GETTING SH*T DONE

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ACHIEVING GOALS, BEING PRODUCTIVE AND GETTING STUFF DONE

One of the **biggest challenges** as an **online marketer** is staying **productive, motivated and getting things done**

It's hard for even the most motivated and productive person to stay focused when you're accountable to no one but yourself.

Procrastination is a real issue and with so many distractions in life it's hard to stay on top of your online business.

So this module will show you how to set goals AND achieve them. How to turn your dreams into reality.

How to plan effectively and make your plans happen. How to manage your time better and eliminate distractions.

And finally how to automate and outsource mundane tasks for higher productivity.

Ready to do this?

Read on...

SETTING GOALS AND ACHEIVING THEM

Have you **SET** for your **goals** for your **online business** and **life?**

And I don't just mean saying stuff like "I want to have an online business".

Or "I'd like to be rich".

Those aren't goals.

Those are just vague wishes and dreams.

And you will never achieve them because of their vagueness.

You need to be super specific and detailed about what you want to achieve.

And figure out how you'll do it.

As well as set deadlines to make them happen.

Otherwise you'll find yourself looking back in one, two, five and even ten years

wishing the same thing still but no further forward.

So here's how to turn your dreams into reality in 5 simple steps...

5 STEPS TO TURN DREAMS INTO REALITY

FROM DREAM TO REALITY IN 5 SIMPLE STEPS

1. Write your dreams down. They are now goals.
2. Work out what you need to do to achieve these targets (literally write down each and every task required to the minute level). You now have a plan.
3. Set REALISTIC deadlines on these goals. They are now targets to hit.
4. Take massive action on that plan every single day so you can hit your deadline.
5. Your deadline just came around and boom you've achieved your targets, hit your goals and your plan came good.

YOU'VE NOW ACHIEVED YOUR DREAMS

If somehow the plan didn't work out quite so well or you missed your targets then there's don't worry there's a step 6.

6. Re-evaluate what went wrong, set new deadlines and targets, and keep in working. You'll get there eventually.

Let's look at each step in more detail...

01 WRITE DOWN YOUR DREAMS TO TURN THEM INTO GOALS

Write down how you envisage your dream life.

A study by Massey University (Switzerland) established a direct relationship between goals, focus and self-motivation. People with clear goals have a much greater sense of purpose, and remain more focused and self-motivated.

What would you like to achieve?

Be SUPER specific.

How much money do you want to have in the bank?

What type of income do you want flowing in every month?

What things would you like to own?

What type of experiences would you like to have?

And make sure they are 'SMART"

S – Specific

M – Measurable

A – Achievable

R – Relevant

T – Time Bound
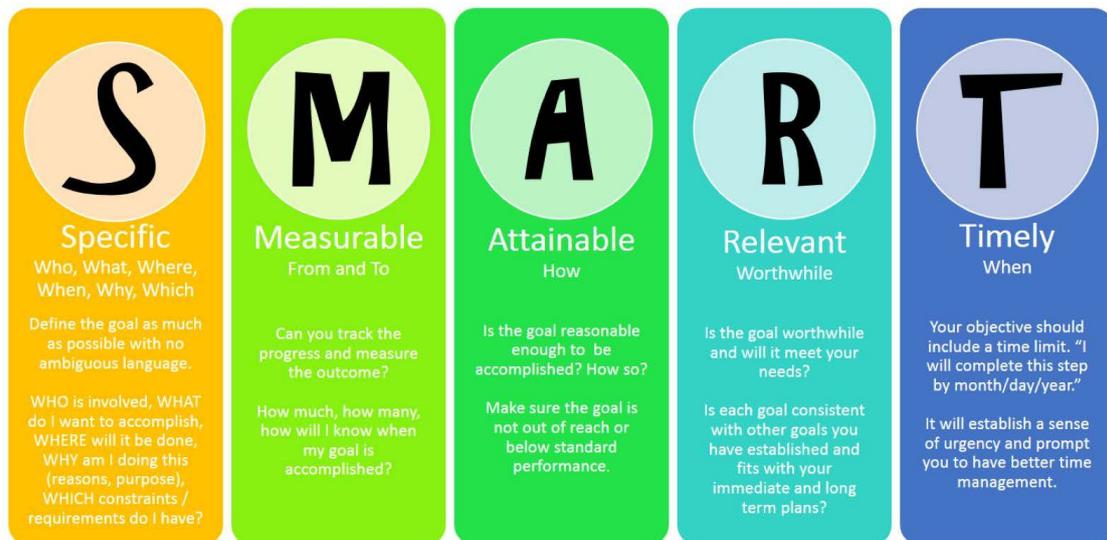
Image Source: NewFoundBalance

