Take your Daily Vitamins and Prosper!

By Hugh Culver

Do you find yourself battling away at a bulging email InBox, forcing a smile through unannounced staff interruptions, shovelling a sandwich down between meetings or rushing to get some paperwork completed that you should have delegated to someone else years ago? If so you need to take your Daily Vitamins!

Any doctor worth their salt will tell you to take vitamins daily. It's the simplest way to compensate for a crazy-busy lifestyle and vagaries of life. And because the body can't produce the vitamins it needs we provide them through the food we eat, and the vitamins we take directly. So, what about daily 'vitamins' you could take at work to compensate for endless interruptions, emails and meetings that take you further away from your goals? What steps do you take ensure you are always progressing forward and not just treading water?

When I was revising our ReClaiming the Clock time management training program recently I wanted to create a 'vitamin' like formula that our clients could follow to ensure that every day they were moving forward, regardless of how crazy it got.

The 10/3/1 Daily Vitamins are my solution for people that find they are often saying: "the day is over and I have no idea where the time went" feeling. Take these everyday and you will be healthier, happier and have the smug feeling that you are the only one making progress in your office. Here's how they work.

Every day you have a sub goal: to take you vitamins. The vitamins will give you the planning, the completion and the learning that will keep you moving forward towards your goals. Once you start this 'healthy working' program you will see the benefits immediately!

10 minutes of planning

Nothing is more important than planning for gaining focus and building your confidence. This is your time to assess what needs to be moved forward from your long term goals and to address what is already on your Action Plan for the day. There are two planning periods in the week: every afternoon before leaving work to plan the next day, and every Friday afternoon to plan the next week.

Allow at least 10 minutes every day for each of these sessions and really assess each task before automatically transferring it to the next day/week.

3 important pebbles completed

When I interview high performing people they repeatedly tell me that every day they focus on getting at least three high priority tasks completed every day. The objective is to always find at

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least three items to complete that move your Boulders forward. Do this every day and you will feel like and appear like a hero!

1 system improvement.

Everyday find a better way to do some part of your work (or help someone else to do the same). In the spirit of continual improvement, this is crucial for creating progress. Rather than waiting until year end to debrief and seek improvement, do this every day and you will see huge wins!

Here are some examples of system improvement:

- Delegate a routine task that someone else could do at least 85% as well as you
- Learn a new keyboard shortcut or time saving tip for MS Outlook
- Take a typing lesson
- Create a better system for recording your commitments from meetings
- Create templates for routine tasks
- Limit your visits to email to four times/ day
- Audit your time for one day and notice where you could be more effective
- Help someone else to do their job better
- Set up MS Outlook Tasks to hold your Boulder Plan
- Organize your office to handle paper better
- Communicate to other staff your need for uninterrupted time in the AM

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