, rearranging, refining and having complete control over the sequence of activities. “Wrong decisions made early can be salvaged, but ‘right’ decisions made late cannot.”

He also commented on the long-term of office operations, “the more the paperwork increases, the less product is delivered per dollar” – suggesting that every once in a while we should reset and start from scratch.

Two-minute rule by David Allen, time management consultant and author

David Allen’s two-minute rule is as easy as it gets. He says that if a task can be completed within two minutes, it’s probably something you should do immediately. There is time gained from not having to organise and prioritise the task in the first place.

An extension of this rule is to batch or group these types of two-minute tasks, and when a window of time presents itself, take the opportunity to attend to these tasks and clear them.

For example making space in your inbox by saving attachments, deleting messages or moving important emails into folders.

Meetings by Tony Wong, productivity expert

According to a survey conducted by Salary.com, 47% of workers say meetings are the No. 1 time wasters in the office. People come together to discuss activities, solutions and everyone has their turn.

Wong suggests to keep the end result in mind and work backwards; to consider the essential participants who need to be there based on their contribution, to set clear directions for the agenda and what should be discussed, and finally to have clear parameters to time.

Because time is the most valued commodity, it’s important to find the sweet spot for the duration of meetings. If it’s too long then participants merely fill in the time casually, with no sense of urgency to create value in the meeting.

If the goal is to get the job done, then at least let’s get it done well and with a sense of satisfaction. Getting overwhelmed is an inevitable part of our jobs and careers. But getting overwhelmed as a result of doing a task in the same manner, and getting stressed time and time again, is a red flag to gaining some perspective on your approach.

Taking on board these expert productivity tips will enable us to reduce time doing the mundane, create efficiencies in our work, give us breathing space and provide clarity of thought - all of which will give us more time to enjoy the things we love.

Shahran Masood is a talent acceleration programme manager with Leaderonomics. For more information on talent acceleration programmes, email people@leaderonomics.com.
I have no sense of fashion, nor am I an expert in matters regarding image and looking good. In fact, I have no right to be writing an article on makeup and women. But I stumbled upon a research which I had to share (and which got me thinking) but might get me into trouble with women!

Many women (and some men) wear makeup all the time, covering themselves with layers of foundation, lipstick, eye shadow, powder and blush. According to research, many women believe that they need to spend all these hours making-up to be more attractive to men. Unfortunately, this new research also claims that “if your goal is to impress or look more beautiful to men, then your efforts may be in vain.”

In fact, all of us are terrible at imagining what other people find attractive. Many men think that having muscles makes them more attractive to the opposite sex whilst many women think men prefer skinny body types. A ground-breaking study done by Alex Jones and Robin Kramer, two researchers from Bangor University and Aberdeen University found that women have got it absolutely wrong when it comes to makeup.

The study published in the Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology concludes that women are seen as more attractive when they have less makeup than they typically wear.

By ROSHAN THIRAN

that women are likely to use cosmetics to appeal to the mistaken preferences of others. These mistaken preferences seem more tied to the perceived expecta-
tions of men, and, to a lesser degree, of women,” the authors wrote. To put it simply – many of us are fuss-
ing for imaginary ideals, and have no sense of reality.

There will be a large number of people who will scream and yell at me and send nasty emails my way. They believe that they wear makeup not to attract others but for themselves – they just want to feel good about themselves. To those in that category, I applaud you. However, many, if not most, will be obligated to spending hours prepping them-

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

In this age of ridiculous beauty standards, it is easy to believe that we need to look flawless or the world will think less of us. But it is rather comforting to know that the only people who actually find impeccably made-up, are ourselves. If we look just as much time doing makeup as say, improving our intelligence or personal leadership, this world may well be a very dif-

ter proposition for us all.

Which brings me to another question. What myths, standards and perceived dogmas which we believe as gospel truths are holding us back from being ourselves and truly fulfilling our real potential?

From a young age, our par-
tents tell us myths about what will make us prettier, healthier and wiser. We all fall into the trap of making sweeping gen-
eralisations. Here is my attempt at the top 10 myths that may be holding you back in your career and life.