A tip I learned from Brian Tracy, time management and productivity expert author of Eat That Frog, is...

To write down your goals in past tense as if you've already achieved them.

Visualize yourself as having achieved them already.

This makes them seem more real and achievable.

And put them somewhere, or multiple places, where you can see them EVERY day.

I have a whiteboard that I see soon as I get out of bed in the morning.

This is a habit of the wealthy and successful and should not be ignored.

WORK OUT EXACTLY WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS

A person with clear goals wakes up every morning knowing exactly what he needs to do in order to grow his business.

He's able to track his progress, learn from his mistakes and make improvements where necessary.

On the other, if you don't have goals, every new day is full of anxiety and lots of wasted time.

Break the goals down into tasks.

Work backwards.

From big down to the minute.

So if your goal is

"To be living in a tropical island on Thailand by 2017"

You need to work out how much money you need to do that.

What you'll need to do to generate that money.

i.e. "Have a business that's already made $X and continues to make $Y every month"

What things you'll have to achieve on a monthly basis to make that money flow.

i.e. "Selling X digital affiliate products every week priced at $Y"

What tasks you'll have to do week by week to make the monthly goals happen.

i.e. "Drive X visitors to the affiliate sales page"

And what tasks you'll do day to day to make the weekly stuff happen.

i.e. "Website built, traffic coming from X, Y,Z, email list

capturing X% of visitors emails, email with affiliate offer going out to the X number of subscribers"

Break it down into the absolute minutest of tasks.

i.e. To get to that point you'll have to do all the getting started and tech stuff that is required to build a website.

This way you know EXACTLY what needs to be done.

And can easily do step 3.

WORK OUT THE EXACT TASKS THAT YOU NEED TO DO TO ACHEIVE YOUR GOALS

03 SET DEADLINES ON YOUR GOALS

Goals without deadlines are just wishes.

A goal needs a deadline to work towards or it will never happen.

Look at all the tasks you've defined in step 2.

Think about how long they will take you.

Some you will have to absolutely guess at because you've not done them before.

Always assume a task will take 25% longer than you anticipate.

And leave a buffer zone at the end of each week and month for anything

unexpected that you didn't account for.

There will always be tasks you forgot about.

Or didn't know about.

And always "life stuff" going on that means some days you just can't put the time in.

Assign each task an hourly time total.

Then work out how much spare time you realistically have each day / week / month.

And figure out by when you can REALISTICALLY get it done.

You should now have a date to aim for.

This is your deadline.

Write it down.

Tell the world about it so you're committed to it.

Set reminders on your calendar.

Not just for the date it's self but in the weeks and months leading up to it.

So you know it's approaching and how long you have left to achieve it.

I personally use Google Calendar with email reminders to my inbox to schedule out tasks.

I fill out the time slot with the activity name the week in advance.

So all I have to do each week is open the calendar and I can see at a glance what I'm doing and when.

The email notifications means I can't forget them either.

04 TAKE MASSIVE ACTION

Now the goals are defined.

The tasks needed to get them done mapped out

And the deadlines set.

