

# Staying Productive: Transcript

## Slide 1:

Thank you for watching the Purdue OWL's vidcast on Staying Productive. Sometimes, the hardest part of writing is just getting started. In this vidcast, we'll consider some methods stay productive and have a successful writing session.

## Slide 2:

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to writing, and as such, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to a successful writing session. Instead, successful writing sessions are the culmination of several factors personal to each and every writer.

To maximize the chance of a successful writing session, the first step is to consider the different methods for maintaining productivity. These methods are:

- Time-Based
- Social-Based
- Output-Based
- Reward-Based
- and Mixed-Methods

## Slide 3:

The first method, a time-based approach to goal-setting, asks writers to dedicate a set amount of time for a certain writing task. Identify when you are most likely to write (or when you are the most productive), and how long you think you can sustain productive output. Reserve that time in your weekly schedule—do not sacrifice it for meetings or other work. This is your time to write. Ideally, for longer projects, this would be at least one hour up to five times per week. Use this time to write, but also to read, research, think, and edit. You might also divide up this time into shorter units, each with its own short task. Take a break as necessary between accomplishing the shorter tasks but continue working until your scheduled writing time is finished.

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If writing with others helps you stay accountable, you can use social methods to accomplish your writing tasks. For example, ask colleagues or peers who are working on

similar projects to form a writing group. Most writing groups either write together or write separately and come together to read and comment on each other's drafts. Some do both. A writing group can be a time commitment, but it is often the most productive use of time since you regularly get feedback on your writing. You might also utilize a writing center or a private writing tutor. Use your campus writing center or a private writing tutor to help you stay accountable and give one-on-one feedback on your ideas and work. There is usually a limit to how many appointments you can make at a campus writing center per week, so ask and make it a goal to make as many appointments as possible for your schedule. Make it your goal to bring at least 2-5 new pages of writing to each appointment.

### Slide 5:

If output-drive methods, like word count, motivate you, assign yourself a reasonable daily word count goal, such as 300 words per day. Attaining this word count daily will really make the pages you write add up quickly. Your goal should also indicate the caliber of this writing. If you're at the beginning of a project, you might aim for a very rough draft of 300 words. If you've already done a lot of thinking and research, you might aim for 300 polished words per day. If you start writing one day and find yourself with a lot of momentum, there is no need to stop at 300 words! See how far you can get and then consider whether you should revise your daily word count goal upwards.

### Slide 6:

A reward-based system helps some writers maintain their productivity. If you're using a rewards-based method, reward yourself for completing a suitable writing task. Rewards can be small: checking items off a list or giving yourself a sticker for accomplishing a task. A larger reward might be streaming an episode of your favorite show, some guilt-free leisure time, or dinner at your favorite restaurant. You may find that rewards keep you motivated and create good habits. You might also try a reward system for long-term writing projects. For instance, you could make a chart and give yourself one sticker each day you meet a time- or output-based goal. Five consecutive stickers could earn you a cup of coffee from your favorite cafe; 10 consecutive stickers could mean you get to buy a new book for your personal collection. In short, you can plan out specific rewards for specific milestones.

### Slide 7:

The above methods and examples are not mutually exclusive. You can also use a mixed-methods approach where you try adapting features of one method and combining them with another. Mix and match to find what works best for you. For example, you can design a

competitive writing challenge with a group of friends, using a social method. You may then collectively decide on the length of the challenge and the metrics for winning, such as highest word count, which is output-based; or, maybe the most hours spent on writing, which is a time-based method. It can be a just-for-fun challenge, or you might include some stakes and make a rewards-based method. Maybe everyone pays \$5 to enter, and the winner is rewarded all of the cash.

## Slide 8:

Check out the rest of our videos which will help you stay productive during any writing task—whether it’s preparing for a specific writing task, setting SMART Goals, or more information on distinct parts of the writing process.

You can also find more information about graduate writing on the Purdue OWL website.

Thanks for watching!