



100 of The Best Time, Energy and Money Saving Tips for the Home-Based Entrepreneur

TIME

"How you spend your time is more important than how you spend your money. Money mistakes can be corrected, but time is gone forever."

1. Make the most of today's audio technology. One of the greatest opportunities to leverage your time can be created by purchasing an iPod, MP3 player or CD Discman.

You can add hundreds of hours of learning to each year by downloading files and purchasing programs on CD. While performing daily tasks around your home like preparing meals, doing dishes, yard work, etc., or driving to and from work, you can learn from the greatest mentors and masterminds of our time.

2. When you place a call to someone and they're not available, leave a detailed message.

Telephone tag is a great time waster. When you leave a detailed message with a specific request, your answer may be delivered to you with one return call.

3. Concentrate on one thing at a time. You may think you can do three things at once, but you can't. I've been guilty of this superhero syndrome myself. I'd play a tape and read a book at the same time thinking I was practicing good time management, only to end up going back to the book to re-read it and listen to the audio a second time.

4. Enforce the 'Touch It Once' rule. While it's in your hand or on your screen, decide immediately what action step to take. Deal with it, delegate it or dump it on first contact.

5. Before saying 'yes' to anything, first ask yourself, "Will this bring me closer to my goal?" If saying yes doesn't serve to benefit you, reconsider.

6. **Delegate:** Make a list of all of your responsibilities, from changing the toilet paper roll to writing proposals for clients. Leave no stone unturned. Once you have everything written out in front of you, select the responsibilities you can delegate to someone else and then, assign them.

You are the founder and CEO of *You Inc.* and it's your responsibility to run your business as efficiently and profitably as possible. If the CEO is doing the job of the janitor, mailroom clerk and equipment technician, business isn't going to go anywhere fast and you're going to have one very frustrated and tired CEO on your hands.

If you're spending a good deal of your time performing business activities that aren't making you money, re-assign the responsibilities. For example, if you're a professional photographer and you're spending more time setting appointments, responding to phone and e-mail inquiries, preparing quotations and trying to manage your financial records, you're going to have



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a reduced amount of time to perform the actual service of taking photographs and molding them into beautiful, lucrative pieces of art.

By enlisting (or bartering) the services of an assistant, bookkeeper and housekeeper, you will be able to create more time for yourself to perform moneymaking activities.

7. **Leverage:** What is one thing you're doing that is bringing you mediocre results while consuming your time and wearing you down, that could be doubled, tripled or multiplied 100 times with the help of someone else?

If you're trying to promote and sell a service or product by yourself, what could your impact be if you enlisted the help of others to promote your offerings? By enlisting the help of others, you can extend your reach and take the weight of doing it all by yourself off of your shoulders.

8. **Automate:** If you're still putting out a manual newsletter or ezine, consider subscribing to an autoresponder service. This will shave hours off your week and again help you focus your attention on bigger issues. [Constant Contact](#) and [KickStart Cart](#) are two great providers.

If you're advertising by handing out business cards, mailing brochures and paying for newspaper ads, consider creating a website for yourself. A professionally-designed web site (and a smart Internet marketing strategy) will bring clients to you instead of you looking for them.

9. **Dump:** This may be a tough one, but if you've had something sitting on your desk for months and you haven't done anything with it yet, you likely never will. Go through your stacks of papers and pages of e-mails and if you deem they're not absolutely critical to your business, get rid of them.

If you think there may be a use for them some day, create a separate folder and put these items aside for future reference. Don't use your inbox or a corner of your desk as a storage place. As the piles grow, so will your stress levels.

10. Track your time and see where it goes so you can make decisions based on what you've learned. If you notice that you're spending the equivalent of two hours a day reading e-mail, it's time to take drastic action and put some structures in place to reduce this non-revenue-generating task.
11. Work on one activity at a time. Focus your attention on the task at hand and get the job done efficiently and effectively. Trying to do two or ten things at once leaves a whole lot of unfinished work that usually results in less than ideal quality, and contributes to confusion, overwhelm and avoidable stress.
12. Create systems and structures. Dedicate certain days of the week or hours of the day to specific tasks. Starting each day with no direction results in lost time, wasted efforts and ultimately, missed opportunities and lost revenue.