That's the easiest part out the way. ;-)

Now the hard part of actually getting down to work starts.

You need to put your absolute all into these tasks every day.

Even if you only have an hour a day.

Make that hour count.

Don't slack.

Work like crazy to get the task you scheduled for that hour done.

You know EXACTLY what needs to be done as you've mapped it out in advance.

TAKE MASSIVE ACTION...

....NOW!

05 DEADLINE TIME

So come deadline time if you've stuck to your plan.

And worked on all your tasks when you said you would.

Then you should have hopefully hit your target.

Remember you gave yourself 25% extra time on each task.

YOU WON'T ALWAYS HIT YOUR DEADLINES SO ALLOW BUFFERZONES.

And set buffer zones to allow for anything you hadn't scheduled.

So if you've hit your deadline congratulations!

If not don't worry too much this isn't a disaster.

You're just going to figure out what went wrong and fix it.

See step 6...

RE-EVALUATE WHAT WENT WRONG

If you didn't hit your deadlines then evaluate what went wrong.

WHY didn't you hit them?

Not enough time?

Not enough action?

Got distracted?

Figure out where you went wrong,

And how you can remedy it.

Then work out again what still needs to be done.

Set new deadlines.

And don't make the same mistake you made last time

PLANNING

PLANNING is the **KEY**

Without a plan you're a headless chicken.

I touched on this in other sections.

You must map out your business from the back to the front.

So that you know EXACTLY what the end goal of it is.

And what you're trying to achieve.

So that you can work towards that end goal.

If you don't do that and start at the front then you've no idea what direction you're supposed to be going in.

Or what the aim is.

Or what you want to achieve.

So you get stuck, lost, and confused (trust me I know!)

We talked through how to map out your goals so you should have a good idea what you plan to do.

Make sure it's all scheduled out in advance and ties in with your end goals.

Ideally you'll know what you're working on for the next month in advance minimum.

ROAD MAPS

Have a very specific to do list mapped out for the next 30 to 90 days.

So even when there are times where you feel like you're grinding through without any results.

You'll be able to look back on the progress you made the next week to easily see that it wasn't all for nothing

It was all for a goal that you're working towards and will accomplish.

So besides keeping you from wasting your time by chasing trendy ideas, this strategy ensures you use what little time you have towards accomplishing your big-picture goals.

And, because it's only 3 months, ensures you don't get too overwhelmed by working with a year-long timeline.

TO DO LISTS

In his book Getting Things Done, renowned author and productivity guru David Allen discusses the GTD system for creating to-do lists.

It's a simple system that focuses on writing everything down and keeping your mind free. The GTD system has three parts,

Source: Getting Things Done

Archive list

List of things you might need one day but don't need immediately.

Current task list

A list of active tasks that need to be done. Every task needs to be written as an action item which should give you a clear guideline on what's next.

For example, instead of writing "Make my blog more secure", write "Ask Jim about the best security plugins he has been using".

The more precise your action item is, the better. Try rephrasing everything on your to-do list in a way that leads you to the next action. This small activity has a huge psychological impact.

Daily Task Folder

A folder for each of the next 31 days of the current month, plus 12 separate folders for the months to follow.

You can manage this whole system either on apps like Evernote or Google Keep (my personal favorite).

Every day you can pick up your current to-do list for the day and review the actions for that day.

If you think a task or a piece of information might be important, but not sure about it, send it to the archive list.

If you see an item that needs to be done later in the month or year, just move it to the relevant folder.

The remaining tasks on your list are current to-do tasks that have clearly defined action items.

Doing this activity every day for a few days will get the GTD system rolling for you.

Freeing up your mind from unnecessary clutter, and making it easier for you to focus on the tasks at hand.

PRODUCTIVITY, TIME MANAGEMENT & ELIMINATING DISTRACTIONS

I **struggle** with productivity for a long time

I used to spend the first 2 hours of my day:

Reading and replying to emails.

