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This Week's Article:

To-do Lists: How Effective Are They?

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If you are like any other internet marketer who is just starting out, you must have been overwhelmed by too much information (also called information overload) and too many fads that are circulating around the world of internet marketing.

So basically you are suffering from two diseases: 'information overload' and 'fad overload'.

Both diseases are dangerous, and both of them stall your progress; both of them keep you from completing your work; both of them force you to choose between options, and more often than not, you end up choosing the wrong one. :(

So one of the most well known ways to cope with these diseases (and that is what more and more business persons are doing) is to create to-do lists. But creating to-do lists is not as easy as it sounds! Read below...

If you are like me: I am a control freak. I want my life to be controlled by MYSELF and no one else (and not of course by my work).

So I create to-do lists to make sure that each day I contribute something to my business. My to-do list also keeps me from getting distracted by the 'many other opportunities'.

The question is: how far are to-do lists effective?

The answer is: they are effective, but only IF you know how to USE them effectively.

If you don't know how to create and maintain to-do lists properly, you may never get anything done. Your do list will remain as it is and you will still be suffering from disorganization. ;)

So here is what I do:

1. I have purchased a small spiral notebook, and write all my tasks there. When writing tasks in this notebook, I don't categorize them by order of importance. I just list them as they come to my mind.

2. Next, when I am done, I take up a few sheets of paper, and then look at the tasks I have listed in the notebook. I write the more important tasks (those which should be finished immediately) in those sheets of paper. Then I categorize the tasks in order of priority. Then I tick a few tasks which I want to complete today. Then I make sure that each task is done before my day is complete. This means even waking up to 6 am in the morning if it takes that long to complete my tasks. :)

Now, I am not perfect. Even as I am writing this, I DO get distracted by all the craze around. However, I make sure to keep my to-do list (those sheets of paper, NOT the notebook) very close to my PC. This way, whenever I get diverted by the 'many other opportunities', my eyes fall upon the to-do list and immediately I switch back to my work.

And here is an important story that I would like to tell you in this connection.

One day it so happened that I had 108 to-do tasks to complete. The list spanned across more than twelve pages. The tasks included ebooks that I was supposed to read, articles I needed to write and more.

So here is what I did.

I kept that list away from my eyes as far as possible. I then did my usual routine work and went to sleep. The next morning, I opened that list again, and took a look. I saw that there were many tasks out there which were unnecessary, or at least, they were not as urgent as some of the other tasks. So, I decided to rate each task by a priority level.

1. Tasks with **High priority** were rated as 1
2. Tasks with **Medium priority** were rated as 2
3. Tasks with **Low priority** were rated as 3

Then I created separate lists for tasks of each priority level. One list contained tasks of high priority level, another contained tasks of medium priority level, and so on; this would help me focus on a few things at a time rather than an astronomical amount of work. I then filed away the lists that contained tasks of medium and low priority, and then totally focused on the high priority list. You know what? The number of high priority tasks was only 10. I could surely focus on 10 tasks, but could I focus on 108 tasks? I then began to complete all of the 10 tasks one by one...

It is a good thing to create to-do lists of projects. But it is even more important that you periodically sort and categorize them by priority level. If you feel that a task on your to-do list is not that urgent, move it to a different list.

By the way, if my memory serves me right, I have included the Art Plus Easy Noter Lite software in your bonus downloads (actually the way I have created the bonus download package is that it contains almost all the free tools I use on a daily basis and hence, have become part of my life; probably those are the only tools you need to start). I use the software as my 'Desktop Task Manager'. Feel free to use it to manage your own to do tasks, notes, or reminders. It is completely free.

If you have not downloaded the bonuses yet, please [click here](#) to go to the download page.

How did you like this article? Please post your comments here. Also, if you have a different way of managing your tasks, feel free to post it here.

You can post your comments about this article at my blog:

<http://arindamchakraborty.com/to-do-lists-how-effective-they-are#postcomment>

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