



ATTORNEY AT WORK QUARTERLY • SUMMER 2013

A Matter of Time

TIME MANAGEMENT & PRODUCTIVITY TIPS FOR LAWYERS



Time Management. Ha!

As if it's really possible to wrestle those slippery minutes, hours and days into any semblance of order, or exercise any control. Most days just whiz by, leaving you with nothing more than a much longer to-do list. And, thanks to technology, that task list follows you *everywhere*.

Technology. Ha! Sometimes it seems you merely serve the machines instead of the other way around — emails, texts, tweets, little irritating jingles while you're trying to eat lunch. And when you're not trying to please your technology, you are busy pleasing the important people in your work life — clients, judges, senior partners, anyone who might grieve you. You work so hard, there just isn't a whole lot of time left over to focus on what pleases you.

Well, that stops here.

"A Matter of Time" is a collection of really good ideas to help you manage, organize and just plain get back to enjoying your time.

Spend a little quality time with this Attorney at Work Quarterly and you'll be ready to set up some good systems, pick out some truly useful apps and generally get the wheels turning to get a grip on your time — and your life!

We thank our Publishing Partners, Attorneys Liability Protection Society (ALPS), Avvo and National Purchasing Partners (NPP), whose generous support helped make this new publication possible.

– *Merrilyn Astin Tarlton and Joan Feldman for Attorney at Work*



*Robert W. Minto, Jr.
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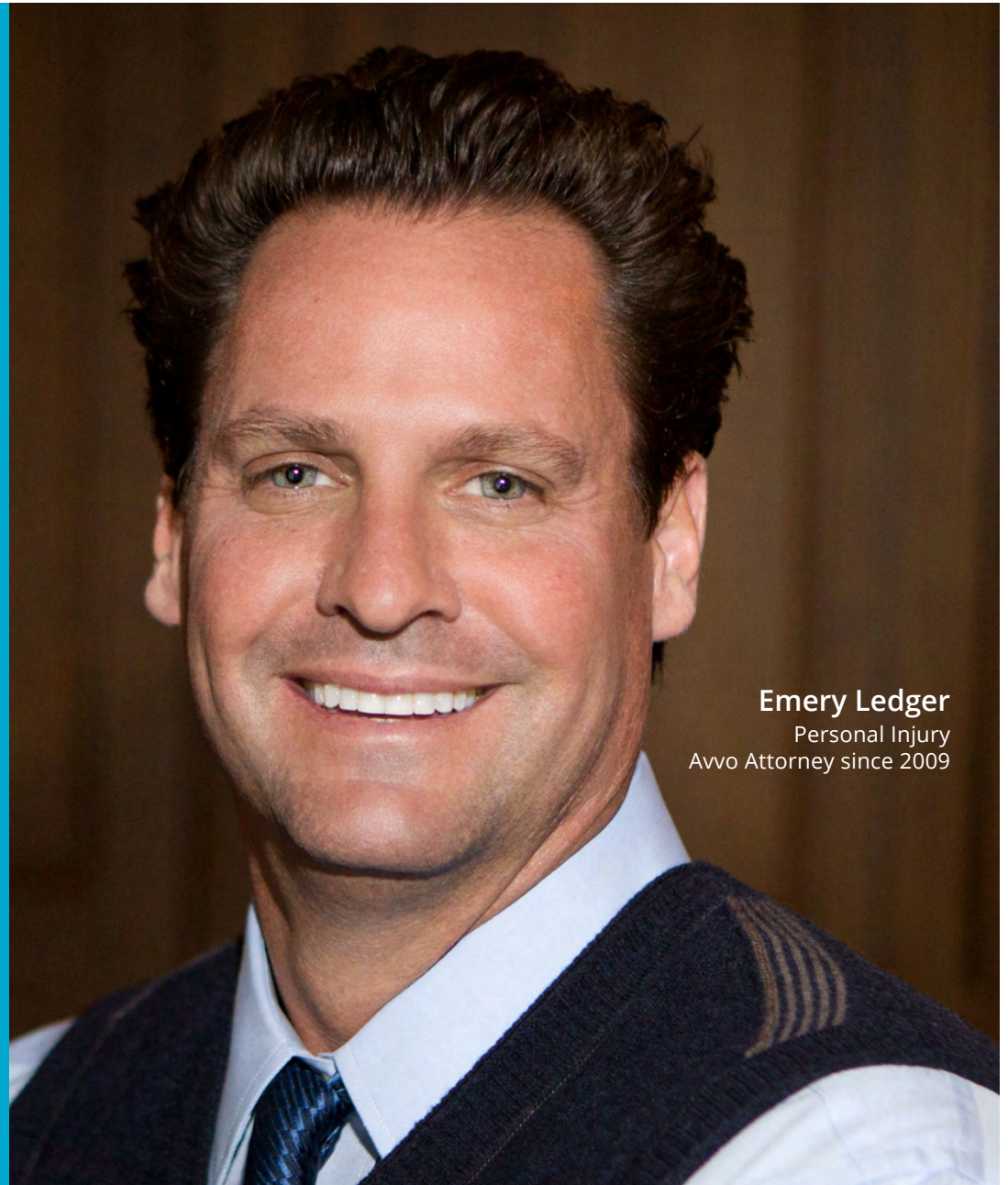
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HOW DO THEY DO IT?

Lawyers’ Time Management Secrets

BY JAMIE JACKSON SPANNHAKE | We all know those lawyers, the ones who have a thriving practice, time for family, loads of energy, and who enjoy their lives. We wanted to know their time management secrets. I spoke to five people who work, on average, 50 hours per week, but still have time for their other priorities. Consistently, their first piece of advice is to **determine your values and priorities**. Here’s how they do it.

Alan Howard

is a litigation partner in Crowell & Moring’s New York City office. He is married with four children.

Vanessa Price

is a solo practitioner at Winkler Price Law in Southaven, Mississippi, focusing on family and criminal law. She is married with two sons.

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is a solo practitioner in Bethel, Connecticut, focusing primarily on real estate transactions. He is married with three daughters.

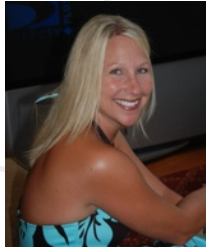
Diane Costigan

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Vanessa Price



Vanessa Price is a solo practitioner at Winkler Price Law in Southaven, Mississippi, focusing on family and criminal law. She has a 30-minute commute in the car. She works about 50 hours per week, with approximately 40 hours in the office. She is married to a lawyer. They have two young sons.

How do you set your priorities, both large scale and small scale? Then how do you keep your priorities in order? On Sunday after church, we have a family day at home hanging out and cleaning up. I plan the week with my husband. We lay out all items on the calendar: kids' activities, soccer, baseball games, driving the kids, gym classes, work stuff, everything.

What's your typical day like? I wake up at 5:30 or 6:00 a.m. I get to the office at 8:20 a.m. I always leave the office at 4:45, drive 30 minutes to get the kids, and then get to the function or practice or game that we have that evening. I try for bed by 10 p.m., but some nights — maybe two nights per week — I work at home until 1 or 2 a.m. I also go to Tae Bo class every Saturday morning, and some weekdays at 5:30 in the morning. I try for three times each week.

How do you avoid burnout and exhaustion? We take one adult vacation each year, without the kids. Then we take a lot of three-day getaways that are drivable. Another thing that truly helps me is that I have lunch every week with about 10 women who do exactly what I do professionally. Misery loves company; I feel like I am not alone. We can ask questions and bounce ideas around.

Best time-saving trick? A good assistant or paralegal who can anticipate issues and handle them on her own. Also, while driving from court to court, I return phone calls and I dictate into a little old-school tape recorder to-do lists and client updates for my paralegal. Another thing I do every month is take two days, back to back: one day to catch up at work and one day for myself. If I don't take the first day to catch up, then I can't enjoy the day for myself. I might plan a day with the kids or have lunch with a friend. I get a massage about once every two months. Or I buy something I want. Sometimes I just sit in my PJ's all day rather than putting on a suit.

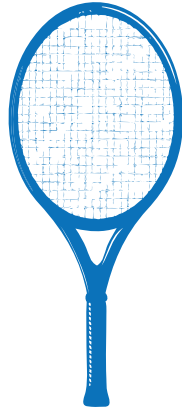
What technology do you use? Amicus Attorney. It is very helpful. It creates one big log that includes a client list, everything that both my paralegal and I have done, all contact information, and a brief synopsis of the current status.

How do you stay focused? My reputation matters to me, so even if I am exhausted I must be fully prepared. Plus, everything is in the calendar so I can focus on what I am doing, whether it is legal or personal or family.

What is your biggest distraction and how do you handle it? My family. It's really hard for me to miss anything because, at the end of my life, I won't wish that I had worked more, I will wish that I had spent more time with my family. My paralegal always reminds me that the work will be here tomorrow.

How do you "shut off" work so you can enjoy downtime? I do not take any family law or criminal cases in the city where I live. I have a 30-minute commute and I leave my cases behind at work as

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much as possible until I return Monday morning. Wine helps, too!

Any advice? People care as much about their case as they have invested in it. A little bit of money is usually not worth it.

Have you designed your office in any particular way to help you be more efficient?

I immediately introduce new clients to my paralegal and tell them that we both know the same things about their case — if she tells you, it is the same as *me* telling you. Clients will ask to speak to her rather than me because her hourly rate is less and she is easier to reach.

What kind of calendar do you use? Do you integrate work and family on one calendar? Yes. I use Microsoft Outlook calendars. I have a personal calendar and a client-legal calendar, both synced to my computers and smartphone. My paralegal has access to my calendars.

What is the one thing that's always neglected? How are you trying to remedy that? Billing. I am too busy doing my job to get paid for it. My assistant is working on it with a new Timeslips billing system. She is now billing based on what is in my calendar because I don't keep a good timesheet when I am so busy.

Do you enjoy your day — most days? Why? Why not? Let me answer a different question: “If I could do it again, would I do it again?” Yes, but family law is very tough as a mother. The good days are really good, but the bad days are really bad. Helping people get what they deserve is a really good day. But things don't always turn out well for clients in family law. The laws are much different from what I think is right.

My days are challenging and exhausting, but I am proud of what I do.

“I'm their mom; I don't miss a practice or a school meeting.”



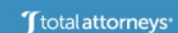
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Alan Howard



Alan Howard is a litigation partner in Crowell & Moring's New York City office. He lives about an hour train ride north of the city. He works 50 to 60 hours per week, with most of that time in the office and a small portion at home. He also travels regularly for work. He is married with four children: two in high school and two in college.

How do you set your priorities, both large scale and small scale?

Then how do you keep your priorities in order? When you are working, work is your priority. A lawyer has to be willing to put in the hours necessary to get the job done and serve clients to the best of his ability. Whatever is required, you do it. That is your priority. The flip side is true, too. It is equally important to focus on family when you are with your family. We lawyers sacrifice so much time with our families; if we can't get quantity of time, then we focus on the quality of the time.

What is your typical day like? I get up at 6:30 a.m. Every day that I'm not traveling I drive my son to school. It is 10 minutes of shared time in the car. We talk. It means I am taking the 8:15 a.m. train instead of the 7:45 a.m., so I stay an extra hour at the office. Usually I take a 7 p.m. train at night and am home by 8:30 p.m. I miss dinner usually, but hang out with my family until bedtime, maybe watch a

ball game together. I also get up early on the weekend, at 6:30 a.m., and take care of work before everyone else is up and going.

How do you avoid burnout and exhaustion? I work out. That's my alone time. I go to the gym on the weekends and I try to get to the gym two days a week during lunch. When I am traveling, I work out in hotel gyms. I use P90X because it is easy to do on the road and has stretching and yoga, too. I bring my computer with a DVD to the gym. I also use my train ride home for an hour of downtime to get my brain back into neutral. If I have work to do, I stay an extra hour at the office so I can still have that downtime on the train.

Best time-saving trick? Having a partner who is strong and independent. My wife Patty can handle everything that needs to be handled when I am tied up with work. She is very supportive but holds me accountable to get balance in life.

Any advice? It is important to balance professional obligations with family life and time for yourself, but I'd add a fourth balance: balance within your professional life. If you focus solely on billable work you lose perspective and opportunities. I love Crowell & Moring because it is very collegial. I know what cases my colleagues are working on. We talk to each other about problems in our cases. It's good to focus on someone else's issue for a while and help them work through it. Professional balance also means doing pro bono work. I am actively involved with the Southern Poverty Law Center. The issues that come up are interesting and it is invigorating to deal with young, devoted advocates for social justice causes. It adds depth to my professional practice.

Editor's Note: Through the Southern Poverty Law Center, Alan represented one of the defendants in the nationally prominent "Jena 6" proceedings in Louisiana, a case of national prominence for its civil rights implications. He not only represented the youngest of the Jena 6 defendants, but became his guardian making him part of his family.

Have you designed your office in any particular way to help you be more efficient? My office has a very big desk with lots of organized piles. I am a paper person. I have a really big computer screen because my eyes are going. And I have lots of pictures of family and of the Red Sox as balance reminders. When you have photos of your family in your office, it is helpful if you are in the photos with them.

What is the one thing that's always neglected? How are you trying to remedy that? I go through phases where I neglect workouts or proper diet. I just remind myself that those are part of balance and I must take care of myself. And it's easy to lose touch with friends. I try to take an annual trip with about 25 friends to Las Vegas to play golf.

Do you enjoy your day — most days? Why? Why not? I enjoy most of my days. The same thing that makes what we do as lawyers great also makes it hard. There are new challenges and questions every day. It keeps you up at night because you want to make sure you are doing the best job possible. It adds stress, and you need balance to handle that stress.

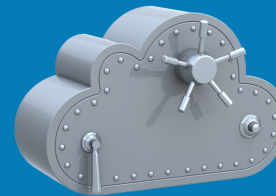
"I avoid going to the office on the weekends because I want weekend days to go to games and be with my family."

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Diane Costigan



Diane Costigan is Senior Managing Director in the New York office of SJL Shannon LLC, a legal career management firm. She lives in New York City, and usually walks to work.

She works 40 to 60 hours per week, depending on the week, and travels regularly for work. She is married with a two-year-old daughter.

How do you set your priorities, both large scale and small scale?

Then how do you keep your priorities in order? I pick a theme for each year. Last year, my theme was financial health. This year my theme is peace and calm, a.k.a. self-care. Everything flows from there. I have a daily practice for small-scale priorities. I plan at the beginning of each day. If things don't go the way I plan, I recalibrate. Then I always review at the end of each day so I know what the next day holds.

What's your typical day like? I don't really have a typical day, and that works for me. I travel a lot. But if I'm not traveling, I wake up at 7 a.m. and I check email first thing, just a quick overview. I walk to work. That's my creative time; I dictate blogs into my phone or practice upcoming workshops in my head. My first scheduled project is at 10 a.m. because I have the most energy and focus in the morning. I work from 10 a.m. to noon. For lunch, I usually have networking or business development activities. I try to get outside during lunchtime

if possible. I schedule clients in the afternoon. The last hour I use to catch up on email, review my day and prepare for the next day. I generally leave at 5 p.m. and walk home. I try not to log back on after I go home.

