

Giles Cleverley's 67 time saving tips

Here are some helpful tips on how I think all companies and individuals can save time:

1. Delegate not abdicate - ultimately you will be delegating everything eventually, you do however need to prioritise the tasks you do, delegate the easier stuff first, eventually moving with the harder, trickier things that need additional skills and training

DO IT	DELEGATE IT	DITCH IT

2. Prioritise the important - don't waste time on the unimportant, these can be rushed if required, ensuring your time is spent on the important tasks.

3. Plan your day before you start - default diaries are great for this, through completing a routine list of jobs you can literally save hours every day. The knack is to concentrate and complete one job at a time.

4. Batch activities - if activities are similar in nature this will enable you to process in one sitting, getting in the 'flow' can massively increase output.

5. Work charts - weekly or monthly - these are for the team, so people know exactly what to focus on. No excuses for time wasting.



6. Get it out the way - Act straight away on the small quick tasks, so for example on phone messages and call-backs. Get them out of the way or your to do list will be getting bigger and bigger.
7. Practice saying NO! – Suggest someone who could
8. Eat the ugliest - if you have some awkward things you do not really want to do, or awkward calls to make, get them out of the way first and start with the ugliest - a great book on this is called 'eat that frog' by Brian Tracy.
9. Leave me alone! - Good to have a do not disturb sign, or certain times of the day when people know not to disturb you.
10. The world is flat - make the most of technology, there are thousands of new software and apps developed every year, immerse yourself in them, from google docs to apps that save you time and money.
11. Email time cruncher - never have email pop-up's, so every time an email comes in it distracts you, only look at email twice a day. People can spend pretty much most of the day wasting time keep checking emails, you do not need to be on it every minute, and checking every 10 minutes? Block out two or three periods to check them.
12. Communication is evolving - with technology like zoom and Microsoft teams you can voice and conference call for little or no cost, so why waste time travelling to a meeting. I still think it is important to meet people face 2 face, but if it is just catching up, then you could have up to 20 meetings a day via videocall compared with a few in person.
13. Use your phone only when on the move - if you have calls to make within a day, but that are not time sensitive, make them on the move, in the car, or when your stood in a queue. Also making sure you have emails on the move, so you can check them when on the go.
14. Schedule routine tasks - if you always send similar emails on a weekly or monthly basis, there are lots of free software available to auto send (usage policies usually apply) things like mailchimp or hoot suite are the better known.
15. Call people - often a quick call is 1-3 minutes, also it shows the personal touch and calls can't be misconstrued. Often emails need to be proofread and checked. However, emails are good for keeping reference and paper trails.
16. Be the initiator – If you are calling people, make sure you call them, you will then make sure the call starts and finishes on time. Also make sure if you have a meeting, try and get near you to save travel time.
17. You can make more money, not time – if a cleaner costs £15 an hour, but you earn £50, never clean again!! How many other things? Cleaning windows, fixing the house, painting etc.
18. STOP WATCHING THE NEWS – this is wasted time, listening to others doom and gloom, focus on you!



