



Wise Words From Six Wildly Successful Women

Learn how these well-known women stay focused in a chaotic world.

It's easy to feel like highly successful professionals have more hours in a day than the average person. How else do they manage to accomplish so much? The truth is, maintaining a high level of productivity often stems from making deliberate choices. Here's the inside scoop from six hardworking women about how they stay focused and achieve success in a distracted and demanding world.

CHOOSE ANALOGUE OVER HIGH-TECH

Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg is well-known in the business world for bringing an old-fashioned spiral notebook to meetings, an unlikely choice for someone in the tech field. For Sandberg, analogue note-taking is a way to keep things simple and maintain focus. She physically crosses items off the list and then rips out the pages when action items are complete.

BLOCK THE DISTRACTIONS

Every day Jennifer Hyman, co-founder and CEO of Rent the Runway, allots time to one or two problems that are important to address strategically. She creates the necessary time by periodically cutting off access to email, texts and social media notifications that threaten to divert her attention. According to Hyman, it makes no sense to spend your day managing to inbox zero.

LET OTHERS BRIDGE THE GAP

Accepting you can be wildly successful and talented but not at everything is a true skill. Renowned businesswoman Karren Brady says hiring people better than you is the key to success and showing your strength as a leader – letting go of any insecurities you have in order to employ the best. Not to mention it frees up some of your valuable time!

EMBRACE THE QUIET

When your day gets crazy and your thoughts are cluttered, consider taking a break to clear your head. Oprah Winfrey spends 20 minutes each day sitting in absolute stillness. Not only is it the perfect formula for clearing her mind, but it also helps her focus on current jobs and outstanding projects.

NEVER GIVE UP

Former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice encourages people to stick with their goals even when things get tough or it takes longer than expected. It's a lesson she learned at age 10 when her mother refused to let her quit piano lessons. You're tougher than you think, she says, so don't let setbacks deter you from bigger accomplishments. Rice went on to play piano with artists like Aretha Franklin and Yo-Yo Ma.

MAKE A TIME TRADE-OFF

When it comes to work-life balance, it's a false trade-off to say quality time versus quantity, according to Hillary Clinton, another former US Secretary of State. You have to have both. If you work long hours like she did – and you want to carve out time for family – the only solution is to get rid of things in your life that you don't need. Save them for later when your time is your own.

NEXT STEPS

When you're ready to tackle your next big goal:

- Tweak the advice of successful people to make it your own
- Take time to shift your attitude if needed
- Develop creative strategies tailored to you
- Re-evaluate your options

Sources: goalcast.com; fatiguescience.com; forbes.com; www.iiod.com; businessinsider.com; thejobnetwork.com; parade.com; thebusinesswomanmedia.com; concertomarketplace.com; linkedin.com; blog.cake.hr