How do you avoid burnout and exhaustion? Walking really helps me, and I have a daily meditation practice. I sneak it in where I can, even if for only 10 or 15 minutes, like before I go to sleep and during the night when the baby wakes up and I can't get back to sleep. Also, every other month, I try to have a girls' night out with friends.

Do you have a mantra? I have two. One is "extreme prioritization," which refers to my most important priorities. Anytime I need to make a choice or add something new, I ask if it is an extreme priority or if it relates to one. I also use "ASAP" — As Simple As Possible. I try to keep things simple.

Best time-saving trick? Despite all the advice about not multitasking, I think there are good ways to multitask, like my walking and working on my way to the office each morning. I multitask when possible, but not on really important things.

What technology do you use? I am an "app slut," mostly on my iPhone and iPad. I use Evernote to keep organized, and Dragon Dictation when walking to work. I convert the dictation to text and email it to myself. I use Dropbox and a shared drive at work.

Any specific time management or productivity tools? I keep a project list in Evernote. Because it's electronic, I have it with me all the time. To the extent I need to capture specifics, I write them down.

What technology could you not live without? My iPhone or iPad because I can work anywhere with them.

How do you stay focused? Meditation, and I take breaks often. I don't work more than 90 minutes without a break.

What is your biggest distraction? How do you handle it? Email and phone calls. Everyone needs something all the time. I am always being asked to do informational interviews with people who want to do what I do. So I don't check email more than a couple of times each day. If they really need me, I tell people they need to call me.

"I am deadline driven. I never miss a deadline."

How do you "shut off" work so you can enjoy downtime? I turn off my technology when I get home unless there is an exception that might impact my schedule the next day, or if there is something pressing.

What's something that you tried that you thought would improve your efficiency, but it didn't work for you? Why? Having a to-do list. I need a system to manage responsibilities but a list didn't work for me. When I put everything on a list, it is so long that it is depressing! My extreme priorities don't need to be on a list. For everything else, I just need to be organized.

Have you designed your office in any particular way to help you be more efficient? I have a "less is more" approach to what is in my office. I am paperless; I scan everything so I can work anywhere. I also keep healthy snacks available in my office and that helps my productivity by giving me energy without having to run out for food. And I know this great artist (my husband), so I have nice artwork that inspires me.

Do you enjoy your day — most days? Why? Why not? Yes, for the past few weeks. My company recently merged with another company, and I stepped down as CEO. Last year when I was CEO, no, I didn't enjoy most days. But I like working. I have the work I want to do and I say "no" when the work is not what I want to do.

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Tom Ozimkoski

Thomas Ozimkoski is a solo practitioner in Bethel, Connecticut, focusing primarily on real estate transactions. He works out of his home office and travels for transactions. He works 12 to 14 hours a day, six days a week. He is married with three daughters, ages 6, 8, and 22.

How do you set your priorities, both large scale and small scale?

Then how do you keep your priorities in order? Work priorities are by deadline. I calendar for the week. Appointments and family stuff are also on the calendar, on a monthly basis. Then I follow the calendar.

What's your typical day like? I get up at 7 a.m. and work in my office until 8:30 a.m., when I put the kids on the bus (about 95 percent of the time). Then it's back to my office through lunch. I eat lunch in my office. I feel a burnout level in the early afternoon, so I go to my gym in the basement. Then back to work until 4 p.m., when I get the kids off the bus. I spend the afternoon and evening with my family until around 8 p.m. when the kids go to bed. At 8:30 p.m., I'm back in my office until 1 a.m. or so.

How do you avoid burnout and exhaustion? I work out. I take a break when I lose focus or get irritated; I do yard work or maybe a house chore. I also enjoy family time and two-day short vacations. We take weekend road trips sometimes.

What technology do you use? I have a computer set up with four screens: Internet and email, HUD forms or judicial site, contracts, and a log of clients and transactions. I use email a lot to manage work because I can answer and talk to lots of people via email at the same time. I also text.

When I have a choice between a networking social event or work, I choose work because that is more important to me."

What technology could you not live without? My computer and smart-phone. I get constant email and communications for updates on my transactions. I couldn't be as productive without mobile access to all the information.

How do you stay focused? I have no choice because I have the work and they are my clients. I have a work ethic. And survival: my family depends on me. I don't get paid if I don't work.

How do you "shut off" work so you can enjoy downtime? I remove myself from the office and keep my phone out of sight. Work will always be there.

Have you designed your office in any particular way to help you be more efficient? My home office is a lot nicer than a lot of attorney's commercial office space. I have a fireplace in my office, and it is comfortable. I have the four computer screens, and a large TV screen with CNBC to watch real estate market news. It's pretty interesting and helpful to know what's going on. And everything is right here so I don't need to go anywhere to get anything.

What is the one thing that always gets neglected? How are you trying to remedy that? Working out. I try to work out in the early afternoon because it relieves some of the stress. But so does lighting the fire pit in the backyard and sitting there in the early evening with a beer and a cigar.

Albert Chang



Albert Chang is an attorney at Bottini & Bottini in La Jolla, California, a litigation boutique that focuses on complex class action cases. He works 50 to 60 hours each week. He drives to work, about 15 miles,

which takes about 30 minutes with traffic.

He is married with two daughters, ages 3 and 6.

How do you set your priorities, both large scale and small scale?

Then how do you keep your priorities in order? Work is first because I spend most of my time at the office and thinking about legal stuff. But if something is going on, like one kid is sick, then priorities change. Priorities change daily; what is most pressing is the priority.

Overall, I'm a workaholic. I don't have a lot of outside interests. I am very passionate about practicing law, very focused. I treat my family time with very serious focus, too.

One thing I do is carve out "daddy Saturdays" for my family when I don't work at all. And I almost always see my girls for half an hour before they go to bed. I also talk to them on the phone a lot. Once a month, I pick up my older daughter from school to go to lunch; we have lots of gelato.

What's your typical day like? I am up at 6 or 7 a.m. I have breakfast at home, am out the door at 8:15 a.m., and to the office by 9 a.m. I leave around 7 p.m., or sometimes never. I pull one all-nighter per month, on average. When I do get home in the evenings, I eat and play with my girls and put them to bed by 8:30 or 9 p.m.. I work after they go to bed.

"I love what I do."

What technology do you use? I'm not a techie. The technology that increases my productivity the most is WestlawNext. It makes online research so much faster. I have an iPhone for email, and I obsessively check it, but I don't have an iPad or any other devices. I think I'm the only Asian guy who doesn't like technology.

Have you designed your office in any particular way to help you be more efficient? I have a stand-up desk. I am standing for 12 hours every day. It is my exercise.

Do you enjoy your day — most days? Why? Why not? Yes, I love what I do. I am grateful. Am I happy? I don't know. I haven't thought about it.

Jamie J. Spannhake is a lawyer, certified health coach and blogger. After working for a large Manhattan law firm for six years as a commercial litigator, she founded her own practice serving clients in New York and Connecticut. She focuses on wills, residential real estate and business transactions, and provides legal research and writing services for other lawyers. She writes and speaks on issues of interest to lawyers, including time and stress management, work-life balance and effective legal writing.

It's Not About Time, It's About Focus



BY PAUL BURTON | Time cannot be managed. It ticks inexorably forward. What we *do* with our time can be managed, and that's what matters. So it's not about time, it's about focusing our effort on the things we want to accomplish.

Another word for accomplishment is productivity. Productivity is getting things done. We like to get things done. It makes us feel good — successful. The more successful we feel, the better use we make of our time.

Productivity results from focused effort, not mere activity. Many people confuse activity with productivity. Activity is about motion itself. Productivity is about forward motion — accomplishment. Activity is often noisy; productivity is usually quiet.

Question: How can we create more quiet in our distraction-rich and interruption-riddled days so we can be more focused and increase our productivity?

Answer: We can quiet down our physical and mental spaces.

Creating Quieter Physical Spaces

Increasing focus is about quieting down two spaces: our external space, the work environment; and our mental space, the roar between our ears. First, we'll look at some suggestions for creating a quieter work environment.

1. Turn off new message alerts. New message alerts create a lot of unnecessary noise. We can't help but react to them. It's an instinctual response that results in a self-inflicted interruption every time one goes off. Turn off the alerts and check your messages periodically throughout the day (e.g., every 30 minutes) when you aren't otherwise trying to focus on what needs doing right now.

2. Create a designated work space. Clear everything off a definable space in your work area — like the four corners of your desk. Place only one task at a time in that space and work on it. This eliminates the effect of peripheral vision, which extends 120 degrees in all direc-

tions. Whether we realize it or not, we “see” everything stacked up around that work item. That causes mini-distractions that increase our stress and reduce our focus.

3. **Face away from traffic.** Eliminate the effects of peripheral vision even more by arranging the office to not face the door. Facing the door results in looking up every time someone walks by. An even greater interruption occurs if eyes meet and the passerby comes in, sits down, and regales us with Little Johnnie’s recent soccer game. By facing away from that traffic, those distractions disappear.

4. **“Mostly close” the door.** An open door invites people to come in on their schedule. Oddly, a closed door invites people to knock and then stick their head in! A “mostly closed” door sends the message that we are there, but would rather not be disturbed. Problem solved.

The great thing about these suggestions is that they require little change in our habits. Collectively, they create a much quieter external work world in which we can concentrate and be productive.

Creating Quieter Mental Spaces

The noisiest place on earth is between our ears. Ironically, we need that place to be the quietest to focus and be productive. Here are some thoughts on how to quiet down the mind to be more focused.

1. **Conduct regular core dumps.** We are not good at keeping track of lists — to-do lists, grocery lists. Conduct regular core dumps to get those lists out of our mind. Use a piece of paper. Use an app. Just do it. Once those nagging items are down on a list, the only thing to remember is: Look at the list!

2. **Separate hard-coded work from soft-coded work.** Hard-coded work is anything that goes onto the calendar. Meetings, conference calls, and appointments are examples of hard-coded work. We must be in a specific place at a specific time to work on a specific subject. Soft-coded work is all the tasks and projects we need to accomplish in between all the hard-coded items. By separating these two types of work, we have a clearer picture of what needs doing when. In other words, don’t throw everything that needs to be done onto the calen-

dar. Keep hard-coded work on the calendar and soft-coded work on a to-do list of some kind.

3. **Use only one monitor at a time.** Having multiple computer monitors on the desktop is fashionable. Unfortunately, they increase the workplace noise level (external and internal) with little to no increase in productivity. The reason is simple: Humans *cannot* multi-task. Numerous studies have shown that we can only single task. When we switch between tasks a “switch cost” is incurred where nothing gets done — activity but no productivity. The more we switch, the higher the cost. The recommendation here is to turn the power off on any monitor that is not actively being used.

4. **Sequester yourself when necessary.** Sometimes our physical and mental spaces need more than just a little help getting quiet. When this is the case, sequester yourself. Collect one or two tasks and physically relocate yourself to a quiet space — the library, an empty office, a caucus room. Don’t let anyone know where you are. When you get there, sit down and work on those one or two items. When you are done, go back to your regular workspace and catch up on what you missed while away. Done properly, this sequester period will be highly productive.

Getting our minds quieted down is hard in today’s frantic world. However, a few simple behavior changes can help you attain a higher level of focus throughout the day.

Making the Most of Your Time

Success is about productivity — getting things done. Productivity is about focused effort. Creating quiet physical and mental workspaces promotes focus, which lets us make the most of the time we have.

Paul Burton is a recovering corporate finance attorney who’s spent the last eight years helping people solve their time management challenges. He’s the author of four books and speaks nationally on time management for professionals. His latest venture — [Reprise](#) — is an app for Outlook that lets lawyers and law firms discover how they use email, compare their usage over time, and improve their email habits.

Favorite Time Management Tips

BY DAN PINNINGTON AND REID TRAUTZ

Determined to get going on a far more organized life? Try these tips aimed at squeezing more productivity out of a busy lawyer's day.



1. Handle More Tasks with Just One Touch

Do as much of your work as you can the first time you touch it. Respond to the letter or email, file the response, or delegate the task immediately if the entire assignment can be completed within several minutes. For tasks that take longer, prioritize quickly, then handle later when you have more time.

2. Delegate One Task

Learn to delegate (but not abdicate) one of the tasks on your plate. Train and empower your staff to perform this task, then monitor them periodically to ensure that your staff is doing the job that needs to be done. After one task, delegate another, then another....

3. Document Your Unbillable Time, Too

Write down all the time you work for a client even if it is not billed to the client. Burnout often occurs when individuals do not realize how hard they are working. Then take time at the end of each month to evaluate the efficiency of performing these tasks. Can this work be done a better way or by another person?

4. Plan Your Day

When starting your day, resist opening your email or perusing your social networks. After reviewing your scheduled meetings and appointments, take a few minutes to build a list of tasks that you need to complete that day. Next — and most importantly — prioritize them. It is important that you determine your priorities before other people impose theirs. Revisit your task list at the end of the day and flag items to be added to your list for the next day.

5. Impose a Quitting Time and Stick to It!

Staying late in the office night after night is counterproductive. The level of human productivity often drops to the level of diminishing returns after eight hours in the office. Impose a quitting time and, whenever possible, stick to it. You'll find that when you have a set time to leave the office, you will use your time more wisely all day long. Plus, nobody on their deathbed

says, "I wish I'd spent more time at the office!"

Dan Pinnington is Vice President, Claims Prevention & Stakeholder Relations at the Lawyers' Professional Indemnity Company (LAWPRO), where he helps lawyers avoid malpractice claims. He is a Fellow of the College of Law Practice Management and a prolific writer, speaker and blogger on risk management, legal technology and law practice management issues. Follow him @DanPinnington.

Reid Trautz is a lawyer and the Director of AILA's Practice & Professionalism Center, where he provides practice management information and consulting services to members. He is a nationally known speaker on important issues facing lawyers in the business of law, including workflow management, client communications and risk avoidance. Follow him @RTrautz.

Five Ways to Have a Much Better Day

BY DANIEL GOLD | What you do (or don't do) to begin your day can determine how you feel for the rest of the day — whether you're focused or distracted, energized or tired, positive or grumpy. That's why it's so important to develop strong productivity practices for first thing in the morning. Here are a few good habits to include in your routine to get your day started correctly. Try them and see what a difference it makes.

1. Avoid Checking Your Email First Thing

You're in shock, I know. But checking your email first thing in the morning, whether when you wake up or when you get to the office, is a surefire way to derail your productivity. Sure, you can do a cursory review and glance at what awaits you, but to jump start your productivity, [review your task list](#) first, not your email.

2. Sort Out Your Task List and Calendar for the Day

Review the next actions on your task list and determine which ones to tackle today. Review your calendar and, based on your availability,

determine which tasks you can accomplish, and when. How much time will it take you to do some of the bigger tasks, and how much time will it take to knock out a group of the smaller ones? Now, block out that time in your calendar and get to work. Tip: Do the most complex task first, as much as you may dread it. You'll feel much better knowing you got it done and have the rest of the day ahead for everything else.

3. Drink Water, Lots of Water

When you go to sleep each night, your body goes for its longest stretch without the sustenance it needs to thrive: food and water. Thus, the origin of the term “breakfast” (to break the fast). Your body especially needs to rehydrate when you wake. There are myriad benefits to starting your day by [drinking a couple of glasses of water](#) ... and waiting to drink your coffee! I have made this part of my regimen every morning, and I can assure you it has helped.