BY ROSHAN THIRAN

no. 1:

BE A LEADER

BREAK FREE FROM THE

TYRANNY OF MAKEUP

AND OTHER MYTHS WHICH MAY BE HOLDING US BACK

MYTH NO. 7: I CAN BE A PERFECT LEADER

It is not possible. No leader is perfect. According to Steve Snyder, “when we compare ourselves against an impossible standard, and when we fall short, we conclude that there is something wrong with us. The truth is that every leader faces intense difficulties at some point in their career.” The mark of a good leader is not being perfect at those times but learning every step of the way, especially when mistakes abound.

MYTH NO. 8: IF YOU HATE YOUR JOB, JUST START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Starting your own business is hard, and not everyone is cut out for it. Many people think it is easy but most fail at it. You need to be extremely passionate about something and have the patience to market yourself, deal with financial uncertainty, and overcome plenty of tri-

MYTH NO. 9: NICE GUYS FINISH LAST

Don’t ever believe this. I am starting to see more and more leaders who have longevity and are nice guys. The horrible bosses tend to rise up the ladder fast, but they always fall. Even if it takes longer to go up, being human and humane always wins long term.

MYTH NO. 10: YOU DON’T HAVE TO WORK HARD IF YOU WORK SMART

I know this is what everyone likes to believe but the truth is in today’s world, everyone is getting pretty smart. Hard work coupled with being smart may be the only option left.

Roshan Thiran has absolutely no inter-
est in fashion and image management. He however, felt compelled to write about this myth about men and makeup, espe-
cially with research to back him up. He is extremely happy that he has helped in busting this myth and hopefully, liberat-
ing women (and some men!) from the “ganny” of makeup.

MYTH NO. 6: THERE IS ONE PERFECT JOB OUT THERE FOR YOU

There is never a perfect job. All jobs have some great aspects to it and some mundane and horrible aspects to it. Get used to them. But at every job, you can learn new things and learn about your-
self. Never be comfortable in any job. Always be ready for new opportunities and keep learning.

MYTH NO. 5: IT’S ALL ABOUT BEING POSITIVE

Many people believe that if they are positive and dream big dreams, they will get incredible results. It helps, but at the end of the day, being positive gets you nowhere if you don’t take action.

Action has to happen and many times, action is painful.

MYTH NO. 4: THE BOSS IS ALWAYS RIGHT

As a boss, I know this is not true. We all make mistakes and are human. If you really want to make an impact, listen closely to your boss. But then try to rationalise and analyse what he or she says. If you think they may be wrong, share your opinion. Long-
term, yes-men who just parrot what the boss says will never end up becoming leaders. And your boss knows this.

MYTH NO. 3: SELF-IMPROVEMENT IS FOR LOSERS

Many people think if you push yourself to improve by learning, reading and doing more, people will perceive you as geeks and “losers”. I think the opposite is true. By knowing and admitting your weaknesses, and by actively setting out to do something about them, you end up living your dreams.

MYTH NO. 2: IT’S NOT WHAT YOU KNOW BUT WHO YOU KNOW.

I know so many people who mistake this advice – which advocates learning to network – to mean that “only the privileged who have connections will ever get ahead.” Absolute nonsense. If you really look at great leaders, you real-
ise majority of them came from poor “non-networked” families, yet used their leadership abilities to get out there and meet people. Just look at US president Barrack Obama, who has no family relationship with the Kennedys. He still managed to build some great net-
works with limited initial connections.

MYTH NO. 1: I’VE TRIED IMPROVING MYSELF BUT IT DOESN’T WORK!

Just because you attended a few sessions by some self-help gurus and read some self-help improvement books does not mean you will automatically become perfect. Learning is hard work and requires tenacious persistence. You can improve any area in your life if you work hard, consistently practice what you learn and are long-term focused.