Each minute you spend planning, saves you nine minutes of execution.



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13. If you identify a new task you need to perform, decide what you need to drop or delegate to create the time to allow for this new task. Follow the rule: If you add something, you must delete something. Just like budgeting income.
14. Give yourself a time restriction to complete specific tasks. For example, if you allocate one hour to telephone follow-up with leads, you will be much more attentive of your time and focused in your communications. Try this, you'll be surprised at how easy it is to focus your time and increase your efficiency.
15. When making a call, keep it short and to the point. Plan what you're going to say ahead of time and consider writing down the major points you want to cover on a sheet of paper so you can check off each one as it's covered.
16. Create regular periods of down time every 90 -120 minutes. Your brain is craving a break by then, according to time management experts. Do something fun and you'll return to work rejuvenated and inspired. What kind of fun mini-activity can you create for yourself today?
17. I don't want to hurt your feelings, but you must know the truth -- you're not super human. If you're accepting every invitation, jumping on every opportunity and adding to your "to do" list quicker than you can say "Jiminy Cricket", **you will crash**. Take a step back, smell the roses and re-assess. Do you honestly have to do it all and do it all now?

One of the secrets to success is to know how to work smarter, not harder.

Working 14-hour days does not make you any more successful than the enlightened business owner who knows how to get the same amount of work done in 8 hours or less.

18. Save your computer work often and create off-line back-ups regularly. One unexpected power outage or hard drive crash and everything you've done is gone ... forever.
19. Attend a speed-reading class. The average person reads at about 200 words per minute and entrepreneurs can read anywhere from two to six hours a day. Imagine how many free hours you can add to a year by developing this timesaving skill. My favorite resource for reading faster is [PhotoReading](#).
20. Record activities using one tool (Day-Timer, pad of paper, Palm Pilot, etc.) Your mind is best used for the big picture rather than all the details. The details are important, but manage them with the pen. Writing things down helps you to more easily remember all that you need to accomplish and helps you prioritize your tasks.
21. Make a list of the activities you need to complete then assign each one a number indicating importance. Follow the list in a priority sequence.
22. Delegate household tasks to family members, or if possible, hire a housekeeper. Your time is money. You can make "x" number of dollars serving clients or selling products or make zero dollars while vacuuming the carpets and cleaning out the kitty litter.



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23. Poor time management can originate from dysfunctional organization such as:

- Constantly changing priorities
- Vague objectives
- Non existence of deadlines
- Unclear responsibilities
- Faulty excuses
- Poor use of tools

Which of these apply to you and what can you do to correct them?

24. Walk. Don't Run. Rushing through your work creates errors and oversights which means corrections are required. Take your time and do the job right the first time.
25. Create "white noise" to drown out distractions. A fan in the room. Instrumental music in the background. Sound masking systems available for purchase.
26. Set ground rules and 'business' hours. Let people know your hours of operation and set clear ground rules that you are not to be disturbed during these times.
27. Don't pick up the phone every time it rings or read an e-mail as soon as it arrives. Check your mail two or three times throughout the day and return calls and e-mails at a time you have set aside for this activity.
28. How much time do you waste each day doing the four R's?
- Redoing
 - Reacting
 - Repairing
 - Repeating

What changes can you make today to stop this from happening?

29. Learn to say no. It may not be easy at first, but it is necessary. You can't be everything to everyone and you'll never get your own needs met by being pulled in different directions by others. If the activity takes you away from your goal and sets you back, decline gracefully.
30. Discipline yourself. Be strict, focused, and punctual, yet flexible.
31. Get organized. Keep your paperwork, supplies, and workspace neat and orderly. A lot of time is wasted looking for correspondence, pens, and important phone numbers.
32. Enlist the help of an intern. Most colleges and high schools offer intern programs for their students. You can get the assistance of a student for 10-20 hours per week absolutely free!



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33. Run an 'Interruptions Log' for a week. List every interruption as it occurs and rate its value on you. 1-Crucial, 2-Important, 3-Little Value, 4-No Value.

After the week, review the list and take action to eliminate those interruptions that rated 3 and 4.

