

Eric Mack's 5 Principles of Productivity Software Design

No leaks

- We are building a system that must be "trusted".
- There can be no inherent potential "leaks" in the system that are not visible or announced to the user.
- Alert user to unclassified or undecided items.

Attract more than repel!

- Be careful not to create unconscious resistance. Keep *personal* in *productivity*.
- There's a fine line between thinking about the actions vs. thinking about the tool to manage them.
- Require as few steps as possible: User must be able to perform tasks in as few steps as possible; reduce clicks, prefill where possible; anticipate or identify choices. Limit distractions and reduce effort wherever possible.
- Product features must have inherent perceived value to the user to encourage good and lasting habits. Quick capture, review, find are all important.

All "features" must pass the 30-60-90 test

- Every feature must add value. Be watchful for shiny but unproductive or unused features.
- For every proposed new feature, are we still talking about it 30 days later?
- Are a significant number of users still using it consistently 60 or 90 days later?

Add productive value, not burden

- Don't burden the user with noise, distractions, or decisions.
- Everything must be intentional and seen as such by the user.
- Any feature that does not add consistent reproducible value to a user's workflow should be removed (or at least disabled by default in preferences).

Would David Allen or Eric Mack use it?

- With so many productivity tools claiming to be designed for GTD®, few add sufficient value to the workflow as promised. Instead, many users feel like they are working the system instead of the system working for them.
- How close do we adhere to the proven GTD methodology for workflow and self-management?
- Before asking David to review a feature, can I show that I have been using it consistently for an extended period of time first?
- Is this a feature that David Allen or Eric Mack are likely to be using 6 days, 6 weeks, or six months later?

Source: [5 GTD App Design Principles with Eric Mack - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74t5RXWAMxk) Podcast with Eric Mack and David Allen
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74t5RXWAMxk>

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