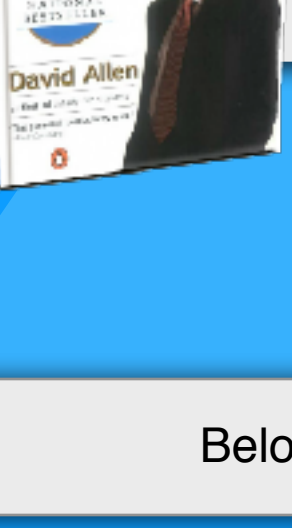


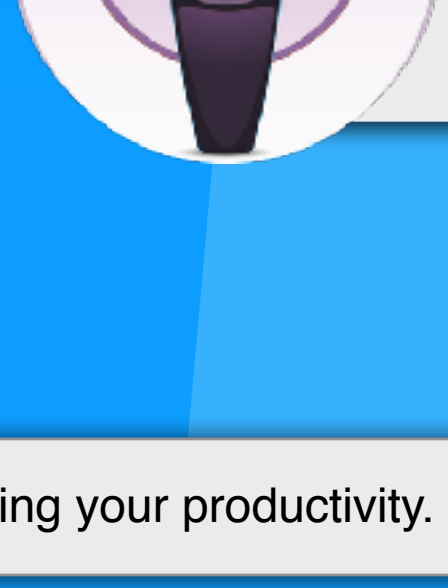
# PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY

## POWERED BY TECHNOLOGY

Infographic by **TONY VINCENT**



Author of *Getting Things Done* and time-management guru David Allen calls personal productivity "a valuable common sense." That's because it can take years to figure out what works for you.



Get personal productivity tips, insights, and advice from these **Podcasts**:

David Allen's GTD Podcast

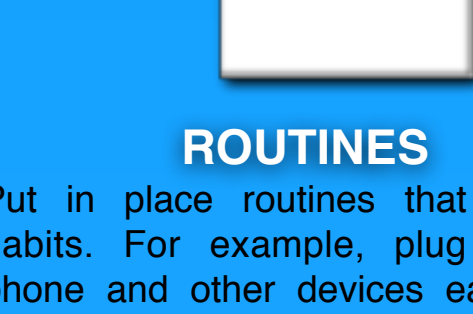
Get It Done Guy  
**TO WORK LESS AND DO MORE**

Beyond the To-Do List  
**BEYOND THE TO-DO LIST**  
Noodle.MX NETWORK

Below are some **strategies** for increasing your productivity. Each strategy has mobile and/or online tools that can help.

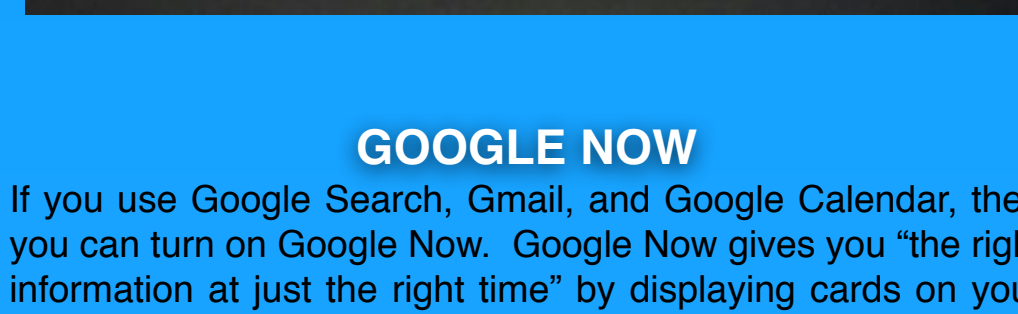
## AUTOMATE TASKS

Pay attention to what consistently has your attention and put systems in place to have tasks done on a regular basis on autopilot.



### ROUTINES

Put in place routines that become habits. For example, plug in your phone and other devices each night and review your calendar every morning when you unplug.



