

# **FREE TO FOCUS**

## **A Total Productivity System to Achieve More By Doing Less**

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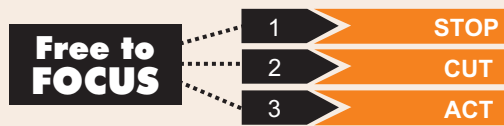
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**MAIN IDEA**

The key to productivity today is not to try and squeeze in more stuff. Instead, you should be focused on getting the right things done in the face of 24/7 distractions and sidetracks. If you can start each day with clarity about your highest value priorities and then end each day with a feeling of accomplishment, you'll be doing well.

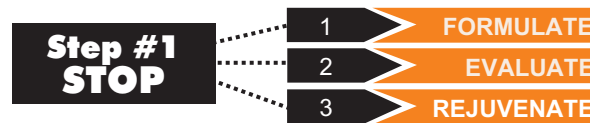
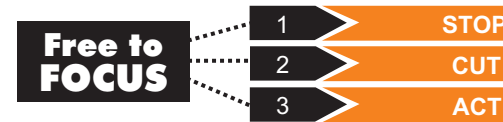
Achieving more by doing less of the stuff that doesn't matter sounds great but how do you do that in the real world? A good 3-step system for this is:



- **STOP** – and figure out why you're working first. It's only once you clarify why you're working that you can then set about upgrading how you work.
- **CUT** – clarify what you won't do so you have more time for what you do need to do.
- **ACT** – fill your day with high-leverage tasks, and look for ways to get these tasks done in less time and with less stress than before.

*"Your attention is being spammed all day long. What will your life have been, in the end, but the sum total of everything you spent it focusing on?"*  
 – Oliver Burkeman, journalist

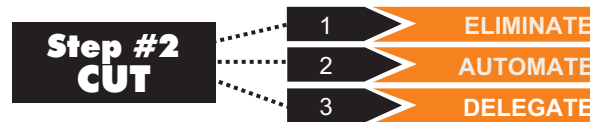
*"It's time to hit the reset button on your life and finally put a system in place that ensures the time and energy to accomplish your most important goals, both in and out of the office. The most productive business leaders I coach recognize productivity is not about getting more things done; it's about getting the right things done. Can you imagine it? Can you picture when you feel fully in control of where your time is going, when you get to decide how to spend your precious energy, and when you hit the pillow at night still energized from a productive, satisfying day? I hope you can, because that time is coming. You really can accomplish more by doing less."*  
 – Michael Hyatt



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It may sound counterintuitive to begin a productivity system by telling people to stop but the reality is that if you don't stop doing marginal value activities, you won't have enough time to do what matters most. The three actions in this step are:

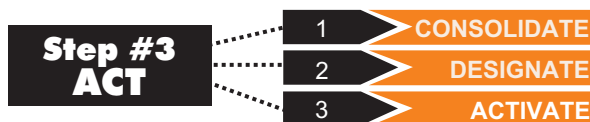
1. *Formulate* – clarify exactly what you want to achieve by being more productive.
2. *Evaluate* – separate your high-leverage activities from your low-leverage busy work.
3. *Rejuvenate* – clarify how to use rest to boost your results when working.



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What you choose not to do is just as important to your productivity as what you actually do with your time. To work to eliminate low-leverage tasks in order to claw back more time for better high-leverage tasks, the three steps are:

1. *Eliminate* – banish all the time bandits which steal your time.
2. *Automate* – all the low-leverage tasks you feasibly can.
3. *Delegate* – get work off your schedule in a practical and sustainable way.



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Once you've cut out nonessentials, it's then time to start executing more high-leverage tasks which add value. As you do this, look for ways to get these tasks done in less time and with less stress than before. The three steps here are:

1. *Consolidate* – find ways to bunch high-leverage tasks together for efficiency.
2. *Designate* – stage tasks so they fit your schedule rather than becoming urgent.
3. *Activate* – eliminate distractions and make maximal use of your skills & abilities.