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8 Ways for Road Warriors to Be More Productive

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Thanks to laptops, smartphones and tablets, professionals around the world are no longer tethered to their desks. But with this ease of portability comes the need to adjust in order to stay efficient and productive while out on the road.

My clients who spend little time in a traditional office tend to have these two major challenges:

Managing Multiple "Offices" - keeping track of supplies and files in up to three different locations - home, work and car

Managing Time and Workload: maximizing the number of client appointments and productivity without having to do paperwork until midnight

It takes a little bit of a mind shift, but here's how you can begin to manage those challenges and increase your productivity.

Managing Multiple Offices – car, work and home

- **Use triplicates.** It sounds funny for someone who talks folks into getting rid of things to say that they should have duplicates or triplicates, but if you work in multiple spaces, there's no need to keep transferring the same supplies around. Utilizing multiples will prevent "I forgot that" incidents, and will annihilate lost

time because you'll never have to look for that item that you wound up leaving back in your other office. Have one set of supplies in your home office. Have a separate set of supplies in your work office. Have a third set of supplies in your go-bag or trunk office.

- **Have a go-bag with compartments.** Often times my clients will have purchased a shoulder bag or case on wheels based on looks or price, and they end up with a great deal on nice-looking bag that has just one compartment. They inevitably dump all of their supplies and files into one black hole and lose time looking for what they need. Instead, figure out what items you need to carry with you on the go, and purchase a bag that contains different compartments to hold what you need. Or, retro-fit your black hole bag with containers that will hold your various categories, such as files, gadgets, cords, brochures, notepad, writing utensils, and so on.
- **Set up your trunk office.** My sales consultant clients have to be ready for each client appointment with brochures, cards, product information and samples. If they're seeing multiple clients in one day, they can't fit all of this in one go-bag. So, we set up a trunk office. Crates hold hanging files with the different forms and brochures. Separate containers hold the various samples. For my clients who commute via train or subway, their trunk office is a roller board suitcase with these same categories. Their go-bag rests on top of the roller board and contains whatever they need for the client in front of them.
- **Go digital when possible.** Having access to all of your client information and files from any location is extremely helpful. If you're digitally inclined, consider using a cloud-based file cabinet like Drop Box or Evernote, which can allow you to access files on your device even when you're not connected to the Internet. For security reasons, you never want to log in to the Internet from a public Wi-Fi, so using platforms that allow you to see your files without an Internet connection is a bonus. If you can log in via non-public Wi-Fi while on the road, consider using a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to house everything related to your clients.

Managing Time and Workload

- **Schedule fewer client appointments in a single day.** Huh? That's right. Less is more when it comes to stuff and when it comes to clients, too. The more rushing around you do, the more mistakes and miscommunication that will happen, and the less time you'll have to nurture your client relationships. It takes eight times more time and money to capture a new client than to take care of a current one, so focus on serving fewer clients better and purposefully filling your pipeline, rather than serving a ton of clients in a mediocre fashion and losing many of them.
- **Pad your appointments with extra time.** Block off time on your calendar for commuting to your appointment, plus 20% extra for traffic delays, and five minutes for centering yourself before you walk in. Block off time for your appointment plus 20% extra in case your client runs late or your appointment goes so well that you should spend additional time chatting instead of just running out. Block off 15 minutes following the appointment to document whatever notes you need to record while it's still fresh in your brain. This includes writing a summary of the appointment for your client file, adding the next appointment to your calendar before it's forgotten or double-booked, and setting reminders for the next actions you need to take.
- **Make an appointment with yourself at the end of each day.** Once you decide what you want your work hours to be, save the last 30 minutes of each day for reviewing what's happened that day. Ask yourself these key questions and take appropriate actions. This ensures you stay current with all your commitments and action items.
 - Did you record everything that needed to be recorded?
 - Did you send the client all the information they requested during that day's appointment?
 - Did you set your reminders for next actions and client follow-up?
 - Did you file or scan any new incoming papers?
 - What's on tap for tomorrow?
 - What supplies need to be packed in your go-bag and office trunk?

- **Always have a Plan B.** In a perfect world, things would always be, well, perfect. But alas, we don't live in a perfect world. A client may cancel at the last minute, leaving you with an extra gap in your day. If something like this happens, what project could you work on during this time gap that will make your next day or next week that much easier for you? Or maybe the stars have aligned and you have an awesome day. You get to an appointment on time, it's successful in record time, and you end up way ahead of schedule – and with a gap before your next appointment. After a quick celebration (self high-five!), commute to your next location and work on a Plan B project while you wait for your next appointment to begin.

Increasing your productivity and lowering your stress levels will happen as you gradually implement these strategies. It may seem counterintuitive to slow things down and take your time, but doing so will give your brain clarity and allow you to better focus on what you need to get done. When your brain is focused, you'll make better decisions and produce higher quality work.

[Watch or listen to Helene's podcast](#) on Staying Organized While Working On the Go.

Helene Segura



As The Inefficiency Assassin™, Helene Segura teaches go-getters how to slay wasted time. Helene has been the featured productivity expert in over 80 media interviews and is the author of two Amazon best-selling books. Learn more about Helene at www.TheInefficiencyAssassin.com.

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