### GOOGLE NOW

If you use Google Search, Gmail, and Google Calendar, then you can turn on Google Now. Google Now gives you the right information at just the right time by displaying cards on your laptop, Android, or iOS device. Cards show up when you need them, like reminders for when you have a meeting and travel information.



### IF THIS, THEN THAT

IFTTT.com is a nifty web service that automates tasks that involve some of the most popular digital services like Twitter, Facebook, Evernote, Dropbox, text messages, and email. You can customize recipes that connect these services through triggers. There are plenty of recipes already made or you can cook one up from scratch.



## ACCESS ANYWHERE

David Allen says, "Minds are for having ideas, not holding them." Store your ideas, information, and projects online so that you can access them from any computer or device and so you make space in your mind to think.



"THE MOST PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE ARE THE ONES WITH THE EMPTIEST HEADS."  
DAVID ALLEN



**CLOUD SERVICES**  
Instead of saving to the hard drive on a single device, use online services that make your files and data accessible from any device or computer. Try Evernote, Dropbox, and Google Drive.



**ONLINE CALENDAR**  
It's time free yourself of a paper calendar. With a digital calendar you can sync with multiple devices for access when and where you need it. Try Google Calendar or Apple's iCloud.



**WUNDERLIST**  
Keep your task lists online with Wunderlist. It's a free app that syncs across devices so you always have your list nearby. You can lists with others, making for great collaborative or family lists.

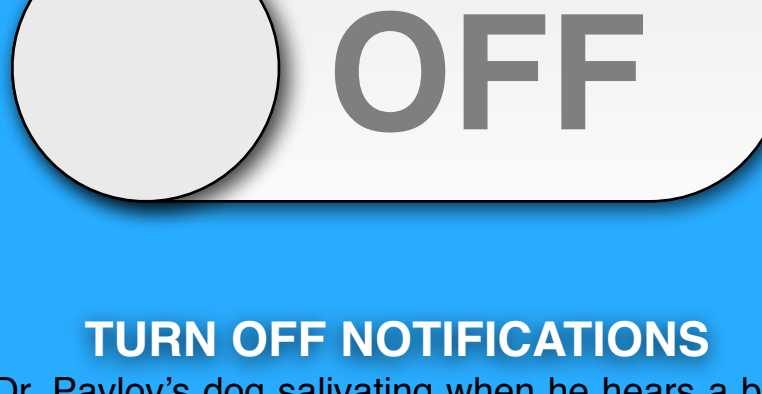
## REDUCE DISTRACTIONS

The American Psychological Association has found that multitasking is neither effective nor efficient. Focus on the task at hand by decreasing interruptions.



### PROCESS MESSAGES ON YOUR TERMS

Don't lose your focus by constantly switching to email or social media the moment you receive a new message. Instead, plan to process those messages in batches at times you set aside.



### TURN OFF NOTIFICATIONS

Like Dr. Pavlov's dog salivating when he hears a bell ring, you might be conditioned to "salivate" when you hear or see that you have a new message. Do yourself a favor and turn off notifications for new emails and messages from other apps. Perhaps your device has a Do Not Disturb mode you can activate.



### REDUCE JUNK MAILINGS

Eliminate much of the unwanted mail you receive in your postal mailbox with PaperKarma. Use the free app to snap photos of mailings you no longer wish to receive. PaperKarma will contact the mailer and request removal from their distribution lists.

