



# PRODUCTIVITY

GET MOTIVATED, GET ORGANISED  
AND GET THINGS DONE

**GILL HASSON**

Bestselling author of *Mindfulness* and *Emotional Intelligence*



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*Harry, My clever boy.*





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# Introduction

**B**eing productive means making things happen and getting things done.

What being productive *doesn't* mean, though, is squeezing every minute out of every hour of every day to become some sort of productivity machine. Being productive doesn't mean working harder – it means working smarter; getting things done effectively and efficiently.

Do you want to get more done? Do you want to be able to fit more in? Or would you like to achieve more by doing less? Either way, what's stopping you? What's stopping you getting things done efficiently and effectively?

Perhaps you're doing too much. Perhaps you rush round in a state of panic; you've got too much to do and too much to think about. You can't think clearly; your head is full of what you're doing, what you haven't done, and what you've yet to do. You're certainly doing a lot, but you're not doing it efficiently.

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On the other hand, it could be that you're not doing enough. You have things you want to get done but you get stuck; you find it difficult to get started, to keep going and get things finished. You don't feel like you ever get much done.

It doesn't have to be like this!

Chapter 1 starts by encouraging you to think about what your reasons might be; why you might be finding it difficult to be productive and get things done. Whatever it is that's getting in the way of you being more productive, it can be overcome. Chapter 1 explains how the way you think – your attitude and approach – makes all the difference. You need a productivity mindset: persistence, determination, and a positive, open mind; a willingness to be adaptable and flexible.

But as well as a productive mindset, it's important to recognize that what you *don't* do helps determine what you *can* do. Chapter 1 also encourages you to identify commitments and chores that may be cluttering up your time and preventing you from getting on with the things you really want to do.

You might, though, feel that you *should* be able to fit it all in – other people seem to manage, don't they? Well of course, there's always someone else you know or hear about who seems to be getting so much done – who's able to fit more into their days than you ever thought possible.

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But that's their life, not yours.

If you look more closely, you'll find that productive people have set things up to succeed according to *their* skills, strengths, and abilities; *their* resources, interests, commitments, and obligations. And rather than working harder, they're working smarter.

You can do the same.

Chapter 2 explains the importance of identifying and drawing on your own skills, strengths, and abilities to help you to be productive; to get things done effectively and efficiently. Then, once you've looked at what's getting in the way and identified the attributes you already have that can help you be more productive, you can start getting yourself more organized. Chapter 3 tells you how.

You'll need to be clear about what it is that you want to get done – what areas and aspects of your life you want to be more productive in. Then, once you have a realistic idea about what, how much, and by when you want to get things done, the next thing to do is to plan how and when you'll do it.

Of course, when it comes to productivity and time management, there's nothing new about setting goals, planning, prioritizing, scheduling tasks, and having routines. But what *is* new is the approach described in this book to doing these things; to planning, prioritizing, etc.

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Throughout this book, the emphasis is on the fact that productivity is personal: it involves finding your own rhythm and getting things done in a way that works best for *you*; according to *your* circumstances, *your* skills and abilities, and the time, energy and resources *you* have.

You might, for example, be someone who needs to tackle difficult tasks and irritating chores head on. On the other hand, you might prefer to ease into your day. Chapter 3 encourages you to be aware of when might be the optimum time of day for you to be productive.

You'll need to remain flexible and open to changing how you do things, because no matter how organized you are – how well you plan your time and your tasks – and how efficiently and effectively you do them, challenges and setbacks happen. You then have to let go of your plans. And plan again.

Having begun to look at why you might be struggling to be more productive in Chapter 1, Chapter 4 looks at what to do about those difficulties. One of the most common challenges is just getting started on things. For many of us, it's easy to keep putting things off. But the guilt and anxiety that you feel while procrastinating are often worse than the effort and energy you have to put into whatever it is that you're putting off doing!

The thing is, waiting until you *really* feel like doing something is a sure-fire way for things *not* to get done. In fact, it's normal *not* to feel like doing something in the beginning. So, what to do? Chapter 4 has a number of