19. Don't send unnecessary emails - messages like 'thank you' are a waste of time, if you know the person and already have built rapport with them, this is just wasting both of your time.
20. Learn shortcuts - keyboard shortcuts, 'function keys' and knowing the built-in shortcuts in the software programmes you use can save you hours every week.
21. Improve your typing speed - learn how to touch type, this will add minutes to every hour you are at your desk. There are also lots of fun ways, I learnt to type using the game 'typing of the dead'. There are also hundreds of online 'learn to type' programs for all levels of typists.
22. Standardise common tasks - if you have routine tasks that need to be performed, try and standardise them as much as possible. Also set times in your default diary to perform them, if they are not tasks that need creativity, then try and bunch them together.
23. Time it – If you dislike a task (unloading the dishwasher for example) six minutes won't get the chore off your plate, it will make it seem like less of a burden.
24. Focus your attention on one thing - start the task, do not stop until it's complete. Many people think multi-tasking and being busy is productive, however it has been proven in multiple studies that it is far more productive to give your full attention to one task until you complete it, then start the next.
25. Overanalysing - this can be the real time burn, procrastination is a waste of time, either get stuck in and complete the task, or do not do it, pass it to someone else to complete or decline. People will not thank you for reneging on a promise. Often if you have not got the answer straight away, park this for a week, you will be amazed how your subconscious can come up with the solution when left unhindered and under no pressure to come up with an immediate fix.
26. Stop procrastinating - some things are good to think about before you jump into them, however often tasks that you end up doing, if you had just done them to begin with, you would have completed it ages ago. Dealing with things when they are smaller is easier and usually saves time.
27. Embrace traditions – Regularity means you don't waste time thinking of new things to do. Such rituals also build stronger families as you develop special things you do together.
28. Audio books and music - often if you are struggling with finding the time to read or watch training videos, you can listen to them instead when driving, walking the dog, running, whatever tasks you do every day.
29. Train and test your memory - random memory exercises and training your brain to remember more can really save time on looking things up or asking others.



30. Templates - create a bank of generic letters, emails and documents, saving people lots of time having to create new ones each time.

31. Meeting templates - make sure you have template and agendas for all meetings, with pre-arranged times, that are never exceeded.

32. Set time periods - set yourself goals of time, give yourself deadlines that you must meet, you will be amazed how much you accomplish setting and meeting mini deadlines.

33. Deadlines - give yourself start and finish times. Knowing you must finish at 6pm for example will make you focus on completing a task by that time. This can be difficult to begin, however stick to it, it will be worth it.

34. Spend extra time today to save time tomorrow - what time consuming tasks do you have, that might take a while to break down to smaller chunks, or delegate to others?

35. Buy in bulk - if you buy things like stationery and consumables frequently, buy them in bulk annually. This will not only save time but buying in bulk will be more cost effective also.

36. Healthy lunch - having a light healthy lunch will stop you from feeling sleepy and lethargic in the afternoon. Small snacks throughout the day can keep your sugar levels balanced, meaning your brain will be motivated and intuitive to the tasks in hand.

37. Quality and quantity - you need to balance out which tasks need your full attention and time, if they do not have to be completed within a time frame, then focus on other things, or try and outsource them. (Stephen Covey's time quadrant is excellent for this)

38. Avoid perfection - perfection is usually never attainable, something can always be done better, giving your all is the main thing. No one is perfect and no one expects you to be. If you strive too much for perfection, your output will reduce and you will end up wasting a lot of time and end up unhappy as you will feel as though you never achieve anything.

1. **PERFECTION = PARALYSIS**

39. Don't sit at your desk all day - this might sound strange, but it's good to have breaks to recharge and refocus your brain. Once you sit back down your brain will work more efficiently. Nap. It might not seem productive, but taking a nap when your run-down will make up the hours later in productivity.

40. Get Outside – Spend more time in the garden or walking round near your office, it gives your mind time to think and refocus.



41. Stand-up - if you make a lot of calls at your desk, try and stand-up. This simple thing will shorten the call, through making you less likely for idle chit chat - get straight to the point!
42. Map everyone's office - this may sound silly but knowing where everything is can potentially save lots of time. Especially if you're trying to find things in others colleague's offices that may be absent.
43. Give things a home. Time spent hunting for things is wasted time!
44. Keep it separate - work and personal documents and activities on a computer should be tagged separately. This reduces confusion, not only from yourself, but also your colleagues.
45. Clear out old addresses - why clutter up your email and/or phone with old unneeded data. Delete them, it reduces mix ups and saves time searching.
46. Updated files - always keep your files up to date, every six months I recommend have a good clear out, I always advise compressing and backing-up anything older than a year. You can always go into an archive and get it back. Why have lots of old receipts and data that have since been replaced with new relevant data.
47. Dual screens - having two or three screens will save lots of time in switching programs and apps. It will reduce the need for printing documents as you can take from past to current documents, it also keeps you in flow rather than minimising screens and reopening programs.
48. Social media and games - the time murderer!! It is so easy to aimlessly waste time on these. Social media should be a crucial part of any companies marketing; however, it is important to have a schedule and an exact target. Have a set time block every day or every other day to check and update. Use tools and apps like 'Hootsuite' to schedule your next quarter.
49. Do not do things twice - often if you want to post blogs to various online mediums, there will usually be a software company that has invented something for you to click a button and automatically upload to all at the same time, and this can save you lots of time. Do check that links work though, linked in (for example) doesn't like links generated from third party posting software.
50. Stay calm – I love Warren Buffets quote:

