



Presents:

Podcast Episode 115: How to Be a Very Productive Blogger (Even With a Full Time Job)



By: Leslie Samuel



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Introductions

[Intro by Guy Kawasaki, Gideon Shalwick, and Farnoosh Brock]

Hello, hello, hello and welcome to another episode of Learning with Leslie, the podcast where you learn, I learn, we all learn about how to build an online business with a blog. No, I'm not talking about one of those blogs that will fall by the wayside when Google has a mood swing. I'm talking about one that will thrive no matter what gets thrown at it.

I'm your host, Leslie Samuel from BecomeaBlogger.com where we're changing the world one blog at a time. As usual, I have another exciting episode for you today. In today's episode, I'm going to be talking about how to be very productive as a blogger even with a full time job,

Yes, you can start something by the side that eventually becomes bigger than yourself. This is one of the questions I get asked very often and I have spoken about it in the past. However, it is something that is constantly evolving. What I do or do not do today is way different from what I have done in the past or didn't do in the past.

I'm not perfect. I still struggle but, I will be talking a bit about what's working for me today and I think that whether you have a full time job or not, these principles can help you be more productive. That's what I'm going to be talking about today.

All right, all right. I'm so glad to be recording this podcast right now. Things have been actually quite interesting over the last 24 hours. I was supposed to record this last night because today is Tuesday and it is right now 8:26. I am supposed to be putting this up at 9:00 am but, I will probably be putting it up a little later.

Last night, what happened was I had to take a friend to the train station so, that kind of messed up my schedule a little bit. I got in way later than I normally would. Then, yesterday, we took little Noah to the doctor and he got some shots. Last night, he was up a lot and crying and it was a bit interesting. So, my morning got off to a rough start.

But, I'm here. I'm here because I need to record this episode for you. I need to be able to connect with you today and I'm happy to be able to do so.

I'm telling you that story because it's relevant. It's relevant to the concept of getting things done and we'll talk about how to do that well.

In this episode, first I'm going to make a quick announcement about a meet up that I'm having in a few weeks then, I'm going to get into the content but, I'm going to do it in three parts.

Part one, I'm going to talk about the preliminaries. How do you prepare yourself for the process that I'm going to be outlining in this episode. Part two, I'm going to be talking about the action steps that you can take, the action that I am taking these days to try to be as productive as possible. Part three, I'm going to be talking about things that you can do to maximize that productivity.

But, before I get into all of that, I want to let you know, of course, that these videos, -- what am I saying? These podcasts are brought to you by my free videos at FreeBloggingvideos.com where I show you how to start a blog and build it so that, you can create content that inspires others and even change the world. So, if you're interested in anything like that, head on over to freebloggingvideos.com.

Also, because of the time crunch, I'm not going to be answering any questions that were called in to the hotline. I know I have a few that were back log because of how crazy things have been. But, I do want to encourage you still. If you ever have a question that you want me to deal with on the podcast, you can call it into the hotline. It may take a while for me to get to it depending on how things are going but, when I get to it, I will get to it.

The number of the hotline is 888-835-2414. You can call that any time of the day or night and I will get it via email and I will answer it on the show.

Some Announcement

All right, for the quick announcement, I am doing a meet up in Cincinnati, Ohio on Sunday, June 23rd. As of right now, it will be at 1PM.

Here's the deal, I don't have the place as yet because I want to see how many people are going to respond to this and how many people are interested in doing that meet up.

So, if you're in the Cincinnati area, or you can get there for a meet up, I would love to be able to connect with you. I'm going there for the Savvy Blogging Summit. I'm very excited. I'm going to be speaking there on the topics of podcasting.

So, if you're around and you want to connect in person, which I love to do, I want you to go to [BecomeaBlogger.com/meet up](http://BecomeaBlogger.com/meet-up). That's going to take you to the Facebook event page that I have set up for this meet up. I want to get an idea of how many people are interested in going and then, we're going to make a decision as to where it's going to be and I would love to meet up with you.

Becoming Productive

All right, so let's get into the story for today. When I first started Internet marketing, this is something I have spoken about in the past but, it is very relevant, I didn't get as much done as I do today. But, I feel as if I do much more today in significantly less time than I used to spend.

I remember there was a time where if I wasn't at my job, I was at home working. Or, if I was at my job, I was still working on my online business at some point. I spend so much time trying to build my business that so many aspects of my life suffered.