Looking at social media accounts.

And checking stats and analytics accounts.

The first 2 hours of your day are when you are most likely to feel motivated to work on your business.

And yet I spent it replying to mundane emails and Facebook notifications.

And looking at data that doesn't need to be looked at.

So many things would pop up in those emails and social media notifications demanding my attention.

I'd end up buzzing about doing small tasks here and there.

And putting out fires.

And afterwards I'd feel defeated and unmotivated.

And still have the main tasks of the day ahead of me.

Which was daunting.

And meant I often never did them.

Or put them off until "tomorrow".

When the same situation repeated it's self and big tasks weren't getting done.

Then I read Eat That Frog by Brian Tracey and realized I was doing it ALL wrong.

Source: Eat That Frog

He shows why you should start your day by taking on the biggest or most complex tasks first.

Because in those first 2 hours you're usually motivated and ready to work.

So can get them done quicker and easier.

And once those big tasks are out the way you feel like you've really achieved something.

And the smaller tasks like email and social accounts seem simple in comparison.

Do your biggest and most difficult tasks first.

Do not procrastinate on them.

The email and other tasks don't make you money.

The big picture stuff does.

DEFINE YOUR WORKING HOURS

Sounds boring, right?

One of the biggest perks of the internet lifestyle is the flexible work schedule it offers.

But that's also one of its biggest drawbacks.

When you tell your brain that you can work at any time and from anywhere, it loses focus and doesn't know when to actually get in the working mode.

A research discussed in the renowned book, The Paradox of Choice – Why More is Less, shows that when we have too many options in life, we're likelier to feel dissatisfied and unhappy with.

Why? Because our brain is always thinking of the opportunity cost, the "What if".

When you limit your choices, you make more concrete decisions.

Similarly, when you don't have a fixed schedule, your brain is unable to prioritize things.

As a result, you either end up doing very little work, or work 12 hours on the trot.

Studies show that people who follow fixed working hours feel much more in control of their business.

Despite the fact I could sleep until midday every day.

And my body would easily allow me too as I struggle to get to sleep at a reasonable time every night.

My alarm still goes off at 8am 6 days per week.

And I get up and crack on with work.

Because if I don't my day goes to sh*t.

And I wake up late feeling like I'm in a rush to get all the tasks scheduled done,

So I can get in my afternoon swim.

And have things finished for evening time where someone might want to go out for dinner.

Or something fun to do pops up.

And I end up having a rushed working day.

Where I do things quickly rather than properly.

Or don't get them finished.

And I become demotivated.

Sure it's great getting a bit more sleep every day.

But it has it's downsides too.

So I'm much better forcing myself out of bed at 8AM every day and giving myself plenty of time to get things done.

I feel better, I have a good routine, I get more done, and I feel happier about it even if I am sleepier.

ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

Not sure exactly what your distractions are yet?

If you want to find out if there's any online ones install the free app RescueTime onto your laptop, tablet, smart phone and any other connected devices.
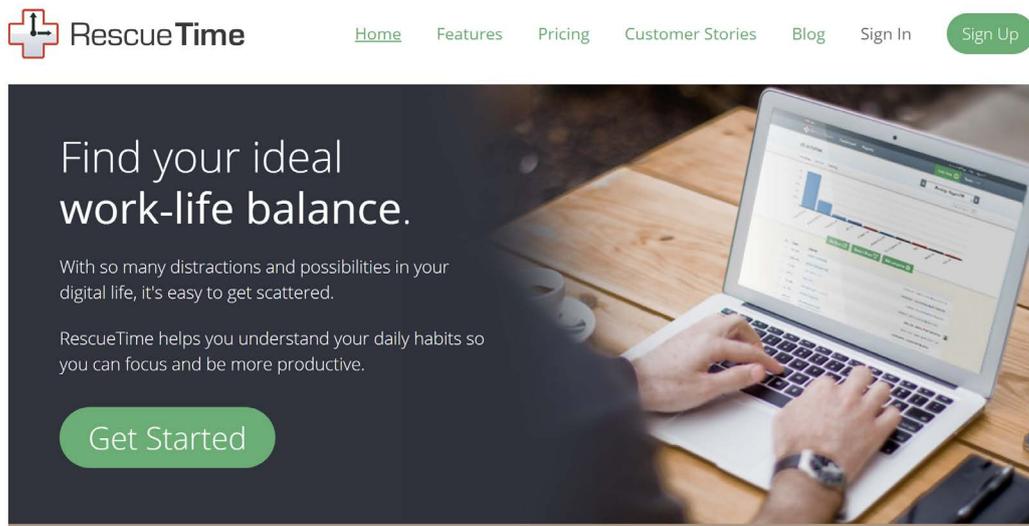
It will automatically record EVERYTHING you do on your devices.