4. Exercise, Seriously

I ignored the calls to exercise for well over three decades. When my closest childhood friend told me one day that he decided to start running, I scoffed because he was nearly as lethargic as me. But I realized he was serious when he signed up for a 5K run, so I made the commitment as well. I decided to figure out a way to make this a meaningful and lasting habit by committing to running three times a week for 30 minutes. In fact, I ran my very first 5K last fall, and I am signing up for another. Running frees your mind and liberates you, and some even say it [improves your brainpower](#).

5. Schedule time for inspiring articles and videos

Just as exercise improves your brainpower, so does reading motivational and useful articles early in the day. I use an app called [Readability](#) to explore articles and save them to read later. Also, I truly enjoy watching videos on TED. Why do this? Reading posts about productivity, “[life hacking](#)” and our profession allows me to think more and gain greater perspective on how to do what I do better. And it

feels great to share what I've learned with others, either at work or through social media.

If you aren't doing any of these now, or you're doing just a couple, I encourage you to make a commitment to yourself and schedule time in your calendar for them. If need be, set your alarm clock to get up 30 minutes earlier than usual. But you must commit and make it a habit. I am convinced it takes 30 days to make any routine into a habit. I can promise you, though, that in 30 days, you will have a whole new outlook at work and at home!

Daniel Gold is a productivity author, podcaster, keynote speaker and consultant. He is the moderator of the [GTD Virtual Study Group](#) podcast, co-host of [The Productive Life Show](#) podcast, author of [author of Evernote: The Unofficial Guide to Capturing Everything and Getting Things Done](#) and [Official Springpad eBook](#). You can read Daniel's posts on [Attorney at Work](#) and the official [DEG Consulting website](#).

GET IT DONE!

Daniel Gold writes the monthly "Get It Done" column for Attorney at Work, focused on improving lawyer productivity. Click the links below for terrific tips for getting even more out of your day.

- ➔ [How We Get Things Done](#)
- ➔ [Boost Your Productivity: The Five Phases of GTD](#)
- ➔ [Using Master Checklists in Evernote to Be a More Productive Lawyer](#)
- ➔ [Three Ingenious Tools to Capture Ideas with Evernote](#)
- ➔ [Five Ways to Control Your Inbox](#)
- ➔ [Redefine Productivity and Do More of What Matters](#)
- ➔ [Automate Your Productivity with IFTTT and Evernote](#)
- ➔ [Save Random Sparks of Genius \(the Art of the Capture\)](#)



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Books for Thinking Differently About Time

BY MARY ELLEN SULLIVAN

Yes, we know. Attorneys live and die by the clock. Getting the most out of every chunk of time may ultimately translate into the difference between jetting to the South of France or settling for a staycation. All that said, you're probably already pretty savvy about time management. But it never hurts to have a tune-up, or consider time from an entirely different point of view. Here, we look at five books with very different approaches to time management — see if one gets your clock running a little faster.

The Classic
First Things First
 By Steven R. Covey



By now, everyone has probably read Covey's groundbreaking *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* that uses evidence-based research to define what successful people consistently do differently — and how to make a paradigm shift to put these same principles to work in your life. This book, however, is less about work and more about life. He asks readers to “look at the gap many of us feel between the way

we spend our time and what is deeply important to us,” or, as he puts it, the gap between the clock and the compass. The clock represents how we manage our time and commitments. The compass represents our vision, mission and direction — how we lead our lives. His goal is to replace the clock with the compass so that you spend time on the things that matter most, focusing more on where you are heading rather than how fast you are going.

GREAT QUOTE: “The key to quality of life is in the compass — it's the choices we make every

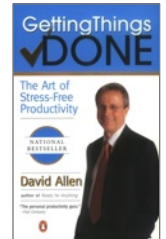
day. As we learn to pause in the space between stimulus and response and consult our internal compass, we can face change squarely, confident that we're being true to principle and purpose, and that we're putting first things first in our lives.”

The Current Guru
Get Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity
 By David Allen

It seems David Allen, highly esteemed management consultant and executive coach, is everywhere these days. *Fast Company* has gone so far as to call him “one of the world's most influential thinkers” in the area of personal productivity. His GTD organizing system turns on ruthless prioritization by understanding that every task, promise or assignment has a place and a time. With everything in its proper place and time, you feel in control and can replace time spent on vague worrying with effective, timely action.

This shifts the balance in your life — accomplishments grow while the pressure to accomplish decreases, resulting in more energy, a more relaxed approach to life and the ability to get more done with less effort. He refers to this as “relaxed control.” What many readers find most useful is the easy-to-consult, one-page flow chart that encapsulates his system.

GREAT TIP: Allen's two-minute rule: If there's anything you absolutely must do that you can do right now in two minutes or less, then do it now, thus freeing up your time and mind tenfold over the long term.



Anti-Procrastination Mantra

Eat That Frog

By Brian Tracy



This book revolves around one key idea: When you do the worst, most dreaded task on your daily to-do list first, you gain energy and momentum for the rest of the day, and you don't sabotage yourself through procrastination. Think about what so many people do when they have to write something: Suddenly the dishes need washing, the desk needs straightening, the dog needs walking, old emails need to be purged, and maybe, just maybe, a nap is calling. In short, you put energy toward everything *but* the most important project. So where does “eat that frog” come in? It's based on the old saying, “If the first thing you do when you wake up each morning is eat a live frog, nothing worse can happen for the rest of the day.”

GREAT FUN: Here's a [video](#) that summarizes the book's core principle in an entertaining minute and a half.

The Philosophical Approach Flow

By Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

Decades ago, this University of Chicago researcher and psychologist set out to understand the optimal human experiences: joy, creativity and the process of total involvement in life. He gave this the term flow, which he defines as the “the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter.” This is



essentially that feeling you get when you are “in the groove” or “in the zone.” Although much of the book centers around understanding the process of happiness through flow, it's easy to make the leap to work and time management. In fact, one chapter addresses how to transform jobs into flow-producing activities. His premise: If you find the flow in your life and your work, everything else falls into place. You get clarity on how you spend your time, while experiencing a profound connection to work and life. We all want what he is having.

GREAT THINKING: “Contrary to what we usually believe the best moments in our lives are not the passive, receptive, relaxing times — although such experiences can also be enjoyable if we have worked hard to attain them. The best moments usually occur when a person's body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile. Optimal experience is thus something that we make happen.”

The No-Nonsense Guide for the Easily Distracted

18 Minutes: Find Your Focus, Master Distraction and Get the Right Things Done

By Peter Bregman

Harvard Business Review columnist Peter Bregman says the idea for this book was born after he realized at the end of one day that he had accomplished nothing he had originally intended, thanks to emails, texts, phone calls and the nonstop fires he had to put out. We've all had too many days like that. Bregman decided to find a way to cut through the daily clutter and distractions and focus on the key



items that are truly the top priorities in his life. One of the systems he developed is the 18 minutes he refers to in the title: taking five minutes at the start of your day, five minutes at the end and eight one-minute check-ins throughout it in order to prioritize and plan for the day, refocus every hour and review how you spent your time. The book is an easy read, eminently actionable and, at times, inspirational.

A GREAT FORMULA: Bregman's six-box to-do list: Identify up to five things — no more — that you want to focus on for the year and write one at the top of each box on the page. Then, generate your daily to-do's in those boxes. You should spend 95 percent of your time in those areas. Take anything that doesn't fit into one of those areas of annual focus off your to-do list. The sixth box, labeled “the other 5 percent,” is like sugar — a little might be okay but your day should never contain more than five percent of the activities that don't fit into your five areas of annual focus.

Demystifying Legal Project Management



BY PAMELA WOLDOW | Maybe you've heard about the rapidly growing Legal Project Management (LPM) trend. Maybe you have felt a little intimidated by the thought of a new “discipline” sweeping the profession — one that promises to significantly change the way lawyers practice law. More practically, maybe you've wondered if there's anything in this hot new trend that can help you — as an individual lawyer — get your time under control, make the most of your time, and improve both your effectiveness and your efficiency. And oh, yes ... also increase the respect and trust you get from your clients. First, let's demystify LPM.

Stripped to its essence, LPM is a systematic, common-sense approach for scoping, planning, managing and controlling legal work within the time and budget requirements you and your client agree upon. So yes, LPM is a discipline — a consistent way of doing things. LPM is also a practical management and communications tool, an effective way of interacting and collaborating with your clients. Let's describe LPM in terms of some of its practical benefits.

Personal Benefits to You

LPM is very front-end loaded. It says it pays to spend more up-front time planning and organizing your work so you can avoid spending so much time later on damage control, crisis management and corrective action. LPM teaches that you should spend more time than you do now in scoping and planning each engagement, for example:

- breaking out its component phases and tasks,
- figuring out how long things actually take,
- creating a budget both of time and dollars, and
- identifying the best and most productive performers.

Once you get really good at this planning discipline, you'll have a better and more conscious understanding of how long tasks really take — both when you perform them and when other levels of lawyers and performers do them. Instead of finding it's 10 p.m. and you've barely scratched the day's to-do list, you'll find that your more realistic time budgets enable you to stay on time, on budget, and “on plan.”

LPM can also help you avoid the dreaded “OPB” (Optimistic Planning Bias) in which you propose (maybe even believe!) the most optimistic work time estimates — to either please the client or paint glowing pictures of potential matter profitability. With OPB, you lose out more often than you luck out. By learning and applying LPM, you discipline yourself to create realistic time frames and anticipate those unexpected twists that can knock hell out of your best-laid plans.

As one partner in a Washington, D.C. firm pointed out, “before I was trained in LPM, I was constantly over-scheduled and in crisis mode. I would promise work to clients and then always end up staying very late or working the whole weekend, to the detriment of my family.” Now that he has mastered LPM, he reports that his work life is much smoother. He understands how long it takes to provide the needed legal services, offers realistic time frames to clients ... and attends many more of his kid's soccer games.

Delegation and Collaboration Benefits

Younger lawyers will tell you it drives them crazy that the lawyers who assign their work and supervise them are really terrible delegators. They all do things differently, they are vague in their instructions and standards, and they often delegate way too much accountability or perhaps — preferring to do everything themselves — don't delegate nearly enough. LPM teaches lawyers that to implement the careful plans they've made, they also have to take real care with delegation — to make it a core discipline — to assure that both “the right people are on the bus” and all those performers are going to the right place. LPM emphasizes the importance of delegating the right tasks to the right performers, using the right performance standards and the right methods for providing performance feedback.

One of the most significant improvements reported from lawyers who have trained in LPM is learning how to “make implicit things explicit.” In other words, LPM trains lawyers to clearly articulate their expectations, rather than leaving associates on their own to try to divine what the partner or senior associate really wants. Lawyers who have used LPM training to improve delegation skills repeatedly report reduced write-downs of time in the 18 to 20 percent range.

LPM proves that great delegators make both effective project managers and loyalty-inspiring leaders. With disciplined delegation, everyone on the team benefits from greater efficiency and fewer do-overs, write-downs, damage control and less effort reinventing the wheel.

Client Benefits

Clients often complain bitterly about poor communication with their outside counsel: They're unresponsive. They only give feedback when they want to, if ever, and they don't keep their client in the loop. Worst of all, they spring costly surprises, often after it's too late to take effective corrective action.

LPM places an extremely high value on constant and candid communication between lawyer and client. One crucial axiom holds that you must “Keep all the players in the loop all the time.” LPM urges that lawyers actively practice the discipline of communication planning — something most lawyers almost never do. Efficient and effective lawyers have learned a systematic approach for spelling out what needs to be communicated, to whom it will be communicated, when it will be communicated and how it will best be communicated.

Communication plans make clients happy and give them a better sense of predictability and control. Communication plans that are followed make them even happier: LPM really does serve as a “communication engine” that transforms the historical adversarial tone of lawyer-client relationships to a collaborative, mutually-beneficial exchange. It doesn't get much more practical than that. When it comes to communication, LPM skills go a long way.

By Pamela Woldow is an attorney and [Partner in Edge International](#). She writes the popular practice management blog, [At the Intersection](#).

Project Management Apps

BY BRETT OWENS

There's a load of project and task management software out there promising to maximize your efficiency, double your free time and make you smarter, richer and taller. But, while project management applications can help you [manage your law practice](#) and [your people](#), it's easy to get in over your head and spend more time managing your software than the projects themselves! So be smart: Consider what you really need (and will use). Not every lawyer needs a Gantt chart to run their practice.

A Few New Options

Here are some highlights of the current crop of project management apps to consider. *(Also see page 35 for a comparison of Asana v. Trello, two popular project management and collaboration tools.)*

- [Remember The Milk](#) is an advanced to-do list. While the program's been around for a while, the newest versions of the mobile app (available for Android, iPhone, iPad and now BlackBerry 10) let you manage your to-do lists from anywhere even more effectively. If you've experienced the frustration of non-mobile-

friendly web apps, you know how convenient a true mobile app can be.

- [Smartsheet](#) — basically, a spreadsheet on steroids — is a dream come true for Microsoft Excel fans. It is blinged out with the project management and collaboration features you always craved in Excel. Spreadsheet jockeys, rejoice!
- [Wrike](#) is a great option for more advanced project management needs because it has the ability to support custom workflows. With Wrike you get everything in one place — your team's activity, time-

lines and communications. Perhaps most importantly, Wrike pays homage to the almighty Gantt chart by dusting it off for practical use in the 21st century.

- [Podio](#) is a veritable pupu platter of apps ... for productivity, that is. You start with their project management offering, and then have the ability to add additional apps to your plate account (sorry, couldn't resist). Like a trench-coat-wearing watch salesman, Podio has it all. Need a CRM tool also? Expense tracking? A new Rolex? Check the [Podio App Market](#) for current listings.

And Some Classics

Two of these classic project management apps — Workflowy and Basecamp — are what we can call “mainstream” offerings:

- [Workflowy](#) is best described as a giant whiteboard in your office — with the added bonus

that everyone can also access it remotely. If something needs to be done, you just add a bullet. When items are completed, you cross them off or delete them. You can also indent sub-items below higher-level objectives to create sub-lists.

- [Basecamp](#), the project management app “legend,” caters to the manager who wants to simply delegate once and never speak of the task again. It emails daily recaps to team members, dropping new assignments directly in their inbox. Open to-dos can be sorted by team member by due date — so that at a glance you can see who should not be leaving the office early today.

And lastly, for those who like their project management and their practice management in the same location, the dynamic duo of online [practice management applications](#) — Rocket Matter and Clio — also boast

their own highly formidable project management features.

(Full disclosure: My company, Chrometa, integrates with both of these products.)

- [Rocket Matter](#) was designed to be a vehicle for implementing GTD (Getting Things Done) for lawyers, with a special task capture system intended to “eliminate all ‘open loops’ from your psyche.”

- [Clio](#) also contains an integrated task management system that rivals Basecamp and, like Rocket Matter, provides you with a “one-stop shop” for all case-specific information related to a matter.

Brett Owens is CEO and Co-Founder of [Chrometa](#), an automatic timekeeping software product designed for solo and small firm attorneys.