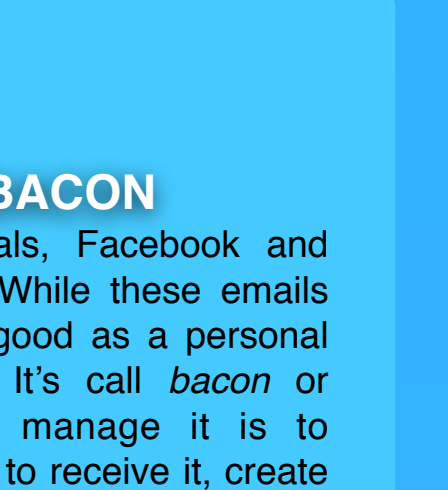
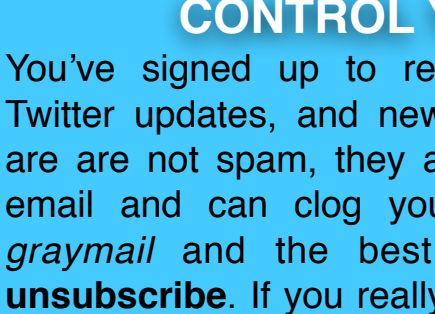
Switching between tasks takes time and mental shifts that can eat up as much as **40%** of one's productive time.



**400**  
THE AVERAGE BUSINESS USER RECEIVES 36 EMAILS PER DAY. THAT'S NEARLY 400 POSSIBLE INTERRUPTIONS IN A WORK WEEK.

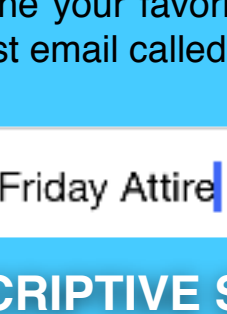
## STRIVE FOR INBOX ZERO

Get email out of your inbox so you are not haunted by messages that need to be processed, answered, or archived. It's not so much about how many messages are in your inbox. It's about managing what comes into your inbox and what to do with it once it's there.



### CONTROL YOUR BACON

You've signed up to receive deals, Facebook and Twitter updates, and newsletters. While these emails are not spam, they aren't as good as a personal email and can clog your inbox. It's called *bacon* or *graymail* and the best way to manage it is to *unsubscribe*. If you really do want to receive it, create an email rule or filter so that the bacon you do want bypasses your inbox and is available to you to browse at a time of your choosing.



### UNROLL.ME

After you sign up, see a list of all your subscription emails. Unsubscribe instantly from whatever you don't want. Easily combine your favorite subscriptions into a beautiful daily digest email called the RollUp.

Subject: Friday Attire

### USE DESCRIPTIVE SUBJECTS

If you use functional subject lines it would be easier to manage our inboxes at a glance. You can at least set an example in the emails you send. Keep your subject line simple and to the point so that it can assist the recipient in processing his or her own email.

## Doodle

### SCHEDULE MEETINGS & EVENTS

Your inbox can quickly fill with exchanges when trying to schedule a meeting or event. Instead of coordinating through email, use Doodle.com. Doodle enables you to propose several dates and times and participants can indicate their availability online.



### COLLABORATE OUTSIDE OF EMAIL

Multiple emails with different versions of a document is not an efficient way to collaborate, and it jams up your inbox. Instead of passing documents back and forth, set up a shared word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, or drawing file using Google Docs.



### THANKS IN ADVANCE

Keep unnecessary communication out of your inbox by eliminating emails that simply say thank you. End your email with *thanks in advance*. Some people end emails with *NNN* which stands for *no reply necessary*. Though, to avoid receiving an email that asks what *NNN* means, don't use the abbreviation.



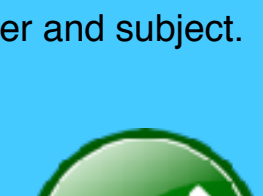
### PREVENT REPLY ALL

You can save yourself and others the headache of the dreaded *Reply All* by making sure that the emails you send will not enable everyone to which you sent the message to see replies. When composing an email put your address in the To field. Place all other recipients' email addresses in the BCC field.

## GET EMAIL OUT OF YOUR INBOX



## MANAGE WHAT COMES INTO YOUR INBOX



### DELETE OR ARCHIVE

Even on the go, you can delete many emails just by looking at the sender and subject.