From websites you visit, to apps you use, to programs you spend time with.

And at the end of the week it will tell you EXACTLY how much time you spent on each activity.

You might be shocked to find you're spending literally DAYS every week on social media or email or playing games.

And then you can work to reduce or eliminate them.

I get distracted by Facebook, Email and ChatApps.

So I use a Chrome addon called "StayFocused" to block any websites that I spend too much time on.
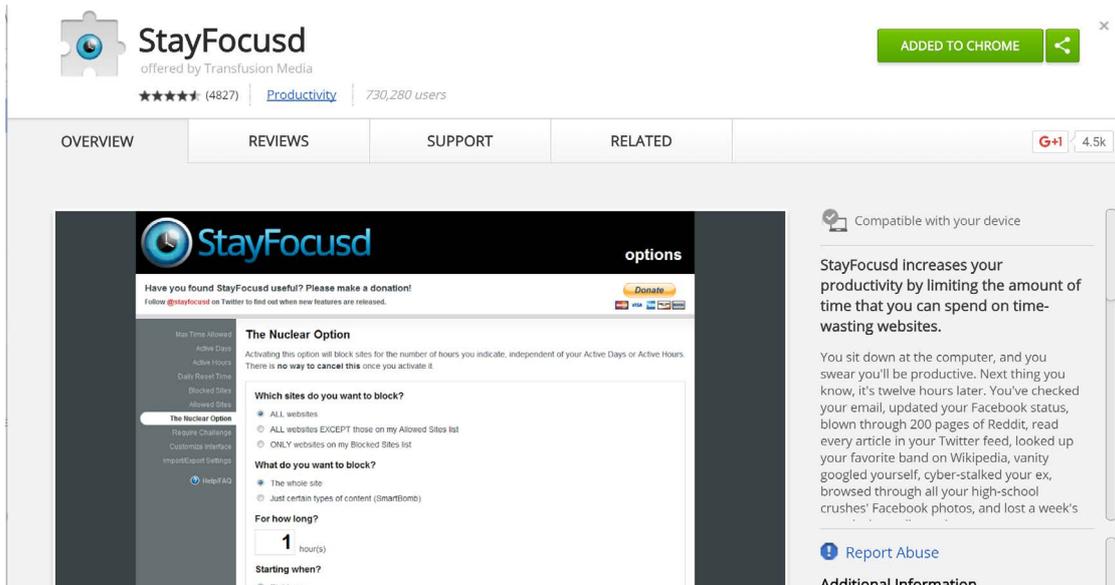
You don't have to block them completely but setting the limit to 10 or 15 minutes per day works well for me.

StayFocused won't let you visit that website after your time is up even if you try to.

With the ChatApps I uninstalled any unnecessary ones that weren't essential for me to communicate with close friends and family.

Turned off any notifications so only when I opened them did I see messages.

And logged out the others.

It's amazing by just having to log in I often won't bother if I'm trying to be productive.