MYTH NO. 10 MYTHS, STAND-ERALS. HERE IS MY ATTEMPT

th no. 9:

th no. 8:

th no. 7:

th no. 6:

th no. 5:

th no. 4:

th no. 3:

th no. 2:

th no. 1:

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I was chatting with one of our editors when my attention was drawn to a book on her shelf. The book was a beautiful matte, burnished gold, but it was the title that caught my eye – Death by Meeting.

“Let me read that book!” I exclaimed.

The editor looked at me, highly amused and probably thinking that dying a painful death in meetings was on my bucket list.

Not exactly by choice, but yes, I have been driven to a painful near-death in meetings before – figuratively speaking, of course. In my previous jobs, I’ve sat through bi-monthly or even weekly six-hour staff meetings, regretting the six hours of my life lost forever.

Apallingly, I’d hardly be the only one. Thrown a stone and you would have no problem hitting someone who has suffered drawn-out, wholly unproductive meetings where one person speaks and everyone else thinks about the noon temperature or the upcoming lunch break.

Author Patrick Lencioni terms meetings as “the most painful problem in business,” writing that “bad meetings, and what they indicate and provoke in an organisation, generate real human suffering in the form of anger, lethargy and cynicism.”

Count the number of times you have said “That was a great meeting!” Chances are, you wouldn’t need more than two hands.

Meetings should be the key defining activity that serves to drive a business. When people start dreading meetings, it is likely that they have become both boring and ineffective.

Death by Meeting starts by introducing us to Yip Software’s founder and CEO Casey McDaniel. McDaniel was an amateur golfer whose career was cut short by a case of the “yips” – a chronic disorder that hampered his game. He retired – figuratively speaking, of course. In my previous life lost forever.

Meetings should be the key defining activity that serves to drive a business. When people start dreading meetings, it is likely that they have become both boring and ineffective.

Death by Meeting starts by introducing us to Yip Software’s founder and CEO Casey McDaniel. McDaniel was an amateur golfer whose career was cut short by a case of the “yips” – a chronic disorder that hampered his game. He retired, after an employee survey concluded that staff morale. His 200 employees were merely satisfied, with the characters, cheering for them to overcome obstacles and achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Most meetings are boring because they lack the key ingredient that makes any activity interesting – drama and conflict.

They’re populated by a great cast (our colleagues) and filled with high enough stakes (our immediate and long-term future), yet many meeting leaders focus on avoiding conflict and sensitive topics.

MINE FOR CONFLICT

“The leaders of these meetings have to think of themselves as directors. Get people hooked in those interesting topics and then let them drift away with no concern or frustration at unresolved business issues.

Bottom line, the meetings had become the birthplace of organisational issues from confusion, dispassion and lethargy, to problems of staff morale.

As a result, Harrison decided to drop in on McDaniel’s meetings over the next three months.

Panicking that his job was on the line and having a personal assistant on maternity leave, McDaniel hired an old friend’s son Will Peterson for the summer.

Meetings as Movies

After sitting through yet another awful meeting, film studies graduate Susan then realised that the problem with meetings could be tackled with some key principles of movie-making.

Meetings take on average the same time as movies – approximately 90 minutes. Whilt movies are detached characters and scenarios played out on a screen with no consequence to our lives, meetings directly impact our actions and wellbeing.

And yet we find it easy to be completely absorbed by a great movie, connecting deeply with the characters, cheering for them to overcome obstacles and achieve a satisfactory resolution.

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MINE FOR CONFLICT

“The leaders of these meetings have to think of themselves as directors. Get people hooked in those first 10 minutes, then mine for ideological conflict, and drive it to a conclusion.” – Death by Meeting, pg 164

Any team with two or more people are bound to have differences in experience, perspectives and opinions. A meeting leader must seek to uncover any areas of conflict where team members do not agree to allow thorough evaluation of important topics. Exploiting this potential for conflict fully utilises the synergy of a group when working out issues in order to make better collective decisions.

THE MYTH OF TOO MANY MEETINGS

“Out problem is not that we’re having too many meetings. Our problem is that we’re having too few of them.” – Death by Meeting, pg 135

Lencioni argues passionately that we do not have enough of the right kind of meetings. Many of us lapse into the habit of what he calls “meeting stew”, where every topic imaginable is fair game for discussion and results in an unstructured, ineffective, unsatisfying meeting.

