



## 5 TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR WRITING ENVIRONMENT

*"We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master."*  
– Ernest Hemingway

### I. LOOK AT YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

- a. Find the prime time of day for you
  - i. Everyone has times of that day when they are most efficient – you are revved and ready to roll and there are times not sleeping is a task
  - ii. You want to plan vital tasks when your energy is high and focus on more less creative or administrative tasks during hours of low efficiency
  - iii. Identify the hours of maximum efficiency and low performance by charting in 2-3 hour chunks for about a week
  - iv. Notice:
    1. Your energy level
    2. Your mood
    3. Whether you would call this a PEAK or VALLEY
    4. Did you just eat? Was it something nutritious or sugary?
    5. Did you have social time? Was that draining or energizing?
  - v. Most energy spikes last 90 minutes and some experience 2-3 peaks a day
  - vi. Now plan your tasks based on your findings
- b. Try "theming" your days
  - i. Group like tasks (such as marketing, social media, promotions) on certain days
  - ii. You might have, for example, a writing day, editing day, marketing day, learning day,
- c. POMODORO Method
  - i. 25 minutes is the recommended interval
  - ii. Set the timer – focus on your project and nothing else
  - iii. Then take a break - set your timer for the break as well and be strict about your break
  - iv. Four work/break sessions
  - v. Then take a longer break – 20-30

## 2. HAVE ERGONOMICALLY SOUND WRITING

- a. Keyboard
  - i. Keep elbows close to the body
  - ii. Keep wrists as straight as possible (even switching out keyboards if needed)
  - iii. Keyboard should be 1-2 inches above the thighs
  - iv. Keyboard and mouse should be shoulder width apart
- b. Posture
  - i. Computer screen should be at eye level to maintain the proper curvature of the neck
  - ii. Have some sort of lumbar support (small pillow behind the small of your back to properly align the upper back)
- c. Move
  - i. Get up every 30-45 minutes
  - ii. Increased circulation means better work from your brain
- d. Tools
  - i. Portable laptop desk
  - ii. Bluetooth keyboard and mouse
  - iii. Standing desk
  - iv. Standing desk mat or balance board
  - v. A timer

## 3. BREAK WRITER'S BLOCK WITH GOOD HABITS

- a. Go for a walk (gets the blood flowing)
- b. Eliminate distractions
  - i. Scrivener's COMPOSE mode
  - ii. Apps like COLD TURKEY or OMMWRITER
- c. Change your environment
- d. Brainstorm – web form, plotting form, bullet form
- e. Do something creative
  - i. Drawing, painting, etc
  - ii. Listen to music
  - iii. Read a book
- f. Do more research – this can stimulate more story ideas
- g. Coffee, coffee, coffee...or a warm beverage
- h. Create a daily routine with set writing hours
- i. Play a writing (creative) game
- j. Write
  - i. Writing on a computer? Switch to longhand
  - ii. Write in your character's POV for a few pages, just to get the feel of him/her
  - iii. Do writing prompts

#### 4. SET GOOD GOALS

- a. Set your goals
  - i. Be realistic
  - ii. Be conservative in your estimates!
  - iii. Be specific about your goals – base goals on solid information and careful consideration
- b. Stick to your deadline(s)
  - i. Make small, measurable goals along the way
  - ii. Reward yourself along the way
  - iii. Stick to your writing sessions - schedule them and do it
  - iv. Every “yes” means a “no” to something else
    - 1. Know your goals/priorities
    - 2. Things that don’t fall within those overarching goals/priorities gets a “I will pray about it”
    - 3. Saying “no” is hard, but it’s not mean – it is saying “yes” to your calling and purpose, and being respectful of both you (especially your time) and that person

#### 5. B.I.C. (OR BUTT IN CHAIR)

- a. Can’t get away from it - you just have to sit down and do the thing
- b. God has called us to this amazing task, we are paper missionaries; be faithful where you are planted

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