

词汇: productivity 效率

Productivity can be a struggle for many of us. **Overflowing** email inboxes, housework, social obligations – it can be easy to feel **overwhelmed**. However, one simple **tool** that can help us stay on top of everything is the **to-do list**. Write it down, do the **tasks** and **cross** them **off** – simple!

There are three key reasons why lists are beneficial, according to psychologist and author David Cohen. Firstly, they help to **drown out** the chaos and anxiety that comes with having **never-ending** tasks. By **writing** everything **down**, we don't have to rely on our memory and can instead focus on the task **at hand**. Secondly, lists provide **structure** and guidance, giving us a plan to follow. As well as this, our brains are more likely to **retain** information that is presented in a **structured** and **organised** manner. And finally, lists serve as **proof** of what we have achieved, which can help boost our sense of **accomplishment** and **motivation**.

Another possible reason our brains love lists is because of something called the 'Zeigarnik Effect'. This is the name psychologists use for when we remember things we need to do, our **unfinished** tasks, better than things we have already completed. Researchers from Wake Forest University tested the **interference** of the Zeigarnik effect on a group of people. The experiment began with a warm-up task, though it was stopped half-way through, and only some people were allowed to make plans to finish it. The researchers found that the group permitted to plan had reduced anxiety and performed better in the second task. The problem was, the others still had the warm-up task stuck in their **active memory** – an **unticked** list of tasks. So, once we **tick** something **off** our list, our brain forgets about it and we can relax.

All in all, it seems lists are a valuable tool for **staying on top of** life!

词汇表

productivity	效率
overflowing	爆满的, 装满了的
overwhelmed	难以承受的, 不知所措的
tool	方法, 工具
to-do list	待办事项清单
task	任务
cross off	(从清单上) 划掉
drown out	盖过, 压过
never-ending	没完没了的
write down	写下, 记下
at hand	手头的, 手边的
structure	条理, 结构
retain	记住
structured	有条理的, 结构清晰的
organised	有条不紊的, 安排有序的
proof	证明
accomplishment	成就
motivation	动力
unfinished	未完成的
interference	干扰, 干预
active memory	短期记忆
unticked	未(在清单上)勾掉的
tick off	在(清单上)勾掉
stay on top of	时时关注, 掌握最新进展

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why is it helpful to write tasks down?
2. How do lists help our sense of accomplishment and motivation?
3. True or False? *The Zeigarnik effect is a phenomenon that helps us finish tasks.*
4. What did researchers from Wake Forest University test in their experiment?
5. Which group performed better in the second task of the experiment?

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. I always _____ washing and ironing clothes even though I don't enjoy it.

cross off	drown out	write down	stay on top of
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2. The police had _____ that she committed the crime. She was on the CCTV.

accomplishment	productivity	interference	proof
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3. My _____ definitely gets lower towards the end of the working day.

motivation	tool	task	structure
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4. I can get _____ if there is too much noise in the house. I like peace and quiet.

unfinished	organised	structured	overwhelmed
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5. Zainab has a _____ list of books she wants to read.

never-ending	unticked	active	social
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答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. Why is it helpful to write tasks down?

Because by writing everything down, we don't have to rely on our memory and can instead focus on the task at hand.

2. How do lists help our sense of accomplishment and motivation?

Lists serve as proof of what we have achieved.

3. True or False? *The Zeigarnik effect is a phenomenon that helps us finish tasks.*

False. The Zeigarnik effect is the phenomenon of remembering things we need to do, our unfinished tasks, better than things we have already completed.

4. What did researchers from Wake Forest University test in their experiment?

Researchers tested the interference of the Zeigarnik effect on a group of people.

5. Which group performed better in the second task of the experiment?

The group permitted to plan had reduced anxiety and performed better in the second task.

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. I always **stay on top of** washing and ironing clothes even though I don't enjoy it.

2. The police had **proof** that she committed the crime. She was on the CCTV.

3. My **motivation** definitely gets lower towards the end of the working day.

4. I can get **overwhelmed** if there is too much noise in the house. I like peace and quiet.

5. Zainab has a **never-ending** list of books she wants to read.