



Proven Productivity Method: Top Six Priorities

Are you like me searching for ways to improve your productivity? In talking with Admins all over the world, I've learned that we are constantly looking for more innovative ways to get things done. Although there are many clever apps and software programs that claim to save us time, I've learned that there are some productivity tips that have been proven over time.

The key to reaching high levels of performance and productivity is for you to develop the lifelong habit of tackling your major tasks first thing each morning. In many of my time management and productivity classes, I share the story about Charles Schwab and Ivy Lee.

Ivy Lee was a well-known efficiency expert. He learned that Charles Schwab, president of Bethlehem Steel over 100 years ago, was interested in improving his management team's efficiency. He approached Schwab and told him that he could increase his team's productivity if he would allow Lee to spend just 15 minutes with each team member. Lee told Schwab that he could send him a check for whatever amount he felt the outcome was worth. Schwab found this interesting and hired Lee.

Lee met individually with each member of the management team. He simply told them this: "I want you to promise me that for the next 90 days, before you leave work, you will make a list of the six most important things you have to do the next day and number them in the order of importance."

That was it! Each executive simply needed to check off each item after they finished it. Then they were asked to go to the next important item. If all six items were not completed by the end of the day, they were asked to put it on the list for the following day.

Each executive agreed to follow Lee's instructions. After three months, Schwab studied the results. It had an amazing productivity impact on his team. He was so pleased with the results that he sent Lee a very substantial check.

Here's the challenge. If Schwab, one of the smartest businessmen of the time, was willing to pay a great deal of money for this simple advice, what would be the harm in us following this for 90 days?

Your action item is to determine at the end of each day your top six items that need to be completed. Prioritize the items in order of real importance. The next morning, start working on number one and stay with it until it's done. Then go to number two and so forth. If you can't finish everything on your list, don't worry. At least you will have taken care of the most important things without getting distracted by items of less importance. Commit to doing this for 90 Days.