

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



307 Is it Time for You to Routinize?

Everybody wants to be more productive. We look for ways to optimize our time and maximize our efforts, but how far would you go to do this? I'm Jerry Roberts and today let's get a little bit extreme and see if you want to go along for the ride. That's next on The Extra Point.

The late Steve Jobs of Apple wore the same clothes every day, a black turtleneck and blue jeans. Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg is the same, a gray t-shirt or hoodie and jeans. Who else? Former president Barack Obama. He wore the same color suits all the time and he said this: "You'll see I wear only gray or blue suits. I'm trying to pare down decisions. I don't want to make decisions about what I'm eating or wearing because I have too many other decisions to make." Obama cited research that shows the simple act of making decisions degrades one's ability to make further decisions. Could that be right?

Are you familiar with the term "routinizing"? It means to reduce something to a regular procedure. Therefore, you don't have to spend time choosing. What's it got to do with higher productivity? I promised you we'd get a little extreme. Here we go.

I caught a story online of a guy who believed in this concept and set out to align his life accordingly. He bought a half-dozen copies of the exact same outfit, choosing fabrics that would look fine coming out of the dryer. No ironing needed. Three pairs of the same shoes. That took care of his wardrobe. He figured he saved an hour to two hours a week not having to choose what to wear or iron anything.

He didn't eat the same things at each meal, but he routinized this, too. His nearby grocery store offered fresh food for takeout. He made a deal with them to pack six meals for him at a time, three days worth of food. They'd label them Monday AM and Monday PM, for example, and all he had to do was pick them up twice a

week and put them into his refrigerator. He only needed six days worth because he fasted on Sunday. He said he even saved money on his food bill because he didn't buy items he didn't need. That was good but it was the savings in time that meant more. No shopping and no food prep saved him five hours a week.

The idea is to pack your life with repeatable sequences with predictable outcomes, doing all you can to eliminate choices as much as possible. Does it sound boring, maybe dreadful? The people who swear by routinizing say it makes them more effective and improves their quality of life. They say it allows them to direct their energy to the areas where they can make the greatest difference, to what really matters.

Former Navy Seal Jocko Willink agrees, saying "Discipline equals freedom." Routinizing gets rid of our impulsive behavior. Our urges will no longer control us.

As the saying goes, the devil is in the details and routinizing kicks the devil out. We get rid of as many small things on our daily schedule as we can, and put the full power of our minds on the important things we say we want.

So, is this crazy or crazy smart? What if you could make a few changes and add 10 productive hours to your week — maybe 500 productive hours per year? Could that make a difference in your life? If so, what changes would you make?

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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