

# Eight Essential Preparation Steps

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## 1. Prepare Proactively

Do whatever you need to carve out time to prepare. Bribe yourself with a latte, get up earlier, make a star chart. Deep thinking is vital.



## 2. Invest Time to Save Time

Stitch in time saves nine.



## 3. Get Clear on the Outcomes

If you are struggling, schedule time with a trusted thought partner to talk through outcomes. Determine the right size tasks (one hour vs one day vs one week). It takes one part of your brain to think through tasks and another part to execute. Chunking like tasks together can help to streamline your thinking over time.



## 4. Create a Game Plan

Once you are clear on your goal and the options, you need a game plan. Looking at the different tasks and options, identify which actions will have the greatest impact on your priorities. The key is to maximize impact while optimizing your investment of time, energy, and resources. The Pareto Principle says that we can achieve 80% of our impact with 20% of our focused effort. What is your 20%?



## 5. Chunk It

Break big projects into smaller subtasks, chunks, or sprints. Thinking through what needs to happen clarifies the outcome, and it stimulates creativity. Ideally, break projects into tasks that can be completed in 15-30 minutes. These tasks should be challenging enough to stretch yourself but not so terrifying that you resist taking action



## 6. Be a Master Delegator

People love to collaborate when they feel valued, clear on the outcome, and know why a project is important. Work to optimize their efforts. Rather than micro-manage, delegate a task and ask your collaborators to share their plan, deliverables, and timeline. This gets them engaged, minimizes micro-managing, and it is a great way to test things out.



## 7. Harness Emotions to get in Motion

Create clear metrics. How will it help move you forward? If you can't connect to the why, ask yourself if the task is really important. If it is simply "part of the job" and not all that emotionally engaging, harness the why for your job (e.g., it gives you a roof over your head and food for people you love).

Wherever there is emotion, there is motion. The more emotion you can harness, the more energy and focus you will be able to leverage and the less willpower you'll need. Know why you are doing what you are doing at all times. When you do, you'll reduce your reliance on willpower. Connecting to an emotionally compelling reason for doing something, motivates us. It shifts things from a "have-to-do" into a "get-to-do."



## 8. Remain Flexible on the Approach

There are many ways to slice an apple. What are the different options or approaches you can adopt to execute each task on your list?

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