

“The simplest things are often the truest.” - Richard Bach

Minimalistic Entrepreneur

Being an entrepreneur is tough. Gary Vaynerchuk says that entrepreneurship sucks! [Watch this video](#).

You quit your 9 to 5 job to build an online business to become your own boss, to work from home, to travel more. You are looking for more freedom and you end up in your own prison!

I guarantee entrepreneurship can get f***** overwhelming. I now work harder and longer than I used to work in investment banking.

Minimalism is not just the key to becoming a successful entrepreneur. It's the only way to go as an entrepreneur. Here are my best tips and lessons I've learned going through a ton of *bad days* as Gary says.

Prioritise. Before you start doing any work in the morning ask yourself what the 2 -3 most important tasks are.

I don't think that changing the theme on your wordpress site is your number 1 priority of the day (I changed my theme recently but I resisted doing it for a whole month as I had other priorities).

Look at your to-do list. Do the stuff that adds the most important value. Be damn strict with this!

Remember the 80/20 rule. 20% of the things you do are responsible for the 80% of your success. Focus on that 20%. Most of the time you know what is important but still you don't do it. You fool yourself. Stop that! Reconsider your day-to-day priorities. I'm repeating myself, I know but it's so important.

Don't check your inbox every five minutes. Set multiple alarm clocks at 11am and 4am every day to check your email. Check your email only twice a day. It wastes your time and it kills your focus and quality of your work. I'll tell you more about this shortly.

Stop multitasking. Our brains are designed to focus on one thing at a time. MIT neuroscientist Earl Miller says that when people think that they multitask, in essence they switch from one task to another very rapidly. [Read this article](#).

When we complete a tiny task (answering an email, sending a text message, posting a post on Facebook), we are hit with a dollop of dopamine, our reward hormone. Our brains are addicted

to dopamine and we switch tasks quickly because that gives us lots of instant doses of gratification.

These instant gratifications make us feel that we accomplish a lot whereas in reality we don't.

Multitasking reduces the quality and efficiency of our work. Organising thoughts and filtering out irrelevant information becomes more difficult.

A study at the University Of London also showed that people who multitask while performing cognitive tasks experience IQ drops. In fact, the IQ drops were similar to what you see in individuals who smoke cannabis or didn't sleep the night before.

Multitasking has also been found to increase cortisol, the stress hormone. The rapid fire-ups of the brain leave us mentally exhausted very quickly even when the working day has barely started!

The biggest instigator of multitasking? Our inboxes. Some studies have shown that even when you have the possibility to multitask when you know for example that you have unread emails in your inbox can reduce your IQ by 10 points! For men, IQ drops can be even worse up to 15 points.

The constant thrill of having new bolded emails in our inbox keeps us distracted. A McKinsey Global Institute Study found that employees spend 28% of their time checking their inboxes.

Studies have also shown that the damage of multitasking in the long run can be permanent. MRI scans showed that people who multitask consistently show less brain density in the anterior cingulate. That's the area responsible for empathy and emotional control.

So, stop multitasking now, check your email twice a day, put your phone in a silent mode and focus on the task at hand.

Don't skip breaks. It's tempting to skip breaks (and even lunch) when you have lots of work to do. However, research again has shown that those who take regular breaks are actually more productive than those who don't. Sounds trivial again? It does. But we skip breaks (including myself of course) and we feel we're working like a supernatural machines. Total illusion.

A great app to use is Pomodoro One. Pomodoro One has an alarm that goes off after a set interval. Then, it sounds an alarm and gives you a break from work. When the break's over, it automatically starts timing your work again. You can use it on both Desktop and phone.

You don't need business cards. It's a waste of paper. I get angry when I see so many business cards on the streets. If someone wants to keep in touch with you, give them your telephone number, or your email. If they are really interested in you, they will contact you. I'm

sure that the chances are higher that someone loses your contact when getting your business card rather than saving your number in their phone.

Unsubscribe. How many emails do you get that you don't even read or open. When you first decide to declutter your inbox you may get overwhelmed. So, unsubscribe as new emails come in. Don't try to do it all at once. You'll drive yourself mad.

Delete the Facebook App from your iPhone. It's unbelievable how much time we spend on Facebook. The best thing I've done in my life is deleting the Facebook App from my phone. Not only did I find inner peace staying away from the Facebook "blink-blink", but I also solved the common problem of the iPhone battery! The Facebook app is probably the #1 energy monster app. OK, to be fair it's not the app itself; it's our addiction of checking Facebook on our phones.

Don't check your sales every 5 minutes. As an entrepreneur you strive for every sale. You want to see your income increase. It's your dream. You don't want to go back to office job. You want your financial freedom like nothing else.

In the beginning, I was addicted to checking the sales every minute. How many more sales? I used to check sales on multiple sites every hour. I used to get up in the morning and check the sales in my computer with my eyes half-closed. All this checking takes so much time just like email checking kills your quality of work. All this checking adds zero value to your business. Dedicate every minute on how you can make your product better. Spend your time on that and only that. Check your sales once a week, or once in two weeks.

It's the same with running a race. If you constantly look around you while you run to check on others, you lose focus. For those who run 100m even a thought can cost them the race.

Launch it. then make it better. Have you heard of the concept of the Minimum Value Product (MVP)? Don't wait to launch your product until it's perfect! It will never be perfect. There will always be something more to do before you launch it. Create a product that adds value to the people. Gauge interest. Listen to the feedback. Your customers will tell you how you can make it better. Again I recommend some further reading here. What else? [The Lean Startup by Eric Ries.](#)

Outsource. I've said this again before. You can't do everything on your own when you run a business. I know you can do this task very well yourself. And that task. And that task. I know it will take you just an hour. But it will be an hour that you could devote to something else that could add more value.

This is how [Muller](#) explains it: *'Take the time to eliminate the pointless, the superfluous, the questionable. Then decide what you can hire out or delegate. Then focus on the work that only you can do, that you can do best, and that you can do for the most impact on your business.'*