MORE PROJECT MANAGEMENT KNOW-HOW

Follow the links below to more good ideas on project management for your law practice.

- ➔ [Project Management Software: Easy as 1-2-3](#) by Brett Owens
- ➔ [Project Management and Your Law Practice Management Software](#) by Brett Owens
- ➔ [Using Project Management Apps to Manage People](#) by Brett Owens
- ➔ [Law Practice Management Software: A Scheduled Tickler](#) by Jared Correia



ANNOUNCING A NEW E-BOOK
BY JORDAN FURLONG

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Conquering Writer's Block: The 21-Minute Method



BY GARY KINDER | You will never “find” time to write; you have to “make” time. Unless you practice law on Walden Pond, carving two or three hours out of your media-riddled day to focus on the substance for a brief or memorandum is nearly impossible. But you can usually preserve pockets of 20 to 30 minutes. Don’t spend these precious moments staring out the window.

First, meet the two sides of your brain: LEFT and RIGHT. The left brain is the CRITICAL side of your brain that insists on perfection. Now. It is not creative, but it thinks it is, and that’s the problem. It tries to insinuate itself throughout the creative process. Think of the left brain as the producer who handles all money and logistics, but cannot stop herself from peering over the director’s shoulder and telling him how to set up every shot. On the CREATIVE side of your head dwells the right brain. It senses things the left brain cannot discern, but it has not one lick of common sense. Think of the right brain as the director who creates and coordinates all of the nuances of mood to fashion a brilliant film, but can’t balance his checkbook. The key to getting the brief written (or the movie made) is to marry the strengths of the two.

Many years ago, I was standing in front of a roomful of lawyers, talking about the 21-Minute Method, when I had a flash of insight, three words that should become your mantra:

Creativity...requires...failure.

You cannot create a substantive piece of writing without failing along the way. It’s the process itself. Michelangelo failed and refined, failed and refined as he created *David*, so it should work for you. It’s not supposed to be good the first time. Or the second. Or the third.

Acknowledging this frees you to fail, which you will, as you move forward. Creating any legal document requires this process of getting something down, and then improving it with as much time as your client is willing to finance.

Back to you. So here you are. You've finished your research. You stare at a blank screen. Now what?

Invariably, the right brain begins, and the left brain instantly challenges, "Are you sure you want to open like that?" so the right brain departs with the Muse, and you're stuck in your office with your left brain, trying to write this memorandum, and nothing's happening. That's called Writer's Block. To conquer it, over several years, I created the Method using "Three Steps and Three Rules."

THREE RULES	THREE STEPS
1. Converse	1. Hide the research
2. Organize	2. Do not stop writing
3. Write	3. Go all the way to the end

The **First Rule: Hide the research.** Do the research, know what you're talking about, then set it aside. Write your first draft or two from memory. After wallowing around in that research for days or weeks, everything you need to know is all there in your right brain. Having it physically in front of you only distracts.

Now **Step One: Converse.** This is the core of the Method. When you have completed your research, imagine a conversation between you and another person, a *real* person— friend, spouse, client, partner, judge – in a *real* setting – office, home, chambers, over a glass of wine. That person has just said to you, "So, tell me about this case/deal/issue/problem." Think about the dynamic here: You would never walk away; you would never sit there, mute, and stare out the window. You

would say something to that real person. Type what you would say. It will not be organized; it will not be good; it's not supposed to be good. It's the first failure along the road to creating that document.

Here, you will also encounter the **Second Rule: You can't stop writing.** The left brain will seize the slightest opportunity to jump in and criticize, and at that point you freeze and writing becomes the painful experience it does not have to be. No matter what pops into your right brain, it goes down on paper. Do not pause, do not look up, do not question. Remember this: In the early stages, it is far more important *that* you write, than it is *what* you write. The momentum alone will carry you in and out of brilliant and not-so-brilliant insights. If you don't stop. The right brain will tell you when it's finished. It's like popping popcorn in the microwave. You get a flurry of pops (ideas), then the pops slow, then you get a pop every two or three seconds, and you know the rest is done. Roughly the same as the popcorn, this conversation usually lasts four to five minutes.

Then comes **Step Two: Organize.** Now, you not only allow the left brain into the process, you invite it, because it knows how to do two things the right brain is incapable of doing: note and group related items, then arrange the groups in logical order. You need only about two minutes to organize. After six or so minutes, you now have a rough outline.

On to **Step Three: Write.** Referring to your rough outline, write for about 15 minutes, expounding upon each point, still working from

"The left brain will seize the slightest opportunity to jump in and criticize, and at that point you freeze and writing becomes a painful experience it does not have to be."

memory, and still not stopping. Don't worry about spelling, punctuation, grammar, or making sense. Just get black on white.

During Step Three, you follow the **Third Rule: You must go all the way to the end.** It's tempting to perfect the first paragraph. Although some paragraphs will develop faster than others, expound upon each thought on your rough outline without stopping to think or pausing to refine. Taking many light passes is far preferable to wrestling one paragraph to perfection.

At the end of about 21 minutes, you now have a two- to three-page draft. Set it aside to answer emails or race to a client meeting, knowing you have something you can work with when you have time to return. Each time, improve what you have written, fail some more, then make it tighter in the next draft.

When I write articles like the one you are reading now, or the [writing tips for WordRake](#), I usually have eight to 10 "drafts," each noticeably improved over the previous one.

You will naturally edit as you go, but do not consciously edit until you think you have a close-to-ready draft. Then have someone you trust proofread your work. If you can't find a human, use (insert shameless advertisement) WordRake, the editing software I created to be the knowledgeable, non-judgmental, always available collaborator we all need to give us the confidence that what we have written is as clear and concise as we can make it before we let anyone else see it. It's fast (10 pages in 30 seconds), and will help you remove the dull and unnecessary words while keeping up your fast pace.

The 21-minute method is an artificial construct designed to keep the left brain out of the creative process until the right brain can get something down on paper you can work with. It will help you "break the block," so you can use those small pockets of time to create the substantive documents your practice demands.

Now for the Tips

Research tip. One of our biggest problems in trying to meet deadlines is spending too much time on research. Compared to the writing, the research is easy, and for that reason it's difficult for us to say, "That's enough." Our fear is that, "*Somewhere* out there *might* be *something* that *could maybe* have a *slight* bearing on what I'm trying to say, and I would hate to begin without that little piece of information." (I've been there; many times; ask my editor.) Understand the issue, acquaint yourself with the area of law, and about the time you start wondering if there might be something else out there, drop the research, and start the Method. If you have gaps in your research (or in your thinking), the writing will reveal them.

Multiple deadlines tip. If you have three deadlines this week, 21-minute the last project. Do a fast second draft, and a fast third draft. That's maybe two hours total. Set it aside. Now 21-minute the second project the same way. Set it aside. Now tackle the most immediate deadline. When you pull out the 3-4-5 pages you sketched out for the later deadlines, you will amaze yourself at the quality of those drafts, and you will see immediately what you need to do to improve them.

Gary Kinder has taught over 1,000 writing programs to law firms like Jones Day, Sidley, Latham & Watkins, and WilmerHale. A lawyer, Gary is also the author of the critically acclaimed New York Times bestseller, Ship of Gold in the Deep Blue Sea. For the American Bar Association, he has created writing webinars and the online CLE series "Advanced Writing for Lawyers." Recently he founded the software company [WordRake](#), the first editing software for lawyers. Email him at garyk@wordrake.com.

Make the Timekeeping Honor Roll



BY FRED ESPOSITO | Wise lawyers know that contemporaneous timekeeping is essential to the success of any fee arrangement — and to the overall financial success of your law firm. Lawyers who reconstruct their time weekly tend to lose *25 to 30 percent* of their time, and those who enter time on a monthly basis can lose as much as *55 to 70 percent*.

To illustrate, assume an attorney is billing at \$150 per hour and doesn't capture 15 minutes a day. When you do the math over the course of a year, that one attorney could lose as much as \$9,000 a year in billable time — and a firm with 25 attorneys could lose as much as \$225,000 in billable time and potential fees. That is a significant number to any law firm.

You Know the Type

Despite statistics that illustrate the impact lost time has on a firm's bottom line, law firms continue to have chronic offenders. To paint the proper landscape, there are four types of timekeepers:

- **"A" students.** These timekeepers are always ahead of the curve by entering their time daily and are low maintenance.
- **Need a kick.** These timekeepers generally have 90 percent or better of their time entered each week, but require more frequent prompting and some maintenance.
- **Special friends.** These timekeepers are usually missing several days of time at any given point and require constant follow-up.
- **Own worst enemy.** These timekeepers are clearly working the hours, but — for whatever reason — do not always record all of their time. Since they have concerns that supervising attorneys will think the

time entered is excessive, they often record *less* billable time just to stay off the radar.

Everyone Can Be an "A" Student

Getting to the honor roll for contemporaneous timekeeping can be a slow and methodical process. Here are five tips to ease the way.

- **Start slow.** Make a commitment to enter your time in small increments throughout the day. From the moment you arrive in the office, use a clipboard with a timesheet or go the system-savvy route and use a timer. Most time-and-billing software packages and apps have timers to facilitate time entry. Commit to recording your time every 15 minutes *or* every time you switch tasks. Incremental steps will help get you into the habit. Whether handwritten and entered in the system by your support staff, or by direct entry (the preferred method), this is a step in the right direction.
- **Try, try again.** If you forget to record some of your time on a particular day, don't give up because you "blew it." Just start recording time again as soon as you realize you fell short. Timekeeping will be more accurate if you have to re-create just a few hours, rather than a few hours plus the rest of the day.
- **Set up reminders.** As ridiculous as this may sound, place a sticky note on the inside of your office door, on your computer screen, on your phone, or even on the steering wheel of your car as a reminder to keep recording your time. I know of one firm that went to the extreme of placing time entry reminders in each of its restrooms to make the point. You will find things go much more smoothly if you set up your own reminders, rather than wait for the "time cops" to knock on your door.
- **Inspire to aspire.** When you don't track your time and have to reconstruct it, take note of how long that takes you. Remember, reconstructing your time is not only likely to be inaccurate (capture rate significantly decreases with time), but it will take more time to reconstruct than to actually enter it in steps. Some lawyers try to re-

create their time by reviewing emails. As methodical as that may seem, you are not capturing all of your time this way. Also, whenever you must reconstruct your time, it means you are either short-changing yourself or overcharging your client, and consequently dealing with the issues surrounding both scenarios.

- **Keep telling yourself there is a reason.** Yes, many view time entry as "an administrative task that gets us paid." Once in a while, remind yourself of the connection between the accuracy of your time and the firm's ability to generate timely billing and receive timely collections. Firms that keep contemporaneous time tend to generate 25 to 40 percent higher revenues than firms that do not keep contemporaneous time. This is a real incentive to improve!

Frederick J. Esposito Jr., CLM, Director of Administration/Chief Financial Officer for the Garden City, NY law firm [Meyer, Suozzi, English & Klein, PC](#), has more than 20 years of [law and accounting firm experience](#). He is a frequent speaker and author of articles on a wide-range of topics, including financial and strategic management, alternative fee arrangements, legal project management and profitability models. In 2012, Long Island Business News named him CFO of the Year. He is currently Chair of ALA's Certification Committee. Follow him @lawmgtguru.

Straight Talkin' Time Apps

BY CHELSEY LAMBERT

Single-Purpose Apps

These simple timekeeping apps for busy professionals may be light on features, but they can execute a timesheet like a flawless triple axle.



Billable Hours

Simple time tracking and recording new projects, tasks and client information is the focus of this app. The tap-to-export option offers all the file types we've come to expect, including Excel or CSV in daily or weekly summary report form.

Fun Fact: App creator Jake MacMullin also wrote [Mousefish](#), a flipbook game for children, combining cards to make silly animal body combinations.

Platform: iOS
Price: \$2.99
Learn more: [Billable Hours](#)



Chrometa

Ever wish you could have someone follow you around and record what you do every day? That's exactly what Chrometa does — minus the weirdness and privacy issues. It keeps track of every action you take on your mobile device or

desktop. Phone calls, website browsing, meetings on your calendar — all are automatically captured as time records, allowing you to report, export or send to the source of your choice.

Fun Fact: Chrometa was the first provider to integrate with both Rocket Matter and Clio's web-based practice management platforms.

Platform: iOS, Android
Price: \$19 per month; multi-device pricing available
Learn more: [Chrometa](#)



Enter Your Hours

This app gained popularity with billable professionals when it was first released because it focused in on the attorney market with legal-specific tools such as LEDES invoice exports, trust accounting, and QuickBooks integration.

Fun Fact: If there is a specific feature you need, the team will do custom development.

Platform: iOS
Price: \$19.95 per month; \$39.95 per month for 2 users and up
Learn more: [Enter Your Hours](#)



iTimeKeep

iTimeKeep integrates with top legal billing systems and is one of the only time capture apps native to Android as well as iOS. A clean, bright interface and smart features like spell-checking

and custom billing codes make it a cheerful addition to your device.

Fun Fact: Tabs3 users will be especially delighted to hear about the sync feature, to help turn those hard earned hours into invoices.

Platform: iOS, Android, BlackBerry
Price: Free
Learn more: [iTime Keep](#)



Office Time

A simple and free app for tracking time on the go. The free version is limited to use on the iPhone or iPad, while Pro allows you to export your tracked time to Excel or CSV files.

Fun Fact: Office Time is a PC Magazine Editors' Choice award winner, and a TiPb.com pick of the week.

Platform: iOS
Price: Free; Pro requires a \$7 desktop download
Learn more: [Office Time](#)



Paymo

The free version of this easy-to-use app captures time and generates basic reports on the web. Export to CSV or Excel or share with others.

Fun Fact: Paymo is one of the most downloaded time-tracking apps in the App Store, and based in Romania.

Platform: iOS, Android
Price: Free; \$14.95 per month for 3 users
Learn more: [Paymo](#)



Time Master

A complete time, billing and invoicing system for \$10?

Not a bad deal for a solo or two-person practice. While this app doesn't contain the client management or note-taking tools you'll see in some of the practice management platform apps, it does have a happy friendship with QuickBooks, even allowing you to import troublesome IIF files (for an additional \$5.99).

Fun Fact: Sync your iPhone and iPad accounts together to avoid courtroom phone restrictions and keep your mobile billing activities judge-friendly.

Platform: iOS
Price: \$9.99
Learn more: [Time Master](#)



Toggl

Time tracking simplified! Start tracking time with one tap. View your time on the web, and keep the billable hours going even when you're offline. Toggl will sync and update as soon as you reconnect.

Fun Fact: Toggl was created by a team of developers for internal use after their frustration with common time tracking tools.

Platform: iOS, Android
Price: Basic is free; Premium \$5 per month
Learn more: [Toggl](#)

Practice Management from Your Palm

These apps elegantly marry your need for mobile timekeeping with a suite of practice management tools, catapulting your team into 21st-century efficiency.

Bill4Time

Access client info, record expenses, manage your schedule — and track your time. You can tailor your mobile timekeeping experience with Bill4Time's [Legal Version](#), which includes ABA Task Codes, LEDES export for invoices and trust accounting features.

Fun Fact: Bill4Time was one of the first time tracking iPhone apps [reviewed on iPhone JD](#) in January 2009.

