

9 top productivity busters: time management tips



Most of us have room to improve our productivity and avoid time vampires lurking around every corner, says Dawn Rasmussen, Pathfinder Writing and Career Services.

She lists the nine worst time-suckers threatening your productivity.

1. **IMs, emails and texts.** When you reply to every message as soon as it hits your screen, you take yourself off course and take time away from more important tasks.
2. **Repetitive emails.** Create templates for messages you send over and over again. You're wasting time rewriting the messages each time.
3. **Lost information.** You need a structured organizational system for all of your computer and paper files.
4. **Communication breakdowns.** Email doesn't convey tone and contributes to miscommunication, which eats up time with frustration, resulting in back and forth. When in doubt, go talk to someone in person or call.
5. **The Internet.** You may get on the Internet for a productive work reason, but soon you realize you don't know how long you've been on or what you've been doing. Place a sticky note on your desktop to remind you to focus on your task.
6. **Unstructured meetings.** Meetings that lack an agenda or have a leader who can't keep everyone on task accomplish less. Make a plan in advance to keep participants focused.
7. **Chatty colleagues.** If you spend too much time talking with colleagues, find a way to break away and take control of your work time.
8. **Other people's problems.** If you find yourself involved with other people's problems, teach them to help themselves instead. Coach subordinates, be honest with colleagues and offer solution suggestions to bosses.
9. **Too many commitments.** Learn to say no when you really don't have time for additional duties.

— Adapted from "[9 Worst Productivity Suckers](#)," Dawn Rasmussen, Careerealism.

Online resource: Learn four more ways to beef up your productivity [here](#).