



## Sara Jane Lowry

COACHING AND CONSULTATION

I have talked with lots of executives and solopreneurs about how they manage to start their day off right to maintain productivity, energy, and accomplishment. And I've added to this list items that I suggest to coaching clients. Here are some of the ways I see successful management of a day begin:

### 1. **Have a routine.**

Productive days don't happen by accident. The most successful people I know have a consistent morning routine, and they very rarely stray from it. They get up at the same time, they do the same 5 things. Most importantly, they control the first hour or two of their day. Don't roll over and grab your phone! Email, Facebook! You're letting the world transfer their demands onto you. Just stop it!

I have learned that if you will take control of your first waking moments, you will likely see a day that is in control. It's hard when you have children to get off to school too, and the secret to a productive day is to get up before any of them need attention.

Routines vary, but most of them include:

- Not picking up the phone (other than turning off the alarm) or looking at email
- Giving a hug and kiss to the person you share your bed with
- Reading something positive and inspirational
- Meditating for 5-20 minutes: it lowers stress, puts your brain in a different wave, gives access to your creativity/ambition.
- Stretching and waking your body through movement. Activate your body in the morning – work out - you'll produce more in the evening, you'll be more resilient, do yoga, breathe, stretch – for 20 minutes.
- Work – just not on email. Write your speech or blog, create.



# Start your Day

## 2. Start a little earlier.

The key to a good morning routine is getting going at an hour before other people need your time. That means early, while many are still sleeping. Many successful people do this. It means going to bed earlier too. And it means setting your top 3-5 priorities for the day -- the night before.

## 3. Raise your ambitions.

Motivation sparks come from ambition. Productivity is tied to ambition and motivation. Ambition to do something, be something is where our life energy comes from. When it flags/flat lines, our motivation fades. Are clear about your ambition? What makes you get out of bed in the morning? Make it part of your daily routine, check-in, visualize it, feel it. Motivation leads to productivity. Don't limit your vision by your current circumstances, connections, and skills.

## 4. Set your intention and *exact* work schedule before you start the day.

Our brain is driven by DEADLINES and goals, and it releases dopamine when we achieve them. So, use it as a tool for yourself.

## 5. Work the needle movers

Identify the one thing that matter the most. 80-20 rule: 80% is crap 20% is what makes the needle move. Give yourself a block of time and keep to it. And don't accept everything your staff/team wants to give you to do – coach them on what to give you that will *move the needle*.

## 6. Practice transition recovery

When you make your schedule, make sure to schedule in time between activities. When you schedule an hour to do email, take time before you switch back to doing something creatively. Between major projects and intense focus, your body needs to recover – it's important to our creative ability. Switching over from email to working on your next presentation take 5 minutes of breathing, movement by walking around your office for a few minutes, drinking some water.

## 7. Make an Intention to Enjoy your day

When you make an intention to enjoy something, you are less likely to be reactionary, and more likely to smile and laugh with others, to choose to see things lightly, or humorously, or recognize the meaning and impact you are having.