Platform: iOS, Android
Price: Standard version, \$9.99 per month; \$19.99 per month and up for legal-specific features
Learn more: [bill4time](#)

Billings

You bill a lot of time, and down to the second. You need a timekeeping app on steroids to track every swipe and tap while you power through work on your phone. Billings keeps an eye on your activities and creates time records for each task. Pull the time records into reports or generate professional invoices from your Mac, iPhone or iPad.

Fun Fact: Billings and Billings Pro are sister products to the famed Mac

program and app [Day Lite](#). Market Circle won the Apple Design Award in 2009 for Billings Pro's easy and intuitive interface.

Platform: iOS
Price: Free for 1 Invoice, \$9.95 per month for 5 invoices, \$19.95 per month for unlimited
Learn more: [Billings](#)

Clio

Clio delivers powerful firm management tools, including a timer, to the palm of your hand. Beyond time tracking, complete access to matter records, billing information and schedules is just a tap or swipe away. The app is an extension of Clio's web-based practice management platform, which offers features such as IOLTA management, online payment processing, document assembly and integration with third-party tools like QuickBooks and Net Documents.

Fun Fact: Clio launched its beta version at ABA TECHSHOW 2008 in Chicago, and it shares [every employee's bio](#) on its website (the list has grown quite a bit since then).

Platform: iOS
Price: \$49 per month per attorney; \$25 per month per support staff
Learn more: [Clio](#)

iSlips for Timeslips

This iPhone app extension for the long-time law office staple Timeslips lets Timeslips users track time, on- or offline, sync time records with the office account over Wi-Fi and even add miles using your device's GPS functionality. Although it comes at a higher price than standard iPhone apps, this one-time cost may be well

worth the access to previously unavailable mobile capabilities for Timeslips users.

Fun Fact: Timeslips is a Sage Software, Inc. product, which serves more than 2 million clients worldwide and is one of the longest standing legal time-and-billing applications on the market.

Platform: iOS
Price: \$64.99 per download (in addition to your Time Slips subscription)
Learn more: [iSlips for Timeslips](#)

MyCase

MyCase aims to facilitate communication between law firm users and their clients in a very social manner, even attaching client photos with their records. A client portal, icons instead of menus and other add-ons that help speed case preparation have earned MyCase excellent user reviews. The iPhone app delivers critical client info to users on the go, and meets the basic everyday needs of managing a schedule, tracking time and recording notes on the fly.

Fun Fact: Nikki Black, MyCase VP of Business Development, is an attorney, author and avid chef, posting her daily creations on [Twitter](#).

Platform: iOS
Price: \$39 per month per attorney; \$29 per month per support staff
Learn more: [MyCase](#)

Rocket Matter

Rocket Matter was an early pioneer of web-based and mobile practice management tools. Its native iPhone app allows users to capture time on the run, while recording expenses, matter notes, appointments and

several other items. Founder Larry Port is committed to expanding the robust platform — evident through release of updates such as Dropbox integration, document assembly tools and the launch of Rocket Matter X1, a marketing solution built to answer users' goals and challenges.

Fun Fact: Feature updates are named after Star Trek characters, The latest: Uhura, Chekov and [Sulu](#).

Platform: iOS
Price: \$59 per month for first user, lower rates apply for additional users
Learn more: [Rocket Matter](#)

Total Attorneys

The only mobile solution that allows attorneys to actively keep time, communicate with clients, manage caseloads and work inbound marketing leads in real time. Apps in the same category focus functionality on mostly back-office tools, while Total Attorneys offers an alternative aimed at creating efficiencies and fostering business growth.

Fact: In 2009 Total Attorneys opened the [Total Impact House, in Gulu, Uganda](#), a residence and long-term rehabilitation center for young female victims of human trafficking.

Platform: iOS
Price: Begins at \$20 per month for 2 users, marketing lead rates may vary
Learn more: [Total Attorneys](#)

Chelsey Lambert is President and founder of [Virtulawso](#), a law practice management and technology consulting practice based in Chicago. Her specialties include online delivery of legal services and e-commerce solutions for small to midsize law firms.

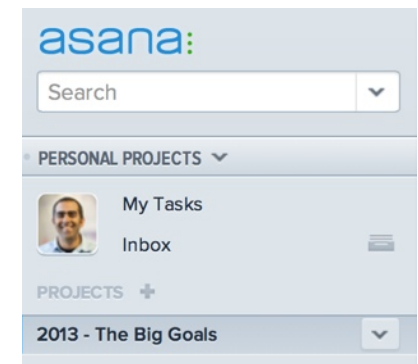
Control Your Technology, Control Your Time



BY SACHIN BHATIA | I often rationalize new gadget purchases by telling myself, “This will make my life so much better.” That, in essence, has been the promise of most technology. They expand our capabilities and allow us to do more with less. But, to do so, control is absolutely key. You need to control your technology, as opposed to it controlling you. Here are some tips that have worked for me.

Start with the Long View

Time management starts with long-term goals. You need to know where you want to go with your life before you start attacking your day-to-day. Over the winter holiday, I set four goals for the new calendar year (one each in health, family, skills and career). The key is to reference these goals every week. I use [Asana](#) for this. Every Sunday night, I reinforce my long-term goals by reading them and evaluating my progress.



Move to a Week View

Once you have a list of what you want to accomplish, take the time to figure out if you’re effectively allocating time toward your goals.

I recently audited one [full week in 30-minute increments](#). I logged my time in an Excel file, but you could use Google Docs. I categorized and color-coded how my time was spent. Turns out, I wasn’t blocking get-work-done time during office hours, which caused me to lose time in the evening that I could have spent exercising.

Once I realized I had 336 cells to fill in every week, I started to see abundance rather than constraints. Why couldn’t I spend 10 cells (five

hours) per week on my health? I'd still be left with 326 cells for my other three major goals.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
5AM	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
5:30	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
6	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
6:30	Get dressed + Mira dressec read with mira in bed	Sleep	Sleep
7	Get dressed + Mira dressec get mira dressed	get mira dressed	Get Dressed + G
7:30	Drive to collision cetner	get mira breakfast	Drive to collision
8	Drop car off	commute	Estimate at collis
8:30	Drive to rental center	work	Speedy auto glas
9	Pick up car + commute to w work	work	Twilio - urgent iss
9:30	Email	work	Twilio - urgent iss
10	Meeting with Kavita	work	Order lunch for te

Once You Know Your Goals, Optimize

After you know what you want to achieve, technology can be leveraged to amplify and speed up how you achieve it. I have found that my iPhone excels at making me more efficient with the time I have, because I control how I use it. Here are eight apps and workflows that have worked for me.

1. [Asana](#) is a web-based task management system that also has a beautiful iPhone app. It allows me to track (and sometimes share) my long-term goals, personal tasks and team tasks. It's free until you get 15 people in your organization. (See page 35 for more on Asana.)
2. [Streaks](#) is an iPhone app that lets you mark off calendar days and create daily wins. This is great for establishing a habit such as daily writing, practice or exercise.
3. [DayOne](#) is an iPhone app that lets you make private journal entries. At first glance, this might appear to have a weak connection to time management. However, I've found that by logging my activities, I gain a better sense of what makes me happy. This is useful when it comes time to rethink larger goals. For me, it is a reminder that relationships with my family and friends are most important.

4. [Overdrive](#) is an iPhone and Android app that connects to [my local library](#). It allows me to check out audiobooks and effectively multi-task during my commute. Alternatives are [Audible](#) or podcast apps like [Instacast](#). And, if you commute by car, make sure you use the right tools to [stay safe](#).

5. [Instapaper](#) is an iPhone app that allows you to "time-shift" your reading, so you dedicate certain hours to it. With Instapaper, I can queue up a reading list and use my office time for actual work.

6. [TextExpander](#) works with a variety of apps and saves you from having to type the same snippet of text multiple times. I have simple shortcuts defined like "ddate" to type today's date to more complicated ones like ";oa," which opens up a full document template for writing an opportunity assessment (how we evaluate projects at Avvo). I also use it on my Mac and sync shortcuts via [Dropbox](#).

7. [Turn off notifications on all apps](#). You don't need to be buzzed every time someone retweets you or likes a photo of your dog. It's just distracting. How many times have you turned to your iPhone to make a call and been distracted by a red badge or notification? Make deliberate time to check the apps you need to care about.

8. [Silent hours](#). My wife and I both put our iPhones away in a cabinet from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Those are family hours. Since the iPhone is our home phone line, we've invested in a [Panasonic Link2Cell cordless phone](#) that allows calls to go through. We don't miss important phone calls, but we can put the Internet, social networking and text messages on hold.

Ultimately, time management must start with a plan. Crafting a plan and being in control of your technology will allow you to use it as an accelerator rather than a drain.

[Sachin Bhatia](#) is the Vice President of Product overseeing Avvo's product management and user experience. Sachin has spent over 15 years in the Internet business in various product, technical and design roles. He started his career at Microsoft in the travel product group and arrived just in time to help with the initial launch of Expedia.com. Follow him [@sachbhat](#).

Asana v. Trello: Checklist Collaboration Tools Compared

BY CATHERINE SANDERS REACH | In his book [The Checklist Manifesto](#), surgeon Atul Gawande asserts that checklists are a “cognitive net,” a mechanism that can help prevent experienced people from making errors due to flawed memory and attention, and ensure that teams work together. Or, as Steven Levitt of *Freakonomics* fame put it, “the book’s main point is simple: no matter how expert you may be, well-designed checklists can improve outcomes.”



In a law office, checklists help reduce errors and increase efficiency. They ensure that work is done, and in an order that makes the most sense. They can also be used as part of a task management system, showing each person in the organization how her responsibilities on the checklist affect the entire procedure. Two collaboration tools that specifically focus on lists and tasks were recently launched online. One, [Asana](#), created by former Facebook employees, provides a web-based “to do” list for up to 30 people to share. The other, [Trello](#), lets users create shared boards with task cards. Both are free.

So which one is better for task and project management based on procedural checklists? Let’s compare.

Basics

Both Asana and Trello are appropriate for creating checklists for single users or creating shared checklists for small groups for free. Both have now added “premium” or “business class” workgroup spaces as well. While these tools could be used for more complex projects, for this review let’s assume the firm’s needs are documenting a checklist or task list, assigning the task with a deadline to someone on the team, and making sure that task has been completed.

- After getting an Asana username and password, you create a work space and invite members (up to 15 for free) if you like. Within the work space you can set up projects and within the project adds tasks. Tasks can be prioritized, tagged, assigned to someone, assigned a due date, and have files attached. Each task has a checkbox to show if it has been completed, and each task has an activity feed.

Users can subscribe to tasks via email or RSS. Projects can be duplicated and archived. The interface is simple, clean and intuitive.

- In Trello, you set up a username and password to get started, then create an organization and invite members (as many as you want). You create a board for each project. Each board is made up of lists, and each lists has “cards.” Cards are equivalent to tasks. Cards can be assigned members, color-coded labels, due dates, attached files, subtasks with checklists and more. Cards also can be dragged and dropped to different lists. An activity log shows recent changes, and the board, lists and cards can be searched and filtered.
- **Verdict:** Feature sets are roughly the same for the free versions. However, the terminology and interface of Asana will be more comfortable for word-driven lawyers. Those who have worked in project-driven organizations or like a more-graphical interface will feel more comfortable in Trello.

Collaborators

Both products provide options for adding collaborators at multiple levels.

- Asana limits work spaces to up to 15 users for free. Asana Premium [pricing](#) from there is \$50 a month and up, but is by group instead of per user per month; 30 members is \$100 a month, 50 members is \$300 a month and so forth. The premium workspaces also afford project-level permissions and priority support. Asana workspace collaborators have full access to all tasks, though you can add unlimited free guests with limited access.
- Trello offers access for an unlimited number of collaborators at the organization, boards, lists and cards levels. Access is granted at each level as well. Simply click “Members” to choose who has access to each discrete point of the project. Trello “[Business Class](#)” adds Google Apps integration, bulk export, read-only roles, and extra administrative control for \$200 per year for each organization.

- **Verdict:** Trello’s granular access and unlimited collaborators will make it appealing to firms looking to invite other parties to participate in taking part of assigned responsibilities in the checklist.

Integration

Most lawyers are not looking for yet another site or application to check constantly. Fortunately, both of these tools offer some integration with software and services attorneys already use.

- For each task in Asana, a user can choose to sync with MS Outlook, Google Calendar or any calendar that uses iCal. However, this sync will only include tasks with due dates and will not include tasks marked as completed. Users are automatically following each project and each task they are collaborating on, unless they choose to unfollow. Asana will send activity messages and daily reminders to your email address. Users can also send email to a project dropbox in Asana to create new tasks for themselves. Asana has a mobile app for iPhone, and a mobile site for Android or iPad.
- In Trello, there is a “Subscribe” option to see when a collaborator changes a card or updates a task. Notifications will then appear in the “Notification” button in the top navigation bar. Unread notifications will be emailed to you. Users can have notification levels set at “never,” “periodically” (once every hour) or “instantly.” Google Apps integration is available to paid subscribers. Trello has full apps for both iOS and Android.
- **Verdict:** Currently Asana has more options for working within your email and calendar apps in the free version, and you can receive notifications and send tasks to the system without logging in. However, this functionality is “in progress” for Trello.

Security

Both applications have the usual privacy/security expected from free or freemium web applications.

- Asana’s [privacy policy](#) (last updated March 30, 2012) states (somewhat alarmingly) that they can monitor your content and remove any information you post for any reason or no reason. Then they further state the company will not view your content except to maintain the service, resolve support requests, or comply with laws or cooperate with law enforcement. They use SSL transfer between your device and their servers. Asana’s [security statement](#) claims that data is hosted in SAS 70 audited data centers for physical security; Amazon’s relational database service is used for redundancy and backup; and unauthorized access to user data access is checked.
- Trello’s [privacy and security policy](#) (last updated April 10, 2013) has grown in length and complexity as they have added paid services and integration with other applications. They commit to making privacy a default, and the user must actively add others to share information. The member profile is public, but not your email address. Trello states that they may need to access data within your account to provide support, but will request your explicit permission before doing so. All traffic runs on SSL/HTTPS, which is standard security protocol for secure information transfer, and they back up data hourly, with copies stored offsite. Trello may disclose user content if required by law. All data is entirely portable, with a “share, print and export” button for each board and card. The export is to JSON, which cannot be opened in Excel or other spreadsheet software.
- **Verdict:** Trello’s refreshingly jargon-free policy leaves some gaps regarding security protocols but provides comforting assurances about data portability and ownership. Asana’s policies are more similar to what is found in boilerplate cloud provider language for freemium services.

The Winner?

For lawyers, Asana edges out Trello only because of the familiar terminology (workspace/project/task), text-driven interface, and more options for integration with tools lawyers currently use to manage tasks and communication. Trello has almost matching features, but for those without a project management background, the “card” paradigm may be too unfamiliar to get started quickly.

Others have weighed in, with a [Quora board discussion](#) concluding “it’s like BMW vs. Mercedes. Taste plays a role.” There are other shared checklist tools in abundance, such as [Workflowy \(reviewed by Jeff Krause\)](#) and [Remember The Milk](#), that offer a few options, but for free full-function workgroup collaboration Asana and Trello are certainly worth a look.