My family suffered. I didn't spend as much time with my wife and eventually, I came to the point where I just got fed up. I was tired. I couldn't do this anymore. So, I just left it all behind. I pretty much gave up because it was just taking too much of my time and it just didn't see that it was worth it even though I was making some decent money on the side, it just wasn't working well for me.

Now, eventually, I decided to get back into Internet Marketing and specifically blogging, and I decided that if I were going to do this again, I had to do things differently because it wasn't working for me. It was working for me in terms of making money as a business but, my time is very valuable and my family is even more valuable and I couldn't just continue neglecting them. I couldn't just keep going and keep going, neglecting my health, neglecting my sanity. It was just too much. So, I had to do things very differently.

Now, I'm not perfect. I'm still learning as I go but, I get much more done with significantly less time. That's what I want to be talking about today, some of the things that I am doing to help me to be more productive but, well-balanced. I guess, that's the best way to say it.

I want to get into this. Let's get into part one, "The Preliminaries."

Part 1: The Preliminaries

These are the things that you want to take into consideration before going into this plan of action.

Step #1: Be clear on your WHY's.



First thing, this is very important. This is something that I really focused on in the beginning but, you want to be clear. You want to be extremely clear about why you are doing what you are doing.

Are you doing what you are doing because you want to make money? That's not necessarily a bad thing, not a bad thing at all, actually. I personally need to know why I'm doing what I'm doing to be really motivated to get things done so that, when I get side tracked, when I get distracted, when things aren't going the way I want them to go, I can keep that why in mind and then, just keep pushing on.

So, my why's are things like my family. I want to be there for my family. I want to be able to provide for my family. My family is the most important thing to me, or one of the most important things in my life and it's one of the motivations behind why I am working on my online business, why I am trying to build something and leave a legacy behind, trying to build something that they can be proud of. My family means the world to me.

So, family is number one.

Number two, I want to help others. I want to help you make something of yourself and do something significant. I want to help you to build something that you can be proud of, something that can impact others.

And, I want to change the world. I keep saying that and people think I'm crazy. Somebody on Facebook yesterday said, a day before yesterday told me that you can't change the world.

I'm sorry, I believe you can. I believe that blogging is a great way to do it.

Number four, I'm also doing this to get out of debt. We have some bills that we are trying to get rid of. I hate bills and I don't like seeing them so, I want to get rid of that. I need to make extra money to be able to pay these bills off faster and to just get rid of that. I'm tired of it.

Those are my why's.

When I get distracted, when I get discouraged or when I don't get as much done in one day, I need to come back to these why's so that, I can get the motivation to continue.

That's step number one, be clear about your why.

Step #2: Identify the high-value tasks.

Step number two in these preliminaries, identify the high value tasks in your business. This is extremely important because specially when you're doing an online business, it's so easy to try to do this and that and everything and everything and everything. It's so easy to get side tracked with things that aren't really contributing a significant amount to your business.

I encourage you to identify those tasks in your business. So, for me, those things are tasks like creating content. That is extremely important. Content is king, especially when it comes to my business and I need to make sure that I am focusing on that creating of content.

Number two, networking with others, connecting with others. My business is all about people so, it's extremely important for me to be able to do that.

Number three, optimizing my funnel. People come into my blog and they get a ton of free content and I want to make sure that if I'm doing this as a business, there's a certain percentage of them that are purchasing things or signing up for things that I am promoting, Become a Blogger Premium Members and upgrading because that is what drives my business.

I want to make sure that I'm optimizing it in a way that it adds value to the people that are coming to my blog and that it makes money because it is a business.

So, those are the high value tasks in my business and it is important to know what those are for you.

Step #3: Identify the things that you can get rid of or minimize.

This is something that is often overlooked also and it is something that is extremely important. I'll give you one perfect example. Watching TV.

Watching TV is great. It's a lot of fun. I enjoy watching TV. Well, I guess watching my laptop. I can watch Hulu on the TV now. I can spend a ton of time doing that and I have in the past. But, I've had to almost eliminate that from my schedule because that's a lot of time that I could spend doing things that are more productive.

Once you've identified those things, get rid of them or minimize them. That's what I have done with TV. I have minimized them to where I watch two episodes per week.

In the past, I used to watch episodes daily but, no, I can't do that because it's a waste of time. It's still good for leisure but, I keep it in context. It is worth it.

You know what you're doing that you don't need to be doing .