Psychologically, “It’s almost impossible for people to shift mindset from tactical issues to a strategic one” – in other words, we need to create the right contextual setting to give the right amount of time for different types of discussion topics.

Lencioni puts forth four distinctive types of meetings.

The daily check-in, or team huddle, is similar to the five-minute news headlines and resolutions immediate operational issues for the day.

The weekly tactical functions like a sitcom episode to resolve immediate tactical obstacles and identify potential “big picture” issues to be brought up in the monthly strategic meeting.

Following the monthly strategic, the quarterly off-site reviews key industry trends, competitive landscape and refines business strategy.

Many would complain at having even more meetings, but the reality is that we become so entrenched in lethargic organisational habits that we do not rethink meetings to our own advantage.

So did Peterson’s film and psychology theories save Yip’s staff meetings and Casey’s job? Pick up this immensely readable book to find out...

Patrick Lencioni’s Four Meetings:

By HUI YI-WEN

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mystarjob.com, Saturday 17 May 2014

Are Your Meetings Fruitful?

Patrick Lencioni’s Four Meetings:

Meeting Type | Time Required | Purpose & Format | Keys to Success
---|---|---|---
Daily Check-In | 5 - 10 minutes | Share daily schedules and activities | • Don’t sit down • Keep it administrative • Don’t cancel even when some people can’t be there
Weekly Tactical | 45 - 90 minutes | Review weekly activities and metrics, and resolve tactical obstacles and issues | • Don’t set agenda until after initial reporting • Postpone strategic discussions • Limit to one to two topics • Prepare and do research • Engage in good conflict
Monthly Strategic (or Ad Hoc Strategic) | 2 - 4 hours | Discuss, analyse, brainstorm and decide on critical issues affecting long-term success | • Get out of the office • Focus on work, limit social activities • Don’t over structure or overburden the schedule
Quarterly Off-Site Review | 1 - 2 days | Review strategy, industry trends, competitive landscape, key personnel, team development | • Get out of the office • Focus on work, limit social activities • Don’t over structure or overburden the schedule
A goal is a desired outcome that a person or a system envisions, plans and commits to achieving within a certain time frame. Goal setting is important because it gives us a sense of pride and achievement when we reach the finish line. It also increases our self-confidence, as we begin to realise our own abilities throughout the process of achieving the goals we’ve set for ourselves. Setting goals also keeps us motivated to achieve what we want in life.

Sadly, many of us are guilty of failing to accomplish the goals we set. Somewhere along the line, we get too busy or discouraged by the small factors which seem like huge obstacles hindering us from reaching our goals. First not, here are three important steps we can follow to reach our goals:

**STEP ONE**

Set goals

Our goals should describe our accomplishments. It should be something we know we can achieve, where we can feel, see, hear, or touch the results. You can try using the S.M.A.R.T. technique to set your goals. There are different variations on what the acronyms stand for, but in general it means:

- **S** – Specific
- **M** – Measurable
- **A** – Action-oriented
- **R** – Relevant
- **T** – Trackable

Specific goals are more achievable than general goals. Clearly define what is it you want to achieve, and by when this should be done.

An example of a general goal would be “I want to get a promotion.” A specific goal, however, would be “I want to get a promotion by September 2014.” One way to set a specific goal is to ask yourself these questions:

1. Who is involved?
2. What is it you want to achieve?
3. Why do you want to achieve it?
4. How are you going to achieve it?
5. By when do you want to achieve it?

Make your goals measurable (M). Measurable goals have concrete criteria for measuring your progress in achieving your goal. There should be a clear way for you to know when your goal is accomplished.

Your goals should be action-oriented (A). There should be ways for you to achieve your goal. Action-oriented goals help you decide the attitude, skills and abilities you need to develop in order to reach your goal.

Relevant goals are realistic (R). Your goal should be something you are both willing and able to achieve.

