

# INCREASE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY WITH THE POWER OF PAPER!


How do you increase your productivity while making sure that everything still gets done with the right amount of care and attention? As we focus on working from home, put down the screen and reach for a note-pad and pen – productivity will be yours.

## DIGITAL OVERLOAD

There's little doubt that the average day is exploding with more screen time than ever before and it hurts. Everything from communication to presentations to shopping is digital-based. But while it's made many day-to-day processes more efficient during this pandemic period, it can have a detrimental effect on productivity. Staring at screens for seven hours a day can lead to digital fatigue, which can make seemingly simple tasks a lot more difficult and take a lot longer.

Research has revealed that more than half of office professionals are suffering from digital overload, with 62% saying that digital tools are making their teams unfocused and inefficient in meetings. The survey, titled the Workplace Productivity Report, also found that over half feel that screen overload is making them less productive.

**“96% OF OFFICE WORKERS PREFER TO WORK WITH PAPER COPIES OF INFORMATION AS OPPOSED TO THE DIGITAL VERSION”**



When asked about their use of paper in the workplace, 60% of the respondents said that they specifically use paper to make themselves more productive, while 96% prefer to work with paper copies of information as opposed to the digital version. The report concluded that workers need a strong balance of analogue and digital at work for focus and productivity.

“There's no question that digital tools have in many ways made the workplace more efficient,” explains productivity expert Holland Haiis. “But while digital tools have helped us to achieve more than we've ever imagined, we also realize it's time for a little technological balance with the help of some non-technological tools.”

## GET ENGAGED WITH PAPER

The increase in productivity that comes from working with paper occurs for the same neurological reasons as why we gain more understanding from a print textbook. When reading from a screen, the mind tends to skim-read, picking out only selected words and phrases to get a quick surface-level understanding of the subject. But when reading in print, the mind becomes fully engaged, taking in every word and gaining a deeper insight into the information.

This deep-thought process also extends to writing on paper, with the physical process concentrating the mind further, allowing it to become more engaged with the task, improving retention and providing solutions quicker. This is why 51% of office workers still jot their ideas down in a notebook and 63% prefer to use paper to collaborate with colleagues and spark creativity.

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## FIVE STEPS TO PAPER PRODUCTIVITY

So how can you use paper to get more done each day? Here are five of the best ways:

### 1. MAKE A DAILY TO-DO LIST

When you start the day, don't go straight to the email inbox. Seeing a mass of unopened messages is the first step to digital overload. Instead, write down the top three priorities you have for the day to focus your mind and become energized.

### 2. TAKE A NOTEBOOK TO MEETINGS

Videoconferencing whilst tapping away can ruin what little connectivity we have left, everyone's attention in different places and no one concentrating on the topic or the people we're discussing topics with. So, grab a clean sheet and jot down ideas and park the keyboard. People will be more engaged, to-dos remembered and, importantly, meetings will be shorter.

### 3. USE STICKY NOTES FOR THE BIG PICTURE

With big projects, it's impossible to gain an overview of every aspect on a screen. Constantly skipping between different pages and formats simply overloads the brain and no one can see the big picture. Instead, write down aspects of the project on pieces of paper and pin them up on a large wall to gain a deeper understanding of the job. Create your very own 'true crime' wall and build visual connections to develop key strategic insights. Spare bedroom walls have never had so much colour.

### 4. USE A TRADITIONAL WORK DIARY

The good old paper work diary is vital for planning your time and keeping on top of your commitments. Simply the act of writing an entry will help retain that information and think about what you need for the next teleconference.

### 5. PREPARE FOR PRESENTATIONS ON PAPER

While PowerPoint is expected as we 'share our screens', writing your notes on paper will give you a deeper understanding of your flow and help you remember more of it. Your notes will also provide handy prompts during the presentation itself and a good fallback should the technology fail.

For more information on the Workplace Productivity Report, go to [www.howlifeunfolds.com/workplace-productivity-report](http://www.howlifeunfolds.com/workplace-productivity-report) / Article by Sam Upton