



All Ears English Episode 207:

How to Run Your Day the Right Way

Lindsay: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 207: “How to Run Your Day the Right Way.”

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel’, from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: In today’s episode, you’ll get an awesome quote from a very smart man about how to take control of your day at 6 a.m.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Lindsay, how do you do?

Lindsay: Gabby. Why are you using that old school English? It sounds like you need to learn some common, real English.

Gabby: Oh, my!



Lindsay: Gabby, seriously. You need help and I know the perfect place you can go. You can go to AllEarsEnglish.com/100 to get the 100 most common phrases in every day English, real English.

Gabby: Goodness.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Gabby!

Gabby: Hey, hey Lindsay. How you doing?

Lindsay: Good. What's shaking?

Gabby: Not much. How are things in Boston?

Lindsay: Good, good, good. Great...

Gabby: Great.

Lindsay: ...sunny day.

Gabby: Oh, wonderful.

Lindsay: I know. I...

Gabby: That's great.

Lindsay: ...I love this time of year. It's just gorgeous, early fall.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Oh, love it.

Gabby: That's wonderful.

Lindsay: The...

Gabby: It sounds great. Are the leaves turning yet?

Lindsay: Yeah, they're, they are. They're starting to and I remember when I was in Japan the leaves were gorgeous in the fall. Have you seen that over there...



Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...yet?

Gabby: Well, where I live they haven't started changing color yet, but I think in the next week or so they will.

Lindsay: Oh, yeah. It is just beautiful. (I mean), yeah, I just remember going to some, somewhere at the base of Mt. Fuji we went and t-t-to view the leaves and it was just amazing, amazing.

Gabby: Oh, beautiful. Nice.

Lindsay: So Gabby can I ask you a question?

Gabby: Sure.

Lindsay: So did you run your day today or did the day run you?

Gabby: Yeah, that's an interesting question. I think it's so important to really plan your day out in advance and I like to think the night before, 'What am I gonna (going to) do tomorrow? What are my priorities?'

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: 'What time will I wake up and what will I work on first?' Because really whatever I work on first during the day that's what I really want to and need to get done.

Lindsay: Yeah. What time do you usually get up in the morning?

Gabby: Well, it depends on what needs to get done, (um), but I like to get up early, (you know), maybe, (uh), six. I think ideally I would be up by six.

Lindsay: (Um), yeah, yeah.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: I usually try to get up at 5:45 and I think a big part of getting your work done early is getting a ritual in the morning, right. So...



Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: ...when we were talking about this before we said, (you know), usually what I like to do is I like to get up, (um), get some breakfast and, (you know), have a shower, meditate for awhile, and then get straight to work. So it's kinda (kind of) the same ritual and I eat the same thing for breakfast everyday because I...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...don't want to take mental energy thinking, 'Oh, should I have eggs? Should I have this?' (You know), it's kind of a waste of time if your priority is to get straight to work or whatever your creative activity is that day.

Gabby: Yeah. It's interesting I was speaking with my students about this the other day, about time management. (You know), if you don't decide how you're going to manage your time someone else will.

Lindsay: (Um), yeah, yeah.

Gabby: So what I mean is, (you know), if you have a job, let's say. (Um), your boss will tell you what you should be doing and, (you know), if you don't, if you don't have a plan, for example, like, if you, (um), don't have any particular plan, (you know), when to leave work you might end up working overtime.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Or you might, (uh), end up doing things that you didn't plan to do and sometimes that's okay. Maybe if you're working on something that you, you have as a priority at work. (Um), (you know), I'm not saying work is bad, but just as an example, we get sucked into work oftentimes and, (um), (you know), you have to think about what is it that is important for you. For example, exercise. Maybe you need to take a little break and go for a jog, and, (you know), exercise is important to you and in the end really that'll make you a more productive person.

Lindsay: Oh, yeah.



Gabby: Because we know exercise increases the oxygen to your brain and, and having a healthy mind-body balance is so important for our productivity.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: So that's just one example.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: (Um), but if you don't plan that out it's very easy for all the things that other people want you to do to (sort of), (uh), overtake the time in your day. (You know), maybe someone asked you for a favor and you wanna (want to) help them or maybe other things come up. Maybe you realize, oh, it would be fun to go shopping or something, but that priority that you had of going for a jog just got eclipsed by other things that just (kind of) came up.

Lindsay: Yeah, it reminds me...

Gabby: (Um).

Lindsay: ...also of your email inbox. I think someone said once...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...that your email inbox is everyone else's agenda for your life, for everyone else's sort of priorities for you. That's what your email inbox actually is. It's not your priorities. So we can talk about...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...this, this quote that we're talking about today is from Jim Rohn and I'll say...

Gabby: (Um-hm).

Lindsay: ...the quote again. So it's, "Either you run the day or the day runs you," and I think that's true for so many aspects of life. So our day – it could be true for our email inbox, or what you were just saying Gabby, your health, (right), your work.



Gabby: (Uh-hm).

Lindsay: It could be true for so many things.