A common misconception people have is that high goals are unrealistic and impossible to achieve. Whether a goal is realistic or not depends on you. If you have the willpower to work towards your goal, then it can definitely be achieved.

Your goal should also be trackable and grounded within a timeframe (T). A timeframe creates a sense of urgency and keeps you motivated. Instead of saying “I’m going to get myself that car,” say “I’m going to get myself that car by Oct 30, 2014.” You will make much more effort into making the second goal happen, because you just gave yourself a deadline.

**STEP TWO**

Strategise and plan

Now that you have set your goals, the next step would be strategising and planning. Here are a few basic strategies to keep yourself on track to reach your goals.

1. **Paste your goals where you can see them everyday**

Print your goals out and place them around the most prominent areas in your house and office. These act as daily reminders and keep you motivated.

2. **Create a visualisation board**

Most of our minds see things in images instead of text and numbers. One way to help keep track on achieving your goals is by creating a visualisation board. A visualisation board is something like a bulletin board, where you paste visuals of the thing that you want to achieve. The added visual simulation can help by invoking emotions which would constantly motivate you. Place your visual board in a place you are sure to look at everyday.

3. **Form a support group**

Form a small group consisting of people who you trust and are reliable. The group acts as a support system. Each of you should share your goals with each other, and the group should meet on a regular basis, perhaps once or twice a month to check on where you are at reaching your goals.

4. **Create a daily action plan**

You need to set an action plan with active tasks for you to follow everyday to achieve your goals. Writing and visualising your goals alone will not bring you to the finish line. You have to actively work towards achieving your goals. One way to do this is to create three mini goals everyday and make sure that you complete them before the end of the day.

5. **Set a timeline with mini deadlines**

One way to keep track of your goals and ensuring that you achieve them by the deadline is to set a timeline with a few check points.

For example, if the deadline for your goal is December 2014, set a quarterly deadline to keep yourself on track. Which means, by April, you will need to achieve A, and by July, you would need to achieve B, and so on until you reach your final goal in December. Having these small deadlines will help you push yourself further and harder towards achieving your goals.

**STEP THREE**

Take action and stay focused

Now that you have your goals and your strategy all planned out, the only thing left to do is to take action and use your time and energy productively to reach your goals. It is very easy to get distracted. Keep your focus and get rid of distractions so you can increase your productivity to achieve more of your goals.

The final, and most important element to help you achieve your goals, is to believe in yourself. Along the road there will be obstacles which will come your way, and these obstacles can hinder you from achieving what you meant to achieve. At this point, remember to shut out all the negative criticisms from other parties and from yourself. Having said that, having constructive, positive critics can help push you further. Take it with a pinch of salt and keep your eyes on the goal, and believe that you will get there, and you most definitely will. All the best in achieving your goals!

**DIODE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP**

Learn how to influence and lead like a great superhero through the upcoming DIODE Youth Leadership Camp. The camp is specially designed to cater to youth aged 14-16. Campers will journey alongside their peers in discovering their leadership potential through projects, simulations, game-based learning sessions and many more.

Find out more about the camp at leaderonomics.com/diodecamps/ or email us at diode@leaderonomics.com to sign-up. Hurry! Registration date is coming to an end soon!

**DATE:** June 2-7, 2014

**VENUE:** Starfresh AgroPark, Seremban

**CROSSING THE FINISH LINE**

**YOUR GOAL SHOULD ALSO BE TRACKABLE AND GROUNDED WITHIN A TIME FRAME TO CREATE A SENSE OF URGENCY AND KEEP YOU MOTIVATED.**

**SETTING, PLANNING AND ACHIEVING GOALS**

**By HYMA PILLAY**

hyma.pillay@leaderonomics.com

**HYMA PILLAY**

is operations leader for the myStarjob.com career guide team and a member of the Leaderonomics content team. She enjoys the thrill of taking on projects and “making things happen”, that is when she is not busy being distracted by cute animal videos on the Internet. You can email her at hyma.pillay@leaderonomics.com

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By IMRAN HASHIM
imran.hashim@leaderonomics.com

I
It’s no surprise to anyone that our daily demands appear to be multiplying as quickly as, and often much quicker than, the rate at which we accomplish them. And yet, some people seem capable of doing a whole lot more than their peers. How is this possible? Given that we all have the same number of hours in each day, surely there are some productivity hacks in action.

