



Edward Deming helped Japan rebuild after the war (including co-founder of Sony, Akio Morita). Image source: deming.org

How To Min/Max Game Development Time and Finish Your Project 2x Faster With These 3 Productivity Tips

This article is for you if you're a solo indie game developer, or have a very small team, and you're missing your deadlines and you're going over budget.

The best reason to learn how to min/max your time is because when you can finish your game 2 or 3 times faster, than you can keep that money you would have spent on extra wasted time.

Spend that money on developing another game. Or put that money into time marketing your game so you can sell more copies.

If you don't learn how to min/max your time, you'll go over budget, or you'll run out of funds. Or you'll be tempted to hire more people. But hiring more people means even MORE time and money to manage those people.

So, if you're a solo indie game dev, or an indie dev with a small team, time is your only resource. If you learn these 3 tips, I know that you'll finish your indie game development 2x faster.

Here's what you need to know...

The Min/Maxer Technique

I always thought that the busier you got, the more people you needed. And when my app development company and online services were getting crazy busy, I hired people. But I soon learned that I was spending MORE time managing people and plus doing my own work.

Something had to change. I didn't want to work 16 hour days, in crunch mode.

So, instead of putting more MONEY onto the problem, I learned how to be more productive with my time. And after 12 years of doing this, I came up with a technique called the Min/Maxer.

I learned how to min/max my time from two guys that are way smarter than me.

The first guy is named Edward Deming. He was a statistician and an engineer. He used stats to improve work efficiency. And he started off by going to Japan to help them rebuild after the war. Top Japanese industrialists like Akio Morita, co-founder of Sony, all used Deming's philosophies to improve productivity.

Deming explained that you lose efficiency when you go from one job to another. By grouping tasks into batches, and focusing all your work on finishing that batch before going onto the next batch, will dramatically improve your speeds.

I'll show you exactly how to use Deming's ideas to help you finish your indie game 2x faster. But there's another guy I learned from, too.

His name is Francesco Cirillo. He's the guy who developed the Pomodoro Technique or Tomato Time. This is where you set a timer and you work on one task until that timer stops. Then you take a short break. And go back to your task.

These two ideas in time management helped me min/max my time. I've personally been using these two techniques for over 10 years. And I grouped these two ideas, and call it my Min/Maxer Technique.

So now let me show you exactly how to use these two ideas to help you min/max your time so you can finish your game development 2x faster....

How To Min/Max Your Time, Finish Your Indie Game 2x Faster: 3 Step Action Plan

Ok, let me sum up what you've just learned...

- You can either hire more people to help you manage your time or you can learn how to min/max your time
- Hiring people is great, but you forget that it also takes more time to manage them (plus takes more money)
- It's better to learn how to min/max your own time before you hire more developers artists and designers to help you finish your indie game
- Edward Deming said that going from one task to another kills productivity
- In other words, jumping from one task or small project to another will hurt your productivity because it's inefficient
- What should take 1 hour, now takes 2 or 4 because of these inefficiencies
- It's more efficient to lump work into batches, and focus your work on those batches before moving onto the next batch
- Tomato time is where you use a timer to help you keep focus on completing a task
- Once the timer goes off, take a short break, and set the timer again

Maybe you're like me, and you're more of a lone-wolf rather than a joiner. But you understand that you still need help from other people.

But before you go and get help from other people, it's better to improve your own productivity the best you can.

So, here's your first step...

Min/Maxer Step 1: Separate Your Work Into Small Batch Projects

Think about what it takes to develop a game. There's programming, art, design, sound, tester, etc. Then these jobs are broken down into even small batches. So for programming there is...

- Physics
- AI
- Graphics
- Sound
- Gameplay
- UI
- Input Processing

- Scripting
- Network comm
- Game tools

The reason it's important to break down all your tasks like this is because of what Deming said: When you hop from one task to another, that extra step is where you lose all your efficiencies.

What takes you 1 hour to get done now takes 2 hours because of these inefficiencies.

It's better to group your jobs into batches, and focus on each batch before moving onto another batch.

So, what do I mean by "focus on each batch"? Let me show you, next...

Min/Maxer Step 2: Set Your Clock For 50 Minutes and Focus On One Task

So, in step one I had you group your jobs into batches and NOT jump from one task to another. Multitasking is NOT productive. You might feel like you're busy when multitasking. But then at the end of the day you say to yourself, "I worked 14 hours, but what did I get done!?"

Multitasking makes you feel like you're busy. But jumping from task to task is inefficient and eats up your day.

A better strategy is to lump your tasks into smaller groups. And focus on each group. Get that done. Then move onto another task.

This is where Tomato time comes in. Say you're working on AI. Set the clock for 50 minutes. Go to work. And when the time goes off, take a 10 minute break. Then set the time for another 50 minutes.

You'll find that in 2 hours you'll have more done than if you just put in 8 hours without this kind of focus.

Setting up a timer like this forces your brain to focus on one task. And you'll be surprised how much you get done when you control your time like this.

This is the heart of min/maxing your time. By grouping your jobs, timing yourself, putting all your focus and energy into one task, and NOT multitasking is how to finish your indie game 2x faster.

But were not done yet...

Min/Maxer Step 3: Work On The Most Important Projects When You Have The Most Energy

When do you have the most energy in the day. It's usually very early in the morning, or late at night, right?

Well, that's when you should be working on your most important tasks. Remember in step one you grouped your jobs into batches?

Well, which one is the most important right now? Work on that task when you have the most energy. Set a time for 50 minutes with a 10 minute break. Do this cycle 3 times. And in 3 hours you'll see that you've done more work than you normally do in 8.

The Major Takeaway For Solo Indie Game Devs or Devs With Small Teams

It's important to min/max your time because time is money. The faster you can finish your game without any loss in quality, the more money you'll make from your improved productivity.

How? Because that time when you go over budget, or you run out of funding, or you go over your deadlines, that time could have been spent promoting your game or making a new game.

By min/maxing your time, you're squeezing out as much productivity out of yourself as you can -- without working 16 hour days or spending money on hiring a big staff.

Good luck with your indie game. I hope my productivity tips helped you finish your indie game 2x or 3x faster.

Later,

Konrad

<http://GetMoreGamers.com>