Catherine Reach is Director, Law Practice Management & Technology for the [Chicago Bar Association](#). A popular speaker and author on law technology, she was Director of the American Bar Association’s Legal Technology Resource Center for over 10 years, providing practice technology assistance to lawyers. Follow her [@CatherineReach](#).

Five Email Productivity Killers



BY BRET BERESFORD-WOOD | Email. It's the app we love to hate. We're overwhelmed by it most days, yet we couldn't practice law effectively without it. We have identified five email productivity killers common to lawyers and legal professionals. Is your productivity suffering because of any of them? Review the following self-assessment guide and consider these solutions for making email more productive.

EMAIL SELF-ASSESSMENT

1. Runaways

QUESTION: Are you involved in endless email conversations?

DESCRIPTION: A runaway email conversation occurs when two or more people are involved in an email-based dialog that extends beyond three replies.

WHY IT MATTERS: People can effectively type 40 to 50 words per minute. These same people can speak about 150 words per minute. That means talking to someone is three times faster! So, when an email thread extends beyond the simple communication of information and blossoms into an actual conversation, it is more efficient to talk in real-time.

What you can do:

- If you are engaged in a runaway email thread, take the initiative and schedule a call or meeting.
- If you are not engaged and you have no authority over those participating, politely ask to be removed from the thread, or consider right-clicking an email in the thread and using Outlook's "Ignore" feature. (A word of caution: This will send the whole conversation, not just future postings, to the Deleted folder).
- If you are not engaged and you are in a position of authority over some or all of those participating, direct the others to schedule a call or meeting and explain the reason why runaway threads are unproductive.

2. Pounces

QUESTION: Do you feel compelled to check your inbox all the time?

DESCRIPTION: Pouncing occurs when the email inbox is checked too frequently — more than four times per hour.

WHY IT MATTERS: Productivity — getting things done — results from focused effort. Frequent inbox checks are self-inflicted distractions that reduce focus and adversely affect productivity.

What you can do:

- Determine what a reasonable response time is for email and base your inbox checks on that timeframe. For example, if 15 minutes is an acceptable response time during the workday, then the inbox needs to be checked four times per hour.
- Eliminate the self-inflicted distractions caused by email software by turning off the new message alerts. In Microsoft Outlook 2010, click on **File > Options > Mail > Message Arrival >** and then uncheck the first, second and fourth box under When New Messages Arrive.
- Another way to minimize the psychological pull of the inbox is to minimize the email screen and avoid using a second monitor to display the inbox. This simple out-of-sight-out-of-mind trick helps you focus on the task at hand.
- Use timers (even an egg timer) to remind you to check your inbox every 15 minutes (or whatever interval you select).

3. Re-reads

QUESTION: Are you re-reading emails again and again?

DEFINITION: Re-reads occur when no action is taken with respect to the contents of a message between reads.

WHY IT MATTERS: Activity is motion; productivity is *forward* motion. Re-reading messages is activity, not productivity. Re-reading *is* one way to manage the tasks embedded in email, but it's inefficient.

What you can do:

- Following a simple read-and-act process can reduce re-reading. In Outlook, only a few configuration changes need to be made:

Turn off the Reading Pane by clicking on **View > Reading Pane > Off**. This will give you a simple list of emails in your inbox.

Set Outlook to advance to the next email after “acting” on the open email. Click on **File > Options > Mail**. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and select “open the next item” in the drop-down menu under Other. Now, when you click Delete or Move inside of an email, the next email will automatically open. (Note, the Move command is located in the middle of the ribbon in every email.)

With these two settings changed, you can now quickly determine if an email can be deleted or moved, leaving in your inbox only those emails associated with tasks.

4. Hoarding

QUESTION: Is your inbox filled with lots of old, unnecessary email?

DESCRIPTION: We hoard email when we fear losing valuable information, we lack understanding of how to process archival information better, and we haven't been taught a better way to manage email.

WHY IT MATTERS: An overstuffed inbox can be overwhelming. It's also harder to find emails you need when they are intermingled among old and unimportant ones.

What you can do:

- First, make sure you are following the read-and-act process described above. The magic of this system is that it de-clutters your inbox as you process messages.
- Second, archive messages you can't delete. Organize folders based on the hierarchy of your work. For example, law firms largely work on Clients and Matters. Corporations are generally structured

around functions like Sales and Operations, then around Projects or Product Lines. With the basic structure established, archival email can be moved to the folders you created with just one or two clicks. Note, too, that folders can be created on the fly by clicking Move, navigating to the area you want to create the new folder, and New. Name the new folder and when you click OK, the email is moved there and the next email in your inbox is opened automatically.

Think of these suggestions as a way of treating email like regular mail. With regular mail, we sort between junk mail (delete), mail that needs to be filed (move) and mail that contains action items (leave in inbox).

5. ASAPs

QUESTION: Does email instill both a sense of urgency and anxiousness in you?

DESCRIPTION: Email, and in particular some of its features, instills both a sense of urgency and anxiousness in many people. The result is a constant need to check the inbox and respond as soon as possible.

WHY IT MATTERS: By allowing email to drive our need to respond “ASAP,” we become enslaved to the tool. The urgency and anxiety that build up are defocusing and reduce productivity. In addition, these emotions have physical and psychological costs. They are stressors that contribute to illness and burnout.

What you can do:

In addition to the suggestions already given, there are a few things you can do to avoid responding ASAP:

- Realize that ultra-short replies don’t need to be sent. Examples include: “got it,” “will do” and “very funny (LOL).” Instead, wait until you can send a more meaningful message *after* you’ve had time to do what was asked of you. Another suggestion is to start email replies with a formal greeting. This will evoke a more meaningful response.

- Consider how the instant response is perceived within your organization. Until recently, responding ASAP was a good thing. Today, email “addiction” is gaining attention. Consequently, people may wonder if you’re just focused on email responses and not focused on more meaningful work.
- Periodically abandon your smartphone. Leave the smartphone in the car when you go into the restaurant — regardless of who your dining companions are — and in your office when you go to a meeting. The point of real-time engagement is to focus on those people regarding those topics, not to check email.

The larger effort is to put email in its rightful place as that relates to our hierarchy of needs and our priority of work. To be in command of our work and our life, we must necessarily act. This action — management of our behaviors and our focus — is something that must happen throughout each day. The alternative is to allow technologies like email dictate when and what is most important with little regard for our larger needs. Consider this the next time you reach to click on your email inbox during a conference call with your team, or you reach for your smartphone at the dinner table.

Small Incremental Changes Aggregate Over Time

Think about the questions posed above. Consider the productivity losses incurred by these all-too-common behaviors. Ask yourself if there are small changes you make that, when aggregated over the course of the next year, will make a big difference in how productive you are and how successful you feel.

Bret Beresford-Wood helps people make email more productive. He is the founder and CEO of Reprise. Reprise is an app for Outlook that lets people discover, compare and improve how they use email. You can learn more at www.repriseapps.com.

Seven Alternatives To Composing Email from Scratch

BY VIVIAN MANNING | I'm lazy, and that's a trait I try to take advantage of whenever possible. How? By relying on every software automation function available to me. If the software will do my work, I'm darned well going to let it. Not only is it faster (leaving me more time to garden if the snow ever melts), but software makes fewer typos than I do when left to my own non-automated fingers.

When it comes to composing emails, most everyone does it the long way, keystroke by tedious keystroke. But a lot of what's written in emails is repetitive — replies to prospective client inquiries containing boilerplate information, for example, or memos to bookkeeping. Microsoft Outlook provides a veritable bounty of automation features that will compile your keystrokes for you, so why keep typing from scratch? Instead, try some of these automation alternatives. And if I've missed something, please share *your* shortcut to creating a long email in the comments box at the end. (These concepts apply to other email programs, too.)

1. AutoCorrect

AutoCorrect, the old standby, is still available in newer versions of Outlook, but Microsoft has it hidden away. If you use AutoCorrect in Word, you already know how to use it in Outlook as a kind of shorthand: You assign a code to a long string of text. You type the code, then hit the space bar and, like magic, the code disappears and in its place you get the text you specified. The text can be as short or long as you like, and it can be formatted any way you like. If it was perfect when you created it, it will be perfect when you let AutoCorrect recreate it. (Just don't make your code a real word, or every time you type your code into an email when you really want just the word itself, you'll have to correct it!)

To access AutoCorrect in Outlook 2010 and 2013, click File, Options, Mail, Spelling and AutoCorrect, then AutoCorrect Options. Enter your chosen code in the Replace box, then paste your desired replacement text in the With box. Then, click the Formatted Text radio button and Add. Now, the next time you type that code and then press the space bar — presto — the replacement text will appear. For a short explanation, here is a [good lesson on using AutoCorrect in Microsoft Office](#). (Just ignore the references to “typo” — the typo you are replacing is your code, not a spelling mistake!)

2. AutoText

AutoText is quite similar to AutoCorrect, in that you type a chosen code and let it expand to the desired text. It is still available in Outlook 2010, but Microsoft has moved it to display under Quick Parts. (I'm not sure about Outlook 2013.) To create an AutoText, simply create the text you wish to insert in your email, then select it and assign a code to it. Then, when you press the F3 key, or hit Enter, the code will be replaced by the text you specified, with formatting intact. Here's a super quick tutorial on using AutoText in Outlook 2010, [How to NOT type commonly typed phrases in Outlook](#).

3. Quick Parts

Microsoft's Quick Parts feature is meant to be the replacement for AutoText. I'm so wed to AutoCorrect and AutoText that I've never taken to Outlook's Quick Parts. (It doesn't seem to function much differently than AutoText.) But Quick Parts are easy to create and use. Type the text that you want to insert automatically into your email, select it, and then choose Quick Parts on the Insert Ribbon. Next, choose "Save Selection to Quick Part Gallery" and assign a name (a description is optional). The next time you want to insert that text in an email, just go to Insert, select Quick Part and choose from the displayed list. Or, just start typing the text and, eventually, a pop-up will appear. When it does, press the Enter key and the remainder of the text will be added. (Microsoft's Outlook blog has a quick [how-to on Using Quick Parts here](#).)

4. Message Templates

Outlook message templates are very similar to Word document templates, just more annoying to use because you really have to dig into the menus to create and use them. Once you do have a template message created, however, you will find that it does have extra bells and whistles that AutoText, AutoCorrect and Quick Parts can't duplicate. With a message template, you can pre-set the To, CC and BCC lines, along with the Subject line. If you have a 100 percent repetitive email,

this may be a great way to go. Just call up the template and finalize it however you wish, then hit Send. Off the email goes, but the template remains, ready to be used when you next need it. If you decide Outlook's message templates are the way you want to go, [have a quick read here first](#).

5. Draft Messages

Using draft emails for repetitive emails is a take-off on templates, but a heck of a lot less clicky to access. A draft email is a saved but unsent message, generally stored in the Drafts folder. To create a reusable draft email, just create the message as you normally would, including any To (etc.) and Subject lines, but don't send it yet — save and close it instead. When you're ready to send it, head off to your Drafts folder and open the draft message. Here's the really important part: You don't *send* it, but you *forward* it instead. When you forward the unsent draft, Outlook will create a copy of the draft for you to send off, leaving the draft intact for future use. You can work up quite a stable of draft message templates using this approach!

MSOutlook.info has a good explanation here: [Keep a copy of a draft as a message template](#).

6. Save Unsent Email Outside of Outlook

You don't have to save the email to your Drafts folder — you can save it to your Desktop (or another folder) for even easier access. Just go ahead and draft the email fully, then save it outside of Outlook, using the "Save as" process. Make sure you save it with a .msg file extension. (That is Outlook's file format for emails.) Browse to the location you want to save the email. (I prefer my desktop or a folder on my desktop for these saved but unsent emails.) If you save to your desktop, you will see a new envelope icon on your desktop — that is your unsent email. To send, just double-click on the message file to open and polish it off, then hit Send. Off the email goes, leaving behind the original on your Desktop for future use. Of the many ways to compose reusable emails, this is my favorite.

7. Email Signatures

This one always takes people by surprise. Most everyone has [automatic signatures](#) added to the end of their emails — you know, the part that says: “Thanks, Vivian Manning, IT Manager,” etc. But nobody says you have to limit your signature to that standard information. A signature can be an entire email, and you can create multiple signatures. Potentially, with this method you can create a reusable email by just clicking Insert, Signature, and then choosing the particular signature that contains the text you want to send. Very easy and convenient. Outlook 2010 and 2013 users: Be aware that you can only have one signature per message, so make sure that when you use signatures for an entire message, the message also includes your real signature, too! Microsoft provides basic instructions on creating an email signature in Outlook [here](#).

Now that you have alternatives, pick the one that appeals to you most and stop working for your email. Put it to work for you instead! Just one small caveat. Don’t overwhelm yourself by creating too many reusable messages at once. I promise, you’ll forget more than you remember. Break it down into small chunks, and once that first chunk is committed to memory, move on to the next.

Vivian Manning is the IT Manager at [Barriston Law LLP](#) in Barrie, Bracebridge and Cookstown, Ontario. Prior to moving into IT, Vivian practiced law primarily in the area of Municipal Land Development, with a total of 17 years in private practice before switching to the IT side of the law office. She currently indulges her love of teaching tech through her blog [Small City Law Firm Tech](#), where she provides “tips of the day.” Vivian writes Attorney at Work’s [“Power User”](#) column.

10 More Time-Saving Tips

A few more articles from Attorney at Work to help boost your productivity.

1. [iPads for Lawyers: Power User Shortcuts](#)
by Carol Gerber
2. [Caveat Editor: Editing Legal Documents on Your iPad](#)
by Carol Gerber
3. [A Better Way to Start Your Outlook Email Day](#)
by Vivian Manning
4. [Favorite Microsoft Outlook Add-Ons](#)
5. [BlackBerry Speed Essentials](#)
by Dan Pinnington
6. [Document Assembly for Real Lawyers](#)
by Joy White
7. [Quieting the Noisiest Place](#)
by Paul Burton
8. [Clean Up Your Email Routine](#)
by Andrea Cannavina
9. [Power Up the Free Google Calendar](#)
by Catherine Sanders Reach
10. [Pickin’ Up What You’re Puttin’ Down: Document Management Tips for Lawyers](#)
by Jared Correia

Top iPhone and iPad Productivity Apps for Lawyers



Productivity apps help you manage the information you need to work efficiently, no matter where you are. Which apps do lawyers like to use? National Purchasing Partners has identified this great list of 20 — many of them free — for document review and mark up, scanning, recording, note-taking, time-tracking and much more. Supported by Verizon Wireless, these apps can enhance your practice and increase productivity.



AppStart

This app is designed to help you become more familiar with your iPad and iPhone apps. Throughout AppStart, you'll find special sections that tell you which apps you'll need if you want to turn your device into a specific kind of tool. For example, you'll be given a list of the essentials apps for certain types of users — lawyer, mom, dad, musician, writer, professor. No need to scour the top charts in the App Store. AppStart recommends the exact set of apps to download.

Price: Free

Learn more: [AppStart](#)



Discover Apps

Simply search for an app that you like or choose from one of Discover Apps' featured apps. You will see how the apps you choose are connected in a massive, never-ending map of the App Store, and get recommendations for other apps to download.

