



Why Is Elon Musk So Productive? Here's How He Gets More Work Done Than the Average Person

Description

It's hard to deny it: Elon Musk, love him or hate him, has one of the most impressive track records of any businessperson alive.

In less than two decades, he's managed to disrupt the entire auto industry with an EV revolution that has turned a small spark of an idea (**Tesla**) into a car company valued at US\$1 trillion. He's managed to launch over 1,740 satellites through SpaceX. And somehow, between making electric cars and launching satellites, he digs holes and makes infrastructures with his *other* company, The Boring.

As if that weren't enough, he also has six kids. Yes. *Six*: a set of twins, a set of triplets, and a baby. Let that sink in for a moment.

How does he do it? How does he lead three major companies without getting burned out? Let's take a look at his top productivity tips to see what we can learn.

Prioritize

In order to use time effectively, Musk focuses less on things that don't matter (such as the media) and more on things that do (product development and research). In his words:

"Focus on signal over noise. Don't waste time on stuff that doesn't actually make things better."

Elon Musk

To prioritize effectively, try to identify your "A1" for the day, with an "A2" and an "A3" to give you a long-term perspective. If a task falls outside of your A1— a distraction, interruption, a new opportunity — ignore it. This will help you focus on what matters, rather than dividing your attention and fragmenting your day.

Long, uninterrupted time to think

For years, a rumour spread that Musk broke his day into five-minute chunks. Yes, for whatever reason, everyone believed that Musk's entire day was composed of five-minute blocks, during which he answered emails, took calls, or did whatever you can do in five minutes.

Then in 2018, Musk responded to the rumour on [Twitter](#). And he revealed a habit that's much more difficult to pull off.

"I definitely don't do this 5 minute thing. Need to have long uninterrupted times to think. Can't be creative otherwise."
Elon Musk

The keyword there is *uninterrupted*. That's a radical word for an era that's so accustomed to digital distractions.

The second keyword is *think*. I almost want to replace this with *contemplate* or *ruminate*, as those seem more appropriate, but I think his point is clear enough. To stay productive, Musk doesn't run from task to task. He sits, he thinks, and he doesn't let other things interrupt him.

Some productivity gurus swear by the five-minute rule (or the law of "breaking your day into chunks"). If it works for you, great. For me, I think this rule is a surefire way to burn yourself out. Instead of doing small tasks in quick bursts, focus deeply on a single purpose for an extended period of time.

Maintain a high pain threshold

Finally, if you're going to be productive, you have to accept the reality of pain. As Musk says:

"Starting a business is not for everyone. Number one, I'd say, is to have a high pain threshold."
Elon Musk

Productivity is like training a muscle. It grows to the degree that you rip it. You might start with a low pain threshold. But the more productive you are, better yet, the more you see yourself as productive, the more work you'll get done.

Bottom line

Elon Musk may seem like a super human, but you know what? He only has 24 hours in day — the same as both you and me. What truly makes Musk different, regardless of his quirky habits, is his ability to focus. He brings the utmost concentration on his tasks, bracketing out distractions, and it's *that* reason above all else that helps him get more work done than most people.

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