

Secrets Of Effective Time Management

One of the greatest assets in life is your time (just ask a man who is on his death bed how precious time is). So Don't Waste It! The moment of now is gone so quickly you can't afford to waste it.

Understanding and implementing time management in your daily life will impact on the very success you will experience. The following points have the ability to make the difference in succeeding in your goals.

- Work with a daily to do list. Write down your last job of the day, or your first job of the new day on your to do list.
- When you're writing the list is the time to prioritise your list. Typically:
 - A – Urgent must do in the time frame
 - B – Important needs to be completed
 - C – neither urgent nor important but will need to be done.
- When organising your tasks if a job is large or of very high importance create a visual chart or road map.
- Write down your goals. Your goals and your daily to do list are different. One is a means to the other.
- Break your goals down into the different areas & steps to achieving, as well as different time periods.
- Make time each day to rewrite or review your 6 major goals down everyday. Then have them where you can see them. It is important to always begin with the end in mind.
- Make two hours in your day (if you can't do this make it two hours a week!) where it is Do Not Disturb Time. This is when you are not available so take the phone off the hook, and hang a sign on your door.
- Your two hours is to be high productivity time when you will work ON not IN your business.
- When setting goals give yourself adequate time for the job. Be aware that delays are part of life and allow a 10-15% buffer for the unexpected. The more you set goals and stick to your 2 hour no go zone your buffer level will go down.
- In your work place avoid clutter. This will improve your productivity. Avoid the temptation of piles of paper on your desk. Get into the habit of spending 10minutes at the end of the day filing your work away.
- A clear desk is one of the most difficult habits for some, so you may need to program this 10 minutes in as a first thing in the morning or maybe before you can go to lunch. Find a time and stick to it.
- If you have a job or project that needs essential items you need to insist on having the items before you begin a task. This will eliminate the need to stop. Stopping to find something or even answer the phone will interrupt your train of thoughts, it's estimated that after one phone call it can take up to 7 minutes before you are completely, re: focused on the task at hand.
- Aim, Shoot, Fire!
Just Do It...do not procrastinate. Forget the excuses, no one is perfect nor is any job perfect so just begin and then finish the job.

- If your list has a particularly difficult task do it first. First thing in the morning is when your energy is the highest. Once you start a task there is an sense of release as well as energy – just because you have started.
- When you have completed a task cross it off your to do list. There is something deeply satisfying and affirming as you complete your to do list.
- Give the task at hand 100% of your attention. This is so rarely done into today’s modern living. Even sitting at your desk working we are distracted by emails, and mobile phones. No matter how difficult you find this task, work at giving 100% to your tasks.
- When assessing your task see if you can use the power of leverage – assign the task to another. It is imperative that you work at where your skills are the most valuable. (in economics this is called specialisation.)
- If you assign tasks, have time frames and controls in place to ensure that these tasks are completed on time and to required standard.
- Work efficiently. Try and handle every piece of paper only the once.
- Use your computer efficiently. Learn the easy insider tricks that make your work quicker and more efficient. I’m sure you wont have to look far to find someone to teach you.
- No one can be effective and 100% efficient at work all the time. Work out when you are most productive. If your most productive time is in the morning utilise this time period. Schedule and program yourself to work then, and try and incorporate your “do not disturb” time during this period.
- Look for waste in the way you work, try and eliminate the things you do that stop you from being efficient or not completing what you set out to achieve.
- Strive for improvement with little steps at a time. Encourage yourself and all times be positive. Develop a preference for action and “I can’ attitude – TODAY!
- “Put yourself under a little more pressure.” As crazy as this may sound, if you work better with a time frame imagine that you have half a day to accomplish what you normally have a day to do. Streamline and prioritise and go from there.
- Stop the interruptions. Put on the answering machine, use voice mail, put up a “do not disturb” sign and time, make your own workspace, have a 2 hour productive time. Tell your friends and family not to visit at this time. Do what you have to and then reward yourself once you are successful.
- Learn to say NO. If others are holding you up say no or prioritise their tasks for later.
- Put your head down and work hard without looking for distraction. If you can put on a set of earphones (even without music or noise, do what you have to, to focus on the task at hand.
- Make or introduce daily and weekly deadlines to your tasks. Deadlines make us more productive.
- If you have many different tasks try and group them together, e.g. writing and creative in the morning, phone calls in the afternoon. Do your talking in the afternoon when you may be less focused.

- When you talk on the phone – stand up! Your voice and your manner will be more positive and you won't get to comfortable and talk longer wasting your precious time.
- If a phone call starts to wander off the task or work issue it is about, express your thanks you're your need to go. Keep your conversations short productive and positive.
- Phone calls need to get straight to the point after the initial niceties. Keep your personal conversation for the lunch break or after work. People will soon begin to notice and appreciate that you are a person of action and getting things done. Work hard then play or rest in the same manner, without distraction.
- Develop the habit of being punctual and on time. Lateness is a horror to avoid as much as possible. Others will be impressed and appreciate the fact that you can be relied upon.
- Be systemised. Remove waste through repetitious tasks. A great book to read on this subject is the *E Myth* by Michael Gerber.
- Keep your daily planner or diary near you at all times, especially when writing notes. Avoid the writing notes on such things as small pieces of paper etc. These bits of paper always get lost and then you waste time and have frustration finding them again.
- Have an efficient filing cabinet. A great filing system is a key to good time management. If you take the time to systematically file then the system will reward you with precious time and frustration avoided.
- Adopt a back up system with your computer. At some stage your computer WILL fail. So be prepared and have your work regularly backed up.
- Be an efficient decision maker. If you are not then practice will help you make decisions quickly and firmly on a day to day basis. You can waste hours making your mind up, when 90% of the time all you have to do is just make up your mind and then follow through with the task at hand following the decision.
- If all this is new give yourself a 1-week period to watch and monitor all of your time. Become aware of the time you're wasting now...it will surprise you. This monitoring of your time will help highlight obvious areas of improvement.
- Become aware of the people/person who wastes your time. Make strategies to change the way they impact on your life and work. Remember if this is tough that the hours you're wasting can never be regained.
- Share the load of change with another. Make a promise or declaration of improvement and have another to whom you are accountable check up on how you are going. You may even consider having a personal contract with yourself.
- At all times give of yourself. Commit to do and be your best.

Life is not a trial run – this is it. What you do today is reflected in your future so don't waste this opportunity.