Gabby: Yeah. I would encourage you to spend sometime – it could be, (you know), for example, I like to spend time in the evenings, (um), to plan my next day or you might wanna (want to) spend time on Sunday night to plan your week ahead. (You know), if Sunday is kind of the last day in your weekend you could start planning your Monday through Friday or Monday through Saturday. (Um), just spend some time thinking about what your priorities are and maybe write them down because when we write things down it solidifies those ideas.

Lindsay: Oh, yeah and I think a big part of this is also, (um), making sure that your physical space, like your office, if you're working from home, your room is, is clean an-an-and neat. So for me that's the case at least.

Gabby: (Um-hm).

Lindsay: (You know) it's kind of a Zen feeling that I get when I, when I clean out – (you know), Sunday evening I need to clear off my desk. I need to make sure that, (you know), there's no clutter in my room. Otherwise I'll get a lot of mental – (sp), (you know) that, that stuff is actually taking up mental space.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: And I don't...

Gabby: Actually...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...I (wan-) – I'd like to take that a step further because if you can set up your work space to be conducive to your priorities...

Lindsay: (Um-hm).



- Gabby:** ..., (um), for example, let's say, okay, let me use the jogging example again. So if I can, let's say tonight, if I can put my jogging shorts and my t-shirt and my sneakers and my socks, if I put them right next to my bed and they're all laid out and they're ready for me as soon as I wake up, then that physical environment makes it much easier for me to get out of bed and go jogging.
- Lindsay:** Yes.
- Gabby:** I don't have the excuse, as silly as it is, "Oh, it's too hard to put on my jogging clothes."
- Lindsay:** That's a lame excuse, but, yeah, no, totally. That's a good point. That's a good point.
- Gabby:** But it's one less mental block, one less excuse that could come to mind.
- Lindsay:** (Uh-hm), yeah, I think that that's good, (um), just being ready to, to jump in, put on those shoes and get out there. (Um).
- Gabby:** So if, if you wanna (want to) work on your English, (you know), one thing you could do is – let's say you have a book in English that you're reading, a novel that you wanna (want to) read, don't put it away on your bookshelf. Leave it out on your kitchen table.
- Lindsay:** (Um).
- Gabby:** So you see it.
- Lindsay:** (Uh-hm).
- Gabby:** And you're ready to pick it up.
- Lindsay:** (Uh-hm, uh-hm, uh-hm), yeah, (act-) – absolutely and subscribing to different podcasts so that when you put on your iPhone you have those podcasts ready, right. The most recent...
- Gabby:** Yeah.



Lindsay: ...episodes have, have already downloaded on their own and they're ready for you. I think this comes...

Gabby: Exactly.

Lindsay: ...I think this does come down – it's similar to, (you know), eating the same thing for breakfast everyday. Not giving yourself time to fumble around and decide, 'What should I do?'

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: (You know), I find that I waste a lot of time, (um), on my less productive days. Just (sort of), (like), moving from task to task and just deciding which task should be done.

Gabby: (Uh-hm).

Lindsay: And instead if I have that written out in the morning – like this is the most important task, this is number two, this is number three, this is number four - these are the four things I have to get done today – then I don't spend any of that time choosing what to do or thinking, 'No, I should do that, when I should be doing this,' right?

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: So it's all about preparation and setting yourself up for success and in the example that you gave about eating the same breakfast everyday, (uh), you don't decide that everyday. You've decided that in advance and I bet that you go grocery shopping in advance.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: I bet you...

Lindsay: Sure, sure, sure.

Gabby: ...you have – let's say, you have oatmeal every morning. I don't know...



Lindsay: Hey, you got it.

Gabby: Do you, do you have oatmeal? Okay, okay, I, I, thought so. (Um), so I bet that you buy a big...

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: ...container of oatmeal.

Lindsay: (Um-huh).

Gabby: ...and you're ready to go.

Lindsay: Exactly and that feels great. (You know), I can just slip right into breakfast and then just get going with my day. So I think the idea here is one way to run your day – so that the day doesn't run you – is by reducing the number of decisions you're making, therefore saving your mental bandwidth for more creative activities...

Gabby: (Uh-hm).

Lindsay: ...than, 'What am I gonna (going to) eat?'

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Well, if you love eating and you take a lot of pleasure in choosing what you're gonna (going to) eat every morning then make that your creative activity and reduce...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: ...the number of decisions you make somewhere else, like what you're going to wear or something else, but the idea is to reduce, (um), number, the number of decisions you make on the things that don't matter that much to you.

Gabby: Yeah, exactly. I think that's good advice and I, I just, I love the quote, (you know), to, (um), just take control of your day. I know it's, it's not talking about control, but, (um), take, take initiative over your time.



Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: (Um), make sure that you're doing what your priorities are.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Don't just, don't just leave your day open. I know some people like to go with the flow and there's value with going with the flow...

Lindsay: On the weekends maybe.

Gabby: ...and just kind of doing... yeah, just doing what, what comes up or going with what opportunities present themselves.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Right, but there, there's a certain time where if you have a goal you have to set your priorities and, (you know), you wanna (want to) set up your day to help you reach your goals.

Lindsay: Yeah. I think that's great. So one more time, "Either you run the day or the day runs you." There we go.

Gabby: Great.

Lindsay: Thanks for chatting today Gabby.

Gabby: Thanks Lindsay.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