34. Take ten minutes at the end of each day to plan for the next.

ENERGY

35. If you don't love what you're doing or facing each day with a smile, maybe you're pursuing a business that isn't in alignment with your personality and temperament.

If you want a reason to jump out of bed every morning and give 100 percent of yourself to building your business, find out if your employer offers an Employee Assistance Program and explore the opportunity for intensive vocational and personality testing at little or no cost to you.

36. Home offices should be set up in a specific area of the house. It's important to have a productive workspace, but it's also necessary that your office doesn't affect the energy of your home.

Stephanie Roberts, author of the "Fast Feng Shui" book series, states it's most ideal to have a specific area reserved for your home business in order to keep work and home energies as separate as possible.

37. Since energy enters your home through the front door, you want to set up your home office in the front of the house to take advantage of the flow of energy. If you're in the back, it's more difficult to receive any energy.
38. Once energy enters through the front door it flows up, so it is preferable to be on the entry level or above as opposed to a level below the main floor of the house. It's difficult for energy to move down into the basement.
39. Some areas of the house are not suitable locations for a home office and these include:

- the center of the home
- a bedroom
- underneath a staircase

A home office located at the house's center is said to make work dominate over the family's life.

Using a corner of your bedroom for your home office will either disrupt the calming, sleep-inducing chi (energy) that is needed in the room and prevent you from resting completely or make you feel lethargic and sleepy while you're trying to work.



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If you have no other choice but to set up your home office in your bedroom, create a divider such as a screen or curtain to separate your sleeping area from your workstation.

A home office situated underneath a staircase is at the receiving end of oppressive overhead energy which may cause headaches and difficulty in concentrating.

40. Avoid placing your home office in a room with low or slanted ceilings.

A low ceiling is said to constrain aspirations and keeps one from exploring future possibilities. A slanted ceiling, on the other hand, is said cause energy imbalance.

Stationing your desk on the taller side of the room and reserving the lower side for cabinets, bookcases or other storage can remedy this imbalance. Home offices with low or slanted ceilings should also be furnished with plants and lights that point upward.

41. Find personal time for yourself every day even if you can only start with 15-20 minutes.
42. Meditate at least once a day for 15-20 minutes. Mornings and just before bed are best.
43. Listen to music that moves you and makes you feel good.
44. Turn the ringer down on your phone and let the answering machine pick up, even if only for an hour a day.
45. Look out your window and watch the world as it passes by. Stop and be an observer instead of a performer for a while. Enjoy a cup of tea while you're watching.
46. A recommended herb for increasing energy and combating burnout is Ginseng. You can cook with it as an herb, take it as a supplement or drink it as a tea.
47. Be steadfast with your sleep requirements. One of the biggest contributors to burnout and overwhelm is insufficient sleep. Set a strict bedtime for yourself and don't deviate.
48. If you're listening to an audio program or participating in a teleconference that has attendee lines muted, put the call on speakerphone, get out of your chair and do some simple stretching exercises. Fifteen minutes of gentle yoga movements will give you an injection of energy that will last for hours.
49. Concentrate on the opportunities. We often expend our energy on negative things that have happened or we 'think' will happen. By focusing on a positive future, you will be more open to recognizing opportunities and will attract positive events and people into your life.



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50. Surround yourself with positive, upbeat people. Negative people bring you down and drain your energy. Positive people increase your energy and lift you higher than you can climb on your own.
51. Picture yourself succeeding and your chances of success will grow exponentially. Visualize your success. 'Feel' the success. Put this feeling into words.
52. Don't force yourself to do the impossible. You don't have to suffer to succeed.
53. Reduce the consumption of fast foods and processed foods. They drain your energy and deteriorate your health because they have little to no nutritional value.
54. Break free of refined sugars. That means cupcakes, cookies, pastries, muffins, fruit juices, soda, candy, etc. Eating foods that contain refined sugar will give you an initial energy spike, but it will quickly follow with a *crash* that will leave you lethargic, slow to process information and more apt to make mistakes.
55. Reduce starchy carbs from your diet like potatoes and bread.
56. Eat more protein and healthy fats like fish oil, pumpkin seeds and soy.
57. Take a B complex supplement to boost energy.
58. Watch moderate amounts of television and news broadcasts. TV shows are strewn with violence and news programs are constantly trying to increase their 'shock' factor by providing the most gruesome, disturbing stories possible. Control your exposure to negative incidents, stories and situations.
59. An exhilarating cold shower is an immediate way to stimulate energy and awaken the senses.
60. Enjoy full spectrum light from either the sun a full spectrum light bulb. Limit your exposure to safe quantities.
61. Smell citrus oils such as orange and lemon that emit energizing aromas.
62. Do jumping jacks - just enough to stimulate circulation.
63. Emotional fatigue often correlates with disappointment. You may feel drained because you've been begging for scraps of attention, approval, financial security or love.