I also leave my phone at home when I go to the coffee shop to work.

Or if I'm working from home I put it in another room in a drawer with the data and sound turned off.

I check email just once per day AFTER my main tasks are finished.

Never FIRST thing.
I know it's tempting.

As you think you might have missed something important over night.

Or there could be an urgent task in there.

But really how important is anything that we ever get sent?

No one sends life or death things to your email box.

And anyone who needs you for anything REALLY important has your number to call you.

And nothing in that email box can't wait a few hours until you've done your most important tasks.

Add in an email signature or auto-reply that tells people you only check emails at 3PM every day and if they have something important to call you.

PERFECTIONIST SYNDROME

You might not have heard the term "perfectionist syndrome" before, but you're possibly suffering from it.

This is one of the biggest reasons why many people, despite knowing enough to start an online business never do so

If you're suffering from this syndrome, you procrastinate everything and wait for the perfect time (which never comes).

You know affiliate marketing works, and people are making full-time passive income from it, but you still want to buy just one more eBook before starting your own site.

The origin of the perfectionist syndrome is fear.

Deep down inside, you fear failure.

AVOID PERFECTIONISM SYNDROME AT ALL COSTS

You fear embarrassment.
You fear financial loss.
You want assurances before starting something.

THAT'S NOT HOW BUSINESS WORKS.

And that is why the only cure to this syndrome is to actually start taking action.

And to make this easier for yourself, you need to follow the first six steps I've shared in this post.

Fear comes from uncertainty – when you don't know what's next.

And you can simply eliminate uncertainty (and fear) by planning.

But in order to plan, you need to have goals, which takes us all the way back to the second point in this post.

STOP READING AND BUYING SHINY OBJECTS

If you're like the average niche marketer...

You're most likely **subscribed** to **DOZENS** of **email lists** and **REGULARLY** receive **offers, notifications and messages** from **countless** other blogs

Plus, you follow all of them on Facebook, Twitter and every other social network as well.

And buy endless products promising the next big thing.

There's no harm in it, as long as you can prioritize your information intake.

This is where productive and successful internet marketers are different from you.

They identify their most important information sources, and shut off everything else.

They realize that they don't need to know every new research that comes up or every new blog post that someone has written.

You need to do the same.

PUT DOWN THE SHINY OBJECTS AND FOCUS ALREADY

The world won't stop spinning if you stop noticing.

A simple way to do that is to align every source of information with your goals.

Whenever you're tempted to read a new blog post, a new research or any other form of content, ask yourself if it contributes directly to any of your goals.

If it does, consume it. But if it doesn't, just move on.

Tim Ferris, author of The 4-Hour Work Week, is a renowned productivity expert.

He mentioned in his book how he managed information overload by completely quitting T.V and News.

Instead, once a week he would ask any of his friends if anything big had happened in the last week.

Even if you don't go to that extent, here's a simple exercise you can do to cut off unnecessary information from your life.

Identify where you spend most of your time on the web and list them down on a piece of paper. Email, Facebook, Twitter and random browsing are likely sources.

Now look at each source and ask yourself if it is contributing to your goals in any way.

Give an importance score (1-10, 1 being most important) to each information source.

Eliminate anything that's below 6.

Now sort the remaining sources according to importance and allocate a time duration for each of them. For example, you could allocate 15 minutes to Facebook.

Now instead of randomly accessing these information sources, schedule them at the end of your work day or distribute them into multiple slots.

Make a conscious effort not to exceed any of the slots.

Limiting your information intake and taking control of your time is one of the most important steps towards achieving your goals and getting things done.

AUTOMATION AND OUTSOURCING

Many of the manual, low level, tasks we do in online business can be automated

And the ones that can't be can usually be cheaply outsourced.

Look at every task you do and figure out if there's a way you can automate it or outsource it within your budget.

And I know if your budget is low it seems like it wouldn't be possible to outsource.