In addition to the excellent tips shared throughout this week’s pullout, here is a look at ten apps to boost your productivity in both your personal and professional lives:

1. **START YOUR DAY WITH Any.do**

   Productive people start their day with a list of to-do’s written down. Scientifically speaking, there’s a neurological process that wire us to strive to a certain objective when it’s written down – and a major delight to strike it off the list once done. Any.do taps into that. With its clear and simple user interface, it’s a pleasantly nice app to start your day. Be mindful of the to-do list though, realistically you should be focusing on three major tasks “wins” in a day.

2. **AUTOMATE TASKS WITH IFTTT**

   In this era of the “Internet of Things”, you just can’t escape it anymore. No, it’s not robots taking over the world – just those mundane tasks you wish someone can do for you.

   Having a tough time remembering birthdays? The app “If This Then That (IFTTT)” can automatically post for you on Facebook or email. You can even auto switch off your WiFi on your mobile outside work or home to save precious battery.

3. **BOOK YOUR CALENDAR WITH Cal+**

   Synchronise all your calendars with Cal+, which also works directly with the Any.do app. Is your next appointment somewhere you’re unfamiliar with? Google Maps is integrated into it so there is no need to open several apps when one can do the job faster.

4. **PRIORITISE TASK WITH Gneo**

   This is urgent. That is important. Sounds familiar? Gneo helps you to identify actual urgent/impor tant tasks and prioritise them accordingly.

5. **TAKE NOTES WITH Evernote**

   Usually, pen and paper note taking gets the job done. And it’s perfectly fine until you need to share the info with some unfortunate soul who might end up struggling to decipher your handwriting.

   Save the trouble and leverage on technology for the win! Evernote is easy to use and allows you to assign and keep track of tasks. It’s also highly portable, compatible with most devices, and integrates with the likes of Google Drive. It has good indexing capabilities with proper tagging, making information flow much more fluid.

6. **MAP OUT IDEAS WITH Mindly**

   So you have ideas. Lots of ideas! You jot them down, then lose the piece of paper. Why not keep ideas flowing in a nice universe map instead? With Mindly, you can give structure to your ideas and visualise them clearly.

7. **KEEP TRACK OF YOUR EXPENSES USING Expensify**

  Ah! Receipts and expense claims. If only they could magically sort themselves into a spreadsheet so claims can be processed. The world would be a better place.

   Well, it’s not magic, but it’s the same result. On Expensify, snap a photo of your receipt, tag it by category and voila – an automated report. The job will be done in just a few minutes. No more missing submission deadlines or accumulating shoeboxes of receipts at the end of the year.

8. **ORGANISE AND ASSIGN TASKS USING Trello**

   Find yourself putting the cart before the horse? Organise projects big and small with Trello, a helpful app which allows you to assign and keep track of tasks.

9. **ELIMINATE DISTRACTION WITH SelfControl**

   Spending too much time on too many social media sites for unproductive purposes? Why not give it a break once in a while and focus on the task at hand.

   SelfControl, as the name suggests, controls your browsing activities. Set the time limit and specify the sites to block, and you’ll be locked out. No distraction at all, full attention on your work.

10. **TRACK YOUR ACTIVITY WITH RescueTime**

    Time is an important resource in our lives. Sometimes without noticing, hours just fly by and you ask yourself what tasks have you actually completed? RescueTime helps you to track and audit your activities on your browser – serious work or otherwise, every second and minute. Yes, all that adds up, and you might be in for a surprise once you find out your true habits in front of the screen.

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**Also next week**

**Dos and don’ts when looking for a mentor**

**AmBank Group as an employer of choice**

**Role models for aspiring innovators**

**How managers can be effective mentors**

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