The antidote is to get fired up and forge your own universe. Your beliefs control your world; whether you believe that you can or can't do something, you're right. Reframe your thinking to empower yourself to move in a more positive direction.

64. Seek medical attention if your energy levels remain low and you can't seem to boost them using the above tips.



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MONEY

65. A blonde walks into a bank in New York City and asks for the loan officer.

She says she's going to Europe on business for two weeks and needs to borrow \$5,000.

The bank officer says the bank will need some kind of security for the loan, so the blonde hands over the keys to a new Rolls Royce.

The car is parked on the street in front of the bank, she has the title and everything checks out. The bank agrees to accept the car as collateral for the loan.

The bank's president and its officers all enjoy a good laugh at the blonde for using a \$250,000 Rolls as collateral against a \$5,000 loan. An employee of the bank then proceeds to drive the Rolls into the bank's underground garage and parks it there.

Two weeks later, the blonde returns, repays the \$5,000 and the interest, which comes to \$15.41. The loan officer says, "Miss, we are very happy to have had your business, and this transaction has worked out very nicely, but we are a little puzzled.

While you were away, we checked you out and found that you are a multimillionaire. What puzzles us is why would you bother to borrow \$5,000?"

The blond replies, "Where else in New York City can I park my car for two weeks for only \$15.41 and expect it to be there when I return?"

Moral of this story? – Be creative in your saving efforts. ;-)

66. Learn to differentiate between what you need and what you want. You need food to survive. You don't need that \$150 designer sweater even if it does bring out the blue in your eyes.
67. Start small, then expand. You don't need state-of-the-art equipment or office furniture to work efficiently. Satisfy your basic needs with a telephone, desk and whatever equipment and supplies are necessary to conduct business, but hold off on the oak pedestal desk and antique bookshelf until you're well established.
68. Don't spend a lot of money printing up thousands of professional business cards or designing fancy stationery. You will more than likely change your mind about the way you want to brand and market yourself several times within the first year or two. Invest your money in things guaranteed not to change such as education, skills training, and marketing strategies.
69. Speak to your accountant and/or lawyer about which type of business would serve you best in term of tax reduction and personal liability.



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70. Keep your financial records organized, otherwise you will be paying your accountant a pretty penny to sort through a year's worth of receipts and paperwork. The longer it takes your accountant to sort through the mess, the larger the bill. (A stitch in time saves nine.)
71. Don't waste money on costly advertising. Newspaper ads are historically poor performers. There are many ways to market your business for little to no expense with a much higher success rate.
72. Don't issue credit. You don't have the same kind of cash flow a bank does.

Extending credit only opens the door for lost revenue, increased administrative tasks to collect negligent accounts, and a whole lot of frustration and stress. Set payment terms that will put money in your pocket prior to service or product delivery, or upon delivery.
73. Negotiate. Always try to get the best price for products and services. More than often discounts are offered for cash or early payment.
74. Buy used or reconditioned equipment. I bought a used vacuum 15 years ago and it still outperforms many of the newfangled machines being sold today. If you're a professional landscaper, do you need a top-of-the-line laser printer to print invoices?
75. Use a credit card when you place orders. Oftentimes the credit card company will help you if you have a problem with an order, while paying by check leaves you with little recourse.
76. Do your research. Compare costs, capabilities, warranties, service, etc. The cheapest product or service isn't always the best over the long haul.
77. Consider leasing. Leasing equipment is sometimes a better option than purchasing outright. This way, you won't deplete your cash flow.
78. If you don't need a fancy business line with all of the bells and whistles, consider installing a second residential line to use for your business. There's a dramatic price difference between the two.
79. Ask vendors and supplies if they have toll-free numbers. Many do, yet don't advertise them outright.
80. Barter. Believe it or not, this is a common practice among the hugely successful business owners. Through trade, they are able to obtain supplies and services without paying hefty taxes or impact cash flow. If you're a graphic designer in need of a business coach, consider trading your services for the benefit of each other.

