

Hi, everyone,

In today's Productivity Tip, we're going to talk about developing and clarifying your optimal work habits.

In this week's lesson, we talked about how focusing on your Unique Ability leads to greater productivity, forward momentum, and satisfaction in your work. Working within your Unique Ability and surrounding yourself with employees that are working in theirs is one of the keys to creating a self-managing and self-multiplying business.

But another important step in this process is getting clear on your most productive work habits and your natural working style. All of us have natural rhythms ... periods of high mental energy, periods of high physical energy, periods of high creative energy. To be as effective as possible, we should set up our daily activities so that they match up with these natural rhythms.

For example, my brain is sharpest in the early morning hours. I've always been an early riser, and I love the quiet periods without distractions in the morning. This is when I do my most focused work. On days when I'm not seeing patients, I schedule any essential writing, project development, or content creation activities into these early morning hours.

Around mid-morning is when I have the highest amount of physical energy, so this tends to be when I exercise. After spending several hours earlier in the morning on highly focused mental tasks, doing physical activity later in the morning provides me with a nice change of pace.

Early afternoons are good times for me to focus on "housekeeping" tasks, like responding to emails, planning, getting organized, etc. I also appreciate a break at this time of day. I might go outside and sit in the sun for a while or take a walk.

By late afternoon, I'm not generally in the mood for any activity that requires a lot of focus. This is when I will typically schedule meetings or phone calls, research or reading, or checking social media or email.

But natural rhythm is just one part of defining your optimal work habits. Work environment and physical considerations are two others.

For example, I prefer a quiet workspace. I don't typically listen to music, and I like to be in a peaceful, well-ordered environment. Both my home office and the office where I see patients reflect this, and they support my productivity and focus.

As far as my body goes, I've found that I prefer a combination of sitting, standing, and walking while working. In my home office, I have a sitting desk and treadmill desk, and I alternate between sitting and walking, with occasional periods of standing. In the office where I see patients, I do my in-person consults at a sitting desk and my phone and video consults at a standing desk.

I know that I do my best work when I'm neither too hungry nor too full. Early in the morning, I will typically have some coffee with cream before I start my focused work period. This is enough to tide me over, but not so much that it affects my focus. If I know I have a big chunk of work to do in the afternoon that requires more attention, I might have a lighter lunch to facilitate that.

This is what works for me. For you, it may be different. The key is to get clear on what your optimal work habits are, and design your schedule to reflect them. I've provided a worksheet to help you to do that. Make sure to check it out!

Okay, that's it for now. See you next time.