

Niche Success Blueprint

“Start to Profit” Training Course

Module 15: Checklists Getting Organized!

In Module 14 you worked on creating structure and a workable schedule to stay on track: goal setting, organization, and prioritizing your tasks. I hope you enjoyed the “Brain Dump” exercise and found it helpful in getting more organized and focused. :)

There’s a reason I didn’t just “hand you a checklist” in last week’s module. I don’t want you to be dependent on products or handouts, but rather learn **how to plan and think freely**. This will benefit you long-term as an entrepreneur, in everything you do going forward!

Your business, model/methods, strengths, weaknesses, schedule/routine, personality, preferences, etc are all unique to you. It’s important to create an Action Plan that suits YOU best, not what works for someone else. You’ll tweak and adjust over time as you become more efficient and have more experience of course, and as things change in your business or in your schedule.

This week I will give you some checklists for common daily, weekly & monthly tasks. You can use these to add to what you already started or set up last week, or to double check to make sure you have everything covered. First though, a note on how to *tackle* focus & discipline...



Serious Entrepreneurs Are Focused & Disciplined!

If you're struggling with focus and discipline, don't feel bad - you're definitely not alone. Most people become self-employed after years (or even decades) of being an employee. It's a big switch from having set tasks and a regular routine, to being the one that determines the tasks, goals, objectives, schedule, deadlines, comes up with creative ideas etc. For most of us, focus and discipline are learned skills, worked out through trial & error. I'll share what works for me. I encourage you to try these ideas - and figure out what works best for you.

"Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment." -Jim Rohn

If you completed the Time Log Exercise in last week's module, you already know how you're spending your time and what your "time wasters" are. That exercise is always a big eye-opener! Now that you're more aware of your *usual habits*, here are some good policies to consider:

- Only buy what you need to complete the ONE task or goal you are focusing on right now. *It's either an investment or an expense.* Consider that before every purchase!
- Create at least as much content as you consume. :-)
- Set aside a time to study/read. (I limit myself to 20 minutes a day for reading.) If you use a Time Block, you're more likely to read those things of highest interest. Choose a time *outside of your productive work hours* for any reading/studying.
- Take control (*personal responsibility*) for how you spend your time, and how much time you spend on it. Question everything! Ask yourself: "Is this in line with my current objectives, what I'm working on NOW, or is this "maybe interesting"? If the latter, put it in the Back Burner file and go back to your priority tasks.
- Learn to be a conscious thinker, instead of just responding to anything and everything that crosses your screen. It takes practice, and a lot of self-discipline, to avoid the distractions and stay focused on your priorities -but it's the key to getting ahead, *fast!*
- Don't compete or compare yourself to anyone - except yourself. Keep your head down and stay focused on YOUR goals. *Embrace where you are... and move forward daily.*

About Lynn Terry

Best known for ClickNewz, Lynn works online full-time as a Professional Blogger and Super Affiliate. She has 18 years experience in a variety of online business models, and a passion for helping others achieve the same success & lifestyle.

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A Note About Checklists, Routines & Schedules

Before I give you some base checklists to work with, just a quick reminder that your list of daily/weekly/monthly tasks may be completely different. Simply use the checklists as a base guideline, and customize your own checklists as you go for the best results.

I love the photo to the right, lol. I feel just like she looks sometimes! Even the most organized entrepreneurs have a lot to juggle, and you'll have days where you feel totally frazzled with it all. That's okay - and actually very normal. ;-)
Add in the additional distractions of the internet and a home office, and it can be a real challenge to stay focused and "on task" some days.

Schedules and routines are really helpful when it comes to productivity, but if you're too strict with it... you may find it *frustrating* when you can't live up to the demands of your own schedule.

I got my online business off the ground running a house and home-schooling two young children as a single parent. They're now raised, and I have two rowdy Great Danes (one just a puppy!). It can get seriously distracting around here. :p

On top of whatever your circumstances & lifestyle, there are things like: unexpected company, phone calls, family needs, package deliveries, home maintenance, etc that can constantly pull you away from your schedule - or the task at hand. It's all part of working from home. Go with the flow and tend to things that *require* your attention, then go straight back to your priority task. Watch for "low priority" things that constantly distract you though, and figure out a solution. Examples: Turn off the phone ringer, and check voice mail on your own schedule. Don't schedule the plumber for the time of day it's quiet or you're most productive. Close Facebook/Google+ while you're writing, etc.

Structure is good. Some people work best with a strict routine, while others achieve more with a loose schedule that allows their creative side some breathing room. Figure out which works best for you (*in terms of results!*), and create a routine that works with (instead of against) your individual personality type.



Daily Task Checklist

- Money Task** (A single task directly related to immediate OR long-term revenue)
- Publish a Blog Post & Share via Social Media** (This could be your Money Task!)
- Topical Social Conversations After Post-share** (Mod 12, Pages 4-8)
- Social Media Replies** (Check your notifications & respond to questions/replies)
- Reply To Your Blog Comments**
- Priority Emails** (File/Filter newsletters & promotions for later, only answer time sensitive emails or check out time sensitive promotions you may want to recommend)
- Moderate Filtered Email & Moderated Blog Comments** (Things gets lost there!)
Do this during "down time" - not during creative/productive work hours.
- Read/Study** (email newsletters, a book/ebook, blog posts - offline or online) I recommend you also do this during "down time" and limit it to a 20 minute Time Block.
- Social Media Sharing** (Share an image, tip, resource, ask a question, etc)
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NOTES: (make note of any additional repetitive tasks your business requires)