Price: \$1.99

Learn more: [Discover Apps](#)



iTap mobile RDP

Using the Microsoft RDP protocol, iTap gives you complete remote control and fast access to your Windows desktop. Advanced compression and caching technologies allow you to use your Windows desktop, even when forced to use slower connections. It's the only RDP client available for the iPhone with FIPS-compliant security and support for Network Level Authentication. Using the same convenient gestures as iTap touchpad, the app puts you in full control over your desktop. Whether you need to scroll, drag and drop, or just right-click, you can perform your tasks without extra buttons or bars.

Price: \$11.99

Learn more: [iTap mobile RDP](#)



Citrix Receiver

If your company uses Citrix to host applications, you can use Citrix Receiver to check your email, review documents, tune into project dashboards, and approve expenses from your iPad or any other device. Ask your help desk for the URL to set up Citrix Receiver.

Price: Free (server required)
Learn more: [Citrix Receiver](#)



CloudOn

CloudOn brings Microsoft Office to your iPhone and iPad and links it to your Box, Dropbox, Google Drive and SkyDrive accounts. Built-in Adobe Reader and the file viewer let you open and view virtually any file type, including PDF, JPG, PNG and GIF. Easily email files directly from the workspace.

Price: Free
Learn more: [CloudOn](#)



SignNow

Sign documents anywhere or get anyone's signature. Simply upload any PDF or Word doc from your email, Dropbox or camera, then sign with your finger and email the signed document or save it to a free SignNow account. Fill in PDF forms, turn a picture into a PDF, get signatures from clients online or on their mobile device.

Price: Free
Learn more: [SignNow](#)



ScanBizCards HD Lite

This business card reader offers both the choice to scan cards in seconds right on your phone or submit them for 100 percent accurate human transcription. It doesn't just scan and add contacts to your address book, but offers 31 premium features not included in other business card scanners. Includes syncing and real-time backup to the cloud and web access to your cards.

Price: Free
Learn more: [ScanBizCards](#)



PDF Expert

Read and annotate PDF documents, highlight text, make notes, draw with your finger and save these changes in Preview and Adobe Acrobat compatible format. PDF Expert reads almost all document types — iWork, Microsoft Office, PowerPoint, text, images, music and video files — and is one of the best apps for filling in PDF forms.

Price: \$9.99
Learn more: [PDF Expert](#)



GoodReader

This super-robust PDF reader for iPad lets you read virtually anything, anywhere and connect to the cloud to manage your documents. It handles huge PDF and TXT files, manuals, large books, magazines, and renderings of 100 MB and more. Mark up PDFs with the typewriter text boxes, sticky notes, lines, arrows, and freehand drawings on top of a PDF file.

Price: \$4.99
Learn more: [GoodReader](#)



FileBrowser

FileBrowser is like having Windows Explorer or Mac Finder on your iPad or iPhone to access network folders on Macs, Windows, Linux and NAS drives. Browse file servers over the web using your device's built-in VPN. Retrieve and view documents from company servers. Edit and update files on the server (requires additional document editing app). Dropbox and SkyDrive supported.

Price: \$4.99
Learn more: [FileBrowser](#)



QuickOffice Pro HD Mobile Suite

The essential Microsoft Office productivity tool with an intuitive, easy-to-use interface for advanced editing of Word, Excel and PowerPoint files. It has integrated file management and convenient access to multiple cloud services. The file manager lets you manage local files, access Google Drive or other cloud accounts, and works with your iPad email attachments so you can work both online and offline.

Price: \$19.99
Learn more: [QuickOffice Pro](#)



Photosynth

This panorama creation app makes it easy and fun to capture and share interactive panoramas of the places, people and events that are important to you. Using the latest in computer vision techniques, you can make a panorama from left to right, and up and down, enabling you to capture a full "sphere." Once you've created a Photosynth, you can share it as an

interactive panorama experience on Facebook and Twitter (using the free Photosynth.net service) or as a simple image.

Price: Free
Learn more: [Photosynth](#)



Word Lens

See the world in your language. Instantly translate printed words using your built-in video camera, in real time! Point your camera at a sign, and watch the app translate it into your language. No network required. Language packs, purchased separately within the app, for English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

Price: Free
Learn more: [Word Lens](#)



iTranslate

Translate words, phrases and even whole texts into over 50 languages. With a fun user interface, you can type or speak words or phrases to get translations, save translations in groups based on language, copy and paste text to translate with an easy swipe, and look up additional translation results and meanings in the dictionary.

Price: Free
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Explain Everything

This easy-to-use, interactive whiteboard and “screencasting” tool lets you design, annotate, animate, narrate, import and export almost anything to and from almost anywhere. Create slides, draw in any color, add shapes and text and use a laser pointer. Rotate, move, scale, copy, clone and lock any object.

Price: \$2.99

Learn more: [Explain Everything](#)



Evernote

Evernote helps you remember anything and everything that happens in your life. From notes to ideas to snapshots to recordings, put it all into Evernote and watch as it instantly synchronizes from your iPhone or iPad to your Mac or Windows desktop. See why millions of people worldwide use Evernote.

Price: Free; Premium \$5 per month (\$45 annually)

Learn more: [Evernote](#)



Toodledo

A powerful task and note manager that will organize your to-do list and notes. Use it as a standalone application, or synchronize with Toodledo.com, one of the most popular online task managers. Customize the app to match your desired work flow, using the popular GTD methodology, or use your own system.

Price: \$2.99

Learn more: [Toodledo](#)



Notability

Notability encourages productivity and note-taking to be beautiful. Take notes or capture information in three different modes: handwritten notes, word-processing, or audio recording. Plus, you can annotate PDFs, add media and sync all of your files in the cloud.

Price: \$1.99

Learn more: [Notability](#)



Noteshelf

This beautiful note-taking app for the iPad allows you to organize all your virtual notebooks on the shelf, customize your notebooks with note templates, edit your notes with comprehensive editing tools and share your notes directly from Noteshelf. Noteshelf's handwriting feature offers super natural digital ink and a comprehensive toolset that will increase the benefits of owning an iPad.

Price: \$5.99

Learn more: [Noteshelf](#)



Notes Plus

Notes Plus is a powerful note-taking tool that supports handwriting, typing, audio recording and PDF annotation. It offers close-up writing mode, stroke smoothing, vector shape auto-detection, palm handling, complete folder structure, images, PDF exporting and emailing, automatic backup to Dropbox and more.

Price: \$7.99

Learn more: [Notes Plus](#)



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Audiotorium

Organize, review and share your audio and text notes from your meetings, classes and conferences with Audiotorium. With its beautiful interface and approach to organizing notes by category and subject, you'll always be able to find the notes you want, fast. Features include rich-text support, highlight, bold, underline and bullets, plus multiple fonts with multiple colors. Password protect the notes that contain sensitive information and, with integrated Dropbox support, your notes will be backed up to the cloud and available instantly.

Price: \$5.99

Learn more: [Notability](#)



Presentation Clock

This timer app does one thing but it does it extremely well. If you give presentations, training or tutorials or speak publicly, this app is for you. Beautifully animated, with large, easy-to-read numbers that change colors at thresholds you determine. When the timer hits 0:00, the colors invert from red on black to black on red, and continue

counting up indicating how long you've gone over. Fully customizable options and simple touch controls.

Price: \$.99

Learn more: [Presentation Clock](#)



iTimeKeep

iTimeKeep is a mobile time entry app from Bellefield, designed to seamlessly integrate with several leading legal time and billing software systems, including Amicus Attorney, Lawbase, Tabs3 and Aderant among others. Designed with simplicity in mind, it can be used with little or no training. Information is encrypted to HIPAA, ABA and banking standards.

Price: Free

Learn more: [iTimeKeep](#)

- ➔ Check out "Straight Talkin' Time Apps" on page 31 for several additional time-tracking and time entry apps options, including apps that integrate with your law practice management software.

[National Purchasing Partners](#) negotiates discount pricing on behalf of its membership. Members receive discounted rates on products and services from prominent companies, including Verizon Wireless, Staples Advantage, Kimball Office, Global Crossing and others. NPP serves companies in industries such as legal, hospitality, construction, transportation and public safety. Membership is free and there is no obligation.

To learn more about applications and other solutions that can help your business, visit www.verizonwireless.com/solutions.

DON'T FORGET YOUR BUILT-IN APPS

Of course, your iPad and iPhone come with some terrific apps aimed at keeping you organized and connected. Plus, all apps sync across your Apple devices.

- ➔ **Reminders.** Reminders is Apple's simple to-do list app. It allows you to create multiple lists of reminders and set due dates, alarms, add notes and level of priority — and even trigger reminders based on your location. When a task is completed, tap to check it off and it is moved to the "Completed" list.
- ➔ **Calendar.** Manage your appointments and sync to all your Apple devices with Calendar. Set alerts and availability, and invite attendees to meetings from the palm of your hand.
- ➔ **Passbook.** Passbook keeps your boarding passes, loyalty cards, retail coupons, movie tickets and more all in one place. Just open the Passbook app on your iPhone or iPad and tap the pass you need. The barcode on the pass is scanned and, just like that, you've checked in for a flight, earned loyalty points or redeemed a coupon.
- ➔ **iBooks.** iBooks is your gateway to the iBookstore, where you can download the latest best-selling books or your favorite classics. Browse your library on a beautiful bookshelf, tap a book to open it, flip through pages with a swipe or a tap, and bookmark or add notes to your favorite passages.
- ➔ **Notes.** This super-simple, no-frills app is great for jotting down quick messages and random thoughts to share via email or the cloud.

Getting Started With Evernote

BY JOE BAHGAT



I'm always surprised when I meet someone who doesn't use [Evernote](#). It's cross-platform (works on Mac, Windows, iOS and Droid), painlessly syncs just about any kind of data you put into it — emails, images, PDFs, webpages, plain text, integrates seamlessly with ScanSnap scanners, and it's free (though you can pay for a Premium account).

I've been using Evernote for about over a year. At first it was mainly for personal use — saving web pages, scanned documents and receipts, recipes. But then I learned how useful it could be in my law practice.

- To catalog case law, statutes and court rules
- As a [blogging](#) notebook
- Keeping travel records, [itineraries](#) and expenses
- Archive articles and blog posts for future reference
- As a daily phone log, keeping notes of all conversations, both incoming and outgoing

Also, say you need to type a quick note or letter, but you don't have a word processor, or you're using a public or shared computer, or perhaps you want to draft an email to send later. Evernote has a built-in word processor that includes basic paragraph formatting, font choices and even bulleted lists.

These are just a few things that you can do with Evernote, but its capabilities go much, much further. Some people use Evernote as their GTD list-maker and primary organizer. The only reason I can figure as to why everyone isn't using Evernote is that they probably don't know what it is.

So, What Is It?

Evernote is a cloud-based app designed to “remember everything” and “capture anything” by letting you set up a personal account where you can save notes, audio or video clips, pictures, webpages (similar to [Instapaper](#)), or PDFs from a computer or mobile device. The data is available on any of your other devices, or by accessing Evernote through virtually any web browser. The user interface resembles Outlook (or almost any desktop email app). The left side has a list of “notebooks,” which act like folders or mini-directories to organize the data that you're storing. When you have any notebook selected (highlighted) on the left, you will see a list of all the notes in a separate window (similar to lists of emails in Outlook), and if you have one note highlighted, you will see a preview of the note in the pane below (just like email). Also, you can double-click on a note to open it up in its own window.

The User Interface

In addition to being a cloud-based app, Evernote has a [native app](#) to live on each of your devices. The native app makes it a breeze to get data out, but because Evernote is inherently cloud-based, you don't need to install the native app to access or retrieve your data. That means that you can get it while you're on somebody else's computer, at the law library or even Starbucks. Also, because Evernote allows users to email data into their accounts, you don't need the native app to put data *in* either. Oh, and I almost forgot, Evernote has its own OCR built right in. Coupled with its robust search engine, it's über easy to find that smoking-gun document from a case you co-counseled on three years ago! The OCR feature is available in Evernote [Premium](#), which comes with a host of additional, useful features, included extra storage space, at a subscription price of \$5 per month or \$45 per year.

So what's the catch? Well, I am still waiting for that shoe to drop myself. Although there are limits to how much data you can upload and sync (if you have a Premium account, the limit is 1GB per month), I've never come close to it. Another limitation is that because your data lives in the cloud, when you want to access it from a mobile device you will need a decent Internet connection. But with an Evernote Premium account, you get something called "offline notebooks"

(just like the photos in your iPhone camera roll, for example), so you can work offline.

Joe Bahgat practices business law and litigation. He uses his experience in the music and entertainment industries to advise organizations and creative-minded professionals in the areas of intellectual property protection and licensing, Internet and privacy law, defamation, and contract negotiation and disputes. He also writes and speaks on these topics, and sometimes bikes to the office (but not to court). His personal blog is [The Sports & Entertainment Law Playbook](#) and you can follow him on Twitter [@njAtty](#).

MORE EVERNOTE TIPS & TRICKS

- ➔ [Getting Stuff Into Evernote](#) by Joe Bahgat
- ➔ [Three Ingenious Tools to Capture Ideas with Evernote](#) by Daniel Gold
- ➔ [Automate Your Productivity with IFTTT and Evernote](#) by Daniel Gold
- ➔ [Using Master Checklists in Evernote to Be a More Productive Lawyer](#) by Daniel Gold



Evernote Guide for Lawyers

Capture Everything and Get Things Done.

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A Few of My Favorite Tech Things

BY VIVIAN MANNING | No, I'm not going to talk about "raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens," although I do feel the raindrops on roses thing has a lot going for it. But I am going to talk about a few of my favorite computer things — things that make my computer work for me. Computers excite geeky girls like me but, honestly, they are really just tools that should make work life easier. Problem is, too often I watch people go to work for their computers, rather than the other way around. I'm on a mission to upend that scenario, starting with the simple things.

Microsoft Windows 7

- **Windows logo key.** The logo key is that key, right there on your keyboard, with the Windows symbol on it. Press it and see what happens. Your Start menu should pop up with your cursor flashing in the Search box. Now, start typing the first few letters of a program you work with often, say, Outlook. You shouldn't be able to get past the "out" before seeing the Outlook icon at the top of the search results list. Press Enter and Outlook will start. This works for every program in your Start menu. Hands on keyboard, not reaching for mouse and click, click, clicking, are faster hands. That's just the beginning of what the Windows Logo Key can do. Visit [this link](#) for more Windows Key goodness and click on "Windows Logo Key Keyboard Shortcuts."
- **Jump lists.** See that Windows Task Bar at the bottom of your monitor? You should see some program icons pinned to it. (If not, pin a program to it by right-clicking on a program's icon on the Start menu, and then clicking on "Pin to Taskbar.") Now, right-click on a program icon on the Task Bar and you'll see a list of all of your recent items. This is your jump list. Jump lists are huge time-savers, giving you easy access to stuff you've worked on recently. Hover your mouse over any one of the items and you will see a stickpin appear to its right. Click on the stickpin and that item is now "pinned" to the jump list. It will stay there until you choose to unpin it. Pin the files you access all the time so you can get to them quickly. Microsoft has a [45-second overview video here](#). (Note that some programs have more jump list functionality than others.)