But you'd be amazed at what people will do for $5.

Doing business online is the default for almost every single business that exists… whether it's considered an "online business" or not.

Social media management and posting, email lists, staying on top of trending topics, and even keyword research are things that can all be done with free or paid software.

For example, posting randomly to Twitter and other social media channels usually isn't something that directly generates revenue for any business

But it does create a nice brand resonance and build loyalty among your existing fan base.

But something like Buffer only costs $10 per month plus time it takes to set up.

And once the setup's done, it keeps posting to social media for you, without any active involvement from your part.

When you automate and outsource the low level tasks it free's you up to work on the high level ones.

The ones that make you money.

You can spend all your time doing the tasks which will make you $5 p/h if you are lucky.

Or doing the $100 p/h income tasks.

It's up to you.

AUTOMATE AND OUTSOURCE THE GRUNT WORK

Tasks that are easily automated or outsourced:

- **Social media posting** (Buffer, HootSuite, Meet Edgar)
- **Email marketing** (Aweber, AWProTools, Getresponse etc)
- **Content Creation** (Hire Writers)
- **Checking Emails** (Cheap hourly VA)
- **Image Design** ($5 on Fiverr.com)
- **Research** (Hire researchers on Odesk.com)

THE 80/20 RULE

You've heard of the 80/20 RULE right?

Also known as the **Pareto principle,** the 80/20 rule says that for almost every event, 80% of the results come from 20% of the causes.

With extensive testing, several management experts have come to the conclusion that this rule applies to almost every aspect of business and life.

You can apply this rule to your current to-do list as well.

For example, if you pass all your information sources (blogs, Facebook groups, etc.) through this filter, you'd realize that 80% of the most valuable information comes from 20% of the all your information sources.

The same applies to the different tasks you perform related to your blog.
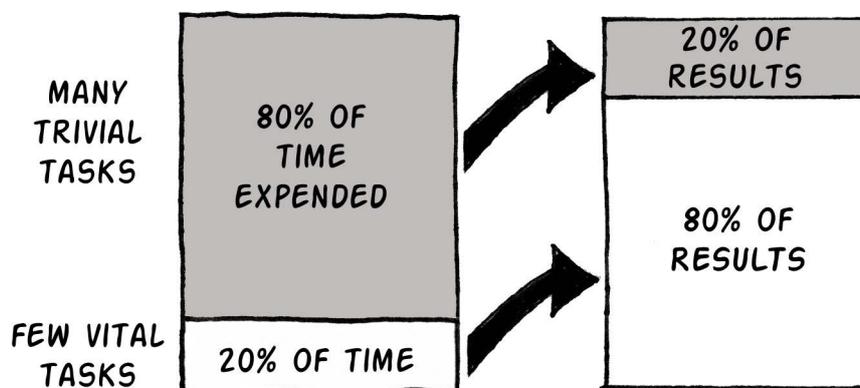
Image source: QuickSprout.

Once you identify the 20% activities that bring the 80% results, your job is to scale them and cut off the rest of the activities.

This will help you focus on the things that have a direct impact on your life and your business, and give you a sense of direction.

You can learn more about applying this theory to your business in this detailed post

Apply this in all aspects of your business:

- To do list
- Traffic sources
- Income sources
- Content
- Customers

Examine the data to see which tasks, traffic sources, products, customers content and so on are actually bringing in the big results.

And then eliminate (or at least focus less on) the others and focus only on that top 20%.

When you focus more on the stuff that brings in the big results your business and income grows fast.

WRAPPING THINGS UP

By setting SMART goals you can much easier achieve them.

Make them specific and time bound and soon dreams become reality.

By planning more effectively using road maps and intelligent to do lists you can actually get your plans complete.

And by eliminating distractions, shutting out anything that sucks up your time, and focusing on the high value tasks you can get more done in less time.

Now you're ready to become a highly productive individual who gets sh*t done!

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