If you don't need to be doing it, don't do it or, do it significantly less.

So, those are the preliminaries. Be clear about your why. Identify the high-value tasks in your business and number three, identify the things that you can get rid of or minimize.

Now, let's get into the action because this is where the rubber meets the road. This is the important part.

Part 2: The Plan of Action

#1: Create a to-do list.

Create a to-do list the night before. The things that you need to get done, Write them down.

There is significant amount of power in writing things down. This is something that I have started doing and when I do it, I get so much more done the next day. I want to encourage you to do the same.

Number two, be clear and specific about the task that you need to get done. Don't just say, "I want to make my blog better."

Say, I want to write one article or I want to write two articles or whatever it is you want to get done.

I'm looking at my to-do list for today and I'm seeing things like set up my Facebook event, record and post my podcast episode which I'm doing right now, send out an email about the podcast, prepare for Pathophysiology, which is a class that teach, create a handout for Pathophysiology, make two keynotes for Become a Blogger, for some videos that I'm going to be working on and then, I have some other personal stuff like pay rent today and get reimbursed.



These are the things that I need to get done today. But, last night, before going to bed, I made this list so that, when I wake up, I can see, "All right, these are the things that I'm going to do." As I do them, I check them off the list.

That is number one, making sure that you're creating that list, the night before.

When you're creating this list, also it's important to be realistic. Don't try to do everything in the world. Be realistic. As you start, you got to start to figure out what is realistic and what is unrealistic.



Then, as you see how things are going, adjust how you see fit. The next things where that's concerned is you want to make sure your highest priority task are at the top and that you're working on the high-value tasks that we decided on, on a regular basis.

These are a big part on your to-do list. At least, they should be a big part of your to-do list.

That's number one, create a to-do list the night before.

#2: Prepare your stuff the night before.

Number two, and this seems insignificant but, it's so significant especially if you have a full time job. Get your clothes ready the night before.

Here's the thing, the less you think about the day of, the better it's going to be. The more effective and efficient you're going to be.

So, before I go to bed, I take out my clothes. I iron them if I need to iron them. I put them aside and I know exactly what I'm going to wear in the morning.

I would encourage you to do this also. Now, if you don't have a full time job that you have to go to or any kind of job that you have to go to, just get whatever it is you need for work, get that done, or to work on your business. Get that prepared. Make sure it's out so that, when you come to get the work done, you can just get at it, not have to think about all the things that you need to prepare.

That's number two, get your clothes, or whatever else you need, ready the night before.

#3: Early to bed, early to rise.

Number three, and this is extremely important. Early to bed and early to rise. Getting on a schedule. Very significant.

This is a statement that I heard from Michael Hyatt that psychologists have realized after doing some research about it, morning people tend to make more money, be more productive, be healthier, live longer, and be more happy and satisfied with their lives. I don't know about you but, all those things are things that I want to be.

I want to make more money. I want to be more productive. I want to be healthier, live longer, and be happy and satisfied with my life. Waking up early is a great way of doing it.

I wake up at 5AM, usually. Now, this morning was a bit more challenging but, 5AM is the target time for me to wake up. Why it's great to wake up early is that there is minimal distractions in the morning.

Some people are listening to this and they are saying, you know, I'm not a morning person.

I was not a morning person. It was extremely difficult for me in the beginning but, if you fight through it, most people can become morning people.

When I was in college, I was known for being the guy that was always sleeping, sleeping late because I just thought that that's me. I sleep late.

I joined the fraternity when I was in college and my code name was "The Sloth." That tells you how bad it was. But, the more you practice, the better you get. I know that I need about seven hours sleep to be optimum. I try to go to bed at ten and wake up at five and do that every day. The more you do it, the better you'll get at it.

Set an alarm and try to do it. It takes about 21 days to form a habit according to psychologists and if you can do this and just fight through it for twenty one days, it will be so part of your routine that you'll be surprised at the fact that you can become a morning person.

So, go to bed on time. Wake up on time and hopefully, that on time is early.



#4: Check things off the list and finish tasks off as you go throughout the day.

Then, start checking off the things on that list. I am recording this podcast episode right now, and when I'm done, I am going to check it off the list. Then, I'm going to go through the other items in this list, check them off one at a time from top to bottom.

In doing that, you want to try to alternate time, things that are going to take a lot of time with things that don't take as much so that, you're not always trying to get the heavy things done first but, you're kind of mixing it up a little bit.