Microsoft Outlook

- **Flags.** Flags are your friends, if you'll just let them be. Look at the list of email in your Inbox. To the far right (generally), you should see a column of tiny transparent flags. Click on a flag — right on top of it. Watch it turn red. Click again. Watch it change to a checkmark. Right-click and see all the flag choices available. This is flagging. When you flag Outlook email for follow-up, you're telling

Outlook this is email you want to pay extra attention to. The flags are quite visible and easily sortable (click on the flag column heading and bring all the flagged email to the top). Once you've paid the flagged email proper attention, just click the flag to mark it done. The flag will change to the checkmark, giving you a nice visual of a finished task. If you want to get fancy, and I hope you do, right-click and choose "Custom" flag to set the flagging details exactly the way you want.

Microsoft Word

- **Autocorrect.** I watch too many people watch their keyboarding. They see that little red squiggly line on the monitor indicating a typo then they backspace to fix it manually, or correct with spell-check. But both actions are one-off fixes and, really, you might as well be using a typewriter. Don't just correct — Autocorrect. When spell-checking, look at the options available. One of them will be Autocorrect. Choose your correction from the Autocorrect list so that the next time you make the same typo (and you will), Word will fix it for you. (For more Autocorrect tips, [read "Don't Touch That Typo," here.](#)) Word 2013 users, you are now out of luck on right-click access to Autocorrect. Microsoft, in its infinite wisdom, has decided to unclutter the right-click menu and Spell Check itself by removing quick access to Autocorrect. Now you must either access it using multiple clicks through Word Options (ugh), or by way of addition of the Autocorrect Icon to the Quick Access Toolbar.

Microsoft Office 2010

- **OneNote.** Over the past year I've fallen in love with this planner and note-taking program (thankfully my husband isn't threatened by my software affairs). If you have Office 2010, you already have OneNote. OneNote is easy to use, easy to search, easy to share. You can store pretty well anything in it you like: Text, Pictures, Files, links to files and webpages, audio, video, drawings and more. You can organize it any way you like and share it, or not, as you like.

Think of it as a spiral notebook with divider tabs for each subject area, and pages within each subject tab, and you will be well on your way to understanding it. For a fabulous quick read, getting straight to the point of the program, you might like [Microsoft One-Note in One Hour for Lawyers](#) by legal technologist Ben Schorr.

- **Deskpins Utility.** [Deskpins](#) is a small, simple program that does only one thing (for free!), but I can't do without it. Simply, it pins one program on top of another and forces it to stay there until you unpin it. Just click on the program pin, then click on the program's task bar to pin it. No more slipping underneath. Little things can mean a lot.

iPad App

- **Dragon Dictation.** I confess, I have fallen for the new iPad. I'm having fun with a lot of apps, but I find Dragon Dictation particularly helpful. Even with the keyboard split (which makes keyboarding so much easier) the virtual keyboard is still uncomfortable and slow. With Dragon Dictation, I don't type so much but I talk a lot. Transcription is amazingly accurate (without a headset!) and it's easy to send to email, the clipboard or social media. And it's free! New iPad users, you have much the same functionality (more, really) through Apple's intelligent personal assistant, Siri, built into the latest iPads. Play with it a little, then use it a lot! You can find more detail at [Learn more about Siri](#) and the unofficial [Siri User Guide](#).

These are some of the simple things that make my computing day just a little easier and more efficient.

Vivian Manning is the IT Manager at [Barriston Law LLP](#) in Barrie, Bracebridge and Cookstown, Ontario. Prior to moving into IT, Vivian practiced law primarily in the area of Municipal Land Development, with a total of 17 years in private practice before switching to the IT side of the law office. She currently indulges her love of teaching tech through her blog [Small City Law Firm Tech](#), where she provides "tips of the day." Vivian writes Attorney at Work's ["Power User"](#) column.

Try Taking a Microbreak

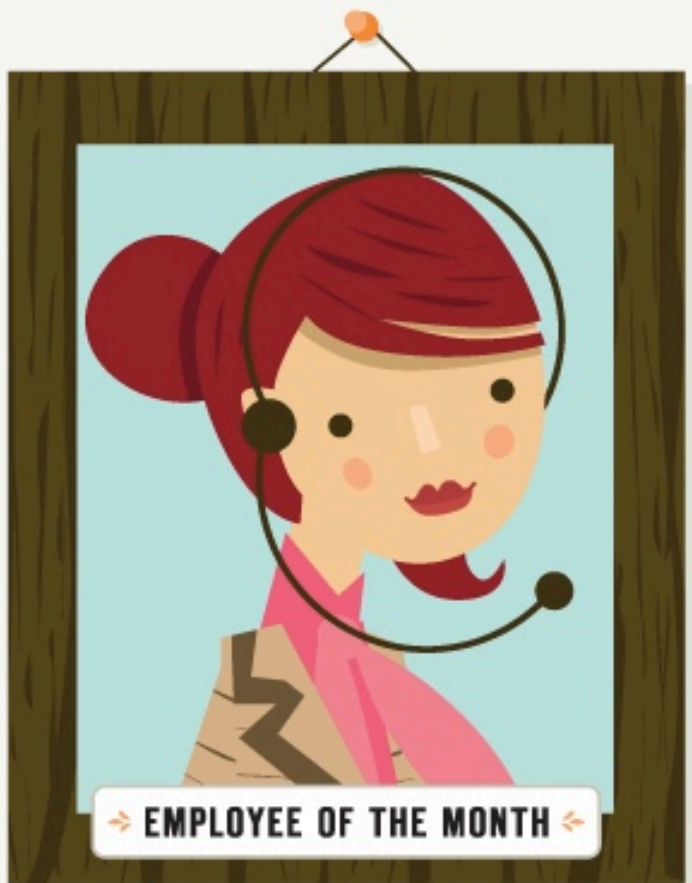


David King Keller | Scientific studies show that a 30-second microbreak periodically during the day can reduce stress and increase productivity. One microbreak technique, in 30 seconds, will cause you to be more centered (C) aware (A) and resourceful (R). The technique involves pressing your thumb against your little finger, as if pressing a button—hence its nickname, the “CAR Button.”

The Science Behind the Microbreak

Before we discuss how to activate your CAR Button™ let’s discuss the science behind it.

1. A joint study between Cornell University and Lockheed Martin showed a 59 percent productivity improvement when keyboarders took 30-second microbreaks periodically during the day. These microbreaks could be as simple as a posture check, a stretch, standing up, or a walk to the watercooler.
2. A study of 21,000 people demonstrated that taking six deep breaths reduced systolic blood pressure, diastolic blood pressure and pulse rate, all of which are signs of stress reduction. This moves your physiology more from the fight-or-flight sympathetic nervous system (which constricts the vascular system) over to the calmer, less stressed parasympathetic nervous system, allowing for more dilated vascular blood vessels (allowing more blood to flow to the brain).
3. Brain science involving left brain-right brain research shows us how to leverage the dominant functions of the right cerebral cortex (seeing colors and performing abstract functions) and the left cerebral cortex (working with numbers and using analysis to find solutions) to calm the mind of unwanted mental chatter. This quieting of the mind prepares the mind and body for a period of very clear-headed, focused activity.



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4. We are able to quickly communicate messages about motion to the brain and body by using the conscious and subconscious messaging of the iconic imagery of traffic science, specifically, the globally accepted colors of the traffic signal, which are green (go), yellow (slow down and get ready to stop) and red (stop). In the CAR Button process you will be asking the brain to look at the top fingerprint portion of the small pinky finger and imagine seeing a green circle on that spot with the number 1 inside the green circle. This has the result of capturing much of the conscious attention of both the left and right brain hemispheres to achieve the assigned task. Don't worry if you cannot actually "see" the green circle with the number 1 in the center of it; just imagine that you see it. Then go to the next step.

5. A 2012 study published in *Psychological Science* stated that "... wearing a smile [even a pretend smile] brings certain benefits, like slowing down the heart and reducing stress."

Now, you have the scientific background to tap into the microbreak power of the CAR Button.

Creating Your Centered-Aware-Resourceful Button aka, Your CAR Button

1. On the fingerprint pad of your left little finger, imagine that you see a green circle with a "1" on it. Now press your left thumb against the green circle, release your thumb, and
2. Now replace the green circle with a yellow circle with a "2" on it and press your left thumb against the yellow circle, release your thumb, and
3. Now replace the yellow circle with a red circle with a "3" on it and press your left thumb against the red circle, and then continue to comfortably press the red circle with your thumb while taking 6 deep relaxing breaths. At the end of the 6th breath, release the thumb and smile inside while allowing the ends of your lips to come up into a slight smile (or a big smile). Do this slowly and deliberately. Set your

computer or smartphone to remind you to take a CAR Button 30-second microbreak every two to three hours. Most of the time when the reminder pops up you'll think, "I don't have 30 seconds, right now." But when you "take control" and pause for those 30 seconds you will feel better with the added message to your subconscious that you are in control of your life, not at the mercy of circumstances.

Of course, there will be the occasional microbreak reminder you'll have to ignore, but for that millisecond you may think, "centered, aware, resourceful." Try this not only when you need to calm yourself in preparation for an important meeting, talk or trial, but also periodically to maintain focus and work-life balance. Given time, linger on the last part and take a few extra deep relaxing breaths, as the tension in your shoulders melts away and your whole body feels refreshed with increased focus and clear-headed alertness.

Next time you're in your car and you see a traffic signal, you may just remember to take advantage of the science behind the CAR Button microbreak.

David King Keller is the award-winning author of 100 Ways to Grow a Thriving Law Practice, and the ABA best-seller [The Associate as Rainmaker: Building Your Business Brain](#). He is CEO of Keller Business Development Advisory Group. He has lectured at UC Hastings College of The Law, various county bar associations, annual ABA Conferences and law firm training sessions. He is a member of ABA, BASF, AAJ and LMA. His company website, www.KBDAG.com, provides many free articles, including "Social Media for Lawyers."

A Guide to Having a Little More Fun in Life!

BY MARY ELLEN SULLIVAN | C'mon. We know you work long hours for what seems like an increasingly smaller paycheck. That you have to deal with belligerent clients, difficult judges and a schedule so overbooked that you hardly have time to take a breath, much less a lunch break. But stop! Your work is not your life, so don't let it override what matters most — your health, your time with friends and family, your sanity. While we know there are some days that you have no choice but to plow through at 180 miles an hour, here is some advice for the rest of them.

1. Stop the Caffeinated Beverages by 10 a.m.

Not only will this help you sleep better at night, but it will keep you from the roller-coaster highs and lows that caffeine fuels. So how to keep your energy up?

- Sip green tea or water with lemon or cucumber throughout the day.
- Eat small snacks throughout the day as well. If you keep your blood sugar even, your energy will stay even, too. Some food suggestions: a handful of almonds (you can even buy a bag of individually portioned almond packets at your local Trader Joe's), a dozen mini carrots, whole wheat crackers with peanut butter or low-fat cheese, a small serving of unsweetened Greek yoghurt or a Bosc pear.

2. Try Some Alternative Mindfulness Techniques

Most involve slowing down and breathing — giving your body and mind a tiny vacation and infusing it with a burst of oxygen. Andrew Weil, MD, one of the country's foremost alternative medicine physicians recommends what he calls the 4-7-8 technique for keeping both stress and blood sugar levels in check. You can do it anywhere: Inhale slowly for a count of four, keep the breath in for a count of seven, then exhale, making a “whoosh” sound for the count of eight. He recommends repeating it until you are feeling “peaceful.”

If even *that* sounds like too much, here's a suggestion from [Susan Gray](#), a Chicago-area wellness coach and mindfulness practitioner with a specialty in stress reduction. She recommends trying to take a few minutes every hour to simply sit quietly and notice your breath. Don't try to manipulate it or change it. Just follow it. This new awareness will automatically start to deepen your breath.

Do this for a week everywhere and anywhere — when you get in the car in the morning, when you sit down in front of your computer, when you are doing mundane tasks. The next week, set the timer on your phone for five minutes in the morning and five minutes in the afternoon to take a breathing break. These five minutes are like a spa treatment for your overworked and overstimulated mind.

3. Build Some Movement Breaks Into Your Day

There are many ways to do this.

- Kick off your shoes under your desk and roll your feet on a tennis ball. No one will be able to see you, and it will feel *good*.
- Stand up and stretch. Gray suggests several: making big arm circles, one arm at a time, in both directions; rocking heel-to-toe on the feet; bringing chin to chest then each ear to each shoulder (to protect your neck, don't make this a full circle — skip tilting your head back); and doing hip circles to loosen up your lower back. "I've never seen anyone *not* smile when they are moving their hips like this," says Gray. "It not only brings you back into your body, it's *fun*."
- Walk around the block. Stop thinking that all exercise has to occur at the gym or in big chunks of time. A 10-minute walk gets your blood and muscles moving and clears your head.
- Consider all those time-honored tricks touted by weight-loss experts: take the stairs instead of the elevator, park a block away from the office instead of closest to the door and instead of calling a colleague on the phone, walk over to his or her desk. The point is to keep yourself in motion.

4. Find Ways to Break Up the Frenetic Energy

It may push you on, but ultimately it saps your strength. So if you find yourself feeling overwhelmed or know that you are getting jangly, stop and try these.

- Splash your face with water. It doesn't have to be cold like in the movies, but water will take you out of the stressful moment and help counteract the intensity of what you may have been feeling.
- Get out into some green space. A recent study at the University of Exeter's Center for Environment and Human Health in Truro found that people with access to numerous green areas reported less mental distress and higher levels of life satisfaction than those without access. So identify an area near your office that you could frequent

daily — or use as your stress release valve on the days that try your soul. Think about ways you might incorporate it into your routine: How about holding a meeting with a colleague there, returning calls on your cell there, checking email on your tablet there ... the possibilities are endlessly enticing.

5. Resolve to Find a Little Bit of Joy and Delight in Your Work Life Every Day!

- Start your morning by reading an inspirational blog or website ... or even a snarky celebrity one if that makes you smile
- Make a stress reduction playlist on your iPod, then install a dock in your office so you can play it in the background while you work.
- Hang a picture of the most beautiful thing you have ever seen on the wall facing your desk — nature, a building, a person, a painting, whatever makes your heart jump when you look at it — and use it as a focal point during tough phone calls.
- If your kids calm you down, record them recounting their cutest story or singing a song so you can listen to it on your darkest days.
- If it's nature that soothes you, bring in a \$5 bouquet of tulips each week, or install an extra fussy plant that you'll need to tend to daily. The nurturing involved in keeping the plant alive will ultimately nurture *you*.

Bottom line. Stress relief doesn't happen by accident; you need to be intentional with it and build a stress safety net into your life. As you can see from the small measures suggested here, your stress-reducers don't need to be elaborate or time-consuming—but they *do* need to be there.

Mary Ellen Sullivan is a Chicago-based freelance writer who writes frequently about the arts, music, travel and women's issues, with a specialty in health care for more than 28 years. She is the author of the best-selling book "Cows on Parade in Chicago," several travel guides, and has been published in *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Woman's Day*, *Vegetarian Times*, and other publications.

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