Weekly Task Checklist

- Your NSB training module** :) Set aside dedicated/focused study time: learn one new thing or do some creative thinking/research each week to grow your business.
- Email Your List** (Even with a Blog Broadcast set up, you can still send subscribers a great resource or invite them to a social discussion. Train them to open/click!)
- Content Planning and/or Writing** Check your [Blog Planning Calendar](#) to plan out the week ahead. Brainstorm, research & draft new blog posts.
You may choose to write your posts in advance and schedule them to publish on certain days that week (Module 4, Pages 7-10). Research commercial keyword phrases: find new ways to reach the buyers in your market (Module 2, Page 7).
- Product Creation** Brainstorm and/or create "products" whether they are free checklists, free downloads or low cost digital products. *(May do monthly instead)*
- Strategic Networking** - Do this consistently 2-3 times a week in focused 30 minute Time Blocks. See Module 10, Page 8 - and Module 11, Page 10
- Inbox Cleanup** Deal with your non-priority emails. You may want to do this 3 times a week, or whatever works best for you. Scan, delete, unsubscribe, respond - move fast!
- PR Opps & Off-Site Content Marketing** Review Module 12 (Pages 9-11) and Module 13. Keep an eye out for opportunities *(be picky!)* and make contact.
- Social Graphic** Create a new [graphic](#) to share on social media as a non-promotional discussion starter and/or pose a question or bring up a hot topic for open discussion.
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Monthly Task Checklist

- Content/Promo Planning** Coordinate your content and promotions in advance using the [Blog Planning Calendar](#) (full of topical ideas for each month!)
- Analyze Site Statistics** At the start of each month, review the previous months stats. Look at pages that got the most views - can you improve/increase the conversion on those pages/posts? See what's working and what isn't - do of what IS working and less of what is NOT. Example: A certain forum/group driving more traffic = invest more time there. A spike in traffic/subscribers from Guest Blogging? Do more of that. etc.
- Accounting** Enter your income/expenses/mileage. I use [Quickbooks Pro](#) but you can also use a simple spreadsheet as long as you're tracking it ALL. Track your mileage (as you go) to/from bank, post office, meetups, etc. Choose a safe way to store receipts.
- Revisit your Objectives Worksheet** This helps you stay grounded in your goals. Consider any additions or changes to make based on ongoing experience & growth.
- Research New Revenue Sources** Review Module 8 (Pages 3-4) and Module 9.
- Find & Fix Any Broken Links**
- 72 Hour Time Log** (Module 14, Page 5) Once a month it's a good idea to do the Time Log exercise. Analyze your checklists/schedule/routine for improvements. Consider ways you can be more efficient, what you can less of or more of, etc.
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Other Tasks:

There will be additional things you need to keep an eye on and/or update once or twice a year, or anytime you make major changes with branding, your image, tagline, etc.

- Update Your About page** (*at least once a year*)
- Update Social Media Profiles/Bios** (are photos/descriptions/links current?)
- Update Email Follow-up Message, Autoresponders, Confirmation pages** (*double check these once or twice a year to make sure they're current & relevant!*)

NOTES: (Add any additional tasks you can think of here, and add them to your Google calendar - or your [Blog Planning Calendar](#) so you have a reminder in place.)

Consistently Evaluate & Brainstorm

Set up a Time Block once a week to spend an hour or two evaluating your progress and your priorities. Use that time for brainstorming and planning, and to map out the week ahead. Scheduling in this time consistently (every week) will help you stay on track with your priorities and objectives. I do this on Friday mornings simply because that's when I have more free time and less on my mind & schedule.

It's important to schedule your planning/brainstorming when you have a block of free time where you're not rushed or stressed. While you have long-term goals, and it may take years to achieve your ideal lifestyle and see the level of success you're after, you have to stay grounded in the short term goals and the consistent daily tasks in order to make it happen. Setting aside time each week to keep yourself on the right track is key!

While you're getting organized and setting up a solid structure for your routine, also consider doing some (probably much-needed!) [digital organizing](#). Make sure you have an automated off-site back-up in place (like Mozy.com) and that your files & documents are organized in a way that makes you more efficient and your tasks flow more smoothly.

There's nothing like time wasted hunting something down, when that time could be spent growing your business. ;-) Or worse, investing tons of time and energy only to lose everything in a hard drive crash (guilty!). Get organized, back up, work smart.

I've mentioned the [Blog Planning Calendar](#) in this Module and the last one. It's an amazing FREE resource for content ideas and content planning, and a great way to keep your content & promo ideas/schedule (plus tasks!) organized all in one place.

Compare the proposed daily, weekly and monthly checklists in this Module with the task lists you set up last week. Note what you should add to your list, and how often you want to do each particular task. You may choose to blog twice a week or twice a day - that's completely up to you! As an obvious note: the more you blog the more keyword phrases you are targeting, and the more traffic you'll see. ;-)

Do the Time Log exercise (again) and look for ways to increase both productivity AND efficiency. Create a routine that works with your own "natural flow" and your schedule.

Seek freedom and become captive of your desires. Seek discipline and find your liberty. -Frank Herbert
* I like that quote! Give it some thought for a moment...

Billie Joe Armstrong (of Green Day) said: "Set lists are tough because you come up with this structure of how the songs are going to go from one to the next, *but at the same time, you have to be spontaneous and take requests and change the set list at the drop of a hat.*"

It's the same with an online business. Structure is GOOD, but you also want to be flexible and be on top of hot topics, be ready for unexpected opportunities, etc. ;-)

If you have questions about this week's tasks you can reach me on [Facebook](#) or at my [Forum](#). Otherwise I'll see you next week in Module 16. *cheers*

Have Questions?

If you have questions, join us on the ClickNewz Forum:

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If you would like hands-on help brainstorming your business or setting up your website, contact Lynn at: AskLynnTerry@gmail.com to discuss low cost private or group coaching options.