



Productivity Habit – Minimum Effective Dose

By Allison Wolf, CEC, Shift Works Strategic

The Minimum Effective Dose (MED) is a medical term adopted by lifestyle and fitness writer Tim Ferris to describe the smallest effort required to produce the desired outcome.

Use MED to get significant results in the most effective manner. Try it out in one or both of the following ways.

Exercise:

Apply it to your fitness routine. Exercise can be effective with as little as ten or fifteen minutes, and it can be done anywhere—even in your office.

Author and coach Christine Carter, Ph.D. used to try to run for 45 minutes to an hour several times a week. Now she just runs for nine minutes at a time and does one short strength building circuit three times a week. In her book The Sweet Spot she wrote:

“I’m now stronger than I have ever been in my life. I’m the same dress size I was before I had my kids and when I was running marathons – but I am also stronger because I have been doing one ridiculously unambitious strength training circuit three days a week (p.12).”

Try experimenting with your fitness MED.

Organization:

You can also apply the MED concept to getting more organized. Instead of waiting for a time when you can set aside several hours for filing or cleaning your office allocate a MED of 5 to 10 minutes daily on the organization project and watch how this simple and small investment of time can add up to major progress.

Try out an MED strategy on an area of disorder in your office and see what results.