How to Improve Your Daily Productivity

Have you ever experienced how one day of slacking can negatively affect your entire week? If so, then I don't have to tell you the value of time in your legal practice. It is the measure of your compensation, a necessity when it comes to completing client tasks, and it directly relates to your law firm's profits.

Spent wisely, time can translate into increased earnings. Spent carelessly, it can keep you from growing your business, and even minimize your current profitability. That's why it is vitally important for you and your firm to operate in the most efficient and productive manner possible, the following are some strategies for helping you do just that:

1. **Minimize interruptions.** You are in the middle of writing a critical brief. The words are flowing out of you with such ease, that the brief is practically writing itself. Then, your cell phone alert lets you know that someone just commented on your social media post from the night before. What do you do? Unfortunately, far too many of us simply cannot resist the temptation to jump on social media. What is supposed to be a quick glance, turns into an entire hour of browsing, responding and watching politically charged videos. If that's not bad enough, when you go back to writing your brief, the momentum is gone. Now it is a laborious task that you have to drag your way through.Distractions are killers of productivity. Limit yours ahead of time by putting effective barriers in place. For example, make sure your administrative assistance is strictly screening calls or redirecting them, when appropriate. Also, turn off those unnecessary phone alerts. Trust me. There is no singing dog video in the world that is worth missing an important case deadline.
2. **Plan each day.** Planning is key to productivity. At the end of each day and the beginning of each week, take some time to think about the

tasks ahead of you and how to best tackle them. For some, this is accomplished with a simple to-do list. For others, detailed calendar blocking is more effective. Think about how you can most efficiently spend each hour of the day. Even if an unavoidable emergency keeps you from implementing your plan, the effort of thoughtfully planning your time will help make you more productive.

3. **Get organized.** How much time do you spend each day looking for a client number or calling the court to confirm a hearing time? What about that misplaced file or the office supply invoice? A disorganized office is an inefficient office, zapping your precious time with completely avoidable tasks. Let's say you bill at an hourly rate of $300. Twenty minutes of searching for a number or a document translates to $100 of lost earnings. Multiply that by several occurrences a day among several attorneys in your office. It starts to add up, doesn't it? There are numerous office organizational tools out there to help you create a systematic and streamlined office environment. (We'll talk about some of them next month.) An investment of time and energy now could pay off with higher profits later.
4. **Accurately track your time.** When you do get organized and start using your time more efficiently, make sure you are tracking it accurately and completely. If you are using an outdated, antiquated legal time tracking system, you are probably leaving earned money on the table. TimeSolv makes time tracking easy and effective, with convenient mobile capabilities, automatic syncing and budget settings. An effectual, innovative time tracking system can be the boost you need to boost your profits.

About Erika Winston:

Erika Winston is a freelance writer with a passion for law. Through her business, The Legal Writing Studio, she helps legal professionals deliver effective written messages. Erika is a regular contributor to TimeSolv and a variety of other publications.