

Kearns Consultancy

5 Steps from Procrastination to Productivity

Taking the Panic out of your Business

It is wonderfully rewarding and challenging being a business owner. Your business is built around serving a need in the world and creating a fulfilling autonomous life for you. That's the ideal but we know it's not always perfect. There are lots of bumps on the way to business success. You may find yourself procrastinating in a manner that completely frustrates you. As we experience problems, we can struggle to deal with them particularly if we've lost some of our mojo due to overload, lack of confidence or being burnt out.

Your head can go into a spin.

You panic.

You lose your focus and things get worse.

STOP! If you're in panic mode, it's simply that you're not thinking clearly. All you need to do is choose the best next steps. Clarity is what's required. It's simple but not always easy. However, there are some concrete things we can do to help manage our muddled thinking. One way is to clearly understand and manage your time. When you have set out your plan for the week ahead, you are injecting certainty into your business. You are prioritising your time for the tasks that will truly benefit your business. Your day won't be randomly decided by whatever emails you received this morning. You will be making progress and infusing hope back into your business. It may be hard work but knowing that you're improving your business helps you stay on track.

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Contents

Taking the Panic out of your Business	1
About the Author: Fiona Kearns	3
Business Psychology, Coaching and Public Speaking.....	3
Professional Qualifications and Accreditations	3
Publications - Live the Life of your Dreams: How to Increase your Confidence.....	3
Academic Research: Business Success Factors of Women Leaders.....	3
Motivation.....	4
Clarity is Vital	4
Focus	4
1 Set out the hours you want to work	5
2 Book your time off	6
3 List your priorities	6
4 Match your availability to requirements	7
5 Insert your priorities into your week.	7
Weekly Planner: From Procrastination to Productivity	8
Inspiration from the real world.....	9
Notes and Reflections	10

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About the Author: Fiona Kearns

Business Psychology, Coaching and Public Speaking

Fiona Kearns is a business psychologist and coach based near Birmingham in the UK. She has built a wealth of commercial experience in IT, Telecoms and Non-profits. Fiona provides consultancy in the area of confidence, performance and communication to business owners, politicians & executives. Fiona has been engaged by CIPD (Essex and Ipswich branch), Women in Business Network, Anglian Advanced Speakers, Common Purpose Ireland, Dublin Business School, QED Training & Dress for Success Dublin as guest lecturer & mentor for leadership, change & communication programmes.

Professional Qualifications and Accreditations

Fiona holds an MSc in Occupational and Business Psychology from Kingston University London and a B.A. in History, Sociology & Politics from NUI Galway. Fiona is a licensed Master Practitioner of Neuro Linguistic Programming & FETAC certified trainer & facilitator. Fiona is a member of the Association for Business Psychology (ABP) and holds British Psychological Society (BPS) qualifications.

Publications - Live the Life of your Dreams: How to Increase your Confidence

Fiona Kearns is the author of [Live the Life of your Dreams: How to Increase your Confidence](#), an easy-to-use practical handbook designed to empower you to be more fulfilled. This publication is available on amazon and kindle <https://amzn.to/2K0PLKA>.

Academic Research: Business Success Factors of Women Leaders

Fiona has completed research on the business success factors of Women Leaders. The research explores how women leaders of SMEs perceive success, motivation, gender differences, barriers & facilitators of success. Qualitative analysis of successful women leaders suggest that women define success as impact, finance, and work-life balance contrasting with the male view of success focusing on finance and status.

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Motivation

Have you noticed that you are often more strongly motivated away from something? You'll move heaven and earth not to lose something but can't quite make yourself reach a goal you'd like to achieve? It's important to have the right mindset and strategies to help motivate you to achieve your goal. Motivation is complex. Planning your week is about taking control and responsibility for your business. It helps you manage procrastination and keep the panic out of your business so you can focus on what you know needs to be done.

Clarity is Vital

5 Steps from Procrastination to Productivity is a **powerful** tool that enables you focus on doing the right things to build your business by gaining insight and clarity. No more wondering what to do today, you've already chosen your priorities and are absolutely clear on the best use of your time and resources. We have created a complete step by step guide but feel free to skip right to step 5 if you're ready!

Focus

Your business relies on you to deliver direction and create a compelling vision of the future. As business owner everything leads back to you so your focus determines its success. It means you have to be energised and in a position to share a compelling message. A burnt-out business owner who isn't bringing in enough money will find it very hard to lead a successful organisation. This is your opportunity to take control and be the leader your business needs.