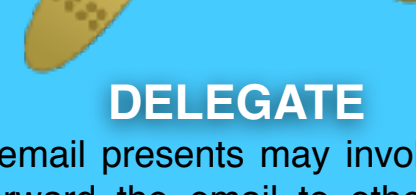
### DO

If the email requires you to do something, then do it immediately if possible so that you can then delete it.



### DATE

Don't let emails that contain information that you'll need on a specific date linger in your inbox. Instead, copy and paste that information into your calendar on the date you'll need it. For example, put airline flight numbers and times into a new event on the date you'll be traveling so you can delete or archive the email.



### DELEGATE

The task an email presents may involve other people. You might forward the email to others but keep the original in your inbox until they reply as a reminder. You could archive the email and place a reminder in your calendar. Or, if you use Gmail, you can install Boomerang. It's a Chrome and Firefox plugin that will take messages out of your inbox until you need them.



### DEFER

You may not be able to immediately delete or do the action an email represents. It could sit in your inbox until complete. If you're determined to achieve inbox zero, it might be even more motivation to complete the action. If you simply cannot deal with an email until later, you could forward it to HitMeLater.com. They will resend your email back to you at a time you specify.



### DECLARE EMAIL BANKRUPTCY

After spending 80 hours trying to process his backlogged email, author Lawrence Lessig wrote a mass email to everyone who sent emails in his inbox. He said, "Bankruptcy is now my only option." Lawrence cleared out his entire inbox and apologized profusely for his email difficulties. He finished the message asking anyone who sent something that was particularly important to resend, and he would give it special attention. Bankruptcy is an extreme option, but it might be your only hope to dig out of your inbox disaster.

## FOLLOW THE 2 MINUTE RULE

Instead of waiting until later to process an email message or instead of adding a task to your to-do list, act on it immediately when possible. This is especially true if the task will take less than two minutes.



"IF YOU DETERMINE AN ACTION CAN BE DONE IN TWO MINUTES, YOU ACTUALLY SHOULD DO IT RIGHT THEN BECAUSE IT WILL TAKE LONGER TO ORGANIZE IT AND REVIEW IT THAN IT WOULD BE TO ACTUALLY FINISH IT THE FIRST TIME YOU NOTICE IT."  
DAVID ALLEN



### GOOGLE THAT

Oftentimes others ask us for information that they could almost as easily look up themselves. To help empower them to seek their own answers and perhaps prevent similar questions in the future, take two minutes to type in the search query into letmeooglethatforyou.com. It will provide a URL for the Google. The URL leads to an animation of typing the search into Google and then presents the results page. Be considerate—sending a lmgtfy.com URL can be considered rude and snarky.

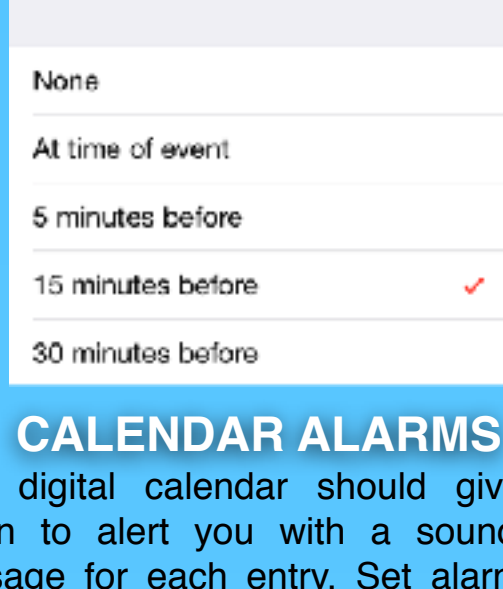
### GOT A COUPLE MINUTES?

Whether you're at your desk or on a mobile device, see how many emails you can delete when you find yourself with short pockets of time.



## USE DIGITAL REMINDERS

You probably have a digital device in hearing distance when you have something of the day. Let the device remind you of appointments or when you'll need to do.



