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G'Day!

That's Aussie speak for Hello!

Update from the USA!

Welcome to 2009! This week we got a new President. It is a time of hope and excitement. Regardless of your current work situation, the economy or the challenges you face, there is one area of your life that you can control and that is your productivity. Our goal for you in 2009 is to give you the tools and resources you need to help you accelerate your productivity so you can manage your time, focus your attention and manage your energy.

As I write this, Doylestown is also experiencing freezing cold temperatures and snow is falling outside. I have just hopped out of my hot tub watching the snow flakes fall. Life is good! The snow makes everything sparkle, look clean and every surface is coated in pure, white snow. It is prettier than I can describe. The snow reminds me of a fresh start, a new beginning, a new opportunity. Decide that this is your year! This year matters and we can choose to focus and achieve and start afresh, look for new opportunities and embrace a new beginning – make 2009 your most productive year ever!

How to Make 2009 Your Most Productive Year Ever

Each year we start the year thinking about our goals, our job, our health, all the 'new' routines and commitments we make to ourself to make this our best year yet... but two weeks into January all our planning and resolution goes out the window! You can make this your best year ever by applying some of these simple ideas (and print this article, keep it handy and re-read to keep you on track).

Make a date. Make time in your schedule to find a quiet, comfortable location to set your goals. I spend a morning at my favourite local cafe in January every year to review my goals and set new ones for the year ahead. Find a local restaurant or café and spend time doing the same – support your local businesses.



Snow Angel (not the most flattering photo but definitely fun!)



Check out Neen's Stiletto Mentoring Program to help you accelerate your career. www.neenjames.com

Take five. Create five categories for which to set goals: physical, educational, spiritual, financial, and relational. By setting goals for each of these areas of your life, you will be taking a balanced approach and not neglecting any important aspects of your life.

Use it or lose it! I recently read – people who spend a thousand dollars or more each year on their personal development will increase their business by 20 percent. Read more books, attend Chamber of Commerce or industry workshops, attend a business card exchanges, listen to CDs in your car, do online courses or enrol at college or university. Keep your brain active.

Make time. Eliminate time-robbers from your day – make a list of all the things you do that rob you of your time, such as watching too much TV, running errands inefficiently, checking and responding to your email too often, making long phone calls, waiting in traffic and even other people. Focus on controlling your time – organising your day efficiently and getting rid of the things in your life that are not a high priority.

Out of sight, out of mind. Remove your in-tray from your desk or get rid of it all together if you can! Keep it out of sight so the contents don't distract you and so that people don't drop new items into it without you noticing.

Unplug. Schedule one TV-free night each week. Switch off the TV and instead listen to your favorite music, play a board or card game, read a book, enjoy a quiet meal by candle light (alone or with someone whose company you love), go on a date in one of your local restaurants or soak in a bath. Start being aware of your television viewing habits and make a point of only watching programs that you truly enjoy and stop wasting precious time in front of the TV.

Manage your reading. Create a reading file and put it in your briefcase. If you don't already have one, start a reading file and carry it with you on your way home. You can get through a surprising amount of reading while on public transport to and from work and while waiting in a line.

Find a mentor. When you identify the person you believe would be a suitable mentor, spend some time watching them in action. Ask around to find out what other people's opinion of your chosen mentor are and find out all you can about their achievements, beliefs, values and way of operating. This will give you insight into them before you approach them about mentoring you.

Schedule email time. Email messages popping into your inbox all day long can be an enormous distraction, particularly if your email is set to alert you every time new mail arrives. To check in on your emails and respond to them as they arrive not only distracts you from whatever tasks or projects you are working on but can rob you of an entire day, responding to other people's needs while your own are neglected. Schedule a couple or a few times each day to check and respond to emails rather than constantly looking-in on your inbox or being bounced there by your email program with every new message.

Your signature. Use your email program to create an email signature block that will automatically attach to all of your outgoing messages; it's a little like an email letterhead. It saves you the effort of including your contact information every time and brings a professional touch to your communications. You might simply include your name, business name, contact details and website or you might also include a sentence or two about your business, a special promotion you are running with a link to your website, or even a favourite funny or inspirational quote.

Spring clean. Schedule time to clean out your email regularly, once a month should be enough to keep you on top of it. Empty your deleted items and any unnecessary sent items, and go through any completed project or task folders and ensure that anything you are keeping is essential to your records. Cleaning out your email will ensure you are managing your email files and disk space effectively.

Set up systems. When using filing cabinets, decide how you will allocate your space to make it easiest to locate your files: for example, rather than mixing all your files together you might decide to keep current customer files in one drawer and potential customer files and marketing information in a separate drawer, or you might choose to store current projects in one drawer and research and reference information in another, or you might decide to file everything in alphabetical order – you get the idea – look at the type of files you have and decide how to logically divide them into categories. Then, label the front of each drawer with the type of files it contains.

Choose to be amazing! It's as simple as making a commitment to yourself every morning that you will have an amazing day. Remember, life is not a dress rehearsal – we only get one performance, so let's give it our best!

Recommended Product – Stiletto Mentoring Program

Register now for this 6-month mentoring program with incredible value and a range of styles to fit anyone. You can choose from the Ballet flat level, Mary Jane level or Platinum Stiletto level. You will enjoy many resources authored by Neen, 1:1 consulting (both telephone and face to face), regular teleconferences, exclusive networking events, accelerated presentation skills training and some fun shoes accessories (including DSW shoe certificates and Foot Petal products)... also access to Neen's Pinkadex (that is priceless!). Contact our office at maria@neenjames.com to find out more or log onto www.neenjames.com

Save the Date!

Save the date! (I know it is crazy early notice) for Women's Resource Center's 2009 Annual Fundraising Luncheon at the Union League 28th May 2009 <http://www.womensresourcecenter.net> Once again I will be the emcee and you will hear from the incredibly accomplished executive at Comcast Spotlight, Kim Woodworth.

A Productivity Tip from Neen's Virtual Assistant, Maria Novey



Organize your email inbox for 2009. At the beginning of each year, I look at my Personal folders and "file" any folders which I may not need in the upcoming year. Also, I set up any new project and/or client folders for 2009. In addition, I use the Auto Archive feature to clear out those old emails.

Neen says "Hoo Roo."

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