

# Make More Time

How to grow a bigger brain in 10 easy steps, Part 8

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“Where do you find the time to do all the things you do?” people often ask me. I run a business, blog, write and speak, post on various social media sites, exercise, occasionally cook and bake, read and go to movies, attend conferences, spend time with my daughters, and travel on occasion. And, most relevant to this column, I come up with new ideas.

We cannot make more time. But we can find more time. When I decided to exercise, I simply started getting up 30 minutes earlier in the morning. I didn’t really like it, but I was serious about doing it. So, I got used to it. When I need to clear my brain to come up with solutions to problems, I rearrange my schedule so that calendar items that are not time-sensitive get pushed off a bit.

If you need to spend more time on strategy and innovation (which many business owners say they need to), here’s what I suggest:

- Spend a week keeping track of how you spend your time each day. Be honest and detailed. You’ll be sure to find less important or unprofitable activities that take up too many minutes.
- Commit to setting daily, weekly, and monthly goals and assign an “accountability buddy” (through a peer networking group, a virtual advisory board, or someone at your company).
- Set tight time limits on meetings, make sure you have an agenda, and stick to your limits. Show up on time and end on time.
- Similarly, set limits on how much time you will spend on social media and the Internet (unless it is directly related to your business success). Colleagues agree that it is one of the easiest ways to get distracted from work. That said, social media is critical to marketing success. If you find it is becoming too much of a drain, outsource or set specific times and time limits for “searching, posting, and exploring.”
- [Time block](#). At first, you may hate it. But the concept really works.
- Multitask if you can, but not so much that you lose focus or get distracted. For example, bring business magazines (yes, the paper kind!) to the gym with you and read on the treadmill. If you have a staff, make sure you are delegating as much as you can, freeing you up to grow your business.
- Take a day off each month as “thinking time.” Do not get sucked into daytoday activities or distractions.
- Most importantly, realize that time is ultimately limited, no matter how organized and committed you are.
- Learn to [say “no”](#) gracefully.

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