### CALENDAR ALARMS

Your digital calendar should give the option to alert you with a sound and message for each entry. Set alarms for meetings, reminders, projects, birthdays, etc. so you can stay focused without the worry of missing something important.



### SCHEDULE EMAIL OR TEXT

Send yourself a message to remind you about an appointment, due date, shopping list, etc. so the information is delivered to you when you will need it. Use a free service like EmailFuture.com or TextItLater.com to schedule an email or text message.



### ASK SIRI OR GOOGLE

You can ask Siri on iPhone or Apple Watch or the Google Assistant on Android to remind you about something at a certain time or when you get to a specific location. Use your device to ask for the reminder right away, otherwise you might forget!

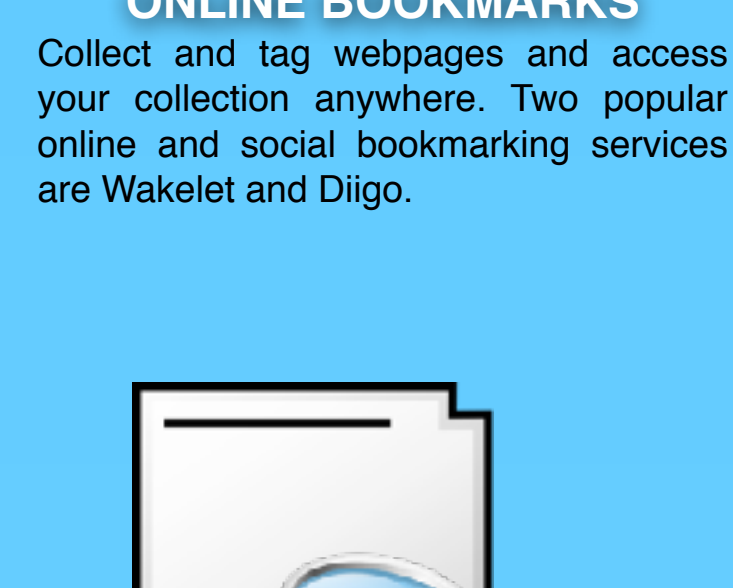
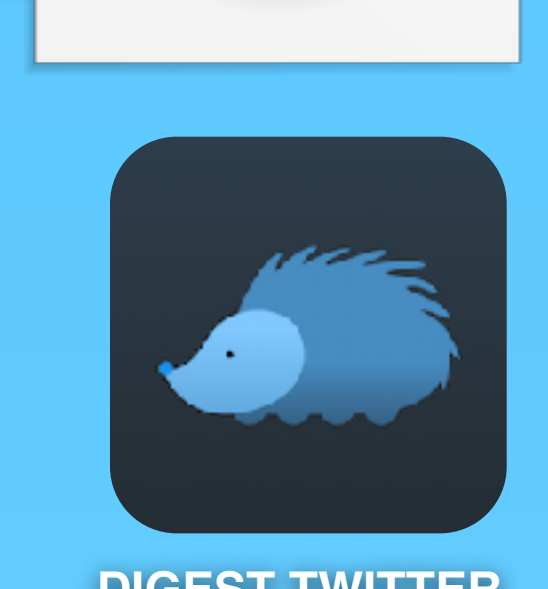


### REMINDR OTHERS

Use Remind's free website or app to send groups of students, parents, or colleagues reminders via text or email. You can schedule the group messages to be sent at a specific time and date.

