



Summertime Productivity

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Warm weather...no school...lighter traffic...empty offices. Yup, it's summer! So, how can you make the next few weeks at work productive ones? Let me offer four quick tips.

Take advantage of the slower schedule.

If your workplace is like most, the number of meetings slows to a trickle, phone calls and emails lessen, people extend weekends, and offices clear out earlier. Nice, right?

Well, the slower pace of the summer months offers some wonderful opportunities. It's actually a great time to tackle your overflowing inbox, invest in quiet strategic thinking, pause to build connections with coworkers in ways not possible during the usual craziness, or sink your teeth into that project that's continually been placed on the back burner. While you may be tempted to veg out at work while others are vacationing, this time may be a blessing in disguise as you *finally* can get something done! Don't let this gift go to waste.

Know when the people you depend on most are heading out, and plan accordingly.

So, you take the first productivity tip to heart, and you sit down to focus in on that assignment. Wonderful! Only, there's one catch. You don't have everything you need. Okay, you think, a simple peak into your colleague's office will resolve the matter. But, lo and behold, your colleague's not in; in fact, you learn that she's out of the country for the next 2 weeks with a rather emphatic note that she will not be checking messages. Great...just great!

To make the summer more productive, take a few minutes to glance at the vacation calendar in your office. Most offices have them -- whether it's posted on the wall or kept online. The point is to get a sense of when the folks with whom you need to interact are going to be unavailable. That will help you to plan your time better and to coordinate with them regarding assignments, hand-offs, the definition "emergency" (for the periods when they're gone), and whom to contact or where to look so that the operation doesn't come to a screeching halt while they're gone.

Organize your work so that your time off is truly time off.

We all know the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." While this clearly is the right thing to do, this is an instance in which doing the right thing also can yield a benefit for you.

Want your summer to be productive? Allow yourself as much uninterrupted time away as possible. (In case you missed it, the operative word in the last sentence is *uninterrupted*.) I get it; it's definitely an ego stroke when folks recognize just how important you are in the workplace. Yeah, they need you! Yeah, you're critical! But, if you're so needed and so critical that everything falls apart without you, something's wrong...no, really...something's wrong. And, the situation that's been created not only hurts the organization you're temporarily vacating, it's also hurting you!

So, for productivity's sake (yours and the team's), organize the work to be accomplished during your absence, bring people in, explain status and next steps and contingencies. Give people the information and the access that they will need to function...effectively...without you for a while. Doing so not only empowers them, it gives you permission (barring some true, unforeseen emergency) to take some time to unplug and refresh.

Enjoy a bit of the summer!

Summer comes but once a year. Whether it's vacation, staycation, or some combination of the two, here's hoping you get to enjoy yours. You'd be surprised what this time can mean to productivity -- yours and others'.



Go and have some fun!

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"Quotes"

"The ant is knowing and wise, but he doesn't know enough to take a vacation."
~Clarence Day

"In the position of president it has been impossible to take any substantial vacation[.] And I'm tired."
~Katherine Henderson

"Summer afternoon, summer afternoon to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language"
~Henry James

"Everybody wants to get away and feel like they're on vacation, even if it's just for the night at home when you can't go anywhere."
~Paula Jenkins

"Let me ask you a question. How do you do your job, I mean, look at you, dragging your bones around like that? You can barely walk, let alone do something productive."
~Jim Kelly

"I want to learn a lot of new stuff over the summer and come back and show it off again."
~Brooke Przekurat

"A vacation is what you take when you can no longer take what you've been taking."
~Earl Wilson

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At **Executive Advantage**, we are committed to providing results-based business and management consulting, leadership development, and coaching support. We partner with business leaders to build healthy, well-functioning organizations, where goals are met and people thrive. We also partner with individuals to create professional (and personal) lives with clearer direction, improved results, and greater balance.

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