- “Rule one. Don’t sweat the small stuff..... Rule two. It’s all small stuff!”
51. Ask for help if you're confused. It's usually the quickest approach to solving a problem.
52. Schedule fun and rewards – This is what you're doing it for, make sure the fun stuff is planned, it's important!!



53. Sleep less – a simple way of gaining more time, you don't need 8 hours sleep, as long as you don't eat at least 3 hours before bedtime, your body will actually be recharging your batteries, rather than spending the sleep time burning the food and not recharging, there are lots of other benefits, but these are quick methods.

54. Keep it simple stupid - when planning and communicating with others, just stick to the point. Why write a ten-page essay when 10 bullet points will suffice. When planning for you - bullet points are fine too.

55. Do one thing at a time – Focus on one thing, get it done, properly, then move to the next task. Multitasking eats hours.

56. Always ask - why spend time finding out yourself, use others knowledge. Also clarifying things with others will make sure you don't waste time doing the wrong things, or things that are not required.

57. Clean your desk - try and clear your desk every day. This will stop you from mentally being bogged down also. It makes it much easier for you to start work the next time too.

58. Problems lose and waste time - ensure whenever your colleagues and employees have issues, they are firstly detected, but then resolved sooner rather than later, it will take people away from work, also will hugely affect their motivation.

59. Match the task to the skill - learn to love getting in the flow of a slick routine. Completing similar tasks will get you much more efficient and increase your knowledge in those areas. Remember tasks that are repeated, will be mastered.

60. Say no - don't become the person that gets dumped with all the awkward stuff, also if people trust you will get things done, they may be inclined to pass activities they are finding difficult or are stuck on, don't be afraid to say no, even offer them to talk it through and help get them get back on the right course.

61. Know your end target - by understanding your end goal, you can normally reduce wasted time on taking a longer journey. For example, making a telephone call, if you know what you want from the call, you will be much more focused on the result. Goals and mini goals are key.

62. Know what you want - similar to goal setting but writing down an actual 'by when' date can really focus you. Forward thinking goals, e.g. By 1st of January, I will weigh 180lbs, not I will lose weight!

63. Avoid the pointless - this might sound harsh, but avoiding pointless meetings, calls or emails will save a lot of time and build trust.

64. Fingers and pies - reduce the number of ventures your involved in, it's great to have your fingers in lots of pies, but too many can end up taking your focus from anyone. You don't want the whole house of cards coming crashing down. Super productive on too many activities will create lag, this slows you down.



65. Routine - this can be the number one-time saver, routines in everything, ordering the same drink at the bar to favourites on your TV box – So many big names often wear the same clothes so it saves the time of decision making. Think of Steve Job's attire!

66. Journals - having a journal can save so much time in the long run and it's great to have all these things in one place, especially if you discuss pricing with someone and then need to check back months later. It is always great for understanding where you waste time.

67. Honesty - just be straight with people why beat around the bush? If you have too much on, ask for help, but don't sugar coat things, it can all be worked out.

Always strive for the next upgrade - improve your skills and never stop training to get to the next level. The more I learn, the more I realise how little I know.