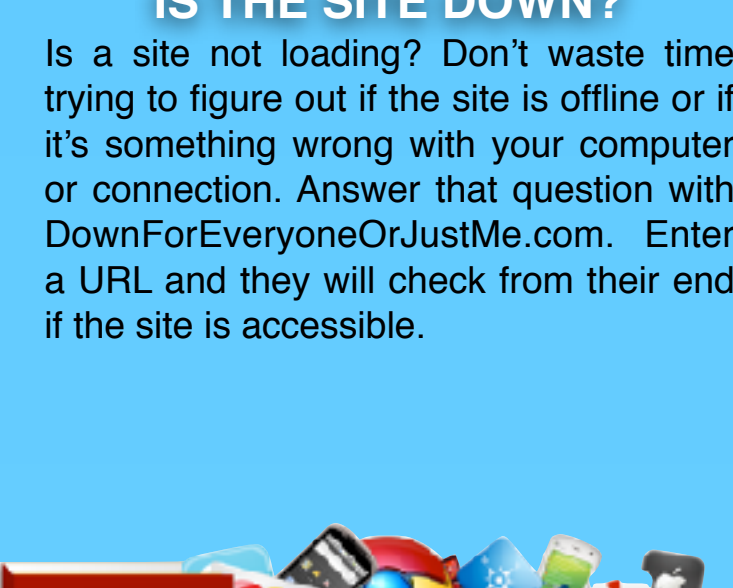
## BROWSE THE WEB EFFICIENTLY

According to research company comScore, the average American internet user spends 32 hours per month online. Make the most of your time online.



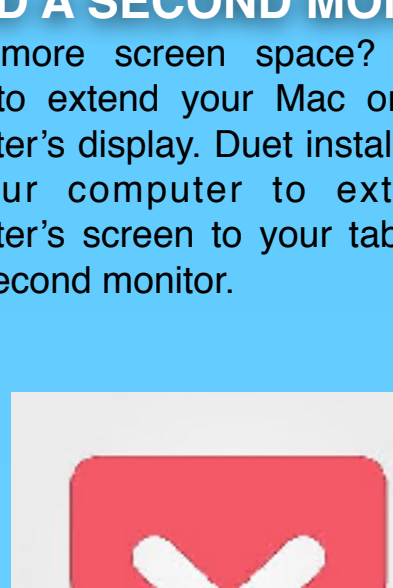
### ONLINE BOOKMARKS

Collect and tag webpages and access your collection anywhere. Two popular online and social bookmarking services are *Wakelet* and *Diigo*.



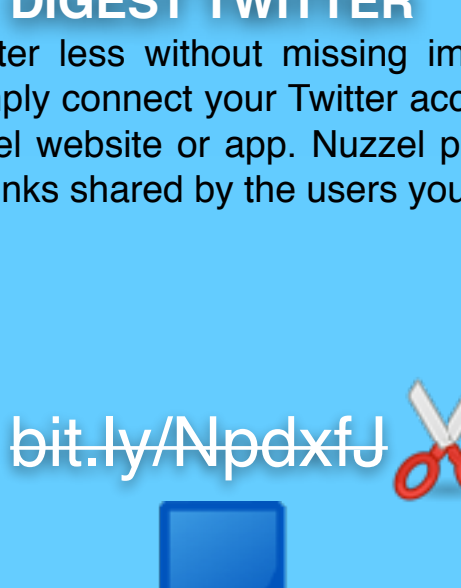
### IS THE SITE DOWN?

Is a site not loading? Don't waste time trying to figure out if the site is offline or if it's something wrong with your computer or connection. Answer that question with DownForEveryoneOrJustMe.com. Enter a URL and they will check from their end if the site is accessible.



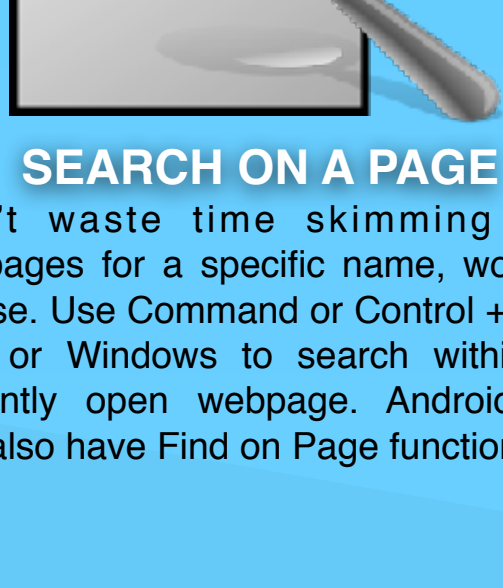
### ADD A SECOND MONITOR

Need more screen space? Use your tablet to extend your Mac or Windows computer's display. Duet installs software on your computer to extend your computer's screen to your tablet. It's an easy second monitor.