That's how it works for me, at least.

Now, especially if you're waking up early, you want to do as many of the tasks early in the day as possible. Just knock them out, try to get them done so that, you can get a good jumpstart on the day and then, finish the rest of the task off as you go throughout the day.



#5: Take time to relax.

Take time to relax. This is extremely important because if you keep going, keep going, you will get tired and you will be burnt out like I was in the past, like I am every so often. You want to relax. You want to spend time with your family. You want to have some time to spend alone. You want to chill and just do nothing sometimes.

Work that into your schedule on a regular basis. It doesn't have to be an extensive period of time. It's good to do it as an extensive period of time every so often but, regularly, just relax.

#6: Take care of your body.

Take care of your body. I know there are so much to get done. You don't have time to exercise, I don't have time to exercise. And, sometimes, you feel so drained, so tired that you can't exercise. Sometimes, I feel that way but, when you do exercise consistently and I have been running for the last few weeks and it has helped me so much.

I, all of a sudden, have a bunch of energy, much more energy to get more things done. I want to encourage you, if you're not exercising, try to do 15 minutes a day. Try to do a half hour a day. Try to build up to where you are exercising regularly. You will see a big difference.

Make sure you're eating right. If you're eating a bunch of crap, fast food and drinking a bunch of soda or pop, whatever you call it, you're not going to have as much energy. So, try to eat healthier.

Those things are, once again:

1. Create your to-do list the night before.
2. Get your clothes ready the night before.
3. Get to bed early and wake up early and try to be consistent with that.
4. Start checking things off that list.
5. Take time to relax.
6. Take care of your body.

I thought it was seven but, it is six.

All right, let's switch over to part three.

Part 3: Maximizing Productivity

How do you maximize this productivity? These are some of the things that I do.

#1: Use whatever tools to use.

Use whatever tools you will actually use. There are so many tools out there that you can use to help you be more productive. Sometimes, you can get so overwhelmed with all the tools that you download a bunch of them and you just get confused and then, you end up using nothing.

Use whatever you will actually use. I'm going to tell you what I use.

Evernote

I use [Evernote](#). I use that because my business is all about content and I can create a lot of content in Evernote. I can catalogue them in different notebooks. They sync across all my devices so that, I can work on them from anywhere regardless of what I have on me, whether it's my phone or my computer or my iPad or whatever the case. Or, if I'm by someone else, I can log on to their computer and get on to Evernote and still get stuff done.

That is number one. It is the program I probably use more than any other program especially when it comes to my business.

Any.do

Then, for my to-do list, I use a very sleek program called, [Any.do](#). You can find it at any.do.com. It just works very nicely. It is very sexy if I might say so. It takes full advantage of the touch and swipe feature that you have on mobile devices these days and it's very simple to add tasks. It's very simple to swipe and get rid of tasks that you complete. I love it.

You don't have to use this app. It's available on Chrome. It's available on Android and iPhone and I think some other platforms.

So, you can use it from anywhere. It syncs. That's a good thing. You can see it on your laptop. You can see it on your phone, and so on.

SelfControl (for Mac) and Freedom (for PC)

Then, there's another really cool program that I use because I get distracted sometimes very easily. I want to jump on Facebook. I want to jump on Google+ or YouTube and watch some videos, all these different types of things that can suck your time away.

I use a program called [Self Control](#). It's only available on the Mac but, there's another alternative called [Freedom](#).

What they do is very simple. You put a list of websites in the settings and then, you can say, I want to work for the next 45 minutes, or I want to work for the next half hour and what it will do is it will actually block those apps for you, block those websites for you so that, no matter what you do, you cannot get to those websites.

It might not be necessary for you but, for me, sometimes, I need that extra help. You can find that at SelfControlApp.com or the one for PC is called Freedom and you can find that at MacFreedom.com.

I don't know why it's called Mac Freedom if it's available on PC but, that's where it is.

Time Doctor

One other tool that I have used in the past, I don't use it as much anymore. It's called [Time Doctor](#). It's what I use to track my outsourcers and track their time. You might want to use that for tracking your own time and keeping track of what you are doing so that, you have a certain amount of time to work on the task in your business. You track that time and you help yourself be more productive by really keeping track of it.

That's at TimeDoctor.com. I don't use that anymore but, it's another tool that I have used. Once again, I want to emphasize use whatever you'll actually use. Keep it simple. You don't have to use all of the apps that I use. You might use more. You might use less. You might use some that I use and some that you have been using for a while, whatever works for you is what you want to do.

