

Time Blocking: Splitting Up Your Schedule

Find balance in your day and complete more tasks by implementing this time management system.

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Most people who have tried time blocking have struggled to follow it. I hear from real estate pros all the time, “I tried that but couldn’t make it work.” But the problem for most of them isn’t with the system itself, but rather the structure they use to split up their schedule.

Time blocking is merely the predetermined placement of specific actions in specific segments of time. You select in advance what action or activity to engage in — for example, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. That is the essence of time blocking.

The first priority in effective time blocking is your personal life. We need to determine and place in our schedule the important personal stuff.

Designate a day off.

We all should have one day we are completely off. Select a day, at a minimum, that you take off from real estate. A day off means you don’t answer your cell phone as well. It can be any day you choose but it must be the same every week.

Take some evenings off.

While some of our clients need to meet in the evenings we don’t need to be available every evening for business. Set aside a few to work and a few that you will take off.

Schedule routine activities.

Do you have family dinner a few nights per week? A weekly date night with your significant other? Are the kids’ basketball games on a certain night? Don’t assume that you can make them unless you block them out.

After you’ve figured out your personal life (with regards to your schedule, anyway!), establish your work priorities. These are actions and activities that create new business. If you want to raise their production and income, you should spend a minimum of 12 hours a week in new business or lead generation and conversion. You also should be at least two hours a day invested in prospecting and lead follow up. To effectively time block, those hours must be placed in the schedule after your personal life priorities.

It’s also important to allocate administration time. To be effective, we must block time for administration daily as well. Attempting to eliminate all administration time is impossible. The key is blocking off a segment of time to do it, potentially an hour a day. Administration time should be allocated during a time of day when your

energy level is lower, as it requires less energy, focus, and intensity. Move it to where the value aligns with your energy.

One thing to keep in mind: The administrative work we must do to serve clients usually expands into the allotted time daily. This expansion causes most agents to avoid or delay the more challenging lead-generation responsibilities for servicing needs. Make sure to stick to the schedule you make.

Finally, insert time I call flex time: This flexibility time should be placed in your schedule every couple of hours for 30 minutes. This will enable you to handle an emergency or challenge without adjusting your schedule. I frequently talk with practitioners who try to time block their schedule so tightly, the odds of actually staying on task or on schedule is nil. You must give yourself a pre-planned opportunity to divert off and back on your schedule.

In the end, time blocking is a muscle to be trained. It is a process of revision, review, and patience. Craft your initial schedule using the steps and techniques I have shared with you. Then check your progress each week to assess how well you adhered to your schedule. I think you'll find that it's time well spent.

<http://realtormag.realtor.org/for-brokers/build-your-business/article/2010/05/time-blocking-splitting-up-your-schedule>