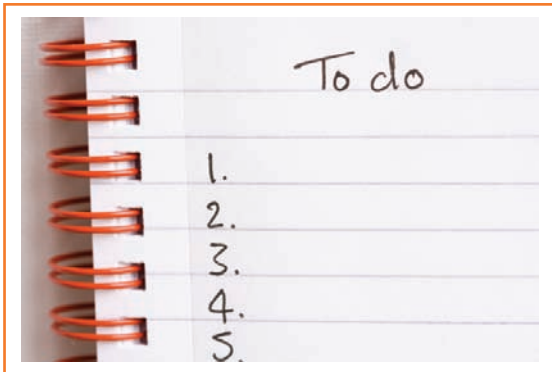


# Tips to Help Get Things Done

The art of getting things done involves focus and discipline. But even those without a strong ability to focus can benefit from techniques that help us direct attention appropriately. The following tips provide both mental and physical focus strategies to help you get important jobs and tasks done on time. So sit back, relax and consider trying some of the following!

## Organize Mental Clutter

- Collect your thoughts! Before you start a task, spend the time writing down your 'to-do' list so that one by one they don't invade your time to be productive. You may already have these lists on the go, in which case, review them and proceed accordingly.



- Clear your mental clutter. If a task takes less than a couple of minutes to do: Do It Now! If it takes longer: defer it to a more appropriate time. If someone else can/should do it: Delegate!

- In order to keep your mind focused you have to train your brain to stay on task. Although it might seem more efficient to be doing 10 things at once, it often creates careless errors and more stress.

- Practice other mental focusing techniques like meditation or mindfulness. If your mind is particularly scattered use guided meditation or relaxation CDs. After time, switch to your own unguided practice. These techniques train your brain to focus on an object of concentration (e.g., breath, visualizations, etc). Mindfulness is a practice of focusing on whatever you are doing in the present moment exclusively, e.g., drinking tea. Your job is to notice when your mind wanders and to bring it back in focus.

When your mind wanders bring it back to focus.



## Organize Physical Clutter

- Organize your workspace so it's FUNctional! If it's functional it should feel more like fun than work. Tasks flow much easier when it's clear where things belong or even where they are!
- Clear away all physical clutter that does not need to be in your line of sight. File it or trash it if it's not something to be done, deferred, or delegated.
- Use a daily agenda to hold all of your time-sensitive tasks. Try to refrain from putting anything in your daily agenda except for things that MUST get done on that particular day/time. The tendency is to overload our to-do lists and our actual time-sensitive tasks get buried or forgotten!
- Keep lists to remind you of what needs to get done, e.g., 1) an overall Master list of all the "projects" going on in your life 2) a Next-Actions list for all the to-do's that have to get done ASAP and 3) a Follow Up list for things you have delegated and want to keep on top of.

## Relax

- If you find yourself overwhelmed, take 5 deep breaths, breathing well into your belly, not just your chest. This often takes practice!
- Remove yourself from the stressful situations.
- Let an overwhelming feeling pass. The law of nature is that everything changes. Eventually, the feeling will subside if you sit back, take deep breaths, and find clarity
- Don't stress about being stressed!



Use a daily agenda to hold all of your time-sensitive tasks.