#2: The Pomodoro technique.

Another tip for maximizing productivity kind of goes back to what I said about resting but, you want to take regular breaks. There's a technique called The Pomodoro Technique where they tell you to work for 25 minutes and then, take a 5 minute break.

I don't do that exactly. Usually, I do something like 45 minutes to an hour and then, I take a 10-15 minute break.

You want to take those breaks regularly because if you're just constantly staring at a screen, you can get tired of doing that. If you're constantly working on one project for too long, it can cause you to get really tired. It just maximizes your efficiency so that, your brain doesn't explode.

My brain hasn't ever exploded but, I'm trying to prevent that from ever happening. So, I take these breaks regularly.

#3: Spend more time on the high value tasks.

Now, another tip... I have four tips. No, I have six tips for maximizing productivity.

Number three is making sure that you're spending most of your time on the high value tasks that we decided on. This comes down to the 80-20 rule. You want to be spending about 80% of your time on those high-value tasks like creating content, networking. You want to get into that rhythm and try as much as possible to do some of them in advance.



So, if content creation is important for you, if I'm recording a podcast every week, it's good to take some time and just record a bunch of podcast so that, I can have them scheduled in advance. If you can do that with your content or with your high-value tasks, that would be great.

#4: Use templates.

Number five, use templates. Oh, this saves so much time. Use templates as much as possible. This is something that I am implementing now. For this podcast episode, I actually had a template of what I was going to follow for coming up with the content.

Number one is my introduction. Number two was my outline of content. Number three was my announcements. Number four, if I was doing listener's questions, that would come next. Number five, tell a story. Number six, give the lesson. Number seven, the recap. Number eight, the outro.

If you're recording a podcast, you might want to consider a template like that or you might want to come up with your own template. Even for the articles that you write, you might want to create a template.

First, you start with an introduction then, you tell a story or however you want it to flow.

The less you have to think, the better. That sounds lazy but, it's true. The less you have to think about the flow of things, the better. You can just get into the content and fit it into the template that you have set up.

#5: Outsource to get more done.

If possible, you want to take advantage of outsourcing. This is something that took me a while to get into but, when I started doing it, oh my word, it helped so much.

If you're making a few hundred dollars in your business, invest \$50. Invest \$100 in your business to outsource.

I recorded a podcast, a podcast episode about outsourcing, it's [Episode 049](#). I will link to it in the show notes of this episode but, you want to be outsourcing as quickly as possible because it will help you get much more done.

#6: Course correct as you go forward.

All right, and lastly, you want to make sure that you are correcting course as you go forward because I give you a bunch of tips. You might try some of these tips. You might try all of these tips. You don't have to try all.

If it sounds like a lot, think about one that you can implement in your business, in your life to be more productive and work on that. Then, modify as you decide, "Hey, this doesn't work for me.

It doesn't work for me to wake up at five. I'd rather wake up at four," or, "I'd rather wake up at six."

Whatever, as long as you're taking action. You want to course correct as you go on.

All right, you're going to get data. You're going to get feedback from yourself, from your body and see what works for you and you want to take advantage of your time by making sure you're optimizing as you go.



Recap

So, for my recap, first, the preliminaries.

You want to be clear about your why. You want to identify your high-value tasks in your business and identify the things that you can get rid of and minimize.

Part two, the things that you want to act on, create your to-do list the night before. Get your clothes ready the night before. Early to bed, early to rise. Start checking things off that list. Take time to relax and take care of your body.

Part three where we're maximizing our productivity, use whatever tools you will actually use. Take regular breaks. Make sure you're spending most of your time on your high value tasks, that 80-20 rule. Use templates.

Outsource if possible and then, course correct as you go.

Outro

So, that's pretty much it for this episode. I hope you got a ton of value from that. I hope you love it. I hope you can take some of these tips, or all of these tips, or one of these tips. Implement it in your life, in your business and start getting more done with your blog. Start being more productive, not just with your blog really because this is just with life in general.

If you enjoyed this podcast episode or this podcast in general, I want you to do me a favor. I don't ask for this a lot but, I'm going to start asking for it more regularly. Head on over to iTunes. Go to becomeablogger.com/iTunes. That's going to take you to the iTunes podcast listing for this podcast and leave me a review, an honest review.

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That's all for this episode. Until next time, take care and God bless.