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1 Set out the hours you want to work

You choose your own working hours. You can decide to work standard working hours or choose your own. It's completely up to you. Setting out your business hours helps you and those around you understand your availability. It enables you to build a sustainable business.

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	No. of Hours
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

A = Total Number of hours per week: _____

Bonus: Set client facing hours

Growing a business requires many hours of non-client facing work so it's useful to be clear with clients the times that you'll interact with them. Will you email them at 10pm or at the weekend? Update your website and social media with your client hours. If in doubt about what is sustainable for you, ask yourself the question 'Would I be happy doing this in a years time?' If not, re-consider your hours or make a plan to change it over time.

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2 Book your time off

It is essential that you have time off in your week. Working every available hour is not sustainable. You need to be clear when you will not be working. Having a minimum of one day off a week will provide an opportunity to rest and come back re-energised. Consider how you like to work and when you need to be available. In any case, it's your choice, you decide what works best for you.

Bonus: Book your holidays for next 6 months

3 List your priorities

Hint: include Clients, meetings, accounts, PR, new business, planning and free time

	Priorities	Hours
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

B = Total Number of hours per week: _____

Bonus: Reduce every one hour slot to 50 minutes, it works wonders

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4 Match your availability to requirements

$$A \text{ ____ } - B \text{ ______ } = \text{ ______ }$$

Do you need more hours than you have available? Revisit your priorities and the amount of time allocated. What can be changed? Are there tasks that could be dropped or delegated? It's up to you to decide what will bring the best return for your business. Remember to work smarter not harder.

Bonus: include thinking time for new ideas

5 Insert your priorities into your week.

Once you've established your priorities and allocated the right amount of hours, start completing your weekly planner. Follow the planner and limit the time assigned to each task. Learn as you go through the week where you need more or less time and where you need to add extra slots. This is a living thing that should flex with you and your business but it is primarily a guide. To make the best use of this tool, stick to the time set out in order to get the most out of your week.

Enjoy!

Bonus Tip: Batch similar tasks together for more impact

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Weekly Planner: From Procrastination to Productivity

How to complete your weekly planner: a) **Block off non-working time** - or add in your non-business tasks in those hours

b) **Insert priority tasks** and use colours for each type of task.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
0700							
0800							
0900							
1000							
1100							
1200							
1300							
1400							
1500							
1600							
1700							
1800							
1900							
2000							
2100							
2200							
2300							

Vision: Building your Business

Focus: the work

Accountability: Non-billable necessities

Me time: Avoiding Burn-out

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Inspiration from the real world

Sample Week for illustration purposes – you’ll see I choose to work evenings and Sunday nights and include lots of personal things

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
0700	VIP Consult	Get-up	Get-up	Get-up	Get-up	Get-up	Sleep-in	
0800	VIP Consult	Kids Drop-off	Kids Drop-off	Kids Drop-off	Kids	Park-run	Sleep-in	
0900	VIP Consult	Client follow-up	Train/Meeting Prep	Client follow-up		Park-run	Family Time	Family Time
1000		New Business	Off-site meeting	New Business		Shower		
1100		VA	Off-site meeting	Accountant				
1200	Networking	New Business	Off-site meeting	New Business				
1300	Networking	Lunch/Run	Off-site meeting	Lunch/Run		Coach		
1400	Networking		Off-site meeting			Client Consult		
1500	121 Meeting		Off-site meeting			Client Consult		
1600	Food Shopping	New Business	Train/Mtg Follow-up	New Business		Client Consult		
1700	Dinner	Admin/Plan	Admin/Plan	Admin/Plan		Client Consult		
1800		Collect Kids/Dinner	Collect Kids/Dinner	Collect Kids/Dinner	Dinner			
1900	Kids Baths	Kids Baths	Kids Baths	Toastmasters	Kids Baths	Kids Baths	Kids Baths	
2000	Bedtime	Client Consult	Bedtime	Toastmasters		Bedtime	Client Consult	
2100	Social Media	Client Consult	Clean House	Toastmasters	Learning/Upskilling	Date Night	Weekly Meeting	
2200	Social Media	Personal Admin	Learning/Upskilling	Personal Finance			Social Media	
2300								

Count the hours!

Vision: Building your Business

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Accountability: Non-billable necessities

Me time: Avoiding Burn-out

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[Notes and Reflections](#)

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