The National Association of Trade Exchanges (United States) or Trade Exchange Canada Ltd. are clearinghouses for member exchanges, allowing business owners to swap just about anything with anyone. Is there a trade association in your country?



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81. Ship and mail on specific dates. Schedule your shipping and mailing to take advantage of bulk transactions. If you need to deliver products to your customers, dedicate one or two specific days of the week for deliveries. Don't bother with overnight or express delivery of packages if they're not critical.
82. Take advantage of freebies. There are numerous opportunities on the Internet to secure useful information for free. Numerous no-cost teleclasses are offered as well as e-books, reports and white papers. You don't have to dish out a lot of money for resources. Many can be found gratis online.
83. Create your own funding strategies. Join online forums in your industry and learn how others are raising funds, increasing cash flow and creatively finding money for their business pursuits.
84. Piggyback your advertising. Include coupons and brochures in your shipments to keep customers informed of additional 'deals' they can take advantage of. Tuck newsletters or promotional flyers into customer packages.
85. Form strategic alliances. Partner with another business owner who isn't a direct competitor but shares your target audience. Split the marketing costs by sharing mailing lists, distribution channels and suppliers.
86. Reduce costs when setting up an online store. You can start by selling items for next to nothing on online auction sites like eBay and Yahoo Auctions. If you want to create a professional storefront, there are several "Web site in a box" solutions available, usually for a low monthly fee.
87. Instead of buying forms at your local office supply store or spending time creating them yourself, you can find tons of free forms online that you can download, customize and print.
88. Get free software. Visit download.com to try hundreds of software products for free through trial downloads, freeware and limited versions of the full product. If you don't find what you're looking for through download.com check out the manufacturer's site. Many offer free trial downloads.
89. Save by association. When looking for insurance, check with your trade association. Many associations offer competitive group insurance.
90. Raising the deductible on your insurance usually lowers your premiums. Even if you end up having to pay the deductible, it's likely to be less than the amount you save.
91. Be prudent with your petty cash. Though you don't need receipts for expenses under a certain dollar value, you should still track these expenses because they can add up.
92. Hire your children. If your children are at least 14 years old (*depending on your Country and/or State*) and pay their own taxes, it pays to take advantage of their lower tax bracket. You can transfer income from your business to them to save money.



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93. In addition to being able to deduct a portion of your rent or mortgage interest and utilities as a business expense, you can also deduct a percentage of various home maintenance expenses, along with a portion of the cost of services such as house cleaning and lawn care. Check with a knowledgeable tax advisor for more information.
94. Ordering your checks from a printing company often costs less than getting them from a bank.
95. Learn something new. Rather than pay an expert to write your press releases or sales copy (one of the most expensive tasks to outsource), hire one for an hour or so to show you how to do it yourself.
96. Get at least three quotes on everything. Even routine purchases merit shopping around. If you quote a competitor's lower price, a supplier or vendor will often match that price to win your business.
97. Before you purchase any product or service, make sure the seller assumes most of the risk by offering a money-back guarantee. I made a \$4,000 mistake by signing on with my first marketing coach who didn't deliver adequate service and didn't refund my investment when I decided to terminate the relationship. *Please* – learn from my mistake and get a written, full or pro-rated money-back guarantee.

If service or product providers are as good as they claim to be, they will offer risk reversal up front.
98. Instead of hiring employees, consider outsourcing. This way you don't have to worry about payroll contributions, benefits, workers compensation or paying wages during lean times.
99. Start selling now. Don't wait to be perfect or have everything in place. If you can start working with clients or selling to customers right away, get it going.
100. Pre-sell your products and services at a discount. Offer incentives and early bird reductions. This will increase cash flow immediately.