

# 10 things to do when the lights are out

 By [Tim Hill](#)

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Businesses are suffering because of the ongoing load shedding across South Africa. Not everyone is in a fortunate position to own a generator, so the flow of day-to-day work tasks is interrupted. Even then, the cellular networks and Internet service providers are struggling to offer fast and efficient services. This issue isn't going to stop any time soon and the impact on business is massive.

Therefore, we have to all do our bit to minimise the blow and have to work around it instead of sitting around staring into space, whining or doing both.



Here are 10 ways to be productive and add value to businesses during the times of power outages.

**1. Read the newspaper.** Everyone should know what is happening in the world around them and increasing general knowledge on current affairs never hurt anyone. In fact, many opportunities are born out of reading articles in the media.

**2. Take a client or a business associate out for a coffee, or a juice.** We are so reliant on email, social media and Whatsapp as replacements to face-to-face interaction. You will be surprised how much you can pick up from a person and what opportunities can be unearthed by having a one on one conversation. Understanding a person can be beneficial in understanding the way that things can be done and the correct approach to take.

**3. Tidy your desk and de-clutter.** We all get so busy that our workspaces look like hell on earth. Throw away the crap, get your filing done and pave the way to a more productive day.

**4. Drink water.** You're probably not going to be able to have a cup of tea or coffee so take the healthier route and cleanse the system by drinking water throughout the day. This will keep you properly hydrated and your energy levels during the day will increase.

**5.** Most of us work on laptops, so despite the power being down, there is usually a couple of hours of use at our disposal. **Use this time to get any written communication down** and loaded so that it is ready to go when the power returns.

**6. You don't need technology or electricity to get the team's creative juices flowing.** All you need is mind power, a pen and paper. Jot down creative ideas for your team, the company and your clients.

**7. Sit outside as a team.** We all get deeply caught up in our to-do lists and we don't get the time to get to know the people we spend at least eight hours of our day with. Most office parks have an outside area, so get to know one another and bond in the fresh air. It is amazing how by understanding our colleagues, our enthusiasm towards our work is kicked into shape and productivity takes to new levels.

**8. Plan with mind maps.** You don't need a computer or power to do some strategic planning. Learn how to do mind maps and start planning your client's strategies or your own business strategy during this time. Again, all you need is a pen and paper.

**9.** Usually when there is no power, there is massive traffic congestion and it can take hours to get in to the office due to broken traffic lights. Instead of flying into a rage, use this time to **listen to an audio book**. There are thousands of books to choose from on iTunes or Audible.com and if you are feeling a thirst for knowledge and personal empowerment, spend R150 on the latest Richard Branson business book.

**10. Set up your work email on your cellphone** and avoid sitting all day on social networks and chat apps. Although limited, at least you will have some form of contact with the outside world and will be able to respond to any urgent matters that need your immediate attention. You want to conserve battery power and browsing social media sites and chatting eats into your battery life.

In wrapping up, we will only be beaten by the electricity crisis if we let it beat us. It is far from an ideal situation to be in, but we have to work around it order to carry on with business as usual and sustain our economy. Being unproductive when the lights are off is way more damaging than having no power.

## ABOUT TIM HILL

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