### DIGEST TWITTER

Visit Twitter less without missing important links. Simply connect your Twitter account to the Nuzzel website or app. Nuzzel presents the best links shared by the users you follow.



### SEARCH ON A PAGE

Your digital calendar should give the option to alert you with a sound and message for each entry. Set alarms for meetings, reminders, projects, birthdays, etc. so you can stay focused without the worry of missing something important.



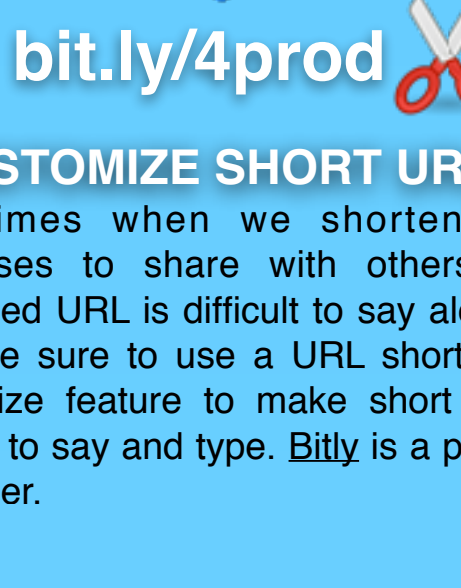
### USE A PASSWORD MANAGER

Stay sane while maintaining secure passwords for every website you log into. A password manager like the one built into your web browser or a manager app. LastPass automatically logs you into websites. With LastPass you won't waste time retrieving forgotten passwords and making new ones.



### SAVE FOR LATER

Stay focused and on track with your task at hand. When you come across something interesting you'd like to read, but not at the present time, you can put articles, videos, or pretty much anything into Pocket from *getpocket.com*.



### CUSTOMIZE SHORT URLs

Oftentimes when we shorten web addresses to share with others, the shortened URL is difficult to use aloud or type. Be sure to use a URL shortener's customize feature to make short URLs friendly to say and type. Bitly is a popular shortener.

### IMAGE CREDITS

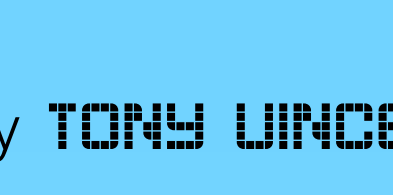
- Public domain images used from OpenClipArt.org
- Paid images licensed from ClipArt.com
- Photo of David Allen by Flickr user Comibase flickr.com/photos/comibase/328829178
- Sync icon by iconfinder.com user Gakuseisean iconfinder.com/icondetails/66054126/synchonize\_icon
- Inbox icon by iconfinder.com user lsaoo iconfinder.com/icondetails/51921126/emails\_inbox\_icon
- Reply All icon by iconarchive.org user Saki iconarchive.com/show/moveXT-2/icons-by-saki
- Diigo and Delicious by SoftIcons.com user Custom Icon Design softicons.com/free-icons/social-media-icons
- Offline icon by IconArchive.com user Simple Icons iconarchive.com/show/simple-icons-by-harwen

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- Vacations from Email Decrease Stress, Increase Concentration www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/05/12/0505120503142645.htm
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Got a personal productivity tip or tool? Share using the Twitter hashtag

**#4PRODUCTIVITY**



Infographic by **TONY VINCENT**  
learninginhand.com  
twitter.com/tonyvincent

